

Episode 1

Welcome to Babylon

The Hebrews in Jeremiah's day were in for hard times

- God warned them from the beginning
- Then God did what he promised
- They found themselves unprepared for what was coming

Build a house. Connect with neighbors. Learn the language of captors.

- Plant gardens.
- Teach sons to be strong fathers and spiritual leaders
- Build a future generation that will carry on God's Kingdom
- Be God's representative to those folks who don't know God

Get involved in city life

- Be good neighbors
- Build relationships
- Pay your taxes
- Seek the welfare of your city

Pray for your neighbors

Remember God's promises

Here in America we're in a culture war

- Abortion
- Same sex marriage
- Sex slavery
- Pornography
- Transgenderism
- Explicit sex education in schools
- Secularism
- Uninhibited sexual idolatry

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. **And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.***

Matthew 28:19-20

Things are not what they appear

- That story will only be written when Jesus returns to settle forever who the winners and losers
- God is not intimidated by humanism, Islam, American leftists or atheists

We are called to speak to our culture that includes:

- Hedonism
- Expanding homosexual power and influence
- Religious antagonism
- Political wrangling
- Exaltation of individual rights

"Our call is to engage alienation, a Christianity that preserves the distinctiveness of the gospel while not retreating from our callings as neighbors, friends, and citizens."
Russel Moore

Ways we can Respond to Our Babylon-like Culture

1. Converting culture: Our nation's culture must reflect biblical values.

2. Condemning culture: Removing ourselves from the world.

- The Church should be distinct from the world.
- We must be salt— that maintains its flavor and spreads it in the world.
- And light – that pushes back the darkness

3. Consuming culture: We must be relevant, so some Christian stuff must go.

“This model sees Christianity as being fundamentally compatible with the surrounding culture. Those who embrace this model believe that God is at work redemptively within cultural movements that have nothing explicitly to do with Christianity.”

Tim Keller

4. A Courageous Posture: We will be the people of God, living out the mission of God.

Confidence in God's sovereignty fuels worship

I will extol the LORD at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.
I will glory in the LORD;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.
Glorify the LORD with me;
let us exalt his name together.

Psalm 34:1-3

Can you trust God's:

- Power
- Purpose or motive
- Program or method
- Provision for needs
- Timing
- Love for us

Question:

Jeremiah sent a message to the exiles in Babylon that included some of the passages quoted in the video. (See below) The message was basically divided into three parts: (1) Why they were in exile; (2) What they should do while in exile; and (3) Promises God made to them.

Write a synopsis of each section and how it should affect their lives. Also, in section 2, he gave instructions for living in Babylon. Describe how those instruction could be applied to us in our current culture.

Jeremiah 11

⁹Then the LORD said to me, "There is a conspiracy among the people of Judah and those who live in Jerusalem. ¹⁰They have returned to the sins of their ancestors, who refused to listen to my words. They have followed other gods to serve them. Both Israel and Judah have broken the covenant I made with their ancestors. ¹¹Therefore this is what the LORD says: 'I will bring on them a disaster they cannot escape. Although they cry out to me, I will not listen to them. ¹²The towns of Judah and the people of Jerusalem will go and cry out to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they will not help them at all when disaster strikes. ¹³You, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns; and the altars you have set up to burn incense to that shameful god Baal are as many as the streets of Jerusalem.'

Jeremiah 17

My mountain in the land and your^[b] wealth and all your treasures I will give away as plunder, together with your high places, because of sin throughout your country. ⁴Through your own fault you will lose the inheritance I gave you. I will enslave you to your enemies in a land you do not know, for you have kindled my anger, and it will burn forever."

Jeremiah 25

⁸Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, ⁹I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the LORD, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. ¹⁰I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. ¹¹This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²"But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever. ¹³I will bring on that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that are written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. ¹⁴They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings; I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."

Jeremiah 29

⁴This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶Marry 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. ⁷Also, 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." ⁸Yes, 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. ⁹They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them," declares the LORD.

Isaiah 45

¹"This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him . . . ⁴For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me. ⁵I am the

LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, ⁶so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may now

there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. ¹³I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free.

Jeremiah 29

¹⁰This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. ¹¹For 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. ¹²Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴I 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."