

NOT THE WHOLE STORY

My missteps may be a chapter in my life, but they are not the whole story because God still has a plan for my life.

KEY POINTS

- ❖ Imagine your life story as a best-selling novel—the intrigue, the drama, the suspense, the challenges, the triumphs.
- ❖ But if such a book existed, there is the likelihood that each of us would have at least one chapter of our lives we wish we could rewrite, like decisions made in anger, or open doors we never should have stepped through. Like wasted seasons, or damaged relationships, or a calling we mistakenly walked away from....
- ❖ The challenge we face at times is the temptation to believe that the chapters in our lives we wish to rewrite is actually the entirety of the book. But the truth is that those chapters are **not the whole story**. They're just a single chapter and not even the final one. The mistakes, bad choices, or missteps we've made are not our identity. Our identities are formed and defined in Jesus (see 1 John 3:1-2). God still has a plan for our lives.
- ❖ This is something the Lord declares to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "For I know the plans I have for you....plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11).
- ❖ Certainly, a powerful expression of promise, hope, and encouragement! But when we take a closer look at Jeremiah 29, we see that the prophet is sending a letter to the Israelites who are living in Babylonian captivity.
- ❖ Israel had a history of disobedience, idolatry, and ignoring the warnings God sent through prophet after prophet. Their captivity was, in large part, the consequence of their own mistakes, bad choices, and missteps.
- ❖ Some of us at this very moment may be navigating the outcomes of some bad choices we've made that has us experiencing a challenging, painful season in our lives. This was also Israel's experience during this chapter of their history.
- ❖ But it was **not the whole story**.
- ❖ In every experience we have in the story of our lives, the most critical thing to realize is that we have inherent value as image bearers of the Almighty God!
- ❖ This is why we believe in the dignity of the human being, that everyone is made in the image of God to become the best that they were created to be.
- ❖ Even though Israel was experiencing the consequences of their disobedience, God still affirmed their value and communicated His expectations for their lives:
Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper. (Jeremiah 29:4-7)
- ❖ The Lord didn't expect Israel to live—or to continue dwelling—in the era of their disobedience. And the same is true for us: God does not expect us to continue dwelling in past mistakes.
- ❖ Some of us may be thinking the following: "Once I fix this mistake, or once I make up for what I did, or once I feel worthy

KEY SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 29:1-14

(all scriptures in text are in NIV unless otherwise noted)

again, then I will build, then I will plant, then I will envision how God can use me powerfully."

- ❖ But God is saying build now! Plant now! Position yourself to be used powerfully NOW!
- ❖ Because the mistakes, bad choices, and missteps we have made may be a chapter in our lives, but that chapter is **not the whole story**.
- ❖ In spite of the mistakes Israel made, God reaffirms the fact that He was still in covenant with them (v.v. 12-14):
"Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."
- ❖ This dynamic is true for our lives as well.
- ❖ The Lord promised Israel that when they seek Him fully, they will find Him. He also promised to restore what was lost, gather what was scattered, and bring them out of exile. Through faith, this promise is available to us as well.
- ❖ For every one of us carrying a chapter of our lives that we wish we could rewrite, know that God is not asking us to erase the negative chapter—He is asking us to stop living in it.
- ❖ Your divorce may be a chapter, but it is not the whole story. Your addiction or moral failure may be a chapter, but it is not the whole story. Your season of walking away from God may be a chapter, but it's not the whole story.
- ❖ After returning to their country from Babylonian captivity, there came a time when the Israelites were able to build a temple, a place for all people to connect with God.
- ❖ God used the people of Israel who rose up from a chapter of bad choices to build a place where people could experience communion with God.
- ❖ The mistakes, bad choices, and missteps we have made may be a chapter in our lives, but they are not the whole story. God still has a plan for our lives.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. "The mistakes, bad choices, and missteps we have made may be a chapter in our lives, but they are not the whole story." Consider at least three figures from the Bible (e.g., David, Peter, etc.) and discuss their mistake(s), their feelings during that situation, and the outcome. Using your own words, what would you write as their epilogue?
2. Pray for one another, especially for those who may be experiencing a difficult chapter in the story of their lives.

PRAYER TIME

My story hasn't reached its conclusion. Thank You, Lord, that You still have a plan for my life. Amen!

Start-up: What is a chapter you want included in the story of your life? To write this chapter, what is a possible or first step?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, JULY 26, 2026

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

✓ (Reminds me/Confirms) 💡 (New idea) 🗨️ (Think about)
! (Do this) ❤️ (Speaks to my heart) ➡️ (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD
Your Life Group ~ Your Lifeline

**PRAYER FOCUS: U.P.C.I. Ontario District departments,
leaders, participants**

24-hour Prayer: Daily;

Daily Devotions: Monday - Friday @ 6:30 a.m. & 9:00 p.m.;
Departmental Prayer: Every Thursday (please check schedule)

Corporate Prayer: Every Friday @ 7:00 p.m. (and in person
every second Friday @ 9:00 p.m. - 3:00 a.m.).

Zoom ID: 898 3191 5909 Phone Access: 647-374-4685

FAITH SANCTUARY DONATIONS

To donate online, please go to www.faithsanctuary.com/give
For email transfers, please use donate@faithsanctuary.com



MONTHLY LEADERS' MEETING

Sunday, July 26th, 2026 @ 1:15 p.m. in the
Upper Chapel.

SUMMER SATURDAYS

Do you want to hear something cool? Summer Saturdays
are taking place each Saturday from August 1st to
September 12th. Summer Saturdays is where you don't
have to plan anything fun for the family—we do that for
you. Whether it's men's soccer, ping pong, board games,
hiking, or enjoying a cup of tea during book club, we've
got you covered! *Sign up at the front foyer or see Sis. Tope
for further details.*

BEREAN BIBLE STUDY

Date: Every Monday @ 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
on Zoom and YouTube. We look forward to growing
in God's Word with you!

Contact: Pastor Chris Simpson



FAITH SANCTUARY WEEKLY SERVICES

Sunday Bible Study @ 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service @ 11:00 a.m.
(Listen via phone: 1-844-268-4848)

Monday Berean Bible Study @ 6:30 p.m.
(Zoom, Facebook, YouTube)

Wednesday Bible Study @ 7:30 p.m.
(In person and via Zoom)

Friday Evening Service @ 8:00 p.m.
(In person and via Zoom)

Life Group Meetings – individually scheduled
(see ushers for information)

FAITH FOUNDATIONS

GOD

We believe there is only one God: the eternal, holy, loving, all-
knowing, all-powerful, omnipresent Spirit, creator of all
(Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Timothy 1:17; Leviticus 19:2; 1 John 4:8;
Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 23:24; John 4:24;
Isaiah 44:24; Colossians 1:16).

GOD'S WORD

We believe the Holy Scriptures—The Bible—is God's true and
complete Word to humanity, verified most notably through
fulfilled prophecies concerning Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16;
2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 41:21-23, 42:8-9, 46:9-10;
Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17).

GOD'S CREATION

We believe all people were created in the image of God for His
pleasure, to be His children, His church and His bride, living in
eternal love and fellowship with Him (Revelation 4:1;
Genesis 1:27; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:16;
Ephesians 5:25-32; Revelation 19:7).

HUMANITY'S FALL

We acknowledge that we have all sinned and failed to fulfill
God's plan and purpose for our lives, through willful
disobedience to the word of God and our own conscience. All
sinful acts lead to separation and alienation from God's pure,
holy presence, eventually resulting in both physical and spiritual
death (Romans 3:23, 6:23a).

THE GOSPEL

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God, fully divine
and fully human (1 Timothy 3:16). He came to Earth and
suffered death by crucifixion, willingly substituting Himself for
us in receiving God's judgment against sin (Isaiah 53:5). But God
raised Him from death (Acts 5:30), and He now offers eternal
life to all who will believe in Him (John 3:14-17, 6:29; 2
Corinthians 5:18-21; Romans 6:23b; Ephesians 2:4-9). Faith is
sparked within us when we hear the gospel, the "good news"
that Jesus died, was buried and rose from the dead for our
benefit (Romans 10:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

OUR FAITH RESPONSE

Hearing the gospel is intended to lead us to repentance, a
divinely inspired change of heart that causes us to turn away
from our sins and turn to God (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy
2:24-26). Faith and repentance lead us to obey the scriptural
command to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of
our sins and to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit. His Spirit gives
us the power to live a righteous, godly life, joyfully sharing the
good news of our new life in Christ with others (Mark 16:16;
Acts 2:38, 4:12; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

CHRIST'S RETURN

We believe our Lord Jesus Christ will soon return to
Earth to receive His people to Himself and establish
His righteous, eternal kingdom
(John 14:3; Matthew 25:34).

JULY 26, 2026



Feed Canada to Feed the World

Reaching the World Through Prayer

~ 2026 ~

Pastor:
Rev. Adrian W. Peel

*“For I know the plans I have for
you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to
prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.
Then you will call on me and come
and pray to me, and I will listen to
you. You will seek me and find me
when you seek me with all your heart.
I will be found by you....”*
Jeremiah 29:11-14 (NIV)

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