

## Jeremiah 18:18

***Then they said, "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come and let us attack him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words."***

Did you know that Jeremiah was a prophet for 52 years, and the entire 52 years that he spoke God's word to the people, not one person repented and turned to the Lord? Not only that, but they ignored everything the Lord spoke to them through the prophet Jeremiah; Therefore, Jeremiah is known as the "Weeping Prophet."

Now when you read that you may be thinking, *"Ah, poor Jeremiah, he was crying because no one listened to him and he felt like a loser or a failure, boo-who-who."* Which is the furthest thing from the truth because these were not tears of pride, but rather for his love for God's people, Israel, as Jeremiah spoke God's heart to the people and wanted them to turn from their wicked ways and return to the Lord.

So, how could Jeremiah have gone on for 52 years and not give up? Simply because Jeremiah spoke God's word and not his own. He also knew that the people's repentance was in God's hands, not his. Sometimes we tend to forget that we are to be obedient to God's calling, not man's response to our calling from God. Yet God puts a calling on our lives and the first thing we do is start to fantasize about how the outcome will be, how thousands will come to Christ because of our ministry and call from the Lord. Yet do we give up because we don't see a change in people or feel they don't listen to us when we tell them about Jesus? Once again, we tend to forget what God's word says:

† ***1 Corinthians 3:6-7 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.***

It would be like planting an apple tree, starting with just the seed, and thinking, *"This time next year I will have so many apples from this tree that I can feed the entire neighborhood."* Which sounds great, but totally untrue, because first off, an apple seed will not mature into a full grown, fully producing apple tree in a year.

You may be thinking that *"I have planted vegetable seeds before, and they produced vegetables that same year."* That's because GOD allows certain seeds to produce faster than other seeds, like vegetables versus fruit trees. The same is true for God's calling, I don't know why some ministries produce a higher volume of those being saved than other ministries, but GOD knows, because God gives us all seed to plant into the lives of others, and some receive seed that produce immediately, where as others receive seed that takes a lot longer to produce fruit (or vegetables).

James, the half brother of Jesus said: ***"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming***

***of the Lord is at hand.” James 5:7-8***

James saw the awesome things his big brother Jesus did, and don't you think he wanted to be just like his big brother Jesus, and see fruit immediately in his ministry like he saw with Jesus? But he learned patience from Jesus as well, therefore he could say: ***“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.”***

I personally know how hard it is to wait for fruit to produce when you are in ministry. I do not have a big following, but then I don't want people to follow me, I want them to follow Jesus; Therefore, I point them to Jesus, not to myself just as John the Baptist said: ***“He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3:30*** After all, don't we all want that; for Jesus to increase in our lives as we decrease, meaning Jesus receives all the glory and not us. Yet sometimes we forget that just being called by God to do for His glory is all we need to keep us going.

So, we should stop seeking what the world calls successful and seek what God has called us to do, and if we simply do His calling, regardless of the outcome, (Think Jeremiah again) then God is more pleased with our obedient heart and we are successful in His eyes with that obedience, then with any other sacrifice we can offer or what the world calls successful.

† **Psalm 90:17 (NLT2)** *And may the Lord our God show us his approval and make our efforts successful. Yes, make our efforts successful!*

† **Proverbs 1:1-4 (NLT2)** *These are the proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel. Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise. Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair. These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young.*