

GOD'S PLAN IS HOPE NOT REGRETS

JEREMIAH 29:4-11

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – MAY 12, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

Jeremiah 29:4-11 ESV

4 “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. 6 Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. 7 But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. 8 For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let your prophets and your diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, 9 for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, declares the Lord. 10 “For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION?

What is something that you regret in your life – how do you wrestle with that regret?

SERMON RECAP

When Struggling with Regret -

- Learn from the mistakes of your past.
- Trust God's plans for your future.
- Devote yourself to God's purposes in the present.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Jeremiah 29:4-11 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - What does the Lord command Israel's exiles to do in Jeremiah 29:4-6?
 - How does the Lord seek to protect Israel, while they are in exile, in Jeremiah 29:7-9?
 - What does the Lord promise the exiles in Jeremiah 29:10-11 and how should that encourage them?
 - How would you summarize Jeremiah 29:4-11?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Read Jeremiah 29:4-6; Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 7:3
 - What do God's commands to Israel suggest about their stay in Babylon?
 - How and why does God sustain Israel in Babylon?
2. Read Jeremiah 29:7-9; Matthew 5:43-45
 - How does the Lord integrate Israel into Babylon, while keeping them set apart?
 - Why does the Lord counsel against these prophets – what do you imagine their prophecies were?
3. Read Jeremiah 29:10-11; Jeremiah 25:11; Jeremiah 27:22
 - What is significant about Israel knowing the period of their exile?
 - How should God's prophetic promise through Jeremiah encourage Israel?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Learn from the mistakes of your past.
 - How do past sinful choices still make you see or feel consequences?
 - How might those consequences block you from fuller relationship with God or others?

- How can you avoid questionable ‘right now’ choices to reap future ‘God-promised’ blessings?
 - “Your past is a terrible master, but it’s an excellent teacher.” How does that statement encourage you and give you hope?
 - How can your Church Group support you in past consequences and future choices?
2. Trust God’s plans for your future.
- Which ‘prophets’ are you listening to on television, radio, in social media, or elsewhere?
 - How might these prophets be steering you in the wrong direction?
 - Read or recite John 3:16. How are the gospel’s promises for you better than the world’s promises?
 - What evidence can you cite that you trust in God’s plans for your future?
 - How can your Church Group support your pursuit of truth and God’s plans for you?
3. Devote yourselves to God’s purposes in the present.
- Read Genesis 17:1-4, Daniel 2:46-48 and Revelation 7:9-10.
 - How is God’s purpose for you greater than the world’s purpose for you?
 - How are you learning from the past rather than getting stuck in the past?
 - How can God turn your mistake or mess into a ministry?
 - How can you trust and lean into God’s purposes for your present life?
 - How has God been good to you in spite of the things you regret?
 - How and why might God be calling your Church Group to multiply?