

Confronting Evil

Text : **Ezek. 3: 16-21 ; Matt. 5: 10-16**

A. Acknowledging that indeed “*These are the times that try men’s souls.*”

S#1.

S#2.

1. We are dealing with a kind of flu that spreads rapidly and has devastating effects.
2. At the same time we are dealing with anarchists who are disrupting our society.
3. We have become radically divided because of politics .. complicated by an election

B. We looked at the concept of prejudices.

S#3.

1. We saw that prejudices are part of the “old man” that we must eliminate.
* *We looked at some examples from the farm ... chickens, pigs.*
2. We acknowledged that everyone has some prejudices to overcome.
3. We observed that one cannot judge the value of the contents by the wrapped.

C. Our last lesson addressed the subject of judging. (*assigning motive*)

S#4.

1. It revealed that judging is specifically forbidden in scripture.
* The devil’s favorite verse, “**Do not judge so you will not be judges.**” **Matt 7:1**
2. No person has the ability to be judgmental because no one can read motives.
3. Some judgments must be made in the church, but a procedure must be followed.

D. This lesson will explore how we confront evil without being judgmental.

S#5.

1. We will see that Christians do not have the option to ignore evil.
2. In a dark world even a small light provides significant illumination.
3. As the world becomes ever darker our life of peace become ever more obvious.
4. The darker the world gets, the greater opportunities manifest themselves.
5. As the darkness closes in, the Christian clings ever more tightly to the Christ.

I. Christians do not have the option to retreat into a secure bubble.

S#6.

A. Our text makes it clear that we have an obligation to warn sinners.

S#7.

1. **Ezek. 3: 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.
2. Many seek to make this text like the Jefferson Bible.
Near the end of his life Pres. Jefferson published an edited of the bible from He eliminated everything he disagreed with, Hell, miracles, reference to Jesus deity.

B. No one else has been given the task of warning sinners.**S#8.**

1. **Rom. 6: 23** – For the wages of sin is death,
2. Satan promises just the opposite, “*Come, sin will make you happy.*”
 - a. Sin does give momentary pleasure.
Heb. 11:25 – Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, **25** choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin.
 - b. Sin is like drug addiction ... the addict always needs just a little more.
3. God has sent His servants into the world with a message of repentance and salvation.
 - a. **Mark 16:15** – And He (*Jesus*) said to them, “Go into all the world and preach **S#9.** the gospel to all creation. **16** ” He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned
 - b. **I Cor. 15: 1** – Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I **S#10.** preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, **2** by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. **3** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

C. We must declare the message that God wants all men to hear.

1. **Acts 17: 30** – Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, **S#11.** God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent.
2. **Luke 24: 46** – He (*Jesus*) said to them, " Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, **47** and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

D. To remain silent is to do violence. (*Theme of the Book of Obadiah*)

1. **Obad. 1: 10** – Because of violence to your brother Jacob, You will be **S#12.** covered with shame, And you will be cut off forever. **11** On the day that you stood aloof, On the day that strangers carried off his wealth, And foreigners entered his gate And cast lots for Jerusalem — You too were as one of them.
2. When we see someone being ravaged by sin and do nothing ... we do violence.

S#13.**E. Our text explains that we will suffer the same fate as those we do not warn.**

Ezek. 3: 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.

II. In a dark world even a small light provides significant illumination.**S#14.****A. Jesus set us up to be lights that illuminate the world.****S#15.**

1. **Matt. 5: 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.
2. This time of year, while the corn is short, one can see a small light miles away.
* *The darker the night the more distant lights are visible.*

B. Now is the time to be more bold in our proclamation.**S#16.**

1. It is the nature of most to be shy about sharing one's faith.
 - a. Why is it that it is easier to talk about sports than eternal life?
 - b. Many of us even hesitate to talk about spiritual things with our brethren.
2. Women feel more free to talk about many things than men.
 - a. I've never had a man make me blush in a counseling session, but women
 - b. They feel much more free to talk about feelings than do I, but not about salvation
3. The Apostle admonished us to be like him.
 - a. **I Cor. 11: 1** – Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.
 - b. **Rom. 1: 16** – For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,

S#17.**III. As the world grows ever darker our peace filled life becomes ever more obvious.****A. The scriptures teach us to keep a cool head in times of stress.****S#18.**

1. **I Pet. 3: 14** – But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, ¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
2. Of all people on earth we are most blessed.
 - a. In this life we have lived in the most prosperous and most secure nation on earth.
 - b. When this life is over, we have the promise of eternity with God in Heaven.
 - c. Thus, from the best it is going to get even better.

B. There is no reason for the Christian to ever be intimidated.

1. **Matt. 10: 28** – Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

S#19.

2. **Rom. 8: 31** – What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

C. As the world panics, the Christian has “sanctify Christ as Lord”, i.e., **S#20.**
has set Jesus aside as the ruler of our life.

1. Having surrendered to Jesus as the ruler of our life, **HE** protects us.
2. Knowing that He is protecting us we have a peace the world can't comprehend.
Phil. 4: 7 – And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

** You'll never truly know that Christ is all you need until Christ is all you have.*

IV. The darker the world gets, the greater opportunities manifest themselves. **S#21.**

A. In these troubled times people feel a greater need than in times past.

1. People who have their lives centered on physical things feel insecure.
 - a. No job is completely secure.
 - b. The quarantine has people feeling isolated.
2. The riots have even people who are normally calm feeling fearful.

B. You have a message of hope and security in Christ.

1. You can bring them under the umbrella of the King of Kings.
2. People in Jerusalem were given the same invitation you offer.
Acts 2: 41 – So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. **S#22.**
42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2: 47 – ... with gladness and sincerity of heart, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

C. The key is for us to have an unabashed heart for Christ that shines. **S#23.**

1. **Col. 4: 5** – Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. **6** Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.
2. The key is to view every interaction as an opportunity. (*Mindset*)

S#24.

V. As the darkness closes in, the Christian clings ever more tightly to the Christ.

S#25.

A. As the world becomes increasingly unstable, where are our / your eyes focused.

1. When a child is frightened, he runs to his parent and clings.
2. When I had a flat tire on my motorcycle, the lady at my back squeezed me so hard I could not breathe.
3. Do you have your arms wrapped around Jesus.

B. These troubled times challenge our faith.

S#26.

1. Will we look up or out ?
2. Will we trust God or man to correct the problem ?
3. *Are you clinging to His Cross ?*

C. I am tempted to rely TOO heavily on the government, on man.

S#27.

1. God is the ultimate authority.
2. Prayer will accomplish more than calls to our congressman or.....
3. I'm not discouraging anyone from calling their government representatives.

CONCLUSION :**A. Yes, these are the times that try men's souls. In whom do we trust ?**

S#28.

S#29.

B. God has offered us some guidance to help us navigate these troubled times.

1. Do not ignore evil, confront sin in all forms.
2. In a dark world even your small light shines bright.
3. As the world became ever darker our life of peace has become ever more obvious.
4. The darker the world gets, the greater opportunities manifest themselves.
5. As the darkness closes in, the Christian clings ever more tightly to the Christ.

S30.

INVITATION : Do you have the peace to guide you through these troubled times.

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."

Matthew 5: 10-16

11 Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

14 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.