



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to Jeremiah 29:11-14a

Title: A Graduate's Call

Theme: Walking in Biblical Success

Introduction: *Today's Scriptures are found in a letter sent by the Prophet Jeremiah to the people of God who have been carried into exile and placed in idolatrous Babylon. He sends this letter to give guidance and comfort to a people who were held captive by the Babylonians. He knows that true hope is based on the revealed Word of God. (The Holy Spirit laid these truths upon my heart as I study the NIV Bible and these other books, Be Decisive; Matthew Henry Commentary; The Expositors Bible Commentary)*

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, there are many references to Babylon, a city that was located in the vicinity of modern-day Iraq. In the Word of God Babylon was not just a physical place but also symbolic of a spiritual condition, representing the condition of fallen man and fallen societies. Today, Babylon speaks of a fallen system, of man trying to find eternity without Christ or the Word of God. This system has its own religion and theology and will not bend its heart to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, a religious system that knows nothing of worshiping in spirit and in truth.

Read Jeremiah 29:11-14a:

Proposition: *I would propose that these passages of Scripture hold God's revealed truths for escaping this world's system and enabling the child of God to walk in step with the Holy Spirit of Christ, thus bringing Biblical success.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just how can you achieve the high calling that God has placed before you, determine His plans and enjoy a Biblical successful life? The Lord's ultimate purpose is to bless you. There are three truths the Holy Spirit wants you grasp as you leave this phase of life and enter into the next phase. 1.) Feed on the Word of God. 2.) Have a heart that says, "Lord, teach me to pray." 3.) Understand that you are only a steward over what God has given you and there will be a day of accountability.*

Transitional Sentence: *The first step to walking on the path to Biblical success is to find God's plan for you through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and by having a powerful thirst and hunger for the Word of God.*

The key word the Holy Spirit has for graduates from today's text is "Search" (*daras*) and in its most important theological meaning involves studying or inquiring into the Law of the Lord (Ezra 7:10) or inquiring of God (Genesis 25:22; Exodus 18:15; Deuteronomy 12:5). Graduates, you are to be like Ezra who, "...devoted himself to the study and observance of the law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees [to others]." (Ezra 7:10)

A teachable spirit begins with the proper regard for God's Word. Joy comes from knowing the Lord Jesus. God's will for you is revealed through the written Word as you pray for revelation and illumination of the Holy Spirit.

A man may take the greatest care to follow a road map, but if the map is incorrect he will be misled. A man may have the most accurate map and still end up lost if he does not follow it carefully. It is not enough to desire to do right; for ignorance has led many to think that they are doing right before the Lord until they found themselves being chastised because of living for the things of this world.

David attempted to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem: (1 Chronicles 13:9-11) In 1 Chronicles 15:13 we read why God's anger flared. David, God's anointed said, "It was because you, the Levites, did not bring the [ark] up the first time that the Lord broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of Him about how to do it the prescribed way." Christians become like oxen in a china shop when they try to do the Lord's work without inquiring His way through the written Word of God.

A sure contrast is found in the book of Acts 1:4-5:

Graduates, the older you get the greater temptation this world system will be. Temptation is going to come at you like stink on a skunk. Jesus was tempted so every creature in heaven and earth could understand that He is the Christ, the Conqueror. It is worth taking note of how He handled temptation. It is important to note that Jesus was led out into the desert by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 4:1) Graduates, you must be asking God to give you sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's leading and correction as you prayerfully read the Word of God.

Jesus said: (John 4:34)

Graduates, all of you have faced medical affliction at some time or another and had to take medicine or treatments to be restored back to health. Graduates, in order for you to walk in Biblical success, you must agree with God's Word, you have the cancer of sin within you and apart from having the blood of the Great Physician, Jesus Christ applied for the redemption of your soul you cannot be restored to Biblical health. The Holy Spirit's call is to look at the Word of God as the medicine and nurturing food for the soul and spiritual heart.

In Peru, Sir Samuel: came across a plant that became of great use to missionaries in Africa. There was a recurring disease called agu. This disease caused recurring chills and fever. There was a plant called the quinquina and from this plant came medicine that kept the fevers and chills from the disease agu away. The Word of God is the quinquina against the fever and chills of recurring passions and over anxiety that comes while living on this sin trodden earth.

The Holy Spirit of Christ has this question for graduates, "Are you hungry and thirsty for the Word of God and is your heart cry like that of the psalmist who wrote; (Psalm 119:12-16)

Transitional Sentence: *Once you are continually feeding on the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will move you to be like the disciple who came to Jesus and said: (Luke 11:1)*

A popular term used today is what would Jesus do? He would pray about everything. Jesus prayed at His baptism, (Luke 3:21) He prayed before the choosing of the twelve, (Luke 6:12) when the crowds began to increase, (Luke 5:16) before He asked the twelve for their confession of faith, (Luke 9:18) and at His Transfiguration. (Luke 9:29) The disciples knew that He often prayed alone (Mark 1:25) and it is only natural that those who know Him would ask Him to teach them to pray.

If Jesus Christ, the perfect Son of God depended on prayer during His days on this earth (Hebrews 5:7) then why would it seem out of place for us to be obedient to God's Word that tells us to, "...pray continually..." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

The Billy Graham Association is a ministry connected to God in prayer and they are very sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading. They literally pray for every detail of their outreaches including letters being sent out by name, praying for the connections needing to be made, asking God to do for them as Nehemiah prayed for favor before the Emperor of Persia. (Nehemiah 1:4-11) Graduates, a key to walking in Biblical success is to grasp in your heart what Ezra knew, God is in control at all times and His obedient servants can ask Him to grant them favor before those who have authority over them. The Bible tells you to; (Hebrews 13:7) God has set before you Christian leaders who have lived a life of faith in Christ. Follow their faith, trust God, live for Christ and walk in step with the Holy Spirit.

Transitional Sentence: *In order to live Biblical successful lives, Christians must know God's Word, let Jesus teach them to pray and understand they are only stewards of what God has given them. The Holy Spirit moved the apostle Paul to write, (1 Corinthians 4:2)*

All humble servants of the Lord are very aware of the fact God is not impressed with their achievements, opportunities, possessions, talents or abilities for He is the one who gave those endowments to them. God extends His grace to those who live in the awareness that there will be a day of accountability. Graduates, it is what is done for Christ that counts. A man doesn't become a steward after he has been saved, nor after he begins to make good money, have possessions, or authority. He is a steward – good or bad – and he will give an accounting to God. Stewardship in the Christian life demands that a man take good care of what the Lord has given him because he has been commissioned by Christ to manage those affairs for the Lord God.

You have God's promise, yet you must prove faithful if you want to hear, "...Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness" (Matthew 25:23) at the Judgment seat of Christ.

In Closing: *Graduates, the choice of walking in Biblical success in this sin trodden world lays completely in your willingness to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, leading to eternal life.*

Be hungry and thirsty for the Word of God and pray for illumination of the Holy Spirit to make God's truth real so you can enjoy all that God has for you. Go to Christ and say, "Lord teach me to pray!"

Lastly, rejoice in all the doors God has already opened for you and know that He is the one who has enabled you to be faithful in what He has given you so far. Yet, God's continued blessings are determined by your knowing and living upon the fact your stewardship will be judged by the righteous Judge. He rewards those who diligently seek Him.

I think of the great man of God John Wesley, born of Samuel Wesley, a minister of the Church of England. He was raised under good Biblical teaching by his mother for some time and in his later school years attended a Christian College. He was deeply religious but had moments of laxity. He loved missions and became involved in missions. He stood strongly against false teachings.

Bishop Ryles gave this assessment of John Wesley. "John preached the gospel, honored Christ and did extensive good with [his Holy Spirit given gifts]. He was a bold fighter on Christ's side, a fearless warrior against sin, the world, and the devil. He was an unflinching adherent of the Lord Jesus Christ. He honored the Holy Word of God. Let us thank God for John Wesley."

Graduates, many have thanked God for you. It is by His divine grace new doors of opportunity are opening up for you. The Holy Spirit's call for you today is to grasp for more of Christ in your heart and life, and desire with all your heart to pray through the vision He has already given you. Be faithful because the Lord has already shown you His faithfulness in opening doors for you in many ways. It is your choice from this day on. Faithfulness to Him will cause others to say, "Let us thank God for our graduates." Choose Biblical success!

Let us pray for our graduates!