

6/22/11

Jeremiah 28:1-4 **1 In the fifth month of that same year, the fourth year, early in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, said to me in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and all the people: 2 "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. 3 Within two years I will bring back to this place all the articles of the LORD's house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed from here and took to Babylon. 4 I will also bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and all the other exiles from Judah who went to Babylon,' declares the LORD, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'"**

2 Timothy 4:3-8

3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. **6** For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. **7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8** Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day-- and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Jeremiah 28:5-9

(Jeremiah talks about the difference between true prophecy and words people want to hear.)

5 Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the LORD. **6** He said, "Amen! May the LORD do so! May the LORD fulfill the words you have prophesied by bringing the articles of the LORD's house and all the exiles back to this place from Babylon.

7 Nevertheless, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: **8 From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. 9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true."**

THE GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 10:34-42

(Whoever does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.)

34 "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. **35** For I have come to turn "'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-- **36** a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' **37** "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more

than me is not worthy of me; 38 and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

39 Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 40 "He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me. 41 Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

The Sermon
28

“Can you ‘Stand the Truth?’”

Jeremiah

INTRO - In the late 70's and early 80's there was a financial advisor who contacted Lutheran pastors in FL. This financial advisor was actually also a pastor. I knew his son. This pastor turned financial advisor had a plan to make the pastors big money. According to what he told them if they invested in dairy cows in Michigan they could double and triple their money. Not everyone believed the claims of this financial advisor. Some were cautious. But, many of these pastors had money in retirement accounts. They liked hearing about the possibility of making money, rather than the conservative approach to protecting their money. So, many took their money out of the accounts and invested it with this pastor / financial advisor so they could increase their retirement money. The only problem was, there never were any dairy cows. They heard what they wanted to hear rather than wisdom to be cautious. But, no matter what they were told, reality was reality. Everyone who invested lost their money.

I. Do you remember the movie with “A Few Good Men” Jack Nicolson and Tom Cruise? Nicolson’s famous line from that move was, “You can’t take the truth.” **THE REALITY IS, MANY PEOPLE DON’T WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH.** But, the truth is still the truth.

A. That is what Jeremiah is talking about.

1. Look with me at Jeremiah 28. Our text is the message of Jeremiah, but he is responding to the prophet Hannaniah from verses 1-4 of chapter 28. **In the fifth month of that same year, the fourth year, early in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, the prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, said to me (Jeremiah) in the house of the LORD in the presence of the priests and all the people: 2 "This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. 3 Within two years I will bring back to this place all the articles of the LORD's house that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon removed from here and took to Babylon. 4 I will also bring back to this place Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah and all the other exiles from Judah who went to Babylon,' declares the LORD, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'"**

2. Hannaniah was saying that the destroyed temple in Jerusalem would be restored the temple and articles returned. He was saying that within two years

God would destroy Nebuchadnezzar, the king who had conquered Judea, and return the people and their Jewish king to Jerusalem.

3. Hannaniah was saying everything would get better. It was what the people WANTED to hear. But it went contrary to what God had said would happen, and Hannaniah's words never did happen.

B. Paul warns about the same thing in 2 Timothy 4.

1. **3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.**

2. Many times, people don't want to hear what God teaches about life. About how we should live, or not live. People don't want to hear about consequences for disobeying God.

3. Instead, people hear what they want to hear rather than the truth.

C. But, consider what happens when people mis-represent God in this way.

1. The false prophet does not only steal money, like the false financial advisor.
2. They steal a person's relationship with God.
3. Ultimately they steal life.

II. One of my pastor friends in Jacksonville was one of those who lost his money. Why did that happen? There is in all of us something that is never totally satisfied, always wants something better, always wants something more.

A. The Bible calls this lack of satisfaction covetousness or greed.

1. Ultimately God wants us to be satisfied with Him and His gifts to us.
2. When we are dissatisfied, or covet, or are greedy, that is sin.
3. There are consequences to sin.
4. **NO ONE LIKES TO HEAR OF THEIR SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.**

B. Jeremiah said, **8 From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. 9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true."**

C. The Jews wanted to believe what Hannaniah said, not what Jeremiah said.

1. God had called the Israelites to repentance and faithfulness time and again. When they didn't listen, God got their attention the only way that worked. Jerusalem was destroyed and they were taken into exile.
2. Their exile was the result of their sin, and God used it to turn them back to Him.
3. But, they would rather hear that things would get better

III. It is obvious the people of Jerusalem did not want to hear the truth. How about you, can you stand the truth?

A. It is hard to hear the bad news about sin and it's affect on our life, unless, unless there is some good news. Jeremiah said, **9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the LORD only if his prediction comes true."**

B. Listen to these words of God.

1. In Luke 2 the angels sang, **14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." This peace comes because of Jesus.**

2. In John 14 Jesus says, **27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**

3. When Jesus met the disciples in the upper room on Easter night, and when Thomas came, 3 times he said, **"Peace be with you!"**

4. In Ephesians 2, where Paul talks about conflict, he talks about the solution for that conflict. **13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,**

C. God gives peace through Jesus, because Jesus died and rose to bring forgiveness.

1. We can admit our sin, because we know we are forgiven. There is not just bad news, but Good news.

2. We can listen to what God says about how we should live, because God brings peace and love.

3. **WE CAN STAND THE TRUTH, BECAUSE JESUS IS GOD'S TRUTH, WHO BRING FORGIVENESS AND PEACE FOR ALL WHO REPENT OF THEIR SIN AND TURN TO HIM FOR FORGIVENESS.**

CONCLUSION - My friend who lost his money one time said to me. Ya, that (guy) he got my money. I may not forget, but I can forgive him. He admitted his lack of wisdom, and through God's love he had peace with himself, and peace with the man who hurt him, and peace with God. With Jesus we can face the truth.