

## WORSHIPING ON THE LORD'S DAY

February 19, 2017

*Worship, as God intended, is a supernatural event. As we enter into this service of worship, we cross the threshold of the secular to the sacred, from the common to the uncommon, from the profane to the holy. Prepare yourself therefore for this most holy convocation!*

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Prelude

Worship Theme

God is Long-Suffering

Jeremiah 15:15: "Thou who knowest, O Lord, remember me, take notice of me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. Do *not*, in view of Thy patience, take me away; know that for Thy sake I endure reproach."

**God Calls us to Worship Before the Cross** Ps. 86:8-10

+We Adore Him

Hymn #95, "Though Troubles Assail Us"

We Confess Our Sin

Sovereign Lord, Your will is supreme in heaven and earth, and all beings are creatures under Your power. You are the Father of our spirits; Your illumination gives us understanding; Your providence governs our lives. But, O God, we are sinners in Your sight; You have judged us so, and if we deny it we make You to be a liar.

Yet in Christ You are reconciled to Your rebellious subjects; give us the ear of faith to hear Him, the eye of faith to see Him, the hand of faith to receive Him, the appetite of faith to feed on Him; that we might find in Him light, grace, and eternal life. You are the inviting one; may we hearken to You, the almighty instructor; may we live more to You, the light dweller, inaccessible to men and angels, hiding Yourself behind the elements of creation, but known to us in Jesus. Possess our minds with the grandeur of Your perfections. Your love to us in Jesus is firm and changeless; no thing can separate us from it; and in the enjoyment of it, nothing can make us miserable. Preserve us from formality and hypocrisy in religion; enable us to remember what You are and what we are, to recall Your holiness and our unworthiness; help us to approach You clothed with humility, for in our hearts are vanity, forwardness,

backwardness to duty, and misguided affections. Let us never forget Your patience, wisdom, power, faithfulness, care; and may we never cease to respond to Your invitations. In Jesus' name, amen!

We Thank Him For His Forgiveness

Hymn #8, "Mighty God, While Angels Bless Thee"

**God Calls us to Worship Thru Dedication** Ps. 86:1-3

We Give Him Our Offering & Concerns

We Give Him Ourselves

Hymn #345, "Glorious Things Of Thee Are Spoken"

**God Calls us to Worship Thru Fellowship** Ps. 86:11

We Read His Word

Sermon

\*We Partake Of The Lord's Supper

Hymn #465, "Marvelous Grace Of Our Loving Lord"

**God Blesses us in the Benediction**

Welcome and Announcements

Postlude

(Containers have been placed at the front for communion cups and small trash)

+You are invited to raise your hands during the prayer of adoration.

\*Visitors, please see note below on the Lord's Supper.

## The Forging of a Servant of God, Pt. 3a

Ezekiel 1-4

Study Notes for February 19, 2017

### I. Introduction: The Commission of the Great Commission

### II. The Forging of a Servant of God, Ezk. 1-4.

A. His Audience, Ezk. 1:4-28; 2:6; 3:22-23.

B. His Strength, Ezk. 2:1-2, 8-10; 3:22-24.

### C. His Commission, Ezk. 2:3-4, 7; 3:16-21.

#### 1. Service in the Kingdom of God means Ministering to Sinners, Ezk. 2:3-4.

This passage describes the people to whom Ezekiel was called to minister under multiple titles...

-rebellious (v. 3): מַרְדָּד (marad)

-transgressors (v. 3): פְּשָׁע (pasha)

-stubborn (v. 4): קָשָׁה (qāšeh) & פָּנָה (paneh)

-obstinate (v. 4): חֲזָאֵק (chazaq)

...of these four words used to describe the people to whom Ezekiel was called to minister, the most frequently used word in this chapter is "rebellious" (used 9x)!

**Why do you suppose God lays so much stress on the wickedness of the people Ezekiel was called to serve?** (cf. Jn. 15:20a; Acts 9:15-16; Jer. 12:6; Ps. 55:12-14; Jn. 16:2-3)...

**\*Point:** What a hard lesson to learn when it comes to ministering in God's Kingdom! Though we are a forgiven people, nevertheless we are saturated with sin; there still resides in us a fallen humanness! Accordingly we will be hurt by the very ones we are trying to help!

#### \*Where We Live

1. We will be hurt in ministry... that is a given. Yet the question is, "Will we do the hurting?"

2. In light of the above, it is important that we understand God's program for dealing with violation and hurt- specifically Mt. 18:15-20. What, based on this passage, ought we to do when we are hurt by another in the body?

3. The Bottom Line: The call of ministry is a call to conflict and suffering from the very ones we are seeking to help! So, don't be naïve! That is the ministry!

#### 2. Service in the Kingdom of God Includes the Call not to Fear Man, Ezk. 2:6.

**Knowing that we are ministering to rebels, what are we to do?** We must be careful that we not fear (1) them, (2) their words, (3) the impact of their words or doings, or that we not be intimidated at or avoid their presence! That is the idea behind the exhortations in this text. Consider the primary word...

-fear: יָרָא (yare)

Illustration: You know the word כָּבַד (kabad)...

...to "fear man" is to attribute a weight to them that is unhealthy. It is to be moved more by their words, opinions, wants,

desires, needs, rather than God! That is why we read such passages as...

Mt. 10:28

Deut. 10:12a

Josh. 1:9

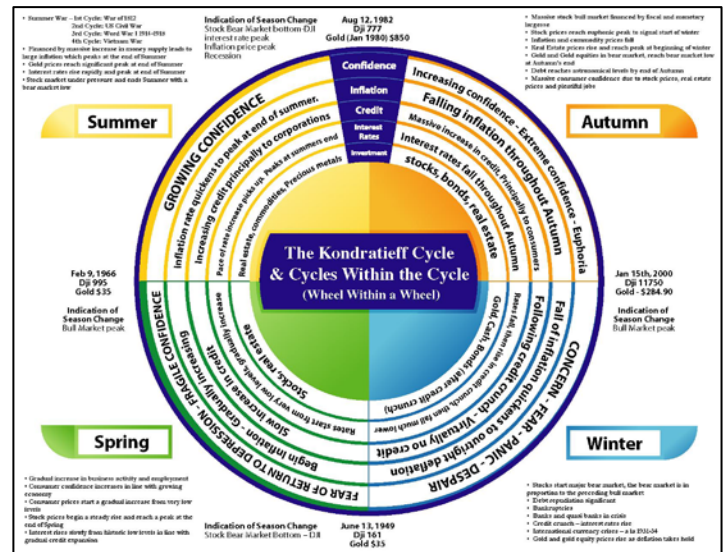
What specifically here was Ezekiel called NOT to “fear” when it came to those to whom he was called to minister? Three things...

1. First, Ezekiel was NOT to “fear THEM”!
2. Second, Ezekiel was NOT to “fear THEIR WORDS” and so the impact of their words!
3. Third, Ezekiel was NOT to “be dismayed at their presence” and so be intimidated by their education, position, power, wealth, or influence.

When we “fear man” there can be absolutely nothing good that will come as a result. In the short run, it might appear that we are avoiding a storm of hurt feelings, broken relationships, and the like. But all you will be doing is delaying it as well as stoking it!

Illustration: Kondratieff Cycles

...that is exactly what you do in ministry if, most frequently on account of fear, you avoid addressing the sin, sickness, frailty of an individual or ministry. The problem does not go away, but only festers and churns under the surface (cf. Prov. 29:25; Ps. 111:10)...



\*Note: in contrast, “understand” what will happen in a life or ministry that “fears the Lord”! Individually or corporately it will (1) avoid sin, Ex. 20:20, (2) walk in God’s ways and advance in love for the Lord, Deut. 10:12-13, (3) grow in humility and deference both to God and man, Deut. 17:20, (4) enjoy increase, Acts 9:31, and (5) advance in holiness, 2 Cor. 7:1.

\*Where We Live

1. Do you see the important connection between Ezekiel 1 & 2? What is it?
2. What happens if out of the fear of man we avoid conflict?
3. In light of this, what does the ministry call for? Cf. Phil. 2:20-21!
4. You say, “I want to be driven exclusively by the fear/reverence of Christ. But in my sin I am so timid! What ought I to do?” cf. Deut. 17:18-19

John Taylor wrote, “To judge from his subsequent ministry, Ezekiel does not give the impression of being anything but fearless. It is almost as if he is immune to the many human reactions of fear and inadequacy and sorrow that dog most of God’s servants. It is therefore all the more illuminating to see the repeated way in which God has to tell him to be free of his natural fears and not to be *dismayed at their looks*.” (Ezekiel, TOTC, p. 65)