

Watching not an end in itself

I am sure that no one will so misunderstand me as to think that I am stating that the supreme task of the Christian is to be a watchman and that no other task is comparable to this. The watchman performs a very necessary service in the Christian world. It is the duty of every one of us to assist and support this work, but it is of course not of such supreme importance as completely to overshadow other tasks. The purpose of the watchman is not watching, as an end in itself; the real purpose is the protection of the city. Were there no city of active vital life, the activity of the watchman would be meaningless.

In the case of which we are speaking, the city stands for the work of the gospel. This involves spreading the good news of salvation through Christ. It involves showing young Christians how they can grow in the knowledge of the Lord. It involves helping all Christians learn to make their lives count for Christ. Dr. McIntire, editor of the Christian Beacon and director of the Twentieth Century Reformation Hour Broadcast, who is one of the finest and most effective watchmen in our Christian world today, would be the last to have a misunderstanding on this point. I think of the fine pastoral work that he does in his large church. I think of the effective presentations of the gospel that he so steadily gives. I think of his great interest in the work of foreign missions. Anyone familiar with these and many other phases of his testimony would realize that his vital work as watchman is only one phase of his testimony, even though a very important one. The purpose of the watchman is the protection of the city. The purpose of the Christian watchman is the protection of the work of Christ from that which would come in and destroy it. The Christian work itself is the ultimate objective--it is for that that all our watching is done.