



2015 Q4 Jeremiah - Lesson 9

Jeremiah's Yoke

Who would like to have the life of a prophet? Why or why not?

What Jeremiah had to go through: He was not allowed to marry or have children, visit places of mourning or of celebration, had to wear a yoke around his neck, was beaten, put into prison, put into a muddy cistern, etc. But on the other hand, he was pulled out from among the captives being taken to Babylon and allowed to go home.

Why do you think Jeremiah was made to wear a yoke? The people weren't listening to God's words through Jeremiah. Talking about Jeremiah's yoke is exciting, because it means that God will do anything to get us to listen to Him!

What is one of the best ways to study a subject in the Bible?

We believe that the Bible inspired by same God - think of studying a subject like putting together a jigsaw puzzle, with pieces scattered throughout. You need to locate and put the pieces together before a whole picture can be seen.

If you only take one or two verses, can get distorted or inaccurate ideas.

Story – I tried finding my childhood home but was unable to find it going by my memory of where it was. My sister tried the same thing and got the same result. When we tried to find it together, we were successful because I remembered things she had forgotten and she remembered things I had forgotten – our memories put together completed the picture of the location of our house and we were able to find it.

So, we will endeavor to do this with today's subject – look at all the Bible verses that might pertain to Jeremiah's yoke. But first, let's take a quick trip through the story we are discussing today, by skipping Sabbath afternoon and going to Sunday through Friday's lesson and review the basic points of the lesson. Then we will come back to what I would like us to focus on this week.

SUNDAY

A Solitary Life

Jeremiah 16 - Hosea was to marry a harlot; Jeremiah was not to marry or have children, go into a house of mourning, or to join in festivals of joy and celebration. Symbols God was using to instruct the Israelites on the pain of separation from family, the lack of response to God's calls for repentance and revival, and a life without rejoicing.

No life goes to waste - it can always be used as an example of what NOT to do!



MONDAY

Jeremiah's Yoke

Jeremiah 27 – God had Jeremiah physically built and wear a yoke around his neck. Jeremiah had to experience physically what the Babylonian invasion meant. In essence it was a sign of humiliation and meant that if the country revolted against Babylon, The Lord would take it as if the country had revolted against Him, and the rebellious would suffer humiliation and bondage as a result.

Never let it be said that God doesn't warn us of what will happen if we choose a wrong course. Do we consistently make choices that we have been warned against, and then suffer the consequences?

TUESDAY

War of the Prophets

Jeremiah 28:1-9 - Hananiah vs Jeremiah - Who to believe? Hananiah, whose name means "God has been gracious," seemed to be presenting a message of grace, of forgiveness, of salvation. He gave the people what they wanted to hear – that God was about to release them from Babylonian rule.

"The amazement of the assembled council of nations knew no bounds when Jeremiah, carrying the yoke of subjection about his neck, made known to them the will of God." EG White - Prophets and Kings, page 444

Jeremiah used the prophecies of Hosea, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and others who were making warnings similar to his own, to demonstrate the validity of what he was saying about the need to submit to the king of Babylon for the time The Lord had specified.

Today there are multiple messages of grace - many of which tend to lead people into a false understanding of their relationship and knowledge of God.

WEDNESDAY

The Yoke of Iron

Jeremiah 28:1-11 Hananiah misused the symbol God instructed Jeremiah to use to indicate the need to remain in bondage, by breaking the yoke and prophesying that like the breaking of Jeremiah's yoke, God was going to break the yoke of the Babylonians on Israel.

Jeremiah had a new message from the Lord - instead of a yoke of wood, Israel's situation would become worse if they rebelled - they would get a yoke of iron.



THURSDAY

Trusting in Lies

Jeremiah 28:15 - The prophet whose prophecies come true is a true prophet. Jeremiah had yet another message for Hananiah - because he had lied to the people and won them over to trust in him and his lie, he would die within the year, which he did.

But he still had done damage to the nation. He had given them a message they preferred to hear, and they trusted in that lie.

What lies are being told today by respected church leadership?

- Trust us to do the studying, and we will give you the truth from the pulpit - just believe
- Once you are "saved" you are always saved, no matter what you do or don't do
- You can buy your way into God's good graces – indulges
- Grace from God is all you need - you have no part to play - just 'believe, no change of your character needed
- Disregard of creation Sabbath
- Eternally burning hell
- Prosperity gospel – that God wants us all to be prosperous, even financially – despite the fact that Jesus said it is hard for the rich to enter heaven.

FRIDAY

Further Thought

Jeremiah's message was to look at the past, to look at history, and to learn from it

Jeremiah 6: 16-19 This is what The Lord says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.' I appointed watchmen over you and said, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But you said, 'We will not listen.' therefore hear, you nations; you who are witnesses, observe what will happen to them. Hear, you earth: I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their schemes, because they have not listened to my words and have rejected my law."

Sounds like: Matthew 7:7-23 "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake: If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets. Enter through the narrow gate.



For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

He who does not remember history is doomed to repeat it. What ancient paths and good ways keep us headed toward God?

Now back to Sabbath Afternoon

Memory text - Luke 9:23, "And he said to them all, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.'"

Why does the lesson start with a text about taking up your cross, when the lesson is about Jeremiah's yoke?

Is there a difference between Yoke and Cross? Yes

Yoke – Was used to keep people from running away who were being taken as a prisoner or slave. But can also be used to harness more than one individual together to learn from more senior individual, and accomplish more than either could do by themselves – there is more strength together.

Cross – Was an instrument of death, sacrifice

Which of these is Jeremiah's Yoke?

Now it's time to put puzzle pieces together by looking at the verses that have to do with using the yoke for slaves/servants –

Exodus 6:6-8 Therefore say to the Israelites, "I am The Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them and will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am The Lord your God who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted



hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am The Lord."

Leviticus 26:13 I am The Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt so that you would no longer be slaves to the Egyptians; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high.

Numbers 19:1, 2 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "This is a requirement of the law that The Lord has commanded. Tell the Israelites to bring you a red heifer without defect or blemish and that has never been under a yoke. Give it to Eleazar the priest; it is to be taken outside the camp and slaughtered in his presence...." (Goes on to describe how the heifer's blood is to be sprinkled and the body to be washed and burned, and how the ashes are to be dealt with)

Numbers 25:1-3 (also referred to in **Psalms 106: 28, 29**) While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their (lifeless) gods. The people ate the sacrificial meal and bowed down before these gods. So Israel yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor. And the Lord's anger burned against them.

Deuteronomy 21:1-9 If someone is found slain, lying in a field in the land The Lord your God is giving you to possess, and it is not known who the killer was, your elders and judges shall go out and measure the distance from the body to the neighboring towns. Then the elders of the town nearest the body shall take a heifer that has never been worked and has never won a yoke and lead it down to a valley that has not been plowed or planted and where there is a flowing stream. There in the valley they are to break the heifer's neck. The Levitical priests shall step forward, for The Lord our God has chosen them to decide all cases of dispute and assault. Then all the elders of the town nearest the body shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley, and they shall declare, "Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it done. Accept this atonement for your people Israel, whom you have redeemed, Lord, and do not hold your people guilty of the blood of an innocent person. Then the bloodshed will be atone for, and you will have purged from yourselves the guilt of shedding innocent blood, since you have done what is right in the eyes of The Lord.

Deuteronomy 28:47,48 Because you did not serve The Lord your God joyfully and gladly in the time of prosperity, therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and dire poverty, you will serve the enemies the Lord sends against you. He will put an iron yoke on your neck until he has destroyed you.

1 Kings 12:3,4, 13-15 (also in **2 Chronicles 10:1-16**) So they sent for Jeroboam, and he and the whole assembly of Israel went to Rehoboam and said to him, "Your father put a heavy yoke on us, but now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you.".....The king answered the people harshly. Rejecting the advice given him by the elders,



he followed the advice of the young men and said, "My father made your yoke heavy; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions." So the king did not listen to the people, for this turn of events was from The Lord, to fulfill the word The Lord had spoken to Jeroboam son of Nebat through Ahijah the Shilohite.

1 Samuel 6:7-9 Now then, get a new cart ready, with two cows that have calved and have never been yoked. Hitch the cows to the cart, but take their calves away and pen them up. Take the ark of the Lord and put it on the cart, and in a chest beside it put the gold objects you are sending back to him as a guilt offering. Send it on its way, but keep watching it. If it goes up to its own territory, toward Beth Shemesh, then The Lord has brought this great disaster on us. But if it does not, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us but that it happened to us by chance.

Isaiah 9:1-7 Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan - The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of The Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Isaiah 10:26, 27 The Lord Almighty will lash them with a whip, as when he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb; and he will raise his staff over the waters, as he did in Egypt. In that day their burden will be lifted from your shoulders, their yoke from your neck; the yoke will be broken because you have grown so fat.

Genesis 27: 38-40 Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me too, my father!" Then Esau wept aloud. His father Isaac answered him, "Your dwelling will be away from the earth's richness, away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck."

Isaiah 14:25 I will crush the Assyrian in my land; on my mountains I will trample him down. His yoke will be taken from my people, and his burden removed from their shoulders.

Isaiah 47:4-7 Our Redeemer - The Lord Almighty is his name - is the Holy One of Israel. "Sit in silence, go into darkness, Queen City of the Babylonians; no more will you be called queen



of kingdoms. I was angry with my people and desecrated my inheritance; I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy. Even on the aged you laid a very heavy yoke. You said, 'I am forever - the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen."

Isaiah 58:6-9 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter - when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from our own flesh and blood? Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of The Lord will be your rear guard. The you will call, and The Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say; "Here am I."

Jeremiah 27:1-15 Early in the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah King of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from The Lord: This is what The Lord said to me, "Make a yoke out of straps and crossbars and put it on your neck. Then send word to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre and Sidon through the envoys who have come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. Give them a message for their masters and say, 'This is what The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Tell this to your masters: With my great power and outstretched arm I made the earth and its people, and the animals that are on it, and I give it to anyone I please. Now I will give all your countries into the hands of my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. I will make even the wild animals subject to him. All nations will serve him and his son and his grandson until the time for his land comes, then many nations and great kings will subjugate him. If, however, any nation or kingdom will not serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon or bow its neck under his yoke, I will punish that nation with the sword, famine and plague, declares The Lord, until I destroy it by his hand. So do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your interpreters of dreams, your mediums or your sorcerers who tell you, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon.' They prophecy lies to you that will only serve to remove you far from your lands; I will banish you and you will perish. But if any nation will bow its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let that nation remain in its own land to till it and to live there, declares The Lord." I gave the same message to Zedekiah king of Judah. I said, "Bow your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon; serve him and his people, and you will live. Why will you and your people die by the sword, famine and plague with which The Lord has threatened any nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? Do not listen to the words of the prophets who say to you, 'You will not serve the king of Babylon,' for they are prophesying lies to you. 'I have not sent them,' declares The Lord.' They are prophesying lies in my name. Therefore, I will banish you and you will perish, both you and the prophets who prophesy to you."

Jeremiah 28:1-17 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. "This is what The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. 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. 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.' 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. 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. Nevertheless, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by The Lord only if his prediction comes true. Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it, and he said before all the people, "This is what The Lord says, 'In the same way will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon off the neck of all the nations within two years.' At this, the prophet Jeremiah went on his way. Shortly after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the word of The Lord came to Jeremiah: "Go and tell Hananiah, 'This is what The Lord says: You have broken a wooden yoke, but in its place you will get a yoke of iron. This is what The Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: I will put an iron yoke on the necks of all these nations to make them serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they will serve him. I will even give him control over the wild animals. Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, "Listen, Hananiah! The Lord has not sent you, yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies. Therefore this is what The Lord says: 'I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against The Lord.'" In the seventh month of that same year, Hananiah the prophet died.

Jeremiah 30:4-9 These are the words The Lord spoke concerning Israel and Judah: "This is what The Lord says, 'Cries of fear are heard - terror, not peace. Ask and see: Can a man bear children? Then why do I see every strong man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor, every face turned deathly pale? How awful that day will be! No other will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it. In that day,' declares The Lord Almighty, 'I will break the yoke off their necks and will tear off their bonds, no longer will foreigners enslave them. Instead, they will serve The Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.'"

Lamentations 1:14 My sins have bound into a yoke; by his hands they were woven together. They have been hung on my neck, and The Lord has sapped my strength. He has given me into the hand of those I cannot withstand.

Ezekiel 30:18, 19 Dark will be the day at Tahpanhes when I break the yoke of Egypt; there her proud strength will come to an end. She will be covered with clouds, and her villages will go into captivity. So I will inflict punishment on Egypt, and they will know that I am The Lord.

Ezekiel 34:27, 28 The trees will yield their fruit and the round will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. "They will know that I am The Lord, when I break the bars of their



yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid.

Nahum 1:12, 13 This is what The Lord says: "Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be destroyed and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, Judah, I will afflict you no more. Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away."

Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

1 Timothy 6:1, 2 All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves.

The Yoke as used for a mentor/mentee relationship:

Deuteronomy 22:10 Do not plow with an ox and a donkey yoked together

2 Samuel 24: 22-25 Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. Your Majesty, Araunah gives all this to the king." Araunah also said to him, "May The Lord your God accept you." But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to The Lord my God burnt offerings that costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them. David build an altar to The Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then The Lord answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

1 Kings 19:19-21 So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?" So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.

Job 1:1-3 In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East.



Job 42:12-15 The Lord blessed the latter part of Job's life more than the former part. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand donkeys. And he also had seven sons and three daughters. The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-Happuch. Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

Jeremiah 2:19-22 "Your wickedness will punish you; your backsliding will rebuke you. Consider them and realize how evil and bitter it is for you when you forsake The Lord your God and have no awe of me," declares The Lord, The Lord Almighty. "Long ago you broke off your yoke and tore off your bonds; you said, 'I will not serve you!' Indeed on every high hill and under every spreading tree you lay down as a prostitute. I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine? Although you wash yourself with soap and use an abundance of cleansing powder, the stain of your guilt is still before me," declares the Sovereign Lord.

Jeremiah 5:1-5 "Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem, look around and consider, search through her squares. If you can find but one person who deals honestly and seeks the truth, I will forgive this city. Although they say, 'As surely as The Lord lives,' still they are swearing falsely." Lord, do not your eyes look for truth? You struck them, but they felt no pain; you crushed them, but they refused correction. They made their faces harder than stone and refused to repent. I thought, "These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of The Lord, the requirements of their God." But with one accord they too had broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds.

Lamentations 3:25-33 The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him, it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of The Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in silence, for The Lord has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust - there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. For no one is cast off by The Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. **For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to anyone.**

Hosea 10:11, 12 Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh; so I will put a yoke on her fair neck. I will drive Ephraim, Judah must plow, and Jacob must break up the ground. Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek The Lord, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."



Luke 14:16-23 Jesus replied, "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' "Another said, "I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' "Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' "The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled the blind and the lame.' "'Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

Acts 15:10, 11 Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are. "

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For WE ARE the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." Therefore, "Come out from them and be separate, says The Lord. Touch no unclean thing and I will receive you." and, "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says The Lord Almighty."

Texts that pertain to the Cross used for death, sacrifice:

Matthew 10:37-42 "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it. Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

Luke 14:25-35 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters - yes, even their own life - such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it



will ridicule you, saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

Matthew 16:24-27 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? For the son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done.

Matthew 27:32 As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.

Mark 15:21 A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross.

Luke 23:26 As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus.

John 19:16-17 Finally Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha)

Matthew 27:39-44 Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God." In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, "I am the Son of God.'" In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

Mark 15:29-32 Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself!" In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! Let this Messiah, this king of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.



Mark 8:34-38 Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me, and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

Luke 9:22-26 And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

John 19:31-34 Now it was the day of preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water.

Acts 2:22-24, 36-41 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.....Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah." When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom The Lord our God will call."

Acts 5:27-42 The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." Peter and the other apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than human beings! The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead - whom you killed by hanging him on the cross. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so it the



Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him." When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God." His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 10:39-43 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen - by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Acts 13:26-32 "Fellow children of Abraham and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. When they had carried out all that was written about him they took him down from the cross and laid him in a tomb. But God raised him from the dead, and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. We tell you the good news: What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus."

1 Corinthians 1:17-18 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel - not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of his power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Galatians 5:11-14 Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves! You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather,



serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love you neighbor as yourself."

Galatians 6:12-15 Those who want to impress people by means of the flesh are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. Not even those who are circumcised keep the law, yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your circumcision in the flesh. May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation.

Ephesians 2:14-22 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in The Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Philippians 2:5-18 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even the death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed - not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence - continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Philippians 3:18-21 For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, The Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Colossians 1:15-23 The Son of the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether



thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight without blemish and free from accusation - if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Colossians 2: 9-15 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Authorized KJV says, "blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross."

New American Standard Version says, "having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which were hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross."

Hebrews 12:1-12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of The Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined - and everyone undergoes discipline - then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had u=human fathers who



disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best, but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time; however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Therefore, strengthen your feeble arms and wake knees. "Make level paths for your feet," so that the lame may not be disabled, but rather healed.

1 Peter 2:23-25 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness;" by his wounds you have been healed." For "you were like sheep going astray," but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Do you see how reading/studying all of the texts that might pertain to a subject help to fill out the picture God is trying to present? God uses examples in one place to explain and give more detail to the picture and ideas He is presenting in other places.

God wants to talk with us, wants us to understand, to be warned, prepared, directed away from danger and death and toward safety, love and life. He will use any means at His disposal to get us to listen.

So, let's look at God's communication forms – think about why he uses one way one time and another way another time?

Examples of God's Communication via (asked for other examples of each form from the audience):

Loudness

Exodus 19:9-19 The Lord said to Moses, "I am going to come to you in a dense cloud, so the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you." Then Moses told The Lord what the people had said. And The Lord said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and be ready by the third day, because on that day The Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not approach the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain is to be put to death. They are to be stoned or shot with arrows; not a hand is to be laid on them. No person or animal shall be permitted to live.' Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they approach the mountain." After Moses had gone down the mountain to the people, he consecrated them, and they washed their clothes. Then he said to the people, "Prepare yourselves for the third day. Abstain from sexual relations." On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because The Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.



Consequences

2 Samuel 6:3-12 They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before The Lord with castanets, harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals. When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act, therefore God struck him down, and he died there beside the ark of God. Then David was angry because the Lord's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah. David was afraid of The Lord that day and said, "How can the ark of The Lord ever come to me?" He was not willing to take the ark of The Lord to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Deom the Gittite. The ark of The Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months, and The Lord blessed him and his entire household. Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing.

Advertising

John 4:21-26 - "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind or worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

Example

John 9:1-7 As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do thee works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

Punishment

1 Chronicles 12: 6-15 But Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, because the king's command was repulsive to him. This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished Israel. Then David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing." The Lord said to Gad, David's seer, "Go tell David, 'This is what The Lord says: I am giving you three options.



Choose one of them for me to carry out against you." So Gad went to David and said to him, "This is what The Lord says: 'Take your choice: Three years of famine, three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or three days of the sword of The Lord - days of plague in the land, with the angel of The Lord ravaging every part of Israel, ' Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me." David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let me fall into the hands of The Lord, for his mercy is very great; but do not let me fall into human hands. "So The Lord sent a plague on Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell dead. And God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem. But as the angel was doing so, The Lord saw it and relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was destroying the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." Then angel of The Lord was then standing at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

Allegory (a figure of speech in which abstract ideas and principles are described in terms of characters, figures and events - allegory tells a story)

Matthew 13:3-12, 16-23 Then he told many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop - a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear." The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?" He replied, "Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.....But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

Metaphor (a figure of speech which makes an implicit, implied or hidden comparison (not an explicit one) between two things or objects that are poles apart from each other, but have some characteristics common between them)

Matthew 21:42-45 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "' The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our eyes?" Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces;



anyone on whom it falls will be crushed." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them."

Simile (A figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid)

Malachi 3:2-4 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then The Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to The Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years

Visual display

John 6:3-13 Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. The Jewish Passover Festival was near. When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do. Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!" Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down," There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

Hands on learning

Matthew 10:5-16 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. Do not get any gold or silver or copper to **take** with you in your belts - no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. As you enter the home, give it your greeting. If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it, if it is not, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Cognitive dissonance

Mark 10:17-27 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good - except God alone. You know the commandments:



"You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother." "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

Questioning

Matthew 16:13-20 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Silence

John 8:2-11 At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you" Jesus declared, "Go now and leave your life of sin."

Can you think of other forms of communication?

Amos 3:7 Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.



Lamentations 3:33 For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.

Like the loving Father he is to us all, he will do anything to teach and guide us, save us from ourselves, from destruction and from destroying each other. Will we listen?

Jeremiah's story is not old news – it's current events:

We were also sent a prophet who warned us that:

- We are being held in captivity
- Destruction of planet earth is coming
- God plans to rescue us at an appropriate time
- We are being told false things about God that we prefer to hear, things that don't mean self-sacrifice and a difficult life on earth; so we listen to those things, rather than the truth that we must die to self, and allow Jesus' character to become ours, take the healing remedy he created for us through his life, death and resurrection.