

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Ezekiel 3:12-17](#).
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (11-13-94).
- C. God had called Ezekiel to be a prophet to warn His people:
 - 1. His congregation was made up of exiles in Babylon--fragments of a shattered nation that God had punished for sin.
 - 2. They were a people who had suffered broken homes and blighted hopes.
 - 3. They had lost family, friends, homes and all of their possessions--acquainted with grief.
- D. Ezekiel needed preparation for this work:
 - 1. He had some preparation since he had been uprooted and brought in the same captivity.
 - 2. But as a priest and teacher, he might not understand the plight of the poor people and tragedy of others.
 - 3. Where could he get better preparation?
 - a. What college of seminary could he attend?
 - b. Should he go into retirement of solitude and study?
 - c. These might help with some problems, but were not suited to this situation.
- E. Ezekiel said, "I sat where they sat."
 - 1. I looked upon the world through their eyes.
 - 2. I bled through their wounds.
 - 3. I wept through their tears.
 - 4. I put myself in their places to understand their sorrows.

I. WE NEED TO SIT WHERE OTHERS SAT.

- A. There are few things needed more in the world than to see other's point of view:
 - 1. We need it in international relations:
 - a. How different our history would have been if we had all learned this divine lesson.
 - b. Our continents would not have been covered with so many graves and bloodshed.
 - c. How different the world would be, if each nation would put itself in other's place.
 - 2. We need it in industrial relations:
 - a. What if capital and labor could change places for a while.
 - b. Suppose the employer and employee could exchange seats.
 - c. How much each one could learn from the other.
 - 3. We need it in our personal relationships:
 - a. Doctors could learn from the sick-bed and patients could learn from the harried pace of doctors.
 - b. The carefree could learn from one near death.
 - c. The rebellious could learn through the bars of the prison cell and the criminal could learn from the victim.
- B. The generation gap could be lessened if the young and old could change places:
 - 1. Older people need to experience youth again:
 - a. They need to look at the world w/o the prejudices and bias that they have acquired.
 - b. They need to experience the energy and impatience for action that they once had.
 - c. They need to experience the inexperience and insecurity of youth that produces loud talking and rash actions that attempt to conceal fears and uncertainty.
 - d. They need to again experience being young enough to know everything.
 - 2. Youth would benefit from the respect gained for experience if they could sit in the seat of the experienced:

- a. They would seek out advice, if they knew how deep the understanding of many years of training and experience.
 - b. They might feel more secure in the counsel of parents and teachers if they understood more of their knowledge.
 - c. They might feel more serious about their opportunities to learn if they tried to make a living without an education, or have the confidence of understanding.
 - d. They might be more sympathetic to the aged warrior to know that his armor is on a body full of battle scars.
 - e. Youth would gain some understanding of loneliness to sit in the seat of one who had lost parents, brothers, sisters, and dear friends, and have children too busy to come and visit.
- C. The person who has grown up with wealth, influence, and privilege would benefit to sit in the seat of insecurity and rejection of the underprivileged or a minority group:
- 1. How does the world look to a pauper--a beggar--an abused person or one w/o family?
 - 2. Do we have the heart to put ourselves in their places?
 - 3. Jesus gave the rule of judgment (Lk. 12:48).
 - 4. The underprivileged may have more understanding of having, than the privileged of not having.
- D. We need to look at the world through eyes of the outcast and the prodigal:
- 1. How does life look from the filth, stench and sin of the swine pen?
 - 2. How does it feel to say, "No one cares about me?"
 - 3. How does life seem to a man or woman who has thrown themselves away, and believes that they are of no value?
- E. In the family we need to sit where others sit:
- 1. Father needs to try mother's work for a while--especially if she has a job outside the home too, and is expected to do the housework when she gets home.
 - 2. Mother needs to sit in father's place in trying to provide for the needs/wants of the family.
 - 3. Parents need to sit again in their children's seats.
 - a. Remember how children love loud noises and loud colors.
 - b. They like to run and play with endless energy.
 - c. They are trying to learn to get along, but lack some of the social skills that come from experience.
 - 4. Children need to sit in their parents' seats:
 - a. They need to feel the responsibility of providing for the family.
 - b. They need to have the family depend on them for meals, clean clothes, and keeping the house clean while others are messing up.
 - c. They need feel the responsibility of training and guiding those they love to have happy lives.
 - d. The young need to think how they would like for their children to act and to treat them.
- F. The preacher needs to change places with members--to sit where they sit.
- 1. He may do that voluntarily at lectureships, but he needs to listen to his own sermons.
 - 2. Members need to prepare three lessons in a week that focuses on the needs of the congregation rather than to please.
 - 3. We need to sit where others sit.

II. WE CAN BE BLESSED BY SITTING WHERE OTHERS SIT.

- A. It would give us greater wisdom and understanding:
- 1. We never really know people until we can see through their eyes or are in their situation.
 - 2. We can know their voices, faces, and mannerisms, but not their hearts (1Cor. 2:11).
- B. It would give us greater love for others:
- 1. To understand people's situation is to better appreciate them.
 - 2. There may be some so evil and twisted in their thinking that the more we know about them, the

- less we like them, or the more we fear them.
3. But generally, we love most those we understand the best.
 4. Jesus loves all men--because He knows them completely. (But he hates evil behavior.)
- C. The better we understand others' situation, the more patient we tend to be with them:
1. Husbands and wives often never understand the feelings and desires of the other because of selfishness.
 2. In the church we often judge superficially, and may never try to examine the other's viewpoint.
- D. A closer understanding of others would make us more helpful:
1. We are much more likely to help someone if we know the need.
 2. True love is characterized by giving rather than demanding and by lifting others up rather than leaning on them.

III. WE NEED TO LEARN HOW TO SIT WHERE OTHERS SIT.

- A. Jesus sat where we sit (Heb. 4:15).
- B. He learned obedience and submission and suffering (Heb. 5:8-).
- C. Many scriptures describe how to sit where others sit (Gal. 6:2; Mt. 7:1; 1Jn 4:7; Lk. 10:27).
- D. We need to try to put ourselves in God's place to understand how painful it is to see those we love and want to help reject Him.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. There may be one here today who wants to leave where they sit in sin to accept the blessings offered. Won't you come?
- B. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.