

“The Problem with Enthusiasm”

Jeremiah 1:4-10

INTRODUCTION:

A common saying – “What we need is more enthusiasm!”

I. “ENTHUSIASM” IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS NOT ALWAYS GOOD

- A. “Enthusiasm” is a negative thing as seen in our Lutheran theological textbook: *The Book of Concord* (1530 AD)
- B. Enthusiasm is a spiritual illness that puts our trust in my feelings, my faith & my deeds and not in God.
- C. We all are guilty of being “closet enthusiasts” & this has been true since Adam & Eve.

II. JEREMIAH WAS ALSO CAUGHT UP IN THIS SELF-CENTERED “ENTHUSIASM”

- A. When Jeremiah was called by God to be His prophet, **THREE** times he tried to give an “enthusiastic” self-centered excuse: “**I said... I don’t know how... I am only a youth” (Jeremiah 1:6)**
- B. But in Jeremiah 1:4-10, there are **18 references** to the LORD & His Word
- C. God replaces Jeremiah’s subjective, self-centered “**I-enthusiasm**” with the objective promise of His Word & promise (Note also Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)



III. OUR LOVING GOD DECLARES TO JEREMIAH & TO US THAT HE IS THE BASIS FOR OUR HOPE, NOT THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF “ME, MYSELF & I”

- A. God assures Jeremiah of His trustworthiness by addressing Jeremiah’s senses of hearing, sight & touch (Jeremiah 1:9)
- B. John speaks of this same “multi-media” assurance in the person of Jesus (1 John 1:1-2)... **this is good news!**
- C. God does the same for us as He assures us as we hear His Word, see the wonders of water, bread & wine in Baptism & Communion and as our lips touch the body & blood of Jesus in the bread and wine... **this is good news!**
- D. God makes the first move to us & will not even let our sinful “enthusiasm” prevent Him from loving us (Romans 5:6; Luke 15:20)... **this is good news!**
- E. He calls us as He called Jeremiah to be His spokesmen & spokeswomen of good news

CONCLUSION: *The middle verse in the entire Bible... a wonderful verse (Psalm 118:8)*