

# **Ridin' High Cowboy Church**

**8771 FM 35**

**Union Valley/Royse City, TX**

**Pastor: Steve Bishop**

**September 25, 2016 – Heritage – Definition: something passed down from preceding generations**

The reason we have this church is a strong belief that God not only wants good things for us but for us to instill this in future generations.

Caidee and I like to go exploring on our land and the land around us. Everywhere we look we see fences my grandad built, a 70 year old barn (that we still use), trees that he planted, and bridges he built.

We often read verses like this with a “what’s in it for me” attitude instead of understand “heritage” and how God views the world

***Jeremiah 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”***

If this does not work out, we say...

1. Well, this must not have been from God, or
2. We say I must have done something bad or my faith is not strong enough...

Maybe it’s we don’t understand this verse.

We read the Bible like we look at a yearbook, we look for the pictures we are in...

Context – this letter was written to Jews in Babylonian exile in a specific time 587 BC. According to context rule: This promise was not made to me and you but it does apply to us if we understand it in context. So we need to look at the principles of this passage to get our application for today. The problem: If we apply 29:11 as a promise to us and then bad stuff happens to us, we say that was not from God. God does not say, “Steve, I really wanted good stuff for you but the devil wouldn’t let me.” God has the devil on a leash.

***This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon:***

The God of the Bible is a spanner, he loves you enough to spank you all the way back home. Many times I wished my parents didn't love me so much to spank me so much!

God's discipline is like a FENCE.

Many times fences are painful (electric, barbed wire) but the slight pain of the fence is less painful than what is on the other side (highway...18 wheeler).

We set fences far enough away from the danger that to hit the fence is OK.

Human Fence: a personal limit on behavior that becomes a matter of conscience.

Our culture has tried to set up some boundaries but they are not fences... Example: culture says "drink responsibly" ...what exactly does that mean? By the time you begin to wonder if you're being responsible you've had enough not to care.

Sex – "wait until you're ready" – I can't imagine how that conversation goes, "are you ready?" "I think so" "well, I feel like I was born ready" Talk to your kids about drugs...

Ephesus was the worst city for morality (the temple had prostitutes). This follows a list of things we should not do.

***Ephesians 5:15-18 15 Be very careful, then how you live*** (Live=walk in some versions, it really means watch where you step) – ***not as unwise but as wise*** (unwise is careless, wise is with our eyes wide open)

***16 making the most of every opportunity*** (redeeming your time, getting the most out of the time you have here) be intentional with your time the way you would walk if you were close to the edge of a cliff.

***Because the days are evil*** (these are dangerous times and things can go wrong really quickly – finances, marriages, children, morals, temptation...)

***17 Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is*** Paul commands us to understand something, embrace what you know God's plan is for your life (recognize what God's plan is for your life, be honest with yourself, you know what happens when you drive close to that fence. Many people have the tendency to get as close to the fence as possible without touching it. How close to sin can I get without sinning!

Skip to verse 8

***8 Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. 9 They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the LORD.***

What is the lie? The prophets were saying its bad right now but it's going to get better real soon, the prophets were saying what the people wanted to hear (sounds like politicians!)

***10 This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill any gracious promise to bring you back to this place.***

The seventy years only got them to the decree of King Cyrus, the exile lasted from 597 to 444 over 150 years, nobody who heard the promise was alive when it was fulfilled. We want the promise right now, today, nobody who heard it realized it. It's a multi-generational Barn. This concept changes everything. If we understand this type of thinking, we can endure hardship every day and know that God is in control and his faithfulness is not controlled by my circumstances. Maybe what you are going through today will result in blessings for generations to come.

This is best seen in the life of Jesus Christ. He experienced a not so pleasant birth into a terrible world...33 years of hardship, the harsh death on a cross to fulfill a multi-generational promise

***11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.***

***12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me in your heart.***

***14 I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.”***

The “you” in these verses is the community of faith, it's a multi-generational promise. When we understand this is a corporate promise not an individual promise and that it is a multigenerational promise. This is hard to understand because we want the verse that apply only to me and very few of them do, they are made to a group of people - to understand Jer 29:11, we have to understand it's not about ME!

What if God does not answer your prayers for several generations ... is God enough ... we want God to bless our children and let us enjoy it too.

So how do people live if they understand Jer 29:11, in the context it was written (go back to the verses we skipped) principles behind the promise.

***5 “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they***

***produce.*** 1. Bloom where you are planted, be firmly rooted, unpack your bags and join like where you are – create stability for the people around you. ***6***

***Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease.***

v.6 2. Prioritize marriage/children ... this is different from the culture we live in, we put off marriage as long as possible so we can have our fun, make our money, why can't we do that with the person we have pledged our life to... Wisdom would say don't have kids to bring them up in captivity, (today don't have many kids cause with the economy it is too expensive). Multi-generational thinking says don't decrease in numbers, just because times are hard. Why would God tell them to do this, cause in 150 years when God fulfilled the promise, for them to prosper and return to their land, the more people they have the quicker they are a nation again.

***7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you, too, will prosper."***

v.7 3. Leave the world better than we found it. This starts in our community, what are you doing to make the place you live better than it was when you moved there, what are you doing to make the company you work for better than it was when you started.

Do you have a view of your time on this earth as Heritage, "something passed down from preceding generations."