

*We can never over-emphasize the severity & importance of eternity. The sense of urgency must seize the preacher of the Word.*

*You are not simply imparting information, you are dealing with souls, you are dealing with pilgrims on the way to eternity, you are dealing with matters not only of life and death in this world, but with eternal destiny. Nothing can be so terribly urgent. (Lloyd Jones)*

*The prophet Ezekiel has 2-fold purpose:*

- (1) warning of divine judgment and
- (2) comfort of future restoration!

God never sends his servant without the necessary equipment for the mission. God told Ezekiel that he would give him a hard head and face, harder than that of rebellious Israel, to enable him to stand against her obstinance and stubbornness (3:8-9). In fact, Ezekiel's name means “GOD WILL STRENGTHEN” — the meaning of his name aptly describing his ministry (Ralph Alexander)

**THESIS — These chapters give a clarion call to all spokesmen for God. These chapters will describe the man of God who serves God in the ministry of the Word...**

## I. **HE MUST BE FILLED!** (1-2)

## II. **HE MUST BE FORTIFIED!** (3-7)

Their description (v.4)

Their antagonism (vv.5-6)

Ezekiel's determination (v.7)

**III. HE MUST BE FEASTING!** (2:8-3:3)

*Ministers should all feed liberally upon the Word (William Greenhill).*

*Psalm 119:103 – How sweet are your words to my taste; yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth.*

*1 Timothy 4:15 – “Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them...”*

**IV. HE MUST BE FERVENT!** (3:4-15)

Contrast Ezekiel with what we often see around us today. Today, tragically, we see **Men Driven by...**

1. The sentimentality of triviality
2. The demand for self-importance & narcissism
3. The standard of entertainment
4. The assertiveness of self-will
5. The intoxication of reputation & applause

But for Ezekiel, it was different. He was *fervent*.

1. Be fervent because of the ***difficulty*** of the task (vv.4-11)

2. Be fervent because of the ***sobriety*** of the task (vv.12-15)

**V.HE MUST BE FAITHFUL! (3:16-27)**

*Men of God must preoccupy themselves with faithfulness not fruitfulness.*

The role of a **watchman** — *A watchman would stand on city walls, hilltops or a watchtower & be on the alert for approaching enemies and warn of impending attack.*

A Watchman with two dimensions:

1. vv.18-19 - he had to warn the **wicked** - turn from evil ways!
2. vv.20-21 - he had to warn the **righteous** to stay faithful & to not turn from it into the evil path!

Ezekiel's commission concludes with his initiation (vv.22-27)

He sees the glory of the Lord

He falls down prostrate in deep humility before God

He is muted (by God) so he cannot speak *until* God gives him words to speak, then he can prophesy.

We desperately need men of God, men of courage, men like Ezekiel.

- ✓ Men alone with God
- ✓ Men unconcerned with entertainment
- ✓ Men serious about eternity
- ✓ Men unflinching in conviction
- ✓ Men preaching the Word
- ✓ Men enduring thru hardships
- ✓ Men zealous for Christ

“Speak to your people as to men that must be awakened, either here or in hell. ... Oh, speak not one cold or careless word about so great a business as heaven or hell. Whatever you do, let the people see that you are in good earnest ... Men will not cast away their dearest pleasures at the drowsy request of one that seems not to mean what he says, or to care much whether his request is granted or not” (Richard Baxter).

## ARISE MY SOUL ARISE!

Arise, my soul, arise; shake off thy guilty fears;  
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears:  
Before the throne my surety stands,  
Before the throne my surety stands,  
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above, for me to intercede;  
His all redeeming love, His precious blood, to plead:  
His blood atoned for all our race,  
His blood atoned for all our race,  
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears; received on Calvary;  
They pour effectual prayers; they strongly plead for me:  
“Forgive him, O forgive,” they cry,  
“Forgive him, O forgive,” they cry,  
“Nor let that ransomed sinner die!”

The Father hears Him pray, His dear anointed One;  
He cannot turn away, the presence of His Son;  
His Spirit answers to the blood,  
His Spirit answers to the blood,  
And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear;  
He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear:  
With confidence I now draw nigh,  
With confidence I now draw nigh,  
And “Father, Abba, Father,” cry.

## GIVE ME ONE PURE AND HOLY PASSION

Give me one pure and holy passion.  
Give me one magnificent obsession.  
Give me one glorious ambition for my life --  
To know and follow hard after You.

To know and follow hard after You,  
To grow as Your disciple in the Truth,  
This world is empty, pale, and poor  
Compared to knowing You my Lord.  
Lead me on, and I will run after You.  
Lead me on, and I will run after You.

The preacher is a herald; his work is heralding the King's message. . . . Now the herald does not invent his message; he merely transmits and explains it. It is not his to criticize its wisdom or fitness; this belongs to his sovereign alone. On the one hand, . . . he is an intelligent medium of communication with the king's enemies; he has brains as well as a tongue; and he is expected so to deliver and explain his master's mind, that the other party shall receive not only the mechanical sounds, but the true meaning of the message. On the other hand, it wholly transcends his office to presume to correct the tenor of the propositions he conveys, by either additions or change. These are the words of God's commission to an ancient preacher: "Arise, go unto Ninevah, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee..."

The preacher's task may be correctly explained as that of (instrumentally) forming the image of Christ upon the souls of men. The plastic substance is the human heart. The die which is provided for the workman is the revealed Word; and the impression to be formed is the divine image of knowledge and true holiness. God, who made the soul, and therefore knows it, made the die. He obviously knew best how to shape it, in order to produce the imprint he desired. Now the workman's business is not to criticize, re-carve, or erase anything in the die which was committed to him; but simply to press it down faithfully upon the substance to be impressed, observing the conditions of the work assigned him in his instructions. In this view, how plain is it, that preaching should be simply representative of Bible truths, and in Bible proportions! The preacher's business is to take what is given him in the Scriptures, as it is given to him, and to endeavor to imprint it on the souls of men. All else is God's work. (RL Dabney)