

“SEEKING GREAT THINGS”

Jeremiah 45:1-5

Our text: God tells a man named Baruch to not seek great things for himself. Goes against human nature.

I. THE WRONG PERSPECTIVE

A. Our world is obsessed with fame

1. Teens say they would rather be famous than have money (But most think fame will bring money)
a. Phones allow selfies b. Social media allows nobodies to gain attention
2. The reason fame is so attractive is that people think it will give them worth/value: *How many followers?*

B. The problem is when we transfer those same desires into salvation and ministry

1. Ministry becomes a means of attention *Ambition; Def: Strong desire for success, achievement, or distinction*
2. **A desire to be seen or recognized: Mat 23:5-7** *"They do good things so that other people will see them. They make the boxes of Scriptures that they wear bigger, and they make their special prayer clothes very long. Those Pharisees and teachers of the law love to have the most important seats at feasts and in the synagogues. They love people to greet them with respect in the marketplaces, and they love to have people call them 'Teacher.'*
a. 3 John 1:9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, receives us not.
3. **A desire to have power over people: Get people to do things/be able to order people around**
a. Mat 20:25 But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that in this world kings are tyrants, and officials lord it over the people beneath them.

C. Our text is about a man named Baruch: A scribe who helped Jeremiah in his ministry

1. But Baruch is making his ministry be about himself: **V5 do you seek great things for yourself?**
a. He is called by God to minister for God/His will b. He is called to minister to others
2. But he is looking at his life and ministry from a wrong perspective - a personal perspective
a. V3 me/my/I/I you only see yourself
3. Whenever we are looking at ministry selfishly – we wind up being disappointed
a. We are upset at God: I should have gotten a better/higher position – should made me famous
b. We get upset at people: How dare they not appreciate all my wonderful efforts!
1. A man told me he was leaving the church: You never thanked me for working on the church van
4. Ambition blinds us to everything else
a. Disciples are missing God's voice/instruction: Who is the greatest! Jesus would be gone in days
b. You don't appreciate the church/the will of God

II. A CORRECT PERSPECTIVE

A. Our focus needs to be on God

1. What does God want to happen in the earth? That's the most important thing
a. Hebrews 10:7 ⁷Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, O God.' "
2. What is my part in God's will in the earth?
a. Jeremiah was the prophet – he wrote it down, and sometimes told people what Jer. prophesied
b. We can't all do the same thing! The body of Christ – different parts working together
1. 1 Corinthians 3:6 ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

B. Our focus needs to be on other people

1. The entire nation was facing judgment: Jeremiah's prophecies could save some
a. So he needed to think: What's best for them? b. Philippians 2:34 ³Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

III. GREAT THINGS

A. The Kingdom works backwards The way up is down

1. **Luke 14:11** ¹¹*For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."*
2. This pleases God – He gets involved in our lives
a. Jeremiah 45:5 "But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go."
1. I will be with you – I will help you; All areas of life and ministry
3. When you don't seek attention/power – it sometimes comes to you
a. Thousands of years later: Baruch is remembered! b. His story has helped many people J.Oswald Sanders/Charles Spurgeon
1. My story: I turned away from position/attention/power – then it came to me