

****Bumper Video –**

Twisted Title

Welcome to Redemption Church and the 1st week of our new Sermon Series entitled Twisted: Scripture Misused. My name is Chris Fluitt and I am glad we can talk openly and honestly about the word of God. If you have questions about the Bible or perhaps a question about today's message, please **TEXT** our anonymous line 214 856 0550.

You might have heard of the term “Twisting Scripture.” Let's get a working definition for “**Twisting Scripture.**” **To alter the meaning of a scripture passage from its original intent.**

It is important to note that twisting scripture can be done intentionally or unintentionally. Sometimes the result of the altering of the original meaning could be innocuous or semantic. Other times the twisting could be very destructive and end up deforming our view of God. In EVERY case we should seek to understand the Word of God as it was originally written.

Our lives are built on the word of God. Our hope is found within the Word of God. Jesus is revealed within the Word of God. SO let us follow **2 Timothy 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.(NIV)**

There is a correct and incorrect way to handle the Word of Truth.

Please turn with me to Jeremiah 29. Maybe you have your physical book with pages... maybe you have your smart phone or tablet... either way.. please arrive at Jeremiah 29.

Each week we want to share a key to interpreting Scripture. This week is really simple and intuitive.. **Read passages of Scripture and not a single verse**

A single sentence taken out of context can easily be twisted. There is a video going around the internet for the last several months where President Obama says a sentence that seems wildly un-American. Upon further study you will realize the sentence was taken completely

out of context and he was not even talking about this country.. but other countries and in the past.

It is easy to take one sentence and leverage it to alter the actual meaning of the collection of sentences.

Read passages of Scripture and not a single verse. Don't just find one verse that says what you want it to say... This is called **PROOFTEXTING**. Make sure you understand what the sentence is saying. Read the entire section of scripture.. Read the entire Chapter.. Read and become familiar with the entire book.. Correctly handle the Word of Truth!

Each week we will be looking at a scripture that has been used to alter and twist the original meaning of the author. Today we will look at **Jeremiah 29:11 For 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.(NIV)**

This is a popular verse. It's a beautiful verse. Many people have the verse written on pretty pictures they hang in their house. Or perhaps it is on a t-shirt or bumper sticker. It is often shared to encourage others in difficult times. We are going to dive into this verse and perhaps change your understanding of the verse... but I promise you will still find this verse beautiful, encouraging, & true at the end of today's sermon. Please trust me.

The Word of God is true... it's just that sometimes we don't understand it properly. Sometimes we have altered its intended purpose, message, and meaning.

Jeremiah 29:11 gets twisted to say everything that happens in your life is God's plan. Because it is God's plan for you, you should have a big smile on your face. Because it is God's plan to bless and prosper you. It has been used to say that God has pre-ordained everything, and everything is his PLAN. For I know the PLANS I have for you..

This is a destructive twist that the original author never intended.

I have personally seen the twist put to use. It goes something like this...

Someone has been told that they have cancer and they look to their Christian friends for support & prayer. That is a good thing to do.. A very biblical response to a bad report. But I have been in situations where the person given a report of Cancer was told “This is all a part of God’s plan. God is trying to teach you, or show you something.”

...How are they supposed to respond to that!? “God’s Plan was to give me cancer? Was there no other way to teach me this valuable life lesson?”

Instead of getting the support and prayer they receive the “This is God’s plan” response. And somehow having cancer is God’s plan that as **Jeremiah 29:11** says...

And because this is God’s plan we should be happy about it. This is so awesome! In fact.. If everything that happens is part of God’s plan, then **EVERYTHING is awesome.**

When this scripture is twisted as this it presents hideous ideas. I mean this is really dark and sad.

There are young ladies that were raped and molested that were told it was God’s plan. If God ordained.. decided... planned that they would be raped then that is equal to God having done the act... That is sickening. There are many people that have gone through this horror and were told with twisted scripture that it was all a part of God’s plan.

Losing a child yet feeling it is necessary to say.. “Well God has a plan and for some cosmic reason I am supposed to go through this loss.”

The horror going on around the world is all a part of God’s plan.

I have been to funerals and heard this said... “I don’t know why God took them, but He knows. In time we will understand his plan..”

Our God is an Awesome God. But it is not correct to say that everything in this world is awesome. **Everything IS NOT awesome**

In Genesis we read about God’s plan. He created the world and called it good. But God’s plan was not the only plan at work in the Garden. There was a serpent who had his own plan.

Everything that happens isn't necessarily a part of God's plan. There are other plans at work in this world. Everything is not awesome.

We would understand Jeremiah 29:11 better if we understood the context of the writing. In fact if we read just 1 verse earlier... Jeremiah 29:10 This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place.(NIV)

Jeremiah 29:11 For 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.(NIV)

Somehow verse 10 doesn't show up on Thomas Kincaid artwork. Somehow verse 10 isn't quoted much at graduations and funerals. Verse 10 helps us understand the context of verse 11.

Exile. Captivity. Struggle. Disaster. That is what is happening to Israel. Babylon has come into Israel and taken everyone captive and exiled, sent them against their will, away from their homes. They became slaves. They left Israel in ruins. The Temple, which represented the very presence of God, was destroyed and laid in rubble. **EVERYTHING IS NOT AWESOME!**

You see God's plans are not on display. The plans of Babylon are on display. **THIS WAS NEVER GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN!** When He revealed His plan to Abraham... He never mentioned this. He talked about being blessed and being a blessing.. When He spoke to Moses He revealed His plan was to take Israel out of slavery. It was not God's plan to make them slaves again.

Something else is at work here.

PLAN

God doesn't just have one plan. Those that have a deterministic view of God think that God has 1 plan that includes every action on the face of the planet. If anything happens it must have been a part of that plan. In fact it was part of God's plan for the Pastor of Redemption Church to say exactly what He is saying right now... Even if I said something wrong or stupid it was God's plan. What you are wearing

and thinking right now.. there is one plan and it is impossible for something not His plan to happen.

Jeremiah 29:11 says **PLANS**.

God can actually change His plan. In fact, your actions can cause God to change His plans.

Micah 2:1 Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it.(NIV)

God is speaking of Israel here. Their plans are evil and disobedient to God. So watch what happens..

Micah 2:3 Therefore, the LORD says: "I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity.(NIV)

This prophecy in Micah 2 is about the coming Exile we read about in Jeremiah 29:10.

The evil plans of men in Micah 2:1 bring about God's new plan in Micah 2:3.

The wrong you do matters. It can change God's plan. Jeremiah 29:10 is a result of Israel being disobedient. They brought this exile upon themselves.

What good you do matters. It can change God's plan! Your prayer matters. It can change God's plan. Your worship matters. Your receiving of God's Word matters.

The wrong you do... the good you do... everything you do matters! Your free will choices, thoughts, and actions matter.

Repentance changes God's Plan

When you turn back towards God in obedience it Changes God's plan. It stops judgment from coming. It stops hell from being your eternal resting place. It brings forgiveness and restoration.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.(NIV)

If you are not right with God today – You listen up. Judgment is coming. Repent today!

So what is Jeremiah 29:11 really saying?

Israel's plans... Even though Israel was being disobedient and going down the wrong path. Even though their actions caused mayhem, destruction, and judgment. It has caused them exile for 70 years... It had opened up a door for an enemy to attack them..

The Enemy's plans... And even though the enemy was administering their plan. Even though the enemy was calling the shots in disobedient Israel and destroying the Temple. Even though evil was ruling over children of light...

God still had His original plans.. Even though Israel had their plans of disobedience. Even though Babylon had their plans of evil. God had His plans of love! He had His plans to bring Israel home. He had his plans to give them a future... to prosper them... to fulfill everything He had promised Father Abraham.

Jeremiah 29:11 For 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.(NIV)

Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.(NIV)

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.(NIV)

Jeremiah 29:14 I 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."(NIV)

Israel! Even though your wrong actions are bring down a rod of correction...

Israel! Even though it seems like the enemy is calling the shots...

Israel! Even though the Temple is destroyed and you think my presence has left..

Israel! I am still working my plan.. and in my plan you are restored.. you are brought back from captivity.

MUSICIAN

You in this place. After all the wrong you have done... God has not given up on you. He still has a plan at work.

Are you in exile today? Do you think life will never be fixed? Do you think you are un-saveable? You are wrong...

Jeremiah 29:11 isn't about a perfect world where God's will is always done and everything that transpires was His eternal plan. Jeremiah 29:11 is a promise that even we are in the wrong, disobedient children, and under control of the enemy... God is still at work trying to bring His plan into our life.

Even when you think that God's presence has left your life... the Temple was destroyed.. but God was still on the scene.

And even though we don't deserve it... God's ultimate plan is to prosper us and give us a future... to save us.

Jesus is the Plan

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.(NIV)

The Greek word for "word" is LOGOS. It means an utterance... and that makes sense. God says "Let there be light" in Genesis 1... But there is a deeper meaning for LOGOS. It means thought... it means to consider... it means to form a plan..

In the beginning was the plan... the plan was God... the plan was with God...

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.(NIV)

The plan became flesh... The plan is Jesus...

Jesus is the Plan that God made before he created the world. It is an unchanging plan. God's love for you is an unchanging plan. No matter what... this is always God's plan for your life. This plan will prosper you and give you a future.

Are you fighting God's plan?