“Begin the New Year with the Basics!”
Jeremiah 15: 16

Introduction:

**IMAG – Consider our text this morning - Jeremiah 15: 16**

“Your words were found, and I ate them,
And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name,
O Lord God of hosts.”

**Context of this verse –**

- **The prophet Jeremiah** served during the final years of the southern kingdom (626-586 b.c.). **Late Seventh Century b.c.**
- Jeremiah lived during the reigns of seven kings of Judah....
- **The Book of Jeremiah** provides a record of the sermons, discourses, symbolic actions, and prophetic utterances of the prophet. ....
- The book points to the inevitable and inescapable judgment of God upon Israel for her rebellion and disobedience.
  - Because of idolatry and sinful indulgence, God’s wrath will fall upon the Hebrew nation in the form of the coming captivity (586-538 b.c.).
  - Jeremiah continually sought, though in vain, to turn the people back to God.
- **The Book of Jeremiah reveals much about the personal feelings of the prophet** himself, including his reluctance with regard to the divine call to a prophetic ministry (1:5-8), and his lament over his circumstances as a true prophet of Yahweh (Jer 15:10; 20:7-18). ....the book represents the grief and heartaches of the “weeping prophet”
- He was a young man at the beginning of his ministry (1:6), and evidently, in obedience to the command of God (16:1-4) he remained unmarried throughout his life.
- Judging from his purchase of the field from Hanamel (32:8-10), he was a man of means.
- As a faithful and true prophet of Yahweh, Jeremiah often stood alone among the religious leaders of his day and his countrymen (e.g., 26:8, 9; 27:16-18), and even among his family and in the city of his birth (11:21; 12:6).
- His life truly exemplified the statement of Jesus, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house” (Matt 13:57).

Chapter 15 of Jeremiah’s prophesy falls in the section of ‘the Pronouncement of God’s judgment’ warning of the coming Captivity –

- **Notice** - In the midst of pronouncing judgment, the prophet himself finds hope in the Word of God
- **15: 19** – it is a Word of promise – “will bring you back; You shall stand before Me...” Restoration/ but also
- **15: 20** – a Word of protection over His life “I will make you to this people a fortified bronze wall... they shall not prevail against you; for I am with you to save you and deliver you.”
Here in this one verse of 15:16, we also find hope and victory in our daily life.

Consider several Key Aspects of a Victorious Life in a world of defeat that calls each one to Begin the New Year with the Basics’ –

Illus. - In 1959, Vince Lombardi became a head coach in the NFL for the first time in his life - at the age of 45. (IMAG – Display a picture of the couch)

• The team: The Green Bay Packers.

• His preseason training method: In a word ... brutal.

• His team’s track record could be summed up in three words: They were bad.

• With a football in his hand, Head Coach Lombardi walked into the locker room of defeated men, and stood before a team that had suffered from massive losses - and had only won two out of the last 12 the season before.

• They were demoralized, humiliated and suffered from a lack of confidence. It wasn’t that they didn’t want to win. It wasn’t that they didn’t work hard during practice. And it wasn’t that on game day they wanted to lose yet another game in front of a live crowd. Nope. Something else was at work here. And Coach Lombardi knew he had his work cut out for him.

• As he stood there before them for several quiet seconds, he contemplated what he should say to this motley crew. Then he held out the pigskin in front of him, and spoke arguably the most famous quote in football history: “Gentlemen, this is a football!”

• His communication was highly effective because Lombardi openly confirmed what everyone already knew, that he would assume nothing about their skills, abilities or motivation ... and he would take them back to where they belonged. He would take them back to the basics.

• You see, all these men were highly competitive. They lived to play the game on the highest level. They worked incredibly hard ... they just forgot something in all their effort. They forgot to do the basics. And Coach Lombardi knew it. So ... he would teach them the meaning of virtuosity.

That’s what I want to do this morning – ‘THIS A BIBLE’

• Challenge you to begin with the Basics in your life as a Christ-follower

• I want to call to your mind something that you may have neglected, or become complacent about... or something to reaffirm as you begin the new year!

• John 8: 31 – Jesus said, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.”
1. BEGIN WITH THE BASICS BY **DISCOVERING** GOD’S WORD.

Notice – in the context of Jeremiah announcing judgment on the rebellious and sinfully stubborn people who were opposed to him and resistant to His message from the Lord, Jeremiah announces –

**IMAG** – 15: 16a *“Your Words were found,”*
- Jeremiah made an amazing discovery – the Word of God for His own life
- For he was proclaiming God’s Word for the rebellious people of Jerusalem... a message of coming judgment
- But now He discovers God’s Word for his own life!

*Q.* – Have you discovered God’s Word for your own life?
- So often we discover God’s Word for someone else’s life...
- But what about your life, your relationships, your struggles, your search????

Consider several key elements to discover God’s Word for your daily life –

**a. Daily Pursuit**
- Just as one pursues food daily for physical nourishment, so one should pursue the spiritual food of the Word for your spiritual nourishment.

**IMAG** - Display
- *Matthew 4: 4* – in the context of Jesus being 40 days without food, the devil tempted Him & notice his response –
  “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’”
- Thus, the discovery of God’s Word in our personal life should be a DAILY PURSUIT!

- **Truth:** *With the opening of each day, there should be the opening of God’s Word!*

**b. Daily Priority**
- Our priorities reveal what is most important in our lives...
- As a Christ follower, our daily priority should be our relationship with our King Jesus!
- **IMAG** - Display
- *Matthew 6: 33* – Jesus spoke of priorities - “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

*Quote* – “*The Things that are most consistent in life are most important!*”

*Challenge* – Rearrange your priorities to make your relationship with the Lord the priority of your day by discovering His Word.
c. Daily **Passion**

- Some question passion in the spiritual life of a Christ-follower, but have you ever viewed the passion of a “fan” of a football team?

**IMAG - Display**

- Psalm 42: 1,2 - “As the deer pants for the water brooks,
  *So pants my soul for You, O God.*
  *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*
  *When shall I come and appear before God?*

**Q. – When is the last time you “panted” for God and His Word?**

- We are to have a “desperate dependence” for the Lord and His Word

**Challenge – Make the prayer of the Psalmist a prayer for daily discovers in your own life** – **IMAG** – display verses

- Psalm 5: 3 – a practice in your life – “*My voice You shall hear in the morning, O Lord; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up.*”
- Psalm 143: 8 – “*Cause me to hear Your loving-kindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You.*”

**Several Practical Helps to Discovering the Word daily :**

i. **Find a Place** – away from distractions

ii. **Make preparation** – Bible, journal, pen

iii. **Establish a priority** – first of every day ... no matter what!

**Mark 1: 35** – “*Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.*”

**Be like Jesus** – “*Determine to see the face of the Father before you see the face of any man!*”

**Q. - Did you know .....?** According to a study of Princeton University...

- that approximately 90% of what we do every day is governed by the habits of our lives?
- that if you do the same thing every day for **28 consecutive days** it will become a habit?

**Quote - C.S. Lewis said** “*The moment you wake up each morning, all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists in shoving it all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other, larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in.*”
2. BEGIN WITH THE BASICS BY DIGESTING GOD’S WORD.

Notice – what was occurring in Jeremiah’s life in the O.T. IS what the Lord desires to occur daily in our lives under the New Covenant –

IMAG – 15: 16b – “Your Words were found, (DISCOVERY) And I ate them,” (DIGEST)

Q. - What does it mean when Jeremiah says, “I ate God’s Words?”
- does it mean that he physically chewed up and ate the pages on which God’s Word was written?
- It is a figure of speech which refers to ‘Partaking’ or ‘Intaking’ the Word in life
- i.e. – Jeremiah ‘internalized’ the Word for His own heart and life

Q. – Have you ever EATEN & DIGESTED/ INTERNALIZED God’s Word?
- Jesus calls His disciples to ‘abide’ in His Word
- Jesus calls His followers to live by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God
- Jesus calls us allow the Word to abide in us – John 15

Consider several basic aspects of DIGESTING God’s Word

a. READ Daily the Word of God.

- Simply a daily schedule that will guide you to read through the entire Bible this year
- Great goal to read through the Bible in a year

IMAG – Display Day 1 on the One Year Bible Reading Plan– Scripture reading – January 1
- Notice the breakdown of the reading....
- O.T, N.T, Psalm, Proverbs, reading

Key thought – Read aloud the Word of God – Romans 10: 17 OR Listen to an audio version of the Bible

IMAG – Display “YouVersion of the Bible” and key a demo of audio reading of Genesis 1: 1-3…. From NLT..

b. WRITE down what God is speaking to you.

Truth: If a daily time with God in the Word is important, then it is important to write down what He is saying to you!

IMAG – Display 3 things
3 things to Journal from the Word –

i. **Daily Insight from the Word** – i.e. out of all you read, what is one promise, principle God spoke to you

ii. **Daily Application of the Word to life** – how will you respond to the Word?

iii. **Daily Prayer of the Word to life** – write out a simple and sincere prayer to what you have read

**Illus.** – I sense with clarity and confidence where God is leading me and what He is calling me to do by my daily journal in the Word.

- My experience last year – God calling me from pastoring... to National Kingdom ministry of Pastor for Pastors through NAMB

- **IMAG** – My daily blog – is a simple example share with you of how to journal - display web address - ‘pastorforpastors@blogspot.com’

c. **STUDY** weekly the Bible with a group.

- Find and **be committed to** a Bible study group weekly.
- **Be accountable** and don’t miss

- **Important to recognize** – in a growing church like FBCW to be in a small group,... Members who are involved in small group show greater signs of spiritual growth, spiritual maturity, and victory!

**Hebrews 10: 24, 25** – is our Biblical basis for small groups –
**IMAG** – display “**let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**”

d. **OBEY** promptly what God speaks to you.

**IMAG** - display

**James 1: 22a** – “**be doers of the word, and not hearers only,**”

Use the acrostic S-P-A-C-E :

- **S** - Confess any known **sin**
- **P** - Claim any **promise**
- **A** - Change any **attitude**
- **C** - Obey any **command**
- **E**. - Follow any **example**
e. **SHARE** what you are learning with others.

**IMAG** – Display reference

- 2 Timothy 2: 2 – *And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*
- the call to multiply and reproduce yourself spiritually...

- **Practice of sharing what you learn with others** is beneficial in several relationships:
  - Marriage
  - Family devotion with children
  - Discipleship / mentorship
  - Witnessing opportunities

3. **BEGIN WITH THE BASICS BY**

**DELIGHTING** IN GOD’S WORD!

**Notice** – in a world of defeat, Jeremiah was finding Victory by his *Discover of the Word, His Digesting the Word, and also.. His Delight*...

**IMAG** – display with emphasis – 15: 16c –  
"Your Words were found, (DISCOVERY) and I ate them, (DIGEST) and YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART;" (DELIGHT)

Consider several aspects of joy that God’s Word brings –

a. **The Father speaks a Word into your heart.**

- As you bend your life and open God’s Word in daily devotion to Him, He “speaks a Word in season” *(Isaiah 50: 4)* every day.

**IMAG** – display verse

- Hebrews 4: 12  *“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*

b. **The Lord guides You by His Word.**

**IMAG** -

- Psalm 32: 8, 11 - “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye…. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”
c. The Lord draws You closer to His heart.

**IMAG -**
- John 14: 21 - Jesus said, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

*Illus.* – Picture this verse in a Cycle – the Word comes to you, you obey the Word, express love to the Father, the Father reveals Himself to you...

**Q. – What is your view of the Word of God?**
- Drudgery – something that you do not like and try to avoid... like a new exercise plan
- Delight – something that causes you joy and excitement...
  - Encourage you to Change your attitude toward the Word!

*Illus* – the single young lady who read a book... it was boring.. but then she met a man who authored the book... it became the most exciting book of her life. Why? Because of her relationship with the author!

Fall in Love with the Author of the Bible!

**CONCLUSION:**
“*This is the Bible*” – it is God’s Word for your life!

“*Begin with the Basics*” spiritually – begin with the basics by committing yourself to daily read the Word & weekly study the Word in a small group.

**IMAG** – Display challenges –

**‘BEYOND THE SERMON’ CHALLENGES –**

1) **READ DAILY** – go to [https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/60-the-one-year-bible](https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/60-the-one-year-bible) ... and begin on January 1 to set aside 30 minutes to 1 hour daily to read the Word and journal.

2) **STUDY WEEKLY** – make a commitment to join and be active every week in a small group... out of 52 weeks of 2014 commit to be here as much as possible.

3) **SHARE DAILY** – what you are reading and studying from God's Word – 2 Tim. 2:2 – reproduce yourself

4) **MEMORIZE THIS WEEK** – Jeremiah 15: 16 and make it a daily spiritual exercise in your life for the new year.

**Q. – Do you know the Author of this Book? Are you saved?**

**Preached:** First Baptist Church  Woodstock **12-29-2013** 9:30 & 11 a.m. services