

JUNE 20/21 - THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Jeremiah 20:7-13

⁷ You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸ Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the Lord has brought me insult and reproach all day long.

⁹ But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.

¹⁰ I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side! Denounce him! Let's denounce him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him."

¹¹ But the Lord is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹² Lord Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance on them, for to you I have committed my cause.

¹³ Sing to the Lord! Give praise to the Lord! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked.

Jeremiah 20:7-13 NIV

1. Would God really deceive us? Have you ever felt that way?
2. Why was Jeremiah afraid?
3. Where is God's grace here?
4. How does this mistreatment of God's prophet foreshadow **Jesus' passion**?

Romans 6:12-23

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³ Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴ For sin shall no longer be your master, because **you are not under the law, but under grace.**

¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! ¹⁶ Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey —whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. ¹⁸ You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

¹⁹ I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. ²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. ²³ **For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** *Romans 6:12-23 NIV*

1. What does Paul mean "do not let sin reign in your mortal body"? Is that possible for us to do?
2. What does it mean to be a slave? What does it mean to be a slave of sin? What about a slave of righteousness?
3. What is the significance of the phrase "obedient from the heart"? Aren't our actions the most important? Why would someone be obedient if it isn't from the heart?
4. Is being a "slave of God" a bad thing?

Matthew 10:5a,21-33

^{5a} These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions:

²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. ²³ When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

²⁴ "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵ It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

²⁶ "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ²⁷ What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. ²⁸ Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground

outside your Father's care.³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

³² "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven.³³ But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. *Matthew 10:5a, 21-33 NIV*

1. Where is "the Peace that passes all understanding" Phil 4:7 in VS. 21 & 22?
2. Who is Beelzebul? What is VS. 25 saying?
3. How do Christians "not be afraid"? What should we fear?
4. Were the Disciples persecuted when Christ sent them out? After His resurrection?