

**Welcome:** We would like to welcome you here today for our worship service with our theme today “**Stop Drifting Away from the Lord**” and our text today is Jeremiah 13:1-17. This is message 12 in our series “Trials of the Prophets.” “Note” the messages each week are also available on the sermon player on our web page [www.lightofchristwi.org](http://www.lightofchristwi.org).

### Sermon Outline

1. What is God telling you in the context?

---

2. What are you hearing from the story, what verses stand out to you?

---

3. What is Jesus doing in your life right now as you respond to the message?

---

4. How is Jesus challenging you as you listened to today’s message?

---

5. What do you believe Jesus wants you to do this week?

---

---

### KEY THOUGHTS FROM THE MESSAGE

1. **When we are obedient to the Lord we bless others by building up God’s Kingdom.**

Jesus was an amazing example of obedience when it says in Philippians 2:8 says, *He humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.* As we reflect on that verse from Philippians we begin to realize that when we are obedient we give up our will to do the will of our heavenly Father...to build His Kingdom, but this is not easy. Phil. 4:13 says, *I can do all things through him who strengthens me.* *1Chronicles 16:1 Search for the Lord and for his strength; continually seek him.*

2. **When I stop listening to the Lord I begin to drift away from Him.** What are ways that we can drift away from the Lord like the people in the days of Jeremiah? 1 John 2:15- *Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.* The world is like a giant fishing lure full of temptations that takes our focus off of Jesus. *Hebrews 12:1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up.*

3. **Be alert remembering you are in a spiritual battle and your protection is found in the Lord.** There is a reason animals travel in herds, birds travel in flocks, fish travel in schools and people attend worship together and become a body of believers. Ephesians 6:10-17 *A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.*

4. **“God calls us back to Himself!”** God is forever calling us back to Himself, back to the cross. It is our choice to stay where we are or to return the father’s arms. In God’s mercy and grace, he gives us chance after chance to repent of our sins when we fall short. He does not require us to be perfect, but to turn away from our sin and turn toward him. 1 John 1:9-10 *But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.* <sup>10</sup> *If we claim we have not sinned, we are calling God a liar and showing that his word has no place in our hearts.*

**Message 14 | Series: The Trials of the Prophets | Theme: The Linen Belt | Jeremiah 13:1-17  
| Developed by Pastor Tom Graves Light of Christ Church**

1. Open with prayer
2. Review the guidelines below
3. **Note: Tell the people that as you tell the story to put yourself into the story...be Jeremiah.**
4. Tell the story orally
5. Rebuild the story
6. Read the story
7. Go to the questions of the heart



**TARGET**

We want the participants to understand why they are here and to lay a foundation of the guidelines for small group’s discussions. It is helpful to go over these guidelines briefly every time your huddle meets.

**SMALL GROUP / HUDDLE GUIDELINES**

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT:** This needs to be a place where people feel comfortable opening up and sharing with one another. Below are some guidelines that will help create a safe environment:

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** What is said in the group stays in the group.

**LISTEN:** Let’s value one another during the discussion by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

**PAUSE:** Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares. Give the person sharing the chance to finish and the group the opportunity to consider what was just shared before responding.

**SILENCE:** It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

**NO “CROSS TALK”:** Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

**NO FIXING:** We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement; speak truth, point to Jesus. Don’t try to solve or fix each other.

**NO RESCUING:** When people are sharing something deeply personal, there can be a tendency to try to make them feel better about themselves or the situation by providing immediate condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing. Resist the temptation to rescue people.

**SHARING:** Be sensitive about the amount of time you share.

**BE SELF-AWARE:** Be self-aware of how you are personally effecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

**“I” STATEMENTS:** It’s easy to talk about the issues of others, but for our purposes, we want you to put yourself on the table. Try to use “I” statements rather than “them”, “the church,” “us” “we”, etc.

**LISTEN TO THE STORY:** When the story is being presented the most effective way to understand the story at this point is just listen...don’t try to follow along in your bible. Opening the Bill will come later.

**CONFLICT:** We will commit to resolve conflict biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we want to make sure that we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues. The following are a few key Scriptures in this regard (there are many others)

- If someone sins against you
  - Matthew 18:15-20
- Restoring someone in sin:
  - Galatians 6:1-5
- Forgive a sinner:
  - Colossians 3:12-13
- Reconciling differences
  - Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 7:1-5

**Message 14 / Series: The Trials of the Prophets / Theme: The Line Belt / Jeremiah 13:1-17 / Developed by Pastor Tom Graves Light of Christ Church**

### **Chapter 13:1-17**

#### *Jeremiah’s Linen Loincloth*

This is what the Lord said to me: “Go and buy a linen loincloth and put it on, but do not wash it.”

<sup>2</sup> So I bought the loincloth as the Lord directed me, and I put it on.

<sup>3</sup> Then the Lord gave me another message: <sup>4</sup> “Take the linen loincloth you are wearing, and go to the Euphrates River. Hide it there in a hole in the rocks.” <sup>5</sup> So I went and hid it by the Euphrates as the Lord had instructed me.

<sup>6</sup> A long time afterward the Lord said to me, “Go back to the Euphrates and get the loincloth I told you to hide there.” <sup>7</sup> So I went to the Euphrates and dug it out of the hole where I had hidden it. But now it was rotting and falling apart. The loincloth was good for nothing.

<sup>8</sup> Then I received this message from the Lord: <sup>9</sup> “This is what the Lord says: This shows how I will rot away the pride of Judah and Jerusalem. <sup>10</sup> These wicked people refuse to listen to me. They stubbornly follow their own desires and worship other gods. Therefore, they will become like this loincloth—good for nothing! <sup>11</sup> As a loincloth clings to a man’s waist, so I created Judah and Israel to cling to me, says the Lord. They were to be my people, my pride, my glory—an honor to my name. But they would not listen to me.

<sup>12</sup> “So tell them, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: May all your jars be filled with wine.’ And they will reply, ‘Of course! Jars are made to be filled with wine!’

<sup>13</sup> “Then tell them, ‘No, this is what the Lord means: I will fill everyone in this land with drunkenness—from the king sitting on David’s throne to the priests and the prophets, right down to the common people of Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> I will smash them against each other, even parents against children, says the Lord. I will not let my pity or mercy or compassion keep me from destroying them.’ ”

#### *A Warning against Pride*

<sup>15</sup> Listen and pay attention!

Do not be arrogant, for the Lord has spoken.

<sup>16</sup> Give glory to the Lord your God

before it is too late.

Acknowledge him before he brings darkness upon you,

causing you to stumble and fall on the darkening mountains.

For then, when you look for light,

you will find only terrible darkness and gloom.

<sup>17</sup> And if you still refuse to listen,

I will weep alone because of your pride.

My eyes will overflow with tears,

because the Lord’s flock will be led away into exile.

Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Je 13:1-17). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

### Questions of the Heart

1. Why would the Lord want to use such a visual demonstration with Jeremiah as a loincloth (Underwear)?
2. In verse 10 it says the wicked people do not listen to the Lord. Why don't they want to listen to the Lord?
  - a. What prevents us from listening to the Lord?
3. In verse 10b it says they stubbornly follow their own desires and worship other gods.
  - a. How does following our own stubborn desires always get us in trouble?
  - b. Who are you thinking about when you follow your own stubborn desires and why is that so dangerous in a spiritual sense.
4. The loincloth rotted away because it was in a bad environment and not taken care of. How can we rot away spiritually by drifting away from the Lord and not taking care of ourselves spiritually?
  - a. If we have drifted away from the Lord how can we come back to Him?
5. How can our sinful behavior make us good for nothing?
6. The first commandment is...Do not worship other gods. Why do you think the Lord made this the foundational number one commandment?
7. Verse 11 says...As a loincloth clings to a man's waist, so I created Judah and Israel to cling to me, says the Lord.
  - a. Why does a child cling to its mother?
  - b. Why would the Lord want Judah and Israel to cling to him?
  - c. What usually happens when we think we are so grown up that we no longer need parental guidance and we don't need to cling to the Lord?
  - d. What happens to Israel when they believe they don't need the Lord's guidance...where does that lead them?
8. *<sup>11</sup> As a loincloth clings to a man's waist, so I created Judah and Israel to cling to me, says the Lord. They were to be my people, my pride, my glory—an honor to my name. But they would not listen to me.*
  - a. What did Judah and Israel give up when they would not listen to the Lord?
  - b. What do we give up when we don't listen to the Lord?
9. What happens in a work environment when we don't listen to our supervisor?
10. When you run a particular machine most of us know it has a certain sound and when it does not sound the same it is often indicating something is wrong?
  - a. How can listening to the Lord help us to know if something in our life is wrong?
11. How does being arrogant affect our relationships with others? How does being arrogant affect our relationship with God? (Arrogance - exaggerating or disposed to exaggerate one's own worth or importance often by an overbearing manner)
12. Why will being arrogant cause you to stumble?

- a. Why is it difficult to work with people who are arrogant?
  - b. If I am arrogant...what do I need to do to change and how do I accomplish that...who will help me?
13. Read verse 17? What will be the end of Jerusalem if they don't listen to God, and how could this be prevented? What would they need to do to start listening to the Lord? What do we need to do to better listen to the Lord?
- a. Tell about a time when listening to the Lord made a difference in your life or a time when you did not listen and it had a very bad effect on you.
  - b. How can listening to the Lord change your life?
  - c. How can I improve my ability to listen to the Lord?
14. Jerusalem receives one warning after another that they must shape up or they will be taken over by another country...but it falls on deaf ears. What is going on in our heart that we blow off one warning after another by the Lord? What is the purpose of the Lord giving Jerusalem warnings?
15. How can being in denial about my own sin affect me and those around me?
16. What does this story tell us about the Lord?
17. What does this story tell us about man?

### **Application and accountability**

1. What is our theme for our message this today?
2. As you reflect on this story what is the Lord telling you that you need to do or maybe change in your life? Why is that a challenge for you? How can we hold you accountable to accomplish what the Lord wants you to do?
3. Who do you think needs to hear this story?

### **Close with prayer**