



**Does Your Truth Work? – Anything But This
Sermon Discussion Questions – March 26, 2023**

Scripture Passages:

Jeremiah 17:5–8 (NRSV) 5 Thus says the Lord: Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord. 6 They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes. They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. 7 Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 They shall be like a tree planted by water, (contrast) sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Jeremiah 1:19 (NRSV) 19 They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you.

John 16:33 (NIV84) 33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the World.”

Jeremiah 12:1–2 (NIV84) You are always righteous, O Lord, when I bring a case before you. Yet I would speak with you about your justice: Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why do all the faithless live at ease? 2 You have planted them, and they have taken root; they grow and bear fruit. You are always on

their lips but far from their hearts.

Jeremiah 20:13–14 (NIV84) 13 Sing to the Lord! Give praise to the Lord! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked. 14 Cursed be the day I was born! May the day my mother bore me not be blessed!

Lamentations 3:19–24 (NIV84) 19 I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. 20 I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within Me. 21 Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: 22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

Romans 8:31–39 (NIV84) 31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? . . . 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Warm Up:

Most of us, if not *all* of us, love making plans. We picture how things should turn out, and then we go for it, expecting everything to just work out. Are you someone who likes to plan out your life and how it should go? Why or why not?

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom opened his message talking about photobombers. Can you think of a time where you may have been a photobomber for someone else? If so, share your story. Some people have a habit of inserting themselves and/or their ideas into someone else's plans. Do you ever find yourself tempted to do this? If so, why?

2. Sometimes, as Pastor Tom mentions, we tell God what we want from him and then we turn around and give him a list of things we don't want him to mess with. It's our "anything but this, God" list.

What things are you not asking him for or giving him full control over because you are nervous about what he might do with that thing? What's on your list of things you don't want God to mess with and why?

3. Read Jeremiah 17: 5-8. This verse starts out pretty heavy, but eventually offers hope to those who put their trust in God.

Where are you at on this? Are you fully trusting God with everything you have, or are you only trusting him with certain things?

4. We talked briefly about Chapter 7 from the book of Matthew where one man built his house on sinking sand, and another man built his house on a rock.

If your house is a representation of your faith and trust in God, what is your's built on, sand or rock? What are some ways you can strengthen the foundation of your "house?"

5. Read Lamentations 3:19–24. Pay close attention to verses 22-24. "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. 23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him."

Is this the kind of hope you currently have in God? If not, what steps should you begin to take to have this kind of faith?

6. When God allows you to go through plans that fail and times in your life that just aren't what you wanted or were expecting, how do you react to it? Why might you react that way? What might it look like to react with trust first?

7. As you reflect on this message, what is your relationship with God like? Do you fully trust him with everything? What is something that you need to hand over to him right now?

8. Read Romans 8:31-39.

How might the truths expressed in this passage impact the way you view your relationship with God? How might they impact the way you view tough circumstances coming your way? Are there other scriptures that you have found helpful when facing a challenge? If so, take a few minutes to share those with the group?

Next Steps:

Take a picture of the lyrics from the song "You've already won," send it to everyone in your small group and ask them to save it somewhere in their phone. Anytime you are faced with a hard situation, read this poem and know that God has already fought your battles and if you'll hand everything over to him, you will win them, too.

“You’ve already won.”

There’s peace that outlast darkness, Hope that’s in the blood
There’s future grace that’s mine today. That Jesus Christ has won
So I can face tomorrow, for tomorrow’s in Your hands
All I need You will provide, just like You always have
I’m fighting the battle, you’ve already won
No matter what comes my way, I will overcome
Don’t know what You’re doing, but I know what You’ve done
And I’m fighting a battle, you’ve already won.