

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Called to a Difficult Task
Jeremiah 1

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Be early and make sure everything is ready.

Bible Study Leader:

As you see your fellow worshippers during the week prior to the first lesson—Take time to let them know that you will be studying the book of Jeremiah. Find a map of Palestine revealing the location of Jerusalem and Anathoth to use in the study.

Worship Time Leader:

Ask for someone to be prepared to lead in prayer. Read over the material to be presented.

Music Sources:

Bless His Holy Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #151; CCLI # 17566

Shout to the Lord, *The Worship Hymnal* #133; CCLI # 1406918

Freely, Freely, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 627; CCLI # 13209

Wherever He Leads, I'll Go; *The Worship Hymnal* # 437; CCLI # 25194

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)***Called to a Difficult Task*****Focal Text**

Jeremiah 1

Background

Jeremiah 1

Main Idea

God sometimes calls us to do difficult things, promising also to be with us when we are faithful.

Question to Explore

What hard thing is God asking you to do, and how will you respond?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to testify of their experiences in responding to God's call.

Gathering together:

Sing:

Bless His Holy Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #151; CCLI # 17566

First thoughts:**The Call of God**

God calls His people in many ways. Some are called to serve Him in faraway places. Others to serve close to where we think of as home. Some serve in what we may term “full-time” ministry. Others are called, like even the apostle Paul, to earn financial needs in secular work while ministering mostly in what time he or she has left in the day and week. Yet God calls all his children to serve Him. No believer is excluded. Men, women, teens, children—we are all called by God to minister in His Name. And God will lead in the directions circumstances that His call provides for the rest of your life.

Today our study will be about the call of God to Jeremiah the prophet. If such a call was given to you, what would you do? That is the question we will ponder today as we study God's call to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah, did not institute the call, God did. God called him to a task He had chosen. The call of Jeremiah came with instructions on how to perform it, protection from those who would oppose him, and a purpose which was to call Judah away from sin and back to Himself.

The purpose God had for Jeremiah was on the mind of God before Jeremiah was born. God has a claim on your life and a purpose for your life. Are you willing to answer with a yes and do whatever God calls you to do? If you say yes to His call then you will receive all the instruction, resources, and protection you need to carry out the purpose for which you are called.

The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, peace of mind, or even happiness. It's far greater than family, career, or even one's wildest dreams and ambitions. Consider this today. Is God calling you to special service as he did Jeremiah?

“This is what the Lord says; ‘Stand at the crossroads and look. . .ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.’” (Jeremiah 6:16)

Closing the Gathering Time:

Pray for each one to be sensitive to God's call upon their life.

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Called to a Difficult Task

Focal Text

Jeremiah 1

Background

Jeremiah 1

Main Idea

God sometimes calls us to do difficult things, promising also to be with us when we are faithful.

Question to Explore

What hard thing is God asking you to do, and how will you respond?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to testify of their experiences in responding to God's call.

Introduction to your personal study:

Clyde T. Francisco wrote in Chapter 1 of his book *Studies in Jeremiah*, “No book of the Old Testament is more dependent upon a knowledge of its times for its interpretation than the book of Jeremiah. During Jeremiah’s ministry the Jewish nation passed through many phases in a remarkable brief period. From the time he was called by God in 626 B.C. until the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 (only 39 years), he saw his beloved people fall from the pinnacle of confident hopes to the depths of despair. First Judah was subject to Assyria, then to Egypt and Babylon. Five kings reigned in Jerusalem during that span. One was killed in battle, another taken as prisoner to Egypt, and two exiled in Babylon. The best of the people were deported, and in the end the city was

completely destroyed. Such a debacle needs careful consideration lest it happen again.¹

Writing about the prophet, Francisco also penned, “During the trying times that marked the end of Judah as a nation God called a man to speak for him, a man who felt that of all men he was the most unlikely for the task. It turned out to be the very one to declare what was in the mind of God.”²

“In Jeremiah it can be seen vividly that the greatest success is often found in apparent failure.”³

H. Wheeler Robinson wrote in *The Cross of the Old Testament* “When he tried to arrest the course of a nation, only to be thrown down and trampled underfoot, when he cried out in bitterness of heart against the inexorable Will that compelled a poet to become a prophet, and a lover of men to be counted their enemy, he little knew that the development and record of his lonely experience of failure was to be a success of highest rank and influence.”⁴

The words of Milton in *Paradise Lost* well describe the prophet Jeremiah:

Servant of God, well done! Well hast thought fought
The better fight, who single has maintained”⁵

As you study these passages and teach them to others keep in mind this question. What would you do if called by God to prophesy as Jeremiah?

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #....) of Bible Study and Worship sessions. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

INTRODUCTION (vv. 1-3).

Verses 1-3. ***The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in the territory of Benjamin. The word of the Lord came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon king of Judah, and through the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, down to the fifth month of the eleventh***

¹ Clyde T. Francisco, *Studies in Jeremiah*, Convention Press, Nashville, TN, 1961, p. 1.

² *Studies in Jeremiah*, p. 5.

³ *Studies in Jeremiah*, p. 5.

⁴ *Studies in Jeremiah*, p. 5.

⁵ *Studies in Jeremiah*, p. 6.

year of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, when the people of Jerusalem went into exile.

We know more about Jeremiah than any other prophet of the Old Testament. The introduction to Jeremiah is much more complete than the introductions to some of the other prophetic books. These verses give to the reader pertinent information about his background.

The prophet is introduced by name, family, status, and place of origin. Jeremiah was a common name in Judah. It could possibly mean “Yahweh loosens” (the womb) or “Yahweh exalts” or “Yahweh hurls.” “Yahweh hurls” is perhaps the best translation. His father’s name was Hilkiah. His family was of the Levites who tended the Temple. Anathoth, the place of his birth was a town about three miles northeast of Jerusalem.

The listing of the names of the kings gives us a time frame for Jeremiah’s ministry. He was a prophet from about 626 B.C. to 587 B.C. His ministry spanned from the last of Judah’s righteous kings, Josiah (640-609 B.C.) to Judah’s last actual king Zedekiah (597-587).

The *deportation* noted here in the introduction is significant. The fact that it happened just as prophesied gave credence to Jeremiah’s messages. In the event the basic thrust of his message was fulfilled.

The Lord came to Jeremiah several times over his lifetime. Therefore, his oracles had a supernatural origin. They would not be his words alone. A careful examination of his call will reveal that it took the form of a dialog between Jeremiah and God.

I. JEREMIAH’S CALL (Verses. 4-5).

“The word of the Lord came to me saying, Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

The expression ***“The word of the LORD”*** which opens the account of his call is significant. The noun translated “word” in Hebrew can mean “thought”, “word”, “thing”, or “action”. For the ancient Israelite “word” and “event” were part of the same experience. What a person thinks or plans, and what he says and what he does are all part of the same event. During his ministry Jeremiah both preached and performed symbolic acts, both these activities were means of declaring the word of Yahweh.

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7a, King James Version)

For God to let Jeremiah know that God had a hand in his development from the womb would give Jeremiah the sense that he was a part of God’s purpose. In naming this

concept down God gave three sovereign aspects of his call to Jeremiah: "I knew you," "I set you apart," and "I appointed you".

First of all is "I knew you" which denotes two things: first, it is knowing in the sense of choosing and second it is knowing in the sense of watching over and caring for. First, God said He knew Jeremiah. Also the verb "know" or "knew" carries with it considerable depth of meaning in the OT. It reached beyond mere intellectual knowledge to a personal relationship. God's knowledge of Jeremiah reached back into time before Jeremiah was born. It stresses an intimate knowledge of Jeremiah.

Second, we see that Jeremiah is to be "set apart." This is another aspect of commitment. Basically it is concerned with setting something apart from all other uses for a specific use. Once set apart the items were for the sole use of Yahweh. His life would be dedicated for God's use.

Third, God appoints Jeremiah. This refers to the specific assignment of Jeremiah to perform a particular task, that of a prophet. He was "given" his assignment. It was not something he set out to do. His appointment was not just to prophesy to Judah, but to all nations which is rather unusual. It is not what one normally expects of a Hebrew prophet. Most were assigned to a particular people. Jeremiah was to have a ministry that would reach beyond the borders of Judah. He truly was a man of destiny.

All of Jeremiah's ministry was under divine impetus. All throughout the book one is reminded that the words are not Jeremiah's but are of the Lord. Understanding this is critical.

Jeremiah was called from birth, but did not respond until his "youth".

II. JEREMIAH'S OBJECTIONS AND EXCUSES. (Verses. 6-8)

Verses 6-8. ***"Alas, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young." But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you."***

Jeremiah protested his call. Notice that he did not say he won't, he says I can't. His reasons were that he didn't know how to speak and "I am too young", I am but a child. Jeremiah was not referring as much to his age as to his inexperience. The Lord replied that his excuses were of no use. He would send him where He wanted him to go and tell him what to say. He needn't be afraid. God's presence would abide with him. The assurance God gave him was that His words would be in his mouth. Jeremiah just needed to be willing. God would provide the content of his prophecies.

When God calls, a person age has very little if nothing to do with it. Many a missionary has received God's call at the age of 7 or 8. The more one feels inadequate the more God is able to use him. It is not God plus you. It is God alone using you.

The apostle Paul knew his own limitations and wrote that God told him ***“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness”*** (2 Corinthians 12:9, King James Version).

III. GOD’S ENCOURAGEMENTS. (Verses. 9-10).

Verses 9-10. ***Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “I have put my words in your mouth.” See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.***

Verse 9. This is an anthropomorphism. God is given attributes of a body. He reaches out His hand and touches Jeremiah’s mouth. What Jeremiah is going to prophesy will be the words God gives him.

God gave three words of encouragement to Jeremiah in response to his excuses. They were “authority”, “protection”, and “source.”

- He stressed He would protect the future prophet.
- He stressed the authority under which Jeremiah was to act.
- He showed the source of his message. He would put the words in his mouth.

God pledged to “watch over” those words to guarantee that what Jeremiah said would be true. God revealed that the message would be one of judgment, but would include hope (build and plant). Jeremiah must preach the Bible’s three great prophetic themes: sin, punishment, and restoration.

Here we find two of those great themes. They are the tasks of every true prophet of God. One is judgment and the other is hope or restoration. God creates anew. Therefore, Jeremiah must “uproot, and tear down, to destroy and overthrow.” Jeremiah’s message would have hope in the words “to build and to plant”. God would build upon a new foundation and plant in the prepared field. Before God could build Judah up she must be torn down to the rock bottom. These themes were preached to Judah but were applicable to all nations.

Two metaphors are used to describe what his ministry to all nations and kingdoms would be. The first one compared his ministry to farmers. God said He would uproot (announce judgment) and plant (announce blessing). In the second one He compared Jeremiah to an architect. He would “tear down,....destroy, and overthrow” (pronounce judgment) and “build” (pronounce blessing).

Jeremiah’s message would be a call for Judah repent and obey the Lord. Repentance is not just called for in one nation. It is called for in all people. Until the people repented there would be no blessings. Obedience and repentance must precede a new creating.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here.” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

IV. THE VISIONS (Verses 11-16)

Verses 11-12. ***The word of the Lord came to me: “What do you see, Jeremiah?” “I see the branch of an almond tree,” I replied. The LORD said to me, “You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled.”***

God gave Jeremiah two visions to instruct him as a prophet. The first vision is about an almond tree. Through this vision God reminded Jeremiah of the nature of the message. The message must be proclaimed urgently. The word for almond tree is *shaked* and comes from the root “to be awake”. The almond tree was used in this object lesson because it was the first tree to bloom in the spring. Possibly the branch Jeremiah saw was not blooming; it had not awakened. But, Jeremiah recognized it anyway. “Keep watching Jeremiah, the buds will flower” was the idea God had for Jeremiah. “What I tell you is coming will come to pass. Do not give up too soon”. God was letting him know that He was awake and watching.

Many in this world feel that God is just an observer. But, to the man of faith, the moment of God’s action is not far away. God was letting Jeremiah know that time was short. He is watching to see that all He says through Jeremiah will come to pass.

Verse 13. ***The word of the LORD came to me again: “What do you see?” “I see a pot that is boiling,” I answered. “It is tilting toward us from the north.”***

The second vision points out the content of the message. The vision of the tilting boiling pot would signify disaster for Judah. It also signified from what direction it would come.

Verses 14-15. ***“The Lord said to me, “From the north disaster will be pored out on all who live in the land. I am about to summon all the peoples of the northern kingdoms,” declares the LORD. “Their kings will come and set up their thrones in the entrance of the gates of Jerusalem; they will come against all her surrounding walls and against the towns of Judah.***

Look at a map of the Middle East. Notice that the nations that are going to move against Judah do not lie directly to the north. They are east across the Arabian desert. But, the natural trade routes go up and over the great deserts of Arabia. An army marching from the east would first go north, then west, and then south. They would follow what has become known as the Fertile Crescent through Syria and Lebanon. Thus, the prophesy that they would come from the north would be true.

Verse 16. ***I will pronounce my judgments on my people because of their wickedness in forsaking me, in burning incense to other gods and in worshiping what their hands have made.***

Here is the reason for God's wrath and judgment upon the people of Judah. They had broken the first commandment. ***"Thou shalt have no other gods before me"*** (Exodus 20:3, King James Version). Idolatry was the basic reason for God calling Jeremiah to prophesy to them. God is a "jealous" God.

V. THE CHARGE TO JEREMIAH (Verses 17-19).

There is a threefold charge to Jeremiah: (1) Brace yourself. (2) Speak Yahwah's word. (3) Do not be dismayed.

Verse 17a. Brace yourself. ***"Get yourself ready!"*** Literally this meant "gird up your loins." When men were about to fight or work they took the lower part of their outfits and tucked them into their waist bands. The time for action had come.

Verse 17b. Speak Yahweh's word. ***"Stand up and say to them whatever I command you."***

Verse 17c. Do not be dismayed. ***Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them."***

Once again God reiterates to Jeremiah that his message is God's message. He will speak only what God instructs him to speak. When he does this Yahweh will provide all the protection Jeremiah will ever need. But, if he fails to realize this and obey the Lord then the terror that was to come upon Judah will come upon him. Then Judah would not see a man of God but a terrified messenger who is unwilling to obey.

Verses 18-19. ***"Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole---against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.***

Once again God assures Jeremiah that he is not alone. The task God placed before him was daunting. He would face the entire nation. Not one person, from kings, officials and priests down to the lowest of the people would be spared the prophesy.

Note that everyone is going to oppose him. His message will not be well received. ***"But they will not overcome you"***, says the Lord. Once again the phrase ***"for I am with you and will rescue you"*** is God's assurance to Jeremiah.

"One man plus God is a majority" may sound good. But, one needs more than theoretical musings when faced with strong opposition to one's beliefs. One must know

deep down in one's heart that God will be with him. Nothing else will suffice. The reassuring words of God become a necessity.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

Has God called you to a difficult task? How did you respond? Make this lesson relevant by sharing your experience. When a leader shares then it is easier for a class member to share.

Your goal should be to get yourself and others ready to be obedient when God calls.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Called to a Difficult Task

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Jeremiah 1

Background

Jeremiah 1

Main Idea

God sometimes calls us to do difficult things, promising also to be with us when we are faithful.

Question to Explore

What hard thing is God asking you to do, and how will you respond?

Teaching Aim

To lead the church to testify of their experiences in responding to God's call.

Connect with Life:

After years of conflict, the country of Syria has experienced civil war, many thousands of deaths and injuries, and massive destruction. Many refugees lived in camps where conditions were poor, food limited, and health care basic. But stories of the faithful care of Syrian pastors and lay leaders amazed Christians outside of Syria. These pastors and leaders were “called” to minister, not just in the good times, but in the most difficult of circumstances.

Guide the Study:

INTRODUCTION (Verses 1-3).

Introduce Jeremiah to the group. Say to them Jeremiah was the premier prophet of his day. Others, such as Habakkuk, Zephaniah, and Ezekiel, were his contemporaries. But, he was like a bright light shining in the dark days of Judah.

Ask: Can anyone find Jerusalem and Anathoth on a map of Palestine?

Have someone read verses 1-3.

Tell them: Jeremiah was born in Anathoth. His father's name was Hilkiah. He was a Levite. He was well taught in the Old Testament books of the Law. As such it would have been much easier for him to perform the prescribed rituals in the Temple rather than preach to all the people.

Share: It is important for each of us to understand that Jeremiah lived most of his life in and around Jerusalem. His prophesies were given to the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. He prophesied for about forty years (from 626 B.C. to 587 B.C.). He began under the reign of Josiah and continued until the destruction of Jerusalem in 587.

I. JEREMIAH'S CALL (Verses 4-5).

Share: The Apostle Paul wrote **"But by the grace of God I am what I am"** (1 Corinthians 15:10a). Just as with Paul, Jeremiah was called by God.

Have someone read verses 4-5.

Question: Do you think that the phrase **"The word of the Lord came to me"** is significant?

Add: What universal biblical principle does it point out? (God is sovereign; He speaks to his people.)

Explain this important concept: "Word" in Hebrew can mean thought, word, thing, or action. For the ancient Hebrew "word" and "event" were part of the same action. What a person plans and what a person does are part of the same event. The word of the Lord spoken through the prophet Jeremiah would result in action.

Question the group: What are three aspects of Jeremiah's call found in these verses? (I knew you, I set you apart, and I appointed you.)

Tell them what each means:

First, I knew you implies two things: knowing in the sense of choosing, and knowing in the sense of watching over and caring. God had an intimate knowledge of Jeremiah.

Second, Jeremiah was set apart for special service to God. His life would be given over to the sole purpose of God.

Third, appoint refers to the assignment of Jeremiah to a particular task.

Now ask them:

Have you ever looked back over your life and seen a pattern drawn by God?

Does God know you intimately?

Has He set you apart for something special? Allow for some personal testimonies.

II. JEREMIAH'S OBJECTIONS AND EXCUSES (Verses 6-8)

Choose someone to read verses 6-8.

Ask: What were the two objections or excuses Jeremiah cited? (Don't know what to say, too young)

Explain: In Jeremiah's excuse that he didn't know how to speak he was protesting that he did not know what to say. As to the excuse about his age, he was letting God know that he felt inexperienced.

Question: What was God's reply? (God would be with him and provide what he was to say.)

Give time for some testimonies here: What are some of your excuses for not serving God?

III. GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENTS (Verses 9-10).

Ask someone who has not read to read verses 9-10.

Let someone in the group explain: What does it mean when the Lord reached out his hand and touched Jeremiah's mouth. (What Jeremiah is going to say will be the words of God.)

Now ask: What was Jeremiah appointed to do? Note that there were two metaphors: one compared his ministry to farming and the other compared his ministry to an architect. ("Uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant")

Tell the group that two great themes are represented here. One is judgment and the other is restoration. These themes would be preached to Judah but would find application in all nations.

Question. What was the reason for such a message? (God wanted Judah to repent and obey.)

Ask: Have you ever felt God getting your attention so that you might repent and obey?

IV. THE VISIONS (Verses 11-16).

Have someone read verses 11-16.

Perhaps the best way to teach this section is to lecture:

God gave Jeremiah two visions. The first vision was to remind Jeremiah of the nature of the message he was to preach which is that God is watching. The vision has as its object an almond tree. Almond trees were the first to bloom in the spring. As Jeremiah looked at the branches, he saw that they had not budded or awakened yet. Even so, Jeremiah recognized the tree. This lesson was to teach Jeremiah not to give up too soon. The time for God to act is not far away. His word will be fulfilled.

The second vision points out the content of the message. Disaster would befall Judah. A nation would come from the north and destroy Judah and Jerusalem. Those nations would begin their journey east of Jerusalem, but would travel to the north around the desert and attack. (Point this out on the map of Palestine)

Follow this reading with this question: What do you think is the reason for God's wrath and judgment upon Judah? (They had committed idolatry.)

Present these questions:

What do you think? Is God far away today?

Is He watching over you?

Is He here with you?

How do you know?

V. THE CHARGE TO JEREMIAH (Verses 17-19).

Have another person read verses 17-19.

Tell the group: These verses give a threefold charge to Jeremiah. God says to him: Brace yourself, speak what I tell you, and do not be dismayed.

Question. What do you think Jeremiah would have to do to get ready?

Follow up with this: Have you ever thought what might happen if you did not obey God. What would happen to Jeremiah if he failed to obey?

Add: Notice that twice God says "I am with you and will rescue you." That refers back to the Exodus experience.

Say: Remember that God said: "***If ye love me, keep my commandments.***" (John 14:15, King James Version)

It did not change when Jesus came into this world. Obedience has been and always will be a sign of love.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Ask: What has God called you to do?

Remember whenever God calls someone to a task He gives the resources to get the job done. You are never alone. The Holy Spirit indwells to teach and provide for you.

Close with a prayer for sensitive ears to hear the call of God. May each one be courageous to take on any challenge God places before them.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

Called to a Difficult Task

Jeremiah 1

What is the hardest thing your parents ever asked you to do?

What right do parents have to ask anything of you?

What are some excuses you give for not wanting to comply with your parents request?

Read **Jeremiah 1:1-15**.

What did God ask of Jeremiah?

What excuses did Jeremiah give to God to avoid obeying?

Do you think that God can ask any of His children to do anything He desires?

Ask yourself: Even at your age, would you give God excuses or would you respond to His call?

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)**Church Basics**

Matthew 28:19-20

Beginning the Service:

Sing **Shout to the Lord**, The Worship Hymnal #133; CCLI # 1406918; **Freely, Freely**, *The Worship Hymnal*, # 627; CCLI # 13209

Offering:

Make sure each one understands for what the offering is being taken.

Praying for the World:

Let your prayer today be for those in your own community. Ask God to reveal to each of you at least one lost person for whom prayer can be offered and a witness made.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Church Basics

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations (make believers out of them), ***baptizing*** (that they may belong and be identified with my church) ***them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*** (that their behavior might conform to mine) ***and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.***" (Matthew 28:19-20, King James Version).

There are three basic ideas in this passage upon which a church is built. It does not matter whether it is a mega-church, family church, or a house church. They will be found in God's church. They are believing, belonging, and behaving.

The road mapped out in Matthew 28:19-20 enables non-believers to progress to believers whose behavior conforms to that of God's Son, Jesus Christ. It is a process that is to be repeated over and over again until the Gospel spreads to every nation and tongue. The map has been placed in the hands of each individual believer, not just in the hands of the clergy. It is to be accomplished through each believer aligned with a group of other believers setting the example for the un-churched world.

BASIC #1: BELIEVING.

A Christian, a believer, is a follower of Jesus Christ. He or she is someone who believes in the saving work of Jesus Christ through His death on the cross, burial in a borrowed tomb, and ultimately resurrected to life anew. He believes His future is secure in the hands of God.

In scripture "believe" and "faith" are often translated from the same Greek word. One not only believes, but he faiths. It is not a passive word but it is an active word. One preacher defined faith like this: "It is hearing the Word of God and doing the Word of God."

James 1:22 reads "***But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.***" (King James Version).

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:31).

BASIC #2: BELONGING THROUGH BAPTISM.

In the Mississippi Delta country in the United States before the days of the large levee system, the spring thaw and spring rains would cause the river to swell over its banks and flood the farms just as rain still does in many countries. The houses were built up on stilts so the people would not lose their belongings. After each flood one could see a ring around the stilts. That was a high water mark.

Christians have a water mark too. It is called baptism. It identifies the believer who is immersed with Christ and His church. Baptism is not an option.

In Rick Warren's book **The Purpose Driven Life** there is a chapter entitled "A Place to Belong." That is the church. It was created by Christ to be place for a believer to be made a disciple. It is a place for fellowship. It is a family of God.

Paul wrote to the Ephesian church ***“You are members of God’s very own family, citizens of God’s country, and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian.”*** (Ephesians 2:19b, The Living Bible).

As you belong to the household you relate to one another.

Romans 12:5 states ***In Christ we who are many form one bond, and each member belongs to all the others.*** Many try to go alone and miss the benefits of family life. Being a part of the family of God, the church, is vitally important. It is the visible presence of Christ on earth. Those who belong to the body make Christ real and approachable.

The chorus of Norman Clayton’s hymn **Now I Belong to Jesus** has these words:

Now I belong to Jesus, Jesus belongs to me. Not for the years of time alone, but for eternity.

BASIC #3: BEHAVING.

Those who believe on Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and make the commitment to belong to His church will demonstrate behavior like their Saviour. Christians are in the world, but they are not of or like the world. Like the butterfly that came from a pupae Paul wrote, ***And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind***” (Romans 12:2a, King James Version).

Life changes when one makes a commitment to follow Christ. Others should be able to easily see the change.

Call to Commitment.

While you are passing through this life make Matthew 28:19-20 your Great Commission. Help others find Jesus. See that they are baptized. Teach them all that Jesus said and did. It’s not someone else’s responsibility. It’s yours.

There is an old, old hymn **Let Others See Jesus in You** whose words sum up this message:

While passing thro’ this world of sin,
And others your life shall view,
Be clean and pure without, within,
Let others see Jesus in you.

Refrain:

Let others see Jesus in you,
Let others see Jesus in you,

Keep telling the story, be faithful and true,
Let others see Jesus in you.

Your life's a book before their eyes,
They're reading it thro' and thro'
Say does it point them to the skies,
Do others see Jesus in you?

Refrain

Then live for Christ both day and night,
Be faithful, be brave and true,
And lead the lost to life and light.
Let others see Jesus in you.

Refrain

Call for a commitment to live a life that gives glory to God.

Ask if there is anyone who wishes to receive Christ as their Savior?

Concluding the Service:

Sing:

Wherever He Leads, I'll Go; *The Worship Hymnal* # 437; CCLI # 25194