

MISSION 2020 = TOWER GROVE
ENJOY GRACE – JEREMIAH 29:4-14

SCRIPTURE & SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – SEPTEMBER 20

OPEN

1. What do you find most of your energy and attention going to these days?

This week, we begin a short series reflecting on our mission to enjoy grace, embody love, and engage culture in the challenging season. Pastor Curtis invited us consider God's word through the prophet Jeremiah in the context of the Babylonian exile—an experience in Israel's history where their entire way of life was disrupted and their future uncertain. **READ JEREMIAH 29:4-14.**

DISCUSS

2. Jeremiah was not the only prophet speaking to God's people at this time. There was also the false prophet Hananiah. We learn in chapter 28 that he was telling people the exile would be over soon (68 years sooner!) giving them a false hope and comfort.
 - a. As you think about the competing voices we are faced with daily, what has been your attitude to God's word? How do you engage God's word throughout the week?
 - b. How does Pastor Curtis's explanation of **spoken grace** challenge the attitude you've had? What can you commit to in this season beyond more regular reading-praying or journaling as you read? Memorization? Deeper study?
3. How do you think persevering through a difficult season expresses itself differently when we are relying on God's grace as opposed to our own strength?
4. In a similar vein, Pastor Curtis asked to consider what we've given ourselves over to find comfort or a sense of control. Where have these temptations arisen for you? Are there any "good" or "healthy" things you're depending on in an unhealthy manner?
5. In verses 5-7, the LORD has a clear calling and purpose for his people even though they are in exile, longing for something else. What is one way you were pursuing God and pursuing others before this season that you've assumed is just on hold? How might you reengage that calling in this season?
6. In referring to God's **sanctifying grace**, Pastor Curtis challenged us with the simple but profound truth that God can use suffering in our lives to draw us closer to him. He drew our attention to verses 12 & 13: "*Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*" What do you sense the Lord is pruning from your life so you will abide in Him more fully? How can you more willingly receive this "severe mercy"?
7. How have you experienced the Lord's **sustaining grace** in this season? How are you asking him to show up in this next season?

PRAY

As you transition to a time of prayer, have some one slowly read out loud Hebrews 4:14-16. Praise the Father for the grace we have through Jesus, our great high priest, and ask the Spirit to open our eyes, our hearts, and our hands to what he has in store for us.