

How to Become a Watchman

Many of you classify yourself as a Watchman or Watchwoman. Your interest in becoming a Watchman prompts two assumptions. The first is that you are a Christian—a person who has come to Jesus for forgiveness of his sins based on Jesus' death and resurrection and who has chosen to follow Jesus for the rest of his life. If you are not a Christian, you can't yet be a Watchman; you are still in the enemy's camp. Leave this article and find some of our resources on becoming a Christian. You need Jesus, not a place in His army.

The second assumption is that you know what a Watchman is. Here too, we have multiple resources to explain the Watchman's role. So that you don't have to leave this article, here's a quick explanation.

A Watchman doesn't belong to a particular denomination. Though Watchmen work as a team, they have no single leader other than Jesus. We're not superior; just servants. Watchmen pay a cost, but it's not to this ministry.

The heart of what we do is spiritual protection. Like ancient soldiers once did, we stand on the wall and watch. We watch for the enemy's advance and the return of the King. We watch for opportunities to rescue those captured by sin and retake territory Satan stole in the past. And whatever we see that could aid in growth, encouragement, or preparation, we announce to the inhabitants of our city. Our ALL-IN commitment is to Jesus, our families, our community of worship, our countries, and those yet to experience release from the enemy's grasp.

If this describes you or what you'd like to become, then read on to discover what it takes to be a Watchman.

1. Listen For God's Call

Though every person in ancient Israel had something to protect, not everyone stood on the wall. Some had to raise animals or crops. Others governed and insured justice in society. Children played in the streets and did their chores in the home. The elders told stories of God's goodness and acts to build the faith of their families. Merchants sold goods, fishermen fished, carpenters shaped wood, and religious leaders pointed people to God. Society divided the work to make sure each task got done. It was only in times of labor shortage or imminent attack that everyone took his shift on the wall.

This pattern of differentiating tasks continues today. God assigns people their roles based on the gifting He provides (1 Cor. 12:4-11). He calls all Christians to watch and prepare for Jesus' return (Matt. 24:42). Each of us must fight the enemy and help to bring those he holds captive into Christ's freedom (Matt. 28:18-20). But not all have protection as their primary task. For that, you need a call.

Take Moses as an example. He, along with Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others, heard God's clear voice take him in a direction he would have never chosen for himself (Ex. 3:10). Moses

fought it. He knew this wouldn't be easy. It was going to require sacrifice from him and those he loved. He told God he wasn't the right man for the job.

You might be fighting God's call too. And you've probably used some of Moses' excuses. "Who am I to protect others? Are you sure you've got the right guy? Do you know all my weaknesses?"

In the end, the only questions that matter are "Has God called?" and "Are you willing?"

2. Find Your Place

Moses had an advantage. God told Moses what group he was to lead and protect, and Moses did so for the rest of his life. Often there is a frustrating delay or discontinuity between the calling to be a Watchman and the opportunity to watch.

God calls a man to pastor but gives him no church. A woman has an overwhelming urge to raise godly children, but her womb is empty. The small-business person feels a calling from God to reach out to corporate America but lacks the skills, resources, or team to make it happen. The public-school teacher longs to influence her students for Jesus Christ, but how can she reach them for Jesus when she can't say His name in their presence?

Moses was a Hebrew. Who he was defined the place of his ministry. That could be the key to the place of your calling as well. Consider how you can impact the groups to which you currently belong.

It is easy to look toward the horizon for your world-altering mission and miss those in danger right at your feet. If you can't pastor a church, then pastor your family and friends. Other nonpregnant mothers share your pain, but they might not share your view of God. Minister to them. The boss can love his employees like Jesus even if he can't reach the bigger pond.

The teacher can't talk to her students about Jesus, but she can talk to Jesus about her students.

If God doesn't direct you to some strange new place, then investigate how He can use you where He's planted you. Who needs protecting right there? Remember that God gives greater assignments to those who prove faithful with what He's already given (Matt. 25:15, 21).

3. Declare Your Intention

This might be the most challenging step, but you've done it before. You declared your intentions in private to the person you married, and then you did it again in front of a crowd. There's a reason weddings have witnesses. They verify the event happened, and they are intended to help make sure we do what we promise.

You also declared your intentions to Jesus when you made Him your Savior. You told someone about your decision—your family, your pastor, your church. That's what baptism is for. If you

haven't taken this step due to your fear, now would be a good time. A Watchman protects people from spiritual danger. He can't be afraid of getting wet in public.

Moses announced his call to his wife, his father-in-law, and his people (Ex. 4:29-31). More difficult than these was when he stood before Pharaoh and gave God's command (Ex. 5:1). But hardest of all was when his declaration of God's plan and his role caused greater hardship for his people and their initial rejection (Ex. 5:20-21). From the moment he made God's call public, his life got progressively more complicated. But the depth of his impact was greatly increased.

To whom have you declared your intention, not just to live as a Christian, but to serve as a Watchman? To Jesus? To Satan? Have you told other Watchmen you are joining them on the wall? Be bold in your statement of whose side you are on and how far you are willing to go.

4. Apply What You Already Know

You are already a watchman in a sense. You've been one ever since you understood the concept of ownership. You watched over your toys as a child to prevent unauthorized use or abuse. Maybe you lined up your wagons or your Legos to defend against a pretend attack from your fake army men. God was using your imagination and play then to prepare you for the real but unseen war occurring in the world all around you.

The older you grew, the more others gave you to protect, and the bigger the consequences became. Students protect lunch and their homework. Football players defend their teammates and the ball. Cashiers at the fast-food restaurant, drivers, security guards—they all have a charge to keep.

Moses had previous experience as well. When God called him, he was a watchman of sorts. He protected sheep from marauders, predators, and cliffs (Ex. 3:1). Forty years shepherding sheep was pretty good preparation for shepherding God's people.

He had the skills, and he knew it. Note that in his excuses to God, not once did he say he didn't know how to do what God asked. He questioned his communication skill but not his ability to lead and protect.

You have skills and experience too. God is calling you to apply what you already have to a spiritual domain. He wants you to provide protection from a more powerful enemy. You get to do it for an eternal cause. Everything you have done in your life has been prepared to get you to this moment.

5. Get All the Training You Can

Moses spent most of his first forty years learning all that Egyptian culture had to offer: reading and writing, math and science, politics and leadership, military skill. Truth is truth wherever you find it. Though he rejected their worldview, he took advantage of the education Egypt provided.

Moses' training continued in the wilderness. There, he learned how to use his staff. He used it to help maintain his stability as he walked over uneven land. He used it to block his sheep from going the wrong direction and to ward off enemies who wanted his sheep for food. The staff that seemed so common and so worn, God would use to part the Red Sea and bring water from a rock. Moses knew how to use what was in his hand.

There are tools a Watchman must learn to use if he is to do his job well. Tools are great, but if used improperly because of poor training and lack of experience, they won't serve their purpose. They might even become a threat.

The tools God gives Watchmen are prayer and the Bible. Though formal training in how to use these resources is beneficial, it is not necessary for you to have a bachelor's or master's degree from an accredited institution to serve on the wall. For now, the best training is to get around people who know how to pray and live out God's Word. Soak up all they have to offer. Then put it into practice yourself.

6. Discern Between a Threat and the Landscape

Moses, by God's power, successfully secured Israel's release from their captivity. But the danger was not past. The people reached the edge of the Red Sea and stopped. That was Pharaoh's cue to attack.

The Israelites responded with fear and complaints. They saw two enemies—the water in front of them and Pharaoh's army behind.

When they approached Moses with their anger and questions, he showed he viewed their situation from a different perspective. He saw the water as a pathway that would escort them to a place their enemy could not go. A wall of water would show them the way, and a wall of fire would prevent their enemy from following until it was too late.

As you watch from your wall, you will view many things in the darkness. Harmless sounds, shadows, and moonbeams tempt you to signal enemy movement where none exists. Your job includes discernment. You must decide what to ignore because it's simply part of the changing landscape and deserves your unwavering attention as a threat.

Not every change in our culture is a sign of moral decay. Not every light in the heaven's points to Jesus' return. Study the Scriptures so you'll know the signs of both. Ask God for discernment and understanding. Then you'll know what changes to celebrate, which ones to watch further before coming to a conclusion, and which ones deserve sounding the alarm.

7. Join with a Team

Before Moses started his mission, Aaron, his brother, became part of his team. Aaron didn't stutter in his speech, a problem Moses claimed to have. Moses was forceful with God's

requirements while Aaron gave way to the people's desires. The two sons of Amram complemented each other. They were better as a team than either one could have been alone.

As Israel settled into life in the desert, problems arose from their daily life. Moses sat day after long day listening to the never-ending line of people who needed his judgment. Jethro, Moses' father-in-law wisely instructed him to spread the judicial burden over ever-descending layers of leadership so that Moses would not have to do the work alone (Ex. 18:17-26). God later instructed Moses to select seventy others who could help Moses with the spiritual load he carried (Num. 11:24-25).

Since the beginning, teamwork has been part of God's plan. No one person can defend the city. You cannot watch the whole wall alone. The larger the team you assemble, the more rest you will gain. More people on your team will also mean you can send more on attack and not have to reserve as many for defense.

Part of our mission at I Am A Watchman is to help identify those God is calling into this ministry and then network them together. We want to work as a cohesive unit to accomplish God's goals as we excitedly anticipate Jesus' return.

Each of us praying for one another, helping to meet needs, interpreting events and their meaning, and encouraging one another not to quit. We'll celebrate victories, weep over failures, and work together toward the enemy's defeat in individual lives until Jesus stands on earth as King.

Are you a Watchman? Have you heard Jesus' call? Then declare it to Him. Give Him your ALL-IN. Give Him your heart. Then watch Him use you in the lives of your family, your friends, your church, and your world.