

SHAPED FOR SERVICE

Part 5 of The Savior King. Jeremiah 1:1-10.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. October 18, 2026.

Dismiss the Middle School

STUDY GUIDE

As you came in this morning, you should have received a bulletin. Inside, you'll find a simple study guide you can use in a few different ways: to follow along with today's teaching, to reflect on during your personal devotions this week, or to spark conversation in your small group.

More resources are available online. The link is in your study guide.

Let's get started on today's teaching ...

INTRODUCTION

When God needs something done, he raises up someone to do it.

- When God wants something proclaimed, he calls a proclaimer.
- When God wants something built, he calls a builder.
- When God wants something organized, he calls an organizer.

This is very exciting. The Lord wants to work with us to accomplish his purposes in the world.

All of us.

- He recruits us for his team.
- He calls us off the bench.
- He shapes us for service.

How does this work?

We see the call to service illustrated in the life of Jeremiah the prophet.

Please open your Bibles to Jeremiah 1.

JEREMIAH 1:1-10 (CSB)

1 The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests living in Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin.

2 The word of the LORD came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah.

3 It also came throughout the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the fifth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.

4 The word of the LORD came to me:

5 I chose you before I formed you in the womb; I set you apart before you were born. I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

6 But I protested, “Oh no, Lord GOD! Look, I don’t know how to speak since I am only a youth.”

7 Then the LORD said to me:

Do not say, “I am only a youth,” for you will go to everyone I send you to and speak whatever I tell you. **8 Do not be afraid of anyone, for I will be with you to rescue you. This is the LORD’s declaration.**

9 Then the LORD reached out his hand, touched my mouth, and told me:

I have now filled your mouth with my words. **10 See, I have appointed you today over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and demolish, to build and plant.**

THE FIVE ELEMENTS OF JEREMIAH'S CALL

Here's what I want to do today:

- First, I want to explore how God called Jeremiah to serve.
- Then, I want to apply those insights to our lives.

1. JEREMIAH'S SITUATION - verses 1-3

Jeremiah was about 20 when God spoke to him. The year was 627 BC.

The nation was economically strong but spiritually in terrible shape. The leaders, priests, and people worshipped Baal, the so-called queen of heaven, and sacrificed their children in the fire.

Injustice was rife. The rich and powerful preyed on the poor and weak.

The nation broke its covenant with God.

So, God decided to intervene. He needed someone to speak for him, so he called a prophet - a spokesman to warn the nation.

OK. That's the situation.

The second insight is ...

2. JEREMIAH'S CALL TO SERVE - verses 4-5

The Bible says, *"The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah."* But it doesn't tell us how that happened. Maybe it was an audible voice; possibly it was an inner conviction. We don't know.

Notice this: The call to serve the Lord came from the Lord, not Jeremiah:

I chose you

I set you apart

I appointed you

Jeremiah didn't tell God what he would do for him. Jeremiah didn't appoint himself. God shaped his man for his mission, like a potter shapes clay on the wheel.

This is so important: Because God appointed him, and Jeremiah did not appoint himself, he could speak with divine, sovereign authority. Like: *"I represent the Lord. These are his words, not mine."*

Next, we read about Jeremiah's response to God's call ...

3. JEREMIAH'S RELUCTANCE TO SERVE - verse 6

Jeremiah did not believe he was a prophet.

Jeremiah was thinking: prophets should be old and great public speakers.

They should sound like God with a low, gravelly voice like Morgan Freeman or Clint Eastwood, not a squeaky teenager.

Plus, prophets should know what they're doing and be theologians and be tough and courageous.

He said to the Lord: *"I'm just a kid! I don't know what to say or where to go to say it. And I don't know what scares me more: Hearing your voice or preaching your Word."*

This was a realistic assessment of his qualifications FROM A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE. He had no experience of preaching. He wasn't a graduate of the Jerusalem School of the Prophets. He was just a kid.

PLUS, speaking for God in Judah at that time was hazardous. Jeremiah soon found that out:

- The men of his hometown threatened to kill him if he didn't stop preaching.
- The chief officer of the temple arrested, beat, and placed him in the stocks.
- The mob tried to kill him.
- King Jehoiakim destroyed the scroll containing Jeremiah's prophecies.

He would need every help the Lord could give him, which brings us to the fourth element of Jeremiah's call ...

4. JEREMIAH'S RESOURCES TO SERVE - verses 7-8

Jeremiah looked in the wrong places for his authority and ability to serve God; he looked **IN** when he should have looked **UP**.

- The Lord would tell him where to go.
- The Lord would tell him who to talk to.
- The Lord would tell him what to say.
- The Lord would be with him to rescue him.
- The Lord would fill Jeremiah's mouth with words.

God would provide everything Jeremiah needed to follow His calling.

The final element in Jeremiah's call was ...

5. THE IMPACT OF JEREMIAH'S SERVICE - verses 9-10

Jeremiah's prophetic voice would accomplish God's purposes:

- ***"Nations and kingdoms"*** heard God's sovereign Word.
- A godless society was dismantled - ***"uproot, tear down, destroy, demolish"***
- A godly remnant was restored - ***"build and plant."*** *This was God's plan so that the Lord Jesus Christ would come from that remnant.*

Now, let's talk about application. What can we take away from Jeremiah's call to serve?

WHAT WE CAN TAKE AWAY FROM JEREMIAH'S CALL

Jeremiah was called to serve God's purpose by proclaiming his Word as a prophet. Not all of us are called to that task, but God has shaped each of one of us for some kind of service. The New Testament assures us that ...

1 Corinthians 12:7 (CSB) A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good ...

1 Peter 4:10 (CSB) Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

Let me share some very quick applications we can all use.

- 1. Be open to God's call to serve.** When he wants something done, he raises up someone to do it. So, have an open heart and mind. It might be you.
- 2. Look up, not in.** None of us are naturally equipped. God does not call the qualified; he qualifies the called. So, don't rule yourself out of God's plans.
- 3. Ask how you - with your skills, education, abilities, interests, and spiritual gift - can best serve God's plans and purposes.** God wants to build a faithful church; he wants to advance the saving gospel; he wants Jesus Christ to be loved and worshipped everywhere. Where do you fit into those purposes? Consider talking to a wise, trusted friend to help you discern.
- 4. Listen to God.** He speaks to us primarily through his Word, the Bible. He also guides through internal conviction and direction; through the people, books, and media you connect with; through what stokes a fire in you; and through what breaks your heart.

5. Say yes. Say yes even when he calls you to do something hard or terrifying. Where God guides, he provides. His grace is sufficient. His power is enough.

If I could give just one word of advice to a young person with their whole life ahead of them, this is what I would tell them: *“Say yes to God. Whatever he asks you to do, say yes. It will not guarantee an easy life, but it will be your best life, a life worth living. And you will hear him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).*

6. Expect to feel alive. When we step up to serve, we partner with God in his great work. What could be better than that? We may never know the impact in this lifetime, but God knows.

Jeremiah said yes to God. His life got a lot more challenging, but listen to what he said about it:

Jeremiah 20:9 (CSB) ... God’s message becomes a fire burning in my heart, shut up in my bones.

He felt compelled to preach. And we will feel the same fire in our hearts when we say yes to God’s calling in our lives, whatever it is.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

We are a church of volunteers. I’m humbled by your commitment to Jesus, your servant hearts, and your willingness to step up and meet needs.

You deserve to be appreciated. I’m inviting you to our Volunteer Appreciation on November 15. We’ll meet and eat at Casey’s downtown. They need a headcount by early November, so please register today.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Use any or all of the following questions to guide your group's conversation about Sunday's sermon.

Read Jeremiah 1:1–10

Observation

Read Jeremiah's protest in verse 6 alongside God's response in verses 7–9. What do you notice about how God addresses Jeremiah's concerns?

Look at the actions described in verses 5–10. What does God take responsibility for, and what does he ask Jeremiah to do? What stands out about that division of responsibility?

Interpretation

God promises to be with Jeremiah and rescue him, yet the sermon describes the threats and mistreatment Jeremiah later faced. How does that tension shape your understanding of what God's presence does—and doesn't—promise?

The sermon says, "Look up, not in." Peter talked about spiritual gifts but also encouraged us to consider our skills, education, abilities, and interests. How do those contrasting ideas (God's power and our abilities) fit together?

Application

What might distinguish honest awareness of our limitations from letting insecurity make our decisions?

Think of a specific opportunity to advance the gospel, strengthen the church (by serving in a ministry), or represent Jesus. Is the Lord calling you to step into this opportunity? Who could you turn to for help in discerning God's call?