

Jeremiah 37-38 – 27 July 2014

Glenn felt God's call to full-time ministry while working as a successful businessman at a Christian company called ABC Foods. He began taking Bible courses at night, and eventually obtained his Bible school degree. Prior to graduation, he informed his boss that he'd be leaving shortly to minister as a pastor in a rural church. Neither the owner of the company or his boss believed it, and they neglected to obtain a replacement for Glenn. So ABC Foods determined to offer a \$2000 a month raise to keep him employed with them. Eventually Glen told the boss that, despite the offer of a raise, he really was leaving and they needed to locate a replacement as soon as possible. This was good news to the Christian owner of ABC Foods for he had instructed Glenn's boss that if Glenn took the raise he wasn't truly called to full-time ministry and didn't deserve to work for his company either.

**How can we know when we're thinking in the flesh?
Here's four signs.**

Chapter 37

- Vs 1-2

- The last we left Zedekiah (before the flashback of chapters 35-36), Jeremiah begged him to repent.
- Here picks up with story with Zedekiah's answer of no!

- Vs 3-10

- Egypt comes to support Judah, then Babylon falls back.
- Vs 7-8 – The Lord says, Egypt will fall back and Babylon will come again and destroy you.
- Judah is trying to use any trick they can to just selfishly get what they want.
 - Remember chapter 34 – setting the slaves free?
 - Now they're asking Jeremiah to pray for them.
 - Not to find God's will, but to fulfill their will

- **The 1st sign that we're thinking in the flesh is that we turn to others for help instead of turning to God.**
- Our selfish flesh trusts in the strength of man, but our spirit-man puts its trust in the Lord!
 - II Kings 18, Isa 30-31 - Hezekiah
 - Read Isa 31:1, 3
- Read Jer 17:5
- Even if all the world's power was turned against us, our God can manipulate things in our favor by His power and might!
- Vs 11-15
 - With the siege lifted, this would be the obvious time for deserters to desert.
- Vs 16-21
 - **The 2nd sign that we're thinking in the flesh is that despite knowing God we reject His ways.**
 - Classic example: When we need to repent, we know we should confess our sin, but the flesh holds us back from the Lord.

- Not good enough to say, “ya I really need to read my Bible or witness more often.”
 - If God is calling, put into place action steps to follow His leading.
 - We are acting in the flesh even if it’s just sins of omission. Be active.
- Vs 17 – Zedekiah KNEW that Jeremiah was a true prophet with a true message!
- Vs 19 – Jeremiah used the “I told ya so” method.
- Vs 20 – Jeremiah begged for personal relief on the basis that he had been honest and trustworthy toward the king.
- Use vs 16-20 when talking with skeptics
 - When speaking God’s truth, they know you’re telling the truth even if their mouth is disagreeing with you.
 - When speaking God’s truth, give them something to look back on at a later date.

- Christ is a great Savior, how will you have all your evil words & deeds forgiven apart from Christ?
- When speaking God's truth, beseech them don't beat them with the Word.
 - Col 1:28 - ...warning every man...

Chapter 38

- Vs 1-4
 - **The 3rd sign that we're thinking in the flesh is that we seek earthly pleasure/prosperity at any cost.**
 - Vs 4 – If it's not leading to a 'healthy, wealthy and wise' people then it must be wrong?
 - Read Phi 1:12-14
 - Can you seek how God could be using a rough situation in your life for the furtherance of the Gospel?

- Don't let the flesh tell you that you have to get right back to an "easy" situation or you're not where God wants you to be.
- In the next verses, Jeremiah is thrown into a dungeon...yet he's right where God wants him to be for the furtherance of the Gospel!

- Vs 5-13

- The furtherance of the Gospel: Who knows what influence the testimony of Jeremiah had on Ebed-melech and these 30 men.
- Are they asking themselves, why does this man suffer so? He really believes what he's preaching!

- Vs 14-28

- **The 4th sign that we're thinking in the flesh is that we act as people-pleasers at the expense of living after spiritual truth.**
 - Vs 14-16 – Zedekiah came to him secretly.
 - Vs 19 – "I'm afraid of the people".

- Notice that Jeremiah gives him the truth at a great potential cost.
- Notice that the king is afraid of the people but **BECAUSE OF THAT** he will fall to it.
 - Even the women will mock him in vs 22.
- People are fickle
 - Just ask any politician who tries to keep up with changing tides.
 - Just about the time you get people on your side, they'll turn against you.
- Just act on the truth and let people agree and disagree with you as they will.
 - You'll probably find that just as many people will agree with you...AND you'll be a lot more consistent with your life.

Conclusion:

1. If you find that you tend to turn to others for help instead of turning to God.
 - a. **Remember that God can turn the tide even if you're outnumbered 1 million to 1.**

2. If you find that despite knowing God you are rejecting going His way.
 - a. **Remember to confess and repent our sins of commission OR omission and then take concrete steps to act by faith.**
3. If you find that you are seeking earthly pleasure at any cost.
 - a. **Remember that it's mostly in the hard times that your godly character has a chance to shine thru toward others.**
4. If you find that you are trying to please people instead of being led of the truth.
 - a. **Remember the fickleness of people and the joy, freedom and openness of seeking and serving the truth!**