

The Watchman #9  
**Stop Blaming Your Family**

*Word*

**Scripture Reference**

Ezekiel 18

**Discussion Questions**

1. Have you ever been blamed for something you didn't do? Share how you felt about that experience.
2. The Israelites believed that they were being punished for the sins of their forefathers, and not because of their own sin. Just like God reminds the Israelites in Ezekiel, God reminds you that you have a responsibility to own up to your own sin so that you can deal with your sin problem. Why do people like to blame someone or something else for their actions? Discuss some of the things that people blame others for instead of taking his or her own responsibility.
3. To be a watchman of this generation, you as a follower of Jesus should stop looking at others to blame, start owning up to your own actions, and accept the consequences of your sins. Read Ezekiel 18. In this passage, we are reminded about three truths about God:
  - a. **Truth #1: God's judgments are based on each individual's personal actions (v. 19-20).** A popular Israeli proverb teaches that children are suffering because of their parents' sin. The Israelite during Ezekiel's time believed that they were suffering from Babylonians because of their ancestors and not because of their own sin, hence blaming God. What are the three scenarios that were mentioned in verses 5-18 that explain how God punishes man for his sin based on his personal actions? Generational sin (sin that is passed down to the next generation) is becoming a popular belief even among Christians. How do verses 19-20 refute this belief? Should parents be blamed when their children don't turn out well even after they have done their best in raising them up? Do you find yourself "rating" your holiness based on how you compare against others? Based on God's standard of holiness made clear in His

Word, how does your "holiness" compare? Do you still think God owes you His best?

- b. **Truth #2: God's desire is to see the wicked turn to righteousness (v. 21-23).** God takes no joy in the death of the wicked; He would rather that they turn to Him and have eternal life. Is there any great sin that God cannot forgive? How did Christ's death prove that God is loving and merciful?
- c. **Truth #3: God's ways are always fair. Previous good does not offset current evil (v. 24-29).** Good works you have done before do not negate or invalidate God's punishment for the sins that you are committing now. God judges you for what you do NOW. If a person lives righteously but later on turn to wickedness, will he be saved from punishment of his wickedness? Does this punishment refer to salvation? What consequences of sin could result from living in sin? What should you do so that your sin will be forgiven and forgotten by God?

*Walk*

In a culture where close family ties is foundational, guilt by association is very difficult to break away from, but it is not impossible. The Bible teaches us that with a renewed heart that seeks to follow Christ, you can choose to break the evil act that is part of your family's heritage. You can choose righteousness. Is there anything in your life that you need to give up to allow God's power to work in you? Do you acknowledge that it is something that you cannot do by yourself, but through the Holy Spirit? Pray for God's new direction by turning to Him and owning up to your own actions instead of putting the blame on your family or someone else.

*Worship & Prayer*

*Heavenly Father, thank You for opening my mind about how You deal with sin. A lot of times, I tend to blame others, even my own family, for the wrong attitudes, actions, habits, and believes that I live by. Give me the humility to take responsibility for my actions, and the courage to correct what is wrong. I trust in Your power to change my heart and my mind. Thank You that there is no such thing as generationally inherited sin, and that through the blood of Christ my ties to sin have been broken. Help me in my resolve to live each day with You in control. In Jesus' name. Amen.*