

1. Fire in My Bones—Everyone needs to be reminded of this Jeremiah story. It speaks directly to us—to challenge us. Of course, it flows from the context in which he lived. This amazing man of God—a priest called to be a prophet to the failing nation of Judah. He lived in transitioning times for God’s people during which he was God’s messenger/God’s preacher exposing the corruption of Judah; the abandonment of the Torah; their detestable idolatry; their injustice and exploitation of the weak and poor; all while warning about impending judgment. Babylon is coming! The day of the Lord is at hand!
2. He preached a bold message—check out one small excerpt in **19:15**. Not surprisingly his message was not popular. Over the course of his ministry he was beaten, faced death threats, imprisoned in a dungeon among other things. It was in such a situation that he speaks the words of our focus—**READ Jeremiah 20:7-12**. His struggle was real—we still live it. His passion is evident—we still need it. God’s people still need fire in our bones—to boldly speak grace and truth into our context; to not allow any obstacle, any opposition to quench the burning desire to live and share a word from the Lord to our world. It is about passion! We have it about many things—what about God?
3. Passion has two parts—fire and fuel.
 - a. Fire—this is what we see welling up within Jeremiah. He could not—not preach. His passion to proclaim truth could not be contained. It is a fire that consumes, refines, sparks transformations. It is also about transparency and authenticity—no one questioned that about Jeremiah. It was real, sometimes raw, but always from the center of his soul—**no fake news!** Passionate preaching has this fire. But it also must have the right fuel or it can burn out of control or burn out.
 - b. Fuel—that is why healthy fuel is so vital. It empowers the flame while also providing proper boundaries. This fuel is of course—the living Word of God, Christ Jesus—our relationship with him; the Spirit of God and the inspired Scripture. With this fuel—like Jeremiah—we will find the strength to endure even in tough times and the right message to speak into sometimes-difficult situations. Without this healthy fuel, our passion could overtake our judgment (**two personal examples**); our flame could flicker out; or it could be blown by substitute fuel—ego, selfish ambition—that burns in the wrong direction. Passionate preaching fueled by the word of God = fire in our bones!
4. Beyond this—three quick observations:
 - a. Never settle. That was Judah’s problem. They settled all too comfortably with their surrounding neighbors. We cannot afford to do this—settle for the status quo (notice how this is a story within The Story); settle for the security of our jobs; settle into a personal or church rut. Sure we all have peak and valley moments—so did Jeremiah, but we must keep growing in our faith; maturing in our understanding of God’s Word; challenging ourselves to excel for Christ. This is what fire in our bones is all about!
 - b. Be real. Let’s live out that passion. Demonstrate the difference that fire makes within by living it out in front of all. Engage people; be transparent. Like Paul encouraged Timothy—don’t be timid, live our passionately the love and power and soundness God has placed within.
 - c. God Delivers. Trust God through it all. Jeremiah’s message included hope—God will not forget those in exile; a better day is coming. Jeremiah trusted God through his process—so must we. Look past the sometimes tough disappointments and see the possibilities. We are more than conquerors; beautiful are our feet! God has always blessing passionate faith and always will. In the pit or on the mountain—trust him! His word is in my heart like a fire!
5. “To you I have committed my cause.”—Jeremiah 20:12 (Can we make the same claim?)