

GETTING UP WHEN YOU FALL DOWN

Jeremiah 8:4-7



SOME JEREMIAH DISCOVERIES

- ◆ Failure Is Not Final!
- ◆ Humility Saves Us Great Pain!
- ◆ There Is A Balm In Gilead!

“This is what the Lord says; when people fall down, don’t they get up again?” (Jeremiah 8:4)

Bill Kirk

“GETTING UP WHEN YOU FALL DOWN”

Text: Jeremiah 8:4-7 (NLT)

Introduction

1. Jeremiah is known as “the Weeping Prophet”.
2. He ministered from 626 to 580 B.C.
3. His purpose was to warn Judah that her sins would result in chastisement from the Babylonians (in the north).
4. Jeremiah confronted kings, false prophets and priests with double standards.
5. He preached through three great difficult seasons:
 - ◆ The city of Jerusalem was invaded
 - ◆ The Temple was destroyed and
 - ◆ The Jews were taken captive
6. Yet God used Jeremiah greatly to speak to your heart and mine:
 - ◆ In Ch. 1-29, Jeremiah condemns Judah’s apostasy
 - ◆ In Ch. 30-33, Jeremiah prophesies mourning turned into joy
 - ◆ In Ch. 34-44, Jeremiah rebukes idolatry and disobedience
 - ◆ In Ch. 45-52, Jeremiah foretells judgment and restoration

(But in Ch 8, I discovered a powerful question in v. 4)

(NLT) *“Jeremiah, say to the people, “This is what the Lord says:
“When people fall down, don’t they get up again?”*

- ◆ What is it that picks you up after you fall down?

(Some Jeremiah Discoveries)

- ◆ Because ye shall know the truth and the truth shall (what?) free us from ourselves!

Question: What’s the truth from God (through Jeremiah) that’s good news to you?

(Heart Lifting Wisdom From Jeremiah 8)

1. Failure Is Not Final!

(v.4) *“This is what the Lord says, ‘When people fall down, don’t they get up again?’*

Question: What is God saying to us here?

Answer: The Lord is referring to the people He loves:

- ◆ Israel has backslidden and gone off course.
- ◆ Israel has sinned and grieved God’s holiness.
- ◆ Israel has drifted and become cold and ineffective.
- ◆ Israel has lost their passion and devotion and fire.

Question: What does the Lord say?

Answer: "When people fall down, don't they get up again?"

(In other words)

- ◆ While we contemplate our failures - God is contemplating our recovery!
- ◆ While we think about our stupidity - God thinks about our potential!
- ◆ While we remind God of our past - God is already planning for our future!
- ◆ While we focus on our weaknesses - God focuses on His strength being made perfect in our weaknesses!

(In other words)

- ◆ While Israel was focused on her vices and shortcomings...
- ◆ God wanted to pardon and reconcile Israel back to Himself.

(So God asks the question)

- ◆ What do smart people do when they fall down? And,
- ◆ What do smart people do when they take a wrong turn in the road?

(They remember that failure is not final!)

Illustration: In 1952, the London Paper was sent to 6 ½ million people. The headlines read "Roger Bannister Fails." Doctors said no one would ever break the four minute mile. On May 6, 1954 Roger Bannister broke the four minute mile for the very first time.

Illustration: Thomas Edison had 10,000 failures before he created the incandescent light bulb.

Illustration: Walt Disney was fired from his first newspaper job. The reason given? Not enough creativity!

Illustration: R.H. Macy failed seven times before his store in Manhattan, NY caught on.

Illustration: Novelist John Creasey received 753 rejection slips before he published the first of his 564 books.

Illustration: At age 67 Colonel Sanders created Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Illustration: Ray Croc failed in real estate, went bankrupt and moved to California. He then brought a hamburger stand from the McDonald brothers!

Maybe you're in a cold, frozen, wilderness; a barren season. Remember this:

- ◆ Winter seasons drive tree roots downward. Know why? So that the roots can gather energy for the next growing season!

(Failure is not final)

2. Humility Saves Me Great Pain:

(v. 5) *"Why do people keep going along their self-destructive path, refusing to turn back, even though I have warned them?"*

Question: Why does God give us this in v. 5?

Answer: Because Israel was deceived. How?

- ◆ Israel thought it was possible to ignore correction (and not have any negative consequences). (Repeat)

(In v. 5) #1. God warns #2. Israel refuses #3. Self-destruction occurs

Question: What are “warnings” that come from a loving God?

Answer: They are guardrails – because a guardrail at the top of the cliff is better than a hospital at the bottom.

Question: Why are warnings so important? Because...

- ◆ The more that I resist the calling voice of God, the harder it becomes to hear that voice again and,
- ◆ The longer I stay where I do not belong, the harder it becomes to exit that place.

Remember

- ◆ The #1 characteristic of a growing Christian is humility that receives correction!

Illustration: Thomas Carlyle said, “The greatest of all faults is to be conscious of none.”

Illustration: Ambrose said, “Before we can make progress, we must first undeceive ourselves.”

Illustration: Charles Crabtree said, “Only a fool knows everything.”

Never forget Proverbs 26:12:

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”

Question: What does it mean to be “wise in your own conceit?” It means...

1. To be satisfied with your own judgment alone.
2. To seek no counsel outside of yourself.
3. To hold the correction of others in contempt and,
4. To refuse to allow others to speak into your life.

- ◆ God says there is more hope for a fool – because the fool in Prov 26:12 is willing to be taught, reprov'd, advised and corrected (and hereby will go from being a fool to being wise.)
- ◆ The only cure for being “wise in our own conceit” is – humility that saves us great pain!

3. Being Sorry Leads To Being Free From Sin!

(v. 6) *“I listen to their conversations and what do I hear? Is anyone sorry for sin? Does anyone say “what a terrible thing I have done?”*

Question: What does God ask in v. 6?

Answer: “Is anyone sorry for their sin?”

Question: Why does God ask this?

Answer: Because no one can repent unless they are first sorry for their sin!

Question: Is repentance that important?

Answer: Proverbs 14:32 *“The curse of the Lord is on the house of the unrepentant, but He blesses the dwelling of the righteous.”*

What is repentance?

1. A heart that hates every sin that robs God of His glory and rightful place in my life.
2. A heart that cares more about God's approval than the opinion of others.
3. A heart that possesses a holy fear of ever causing another person to stumble.
4. A heart that asks God to diligently search my heart to expose any secret sin.
5. A heart that offers no excuse for any inconsistent behavior.
6. A heart that is easily convicted when it grieves the Holy Spirit.
7. A heart that forsakes every disobedience that hinders my spiritual growth.

Why is personal repentance so important? Because...

1. It's only by continual repentance that the heart is kept tender.
2. Failing to live in a spirit of repentance will harden our hearts and make us insensitive to Divine whispers.
3. An attitude of repentance will protect us from carrying excess baggage that robs us of our peace and joy.
4. When you lessen the motivation for repentance, the tendency to excuse sin increases.
5. Repentance frees you from carrying guilt that drains us of the strength and vitality.
6. Without repentance, no one can make their way back to God and be restored.
7. Without repentance, the wrath of God abides on all who choose their own way.

Romans 2:5 says:

“Because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”

In other words

- ◆ All sin is against God's name, God's person and God's holiness.
- ◆ God's hatred of unholiness is the very reason that hell was created and exists.
- ◆ Yet the gift of repentance allows you and me to be restored and forgiven by God.

Remember

- ◆ You can't have a great life without a pure life and
- ◆ You can't have a pure life without a pure mind and
- ◆ You can't have a pure mind without a continual washing of the Word that leads to repentance and a turning away from the things that attempt to pollute and defile.

Question: Why is repentance so important? Because...

Answer: The more that I mourn over my sin, the more that sin loses its power to govern my life!!!

Paul said in II Corinthians 7:10 - **“Godly sorrow leads to repentance.”**

- ◆ Godly sorrow comes from agreeing with God about my sin.
- ◆ Godly sorrow is the sorrow I feel because of any attitude or action that doesn't please God.
- ◆ Godly sorrow leads me to repent so that God can change in me what needs to be changed!

(Being sorry leads to being free from sin.)

4. Enjoying The Journey Is A God Idea!

(v. 20) *"The harvest is finished and the summer is gone, the people cry, yet we are not saved."*

(v. 21) *"Since my people are hurt, I am hurt."*

(v. 22) *"Is there no balm in Gilead?"*

"Is there no physician there?"

"Why then is not the health of my people recovered?"

Question: What is God saying here?

Answer: That God's grace is equal to every life challenge you have!

Question: Is it God's will for you to be a spiritually healthy person? (v. 22)

Answer: "Why then is not the health of my people recovered?"

(In other words)

- ◆ Gilead is a mountain with balsam trees.
- ◆ Balm trees produce a gum or sap that is used for medicinal purposes.

(So God is saying)

- ◆ There is a balm, there is a physician and there is a healer!

(In other words)

- ◆ Like the balsam tree was cut with an axe or spear so the sap could flow out,
- ◆ So the Messiah was pierced so that blood could flow out.

(In other words)

1. God is acquainted with spiritual and physical diseases.
2. God (like a physician) is skillful in applying the remedy.
3. God is more than willing to bring relief to you if you are weary and need strength. Why?
(Because enjoying the journey is a God idea.)

5. If I Can't Change Here, I Can't Change Anywhere!

(9:2) *"Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place for travelers, so that I could leave this place and get away from my people."*

Question: What is Jeremiah saying here?

Answer: He's saying that he wants to run away and open a motel business out in the middle of nowhere.

Question: Why does he say this?

Answer: Because he has disappointments and unfulfilled expectations!

Question: What is God going to teach him?

Answer: ♦ That running from your problems doesn't solve your problems!

(Remember now)

- ♦ Jeremiah was being rejected and verbally abused.
- ♦ Jeremiah had all of his work (on the scroll) tossed in the fire by the king. (Jer 36:23)
- ♦ Jeremiah was put in prison and sank deep in the mud pit. (Jer 38:6)
- ♦ Jeremiah even cursed the day he was born. (In Ch. 20:14)

Question: What does God want to teach Jeremiah?

Answer: The same thing He wants to teach us:

1. Happiness is not a place – but a state of mind!
2. Your present field may be limited, but you are not limited by your field!
3. Disappointments are inevitable, discouragement is a choice!
4. God did not create you to make everybody happy, fix everyone or worry about things outside of your control!

(Jeremiah says...)

“Oh that I could leave this place and get away from here.” (9:2)

Question: Have you entertained these thoughts?

Question: Ever want to just “hide out” or “get away” or “take off” and “relocate out of sight”?

(What's the discovery?)

- ♦ The flesh wants to change location on the outside,
- ♦ The Lord wants to change us on the inside.

Question: How do you grow in the Lord? (One way)

Answer: By being obedient to the last thing He asked you to do!

AMEN!
Bill Kirk