

# Sermon Notes

## A Closer Look – Your Favorite Verses Explored

### August 17-18<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

#### - **A Closer Look: Favorite Verses Explored**

- We are looking at the most quoted verses in the Bible. Are they taken out of context, do they present only part of the truth, or do they really mean what we think they mean?? That is the question!
- This week **Jeremiah 29:11**.
  - o Love this verse! However, this is only a partial truth and if taken as a universal generalization it can be quite misunderstood.
- Israel's history is a loose parable of our lives as New Testament believers in Jesus.
  - o Quick overview of history of Israel: Abraham, Jacob, Egypt, Moses, Dessert, Joshua, Judges, Kings, Civil War, Assyrian Captivity, Babylonian Captivity, Ezra/Nehemiah, Sadducees/Pharisees, Jesus.
- Back to **Jeremiah 29:11**.
  - o God has a plan and it is a good plan! True!! God has a plan for YOU and it is a good plan! True!!
    - However, if you don't follow the plan, bad things happen!!
  - o Two destinies: Heaven or Hell. Abundant life or regret. **Deuteronomy 30:15-20**
    - Jer 29:11 doesn't mean everything will be ok. True only for those who live God's ways.
    - Compare to **Jeremiah 29:18-19**. Same chapter, also written to Israelites!
  - o Context: Babylonian Captivity. **Jeremiah 29:10**
    - They were in the promised land, but through idolatry and disobedience to God they lost it.
    - Deeper Context: **Jeremiah 28:1-17, Jeremiah 29:5-11**.
      - False prophet says it's going to be ok. He dies.
      - Jeremiah says get comfy, because you will be in Babylon a long time!!
        - o Interesting: pray for Babylon to prosper. How do we do that?
      - AND God has not forgotten his plan for Israel. They will come home!!
- Israel's history as a parable of our lives.
  - o I hope you are in the Promised Land!! Have faith to obey God so you can stay there!!
    - It takes faith to enter, and it takes faith to stay.
  - o Let's look at 3 other options.
    - 1) Egypt. Born into captivity and haven't gotten free yet. Stuck in the old life.
      - Jesus came to set you free!! Forgiveness is freedom from the past!!
    - 2) Dessert. Free from Egypt, but fighting internal (unbelief) and external (giants) opposition.
      - Freedom from Egypt doesn't put you in the Promised Land. Sanctification does.
      - It's like how apologizing can't give you integrity. You must do what you say.
    - 3) Babylon. Used to be in the Promised Land, but you lost it.
      - God still has a plan for you. Get comfy in Babylon, as odd as that sounds.
      - Then have the faith to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem!!
- Don't settle for Egypt, the Dessert, or Babylon with only dreams of the Promised Land, GO TAKE IT!!
- Closing verse: **Matthew 7:13-14**.
  - o You have to walk the right path. The promise is an opportunity, but you must take advantage of that opportunity.
  - o God does have a good plan for you. Take the narrow path and you can live in God's plan!
- Pray for each other before you finish up!