

His Word Like a Burning Flame
By Trey Sullins

What is your passion? What is that one aspect of life which really gets you excited? Everyone in life has something that they deeply care about. Whether that be cars, politics, hunting, fishing, sports, or shopping, all people have something that burns within them. These passions of life can be really beneficial in shaping who we are as people and where our focus is in life. However, there is one thing for which all people should have a deep passion: the word of God. In Jeremiah chapter twenty there is an incredible state of zeal for the word of God.

Jeremiah had been called to do an incredibly challenging work for God. All the way back in Jeremiah 1:4 a young man was called upon by God to be a “prophet to the nations.” Very shortly after this calling, Jeremiah was told that the people to whom he was prophesying would “fight against him” (Jeremiah 1:19). This is the backdrop for the work which Jeremiah was setting out to do. From chapters one through twenty, Jeremiah had to face being beaten (Jeremiah 20:2), mocked (Jeremiah 15:10), and rejected (Jeremiah 7:27, 13:10, 17:23, 18:18). Such a mission would certainly be hard to endure.

Jeremiah had an incredible passion for the word of God. In Jeremiah 20:9, the Bible says, “Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name.’ But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, And I could not.” To Jeremiah the word of God was a fire within him, so strong that he could not stop it. He had no power to hold back the word of God. In verse 7 he said that everyone mocked him daily and in verse 8 he said that he was a “reproach and a derision daily.” If Jeremiah could, then he might try and hold back his preaching so the people would stop attacking him. Instead he was powerless to stop it. In the end it is easy to see why Jeremiah could have such a strong zeal for God’s word. Jeremiah 20:11 reveals this when it says, “But the LORD is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten.” No matter what happened to him, he could continue strong because God was going to protect, guide, and deliver him.

Jeremiah sets out a powerful example for Christians to follow. There are so many things in life which can become someone’s passion in life. God’s people instead should consider that a passion for the word of God must be a top priority in life. Second Timothy 3:12 says, “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Everyone who strives to live a godly life will suffer persecution. However, by seeing the excellent model of perseverance that Jeremiah shows we can know with certainty that a Christian can endure the persecution. Furthermore, Romans 8:31 ensures the safety of the righteous even more by saying, “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?” Truly, no matter how greatly the world might resist, if God’s people continue to preach His word then they will be delivered.

The word of God is one of the greatest gifts that is on the earth today. Christians must use it properly by being like Jeremiah who did a challenging work with great zeal. If we do that then not only God’s will be done, but so many more will be able to come to the knowledge of the Almighty God and live according to His word. What is your passion in life?