

The Watchman

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

When I first felt that I was to preach there was a verse that caused me to be uneasy with the thought. I had never felt the desire to preach and did not look forward to the responsibility. The verse was **Hebrews 13:17**, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

It was a big enough job trying to keep myself in line with God's Word. I didn't want to be responsible for anyone else as well. I resisted for awhile, not doubting God, but doubting myself. At last came a day when I gave in and decided that if God wanted me, or anybody, He would make a way. I had the notion that if the Gospel was preached plainly and truthfully that folks would accept it and be saved. I have learned thru the years that some will but many will not no matter how many times they hear it.

In **Ezekiel 3:17-21** God told Ezekiel that he had been called to

be a watchman over the house of Israel. Ezekiel did not ask for the job, he was called to it as any preacher should be. He was to hear the Word of God and to warn the people. If the wicked was warned of his sin and repented he would live. If Ezekiel did not warn him he would die in his sin, but his blood (life) would be required at Ezekiel's hand.

If a righteous man turned from his righteousness and sinned because Ezekiel had not warned him, he would die in his sin. His former righteousness would not be remembered and his blood would be required at Ezekiel's hand. However, if Ezekiel warned him and he did not sin he would live and Ezekiel had delivered his soul. This is also in chapters 18 and 33 as God saw the need to repeat the warning.

Today there are so called preachers who say that sin is alright and that God don't mind. A lot of people don't like to be told that we are to be following the Lord every day and fighting against sin. I know that the preacher has an important duty that most people don't realize. If they are the right kind of preacher they try to lead people to a closer walk with God, comfort, instruct, and when necessary, warn against sin. If you have one who cares enough to warn you then I hope you appreciate his efforts

in your behalf. It would be a lot easier to sweet talk everything and try to keep everyone happy. The question is, would that please God? The answer is No! God says to preach His word, not what man wants to hear.

Ezekiel, or any of God's people, would give the Word of God to the people that would listen. Some would hear and obey and some would get mad, and/or not accept it or obey. Several times I have preached on church attendance and next time there would be fewer to show up. I spoke on teaching the children and our example to them and that night there was not one child in church Our task is but to preach God's Word, it is up to the individual what they do with it. Let none say at the judgment, "I was not warned."

Someone told me long ago that I could be a popular preacher if I didn't talk about certain topics. If I didn't talk long or about controversial issues. One person even said, "You have to keep the people happy!" I said, "No, I don't." Preacher, if you want to keep your position, you may have to please the people. However, if you want to save your soul, you had better please God.

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MUSIC TO STILL THE SAVAGE BEAST!

THE FIRST MENTION OF DAVID IN THE BIBLE IS TO BE FOUND IN I SAMUEL 16. KING SAUL, HARD AT WAR WITH THE PHILISTINES, HAS BEGUN TO SHOW THE FIRST SIGNS OF HIS MENTAL ILLNESS, DEEP MELANCHOLIA, IF NOT OUT-AND-OUT SCHIZOPHRENIA! IN THOSE TIMES, IT WAS FELT THAT MUSIC HAD A SOOTHING EFFECT ON THIS AILMENT, WHICH INDEED IT HAD, AND SAUL'S ADVISERS SENT FOR YOUNG DAVID, WHO WAS KNOWN TO BE AN EXPERT PLAYER. THEREAFTER, WHEN SAUL WENT INTO DEPRESSED FITS, DAVID WOULD PLAY AND SAUL WOULD BE SOOTHED AND REFRESHED AND SOON CAME TO LOVE DAVID AS HIS OWN SON. HOWEVER...

...DURING THE NEXT SIX YEARS, AS THE LAD GREW FROM YOUTH TO YOUNG MANHOOD, SAUL'S ATTITUDE BEGAN TO CHANGE—FOR DAVID SHOWED A FINE APITUDE AS A WARRIOR AND LEADER, GAINING GREAT POPULARITY WITH THE PEOPLE. SAUL, IN HIS DEPRESSED MENTAL STATE, BEGAN TO SEE DAVID AS A THREAT TO HIS OWN RULE, LET ALONE THE FUTURE RULE OF JONATHAN, HIS SON, WHOM HE TRIED TO ENTICE INTO KILLING DAVID—WHICH JONATHAN WOULDN'T DO BECAUSE HE WAS A CLOSE AND SINCERE FRIEND. BUT, UNDERNEATH THIS GROWING OBSESSION TO SEE DAVID DEAD, LOVE FOR HIM STILL REMAINED WHICH BECAME QUITE EVIDENT, IN THIS WRITER'S OPINION, WHEN, THE LAST TIME DAVID PLAYED FOR HIM, SAUL TOOK UP HIS JAVELIN (I SAMUEL 19) AND HALF-HEARTEDLY ATTEMPTED TO PIN DAVID TO THE WALL. THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN, OF WHICH SAUL WAS A MEMBER, WAS RENOWNED AS THE GREATEST OF LEFT-HANDED MARKSMEN (JUDGES: 20-16) WITH SLING, SPEAR, OR ANY OTHER WEAPON OF WAR AND, FOR A WARRIOR OF SAUL'S GREAT CALIBER, TO MISS HIS MARK IN THE CLOSE CONFINES OF A ROOM, OTHER THAN ON PURPOSE, WAS IMPOSSIBLE! BUT IT DID SERVE AS A SIGN TO THE ESCAPING DAVID THAT FROM HENCE HIS LIFE WAS ENDANGERED, EVEN THOUGH THE KING DID NOT, PERSONALLY, INTEND TO HAVE DAVID'S BLOOD ON HIS OWN ROYAL HANDS!



NEXT WEEK: A PROPHET WHO KNEW HIS POLITICS!

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