A Successful Failure – Jeremiah's Example

Ken Chapman · Jeremiah 1:17–19

INTRODUCTION

- This time of year is or can be at least a powerful time for us. It should be a time of reflection as you look back upon this past year.
- I want to challenge you in your spiritual growth to not to be overwhelmed by the maybe a hundred things that you need to change and improve in your life, but what's one thing?
- This oxymoron that we see from the life of Jeremiah that I hope will be our motto as well. That Jeremiah, the prophet of God, could be seen as a successful failure.

1 Jeremiah, You're Going to Be a Failure

Jeremiah 1:17–19; Jeremiah 7:26–27; Jeremiah 26:7–8

- Jeremiah is going to preach for approximately 40 years to this nation. And at the end of that 40 years of preaching, of pleading with them to repent, they haven't repented.
- Therefore, prepare yourself and arise and speak to them all that I command you. And do not be dismayed before their faces, lest I dismay you before them.
- They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I'm with you, says the Lord, to deliver you.
- Therefore you shall speak all these words to them, but they will not obey you. You shall also call to them, but they will not answer you.
- The people rebelled against the word of God. They sought to kill Jeremiah. And they did not repent.

2 Jeremiah Was Truly a Successful Failure

- Jeremiah was a success because Jeremiah did what God told him to do.
- God said, speak to them, they won't listen. Preach to them, they won't repent, but do it anyway.
- And so Jeremiah did what a servant of God should do. He preached anyway. He pleaded anyway.
- I believe you could make the argument, the effective argument that Jesus, by the same standard of Jeremiah, was a successful failure.
- Here's a man who came to be the Savior of His people, but his own people mocked him, spat upon him, and put him to death.

3 The Church Will Be a Successful Failure

Ephesians 4:8–13

- The church, the New Testament church being born out and lived out today, will be, like Jeremiah and like our Savior before us, will be a successful failure.
- What made Jeremiah truly a success is that he was able, even through his discouragements and the despondency, he was able to keep his eye on the big picture.

- And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,.
- If we do things God's way, if we focus upon the spiritual rather than the carnal, like Jeremiah, we'll be a glorious successful failure.

4 Successful Failures in Our Evangelism

2 Corinthians 2:14–16

- Every time the gospel is taught in its simplicity and truth, every time the word of God is delivered, it's a success.
- Every time the apostle Paul planted the word of God, it was a success. Whether he could see the increase or not.
- But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of his knowledge in every place.
- Some will listen, some will reject, but either way, God leads us in triumph.

5 By What Measure Will You Measure Your Family?

- By what gauge, by what measure will you measure your family? A success or a failure?
- If you've raised your children in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord, if both by your teaching and by your example you've imparted unto them the importance of living a life in God.

6 What About Your Own Personal Life?

- Are you a Jeremiah? Do you get discouraged? Do you feel like you're the only one and nobody's listening and nobody's doing what they ought to do?
- You stumble and fall, but you get back up. You come back to Him and you live for Him.
- It's okay to be a failure by the world's standards. As long as you're a successful failure.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Serve God to the best of your ability. Recognizing you won't receive the rewards in this life, the accolades, the applause in this life. But you can truly be a success in the eyes of Him for whom we live.**

MY NOTES