

Sunday Morning Message

September 3, 2023

The Watchman

Topic – Soulwinning

Text – Ezekiel 3:15 - 21

Congregational Reading – Ezekiel 3:16 - 18

Introduction

Read Ezekiel 1:1 - 3

Ezekiel was a priest (Ezekiel 1:3), but because he had been deported to Babylon in the second of three deportations, he never actually served in the office of the priesthood. Ezekiel was also a prophet who was contemporary with both Daniel and Jeremiah. Each of these men had different ministries, however. Daniel was taken into Babylon during the first of the three deportations and was given a position within the Babylonian government and was very close to the King Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah was never deported. He remained with the remnant of Judea and eventually travelled with them down into Egypt. Ezekiel's ministry was to the people of Israel who were taken into captivity in Babylon and resided by the "rivers of Babylon." (See Psalm 137)

Ezekiel was set as a "watchman" over the House of Israel, meaning that God had appointed him to the prophetic office to watch over and warn the people. In Bible days, the cities were walled. Before nightfall, the watchmen were to get up on top of the walls at strategic locations where they could see and hear approaching danger. They were to be the alarm system, warning the city of invaders. Obviously, God was speaking metaphorically here, because Ezekiel's ministry was to a portion of Israel that had already been invaded and removed from their land. Ezekiel's job was to warn them about their lives, their futures, and their relationship with God.

Isaiah made this allegorical connection between watchmen and people who speak on behalf of the Lord:

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence," (Isaiah 62:6)

See also Ezekiel 33:1 – 11, where God repeats this responsibility of warning Israel.

Unfortunately, most people did not heed Ezekiel's warnings. (See Ezekiel 33:30 – 33)

Notice the phrase in v. 31: *"for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."*

Jesus made a similar observation about the people in His day:

"7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

(Matthew 15:7-8)

Read Ezekiel 3:15 – 21 and explain the text:

Transition

Just as God appointed Ezekiel to be a watchman over the House of Israel; God calls all of us who know the truth of salvation to watchman over this generation, and to warn the people of the ultimate and eternal consequences of not receiving Christ as their Saviour.

Ezekiel understood this. He stated twice in chapter 18, *"the soul that sinneth, it shall die."* (Ezekiel 18:4, 20)

We are commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ to be soulwinners, or "soul warners" who warn people of the horrible consequences of not getting saved.

Your job as a New Testament Christian (and my job) is to warn the people:

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:11-15)

If you are saved, your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life and you will not have to face this great white throne judgment and the final, eternal punishment of being cast into the Lake of Fire forever.

The Bible is very clear, and very definitely teaches that there is a Hell.

Jesus spoke of Hell often. (Turn to Luke 16:19 – 31)

Your job is to warn people that there is a Hell, and encourage people that there is also a Heaven. Those who place their faith in Christ go to Heaven. Christ is the only way to escape Hell and go to Heaven.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:1-6)

Your job and my job is to point people to "the way."

There is only one right way. Christ is the only way. The world will tell you that there are many:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25)

Jesus said:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:16-18)

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36)

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:12-13)

Do you have the Son? Are you saved? Have you placed your faith in Christ as your only hope for escaping Hell and entering Heaven?

Have you warned your friends about Hell; about the consequences of not being saved?

Have you warned your family?

Have you warned your co-workers?

This is real. People die.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" (Hebrews 9:27)

People die every day, and they either go to Heaven or Hell. All people are sinners, and all people deserve Hell, but only those who are saved will escape it. People who trust Christ as their Saviour go to Heaven when they die. People who don't receive Christ go to Hell. That is the plain teaching of the Bible.

God is calling you to be the watchman for your family, for your school, for your neighborhood, for your community, for your workplace. God is calling you to warn everybody that there is a real place called Hell.

If you warn and they don't listen, it is not on you; but, if you don't warn them, their blood will be upon your hands.

Illustrate – If a fireman had the means to help a man escape from a burning building and didn't help him.

If a man had a cure for cancer and he didn't share it.

Conclusion

As we enter the school year where our lives kind of reset a little bit back to more normal schedules, here are some things that we can do that will help us all to be more effective watchmen and women for the Lord.

- 1. Submit to the Lord.** Make sure your relationship with Christ is right where it needs to be. Spend time in the Word of God and in prayer every day. Be obedient to His will and filled with His Spirit.
- 2. Keep your heart tender toward people: lost people who need Jesus and saved people who are currently away from Him.** It could be you who are away from Him someday.
- 3. Learn about Hell.** Get out your Bible concordance and look up every verse in the Bible that talks about Hell. (For example: the word Hell appears 54 times in the Bible beginning with Deuteronomy 32:22 and all the way through to Revelation 20:14. The phrase “Lake of Fire is used 4 times) Hell and ultimately the Lake of Fire will be the destination of all who on earth today who never receive Christ as their Saviour.

You may not believe the Bible, but you can't possibly believe that the Bible doesn't teach that there is a Hell.

Learn about Heaven as well.

Are you saved? God is giving you an opportunity to find out more from the Bible about being saved. Don't leave here without checking it out. God brought you here today and is speaking to your heart about it now. He may not ever talk to you about it again. Do something about it today. The Bible says: *“behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”* (2 Corinthians 6:2).

4. Learn how to effectively communicate your faith.

Learn how to give people the gospel.

5. Pray

- For yourself – that God will make all this real to you, and that God will give you a burden for people.
- For specific people in your life that need to get saved.
- For opportunities to share your faith – divine appointments.

6. Carry gospel tracts with you everywhere.

And, if you're serious, carry a New Testament.

7. Start warning people.

They may think that you are crazy, but someday they will remember that you cared enough about them to warn them.

There is a Hell. People who die without Christ go there.

151,000 people die every day. 105 people die every minute. 4,200 people died since I started preaching this message. Most of them were probably lost.

"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." (Ezekiel 3:17-18)

How much blood will be upon your hands? How much blood will be upon mine?