

## I. INTRODUCTION

Christians share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others for two reasons: because of love, and because of duty. Today we will look at how serious this duty.

## II. BIBLE READING

*Ezekiel 33:1 The word of the LORD came to me: 2 "Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them: 'When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, 3 and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, 4 then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. 5 Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take warning, his blood will be on his own head. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself. 6 But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his blood.' 7 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak 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 out to dissuade him from his ways, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. 9 But if you do warn the wicked man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved yourself. 10 "Son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'This is what you are saying: "Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?" 11 Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?' (NIV)*

## III. DISCUSSION

### A. The Analogy (vv. 1-6)

1. Who was the Lord speaking to?
2. When a nation is at war, how does one become a watchman and what are his duties?
3. How serious is his duty? (vv. 5, 6)
4. The Lord tells Ezekiel this analogy to make him understand the seriousness of being a watchman. Let us imagine ourselves to be the watchman who failed to sound the alarm and our loved ones were killed as a result. What are our feelings and thoughts?

### B. The Application (vv. 7-9)

1. How does this portion correspond point by point with the above analogy ?
2. Why did God want to warn the Israelites?
3. Is the appointment to be a watchman applicable only to Ezekiel, or to all Christians today also? How do we know? (Matthew 28:18-20, John 20:21) How do we feel when our loved ones die because no warning was given? What if a stranger dies because no warning was given? Even if we do not feel anything, ' how accountable are we?

## C. The Message Of Hope (vv. 10, 11)

1. What were the cries of the Israelites, and how relevant are they to us today? What does it mean to be ‘wasting away?’” (v. 10)
2. How aware are we of the cries of the people around us today? If we are not even aware of them, what are the reasons?
3. Our God is sovereign and immortal, and is the same yesterday, today and forever. How did God show His compassion and love, and what hope is there for us?
4. Christians have been told time and again that we should sound the alarm, that we should share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. Honestly speaking, have each of us been sharing the Gospel? If so, share your experiences. If not, why are we not sharing the Gospel?
5. How do we remedy these reasons for not sharing the Gospel? For those who do not feel concern, or the need to share the Gospel, a study of today’s passage will shock them into reality. For those who are afraid of being rebuffed or rejected, they should not be thinking of their “face” or pride, but the need of others. If they share the Gospel out of love and concern and people still reject the message, at least they have done their duty. For those who feel inadequate, they can undergo training. For those who are too busy, they should re-orient their priority.
6. What concrete steps can we take to warn people and share with them the good news of Jesus Christ?
7. How should we live to make our message credible? What should be our two-pronged motivation when we share the Gospel? What happens if we have one motivation but not the other?

REFLECTION: How faithful have I been in sharing the Gospel?

## IV. CONCLUSION

Christians should be fully aware of the danger that all people face. We know they will perish unless they repent and turn to God. If we do not warn them, we shall be responsible for their death. Let our hearts be filled with the love and compassion of God, and sound the alarm.