

Read: Ezekiel 33:7-11

Call Others to Repent in Love

Ezekiel 33:11 (EHV)

As I live, declares the LORD God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from their way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why should you die, O house of Israel?

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

If you see someone in terrible danger what do you do? You try to warn them. You call out their name. You try to get their attention. You try to move them away from the danger. You tell them to run away. You call 911. You do everything you can to help them avoid that terrible danger.

Did you know there is a danger that threatens everyone: Grown-ups. Teens. Kids. Even babies? That danger lurks in the darkness, yet appears in broad daylight. It threatens from morning to night. It can be found in your home, your school, your neighborhood, even your church. What is that danger? Sin.

Sin is a danger that threatens every one of us from the moment life begins to the moment when life ends. Sin lurks inside our hearts and minds, but also threatens us in a variety of ways in the world around us. Sin takes on all kinds of forms and is such a danger that God himself warns us to turn away from sin. Why? Sin leads to death.

The Lord knows how dangerous sin can be. Sin ruined his creation long ago. Sin has threatened every person since. Yet rather than sit back and let harm come our way, Jesus did something about it. Jesus faced the danger of sin for us and suffered all the punishment that sin deserves. With divine power and jaw-dropping love, Jesus rescued us from the dangers of sins by taking all of our sins on himself on the cross to forgive us. By his death, we have life.

Yet sin still threatens. We still sin. People we know and love still sin. The danger is still real, so what does the Lord call us to do? "Turn back, turn back from your evil ways!" today's Word of God warns. That's another way of saying, "Repent!" The Lord does not want any of us to return to the dangers of our sins, but to live in his forgiveness and love. He also urges us to call out to our loved ones to turn back from the dangers of sin. Calling someone to repent is not being mean, but showing that we care about them. We want them to enjoy God's forgiveness. We want them to join us in heaven someday. So in love, let's do everything we can help them avoid sin's danger.

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 Younger Children

- What would you do if someone was in danger?
- How did Jesus rescue you from the danger of sin?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Explain what *sin* is and what it means to *repent*.
- Why is sin so dangerous?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- The Lord sent the prophet Ezekiel to call God's people to repent. Why would that be difficult for any believer to do?
- The Lord urges us to call others to repent in love. How would you do that if you knew that your best friend had broken the law—not just the local law, but God's Law?

Closing Prayer:

Lord God, rescue me from the danger of sin. Lead me to repent when I fall into sin's traps. Help me to call other people in my life to repent of their sin that they may live with you. Amen.

Hymn: CW 304:5,6 – Jesus Sinners Does Receive

I, a sinner, come to you with a penitent confession.
Savior, show me mercy, too; grant for all my sins remission.
Let these words my soul relieve—Jesus sinners does receive.

Oh, how blest is it to know, were as scarlet my transgression,
It shall be as white as snow by your blood and bitter passion,
For these words I do believe—Jesus sinners does receive.