

More on Jeremiah Contrasting the Two Options on Trust

by Bob Hoekstra

Trusting in God brings spiritual blessing, growth, and fruitfulness, while trusting in man leads to spiritual barrenness.

Scripture: Jeremiah 17:7

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Bob Hoekstra preaches on the importance of trusting in the Lord rather than in man, highlighting the contrasting outcomes of spiritual barrenness when relying on man and great blessings when depending on God. He emphasizes that trusting in the Lord is like a tree planted by the waters, symbolizing a flourishing spiritual life that continues to grow and bear fruit even in challenging times.

Transcript

Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength . . . Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but her leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit. (Jeremiah 17:5a, 7-8)

Again, we consider Jeremiah's contrasting the two options on trust. As we noted, there are only two choices: man or God. When man is the object of our hope, the result is the curse of spiritual barrenness. "Cursed is the man who trusts in man." Contrariwise, when God is the object of our dependence, the result is great blessing. "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD."

The spiritual blessing that comes from trusting in the Lord is likened to a tree that is growing by the continual flow of a river. "For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters." The riverside is the ideal location for developing a flourishing tree. Trusting in the Lord is the only setting in which a flourishing spiritual life can be developed. A tree that is located by the river sends out its roots to take in more and more life-giving water: "which spreads out its roots by the river." The Christian who is hoping in the Lord finds the life his inner man cherishes, and he reaches out for more of that life for which he yearns.

When the heat of drought comes, it is a dreadful threat to plant-life (unless the plant is located beside a sufficient river). When the heat of battle or impossible circumstances arise, they can pose a fearful threat. Even a child of God is tempted to be anxious. However, if the Lord is our hope, we "will not fear when heat comes . . . and will not be anxious in the year of drought." Instead, we will continue in growth and spiritual fruitfulness. "Her leaf will be green, and will not . . . cease from yielding fruit."

What radically different results come from trusting in God (instead of hoping in man). We receive spiritual blessing (instead of a cursing). Our spiritual life is like a luxuriant tree beside a river (instead of like a shrub in the desert). We experience the grace resources of God (instead of the flesh resources of man).

Dear God, I praise You for the abundant grace that flows from You into my heart every time I trust in You. It is blessing beyond measure. Nothing else could ever keep me from fear and anxiety. Nothing less could ever bring growth and fruitfulness in the midst of threatening circumstances. You are my hope day by day, Amen.

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