

Congregation:

(Music)

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Good morning.

Congregation:

Good morning.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Welcome to Morning Prayers. All who are able, please stand and join me in the responsive reading found in your Psalter, Psalm 126.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Congregation:

Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then sat, they among the heathen. The Lord hath done great things for them.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

Congregation:

Turn again our captivity, oh, Lord, as the streams in the south.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

Congregation:

He that go up forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Amen. You may be seated.

Choir:

(singing).

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Then, the Word of the Lord came unto me saying, "Before I formed thee in your mother's belly, I knew you. I knew your name. And before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee to be a prophet unto the nations." Then said I, "Lord, God, I cannot speak, for I am only a child."

But the Lord said unto me, "Say not that you are a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee. And whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak, for I know your name."

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:
(singing).

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Have you ever battled with low self-esteem? Have you ever questioned your calling? Or have you gotten to a point in your life that you've been asking God, what is next? Have you ever thought that you're not good enough? Or have you felt that you were all alone in this big world? Have you ever had trouble walking in your calling? Have you ever wondered, does God really know my name? Who am I? What is my task? What is my responsibility? God, I have done this. I've done that. I still do not know what is my calling?

Well in this text this morning, Jeremiah, I assume had these same questions. Although Jeremiah was the son of a well-known priest, he struggled with thinking he could reach his dreams. Although Jeremiah came from a priestly family, he struggled with walking fully in his divine assignment. No matter the prestige of his family, Jeremiah thought he was not capable. He thought he was too young. He thought that he was not good enough. He thought that the task was too difficult. He thought that someone else could do a better job. He did not think that God could use him.

God, do you know my name? Am I really important? Some of us have allowed the curse of comparison to seep into the chambers of our hearts, where we're always looking at this one, and wondering God, when will it be my time? Am I like Sue? Am I like Jane? Am I like Bob? But I have news for you, this morning. God has called you to be you. Don't try to be like anybody else because everyone else's place is taken.

I'm sure a number of us can relate to Jeremiah. God, do you know my name? But Reverend Jones just stopped by this morning before you go and get your breakfast, or if you already had your cup of coffee, to remind you that God has called you to something great. God knows your name. You have purpose.

No matter what someone else is doing, remember who you are. Remember that you are special, incredible, called, unique. And no matter what people have said, what negative stigmas have been placed upon you or what statistics have been written to try to take you out of the story, you are somebody.

Do you know your name? Not just my name is Calvin Jones, but do I know my name in Christ? Do I know that I'm God's son? Do you know that you are God's child? When Jeremiah looks at God, and I can see Jeremiah with his hand on his hip saying, "God, I'm too young. This task is too great." God looks at Jeremiah and reminds him that, "When you were in your mother's womb, I knew your name. I knew what you were capable of. I knew that you would be a prophet to the nations. I knew that you would be a teacher. I knew that you would be a preacher, a lawyer, and activist. I knew your name before anybody had anything else to say about you.

Beloved, as I go to my seat, I encourage you, this morning, to look and reflect, and ask yourself, do I know who I am, and whose I am.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

(singing).

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Please stand as you are able, and let us pray the LORD's prayer.

Congregation:

Our Father, who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on the earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Now, let us sing Hymn Number 35, God of the Morning at Whose Voice, found in your Crimson Harvard hymnal.

Congregation:

(singing)

The Rev. Calvin T. Jones:

Amid a cacophony of names, remember that God knows your name. Regardless of where you are on life journey, what you may face, remember that God has called you to be you. For you have a divine assignment that only you can do. As you leave this place, but never away from God's presence, remember that God knows your name.