

Outline

- **I. The Temple Sermon: False Security in Sacred Places (Jeremiah 7:1-11)**

- A. The setting: Jeremiah preaches at the gate of the Lord's house
- B. The people's false logic: possession of the temple equals protection from judgment
- C. The people had separated religious practice from moral obedience
- D. What God actually requires: justice, care for the vulnerable, and forsaking idols (Jeremiah 7:5-7)
- E. The devastating question: do you think ritual worship can excuse spiritual rebellion? (Jeremiah 7:9-10)
- F. The temple declared a den of thieves: worship used as moral camouflage
- G. Application: false religion turns worship into cover for unrepentant living
 - 1. People hide behind ministry involvement, doctrinal fidelity, religious image, years of attendance
 - 2. No church is immune because of its name, size, preacher, or reputation
- H. The answer is not to despise the church but to purify it under the authority of God's Word

- **II. The Point of No Return: When Judgment Is Decided (Jeremiah 7, continued)**

- A. God tells Jeremiah not to pray for the people
 - 1. The people's hearts had hardened through deliberate, repeated resistance
 - 2. There comes a point where judgment is no longer warned about but decided
- B. Pastoral comfort: conviction and fear of the Lord are signs of grace, not signs of abandonment
- C. God's foundational command from the Exodus: "Obey My voice," not merely sacrifice

- 1. Ritual was never designed to replace obedience
- 2. The people had reversed the order, treating ritual as equivalent to relationship
- D. Modern equivalents of the same error
 - 1. Attending church is not the same as walking with God
 - 2. Visible ministry cannot substitute for a heart of obedience
 - 3. Doctrinal conservatism does not excuse moral compromise
- E. The end of chapter 7: unchecked idolatry leads to no limit of depravity, including child sacrifice

- **III. Irrational Rebellion: The People Who Will Not Return (Jeremiah 8)**
 - A. The Lord's question: why do these people stay on their self-destructive path? (Jeremiah 8:4-7)
 - B. The image of the migrating birds
 - 1. Birds instinctively follow the order God built into creation
 - 2. Covenant people, endowed with revelation, move against the order of their Redeemer
 - 3. Sin is not merely error; it is irrational rebellion
 - C. The false cry of "Peace, peace" when there is no peace
 - D. Pastoral danger: using encouraging language that implies God's approval of unrepented sin

- **IV. The Weeping Prophet: Truth and Tears Together (Jeremiah 9:1-2)**
 - A. Jeremiah's lament: a desire to weep day and night for his people

- B. This is not rhetorical; it is the outpouring of a heart formed by God
- C. The faithful preacher is a grieving witness, not a detached critic
- D. Truth without tears becomes cruel; tears without truth become sentimental
- E. Jeremiah speaks hard things because he loves deeply

- **V. The Only Lawful Boast: Knowing the Lord (Jeremiah 9:23-24)**

- A. God minimizes human wisdom, power, and wealth
- B. Modern additions: human influence, platform, branding, sophistication
- C. The only lawful boast is to know God in a relational, covenantal, experiential way
- D. The church is healthiest when least impressed with itself and most captured by the beauty of God

- **VI. The Absurdity of Idols (Jeremiah 10)**

- A. The idol described: cut down, shaped, decorated, nailed in place, mute and immobile
- B. The worshiper is more impressive than the god; the worshiper must carry the idol
- C. Modern idols are less visible but no less absurd
 - 1. Money must be maintained
 - 2. Image must be curated
 - 3. Pleasure must be fed
 - 4. Power must be defended
 - 5. Ideology must be constantly reinforced
- D. What idols cannot do

- 1. Money cannot forgive
- 2. Image cannot satisfy
- 3. Pleasure cannot resurrect
- 4. Power cannot judge justly
- 5. Ideology cannot save
- E. The Lord contrasted with idols: living, sovereign, eternal, and real (Jeremiah 10:6-7, 10)

- **VII. What This Text Demands of the 21st-Century Church**

- A. Stop trusting in temple slogans
 - 1. Labels such as evangelical, conservative, Reformed, Spirit-filled, or missional cannot save a congregation with an unrepentant heart
 - 2. No label substitutes for obedience, holiness, and the real knowledge of God
- B. Stop using religion as cover
 - 1. The church is not a cave for hiding cherished sins under sacred language
 - 2. It is the place where God's truth exposes, humbles, heals, and restores sinners through Christ
- C. Worship and obedience must go hand-in-hand
 - 1. God is not honored by songs that leave injustice untouched
 - 2. God is not honored by doctrine that leaves pride intact
 - 3. God is not honored by services that never challenge the idols of the age
- D. Learn to boast only in knowing the Lord
- E. Forsake idols because only the living God is worthy of trust

- **VIII. All of This Drives Us Toward Christ**

- A. He is the true temple, the One in whom God meets with His people
- B. He is the obedient Son Israel failed to be
- C. He is the One who cleanses the house of God
- D. He is the One through whom we truly know the Father
- E. He tears down false religion and creates a people who worship in spirit and truth