



# COUNTERFEIT RELIGION

JULY 22 AND 26, 2020

History is full of examples of decay and reform; revolution and counter-revolution. From politics and the economy to morality and religion, humans are in a continual battle for the right to define what is right. Is there an objective standard beyond human control or definition? If so, who gets to determine what it is? Join us for part two of **Jeremiah: A Prophet for the City**, where we explore how Jeremiah confronted the counterfeit religious reforms of his day and what the church might learn from them today.

## PASSAGE (READ):

Jeremiah 7:1-15

## PRINCIPLE (KNOW):

Getting rid of \_\_\_\_\_ won't make people \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ reforms can't reform the \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus replaces dead \_\_\_\_\_ with transformed \_\_\_\_\_.

## PRACTICE (DO):

Don't settle for \_\_\_\_\_ the teachings of Jesus; \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Steer clear of \_\_\_\_\_ shows designed to hide \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't settle for behavior \_\_\_\_\_ when what you need is heart \_\_\_\_\_.

## DAILY READINGS:

Day 1: Jeremiah 3-4

Day 2: Jeremiah 5-6

Day 3: 2 Chronicles 33-34

Day 4: 2 Chronicles 35-36

Day 5: Jeremiah 7 and 15

Day 6: Jeremiah 26 and 31

Day 7: Matthew 21

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

### BOOKS:

**Run with the Horses**, by Eugene Peterson

**The End of Religion**, by Bruxy Cavey

## OTHER SERMON SERIES:

**Losing My Religion** (2020)

## RIGHTNOW MEDIA (VISIT [SSBC.ORG/FAMILY-RESOURCES](http://SSBC.ORG/FAMILY-RESOURCES)):

**Precepts for Life: Jeremiah, Part 1 and 2**, by Kay Arthur

**Worldview: Thinking and Living Biblically**, by Greg Laurie and others

**Intro to the Major Prophets**, by J. B. Nicholson

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS



### HANGOUT [Warming Up to the Topic]

1. Do you have any lingering questions or thoughts related to this week's teaching or daily readings?
2. Who comes to mind when you think about a person who implemented real and lasting societal change? What cost did that person pay to champion that change?

### HEAR [Listening to God through Scripture]

This week's message focused on how Jeremiah called out the superficial religious reforms implemented by King Josiah after the scroll of Deuteronomy was found in the temple. Jeremiah continued to preach this message after Josiah's death and throughout the reigns of his sons. But unlike their father, Josiah's sons did not obey God, so Jeremiah's message was met with severe opposition.

3. Read Jeremiah 26:1-6.
  - Where and to whom was Jeremiah preaching? Why is it important to know God's intended audience when reading the Bible? (ex. 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If **My people** who are called by **My Name** . . .")
  - What message(s) do you believe God has intended for His church today?
4. Read Jeremiah 26:7-11.
  - Shiloh was the ancient center of worship in Israel (the northern kingdom). Many in Jerusalem had believed its destruction was the consequence of God's judgment on the people of Israel. Why would Jeremiah's reference to Shiloh have provoked such a strong response from the religious leaders of Jerusalem?
  - Why do people prefer to hear smooth lies rather than hard truths?
  - What happens to the church and society when God's people stop reflecting kingdom values and simply become reflections of the culture?
5. Read Jeremiah 26:12-15.
  - What was hopeful about Jeremiah's message?
  - Compare Jeremiah's experience with the religious leaders in Jerusalem to Jesus' experience.
  - How were Jeremiah's words about "innocent blood" also a prophetic statement?
6. Read Jeremiah 26:16-24.
  - What was the argument for sparing Jeremiah's life?
  - How did Jeremiah's experience differ from Jesus' experience?
  - Read Matthew 27:24-26. How were the cries of the people in Matthew 27:25 also prophetic? Why would Jeremiah's death not have had the same effect as Jesus' death?
  - What might Jeremiah say to the church in America today?

### HUDDLE [Making It Personal and Praying Together – in Huddles]

7. Are there any ways in which you are practicing a religion that isn't reflective of your heart? Are you an "observer" or a "consumer" of God's Word? What would have to change in your life if you, like Jeremiah, were to "eat" God's Word? Talk about it, invite accountability, and take time to pray.