

INTRO

- If you could speak to yourself 6 months ago, what is the one thing you'd tell yourself?

In the last few months, much has changed and continues to change in all our lives. Some see this as an interruption before things return to normal. However, it is fair to say in many areas this is a *disruption* that will forever change what was once normal.

READ

Jeremiah 29:1,4-14

REFLECT & RESPOND

God's people experienced incredible disruption to their way of life and worship when they were taken into exile by Babylon. They would have to find a way to move forward, stay faithful and thrive in a very different and oftentimes hostile culture to their own.

In other words, they would need to forge resilience in exile. Resilience has to do with the ability to withstand and recover quickly from adversity:

Resilience = Realism + Hope

Qu: We are familiar with IQ and even EQ. How would you rate your AQ (Adversity Quotient)?

In Jeremiah's letter, we see God reassure his people and exhort them towards resilience through both a reality check & hope:

Reality check: you'll be in exile for a while (70yrs!); settle down; build a life; raise a family; engage Babylon, don't disengage; seek its welfare. (v4-10)

Hope: I have plans & a purpose for you that will prevail. (v11)

Qu: Jer 29:11 is a popular verse of hope for many. Knowing the challenging context it was given in, does it change anything for you?

You might say we live in digital Babylon with the influence of screens and technology that seeks to shape our culture. One of the challenges that face us is that our digital world is becoming incredibly successful at discipling us. **Sadly, our discipleship may be insufficient if it continues to prepare us for a world we no longer live in.**

Throughout this series, we will be looking at what it will take for us as followers of Jesus to forge resilience as we move ahead in uncertain, disruptive and complex times.

This can feel overwhelming. So what should we do?

Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you, declares the Lord....—Jeremiah 29:12-14

Call, come, pray, seek me with all your heart...

Unless we take these simple actions seriously, we may not forge the resilience needed for the future ahead.

Qu: How might God specifically be wanting you to forge resilience in your own life?

PRAY

- Pray for the resolve we will need (personally and as a church) throughout this series to make the changes needed to be and make disciples more faithfully.