

Faithful Watchmen Preserve Themselves

Text : **Ezekiel 3: 16-21 , 33: 1-11**

S#1.

A. Two thought questions :

1. **Question :** If a king gives commands to his subjects, but a group of them refuse to do as he has commanded, what are those in that non-compliant group commonly called ? S#2.
2. **Question :** If God gives a command and a Christian or group of Christians does not obey that command, does their disobedience constitute a sin ? S#3.

B. From the beginning God has dealt with rebellious and disobedient men.

1. **Gen. 3** ... The first man rebelled and went his own way, followed his own desires.
2. Ezekiel was appointed a watchman for Israel because they were rebellious. S#4.
Ezek. 2: 6-8 neither fear them nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions; neither fear their words nor be dismayed at their presence, for they are a rebellious house.
⁷ "But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious." ⁸ "Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house." S#5.
3. Elders are appointed watchmen over the church to prevent rebellion. S#6.
Titus 1: 9-10 ... holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. ¹⁰ For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, ¹¹ who must be silenced ...

With this lesson we will examine the work of the watchman. S#7.

We will see that God desires that there are always watchmen on duty.
 God has called every Christian to be a watchman ... even YOU / ME.

I. We are all familiar with the concept of a watchman. S#8.

Note : *As we describe the physical watchman, seek spiritual applications from our text.*

- A. There are watchmen even in nature. S#9.
 1. A feeding flock of crows assigns a watch-bird.
 2. If the flock is attacked, the watcher is killed by the survivors.
- B. Even today ships all have a watchman to guide and protect the ship. S#10.
 1. In earlier times the watchman stood in the "crow's nest" and watched horizons.
 2. Modern ships have men using radar and sonar to scan the surrounding.

C. In the time of Ezekiel watchmen were vital to a city's survival. Why ? **S#11.**

1. There was danger; invading armies came to plunder.
2. Watchmen warn the people of approaching danger.
 - a. The people outside the gates had time to get in and close the gates.
 - b. The army had time to prepare to defend the city. (cf. *Tornado warning sirens*)

D. Watchmen were required to be skilled at their job.

1. They had to listen to instructions, understand them and implement.
 - a. The watchman had to recognize the enemy.
 - b. The watchman had to blow the proper signal on the trumpet.

** Even today there are specific trumpet calls soldiers must learn. (Reveille, chow)*
2. The watchman must be a trustworthy person.
 - a. He had to show up for his watch on time and be there every day.
 - b. He had to stay alert at all times; even when bored or tired.
3. The watchman had to be a loyal citizen.
 - a. A slave would never be assigned to be a watchman.
 - b. A disloyal watchman could let the enemy into the city or camp.
4. The lives of everyone in the city were in the hands of the watchman.
 - a. The watchman's work is never complete. (24 x 7 x 365¼)
 - b. When he blew the trumpet, he saved the people and also saved himself.
 - c. No matter how skilled or virtuous a watchman might have been, he was of no value unless he would blow the trumpet.

II. All Christians are called to be watchmen.**S#12.****A. Jesus did great things for mankind.****S#13.**

1. He gave himself a ransom to propitiate for the sin that brought death.

I Tim. 2: 5-6 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

2. He will take us to a place prepared for us to reside with Him eternally.

S#14.

John 14: 3 – If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

3. Meanwhile, He has given us ALL spiritual blessings in Christ. **S#15.**
Eph. 1: 3 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

B. What should be our response to God’s wondrous outpouring of love ? **S#16.**

1. It would surely motivate us to reciprocate in loving Him.
 a. **I John 4: 19** – We love, because He first loved us.
 b. **II Cor 5. 14-15** For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that **S#17** one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

2. If love for God controls us, we cannot help but tell people about it. **S#18.**

- a. **Jer. 20: 9** – But if I say, “I will not remember Him Or speak anymore in His name,” Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, And I cannot endure it.
 b. **I Cor. 9: 16** – Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled **S#19** to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! (NIV)

Vs. 19 – For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.

C. When one accepts Christ as Lord, he accepts the “yoke” of his new Lord. **S#20.**

1. **Matt. 11: 29-30** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
³⁰ “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

2. His “yoke” includes publically doing things that draw the world to Him. **S#21.**

Matt 5: 14-16 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

3. Jesus wants only followers that will be zealous to serve Him in practical ways. **S#22.**

Tit. 2: 14 – who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

4. Jesus demands **DAILY** service, not just occasionally for an occasion. **S#23.**

Luke 9: 23 – And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

D. The “yoke” of Jesus includes being a watchman for those within the gates. **S#24.**

1. It should go without saying that we watch over brethren as a protector, as not judge.

2. When a brother is wandering off, we sound a warning and reach out to him. **S#25.**
 a. **Gal. 6: 1** – Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

- b. **I Thes 5: 14** – We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. (cf- **Heb 13: 17**) **S#26.**

4. Being a watchman includes watching over one's self. **S#27.**

- a. **2 John 8** – Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.
 b. **II Cor. 13: 5** – Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you — unless indeed you fail the test? **S#28.**

- E. As watchmen, we are called to warn those who are outside the gates. **S#29.**

1. **Mk. 16: 15** – And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.
 2. The very reason you were called was to be a proclaimer of salvation in Jesus. **S#30.**
 a. **I Pet. 2: 9** – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
 b. This is the good work that you were created in Christ to do. (**Eph. 2: 10**)

- D. Christians go out as ambassadors for Christ and beg people to come to Him. **S#31**

1. **2 Cor. 5: 17-21** Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ¹⁸ Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. **S#32.**
S#33.

2. Christians are the witnesses of God / of Christ on the earth. **S#34.**

- a. **Acts 1: 8** – you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.
 b. Both Steven and Paul were called witnesses. (**Acts 22: 20, 22: 15**)
 c. Satan seeks to prevent us, but “we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (**Acts. 4: 20**) *What have you experienced in Christ ?*

S#35.

III. Our functioning as a watchman is not contingent on convenience or reception.

A. God assigned Ezekiel to go to a people God knew would reject Him.

S#36.

1. **Ezek. 3: 6b-7** But I have sent you to them who should listen to you; ⁷ yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate.

2. Ezekiel was commanded to sound the trumpet irrespective of their response.

S#37.

Ezek. 3: 11 – Go to the exiles, to the sons of your people, and speak to them and tell them, whether they listen or not, ‘Thus says the Lord God.’

(cf- **I Pet. 4: 11** .. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.)

B. Even today we are to speak the words of God irrespective of response.

S#38.

1. **II Tim. 4: 1-5** I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, ⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

S#39.

2. **I Pet. 2: 5** ... Noah was God’s watchman in a much tougher time.

S#40.

C. The confrontation with sin and the call to repentance runs all through the bible.

1. The Prophets called men to repentance.

S#41.

Ezekiel 33: 11– Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord God, ‘I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?’

2. Jesus called people to repentance.

S#42.

Luke 13: 3 – I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

3. The Apostles called men to repentance.

- a. Peter preached repentance. (cf - **Ax 2: 38**)

S#43.

Acts 3: 19 – Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord

- b. Paul consistently preached repentance.

S#44.

Acts 17: 30 – Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,

- c. **Acts 24:25** – But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said “Go away ..”

S#45.

The pattern and the command is clear as God's watchmen we must blow the trumpet whether men want to hear it or not. (cf – Jas. 4: 4)

S#46.

IV. Whether or not we blow the trumpet there are consequences.

S#47.

- A. **Ezek. 3: 18-21** When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. ¹⁹ Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. ²⁰ Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. ²¹ However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself."

S#48.

S#49.

S#50.

S#51.

1. God's message is clear – "Blow the trumpet and live ... don't and die."
2. Once the trumpet is blown, personal responsibility takes over.

S#52.

B. The Apostle Paul understood that this principle is still in effect.

S#53.

1. **Acts 20: 26-27** Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.
2. **THUS**, If he had **not** preached to them he would have been guilty of blood.
3. **Alternatively ...** Once the trumpet is blown, there is no guilt.

S#54.

Acts 18: 6 – But when they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

CONCLUSION :

A. Are you delivering yourself ? BLOW THE TRUMPET !

S#55.

1. God has placed His trumpet in your hand.
2. Are you blowing it or just polishing it ?

B. As stewards of God we must be faithful serving in season and out.

S#56.

I Cor. 4: 2 – moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

INVITATION : Jesus will come blowing His trumpet. How will you respond? S#57.

Lesson Text :**Ezekiel 3 : 16-21**

16 At the end of seven days the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **17** Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman to the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from My mouth, warn them from Me. **18** When I say to the wicked, 'You will surely die,' and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. **19** Yet if you have warned the wicked and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself. **20** Again, when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I place an obstacle before him, he will die; since you have not warned him, he shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. **21** However, if you have warned the righteous man that the righteous should not sin and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; and you have delivered yourself."

Ezekiel 33: 1-11

1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, **2** "Son of man, speak to the sons of your people and say to them, 'If I bring a sword upon a land, and the people of the land take one man from among them and make him their watchman, **3** and he sees the sword coming upon the land and blows on the trumpet and warns the people, **4** then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head. **5** He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning; his blood will be on himself. But had he taken warning, he would have delivered his life. **6** But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet and the people are not warned, and a sword comes and takes a person from them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require from the watchman's hand.' **7** Now as for you, son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel; so you will hear a message from My mouth and give them warning from Me. **8** When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you will surely die,' and you do not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require from your hand. **9** But if you on your part warn a wicked man to turn from his way and he does not turn from his way, he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your life.

10 Now as for you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'Thus you have spoken, saying, "Surely our transgressions and our sins are upon us, and we are rotting away in them; how then can we survive?" ' **11** Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord GOD, 'I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then will you die, O house of Israel?'