

December 27, 2020 - Brad Kloeppe

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 December 2020

Preacher: Brad Kloeppe

[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church, knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. Good morning. I'm glad Jeffrey brought up the hope we have in Jesus that really fits the message well and looking into a new year.

You know, our only hope and trust should really be in Him. And that's what this message is going to hit on.

Jeremiah 7, 1 through 15 will be the context of our message, and I titled it, Misplaced Trust. We have friends that have a band called the Ineloquent, and I feel like I can relate to that name.

I wanted to read a verse to start this message off from Exodus 4. It says, Oh my Lord, I am not eloquent either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and tongue.

If you are looking for a dynamic speaker or articulate message, you probably shouldn't have come to Bethel this morning. But now that I lowered your expectations, let's get started.

[1:29] So I titled this message, Misplaced Trust, and we'll be looking at Jeremiah 7 and seeing how it connects to Hebrews.

And so I was, well, I guess let me tell you how this message got developed, because it's kind of an obscure passage.

Maybe some of you are familiar with it in Jeremiah 7. But when we had an elder deacon meeting in the springtime, Jeffrey had just gotten done speaking on Melchizedek.

He said, what the heck is Melchizedek, or who the heck is Melchizedek? And Teddy really liked that format of us being able to basically share on whatever was on our hearts.

And so I had been studying Hebrews at the time, so I naturally thought, well, I'm definitely going to speak on Hebrews. That was what's on my heart.

[2:29] And as I was listening to my Ligonier app, as I often do while delivering, I listened to hundreds of messages by Sproul while delivering.

He was going through the hard sayings of the Bible. And this passage came up as one of his hard sayings. And he focused on, he actually called it the hardest speech any prophet had ever given, because he told the people of Israel, spoiler alert, that Jerusalem would be destroyed.

And after I heard that message, I started studying on Jeremiah 7. And I was just fascinated how well this fit with what I had been studying in Hebrews.

So that's hopefully the connection I'm going to convey to you all today. I wanted to start by telling a story. Jeffrey said that's basically a necessity for any message.

You've got to tell a story. It probably will be the only thing you remember in this message. And I really debated on whether or not to tell this story, because, well, you'll see why.

[3:46] And some of you know it, and some of you don't. But anyway, so let me describe what's going on in this picture. That's the passenger side seat right there on the left.

You can't see the top of the seat. That's right where the picture's cut off. And if you look where I have a tape gun in the left corner up there, that's the track that are sliding doors.

That's our air conditioning in the summer, these sliding doors for the UPS truck. And so there's a track that runs right there. Well, I had this very peculiar driver helper last year, and his name was Marcus.

Marcus, I'd pick him up from Dearburg's every morning, and he was a super healthy guy, like a vegan, vegetarian type of person.

And so he always would have fruit or like these kind of exotic drinks. And I'm not kidding. One day he had a bag of bananas, and he ate all 16 bananas in one day while we were driving.

[4:52] And I told Marcus, I'm like, Marcus, I don't believe in evolution, but you're making a case that we came from monkeys. And, but anyway, so he had this big bottle of coconut water.

And it was in like one of those milk carton type of containers. And it was kind of like this paper carton. And it wouldn't, it was so big, it wouldn't fit in the cup holder.

And so I'm like, well, just set it in that track up there. And, you know, you can just get it down when you need a drink from there. So anyway, so we started delivering. This was early in the morning. We started delivering. And all of a sudden, this thing is just, like fluid is leaking out those holes. You see those holes under the track? And it's just pouring on Marcus as he's going in and out. I'm like, Marcus, your coconut water is leaking all over. And I said, check the cap or something. And so he grabbed the bottle and made sure the cap was real tight and set it back in there.

[5:58] It continued to leak all over him, like as he's going in and out of the truck. And I'm like, man, you need to check that again. Like it's maybe the paper carton is like leaking on the bottom or something.

So he did. He couldn't find a leak. And finally, it slowed down and stopped. And the next stop, after it stopped, the next stop, I went into the back of the truck.

And there was my bottle that was previously filled with pee. We peed our truck.

And the cap had come loose. And it had completely leaked out and ran down that track and was just leaking all over him. And all this time, I thought it was the coconut bottle.

And I never told him either. But the point being to the story and how this I feel less fits into my message is there's this wall.

[7:02] So that track runs back into the back of the car. Well, I couldn't see my bottle behind that wall. And that's because obviously my vision was blocked by that wall.

And we could have done whatever possible to that carton of coconut water to get it to stop. I mean, we could have duct taped it, wrapped it in ceram wrap, put it in a Ziploc.

But it simply wasn't the source of the problem. And so I say that to point out that the source is very important.

And we need to go to the source, especially for our trust. So, no, it's maybe a loose connection. So, I wanted to point out why that didn't fix the problem.

[8:06] And it was because we didn't go to the source. And what I want to drive home in this message is if we look to or place our trust in anything or anyone but Jesus, the source, for our salvation or our walk, we are trusting in a lie.

That's going to be a key phrase. So, I want to repeat it for this whole message. And it says, If we look to or place our trust in anything or anyone but Jesus for our salvation or in our spiritual walk, we are trusting in a lie.

What does Colossians 2, 6, and 7 say about our walk? What should our walk look like? It says, Therefore, as you receive Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up, and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

If you want to know what walking in the Spirit looks like, there it is. Justin and I have discussed this many a times. And just the idea that, look, we put our dependence, our faith in Christ and what He did on the cross.

And that same dependence and trust is what we need to be focused on for our spiritual walk. It's good to remember the work of Jesus every Sunday in the remembrance meeting, but we need to look to the gospel every day.

[9:42] It's essential to our walk. I believe Martin Luther recognized the importance of the gospel and our sanctification. Here's a quote from him. A church member asked Luther, Why do you preach the gospel to us week after week?

And Luther replied, Because week after week you forget that. You forget it. Like, he was saying that our guys are living like people that don't remember the gospel.

So he realized the essential of the gospel in our sanctification and in our walk. And keep that in mind. We're going to come back to that at the end of the message.

So let's get to our text. I'm going to start by reading the first three verses of Jeremiah 7. It says, The word came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Stand in the gate of the Lord's house and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all you of Judah who enter in these gates to worship the Lord.

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Amen your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. So what's going on here?

[11:02] Jeremiah gets this word from the Lord and says, Hear the word of the Lord. Right off the bat, he calls the people to solemn attention. I've got this house on my route that I deliver to, and on their door is this sign, and it says, Do not knock or ring the doorbell, because if you do, the dog's going to bark, the baby's going to wake up, and stuff will get real.

Except it doesn't say stuff. But anyway, that is always a solemn attention. I mean, that causes me to be in solemn attention.

But Jeremiah right here is giving a much more important message to the people than an angry mother. And so he calls the people to solemn attention here.

And right off the bat, he uses this conditional phrase. He says, Amen your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.

So this would have taken the Jews by surprise. It wasn't so much the physical protection of 150 foot walls that they had around the city, but it was a divine protection of God.

[12:23] You see, in their minds, Jerusalem was the promised city to all generations. They literally thought Jerusalem, at this point in history, was indestructible.

They had this promise of, This is your city to all generations, And this would have been mind-blowing for them, that he says, Amen your ways or your doings, or else.

So it gives this conditional phrase that, if they don't amend their ways or their doings, something dire is going to happen. Let's continue with verse 4.

It says, Do not trust in these lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these.

In our small group, the topic of the holiness of God came up one week, and we looked at Isaiah 6. If you want to turn there, in verse 3 it says, I'll give you a second.

[13:35] And one cried to one another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

I taught our small group, what I learned from Sproul, that the Jews, when something was important, would repeat words to place emphasis on them. Like Jesus would often do when he'd say, Truly, truly.

Some of his most important messages to his people, he would start by, Verily, verily, or truly, truly. And so he would repeat the word, and that would place emphasis on what he's about to say.

This is very important. I want you to listen up. Truly, truly. Verily, verily, I say to you. On very rare occasions, something was deemed so important, that the word would be repeated three times.

Okay? So, yeah, it would be said three times. And this was the superlative degree. There was no, like, repeating a word four times to cause emphasis.

[14:45] This was it. Like, this is very rare, and the most important things were said three times. And so, God isn't only holy, or even holy, holy, but he is holy, holy, holy.

Dave and the group that did the revelation study, you might remember seeing this in Revelation 8. And you don't even have to turn for the sake of time. Verses 12 and 13, it says, Then the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened, a third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.

And I looked and I heard an angel flying through the mist of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blast of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound.

So we see this threefold announcement that an extraordinary measure of divine judgment is coming. From studying this, I believe there were five times this literary device of repetition to the third degree was used, and the only one that wasn't connected to judgment was the verse in Isaiah 6, the holy, holy, holy, which I thought was interesting.

So Jeremiah tells the Israelites, You say the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord. Why does he use this device of emphasis to the third degree here?

[16:22] So he is emphasizing the radical degree of misplaced trust of the people. You see, the people thought that their religious acts being done in the temple would somehow deliver them from the judgment of God.

Sorry, I lost my place here. We will see a little later that it wasn't the people simply going around saying this is the temple of the Lord.

That phrase represented the acts in the temple, such as sacrifices, reading of scripture, creeds being professed. Notice Jeremiah calls these words lying or deceptive words in some versions. Why? The words they were saying were true. This was the temple of the Lord. Well, it's because they were trusting in a lie.

In saying the temple of the Lord, the words were deceiving themselves into thinking they were somehow justified by trusting in their religious actions in the temple. They became lying words in the mouths of those who were bringing false worship into the presence of God.

[17:33] You see, they were missing the point. Those different practices, like the sacrifices and scriptures being read, all pointed to the coming Messiah. Jesus, who was the only one who could ever justify them, they were simply a shadow of the things to come, and they were trusting in that shadow instead of the living God.

Let's continue with verse 5 here. It says, For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if you thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor, if you do not oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and you do not shed innocent blood in this place or walk after other gods to your hurt, then I will cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers forever and ever.

How can this happen? How can they amend their ways? I wanted to point out a connection between obedience and faith.

If you want to look at 1 John 3, 22. It says, And whatever we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do these things that are pleasing in his sight.

So, what does it take to please God? Disobedience, it says right here, If we keep his commandments, these things are pleasing in his sight.

[19:19] What do we know from Hebrews 11? It says, in Hebrews 11, 6a, it says, But without faith, it is impossible to please him. Two more verses I want to bring up, and then I'll expound on that a little.

Galatians 3, 11 and 12, But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith. Yet the law is not of faith, but the man who does them shall live by them. And then Hebrews 10, 38, Now the just shall live by faith, but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him. You see this connection between pleasing the Lord?

The only way, it says in Hebrews 11, the only way we can please God is through faith. And if our disobedience is displeasing to God, and our obedience is pleasing to him, therefore faith is necessary for obedience.

And we cannot amend our ways without faith. In Romans 3, it says, No man seeks God, not even one. And there's no one that does good. Our trust in Jesus is essential.

[20:31] And I don't want to get too focused on our trust. John Bateman, when he taught down at Ethel Bookmeyer's, he would use this illustration on the chalkboard, and he would write our faith in lowercase letters, and real small, our faith.

But then when he would write, in Jesus, he would capitalize it. And he's doing that to show the importance of the object of our faith.

The emphasis isn't on our faith. It's on the object of our faith. And that's what's most important. So Jeremiah is calling the people to attention by saying, Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit.

Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know? And then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say we are delivered to do these abominations?

You see what's going on here? I believe Jeremiah is pointing out the misplaced trust here, and in turn is pointing them to the Lamb. That word, behold, it's like, look here.

[21:53] It's a call to attention. And immediately I thought of John the Baptist when he says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

And I really think that the same thing is going on here. By Jeremiah pointing out that mistrust, that trust in their religious actions, that trust in the words they're saying, this is the temple of the Lord. They have this trust in the temple and what's going on here. And he's condemning them for it. He's saying, No, you guys are missing the point. All these scriptures, let me read a verse from John 5, 39 and 40.

It says, You search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. And these are they which testify of me. But you are not willing to come to me that you may have life.

The author of Hebrews, in Hebrews 10, 7 says, Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book. This whole book is centered around Christ.

[22:59] Every page of the Bible, you could connect back to Jesus and the Messiah that's coming. And Jesus knows that. And he's saying, You search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life.

Well, guess what? That life, these scriptures, is talking about me. And I believe that's what Jeremiah is telling them too. You're trusting in these lying words.

And why does he call these words a lie? These aren't lying words. The words are true. This was the temple of the Lord. It was the temple of the Lord there when they say the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.

And it's because in their mouth, lying words are coming out because they're trusting in a lie. It's a misplaced trust.

It's deceptive words in some versions. And it's just something that if they're dependent on that, they're trusting in a lie.

[24:05] And they're missing the point of what all these sacrifices, what all these creeds that they're professing, the scriptures they're reading, is actually pointing to. They were sacrificing animals in the temple.

And look what Hebrews 10 says about the sacrifices. It says that were made under the law. It says, For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never by the same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year make perfect those who draw near.

Otherwise would they not have ceased to be offered since the worshipers having been once cleansed would no longer have any conscience of sin. But in these sacrifices, there is a reminder of sin year after year.

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me.

In burnt offerings and sin, you have taken no pleasure. Again, we see that thought of what pleases God. It's not the sacrifices and offerings.

[25:26] He takes no pleasure in those. What pleases God is the faith, the trust in what those sacrifices pointed to. What all those creeds, the scriptures pointed to.

And that was the coming Messiah. Verse 11.

It says, Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, says the Lord.

This is anticipating the act of Jesus cleansing the temple. And centuries before that happened, God is telling the people through Jeremiah, they have already defiled the temple.

They are practicing all the religious acts that happened in the temple and trusting in that to deliver them, to take care of their sin, when only the blood of Jesus can achieve that. Jeremiah is saying their acts are mocking what it's all about.

[26:28] It reminds me of the second half of Hebrews 6.6. And that says, Since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

In the book of Hebrews, the believers, He's warning them against going back to the law, against going back to these sacrifices. And He's saying, If you're doing these sacrifices, it's like re-crucifying Christ and putting Him to open shame.

And that's what reminds me of, they're trusting in these sacrifices. They're trusting in these creeds. They're trusting in the temple, the temple of the Lord.

And by doing that, they're missing the point of what it actually points to. This is obviously before Jesus had come, but we learn a few chapters later in Hebrews that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, and that they were a shadow of the good things to come.

They were simply pointing to Jesus, along with the Scripture, and that's where their trust should have been directed towards. So what's God going to do about it?

[27:41] Let's read, let's continue reading in Jeremiah 7, and starting in verse 12 through 15 here. It says, But go now to my place, which was in Shiloh.

If you are using the New King James Version, there's a couple references to Shiloh. We can take a look at them real quick, and I can just read them for the sake of time again. The first one's in Joshua 18.1.

And it says, Now the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of meeting there, and the land was subdued before them.

One more here in Deuteronomy. It says, Then there will be, I'm sorry, Deuteronomy 12.11, if you want to mark that. Then there will be the place where the Lord your God chooses to make his name abide.

There you shall bring all that I command you, your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heath of offerings of your hand, and all of your choice offerings which you vowed to the Lord.

[28:44] You see, they knew what Shiloh was. It was one of the earliest places of worship in Israel. It was the central sanctuary where they would do their sacrifices and worship God before Jerusalem, under David, became the capital city.

And he then built the temple as the central sanctuary. So he's using Shiloh as this example. And he says, Go look at Shiloh, which was in rubble at the time.

It was completely destroyed. And he says that this is what Jerusalem is going to look like. As we see here, continue reading in Jeremiah 7, where I set my name at the first.

So he's saying, this is the first place of worship. And see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel. And now because you have done these things, says the Lord, and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear.

And I called you, but you did not answer. Therefore, I will do to the house, which is called by my name, in which you trust. There's three times the word trust is used here.

[29:57] And all three times, their trust is in the wrong thing. They're trusting. You trust this. Okay? In which you trust, and to this place, which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.

And I will cast you out of my side, as I have cast out your brethren, the whole posterity of Ephraim. Sure enough, in the year 586 B.C., the Babylonians came in and destroyed Jerusalem and took the people away captive.

And after the exile, the city had to be rebuilt, the walls had to be rebuilt, and the temple had to be rebuilt. Then when Jesus begins the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, he says about the temple, Do you not see all these things?

Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another that shall be not thrown down. And God does it again in 70 A.D.

I called up Dave and verified with him that this prophecy was basically unanimous.

[31:09] No matter what your end times view is, when Jesus says at the beginning of Matthew 24, it's concluded by different people that believe in different views, whether you believe in post or pre-trib, whatever, that this prophecy was fulfilled in 70 A.D., the destruction of

Jerusalem, when it says, one stone is not going to be left upon another. It's, I'm going to completely destroy this city. Because, and you know why? It's because the people put their trust in the religion instead of the living God, instead of Jesus.

I mention all three of these occasions because throughout every generation, this mistrust takes place. And guess what? It still happens today. As believers, we often take our eyes off Jesus and the gospel.

And sometimes it's even to focus on what we think are good things. Excuse me. At Thanksgiving at the grasses, we talked about this.

I mentioned that we often gauge our spiritual walk by how little we can sin. And Olivia pointed out that that is where self-righteousness comes in. And then she's exactly right.

[32:29] It's like trying to get to the point where we just don't need Jesus anymore, because we are sinning so little and are dependent on ourselves. That's the self-righteousness. And we look at our walk and gauge how we are doing by how we project that walk to others.

That's what we do a lot. How are we looking to others with our spiritual walk? And that's how we gauge it. And how little are we sinning? We fall into that trap.

That's not what the spiritual walk is at all. That's not what walking in the spirit is. That's not what the Christian life is about. It's not about managing our Christian lives where we think if we are sinning less, we are doing good.

The point of our spiritual walk is not about sinning less. It's about looking to Jesus who took our sin upon himself. We're looking on him more.

It's not about sinning less. It's about looking on him more. When we do that, we will sin less, but that's not the point. It's looking to Jesus more.

[33:30] Like I mentioned earlier, Luther said, when he pointed out to his church members the need to look to the gospel over and over again, remember in the same way you receive Christ Jesus, so walk in him.

I want to close with a verse that I think sums up not only Hebrews, but the Bible. And then also give a stern warning and that verse is in Hebrews 12 if you want to turn there.

Verses 1 and 2. This is right after the hall of faith in Hebrews 11. He goes through the hall of faith, all these great men of faith, and what they did in their Christian lives and in their walk.

And I just find this really interesting because he starts out, therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

He says, look to Jesus right after he gets done talking about all these great people. Don't look to them. Don't look to man who just accomplished, you know, they did great feats of faith and they're in the hall of faith.

[35:02] But don't look to them. He says, look to Jesus. Focus on Jesus because he's the author and perfecter of our faith. And that's where our focus should be. You know, it can be blocked by the many things in this world.

Like I couldn't see that wall that was blocking the source of the problem with Marcus. But I remember a few weeks back when David's Vineyard Charity, he talked about that verse that Satan basically blinds the eyes of the people.

And that's what he wants to do. He wants to take our focus. He wants to put up things that take our focus off of Christ, off of Jesus and what he did for us.

And man, there are many things that can do that. One more thing, and this is the stern warning that I see in Hebrews.

And obviously, this was a very serious thing in Jeremiah. And that's why he uses this to the third degree, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, because he's pointing out the radical degree of mistrust.

[36:19] And so this is very important. And he does this in every generation. So I wanted to point out that all these things happened with the temple.

And he destroyed the early temple. He destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C. They rebuilt it. He destroyed it in 70 A.D. Throughout all generations, this mistrust happens.

And we focus on the wrong thing. And so I wanted to point that out and give this warning. It says in Hebrews 12, same chapter, right after he says, focus on Christ.

That's what our focus should be on, the author and perfecter of our faith. He says, verse 5 and 6, have you not forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons?

My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son whom he receives.

[37:23] We have seen that misplaced trust is a serious thing. For the unbeliever, the result of trusting anyone but Jesus for your salvation is eternal damnation. For the believer, we should take making Jesus the focus of our spiritual walk very seriously.

As we just read, God disciplines the one he loves and we shouldn't take that lightly. Also, look what he says at the end of Hebrews verses 28 and 29.

Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship with reverence and awe for God is a consuming fire.

Again, if you use the New King James Version, you can click on the note there and it takes you back to Deuteronomy 4.24. And that verse says, For the Lord is a consuming fire, a jealous God. Just like when Jesus cleanses the temple out of jealousy over false worship, he warns believers here that he is jealous for us and to give him acceptable worship.

[38:38] For he is a consuming fire. And that consuming fire is aimed at the believer in the context here, in the context of discipline. It's aimed at the believer, the consuming fire, because I'm a jealous God.

Misplaced trust is a serious subject, not only for the unbeliever, but also for the believer. Let's heed to the warning in Hebrews and not take that lightly.

We're going to close with that. Heavenly Father, I thank you for this time, Lord, to look at your word, to look at Jeremiah 7. And just thank you for teaching me about where our focus should be, where our trust should be, and the serious warnings against not placing our trust in your son, Jesus, and not looking to him in our walk daily, Lord, because we need you daily, Lord.

Our sin is great. If our sin is small, your Savior is going to be small. If our sin is great, our Savior will be great. And guess what?

We have a great Savior because our sin is great. We just lift up the rest of this day to you, Lord, and just let us focus on you, Lord, the author and perfecter of our faith.

[39:53] In Jesus' name, amen.