

**Read: Ezekiel 33:7-11**

## You're accountable

### **Ezekiel 33:10a,11**

“Son of man, say to the Israelites, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?’”

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Have you ever drawn a “Do Not Enter!” sign for your door? Or maybe, in a moment of frustration with a sibling, you drew a “No Girls (or Boys) Allowed!” notice? We all know those signs mean to keep out. This isn’t just in a house either. A “No Trespassing” sign on a fence tells you strangers aren’t welcome at that business. The yellow tape around a crime scene lets you know you aren’t allowed in. Bad things can happen when you ignore the signs.

God’s laws, the commandments he gives you, are like warning signs. When he says, “Do not murder, do not covet, do not steal,” he’s saying, “Don’t go there.” It could be dangerous if you don’t listen. People get hurt when you and the people in your life don’t pay attention to God’s signs.

Ezekiel was a prophet, someone who spoke God’s words to God’s people. God told Ezekiel to give the Israelites warning signs. They were headed for the disaster of not loving God, of not following his ways, of following complete evil—and it was Ezekiel’s job to warn them. And God said he would hold Ezekiel accountable if he didn’t do his job.

Whose job is it to give words of warning today? God tells us, our family, and friends to step up and say hard things like, “don’t” or “stop” when it comes to sin. The Bible tells us that a real friend tells the truth, even when it’s hard to hear. A friend cares too much to let friends act like idiots. Even though it can be scary and we can get sick to our stomach as we think about having to say hard things, we remember that it’s for our good.

You might not be a prophet exactly like Ezekiel, but God wants you to speak up too, even if you’re scared, because he loves the people he has put around you. It might be your friends. It might be your family. They are all people that God wants us to take care of, protect, and warn—because we love them and so does he.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Remember what happened the last time you didn't listen to your parents' or teachers' warning signs? Share it out loud.
- Name two dangerous things or choices that we might need to warn someone about.

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Ask your parents how it feels when someone in the family doesn't listen to their warnings. What emotion drives them to say something?
- How does God feel if we don't follow his signs? What emotion drives him to say something?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Recall a time you tried to warn a friend not to do something.
- Recall a time someone warned *you* not to do something. How did you react?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear God, there are people in our lives who might need us give them warning signs. Help us see them and work in our hearts to make us courageous to say hard things. Give us the right words so we lovingly warn them about the cost of not following you. Amen.