

fire ministries

January 2012

Hi Dear Family in Jesus!

I want to start this new year by expressing how grateful I am for each one of you. One of the greatest reasons God keeps dealing to form more of Christ in me is for you. He loves you so much, and He knows the more that Jesus lives in me, the more I will treat each one of you according to His heart of love. This is a great motivation for me to continue to yield to the Father's correction and forming. Much greater than any ministry or work in the whole earth is the way we treat one another. I ask your forgiveness when I have not related to you with attitudes that come from Jesus. I look forward to more opportunities in 2012 to express Him in small ways that mean so much. Thank you for being my family in Jesus. I love you.

Happy 2012 IN CHRIST!!!

"Jeremiah's Calling and 2012"

Whether we like it or not, we are being "called" into a new year. 2012 is here, and with it are new responsibilities, burdens, and lists of things that we need to accomplish through-out the upcoming days. Just a glance at the calendar is enough to overwhelm some of us. Thoughts may arise such as, "How am I going to do all this?" Even greater than the "to-do lists" of 2012 is our

spiritual needs. How can I truly love those close to me? How will my marriage and close relationships survive one more year? How am I going to raise my children without losing my temper? What method will I use to Pastor this flock in the way God desires? How am I going to honor God in my job and before those I work with? We each have our own method of setting forth to accomplish the needs of this future year, whether those needs be practical or spiritual. Many times, as soon as I am aware of a need, my mind begins figuring out how I can accomplish it. It is not always automatically in my heart to go FIRST to God rather than immediately setting about to do it in my own strength. Yet God has made His method available to whosoever has the time to slow down and listen to what He has to say!

I believe a great example of this can be found in the scriptures that deal with Jeremiah's calling. It is for that reason we are beginning 2012 with an article based on Jeremiah.

Article on following pages

*Have you ever had this thought,
"How am I going to survive 2012"?*

"On fire With God's Desire"

"Be kind to each other -



*I prefer you make mistakes in kindness,
than that you work miracles in unkindness."*

- Mother Teresa 1963



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*Happy New Years
from "Fire Ministries"!*

Jeremiah's Calling

"The Big Mystery!"

*"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;
and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee,
and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations"
(Jeremiah 1:5).*

I always thought I understood Jeremiah chapter one and verse five. It seemed pretty straight-forward and obvious to me that God was telling Jeremiah that from before he was born he was specially chosen and gifted to be a super-spiritual saint with a mighty ministry to the nations. Jeremiah was going to have to live as an anointed, ordained, and sanctified prophet doing mighty works for God all the days of his life. Wow, that is quite a big "to-do list" to give to a young man. Just listen to the words of Jeremiah chapter one and verse five; *"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations"*. If I heard God speaking those words to me I would probably start getting a superiority complex! "Wow! God must think I am something really special to choose me even before I was born to have such an important ministry". Before God began speaking to my heart concerning these scriptures, I would read them and think, "I guess you have to have a special call on your life in order to be used by God in powerful ways. God picks the big anointed ministers even before there are born". The thought that these scriptures were speaking of Christ and not of me never even entered my mind. My approach to understanding God's Word was still self-centered in many ways. Yet the Holy Spirit teaches us Who the Word of God always truly declares,... that it is not us, but Christ Who is being spoken of. I was flying home from Ireland when the Holy Spirit first started sharing His interpretation of these verses with me. I will never forget that moment, because I was shocked at how self-centered my view of these verses had been, and how Christ-centered the Holy Spirit's view was. When the Holy Spirit first shared from these verses with me, I literally said out loud in the airplane, "How could I have been so blind! All I saw was me and I never even considered the Son!"

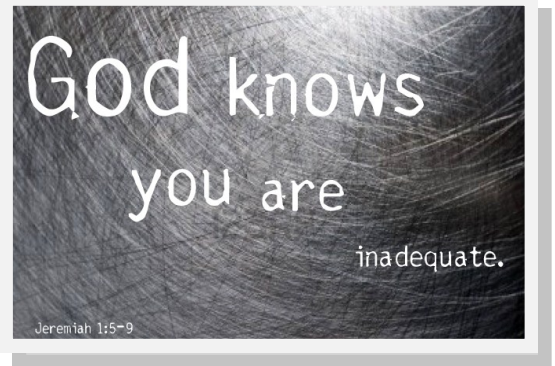
"What The Spirit Shared"

What the Spirit shared with me was simple, but radical and shook me right to the core. He said, the One that God had known before Jeremiah (and all of us) was His Son. John the Baptist understood this when he said, *"He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for He was before me"* (John 1:15). John said it again in verse 30 *"After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for He was before me"*. John understood that the only One known, preferred and called before he was born is the Son of the Father's love. Then the Holy Spirit continued on to say that the only One the Father sanctifies and ordains unto ministry is His Son, and whosoever will allow His Son to live through them. Hebrews 7:28 reminds us that the only One Who is consecrated forever is the Son; *"For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."*

Peter also learned to keep his eyes on the One God had ordained from before creation; I Peter 1:19-20 says, *"but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world."* And then, to seal the matter, the Holy Spirit reminded me of what Paul shared in Galatians 2:20 where he declared, *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet NOT I but CHRIST LIVETH in me"*. It was becoming obvious to me that I was looking at Jeremiah as the pre-ordained and sanctified one while God was really speaking of His Son. It was the perfect way to start reading the book of Jeremiah. I had studied the scriptures in Jeremiah so many times before, always sensing in my spirit that the pages were rich with life, while unable to really partake of the true essence of the book. In those times of searching I had always started with Jeremiah being the source, rather than comprehending that Jeremiah represented a vessel that allowed the SON to be the Source in him. Jeremiah represents how someone can be greatly used of God if they allow the Son to live through Him. In type and shadow, God was calling His SON out of Jeremiah, and not asking Jeremiah to be something great.

“Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot!”

My next reaction to what the Spirit was sharing with me from Jeremiah 1:5 concerned how I hear things. I realized that the way I had heard those scriptures caused me to assume that God was laying a huge ministry burden on Jeremiah and looking to him as the “great prophet” that would fulfill it. I began to wonder how many other things I had been hearing wrong. How many times had God been speaking to me concerning His Son in me, when all I heard was God requiring me to perform a task I was unable to do. Have my ears been hearing God’s words in a way that makes me feel overwhelmed and burdened, when all the while God was saying something quite different? I was encouraged to then discover that I am not the only one who hears wrong, for as I read the next verse I realized that Jeremiah did the exact same thing; *“Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child” (Jeremiah 1:6)*. Immediately Jeremiah assumed God was looking to his abilities as a speaker in order to fulfill his commission as a prophet. In my old interpretation of these verses, I would groan right along with Jeremiah saying; “How can I carry this impossible load? This is too much for me. I am not able to do this. God, why are you asking the impossible of me?”. Like Jeremiah, we hear God’s calling on our lives and take it personally. Or, we hear God calling us to do something for Him and we set about to accomplish the task in our own strength. It changes everything when we realize that God is now speaking and relating to us IN HIS SON (Hebrews 1:2). God is calling HIS SON out of us, ordaining Christ in us to the ministry, and knowing us in Him as His Body, even before time (Ephesians 1:4). Hence God’s response to Jeremiah in verse six; *“The Lord said unto me, Say not, I”*. This is the perfect response from God Who is telling Jeremiah not take these things unto himself. We are not to receive these things unto the “I” that is crucified, but unto the Son within Who is ordained and consecrated by the Father eternally and fully. We can take an example from Paul who learned how to hear correctly once he lost hope in himself and found all his sufficiency through Christ Who lived in him. May our new response be like Paul’s when He said, “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ LIVETH IN ME”!



“This is For us,... Today!”

I have to remind myself that the book of Jeremiah was not written as a great spiritual document to share deep mysteries, but a God-given guide to help US... TODAY. The Holy Spirit did not speak to my heart on that airplane to simply open up deep things in the Word of God so that I could gain more “spiritual knowledge”. Rather, the Holy Spirit was trying to reach my heart and communicate how God wants His Son to live in me. Jeremiah was meant to be an example so that I could learn how to truly HEAR God’s heart when He is communicating to me concerning things He has for me and how they can only be done through His Son. God’s goal isn’t to make me a great teacher or writer, but to craft me as a vessel that will contain His Son as my Source. Rather than marveling at the Holy Spirit’s ability to reveal Christ in the Scriptures, I need to allow Him to reveal Christ in me. And I will have opportunity to embrace that reality when I am overwhelmed in my relationships, undone with my failures, burnt-out from carrying heavy loads, etc. I must press past my interpretation of what I need to do to make things right or make things work, and cry out for the Father to reveal His Son in me. When it is Christ doing the living, loving, serving, giving, and ministry... then the burden is light. I carry Christ as His vessel and He carries my burdens as my Life. If we look at our “2012 to-do lists” in this way, then we can actually face the New Year with hope and anticipation. Do you need hope? Are you overwhelmed by burdens you cannot carry? Then this is the time to find God’s method, and God’s method is Christ in us, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). If Jeremiah did not find God’s method, then the Book of Jeremiah would probably have consisted of one chapter rather than fifty-two, for the task would have been impossible. May our ears be open to really HEAR what God is asking of us, to SEE His Son that is in us, and to KNOW His heart to bring us forth as vessels filled with His Glory, the beauty of Christ within. Happy 2012 dear friends. May this upcoming year be like none other before it. May this year be filled with the breakthrough’s that only Christ-in-us can bring. ☀