

Be a Gap Filler

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[0 : 00] My message tonight is be a gap filler. Stand in the gap. And the word of God tells us that God is looking for a man, a person to stand in the gap.

He's looking for that one to fill the gap. Ezekiel 22 verse 30 is where we're going to go. Ezekiel 22 and verse 13 says this.

The Lord's speaking to Ezekiel, and I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land that I should not destroy it.

But I found none. Speaks of a gap here, a hole if you like, a bridge, an opening in a wall. There's the picture, a hedge, a wall. There's this gap, this opening in this wall.

And back in Bible days where this relates to, the big cities had these large strong walls around them as a protection for the city from the enemy so that the enemy couldn't attack and enter.

[1 : 08] And it was a way of defending the city from attack, from enemies. And today the Bible says that we have an enemy of our soul.

And the Bible calls him the devil. He's busily at work. He's the enemy of our soul. And he's on the attack all the time against those that trust the Lord.

And the Bible speaks of how the devil is intently against us. He would want to tear down our spiritual defences.

He would want to find the weak spots and maybe where the arm is not fully covering and find a way of attacking and getting in to where he can hurt us, where he can break down godliness, where he can damage our testimony.

And the world's culture also threatens to do us damage. We know, as I've related in recent messages, how we're kind of aliens and strangers. It's like we're in a different planet because the people of this world do not know the Saviour as we do.

[2 : 15] Mind you, we were once like them. And there's hope for all to know him. And that's the good news we want to share. We don't keep it to ourselves. We want to tell our world.

But the world, by and large, is against the church. It's against Christian teaching and truth. And Satan is masterminding all of us. He wants your destruction. He wants to pull you down.

And the context here in Ezekiel 22 is of Israel. And the enemy was on the attack against the people of God.

Wanting their destruction. And I've been saddened lately to see someone who was identifying with us join a false cult.

And I was really broken up over it on the weekend. To see someone who would go and join a false cult. You know, I said, look, there's a good church here.

[3 : 14] There's a good church there. But no, they went and joined a church that teaches false doctrine. And really is quite cultic. And it breaks my heart to see such a thing happen.

Friends, the devil is on the warpath. There's this wall of protection. But sometimes the devil, bang, he does damage. He hurts the church.

He hurts the people of God. God says, I'm looking for a man who will stand in the gap. We're seeing how our own nation is turning its back on God. It's a godless land.

And we're paying for it as a people. We reap what we sow, the Bible says. See some of the media lately. Some of the wacko things. The world has just gone nuts, hasn't it?

A hole in the wall of a city makes it vulnerable. It means the enemy can get through. And we're headed for trouble unless we fill the gap. Friends, we've got an enemy.

[4 : 12] I know there's someone been relating to me about, there's black magic out there. There's those that are actually worshipping the devil. And they would be against churches that preach the truth.

There are people intently against the kingdom of God and allied with Satan. Friends, we are in this situation where the wall around us has damage.

And Ezekiel says, God is looking for someone who will build up a wall. And if there's a hole in the wall, we need to fix it, don't we? We can find that at our home, can't we?

It says through neglect, the roof falls in. You know, you leave a house long enough and it's just going to crumble. So if you see a wall with a hole in it, you want to fix that wall.

Especially if it's a hole in the defence of your city, as it is in this case here. And it says that God sought here for a man. Now, the Hebrew man, it encompasses male and female.

[5 : 11] It means a person. It means humankind. A mankind. It means, so, ladies, you can't tune out tonight and say, oh, God's looking for a man, that doesn't include me. No, it's men and women that are caught to this.

God is looking for men and women who'll stand in the gap. Who'll be a gap filler, if you like. As my little kind of illustration here is, you know, those familiar articles that people use to squash silicon into holes.

There's a sense where we're like a gap filler. And so, it says here, Ezekiel 22, verse 13, that God sought for a man to make up a hedge, fill in the gap, stand in the gap, for me before the land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none.

Judah here was corrupt, backslidden, and in desperate need of prayer. God sought for a man. Now, notice now it says, God sought for a man.

Just one. Just one would have been enough. God is looking for one. One person. And he works personally with you and me, as God's children, as a son of God, as a daughter of God.

[6 : 35] God works one by one. And the question tonight, for all of us, will I be the one? Will I be the one? It's been said that this is the most influential number in the Bible.

One. One. As someone has related, one man named Abraham began a nation by obeying God. Abraham, his nation, his descendants multiplied.

He simply trusted. He had faith. He believed God. He obeyed God. One man named Moses led the people from slavery to freedom, to the promised land.

One man named Joseph saved the nation by turning from temptation. He said, no, he could have got away with it. No one else was watching what he could have got up to. But no, he stood firm.

He was one man with God. One teenager named David fought for the nation when he faced Goliath. It's interesting, as we read this morning, Saul was the tallest of Israel.

[7 : 43] He should have been the one. But he kind of hid and let the young David run to face Goliath. One David made a difference.

One woman named Esther rescued the nation by risking her life. Just one. Maybe you could be a David tonight.

An Esther. You could be a Joseph. An Abraham. One preacher named Paul spread the gospel over the whole world.

He obeyed God. Can one person make a difference? Absolutely. You are that one. I want to tell you tonight, encourage you tonight, that you are that one.

It's proven in the Bible. It's proven in history. One man, one woman with God can be used mightily.

Be the one. There's a song that goes, will you be the one to answer to his call?

[8 : 45] Will you stand when those around you fall? Will you be the one to take his light into a darkened world? Friends, the question is, will you be the one? He sought for a man.

And in the context here, the nation was astray from God's word. Israel's leaders were lax and compromising. Spiritually, they were going no place. And they were ignoring God's truth.

And at this time, God's wrath threatened. It was about to break in this judgment against this sinful city. There was a hole in the wall, people. That city was in danger.

And Ezekiel, through the Lord, the Lord through Ezekiel was saying, is looking for a man. One man, one man to intercede.

One man who would pray. One man who would cry out in righteousness on behalf of the city of Jerusalem. And seek after God's mercy. But it says, but I found none.

[9 : 43] Friends, the spiritual foundations are broken down. Our state government is going in a dangerous direction.

Some of the laws that are being talked about. Our federal government. Look at what the USA is now heading in a completely different direction.

Friends. And I know it's been said. We follow the USA. We tend to follow lockstep with them, don't we, ultimately? With whatever's the flavor in the USA.

Australia tends to be just following along like a little dog. Following the bidding of the USA or the World Health Organization.

And such things that at times can be just a front for evil. The planned parenthood, so-called. In other words, no parenthood. That's what they want. Friends, the spiritual foundations are broken down.

[10 : 43] It's a sick world. And so there's a need for us, as God's people, to be the one. The wall's broken down. Does anybody care? You know, we can see the hole in the wall and think, someone else will fix it.

Or we can be the one. We'll be the one who'll stand in the gap. The one willing to stand out from the crowd. The one willing to stand up and be counted and say, yes, I'm going to stand for something. I'm going to do something. I'm going to pray. I'm going to believe God. I'm going to be available for God. We have need of boldness. We need to stand against some things. God is looking for a people who will be strong.

People with character. People who will pray. The Lord sought for a man among them. As we related, Esther, she stood in the gap.

She represented her people before the king, asking for his mercy. She wanted to fulfill God's will. And here was Esther, as she was unknown to be one of the people of God.

[11 : 51] And she heard about the danger for the people of God. And she wanted to fulfill God's will. So she put aside her own comfort. The ease and the comfort of the palace.

Willing even to perish. She said, if I perish, I perish. She was willing to step over the line. And say, I'm going God's way. I'm going to stand with God.

And for God. And for God's people. For God's truth. Even it cost me my life. She was willing to even give herself. Deborah, another woman of God. The prophetess and judge of Israel.

She stood in the gap. She stood along with Barak. And defeated the king of Canaan. Freeing Israel from his oppression. She was willing to be the one. Amen. She was willing to be the one.

Gideon believed God. And with his 300 men, he delivered Israel from the oppression of the Midianites. He was willing to be the one. Moses stood in the gap. As God worked with him to lead Israel out of Egypt.

[12 : 50] Elijah stood in the gap. As he confronted the wicked priests of Baal. In a showdown on Mount Carmel. Totally outnumbered. But God is the majority, isn't he?

If we're with God, we're in the majority. Our Lord tells of how the good shepherd is the door of the sheep. Again, this picture of a wall of the sheepfold. In Bible times, out on the hillsides.

The shepherds had these folds made of piles of rocks with an entry point. And the shepherd would lie in the gap. The shepherd would be the door of the sheep.

And he would lie in the gap. The godly shepherd must stand in the gap and fight and protect the sheep. Every one of us has a mission we must fulfill.

How much are we willing to be the one? To find what God wants for us and to do it. Without reserve.

[13 : 48] To accomplish the work God has put on our heart to do. We must stand in the gap, people of God tonight. We must stand in the gap. We must leave the comfort zone.

And be willing to be used of God. No matter the cost. Now some would try and patch up a hole in the wall.

They would do a makeshift job. Who's that a handyman like that? I'm a bit like that sometimes at home. We see a hole in the wall and we try to patch it up.

Rather than properly fill the gap. And they make this half-hearted attempt to fill the need. But that's not going to cut it. We see that in Ezekiel 13.

Where the prophet says that these ones that just daubed on this mortar. They haven't really got it ready and properly set. It's not really a sloppy kind of mortar. They plaster it on this wall.

[14 : 48] With this kind of weak kind of whitewash. There's a picture here of someone who's just doing a patch up job. Not using the right filling material.

And some would do that spiritually too. They just do this kind of half-hearted patch up job. But this plastering, it just hit the weaknesses. The gaps.

It didn't fix it. Now give it time, it starts cracking again. Doesn't it? A little crack there in the corner there. Got to get someone who knows what they're doing. Fix that little crack.

Now there's this sense where some people would... Ezekiel was kind of relating the story of these false prophets. Who would make a half-hearted effort.

And then they would leave people with this false confidence. That the hole was repaired. When it really wasn't. If we're going to stand in the gap. We need to stand strong in the gap.

[15:50] To be resolved as a builder. As it were. So just to consider this again. What about you? What about you in this sinful world that we live?

This wicked generation? Are we going to be one who will say, I'm going to be the one. I'm going to be willing to stand boldly. To stand for God's truth.

To stand before the face of God. Will you be that man? Now taking a stand is not the popular thing to do. It's not the easiest thing to do.

Look through the pages of the Bible. And see the men and women. Who stood out from the crowd. And actually stepped over that line, if you like. And made a decision. I'm going to be the one.

People like John the Baptist. What happened to him? John the Baptist. He stood in the gap. He denounced wicked King Herod. He told him like it was. Christ. And he was beheaded.

[16:52] You can stand like Stephen. Before the council. Willing to go to his death for the gospel. Stand like Paul. Before Agrippa. He stood for Christ.

And he paid the price. He was willing to count the cost. Friends. You can stand like Daniel. He was delivered. From the lions. For his faith. But he stood before Nebuchadnezzar.

He was the one. Who stood. We can stand. And we can intercede. Like Moses did. Psalm 106. It tells. How he stood in the breach. He stood in the gap.

He stood. When. God. Had. Talked about destruction. Moses. Prayed. And God. Turned away his wrath.

I like to that. Abraham. Interceded for Lot. He stood in the gap. And he prayed for his nephew. He prayed to God. On behalf of Lot.

[17:49] Yeah. Job interceded for his children. Job won. They still. Were lost. But. In the.

Destruction. But Job. Was one who demonstrates for us. The need to pray. Interceded for your children. We must pray people.

Even as Stephen prayed for those. While they were killing him. While they were stoning him. In Acts 7 verse 60. He prayed for them. Paul prayed for Israel's salvation. Romans 10 verse 1.

Even our Lord Jesus on the cross. He prayed for them. As they were killing him. He said. Father forgive them. For they know not what they do. And friends. Tonight. The Bible says.

He is interceding for us. Even now. Hebrews 7 verse 25. He continues to intercede for us. So. He. Stands. In the gap. For us.

[18:50] Will we stand for God. In the gap. Will we pray for laborers. In the New Testament. We're told to pray. He says.

Pray. The Lord of the harvest. That he may send forth laborers. Into his harvest. In 1 Timothy. It talks about. Intercessions. For all the saints. For all.

For all. I exhort. For that. Sorry. I exhort. Therefore. That first of all. Supplications. Prayers.

Intercessions. And giving of thanks. Be made for all men.

So we should have. A wide open. Number of people. That we can pray for. That we can intercede for. Bring before God.

In prayer. Stand in the gap. As our Lord told. Ezekiel. He was looking for a man.

[19:48] To stand in the gap. To fill that gap. As it were. And the picture is of. Interceding. Of praying. And pray for friends. Pray for family.

Pray for loved ones. Pray for enemies. God is looking for parents. Who will pray for their children. Stand in the gap. On behalf of their children.

That their children can know the Lord. God is looking for some wives. Who will stand in the gap. Before him. On behalf of their husbands. So that God will not destroy them.

God is looking for some husbands. Who will stand in the gap. For their wives. Stand in the gap. Before him. To intercede. To pray. That God.

Will have mercy. And save them. Amen. Is what God looks for. Amen.

[20:48] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. God is looking for a man. Alright. Get it right. God. God. God. Did not raise up an army.

To destroy Ahab. And Jezebel. He didn't choose some great statesman. Or some. Someone well known. He chose Elijah.

And that gives us hope. Doesn't it? That he chose Elijah. He was an ordinary person. An ordinary person. The average Joe. He chose someone really much like you and me.

Elijah wasn't anything that was known. He wasn't particularly. It was not recorded of him. That he had any particular credentials. To fit him.

[21 : 43] To be the prophet. That God chose an unlikely one. To stand in the gap. And friends. That gives you hope. Doesn't it? Gives me hope.

That God can raise up ordinary people. Ordinary people. And use you. For his glory. Needn't be someone especially talented.

Or gifted. Rather not. That God would enable you. The question. Our Lord simply asked is. Are you willing.

To stand in the gap. So here was Elijah. Some 3,000 years ago. Came out of nowhere. And suddenly Elijah was there. And God.

Used. That one life. That was committed to him. Here he was. An unknown man. But God called him. To stand in the gap. Against evil. In this most immoral and violent of times.

[22 : 39] Before Ahab. And Jezebel. You know. The nation was. Was a. I was a worshipping. Mass. Of a nation. And God called Elijah. Out of obscurity. He called the one.

Who was willing to stand in the gap. Now. Friends. What about you and me? May we see the gap. For one thing. You know. It's easy.

Even at home. To. Kind of relate. How. It can happen. The gap. It just gets wider and wider. A little crack in the wall. And. Sometimes you dismiss it.

We need to see the gap. Number one. In other words. The need of prayer. Other. Other situations. In our life. In that. That. Spiritual wall.

That should be around us. And our loved ones. That's broken down. Where the enemy can find entry. May we think. To answer the call.

[23 : 37] Ourselves. To answer the call. Not to think. Oh. Some other person will fill the gap. Well. I'll get the pastor to do that. Or I'll get. So and so to. To. To do this.

Or that. And to just. Take that stepping back. Where. Actually. I could do that. I could say. I'll be the one. Now. Sometimes we can see.

Something needs to be done. But we might say. Oh. But that's not my job. Some people are like that. Aren't they? Oh. So and so always vacuums the carpets.

I'll just let them do it. Whatever it is. You know. It's kind of the lazy way. Isn't it? I mean. It's the. It's the Aussie way. I mean. Isn't it? It's the.

Apathetic way. Someone else will do it. It's not my gift. That's not my role. I'm not getting paid for that. So the hole goes unfilled. Doesn't it?

[24 : 34] There's lots of holes. The church is a holy place. There's lots of holes. There's lots of holes to fill. You know. Moses. Said. It's not my gift. I don't speak very well.

He said. Send somebody else. But no. God said. Moses. You're it. God wanted Moses to go. He said. It's not my gift. I'm not eloquent.

You know. I just don't have the gift of the gab. It's not my specialty. I'm a shy little person. But no. God says. Moses. You're it. Jonah said.

It's not my gift. You know. Here he was. I'm not that kind of a prophet. I don't want to go to Nineveh. To warn all those ungodly people. It's not my gift.

Somebody else can do it. But no. God got Jonah. Eventually. Didn't he? Jeremiah said. It's not my gift. I'm too young.

[25 : 32] To serve in such a way. And you might say. I'm too young. There's older people. No. It's wrong. God wanted Jeremiah to do it.

Gideon said. It's not my gift. I'm a nobody. God says. You mighty warrior. You mighty man of faith. Now most of us feel the same way. Don't we?

What we want. We think. Maybe there's others better qualified. Better able than me. It's not my gift. It's not my job. Others are better suited. But really. If God is putting it on your heart.

Then. If you've seen the hole. Fill it. And surely. You'd want to fix that hole. As best as you can. To be the best that you can for God. And if you imagine.

In that context of Ezekiel's day. Of Jeremiah. Of Jerusalem's wall. That a hole in the wall. Of the city of Jerusalem. Was a big deal. It was something dangerous.

[26 : 29] So you don't want to leave that hole. Don't. Come with the cop out. And say to yourself. I'm not a builder.

I'm not. I'm just humble old me. Someone else is better than. Someone else is better suited than me. Someone else. Will do it.

You know. There's some funny poems about such things. Isn't there. In churches. Where everyone says. Somebody else will do it. But actually. No one else does it. That's what happens. So friends. My appeal to you tonight.

Do something about the hole. If you like that. That's. That opportunity to pray. That opportunity. To step out. And do. What God has put on your heart.

To do. Don't think someone else. Will do it. We've got need of courage today. We are in a battle zone. We're living in a world.

[27 : 26] Where they call evil good. And good evil. So what we're. Preaching tonight. It's not the message of God's love. They call it hate speech. That's what it is. We've got need of courage.

Because the world. Is against us. And this message. Friends. Especially the need. Is that we. Are a people of prayer. That was the context of a seek. I know there's some. That call me. And say. Pastor pray for me. Or we've got. We've got a prayer line. As well. We've got. An email prayer chain.

Where you can send your. Prayer needs. To this email prayer chain. And. And you don't need to name yourself. But. There's people that. Are praying. Who will receive that email. And they will pray.

Do we care enough to pray. Ezekiel. Was called to be. One who would stand in the gap. And pray. We need a revival of prayer.

[28 : 19] Everything rests on prayer. What is it that you have need of. Take it to the Lord in prayer. Do we care enough to pray. What are those lost ones on our hearts. We know there's family members that are lost.

Or don't we to be concerned. And yet. How easily. We are unconcerned. We are unconcerned. Oh. We dismiss the hole in the wall. We dismiss that need to pray.

And we do not pray. We dismiss that need to care. To reach out. To love. God. I urge you tonight. God's people. The need is great.

There's a great need. And. It's important. It's like. There's. It's dangerous. To leave a hole in the wall of the city. So there's a.

A strong plea here. To respond. The spiritual walls of Australia. Are in disrepair. They're falling down. When Nehemiah heard of the need in Jerusalem.

[29 : 18] He heard about a wall that was falling down. The wall encircled Jerusalem. What did Nehemiah do? When he heard of the need of Jerusalem. Of the wall breaking down.

He went to prayer. That's what he did. Sometimes it's like. We pray. But it's not the first thing that we do. I know. I confess that.

Or don't we go to God first. Nehemiah did that. In Nehemiah 1 verse 6. It says. Let thine ear now be attentive.

This is Nehemiah's prayer. And thine eyes open. Thou mayst hear the prayer of thy servant. Which I pray before thee now. Nehemiah prayed. It says. I pray before thee now.

Day and night. For the children of Israel thy servants. And confess the sins of the children of Israel. Which we have sinned against thee. Both I and my father's house of sin.

[30 : 18] Nehemiah humbled himself. He went to prayer. He went to that place of humility. And we all too easily can underestimate the power of prayer. In James 1 it says.

James 5 it says. Confess your faults one to another. And pray one for another. That you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer. Of a righteous man. Availeth much.

Now are we disciplined with prayer? I know sometimes I get these people and they say. Pray for me. And I need to write it down. Because. I'm not always good at.

Keeping things in my mind. I've got to write it down. I've got to. I've got to be. Disciplined and diligent. Because prayer is important. And people who need prayer.

That's. That's a hole in the wall people. Isn't it? We ought to take that very seriously. And be like Nehemiah. He fervently cried out. He cried out to God in prayer. And then he moved.

[31 : 14] Into action. To. Answer the need. And James says. Pray one for another. There's healing there. So. As we.

Come to. Wind up here. Tonight. To put this into action. For you. Humble yourself enough. To pray. Humble yourself. To seek the face of God.

See the gaps. The needs. The things that you ought to do. To be praying for. The spiritual danger. To. Stand. Strongly against.

The enemy. To. Meet those needs. That you can meet. To be the one. To not say someone else can. Do it. To be the one.

And to. Discipline yourself. To intercede. For example. To pray for the lost. We all have. People who. Are not yet. Following the saviour.

[32 : 12] We want to pray for them. Don't we. Pray for the lost. Pray for God's work. Amongst ourselves. That we might be stronger. And strengthened. In our faith. And doctrine.

Pray for God's protection. Over the church. Pray for missionaries. Pray for ministers. Pray for God. To supply your needs. Pray for victory. For strength. To overcome.

Temptations and trials. Don't forget to pray. I urge you to that end. To fill the gap. To step up. And fill the gap. Now after all this.

You might say. Preacher. Why God wouldn't use. Someone like me. We can all have that thought. Can't we?

Who am I? Who am I? That God would want. Want to use me. The people God used in the Bible. Were people just like you and me.

[33 : 11] If we were translated back. Through some time machine. To that very time of the Bible days. We'd be rubbing shoulders with them. They were just human beings.

Just like you and me. Ordinary men and women. People like Moses. Joshua. David. Daniel. Elisha. Many others. They were just ordinary. Human folk.

Just like you and me. Esther. Deborah. Just the one. Willing to. Stand in the gap. And. You can be such a one.

You can be one. You see what needs to be done. You see what needs to be prayed for. You see what you can do. And you can say. I can be the one. I can fill the gap.

It says. It says. To close here. Paul. Urges Timothy. To study. To show himself.

[34 : 07] Approved unto God. A workman. That needs not to be ashamed. Rightly dividing. The word of truth. He says. Be a worker. Be a worker. and it's simply being the one that's all it isn't it that's all it is believe God rely on God he's the same God he's the same God of David the same God of Moses the same God of Joshua of all these ordinary men and women this same God is your God his power is still the same and his ability to use such as you it's just the same as it was way back then in Bible days so stand in the gap tonight keep on standing even when it's hard God can use you let's pray just as I close this time I've been preaching really to those that know the Lord and I urge each one here tonight to consider the Bible says that we are in need of a saviour every man every one of us needs the saviour and it's not religion or philosophy or works but we need the saviour the Bible calls the Lord Jesus the saviour of the world and

I urge you tonight to consider the claims of Christ to consider this one he left heaven's glory became a man whilst God clothed in human skin it's the God the skin on the God we can touch and know the living God he died on a cross for our sin he rose again he's living now and he's interceding even standing in the gap with us praying for us and this one we can know him personally tonight I urge you to that trust in him and seek prayer if you'd like to talk further I'm sure there'll be others or myself that can speak further with you on that let's just close in prayer now Lord we thank you for the message of Ezekiel that we can heed that message in this 21st century that it's still the same the need is still the same the gaps are still there there's a gap in the wall there's a there's a breach in the hedge there's there's a need for each one of us to be the one you say that you're looking for a man a man a woman you're looking for one who will stand in the gap

Lord we pray that each one of us might be stirred to to pray to intercede more to deliberately intercede the needs that we see around us that we pray for one another Lord that we be humble enough to acknowledge our need to pray to pray more Lord help us to be a people of prayer help us Lord to stand in the gap and also to see where there's a need that we won't hold back but we'll stand up Lord move us to that end as you move Nehemiah to pray and then you move Nehemiah to take action there's a hole in the wall we notice our nation is is desperately in need to know the

Saviour our neighbours our friends our family members on our hearts tonight
Lord we intercede for them help us to pray for them help us to pray fervently the effectual fervent
prayer of a righteous man availeth much Lord we want to be such a people pray for each one here
tonight that each one might have that assurance that heaven is their home as they've trusted you as
their Lord and Saviour we pray for others not present tonight that they would be encouraged into
fellowship Lord God as best they can dear Lord work in us by your Holy Spirit's power may we be
the one that you've called us to be in Jesus name Amen