



Sermon 2: Even a Piccolo?

Suggested Opening Hymns: SDAH 88, 82, 86, 103, 99

Suggested Closing Hymns: SDAH 572, 359, 537, 369, 594, 608, 593

Key Bible Text: Jeremiah 1:4-10 NKJV

4 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying:**5**“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.”**6** Then said I: “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth.” **7** But the Lord said to me: “Do not say, ‘I *am* a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. **8** Do not be afraid of their faces, for I *am* with you to deliver you,” says the Lord. **9** Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me: **10**“Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down to build and to plant”

Introduction

Sir Michael Costa was an outstanding orchestral conductor of the 19th Century. On one occasion, Sir Michael Costa was said to be conducting an orchestral rehearsal in which a great orchestra with hundreds of instruments was accompanied by a mass choir. This massive choir sang in full voice, the hundreds of instruments in full blast and a thundering massive organ. At some point, the one who played the piccolo thought the piccolo was insignificant in the midst of such a great orchestra and decided to stop playing. Unknown to the player was the fact that Sir Michael Costa was keenly listening to every instrument, including the piccolo. Surprisingly but suddenly, Sir Michael halted the entire orchestra and choir. “Stop! Stop! Where’s the piccolo? What’s happened to the piccolo?”

A Piccolo

The piccolo is of Italian origin, and hence its name “piccolo,” which is the Italian word for small. It is a tiny musical instrument (about half the size of a flute) played horizontally. The piccolo belongs to the woodwind family of musical instruments. Surprisingly, piccolos produce an octave higher sound than written, which led to its Italian nickname, ottavino. Although small, it produces the highest pitch in the woodwind family of musical instruments. The piccolo is also called flauto or flautino. Although piccolos were formerly manufactured in key Db, they are now commonly in key C. Due to its ability to go an octave higher than written, piccolos usually double with the violin or flute to add excitement and brilliance to the overall sound. Interestingly, piccolos though small are a must have instrument in concert band. Traditionally, piccolos had no key and was made from wood, glass or ivory. However, in recent times, piccolos has been made from a variety of materials including plastic, resin, silver, nickel silver, and a variety of woods.





The Piccolo Feeling

We may sometimes feel like that piccolo player – that we are so insignificant in our home, in our church or in the community, that we don't have much to offer, and that if we quit what we are doing or stopped our ministry, no one would notice anyway. Yet the Great Conductor notices, and needs us to complete his orchestral masterpiece! God the Master Conductor values you such that He knows even the minutest details of our life. He declares: "Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows" Luke 12:6-7. If you ever thought you're a piccolo? You need a reconsider!

Jeremiah and His Time

A long time ago (ca. 2645 years) there lived a teenager by the name Jeremiah. He was Jewish and would have probably been a Pathfinder Club member, if he lived today. He lived during a difficult period in the history of the children of Israel. Jeremiah was called to the prophetic ministry in the 13th year of the reign of king Josiah, about five years before the commencement of King Josiah's reformation. At this time king Josiah was about 21 years old. The glorious reformation of King Hezekiah (Josiah's grandfather) had been wiped out and forgotten by the idolatrous reign of king Manasseh. King Manasseh made alliance with the Assyrians which in turn led Judah into syncretism (combining different forms of belief), gross idol worship and human sacrifices to the Assyrian god, Moloch. As a result of the low spiritual condition of the land, prophets were in high demand and those who would betray their conscience for money became more influential in the society. So bad was the situation in Israel that Jeremiah often declared his messages with tears and is fondly referred to as the "weeping prophet." Jeremiah ministered during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. During these periods, Jeremiah warned the people of the judgment of God on His people and their ultimate destruction and captivity and yet they would not listen.

The Piccolo Feeling in Prophet Jeremiah's Life

Jeremiah viewed himself in his own eyes and perhaps in the eyes of those (parents, adult church leaders etc.) around him and concluded that he was insignificant and unfitted for the task. And therefore, he rolled out his excuses: "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I *am* a youth." That was the piccolo moment in the life of Jeremiah and it ok to think or even conclude that we are piccolos in the face of some daunting task. However, that will not stop God from using us because God can use even a piccolo.





The Piccolo Moments of Life

We all do have our “piccolo” moments in life

- Maybe you’re the last child in your family and you feel like a piccolo.
- Perhaps you’re not the one who leads song service in your club meetings and you feel like a piccolo.
- Maybe you are the shortest person in your club and you feel like a piccolo.
- It could be that you just failed an exam and you feel like a piccolo.
- Or perhaps your friend just mistreated or dumped you and you feel like a piccolo.

Different situations and challenges of life can make us feel like piccolos.

But you are not alone in your piccolo feelings; someone loves you so much that He stands with you even in your piccolo moments. Just like He said to Jeremiah, God says to you: “Do not say, ‘I *am* a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. **8** Do not be afraid of their faces, for I *am* with you to deliver you,” says the Lord.” He has provided all that you will need to accomplish the task even before He called, and at the point of the call, He will empower you through the Holy Spirit to fulfill the mission. Whatever is needed He is willing to provide, even if it requires touching your mouth to give you the boldness to speak.

Lessons from the Call and Life of Jeremiah

- ❖ God knew me before I was conceived in my mother’s womb. God knew me before I was conceived and so I was special to God long before I became conscious of myself. My life is a result of intentional design. God created me in His own image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27). Pathfinders are special to God.
- ❖ God has a purpose for my life. Because God knew me before I was conceived, He sanctified and set me apart for His divine purpose. It is God that designed me and it is God’s prerogative to determine the purposes of my life. Therefore, my life is meaningful and worth living no matter the circumstances of life. I choose to live and believe I am more than a piccolo.
- ❖ God can use a Pathfinder like me. Interestingly enough, God has used so many pathfinders in Biblical and contemporary times. God used, Joseph from his Pathfinder age days to adulthood, God used David, God used King Josiah, God used Samuel and the list goes on and on. Today, God is still using Pathfinders to do great exploits for His kingdom. I am proud to be a Pathfinder and God is using me for His glory.
- ❖ Every Pathfinder has been called by God and given a global commission. The Adventist Youth Ministries aim states, “The advent message to all the world in my generation.” This is a global mission, not local. Like Jeremiah our commission is to the nations of the world. Jesus our Master commanded: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” Matt 28:19-20 NKJV.





- ❖ With God I can do whatever task He gives me. Philippians 4:13 NKJV reads: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” God is bigger than any challenge I will ever face as a child of God. When Abraham and Sarah were confused about the promise of God, the LORD asked them a rhetorical question them, “Is anything too hard for the Lord? Gen 18:14 NKJV. Certainly, with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26).
- ❖ God is always a present help when we go on His errand. God assisted Jeremiah with the weakness of his inability to speak - He touched Jeremiah’s mouth and put His words in Jeremiah’s mouth (verses 9-10). In the same way He is ever ready and present to help when we obey His word and command to proclaim the ever-lasting gospel.

A Call to ALL Pathfinders and Staffs

As we celebrate this world Pathfinder Day, like Jeremiah we must remember that we have special commission from God to:

- to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down whatever is not of God.
- to build and to plant that which is of God and to the glory of the Almighty.

We cannot sit idle and say there is nothing we can do, nor shall we give excuses as a result of our age, the times in which we live, our speech limitations, or any other challenge.

Pathfinders will play significant role in the finishing of the work to proclaiming the everlasting gospel and this is the appointed time.

The history of the Seventh-day Adventist church reminds us of the significant roles that Pathfinders and young people have played in the proclamation of the everlasting gospel.

Ellen White comments: “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world!” MYP, 73.

Let us therefore march on by faith and fearlessly proclaim this ever-lasting gospel with power and boldness. No need to be afraid of the faces of men and women, not even the devil himself “because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” 1 John 4:4 NKJV. The promise is that God will be with us all the way to the very end of the age (Matt 28:20) and “therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; *though* its waters roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with its swelling” Psalm 46:2-3 NKJV. “God is with us,” “God is with us” was the chant of our brave fathers of old and is our chant of victory even today. March Pathfinders, march and never be weary because God is with you!





How God Sees Us

While we may consider ourselves as piccolos, God always has high view of us:

- We are not piccolos, We are children of God (John 1:12; 1 John 3:2)
- We are not piccolos, We are created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-27)
- We are not piccolos, God has placed us in charge of the earth (Gen 1:28; 2:15)
- We are not piccolos, We are the body of Christ (Col 1:18)
- We are not piccolos, We are the apple of God's eye (Psalm 17:8)
- We are not piccolos, We are joint heirs of the kingdom (Rom 8:17)
- We are not piccolos, We will judge even the angels (1 Cor 6:3)

And if God used and still uses piccolos, then God can use me:

**Oh, we are the Pathfinders strong,
The servants of God are we.
Faithful as we march along,
In kindness, truth, and purity
A Message to tell to the world,
A truth that will set us free!
King Jesus the Savior's coming back
For you, and me!**

And why don't we sing our Pathfinder song together (then have the entire congregation stand and sing the Pathfinder Song).

Appeal:

God is calling on Pathfinders that will live-out our Pathfinder Song

God is willing and ready to use you, even if you feel like a piccolo

Are you ready?

Then come forward as we rededicate ourselves in prayer (invite Pathfinders, staffs, parents for prayer of rededication).

Suggested Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, You are God and God alone. You created us with purpose. Although we sometimes feel insignificant like the piccolo, yet you have made us precious to yourself and exalted us before Your holy presence through Jesus Christ. Please, help us to accept your purpose for our lives and give us your Holy Spirit so that we will accomplish your divine plan for our lives; make us Pathfinders indeed, we pray to You in Jesus' name, Amen.

