

A WATCHMAN'S CALLING – ARE YOU CALLED?

Watchmen have a mission—a mission from God. They cannot be begged, bought, or guilted into the role. It is an objective, a Godly pursuit, a duty, and a profoundly personal mandate. They *need* to watch. They love their wall and the people who live within its gates. They love the King of their kingdom and want to serve Him in any way they can.

What *IS* a Watchman Calling?

What is a Watchman's calling? What does that term "*calling*" even mean? What if a Watchman is not sure he's been "called" – can he still be a Watchman? Good questions all. To discern the role of a modern-day Watchman, it would be good to look at what Watchmen did in the past.

Nowadays, a golden retriever could be trained to walk up and down a wall and bark if it sees strangers. A dog's unaided vision is better than most humans. Its sense of smell is keener, and its hearing is far superior to most people. But a Watchman possessed traits no animal, no matter how instinctively superior, could ever have.

Watchmen Then and Now

In the literal biblical sense, the job of a Watchman was likely mundane, monotonous, some days and nights it was just plain dull. So, it would seem. The analogy is often drawn of an enemy and those who watch for the enemy – the watcher must be right 100% of the time. The enemy only has to be right once.

In our day and time, the military has tools such as night-vision goggles, infrared cameras, laser guided missiles, tracer rounds; they even have weapons to detect weapons the opposing armies might be using. A Watchman in biblical times had no such luxuries.

Watchmen relied upon the keen-but-unaided vision of their naked eyes. Vision was, no doubt, one of the qualifying determinants of the position. A Watchman must see better, farther, more clearly and even more intuitively than others. It was quite indisputably, a matter of life or death. It was then, and it is today.

I Want to Be a Watchman

Some ask, "How can I become a Watchman?" You can see why Watchmen and Watchwomen are needed. You see the value of a Watchman in the Church, and outside of it to society in general. Like some others, you may be thinking, "I want to be a Watchman." Be sure you understand what that means.

Watchmen and Watchwomen have been called by God to serve in their position. It is a demanding endeavor. It is a service opportunity, not a hobby, and definitely not for the faint of heart. A Watchman is a formidable force for God in these last days, and that means he can expect opposition from a menacing enemy.

Watchmen are not Watchmen for the thrills or accolades or title. If you consider yourself a Watchman or Watchwoman you know what you signed up for and would quickly tell anyone who isn't ready for the job to serve God in some other fashion. This is not a calling for newborn Christians. Watchman work is next level Christianity (pun intended). If you plan to crawl up on a wall and be a voice against the enemy, you should know what the mission entails.

A Watchman Is

Someone with exceptionally clear vision – The telescoping lens we see in pirate movies wouldn't come along until many centuries after Nehemiah oversaw the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls; yet the Watchman was expected to see far off and discern friend from foe. [2 Samuel 18:24-27](#) records this insightful exchange between King David and the Watchman,

“Now David was sitting between the two gates, and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and when he lifted up his eyes and looked, he saw a man running alone. The watchman called out and told the king.

And the king said, “If he is alone, there is news in his mouth.” And he drew nearer and nearer. The watchman saw another man running. And the watchman called to the gate and said, “See, another man running alone!” The king said, “He also brings news.”

The watchman said, “I think the running of the first is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok.” And the king said, “He is a good man and comes with good news.”

There are several lessons to be drawn from the exchange. For now, focus on the one – He can see from afar and recognizes what he sees.

A person who can recognize Watchmen – Watchmen have keen senses, sharp vision, valuable insight, but also common sense. No Watchman serves alone. There are 24 hours in the day. Every hour must be guarded, but God did not appoint one Watchman. It can be a lonely, dark, tense and dangerous calling. Watchmen need other Watchmen to stay balanced and clear. Those who “go it alone” become exhausted and ambivalent, or worse – just plain weird. Those who constantly stand apart eventually fall apart.

Someone who carries a more significant burden – cities, states, nations. Serving the Lord is not measured in acreage, but Watchmen do see farther from their vantage point on the wall. Because they shoulder such a burden, it affects how they view people. Watchmen know a person's spiritual condition in a few seconds of quick exchange. Others see their outfit, their car, their ethnicity; and Watchmen see that too – but they focus on a person's spirit. Others who do not walk in this calling find that difficult – even impossible – to do. How can you understand a person's spiritual condition? Watchmen do.

Someone who answers only to God – Watchmen understand that the world, and even some fellow Christians, may not fully comprehend the calling to be a Watchman. They are undeterred by their lack of recognition. They serve in anonymity and obscurity, and they do so willingly.

Someone who sees the world from God's perspective – God sees sin. He knows there is evil in the world. He knows every detail of each person's life. Yet he responds in love to those who hate Him. "God so loved the world..." Watchmen love people, even people who hate God. Why? Because that's what God does, and that's what a Watchman does. His mission is to warn, not condemn.

Someone who hears from God – Many sermons and many books have tried to explain precisely what that means, "hear from God." Some of it has been beneficial to the Church, some not. Some of it has detracted from the message of the Gospel and convinced the unsaved world Christians are kooks. Watchmen hear that voice, immediately recognize it's God, and know what to do with what they're told. Sometimes it's appropriate to share that word from God, other times, no. God gives discernment with the word.

One of the "inner circle" who see the King's plans – Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God*, says, "Seeing what God is doing is God's invitation to join Him." That does not mean Watchmen push their way into the plans, it means they are made aware. The King's plans often affect what the Watchman is looking for. Sometimes they're shown the King's plans because they play a role. Other times it's only to make them aware God is moving. Seeing what God is up to keeps a Watchman vigilant.

Someone who understands authority – Watchmen "know their place in a room." They speak when their opinion is requested. They understand, just because they are watchers, does not mean they're elevated in status, only in station. A Watchman is informed, prepared and capable of giving a report. Sometimes their report will influence those in authority, but that is not the goal. Watchmen are primarily called to watch. They're capable of holding authority, but they don't seek it. They allow God to make that determination.

NOTE: With all that Watchmen do they can become exhausted doing God's work. Now, as in Biblical times, Watchmen work in shifts. This is imperative. YOU NEED REST! Resting is not rusting. Rest. Repair. Restore.

Watchmen can become overcommitted and under-rested. There's a word for that – stress. That combination leads to burnout. Burnout is not a badge of honor; it is a death sentence carried out in degrees. Take care of yourself: spiritually first, but also emotionally, physically, and mentally. The city with no Watchman is wholly unprotected, blind to the enemy. Weariness dims vision, impairs judgment, and skews insight. There is a time to watch, and a time to rest.

Watchmen are connected with other Watchman. Swap stories. Find out what's happening on their wall, ask for help. Watchmen know they are vulnerable. Those who attempt to serve alone are not lone rangers, they are lone targets.

In Nehemiah 4:19-20 the prophet is rallying the people who are working on the wall. He recognizes that the enemy could attack at any moment, and he has stationed Watchmen along the wall. The problem is, he needs all hands working on rebuilding the wall because the sooner the wall is finished, the safer they will all be. He needs more than Watchmen to warn when the enemy is approaching, he needs a wall to keep the enemy out.

Nehemiah analyzes the situation and determines the solution is to create more Watchmen *and* more workers by empowering every worker to do both; watch and work. Each worker is armed with both tools to build and weapons to fight, but there is a problem—it's a big wall, around an entire city, and the people are scattered. If the enemy is approaching from the South, how can one small team of workers possibly defend the South wall while the rest of the 'army' is spread across the North wall, and the East and the West?

Nehemiah called all the people together, city officials, elders, workers, and Watchmen and gave them all the same order.

"The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another. In the place where you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."
(Nehemiah 4:19-20) [NASB]

Maranatha to that day!