

**Face the Issue:**

This week, we were reminded that God has something for each of us to achieve and that He will equip us within with what we need to accomplish it. Our challenge is to have faith in that statement and the courage to follow through. It takes courage to speak the truth and say what must be said—especially when no one else stands with you. Standing for God and answering His call sometimes brings self-doubt, pain, and persecution.

Jeremiah shows us how to find a meaningful relationship with God, how to find strength in a transformed heart, and how to endure despite a world filled with pain and suffering.

**Into the Word:****Read Jeremiah 1**

When you think of Old Testament prophets delivering speeches of doom and gloom, you imagine them as bigger-than-life, wild-eyed men with thundering voices just inches from a meltdown. But when God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, he was just a boy. Jeremiah made sure to point that fact out to God.

God answered back with (and this is paraphrased), “Nonsense! From now on, you’re like a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall. Even though *everybody* else will be against you, they won’t win—because *I’m* with you, and *I* will rescue you”. From Jeremiah’s view, God had the wrong guy. But God had big plans and had laid the foundation for those plans *before Jeremiah was even born*.

*Consider the saying, “God equips those He calls.” If true, why does God work this way? What would happen if God only called the people who were already confident in their abilities?*

*What other biblical examples show God calling his people to do jobs beyond their ability?*

*Here are some clues to help you with this question:*

*Exodus 4:10    1 Samuel 16:3–16    Amos 7:14–15    Acts 15:35–41).*

*God calms Jeremiah with His presence: “I am with you and will rescue you.” He also says He made Jeremiah a “fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall.” Why did God make these specific promises? Why are they important? What does this say about the character God formed within Jeremiah?*

*What does this passage teach about finding and following God’s will?*

*Reread Jeremiah 1:5. What does it mean for you that God knew Jeremiah before he was born? Does God also have a similar plan for you? How can we know what God has set us apart for?*