

21. Father Is a Watchman

by Denny Kenaston

The father has a responsibility to protect his family by being a watchman and setting boundaries, and to teach his children to discern what is good and what is bad.

Duration: 44:46

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:3

Topics: "Family Protection", "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the role of fathers as watchmen in protecting their families from worldly influences. Drawing from the example of Nehemiah's burden for Jerusalem's broken walls, the speaker urges fathers to set biblical standards, be discerning gatekeepers, and safeguard their homes from harmful influences like entertainment, media, toys, music, and distorted teachings. The importance of conducting a 'house cleaning' to remove defiling elements and prioritize Godly standards is highlighted.

Transcript

All right, in this last session this evening, I want to speak on this subject, Father is the Watchman. Father is the Watchman. We live in a world that is coming up with new inventions of entertainment almost daily.

How does a godly family deal with all of this? In our last session, we saw the overwhelming blessing that it is when parents train and preserve the body and the soul of their children. In this session, I want to deal with some of the practical ways in which we can protect our children's minds and their bodies. I have some strong things to say and I pray that God will give all of us open hearts to consider, maybe to reconsider, how we view certain things in this world around us.

I have some very important issues that affect our children that I would like to take a look at. I realize that I can get a lot of criticism for what I'm going to say in this session, but what good if all we do is talk about it up here and never bring it down here where we all live every day and take a look at our world that we live in, in light of the principles that are in the Word of God. Nehemiah was an overseer.

He was the governor of Jerusalem during the time of the rebuilding after the captivity. When he heard that the wall of Jerusalem was still broken down and the gates had not been repaired, he was deeply burdened. I want us to read what he said.

We can hear the burden of his heart in the words here in Nehemiah chapter 1, verse 3 and then also verse 4. He heard from those who traveled back from Jerusalem, back to the place where he was living. He heard about the remnant that was left, that they were in great affliction and reproach. He heard that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

Nehemiah's response to this sad news was this. I sat down and wept and mourned certain days and I fasted and prayed before the Lord God of heaven. That was Nehemiah's response when he heard that the wall of the city was still broken down and the gates were not there.

God's people were living without any protection from their enemies. The walls of the city stopped the enemy from flooding in and overtaking the people and the gates of the city were there so that with the help of a watchman who sat at the gate, no one could sneak in and destroy the city from within. Nehemiah was greatly burdened about this.

I would like to use him as an illustration to focus on our responsibility to protect our homes. The father is the one who has this task, number one. Father is Nehemiah.

We are the Nehemiah in our house, brethren. He is the overseer. He is the one who's responsible for the spiritual welfare of his family.

He is the one who builds a wall around his family by raising up basic biblical standards that the family should live by. He gives direction about activities, clothing, standards, music, and many other things. And as the family submits to his directives, these family standards become walls of protection around his family.

Hallelujah. Not only is he concerned about the convictions of the home, the walls that is, but he is also responsible for the gates. The father is the gatekeeper.

We are supposed to stand at the gate of our household and make sure nothing gets through the gate that could slowly destroy the family from within. I have seen many sincere families who had many things right. I've seen many erode into worldliness simply because the father was not a discerning gatekeeper.

Have you ever seen a family like that? Let me see your hands. Going to the right church, wanting the right things, but for some reason, dad just didn't have the grit, the spiritual grit that it took to say, no, we're not going to have this in here when it's not going to happen. This is a warning to each and every one of us fathers and mothers.

Most of the time when the father wakes up to what has happened, it is very hard to convince his already infected family of the danger of the things that they are doing that he allowed in through the gate. The key to the whole thing is to be a discerning, watchful father in the beginning. And the key to this whole thing is that as a father, you have that place in your home.

Not that you have to wrestle for it every time a new cassette comes into the house. That's not what I mean. I mean the ground work is already laid and everybody understands my papa is the gatekeeper of this house and everything that comes through that door.

He has every right to look at it, I say with the eagle's eye and see if it's okay. There is a holy war going on over your children and I'm sure you know that. John Bunyan wrote an allegory called the holy war.

Have you read it? It is a story about the devil's attempt to conquer and control man's soul or the soul of man. In controlling man's soul, he has control over man's being, thus having another servant for his evil uses. In this story, man's soul is likened to a city with five gates.

The enemy makes his way into the city through these gates. The gates represent man's five senses. Now it's just a story, but it represents the realities of how satan does indeed take control of man through these very gates.

And we don't have to look very far to see how he is still employing ways and means to enter the souls of men through the same gates as that story which was written 250 years ago. My, if John Bunyan could look around today, he would have written the book way faster. That brings us again to the fathers.

In this modern world, our families are in desperate need of gatekeepers who will, with loving scrutiny, check out everything that tries to get into the home through the gates. The gates are five. The eyes, the ears, the nose, the mouth, the touch, and a discerning father will watch out for dangerous influences in all of these areas.

Now this is a very practical message, I know. And I know I wouldn't get one here, but I'm sure I might get a rotten tomato somewhere for what I'm going to say tonight. But I know I wouldn't get a rotten tomato in here.

This is a good crowd. Here's the question that I propose before we get real practical. What is the world? What is the world? This is a question that every evangelical needs to re-ask himself.

We have lost a clear unquestionable definition of what the world is. It seems that Bunyan's Vanity Fair now dwells in the church. And it is time for an examination.

And that's what I'm pleading for. 40 million American Christians, in quotes, profess to believe in the doctrine of separation from the world. Yet, recent polls indicate that there is no difference at all in the way Christians live and the rest of the people around them.

In some issues, we are worse than the world, i.e. divorce. It is time to evaluate where we truly are going. That is my plea.

We all believe in separation, but very few are separated. That makes us hearers of the word, but not doers. The world is under judgment, dear brothers and sisters.

It is reserved under fire already. It is a sinking ship, and everyone is dancing while it is slowly going down, just like they did on the Titanic. I mean, they got that crushing blow, the ship shook this way and that way.

Somebody said, we're taking in water. There was a big ball going on when they got the shock. And the people just said, oh, don't worry about it.

Nothing can sink this ship. And they kept right on dancing while the ship began to slowly sink. What a picture of the evangelical world in our land.

I like what Tozer said some time ago. He was one of the last prophets evangelicals had. The world is not a battlefield anymore.

It is a playground. It is a playground. I know this probably sounds pretty strong, but somebody needs to blow the trumpets, and I'm going to blow it tonight.

I may not have a lot of volume to blow it, but I'm going to blow it anyway. I have observed through these last 20 years that when parents get serious about raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, then suddenly they take a fresh look at what is coming in the gates of their home. How many of you could give that testimony by raising your hands? Isn't that right? All of a sudden, I get aware that things that are coming into my home just might affect my children.

Well, my desire is to fan the flames of this new desire that is in your heart already. I want to encourage you. Many have allowed a host of evil teachers to gather their children around them and teach them the ways of the heathen, and it's time that it stopped.

To some, I probably sound like I'm coming from another planet, but that's okay. A godly seed is the issue. Turn with me to the book of Psalms now.

We want to read a few verses in the book of Psalms. Psalm 101 is where we're looking. I have written the title above this psalm.

I call it the father's psalm. The father's psalm. Reading verse 2 through 4 and 6 through 7. Hear what David said.

I like his attitude about his house. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. Oh, when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

Good counsel, David. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. I hate the work of them that turn aside.

It shall not cleave to me. Verse 6. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

He that worketh this sea shall not dwell within my house. He that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. That's what David said about his house.

Let us look at some of these real issues. Please, please, please just consider this evening. The television for one.

A whole sermon could be given about the evil character of this teacher. He has slain his hundreds of thousands. No single influence has destroyed more lives than he.

The positive advertisement proclaims the negative reality quite clearly. We bring the world into your home. The television is full of those who turn aside from the Lord.

And David said he'll have nothing to do with them. How can we set our children down before them who turn aside from the Lord? It is a wicked thing that we have set before our eyes. Through the eye gate, our children are inflamed with passions that plague them all the rest of their days.

Most of those who stand before the cameras are filled with lies and deceit. If we place their opinions and values next to the word of God, they're antichrist. Why would we want to sit before them? We are warned not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly and the television is full of it.

The television is Satan's number one tool to train the next generation in his evil ways. America is drunk on this thing. She stumbles on silly in silly ignorance, drinking at its fountain, laughing at its utter foolishness, not knowing that the serpent is in there.

God's people should not be there with them and our precious children should not be allowed to sit at the feet of this wicked teacher and bow at its altar. Some years ago, I heard a sermon by Billy Graham about television. He preached it in 1953.

Man, did he smoke. That man was such a fiery preacher, but in the middle of his sermon in 1953, he paid his respect to the television. Now in 1953, the television was okay in parentheses.

People were looking at it and saying, nothing wrong with the television, nice little this, nice little that, you know, everything's okay. But there were a few prophets around in 1953 saying, no, no, no, stay away from it. Billy Graham was one of those.

He prophesied in 1953 the dangers of the television and he said this, America, the television will destroy the devotional life of the American Christian. That's what he said. Guess what? He was a prophet.

He was a prophet. He was on target with that prophecy. I personally believe that this issue is urgent and it calls for strong measures.

Dear fathers, I plead with you, take that thing and hew it in pieces before the Lord and your family. Don't sell it. Don't sell it.

You may say, look, the thing costs \$500. Listen, the lesson that you will give your children, if you take a sledgehammer to that thing and hew it to pieces in Jesus name is worth \$10,000. Smash it to pieces.

What about movies and drama? Hollywood is like the troubled sea that cannot rest. Its waters cast up mire and dirt continually. I have set this evil teacher by itself because I feel it reaches far beyond the television in these days that we live in.

The theaters, the videos and now the DVDs are all shouting for the attention of our children and for the most part they have gotten what they're crying for. This form of media is deception with a capital D brothers and sisters. It is all faith.

It is all unreality. Hurting people put on false faces and act like they are enjoying the blessings of life when in reality they are dying on the inside and contemplating suicide. Why would we want to sit our precious sons and daughters down before these hypocrites? There is also a desensitizing of the conscience about sin that takes place when you sit your family and you in front of that stuff.

To watch people sin on television has a dulling effect on you. To watch it on a movie it does the same thing. After you watch so many murders then murder isn't so bad anymore.

It has a desensitizing effect upon you. My children have never watched movies. If I sat them down to view one of these bloody movies they would sit in utter shock because they've never seen it.

Not once, bless God. Not once. I would never do such a thing.

The thing that makes a movie so interesting, listen to this, is the drama. Drama is the use of extreme emotions to make a story grip the audience. Anger must become wrath.

Love must be manifested in deep lust. Disagreements must become a slugging fight or it just isn't very good. The flesh is never satisfied with what it sees so the movies move on to rape, murder and witchcraft.

Where will this all end? I tell you it'll end in utter destruction of this land we're living in. When will America realize they are training their own terrorists of destruction by these means? We Christians must bail out of this sinking ship and have a burning in the backyard in Jesus name if you have any of that junk around. What about the modern toys? One courageous man wrote a book some time ago called Turmoil in the Toy Box.

I don't know his name but he was a courageous man. It never hit the bestseller list and it probably offended many people but the man was right on in his evaluation of toys. Right on.

Toys are not innocent child's play. That is a devil's lie. The devil wants you to think that that's what it is but they are not innocent child play.

Play has always been, note this, it has always been practice and meditation for future living. We all know this. If we stop and think about it that's the way it is.

When the hearts were right the toys were baby dolls and tractors and real life followed right along accordingly but it's not that way anymore. The times have changed. The functions of toys is still the same.

The children in America are still practicing and meditating for future conduct but what kind of toys are they playing with in these days? The baby doll has become a Barbie doll who wears many skirts and paints her face. She has a figure that is impossible to match but the girls are trying with every means they can to try to match it and that's where bulimia and anorexia come from. The tractor has been replaced with a hot rod that peels down the street and is the pride of every young man's dream.

These are the first fruits of destruction. We have gone way beyond these to utterly evil demonic toys. How many rows in the toy store today is just a big long row of demons.

You can now practice witchcraft and prepare for deep satanic rituals by purchasing dungeons and dragons on the toy shelf by the way. The stuffed toys have been replaced with these gruesome looking creatures from the underworld of the damned. Brothers and sisters, satan is behind every bit of it.

Every bit of it. Just like he's made Halloween look like a big party when in actuality it's the devil's high day and human sacrifices are being made on that day while the children are foolishly going out looking like demons. Bless God I'm glad we don't do that around here.

My heart hurts when I think how many children are ignorantly playing with these evil teachers. I have only listed a few. There are many many more but I just plead with parents.

Consider toys are practice for future living. What are your children practicing for? That is a good question to answer. What about the world of thrills? Have you looked in the dictionary for the definition of this word thrill? It is very revealing and it helps me to understand why there's never enough.

Never enough. A thrill is a sharp shivering sensation running through the body. It means to give a rush of pleasure to penetrate the body with intense sensations.

That's what the word thrill means. The whole idea of more and more thrills is central in all of its roots. Worldly men are working over time to come up with another thrill that is a little higher than the last one and

the masses are running after them as fast as the new ones come out.

There's never enough. The thrill is never enough. 200 miles an hour is not fast enough.

The old rides at the amusement park are not good enough. The rush is gone. They must have another one.

They must get a higher one. They must have a faster one. Now they tie a rubber band around their waist and jump off the side of a mountain.

The rush they get is the feeling they get from free fall thinking that they might land on the rocks below. They call that a rush. I tell you that's utter perversion.

Utter perversion. But that's the way it's going. We watch over the thrill level of our children.

I used to go home in the summertime you know to visit family and all the relatives would get out there with my children and say hey can Daniel ride the motorcycle with us and I said no absolutely not. He likes his bicycle. Bless God.

We watch over the thrill level of our children. Oddly enough the children still get a thrill out of going to McDonald's for a meal together. Bless God.

But you know what? If you let that thing just keep getting higher and higher and higher what's McDonald's? Who needs that? I want the next latest thing. Let me go up to and climb the highest mountain. Let me go skiing up in Alaska on the highest mountains where you fall off over a cliff and land 30 feet down below and keep on going.

It's ridiculous. Ridiculous. The world of thrills.

What about computer games? I have much caution about these innocent games. More cautions are coming about these innocent games all the time. It's being raised by the secular community in the last couple of years because of all the high school shootings.

Even the secular media is raising questions about the connection between the practice of these games and youth walking down the halls in the school shooting their classmates with real guns. Because of progress these games are getting more realistic all the time. You actually feel like you are in the game standing before your enemy when you blow his brains out.

The blood flies everywhere when you shoot. You say well we don't go for things like that. We're Christian.

Well okay and I'm glad. I'm glad you don't go for things like that but who wants to be a part of any of it seriously? Who wants to be a part of any of it? Remember your children are practicing for real life. Is this what you want them to do in real life? I don't want mine to mess around with a game of golf.

Bless God I'd rather they go soul winning than go golfing on Saturday afternoon. Bless God. The golf games gave way to the killing games long ago and both are a waste of precious time.

How about reading material? Most children are avid readers, aren't they? How many of you have children like that? I mean give them something to read. They're just like they just eat them up as fast as you can come up with a new one that you think is okay for them to read. It seems like they can never get enough

books to read.

This presents a real challenge to parents but it's one that we need to take seriously and not just let them read whatever they get their hands on. I reserve the right in my house and everybody knows that I have that right to pick up any book anytime and look it over and check it out and say I don't like this book. Let's set this one aside.

Okay Papa, okay. I would encourage you to when you're choosing books I would encourage you to stick to the true the real and stay away from the imaginary. We are being overrun with Christian novels these days and the church is eating up this material by the millions.

They all have a story of romance in them and they are mostly read by ladies and girls. Interesting isn't it? I feel these books are dangerous for our daughters and our wives to read. They present an unreal fuzzy kind of love affair that is not true in real life.

A girl's lust for romance is stimulated by reading these books. I have heard of dozens of cases where girls read till three o'clock in the morning to finish the end of the story and get up at six o'clock skip devotions and go off to the rest of the things in life. What is drawing them to stay up till three o'clock in the morning? Is it the spirit of God brooding over the book? Absolutely not.

It is nothing but emotion and flesh. Burn them. Let us read the Bible till three o'clock in the morning.

Amen. I am a fanatic. Our daughters get an unrealistic idea about what love is and then they get disappointed with their marriage because it isn't like what they read in the book.

Dear fathers, guard the hearts and keep the hearts of your daughters for one man. The mystery thrillers have given way to the end time thrillers and now all the boys also have something to captivate their receptive minds till three o'clock in the morning on. Stay away from it my dear brothers and sisters.

Stay away from it. It has nothing good in it. It's a waste.

What about the internet? We have internet at our house. The internet is fast becoming a tool for every kind of business activity that you can imagine. While we do use the internet, it is very limited and no one is allowed to log on without someone else in the room.

Good rule to have. The children are not allowed at all to log on. We use it occasionally to gather information about a subject or a product of interest.

The first issue I see when I look at the use of the internet is T.I.M.E. I mean I've got so many things that I want to do. How could you waste your time in front of one of those things? But the main issue is the filth that is available to those who go looking for it. It has been the greatest curse to American men that you can ever find.

It has revealed the low level of spiritual strength that Christian men have in this land. Someone said what are we going to do? Look at what's happening to all our Christian men. I say it's just revealing where they've been at all along.

No fire of God burning in their soul. They live in the flesh so they get trapped by every hook that the devil throws out. Every fleshly hook that he throws they get caught by.

There are dangers to our children and they're very obvious. I would encourage you there are options available that protect you and your family from this evil. Don't wait until you've had a tragedy to do something about it.

Do it now and if you can't handle it, smash it and do it before your children by the way. It's good lessons for them. Praise God the clock's being good to me tonight.

What about Christian rock music? When Balaam could not curse Israel because of God's blessing on them, he taught of another way to curse Israel indirectly. He counseled Balak to destroy them from the inside. He sent sensual women down into the camp of Israel and the rest is history.

This is the story that I think of when I consider the destructive influence that wrong music has had on our youth. That would be sad enough but it is now reached over into the Christian realm and now the church is dancing to the world's music with some sanctified words thrown in. How sad.

Even the subtitle that I have used is a misnomer. Christian rock? That's like Christian gambling and Christian beer. They don't go together.

At least not yet but probably they're on the way. Amen? Somehow they'll figure out a way to sanctify gambling and beer too. Those do not work.

Those two words do not go together. I want to encourage you fathers to stand at the gate and check out the music that your children are listening to. Listen to this.

We spoke about authority earlier. I think it was last evening and a couple of times through these sessions. Here is where the rubber meets the road men.

Sit down with your family and get a clear understanding from all that are there that it is okay for Papa to check out the music and he can throw away any that he wants to and we will bless him and thank him for it. I want to encourage you fathers, gain that piece of ground in your home and don't let go of it. There is so much stuff coming out and it comes out so fast.

Somebody has to watch over it and guess what? You are the gatekeeper at your house. Every time we have a youth bible school, scores of youth get right with God and their dads about their worldly music. Let's head them off at the pass men.

Why send them to the bible school where some hot preacher gets them all fired up and they get right with God in the midst of the atmosphere. Then they go home and say, Dad this is what I've been doing. Would you please forgive me? You head them off at the pass Dad.

Sit down, have a family meeting and discuss these things. Lastly, and there are others but I'm just giving you a few. Silly bible stories.

Some time back, maybe 20 years or so, it came into the minds of Christian educators that children learn better if the material is funny. I wonder where they got that. There is that foolishness again that we talked about the other evening.

Now even the Christians are playing on the foolish mind of a child and thinking they're going to teach them with foolishness. Well, the children really did sit up and listen as they laugh their way through the bible story. From there they went to the silly puppets which really made everybody laugh but now it's the norm.

That's the only way you can learn the bible is with a silly little puppet up there dancing around in front of the children. Most material for the little ones is full of this nonsense method of teaching. Can I give it such a strong name? Nonsense method of teaching.

Moses is a funny little man with a big round nose with eyes that look like precious moment babies, please. Instead of a prophet, a fiery prophet who stood for God in the midst of hard times. Where are they going with all this stuff? Do you really think this is the way to pass on the faith to the next generation? I hardly think so.

Now they have put these things in animated cartoons and added silly voices to go along with it. You really have to distort the prophet Moses to do that. These creative educators have now come up with the greatest perversion of them all.

King David is a cucumber. Can you believe it? He's a cucumber playing his heart. I tell you it makes my heart hurt to think that they're doing stuff like that and nobody has a sensitive conscience at all.

You mean it's okay for David, the prophet David, the psalmist David, that powerful man, that giant killer. It's okay for David to be a singing cucumber? That's the veggie tales you know. Maybe you don't know what those are.

I hope you don't bless God. But that's what it is. That's what it is.

This whole thing is the devil's device to water down the word of God and his testimony to the next generation. I guarantee you that's what it is. He's out after him.

I feel this is a poor choice for babysitters and even poorer choice for teachers. What do you think? Let's have an old-fashioned house cleaning. Amen.

This is what we have invited into our homes. All this stuff. It's time to have a house cleaning.

We've invited these things into our home to entertain our children while we do better things. I'm deeply burdened about all of this. Most of this has happened because the fathers have not been watching at the gates.

Many fathers do not even know that they're the ones that are responsible to deal with all these things. Dear fathers, how are the walls and the gates of your home? Are they broken down? Have you directed your family with holy standards? I pray that God will give you the strength and courage to cleanse your home of anything that defile it. It's time to have an old-fashioned house cleaning.

Oh, your children will never forget it. I remember back there. I remember what that dad got all excited and he went through the house and when he got done we had a pile of this and we had a pile of this and we had a pile of this and he got out the sledgehammer and took care of these and started a fire and took care of these and all of these went to the garbage dump.

Oh, what a day when dad finally got on fire for God and destroyed all the junk that was in the house defiling the children. By the way, if William Booth were standing up here right now he'd say it a whole lot stronger than what I have. I guarantee it.

Have you ever read any of his writings about entertainment? I'll close with this. A dear friend of mine, a dear friend of mine got convicted by God about his television set. He realized this thing is not good for my

family.

We're hooked on it. Everybody sits in front of it. Nobody talks to each other.

We come home from work. We come home from school. Everybody sits down.

They eat their meal in front of it. They don't communicate. There they are glued to the TV and he had this cable TV stuff too, you know.

He had a big dish outside in his front yard, you know, back when they had big ones. Huge discs sitting out there sticking up on a six by six post. He came home from work for an evening with a backhoe and a chainsaw and backed up there in the front.

Bless God. I mean all the neighbors were looking. Hey, I wonder what Graham's doing.

He's got a backhoe out there. I wonder what he's building. He gets the old chainsaw going, you know, it's down there on that post.

Boom, down goes the cable, whatever that satellite dish is. And then after that, he gets on the backhoe and starts digging himself a hole right in the middle of his front yard. All the neighbors are watching.

What in the world is that guy doing out there? After he dug the hole, he laid the big dish right in the hole, filled it up with water, made a fish pond out of it. Bless God. He did it in front of the whole neighborhood.

Now that's taking a stand for God. Amen. It's about time we quit being ashamed of being Christian.

And I want to encourage you dads, rise up and take the lead and you dear moms stand beside your man. Don't you make a fuss if he wants to break something, even if he breaks the wrong thing. Thank God he wants to break something.

Amen.

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