



Sermon Notes

Sermon Fire in My Bones

Scripture Jeremiah 20:7-9, 13 NRSVue

Preaching Pastor John Tittle

Date August 9, 2026

1. How do we find the right balance between gospel and law, judgment and mercy? When do we cross the line of being too harsh and judgmental and when do we become too soft and permissive?
2. Do you think Jeremiah is in a **crisis of vocation** (struggling with his call as a prophet) or a **crisis of faith** (not sure if he believes in God anymore)?
3. Jeremiah is in inner turmoil through much of the book, basically saying, “I can’t win God! If I speak up, they will burn me on the outside. If I don’t speak up, God will burn me on the inside.” What does he decide to do in this “darned if you do, danged if you don’t” moment?
4. What do you think about the different perspectives of “winning” found in verses 7-11:
 - a. **You won:** God overpowered the prophet Jeremiah
 - b. **I can’t win:** Jeremiah is in a lose-lose situation, between a relentless God and a remorseless people
 - c. **We will win:** the words of Jeremiah’s former friends about their plans to take him down
 - d. **They won’t win:** Jeremiah’s unshakable trust that God will frustrate the stratagems of his adversaries
5. Jeremiah called out his people on these issues: worshiping false gods, neglect of the poor and vulnerable, preaching a false peace, and depending solely on diplomacy and military alliances. **What might Jeremiah call America out on today? What would he call the church out on?**
6. In verse 7, Jeremiah accuses God of deceiving or overpowering him. Other translations choose these words: *duped, enticed, seduced, tricked, or made a fool of*. *What do you make of this kind of raw, accusatory language directed at God? Is this a failure of faith? Or could this be a sign of a deep relationship with God? Is this a statement about God or Jeremiah’s experience of God as a prophet?*
7. Jeremiah says that speaking God’s word made him “a reproach and a derision, daily” (v. 8). Have you ever paid a real relational or social cost for saying something true? What was that like?
8. Verse 9 describes God’s word as “a burning fire shut up in my bones.” Why do you think Jeremiah couldn’t simply stop speaking, even when it cost him so much?
9. Jeremiah’s emotions are all over the map in these verses (complaint, confession, trust, petition, confidence in being heard, thanksgiving, and then doubts). In verse 13 he bursts into praise, then in verse 14 he regrets he was born. What do you think is going on?
10. At the end of the day, is Jeremiah more concerned about being duped by God or being duped by his people?