

WHEN WE STEP OUT GOD STEPS IN (8)

THE CALL TO THE NATIONS

Read Jeremiah 1:1-19

1. The word of the Lord is the only basis for ministry (2, 4, 9)

The written Word – Psalm 119:105

A personal word – Mark 1:17

We cannot be selective with the word of the Lord

2. God never makes a mistake in choosing his servants (5-7)

God chooses his servants before they have even been born

Know = know us (not just about us)

We may think he made a mistake, but he never does

All we have to do is step out and obey

3. Every command is accompanied by a promise (8)

God never asks us to do what he does not enable us to do

Whenever God commands us to do something he always promises us the resources to do it.

See Deuteronomy: 53 promises.

So we are not discouraged by impossible commands

See Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:44-49; Act 1:8

4. Fear is failure to trust God (7, 8)

We tend to justify or excuse fear

But with God there is no excuse for being afraid

Fear is failure to trust God

Read Matthew 8:26; 14:31; Romans 14:23

The fear of God is greater than the fear of man (17)

5. God watches over his word (11, 12)

When we act on God's Word we can be confident he will bring it to pass

See Psalm 145:13; Isaiah 55:10, 11

6. Anything more important to us than God is an idol (4-16)

Note the scorn with which the prophets treat idols

Isaiah 44:9-20; 45:20, 21; Jeremiah 10:3-10

They are just the work of human hands

Psalm 115:4; 135:15; Isaiah 2:8

Some people are afraid of things like ouija boards, symbols of Buddhism etc. Of course,

Christians should avoid these things, but if we are in Christ, what is there to fear?

7. Nothing can stand against us (18)

Fortified city = strong defences

Iron pillar = cannot be broken down

Bronze walls = cannot be pierced

Kings, officials, priests represent principalities and powers

People represent general opposition

Now read Romans 8:31-39

8. The battle is inevitable—but so is the victory! (19)

When we follow the Lord's calling, we will certainly run into opposition
But equally certain, the Lord will deliver us!

Is God calling us to step out for him?

Ministry?
Missions?
Training?
Evangelism?
Social work?
Counselling?
Youth work?
Children's work?
Secular field?
Overseas?
Let's do it! Let's step out today!

SOMETHING TO THINK OR TALK ABOUT

Remember: You don't have to answer all the questions. First do those that seem most helpful to you.

Read: Jeremiah 1:1-19

Biblical

1. Read verses 2, 4 and 9. What was the basis of Jeremiah's ministry?
2. Even before his birth, Jeremiah was called by the Lord to step out for him. Compare this with what the Scripture says about us in Ephesians 1:4-6, 11-12. Why did the Lord choose us? Make a list of the reasons given in these verses.
3. Why do you think Jeremiah reacted the way he did to what the Lord said? There are probably two reasons. (6, 7)
4. What promises did the Lord give Jeremiah? (8, 9) What promises has the Lord given *us* to equip *us* for ministry? Make a list together with relevant Scripture references (eg Matthew 28:20; Luke 10:19; Acts 1:8). Is there one that you personally have found encouraging? Why?
5. Almond trees blossom earlier than most. This is a vision of soon-coming judgement (11, 12). Notice the promise at the end of 12. How does this apply to us today?
6. The boiling cauldron is tilted from the north to the south, pouring out judgement (13). Because of desert to the east, armies usually invaded and attacked Jerusalem (the capital of Judah) from the north. Why was this judgement to come on Judah? (13-16)
7. What further promises did God give Jeremiah? (18, 19).

Personal and practical

8. What choice did God give Jeremiah? (17) How would you feel if God said this to you? (Maybe he has!)
9. One commentator says, ‘God never makes a mistake in choosing his servants.’ How does this apply to you?
10. What ‘excuses’ do people commonly give today for not stepping out for the Lord? Make a list. Now for a tough one—what excuses have *you* given?
11. Which of the following best applies to you? Why? Be honest!
 - a. I am 100% confident I can do whatever the Lord calls me to do
 - b. I am very confident I can do whatever the Lord calls me to do
 - c. I am reasonably confident I can do whatever the Lord calls me to do
 - d. I am uncertain as to whether I can do whatever the Lord calls me to do
 - e. I very much doubt whether I can do whatever the Lord calls me to do
12. What forms of idolatry are evident in our society today? (16) Now let’s get personal: what about in our own lives? What things are—or could be—idols for us?
13. When we step out for the Lord, there may be battles to fight, but we are guaranteed the victory (19). When we step out in faith, God steps in with power. What challenge is facing you right now? Is there a situation you can share with your group that you could all pray about?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to have the courage and faith to step out for you, no matter what the cost and no matter how difficult it is. Help me to trust your promises and to believe that when you are with me, nothing is impossible! In Jesus’ name, amen.

About Dr Barry Chant

Barry Chant is Senior Pastor of the Wesley International Congregation in Sydney, Australia. He is a regular speaker at church services, seminars, conferences and conventions. Hundreds of thousands of his books have been sold around the world. He has degrees in arts, theology and ministry, a diploma in education and a PhD in history. He was the initiator and former president of Tabor College, Australia.

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