

Repent and commit to obedience

Lesson Scripture: Jeremiah 6:16-21, 26-28

Lesson aims: To recognize that God warns the rebellious before judgment, to understand and appreciate that He warns to give the rebel a chance to repent and to commit to obedience.

Background: The next four lessons come from the book of Jeremiah. To fully appreciate this prophet, we need to examine the times as well as the man. When Jeremiah began to prophesy, Assyria was losing control and Babylon was gaining it. Egypt and other nations were struggling to ally themselves with one side or the other. Judah aligned herself with Egypt in support of Assyria. It didn't work. Nineveh (Assyria's capital) fell in 612 B.C.

Born to a priestly family during the reign of Manasseh, Jeremiah was called by God to be a prophet around 627 B.C. (one year after Josiah became king). His 40-year ministry spanned Judah's last days as an independent state. He shared in Josiah's revival only to agonize with their hardened hearts at the end. Referred to as the "weeping prophet," he openly expresses his sorrow over their behavior.



Mildred Peppers
Sunday School Lesson

When called, God promised him probation from his enemies and vindication during his lifetime. Scripture didn't allude to a close relationship between the king and prophet although they are on the same side. Let's examine today's warning.

Lesson: Jeremiah's ministry begins with an indictment. God's love and care for His people don't inspire loyalty and appreciation. He points out that their present predicament is the result of their behavior "to consciously and willfully reject God. Jeremiah even strikes down their pretense of repentance. He accuses them of being hollow and empty" ("Richard's Complete Bible Handbook"). The Lord has pronounced judgment, and it will come from the north (4:5-31).

Chapter 6 opens with a

dialogue between God and the prophet on the people's rebellion. God looks for one who has not turned from Him to spare Jerusalem of her fate.

Not one could be found. This is similar to Genesis 18:22-32.

Verse 16 records Jeremiah's comments to the people. "He creates the image of a lost traveler who is asking for directions. Judah is the traveler that is lost due to disobedience" ("UMI Direction Teacher"). Alarms (watchmen) are heard but unheeded. Their rebelliousness leads to judgment. Their revival has not gone unnoticed. God rejects their external worship and everything that goes with it. He knows their hearts.

The prophet cries out for Judah because spiritually they are dead, and very soon the physical death (captivity) will come.

The people will mourn as a woman who has lost her only son. Judah has been tested and proven unfaithful.

Application: Sin by commission or omission, individual or corporate, breaks relationship with God. The more we sin, the easier it becomes and our hearts become numb to it. There are always consequences for every decision good or bad.

Jeremiah indicts them and then offers a ray of hope. They can repent and be spared. Their false sense of security makes them scoff at his words. Like Judah, we must make decisions and live with the consequences. Can we stand the pressure?

America has become exactly like Judah. We falsely believe that we are special, above the rest of God's creation. We are arrogant and don't respect God and others. We very often are pseudo-religious. Our reasons for worship are shallow and selfish. We care little or nothing for others.

Can we fool God? Remember that He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He is not fooled by our pretenses. For us to escape His judgment, we too must repent because through it there is hope.

Take someone with you to learn more about our hope in Christ Jesus.

new members. The Rev. James Smith, who served the church from 1975 to 1981, was the featured speaker. Memorabilia displayed included photographs, reports and artifacts spanning the church's first 100 years.

For more information about the church or its anniversary celebrations, visit www.greenstreetchurch.org or call 722-8379.

from 1997 to 2000, the Rev. Michael Goode.

Since its re-visioning in 1997, the church has flourished, sustained by dedicated longtime members, new participants from its surrounding community and others who have chosen to join the "Green Street family" because of its vigorous commitment to creating "a church for ALL God's people."

Current leadership includes Leadership Coun-

cil Chairperson Shirley Abdullah, Lay Leader Norma Niofi Dalton, Trustee Chairperson Clara Thore and Pastor-Parish Chairman Jack Peacock. The Rev. Kelly P. Carpenter is senior pastor, serving with the Rev. Ronald Perry, associate pastor of outreach, and the Rev. Abraham Bruno, assistant pastor of Hispanic ministry.

On Sept. 20, a Heritage banquet was held, with recollections by longtime and

Green Street

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an after-school program staffed by volunteer adults and college students, and the weekly "Welcome Table."

Refusing to "die or move away" as its community changed, Green Street Church chose renewal in collaboration with the Winston-Salem District, the Western North Carolina Conference, and its pastor

Union Baptist Church 'TNT' will resume

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

"TNT" - an explosive program of Bible study, prayer and fellowship - will resume at Union Baptist Church Oct. 1.

Tuesday Noon Teaching will be at noon and will include lunch. Tuesday Night Teaching will begin at 7. Dinner will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., and praise service will begin at 6:30 pm.

The Tuesday Bible study was initiated three years ago and has deepened biblical understanding and changed lives. Teaching of God's word has reached a new spiritual level with Pastor Sir Walter Mack Jr.'s explosive TNT Teaching Ministries. The Tuesday Night Teaching Ministry draws more than 400 people each week.

"TNT focuses on the study of God's word to find answers to life's difficult problems and provides power for living," Dr. Mack said.

Everyone is invited to tap into the power of God's word.

Union Baptist Church, "A Church Determined to Live for Christ," is at 1200 N. Trade Street. Visit the Web site at www.union-baptistwsnc.org or call 724-9305 for more information.



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James A. Gray Professor

October 3, 2002

"Another Day's Journey"

Dr. Robert Michael Franklin, Jr.



One of the leading voices in the field of theological education, Dr. Robert Michael Franklin, Jr. is president of Atlanta's Interdenominational Theological Center, the nation's foremost center for historically black religious training and graduate theological education.

An ordained clergyman, Dr. Franklin has worked with the White House on projects related to religion, race and public health. He is author of two books, including *Another Day's Journey: Black Churches Confronting the American Crisis*, in which he urges an activist Christian commitment by black churches in resolving social problems. He is the co-author of *From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and the American Family Debate*.



Dr. James T. Roberson, Jr.
A recognized speaker on mentoring, Dr. James T. Roberson, Jr. is Dean of Shaw University Divinity School in Raleigh, NC. He has conducted workshops nationwide on mentoring and currently mentors a group on Transformational Church Leadership. A native of Mississippi, Dr. Roberson received his Master of Divinity from New York Theological Seminary. He also holds a doctorate in educational administration with an emphasis on church leadership. The president and founder of Black Religious Studies Network, Dr. Roberson also spent 24 years with the IBM corporation serving in a variety of capacities.

November 7, 2002

"Inclusive & Holistic Church Leadership"

Dr. James T. Roberson, Jr.

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February 6, 2003

"From Rags to Righteous"

The Rev. Dr. JoAnne Marie Terrell

An advocate for building bridges between the church and the academy, the Rev. Dr. JoAnne M. Terrell is interim director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at the Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). She has been an associate professor of ethics and theology at CTS and has been advisor to the African American Seminars Organization. Rev. Terrell has also chaired both the recruitment and sexual harassment committees at the Seminary. She is professionally affiliated with the American Academy of Religion, the Society of Biblical Literature and the Society for the Study of Black Religion. A prolific writer, Rev.



Terrell is the author of the upcoming book *Far as the Curse is Found: Experiencing Blessedness in a World of Pain*. She has lectured extensively on such topics as "The Long Journey Home: A Black Woman's Struggle to Reclaim Her Faith and Sensuality," "Mothers and Sons" and "Religious Pluralism and Black Faith."

April 3, 2003

"Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation"

Dr. Charles G. Adams



A lecturer of worldwide renown, Dr. Charles G. Adams is pastor of Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in Detroit, MI, where he has served since 1969. He has spoken before the United Nations on South African apartheid and was a speaker for the World Congress of the Baptist Alliance in Seoul, Korea. When the Unit Commissions and Working Groups of the World Council of Churches met in Evian, France in May 1992, Dr. Adams was called upon to address the causes and challenges of the Los Angeles riots. He subsequently played a role as advisor in a combined effort by the World Council and the National Council of the Church of Christ in addressing this issue. In 1994, Dr. Adams accompanied President Bill Clinton to Jordan to witness the signing of the Peace Accord between Jordan and Israel.

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