

The Sound of the Trumpet

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[0 : 0 0] We come together around the Word of God. Let us seek his blessing upon his Word. Let us pray. Eternal and ever, blessed Lord, we acknowledge thine own sovereignty over us, and we give thanks that thou hast enabled us to come together under thine own Word. And as we do so in this act of worship, we seek, O Lord, that it may please thee to grant unto us the spirit of humility so that we will take that place that belongs to us in humility of mind, of heart, and of spirit in thine own presence, acknowledging our sinnership, our great need of repentance, of coming to sorrow over our sin, and to seek the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

We give thee thanks for thy Word, and we pray that it may please thee through thy spirit to apply thy Word to our hearts, that it may be lodged in our hearts, and that it may bring forth evidence in our lives. We acknowledge that we are dependent upon thee, for without thee we can do nothing. We pray for thy blessing upon our community, upon every home and every family.

Thou knowest their needs, and we pray that it would please thee to meet with their needs out of the riches of thy grace through Jesus Christ. We remember those of their number who have come to elderly years, who are confined to their homes. We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst draw near to them, and in their loneliness that they may know, that there is one in whom they can trust, who will never leave them nor forsake them. Bless those of our number who are ill. We pray that thy healing hand may be upon them. Bless we pray that thy healing hand may be upon them. Bless we pray thee, those who mourn.

We pray that thine own comfort would fill their hearts this day. Remember the indifferent and the careless. O Lord, we pray that thou would come on a day of thine own power, and that thou would convict people of their great need of that provision, of that provision which thou hast given to us out of thy grace and of thy love, through thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we pray, O Lord, that through thy Spirit thou would draw a people to thyself, that they may come to experience thine own salvation, and the joy of thy salvation.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless thy gospel throughout our nation and the world, wherever Christ and him crucified is proclaimed to our people, that it may go forth in the power and demonstration of thine own Spirit, in convicting and in converting, and in the building of thine own church here on earth. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for all the promises of thine own word, that they have been sealed for us through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

[3 : 4 5] And although thy people, O Lord, may feel weary and tired, in this world we give thanks that they are looking forward to a day when there will be no more crying, there will be no more pain, there will be no more dying, there will be no more stain. Satan shall tempt us never, sin shall overcome no more, where joy shall abide forever, where sorrow and grief will be over.

Father, we give thee thanks for that living hope that we have, and through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Although there are many things that brings disappointment to us in this world, the greatest disappointment is ourselves. When we come so far short of what we would desire to be, and of what we ought to be, we give thanks that we are what we are by thine own grace, that we have come to embrace the Saviour, that our life is in him, that it is hidden in Christ. And so we give thanks, O Lord, for the work of thy grace in the hearts of sinners such as we are. And we pray, O Lord, that there would be many who are right outside the fold would be brought in to experience the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, in their own hearts.

O Lord, may thou protect us. May thou keep us from being distracted by the things that are around us, or even by the burdens that may lie heavy upon our heart. That we will be focused upon thy word, and that we would hear what thou hast to say to us. That we will take heed to thy word, and apply it in our lives.

We ask, O Lord, that thou would continue with us, and forgive us for all our sins, and all that we ask is in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

We shall read the word of God as we find it in the prophecy of Ezekiel and chapter 33. Ezekiel and chapter 33.

[6 : 27] Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman, if when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people, then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning, if the sword come and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head.

He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning, his blood shall be upon him, but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned, if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman into the house of Israel. Therefore thou shalt hear the word of my mouth, and warn them from me.

When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.

[8 : 04] Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it. If he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul.

Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel. Thus he speaks, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and repine away in them, how shall we then live?

Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Therefore, O son of man, say unto the children of thy people, the righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness.

Neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth. When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, if he trusts to his own righteousness and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered, but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.

[9 : 26] Again, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, if he turn from his sin and do that which is lawful and right. If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walked in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him. He hath done that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live. Yet the children of thy people say the way of the Lord is not equal, but as for them, their way is not equal.

When the righteous turneth from his righteousness and commiteth iniquity, he shall live and die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby.

Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal. O ye house of Israel, I will judge you, every one after his ways. And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity in the tenth month and the fifth day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, The city is mitten.

Now the hand of the Lord was upon me in the evening, and for he that was escaped came. And I opened my mouth until he came to me in the morning, and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb.

[10 : 52] Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land, but we had many.

The land is given us for inheritance. For I forsake unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes, to hold your idols, and shed blood, and shall ye possess the land?

Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbor's wife, and shall ye possess the land. Say thou thus unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely they that are in the waste shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the forts and in the cave shall die of the pestilence.

For I will lay the land most desolate, and the pomp of her strength shall cease, and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the Lord, when I have laid the land most desolate, because of all their abominations which they have committed.

Also thou, son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord.

[12 : 23] And they come unto thee as a people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with the mouth show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

And when this cometh to pass, lo, it will come, then shall I know that a prophet hath been among them. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word, and seeking his help and blessing, let us turn now to verse number seven.

So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel. Therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die. If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will be required at thine hand.

[13 : 35] Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity. But thou hast delivered thy soul.

The book of Ezekiel can seem vague and confusing and difficult to enter it, because it is full of imagery.

But like all the Bible, it is worthy of careful consideration, because it is all about the great redemptive plan of God.

Now, as we approach this book, it is important that we have some background knowledge, as to the writer, and also as to his times.

So we need a wee bit of history. Sometimes we can find history rather boring, but it is important when we come to the books of the Bible, that we know the background to the people that wrote those books and of their own times.

[14 : 46] Ezekiel name means God strengthens, and the little that we know about and comes solely from this book that bears his name.

We know that he was a priest, a son of Busai, and that he was taken from Jerusalem to Babylon as an exile, along with King Jehoiachin in the second deportation, which took place in 597 BC.

From the information at the beginning of the book, we understand that his prophecy began when he was 30 years of age, that is, five years after his deportation, which means that he was only 25 when he was exiled.

So Ezekiel would have been born in around 623 BC, and that was during the reforms of King Josiah of Judah.

Nevertheless, he was living during a time of great international upheaval. The Assyrian Empire, that had such a great conquering power and which destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC, was beginning now to crumble.

[16 : 05] In 612 BC, the Assyrian city of Nineveh fell to the Babylonians, who now had become a dominant power.

Three years later, King Josiah attempted to intercept the Egyptian army, but he was defeated and he lost his life. We find that recorded for us in 2 Kings chapter 23.

And as a result, Judah came under the control of Egypt. However, in 605 BC, the Babylonians overpowered the Egyptian army and Nebuchadnezzar was elevated to become king in Babylon.

Now, at this time, Jehoiakim, who had been appointed by the Egyptians as the vassal king in Jerusalem, shifted his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the first deportation of Jews took place.

That was a time when Daniel and his friends were deported to Babylon. A few years later, when the armies of Babylon and Egypt met in a standoff battle, Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar and he responded by sending a force against Jerusalem in 597 BC and the second deportation of Jews to Babylon took place.

[17 : 37] It was at this time in the second deportation that Ezekiel along with King Jehoiakim and around 10,000 Jews were deported to Babylon and that's recorded for us in 2 Kings chapter 24.

Nabuch Nebuchadnezzar placed Jehoiakim's uncle Sedekiah on the throne of Jerusalem but within a few years he also rebelled and the Babylonians responded by breaching the walls of Jerusalem and coming into the city and destroying and burning down the city and the temple that was in 586 BC and then a third deportation took place.

Babylon had become the mighty force and dominated the international scene until it was destroyed by Persia in 539 BC.

Now what this meant for Judah and Jerusalem is that the reign of the house of David had come to an end the city and the temple laid in ruins.

Now as I said sometimes history some people are not that interested in history they might find it boring but it is relevant for us when we come to books like Ezekiel to know the background of what was happening in the land at that time.

[19 : 06] Now though Ezekiel had been deported and was in exile in Babylon along with other exiles he had a relatively free existence he lived in his own house and while he was among the Jewish exiles who settled by the river keeper Ezekiel saw the heavens open and he beheld the heavenly throne room of God and he received his commission.

The exiles thought that their period in exile would be truly short and that soon they would be back in their own land in Judah and in Jerusalem.

False prophets had arisen among them in exile that had led the people to believe that Jerusalem would not be destroyed and that the exiles would soon be allowed to return to their own land.

And so Ezekiel is called and commissioned to be a watchman for Israel and to give warnings from God for in chapter 3 of this prophecy we read Son of man I have made thee a watchman into the house of Israel therefore hear the word at my mouth and give them a warning from me.

His mission was to convince the exiles that they must return to the Lord in repentance before they can ever hope to return to Jerusalem.

[20 : 37] His task is not easy and he meets with much opposition. the idolatry that was so prevalent in Jerusalem is sadly taken up by the exiles in Babylon.

The punishment of God in the first wave of captivity in the first deportation did not stir the first exiles to repentance. They did not believe that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed.

and the second wave of deportation failed to suppress that rising confidence. In verses 24 to 26 we find what the Lord is saying to them who were exiled in Babylon.

Now a contemporary of Ezekiel was of course the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah ministered to the small community of Jews back in Jerusalem.

Of course there was also Daniel who served in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar and it is also highly likely that Ezekiel would have known of Habakkuk and Sephaniah who prophesied in Judah during the same period.

[22 : 00] The message was the same warnings and predictions concerning the guilt of the people and the coming destruction of Jerusalem because of their hard hearts their rebellious hearts.

It was their sin that was to bring judgment upon them. In chapter 5 we read there for thus saith the Lord God because he multiplied more than the nations around about you and have not walked in my statutes neither have kept my judgments neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God behold I even I am against thee and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations and I will do in thee that which I have not done and whereunto I will not any more do the like because of all thine abominations.

It was their sin that was to bring judgment upon them. So that the first 24 chapters of this prophecy are about the judgments against Judah before of course the fall of Jerusalem.

And from chapter 25 to 32 it's about the judgments that the Lord was going to bring on the surrounding nations. Then from this chapter chapter 33 from which we have our text today to the end of the book we have prophecies of return and restoration.

[23 : 39] The means of this restoration is spelled out and first it is by listening to the warnings given by the spiritual watchman and by the call of repentance.

Ezekiel's task as we noted was not easy. But he is told so thou O son of man I have set thee a watchman into the house of Israel therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth and warn them from me.

It was exceedingly difficult to convince the exiles that their predicaments was because and as a direct consequence of their sin.

Now we have the same difficulty with the preaching of the gospel. It is extremely difficult to convince sinners that they are going to be punished as a consequence of their sin.

It is difficult to convince a people that they are sinners. Now while the sovereignty of God is constantly portrayed throughout the book of Ezekiel, it is consistently portrayed throughout the book of Ezekiel, this in no way removes personal responsibility.

[25 : 10] The sovereignty of God does not in any way remove personal responsibility. In chapter 18 we read Behold all souls are mine.

As the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine. The soul that sinneth it shall die. The soul that sinneth it shall die.

The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

Personal responsibility. And this is always to be the place of beginning. That is for us to acknowledge our own responsibility for our sin.

Jesus said that the work of the Holy Spirit is that he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Paul writing to the Romans says, there is none righteous, there is none righteous, there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

[26 : 29] They are all gone out of the way, they are all together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. Remember the story that Jesus told of two men that went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican.

The Pharisee stood and prayed, praising himself, but the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his face, saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner, or be merciful to me, the sinner.

And what was Jesus' verdict on the matter? I tell you, this man went down to the house justified rather than the other. For everyone that exalted himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Well, are you prepared today to confess that you are a sinner? Are you prepared today to confess your own personal responsibility for your sin?

Are you prepared today to confess that you are a hell-deserving sinner? Now, while we acknowledge God's sovereignty, and while we acknowledge personal responsibility, we also acknowledge God's loving kindness and mercy.

[27 : 58] Let us look at these verses that we have here today a little closer. At the beginning of the chapter, we read, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, the people of the land take a man of their coast, and set him for their watchman.

One of the remarkable things that Ezekiel is told here is about God's sovereignty. He was told that the sword was coming upon the land because the Lord was bringing it upon the land.

And he was beginning, and he was bringing the sword upon the land because of their wickedness, and because of their sinfulness.

God shall punish sin. That is God's sovereignty. He will punish the sinner for his sin. We have already noted, The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

And we must not here just confine these words to physical death, but we must also apply it to eternal death. Paul writes in the New Testament and says, The wages of sin is death.

[29 : 19] Now while we acknowledge that physical death, the separation of the body and soul is as a consequence of sin, we must follow it beyond and understand there is a second death, the separation of body and soul from God.

And that is also as a consequence of our sin. But what do we find here is that although God will act in his sovereign justice to bring the sword upon the land, he will also act in his sovereign mercy.

The Lord will act in his sovereign justice to punish the sinner, but he will also act in his sovereign mercy.

For here we note that he does not leave the people without the warning of a watchman. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.

Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel? Again, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, if he turn from his sin and do that which is lawful and right, if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live.

[30 : 46] He shall not die. So in his mercy, he gives to Israel a watchman. The Lord urges sinners to turn to him.

Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should return from his ways and live. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your own.

For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God, wherefore turn yourselves and live. But if the wicked will turn from his sins, that he hath committed and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live.

He shall not die. Here in these verses that we have today, we have been shown that the responsibility of the prophets were to discharge their obligation as watchmen and sound a clear note of warning to sinners.

Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, when I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman.

[32 : 02] If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people. The watchman is to warn the people by blowing the trumpet.

Now, you may ask, well, how does that apply to me in the 21st century? We do not take a ram's horn that has been sacrificed to warn the people of impending physical danger, but we do warn the people of impending eternal danger.

And we do that through the preaching of the gospel. And the preaching of the gospel is Christ and Tim crucified. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, way back in the 1960s, in one of his sermons, made this comment.

We are living in days when preaching is not as popular as it once was, and when people do not believe in it as they once did.

I wonder what his evaluation would be today, in 2021. And that, not among those who are not Christians, but even among Christians.

[33 : 19] We have to ask ourselves, why are the pews of this church looking so empty? Why is there only a few of us gathered here today?

Is it a shortage of people in the village of North Tolstair? Surely it is not. There are more people that will fill this church over again.

And yet, as I look round, and as you look round, you see so many empty pews. And that is not merely due to social distancing, but of people's apathy.

And people not seeing any need for the preaching of the gospel. And that not only among non-Christians, but Christians themselves.

We live in sober days. We live in solemn days. Because the Lord puts a great emphasis upon preaching.

[34 : 18] How shall we hear without a preacher? Preaching is that which has been ordained by God. It is God that has ordained it, but he said, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe.

Now, I know that God is not tied to preaching as the only means to bring people to salvation. He can do things directly if he so wills.

But his usual manner is by the preaching of the gospel. Do you know, it is a sad day when we look upon our small community and when we see so many empty pews.

When we take the number of people that gather on a Sabbath morning or a Sabbath evening, when I look over my diary and see how it was when I came here 22 years ago, I see a great decline.

And the decline is not because of a shortage of people in North Torster, but because of their apathy towards the preaching of the gospel. Now, that is a point for prayer.

[35 : 34] That is a point for prayer. In the ancient world, the watchmen of the cities were to position themselves high upon the city wall, possibly position themselves on a tower upon the wall.

And they were to watch carefully to see if an enemy approached the city. And if so, they were to take up their trumpets and they were to blow the warning to the people of the city.

Their service to the people of the city was a matter of life and death. And the preaching of the gospel is a matter of life and death.

What we bring before the people when we preach the gospel is a matter of life and death, of eternal life and eternal death. Now, if they should fail, for whatever reason, to blow the warning signal, then some of the people of the city would perish.

But if they were faithful and warning the people, then many lives of the people in the city would be spared. As the trumpet was sounded and heard by the people, they were given time and opportunity to prepare themselves from destruction.

[36 : 49] And dear friend, haven't you heard the trumpet of the gospel time and time and time again? And as it has been sounded, you have been given time, you have been given opportunity to prepare yourself from eternal destruction.

Obviously, it was important that the watchmen understood the significance of their purpose and duty and that they would give themselves fully to it. They were appointed to be alert for anything that was liable to affect the well-being of the city.

In Isaiah 62, we have these words, I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day or night.

Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silent and give him no rest till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Now, the circumstances there are different, but they present to us another duty that is required of the watchmen of Zion and that is their duty as an activity towards God.

[38 : 03] Not only have they a duty as activity towards their fellow man in warning them, but the watchman also has an activity towards God. The watchmen are to warn the people about impending doom.

If when he says, he has the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, he warns the people. But in Isaiah chapter 62, the watchman's other duty is described as an activity directed towards God.

And the same is true of the watchmen of today. For the church today, the watchman has two duties, that of warning the people and that of intercessory prayer.

And these two duties are bounded together, the preaching of the word and intercessory prayer. The preaching of the word and prayer.

They are together. They cannot be separated. We read in verses 3 and 4. Here we have personal responsibility.

[39 : 32] The watchman blows the trumpet to warn the people. And if they hear the warning and do not take heed and the sword comes and takes them away, then their blood is upon their own head.

The same is true for those living under the gospel. The preacher of the gospel and all of God's people are us watchmen upon the walls of our community.

And they have a trumpet called the gospel which warns the people of the consequences of their sin. And the watchman blows the trumpet as a warning.

The preaching of the gospel in North Tostle today is a warning to our community. It is a warning sound. And if you hear that sound and you do not take heed and you are taken away then in your iniquity, then your blood is required at your own hands.

It brings us to the point already emphasized of our personal responsibility to the gospel. How do we in our hearts respond to the preaching of the gospel?

[40 : 52] We hear the trumpet sound of the gospel that warns us of eternal danger. But what do we do? How do we receive the gospel?

Does it cause you to long for more or do you shut up your heart and your ears towards the sound of the gospel? Does it make you to seek after God or receive response to the gospel?

I haven't got the time to think about it. I hear the sound of the trumpet but I haven't got time to think about it. I am too busy. Or do you respond on hearing the gospel by saying well you know it's a lot of nonsense.

It's a lot of nonsense. The watchman blows the trumpet. He warns but it is a lot of nonsense. There is no danger. There is no destruction.

There are those who hear the sound of the gospel but their minds are crowded by other things. They are distracted by the world. They are distracted by temptation.

[42 : 04] There is an exhortation that Jesus gave to his apostle John from heaven that is recorded for us in the book of Revelation where he warns the seven churches of Asia where he repeatedly says he that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.

The writer to the Hebrews warns us today if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts. My dear friend what are you doing with the gospel?

What are you doing with the preaching of the gospel? What are you doing with the sound of the trumpet? Are you under the delusion that it is a sound that doesn't concern you?

It concerns me. It concerns you. It concerns every one of us from the youngest here today to the oldest person here today. It's a concern for everyone because the trumpet of the gospel warns not merely a physical destruction but an eternal destruction.

The Lord Jesus taught his disciples and taught us a very vital lesson by the parable of the sower and that is we will come across different responses as we go about preaching the gospel and sowing the seed of God's word.

[43 : 34] It is a vital lesson for preachers of the gospel for Sunday school teachers for parents or those who are the children of God for Jesus himself the greatest of all preachers.

He had different responses to his preaching. Some believed and some did not believe. Some wanted him killed.

Some wanted him crucified. Some wanted to shut his mouth. And these responses to the preaching of the gospel is not confined to the days of Jesus. It is here with us in the 21st century.

There are people out there who would love to shut the mouth of the preacher. Who would love to shut the mouth of those who proclaim God's word.

God's word. Just because things do not go the way that we would like we don't see revival. We are not to be discouraged or fall into despair.

[44 : 37] Let us remember what Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians and let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men.

Whatever opposition is out there tells the preaching of the gospel let us not be weary but continue to preach the gospel continue to warn to blow the trumpet of the gospel.

Because why? Well Paul tells us it is the power of God into salvation. I am not ashamed of the trumpet of the gospel. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

For it is the power of God into salvation. Here we are confronted without personal responsibility.

Then whosoever hear the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning if the sword come and take him away his blood shall be upon his own head.

[45 : 42] He cannot blame anyone else. No one in a lost eternity today no one in hell can blame anyone else.

If they heard the sound of the gospel and did not take it, they have only themselves to blame. That is a profoundly serious warning for those who hear the gospel and who do not heed the warning.

sound of the sound of the trumpet of the gospel.

well if you live and die as you are remember your blood shall be upon your own head. You cannot blame the preacher. You cannot blame God's people.

It will be upon your own head. You have heard. You have heard and you have not hid it. And your response to the preaching of the gospel affects your eternal destiny.

[47 : 03] The more you close your heart the more you harden your heart the less you will be able to receive and respond to the gospel. You know there is something that is very it's a very serious matter.

You know maybe when you first of all in your young days heard the preaching of the gospel maybe it had some effect upon you. And we know of people who shed tears under the sound of the gospel.

But they didn't do anything about it and the years went on. And you know what happens they harden their hearts more so that now the very sound of the gospel has no effect whatsoever upon them.

It's not you today. Do you remember times when the preaching of gospel had effect upon you? What did make you think? But today you can sit for 45 minutes under the preaching of the gospel and it has no effect whatsoever upon you.

You leave this place as you came into it. Well, you don't actually leave this place as you came into it. You will harden have hardened your hearts even more against the gospel.

[48 : 22] The more you close your heart and harden your heart the less you will be able to receive and respond to the gospel. Everyone in hell today is responsible for their own destiny.

They were warned but they chose to ignore the warning. In Jeremiah chapter 6 it is written Also I said watch men over you saying hearken to the sound of the trumpet but they said we will not hearken.

But you see here is God's mercy. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. You see the gospel call the trumpet is a call to obedience.

Paul preaching in Athens says in Acts chapter 17 that God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. The preaching of the gospel is a command.

It calls for a response. The sounding of the trumpet of the preaching of the gospel calls for a response. It demands a response. It is a call to the obedience of faith.

[49 : 33] Now what is obedience of faith? Well the obedience of faith involves a belief in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ and his atoning sacrificial death on the cross and his resurrection and his ascension and his heavenly session at the right hand of God the father and his return.

In Romans chapter 6 Paul says but God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

Obedience of faith is an obedience from the heart. It is not I decided to do this but I heard the sound of the trumpet and I could do no other thing but heed the warning and believe.

Obedience from the heart is not something that a person puts on but it comes from inside and it moves outside. These there are also here my friend warnings to the watchmen but if the watchmen see the sword come and blow not the trumpet and the people be not warned if the sword come and take any person from among them he is taken away in his iniquity but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

A warning to the watchman that if he does not blow the trumpet if he does not warn the people and the sword comes and the people are taken away in their sin then the blood will be required at the watchman's hand.

[51 : 23] If the watchman is faithful to his task he sees the danger he shows the alarm to his people but if the watchman is not faithful to his task and he sees the danger but fails to give the warning then the blood of the people will be acquired at his hand.

The faithfulness of the watchman is important and over these many years I think we can testify that we have had faithful watchman and I hope that when the record is opened that I have been faithful among you over these many years in warning you all of the danger of dying without Christ that I have sounded the trumpet of the gospel and faithfulness among my people and have warned them of the dangers of dying Christless what have you responded to the warning well that is personally with you that is personally with you gospel preaching must warn the people of their state by nature it must warn because of our fallen nature because of our sins and the sins that we have committed that we are under the wrath and condemnation of

God and I hope there is no one here today who has left not knowing that they are under the wrath and condemnation of God as sinners gospel preaching must warn the people that when we die we will have to stand before God in judgment and because we are sinners that judgment upon sin is eternal punishment in hell but true and faithful preaching of the gospel must bring people to realization of not only their state by nature and its consequences but it must tell people also of the true nature of salvation oh there will be false prophets they are in the world today false prophets people who say peace peace when there is no peace just as they were in ezekeiel's day false prophets saying it doesn't matter peace peace when there is no peace peace but gospel preaching not only warns the people of their state by nature and its consequences but it also tells the people of the true nature of salvation 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 faithful preaching is Christ and him crucified that we can have forgiveness of sin that we can have peace with God that we can be reconciled to God 1st John chapter 3 says beloved now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him for we shall see him as he is and every man that hath this hope in him purify himself even as he is pure that is the hope of the believer the hope of those who have responded to the trumpet sound of the gospel what well what is your response to the trumpet call of the gospel and

I just want to leave briefly with what we have at the end of the chapter verse 30 to 33 read it and reread it and consider it and think upon it what do we have here we have they come unto thee as a people cometh and they sit before thee as my people and they hear thy words but what is written then but they will not do them you come you come and you hear the words but do you do them is this against you but they will not do them for with their mouth they show much love but their heart goeth after their covetness and lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well as an instrument for they hear thy words but they do them not for they hear thy words but they do them not they hear the warning of the preaching of the gospel but they give no heed oh my friend after all those years is that what is written today that you've heard the gospel that you've heard the sound that you've come and sat down and that you've heard the words but your heart went after covetousness your heart went away from

[56 : 43] God you heard the words but they do them not oh my dear friend what a judgment that is well if you do not give heed to the trumpet sound and you die in your sin then your blood be upon your own head that is personal responsibility may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we come before thee and we seek that thy spirit would solemnize our hearts to thy word today and we pray oh Lord that thou would grant us the grace to enable us to take heed to the preaching of the gospel we thank thee for the preaching of the gospel we thank thee that thou doth send watchmen out into the world to blow the trumpet of the preaching of the gospel to warn our people but we pray oh

Lord that thou would take the warning and that they would be given a time and opportunity to turn unto thee for why should they die why should they die oh Lord we pray that thou would bless the gospel among us as a community and as a people that thou oh Lord would protect us and go before us in all that we endeavour to do to bring a people to a realisation of their great need before the time is too late may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen