

Jeremiah 33:2-11 (NIV)

² “This is what the LORD says, he who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it—the LORD is his name: ³ ‘Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.’ ⁴ For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says about the houses in this city and the royal palaces of Judah that have been torn down to be used against the siege ramps and the sword ⁵ in the fight with the Babylonians: ‘They will be filled with the dead bodies of the people I will slay in my anger and wrath. I will hide my face from this city because of all its wickedness.

⁶ “Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security. ⁷ I will bring Judah and Israel back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before. ⁸ I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me. ⁹ Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the abundant prosperity and peace I provide for it.’

¹⁰ “This is what the LORD says: ‘You say about this place, “It is a desolate waste, without people or animals.” Yet in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are deserted, inhabited by neither people nor animals, there will be heard once more ¹¹ the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, and the voices of those who bring thank offerings to the house of the LORD, saying,

“Give thanks to the LORD Almighty,
for the LORD is good;
his love endures forever.”

For I will restore the fortunes of the land as they were before,’ says the LORD.

Good Morning First Baptist Members and Friends. I greet you this morning in the name of Jesus. The modern day psalmists have given us such wonderful words to use when we praise Him.

*some people call him the lily of the valley
but to me He is a bright and morning star*

*Jesus oh how sweet the name
Jesus everyday He is just the same*

*Oh how I love Jesus, Oh how I love Jesus,
Oh, how I love Jesus, Because He first loved me*

If you love Him this morning, if you have tried Him and know Him to be both sweet and consistent, if have been in the dark and He has given you light you ought to want to praise Him this morning. Praise Him like you know Him for yourself. Praise Him cause He has given you a new song to sing. Praise Him because He loved you from the beginning of time and will love you until the end. Praise Him!

This morning we conclude our study of Jeremiah. (Open your Bible to Jeremiah 33 and put a marker there – we will be back)

Let us do a quick review of where we have been.

- On 1st Sunday we focused on the 22nd verse of Jeremiah 30 “So you will be my people, and I will be your God” and I asked us to consider if as people of God if we were ready for an ANNUAL REVIEW. I suggested that there were three areas where God might chose to review us.
 - The Church Covenant, which we read every first Sunday
 - The Great Commission our focal verse for this year and
 - **Three of the sins** of the Children of Israel:
 - Have you avoided the bad habits of those around you?
 - Can anyone tell by your walk and your talk that you work for me?
 - Have you taken care of the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow?

At the end of that sermon I challenged you to answer honestly
Are you exceeding expectations?
Are you meeting expectations?

Is there need for improvement?

Is there any evidence of these things in your life?

- On 2nd Sunday we focused on Jeremiah 31:33
***"I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.
I will be their God, and they will be my people.***

Using our religious imagination I asked you to consider your heart, the heart God was going to write upon as paper and I asked the question:

WHAT KIND OF PAPER ARE WE OFFERING TO GOD?

I suggested:

When things are going well God just gets a scrap of paper, maybe the back of an envelope, the margins of an article we have just read, or the back of a receipt we have in the car.

When things are **out of control** we are more open to what God has to say and it is reflected in the quality of the paper. We buy a new journal, just for talking to God. We update our planner and make sure we have God on the schedule. We buy a new book or Bible designed to help us draw nearer to God. We improve the quality of the paper, because we want something from God. It is as if we think quality paper will get us quality responses.

In the midst of **things going well** and things being **out of control** there is what I will call **ordinary time**. Those times when things are not high or low, things are just okay. What kind of paper do we offer to God at those times?

Some of us don't offer God any paper at all. The journals collect dust, His Word is seldom consulted and the notes where we have collected our answered prayers are not reviewed. God may not get any paper from us until the next crisis.

I concluded that sermon with a reminder that God needs all of our paper - our hearts, not just a scrap or a margin **and** that heart needs to be clean, not the back of a receipt or the margins **and** finally that heart needs to be pure.

- On third Sunday I preached the sermon the Holy Spirit sent and I preached without a manuscript. So I cannot repeat the teaching points because they were not mine, they were God's. But the aim of that sermon was to remind us that it, whatever it might be is not over until God says so.

Today I want to attempt to tie it all together – our Annual Review, The Paper we offer God and the need to believe that it is God who says when it is over – I want to tie it all together with two simple words:

CALL ME!

³ 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

SHALL WE PRAY!

God of heaven and earth here we are on another Sunday morning calling on you. We don't always know what we **need** when we call you, but we generally know what we **want**. Father, I am asking you to use this moment to help us to bring our needs and our wants in line with your needs and wants. Abba, I ask you to use the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart in a way that meets the needs of this people and are pleasing to you. In the name of Jesus we pray. AMEN and AMEN.

CALL ME!

I am a child of the 60's and the first thing that came to mind when I said **CALL ME** was Aretha singing "call me the second, the hour, the moment you get there, don't forget about me, call me..." that thought was followed by Diana telling us:

"If you need me, call me. No matter where you are,
no matter how far. Just call my name. I'll be there in a hurry.
On that you can depend and never worry."¹

Then there is the famous "Call me?" to which, we answer "Have your people call my people and we will do lunch".

I remember when I was first started to travel Martha Ann and Daddy would say "call me". Later it was Jesse and still later Jasmyne "call me".

¹ http://www.myths.com/pub/lyrics/Diana-Ross-and-the-Supremes_.html

- ✓ Aretha wanted to be called because she was afraid she would be forgotten.
- ✓ Diana wanted to be called if she was needed.
- ✓ Call me? Is a request to hear from that person again, when we are not sure of our standing.
- ✓ Call me from parents, spouse and children is a desire to know that we have arrived safely, the hotel is ok to stay in, the plans you made before you left are still the plans.

So what is the context in which God says "call me". Follow along with me as I read the passage again, beginning at the 1st verse.

While Jeremiah was still confined in the courtyard of the guard, the word of the LORD came to him a second time: ² "This is what the LORD says, he who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it—the LORD is his name: ³ 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

God says to Jeremiah while he is incarnated for speaking the Word of the Lord. Call me!

God comes to Jeremiah a second time – so Jeremiah is not confused about who is calling him.

But just in case the Lord identifies Himself – I am the He who made the earth, I am He who formed the earth – I am He who established the earth.

Call me!

The Lord God is not afraid He has been forgotten
 The Lord God does not need us – God invites us to need Him
 The Lord God will come to us and invite us to call Him – as many times as it takes.

Call me!

Is not a desire to know how we are or where we are or even our state of mind. The Lord God sees all, hears all, knows all, all at the same.

Call me is an invitation to see what God can do. God says call me and I will answer.

But Pastor Carol, I called Him and I did not get an answer. Think about these words the next time it happens.

But let's be honest. It sometimes seems that our prayers are not answered, doesn't it? One pastor offers some great perspective on prayer when he writes: "If the request is wrong, God says, 'No.' If the timing is wrong, God says, 'Slow.' If you are wrong, God says, 'Grow.' But if the request is right, the timing is right and you are right, God says, 'Go!'"

Spurgeon had this insight: "Even the Lord's people ask for things which it would not be for God's glory to give, nor for their profit to receive."

Philip Yancey writes: "By answering every possible prayer [the way we want], God would in effect abdicate, turning the world over to us to run."²

The Lord God says CALL ME! and I will answer.

In our technological age we sometimes forget that in order to get an answer to our call we have to catch the call, answer the phone, listen to the voice mail, read the text, keep the bill paid and the line charged and clear. Why because God has promised to answer and God keeps His promise.

Somebody is still waiting to be told how to call Him.

- Make sure you're a born again believer. Hebrews 11:6: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."
- Make your requests in Jesus' name. John 14:13: "And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father."
- Ask according to God's will. Matthew 6:10: "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." God loves to answer prayer when we want what He wants.
- Confess all known sin in your life. Psalm 66:18: "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."
- Live in peace with your spouse. 1 Peter 3:7: "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers."
- Forgive those who have wronged you. Mark 11:25: "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."
- Make sure your motives are right. James 4:3: "When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."
- Stay close to Christ. John 15:7: "If you remain in me and my words

² http://www.sermoncentral.com/print_friendly.asp?SermonID=159172

remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”

- Listen to God’s Word. Proverbs 28:9: “If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.”
- Be willing to share with the poor. Proverbs 21:13: “If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.” Related to his, we are collecting school supplies right now for those families who can’t afford it.
- Call out to God. Let’s say Jeremiah 33:3 together: “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”³

³ http://www.sermoncentral.com/print_friendly.asp?SermonID=159172