

The Wolf is at The Door

by Carter Conlon

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Scripture: Isaiah 53:3, Matthew 7:15, Acts 20:29, Jude 1:3, 1 Corinthians 6:9

Topics: "Courage in Truth", "Standing Firm Against False Teachings"

Description

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Transcript

My message is entitled, The Wolf is at the Door. The wolf is at the door. Father, I thank you, God.

I thank you, Lord, for your word. It's a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. I thank you, Lord, for the indwelling presence of your Holy Spirit that gives us new hearts, Lord, so that we can stretch out beyond our limitations and be ambassadors of you and your word to all who can still hear.

I thank you, Lord, for the anointing of your spirit. I thank you for courage and compassion today, God, to speak things that need to be spoken in this generation. Help us, Lord, as a church, never to back away from truth.

Help us to go forward and let it fall where it may. And we thank you for it in Jesus' name. The wolf is at the door, Isaiah chapter 53.

Prophet Isaiah says these words. Who has believed our report? Beginning at verse one. And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, as a root out of dry ground.

He has no form or comeliness. And when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He's despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

And we hid, as it were, our faces from him. He was despised and we did not esteem him. Surely he's borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our inequities.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him. And by his stripes, we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray and we've turned everyone to his own way.

And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. You know, it's so important before we even begin to look at this passage of scripture to understand that it was a religious system that crucified Christ. You know, we understand that the Roman authorities were the instruments of his death, but it was the religious order of the day created by God's own people that put the son of God on a cross.

There were leaders in that generation and they had used their position over the people to garner titles for themselves. They had adorned themselves in righteous robes as they saw it. And they loved to parade among the people, as Jesus said, and be called master, teacher, teacher, teacher in the marketplace.

But Jesus himself came in a form that he did not take on this form of grandeur that men give to themselves. And also too, they created a system of salvation that was much wider and much more inclusive than the one that God had given to us. Matter of fact, it was so narrow that Jesus said, I'm the way, the truth and the life, and no one can come to the father except through me.

They were so offended when he challenged their religious system because they had created this wide door into eternal life and eternal bliss with God that doesn't exist. All kinds of people were coming into the temple, defiled and going out defiled. They were living in manners and ways that the Bible clearly indicated would leave them excluded from the kingdom of God forever.

And so in comes this man. He's not interested in their system. He's not trying to garner one of their titles.

He's not doing things their way. The Bible says there was no beauty in him that we should desire him. He's not dressed in righteous robes.

He's not got boxes on his forehead. He's not walking around with tassels on his arms. He's not parading like some rooster before the people talking about how close to God he actually is.

They despised him and rejected him because he challenged their religious system. They had created a system of redemption that did not exist. Do you understand? And that's the propensity of humankind.

The original sin in the garden of Eden is that we can be as God is. Remember, we can become judges of what's good and what's evil. And if you take that to its logical extension, we can start declaring things that God forgives when he doesn't.

We can start declaring behaviors righteous when they're not. We can start telling people they're going to heaven when they aren't. That is the grave, grave danger of religion when humankind in its sin nature is allowed to take it and so twist it and so perverted that it becomes something that God never intended it to be.

Can you imagine sitting in a place as a professed or supposed believer in Christ only to end up at the throne of God one day to find out you've been outside the whole thing all along? What a tragedy that's

going to be for so many. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There was a heaviness in the heart of the son of God as he looked on the people as sheep without a shepherd.

But we hid our faces from him. He was despised and we did not esteem him. And we are, of course, reliving this scripture again in great measure in our day.

In many, many places, even where God's people are gathering, the word of God is despised. And we are now gravitating to fancy preachers who have opened the door real wide to people who are not going to heaven, giving them false peace when they're not at peace with God. The apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 5, 17, if anyone is in Christ, he or she is a new creation.

The old things are what passed away and behold, all things have become new. If we are in Christ, if Christ is in us, that means a new value system. It means a new heart.

It means a new mind. It means a new way of speaking, thinking, living. It means that what God says is good is good.

And what God says is evil is evil. We don't try to change that. We accept that from the word of God.

Now this message is given to shepherds to bring us not only to the knowledge of our salvation, but to the freedom which Christ bought for us. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

And by his beating as it is that he took on the cross, we are healed. The old things don't have power over us anymore unless we choose to let them. The old ways of living, speaking, thinking, doing are broken and we become new creations in Christ.

We are able to look back and say, thank God, I'm not what I used to be. I'm not everything that I hope to be. But thank God, I'm not what I used to be.

And thank God, I'm going to be one day what Christ is calling me to be. So there's this constant moving forward in the life of a genuine believer, leaving an old way of thinking, an old way of living, an old way of speaking and moving to truth, even when it's painful. Book of Proverbs says, a righteous person swears to their own hurt and doesn't change.

In other words, I say I'm going to do this and I do it because God's word says I should, even if it causes me pain. And I don't turn from it. Now, Paul was this kind of a shepherd.

He didn't hold back, as I said earlier. This is what he said in Acts chapter 20, verses 26 to 31. He said, therefore, I testify to you this day, I'm innocent of the blood of all men.

In other words, and this is the cry of my heart. If anyone here today hearing my voice ends up in hell, let it not be my fault. Let it never be because I didn't declare to you the whole counsel of God, or I didn't warn you of something that had the power to drag you down into eternal darkness.

For I've not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood. Paul says, for this I know, that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Also from among yourselves, men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore, watch and remember that for three years, I did not cease to warn everyone. He said, day and night with tears.

Paul said, there's gonna be wolves that are going to come and they're already, there's packs of them now. It's not just a few, there's many now in our generation. And they're going to come to devour the sacrifice of Christ and the promise of new life through him.

They're gonna promise you liberty as the scripture says in the New Testament, but they themselves are the slaves to corruption. They're promising something they're not experiencing themselves and they can't deliver it. Listen to what Jude says, the last book of the New Testament before the book of the Revelation.

Verse three says, behold, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. I want to remind you though you once knew this, that the Lord having saved the people out of the land of Egypt afterward destroyed those who did not believe and the angels who did not keep their proper domain but left their own abode as reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

As Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities round about them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Here's what the wolves do. They teach that you can live a lifestyle against the word of God and still claim heaven as your eternal home.

That is the wolf that's now at the door of the Christian church in America. Listen to what the apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verses 9 to 11. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived, neither fornicators.

That means people who engage in sexual intercourse outside of the bonds of marriage between one man and one woman. Fornicators are not going to inherit the kingdom of God. Settle it.

It's in the word of God. Don't be deceived into thinking you can live in a moral lifestyle and heaven will still be your home. So hard for this generation to hear when you've got preachers standing in pulpits saying, well, God understands your need and God is a God of love and God won't send anybody to hell.

No, that's not true. God is a God of love. We know that.

But the Bible tells us that fornicators have no inheritance in the kingdom of God nor idolaters. People who have other loves and there's something that is in your life that is your whole obsession. Churches or Christ is just a little part of your life but there's something else in your life that you're pursuing.

Nor adulterers, people who engage, who are married but engage in, you know, today we take words like adultery and we call it an extramarital affair as if it's a black tie event. You know, you are invited to an extramarital affair next Friday at five o'clock. Bible calls it adultery, adultery.

Settle it, deal with it. Sex outside of marriage will keep you outside of the kingdom of God and sex outside of the bonds of the person that you are married to, the man or woman you're married to will also keep you

outside of the kingdom of God unless it's repented of. Nor homosexuals, nor sodomites.

In other words, that's both men and women. Folks, listen. I understand the dilemma in a sense that some might face in same-sex attraction but I'm telling you, you can't give in to that lifestyle on any level because the Bible clearly says it will leave you outside the kingdom of God.

Jesus himself said some people are eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven. In other words, some people just live their lives without any sexual activity for the kingdom of heaven's sake. And he said, whoever can hear this, let them hear it.

You know, you can, you go to a funeral, for example, and you can dress it up with flowers all around and you can, there's a death certificate and the preacher can get up and say nice words but the reality is that the corpse is still dead. You can't make it live. It doesn't matter what you do.

It's the same with homosexual marriage, folks. I gotta say it straight out today. I'm not gonna hold back on it.

You can adorn it with flowers. You can get a certificate from city hall. You can find some backstabbing preacher to say nice words about it but the wages of sin is still death.

You can't change that. Now, listen. I'll be called a hater for this message today.

I understand that, but I'm not a hater. If I hated you, I'd let you go to hell. If I hated you, I'd let you die on your sins.

If I walk down the street and your house is on fire and you're up in your bedroom window and I don't warn you, am I really a good neighbor? Do I really love you? Do I really care about your eternal destiny? You can curse me out of your bedroom window all you want but I will still warn you that your house is on fire for your soul's sake. Nor thieves, lest we should think that we're just gonna focus on one thing. Nor thieves.

That means people who steal. It's that simple. People who steal.

People who steal a little. They have a contract maybe and steal a little bit more than they should. Income tax time is coming around, folks.

Are you gonna pay your taxes? Nor covetous, nor drunkards. People who come to church this morning but you were out at a club last night. You're drinking and dancing and this foolishness.

I'm out there to share the testimony of Christ. Who are you kidding? If you really are there to do that, stand on the sidewalk with pamphlets in your hand and give it to the drunks coming out of the club. You don't need to be in there with them.

Nor revilers. You know, especially in this environment we're now living in, in this country at this time where reviling has become the speech of the day. Where it's fashionable just to curse everybody around you.

You know, Paul said revilers don't inherit the kingdom of God. We have a different heart. We have a different spirit.

We're a different kind of people. Jesus himself said, blessed are the peacemakers. Yours is the kingdom of heaven.

Nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. I love that.

Would be to God that I can honestly say that of everybody here today. Such were some of you. But you are sanctified.

That means you are set apart for the kingdom of God. You honestly repented. You walked away.

You moved away from what God's word says is wrong. You can't make it right. You can't change it.

It doesn't matter if a million people say, oh, isn't this wonderful. If God's word says it's not, it's not. You are sanctified.

You walked away. You walked away from this old ways of thinking, these old behaviors and all of these things. And you set yourself apart for the kingdom of God.

You're justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of God. Now you and I are living in an hour where the wolf is heading to the door of the church, demanding in our generation that we bow down to this new definitions of good and evil. This is where we're living.

The days of being able to say without penalty, what I'm saying today are over. If they're not over, they're very close to over. It's an amazing time that we're now living in.

Jesus said in John chapter 10, I am the good shepherd and the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But a hireling who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

This is the point. There's a lot of hirelings and a lot of pulpits in America today. And they don't necessarily leave the people, but they leave biblical truth.

They flee the truth when the wolf is at the door. When the wolf says, if you don't bow down, this is our golden statue. This is what this generation is gonna look like.

This is what you'll preach. These are the truths that you will espouse. They will bow down when the music plays to save themselves because it's always been about themselves, not about the people.

The hireling will flee and you are seeing and you will see a huge departure from biblical truth in the Christian church in this last hour we're living in. The Bible declares that there's going to be an apostasy, a great falling away in the last days from biblical truth. And the hirelings will leave the people, not into the narrow way of eternal life, but into that broad way of destruction.

They flee because it's always been about them. It's been about the robes. It's been about the praises of man.

It's been about the titles. It's been about the numbers. It's been about the apparent evidences of success.

Then when Christ comes and challenges them, they hate him. His own system hated him. His own people hated him.

They pushed him away because he declared their definitions of salvation and truth to be bankrupt. He told them they were full of dead men's bones. He said, you go cross land and sea to get one convert and you

make them twice the child of hell that you've become.

These are the words of Christ. He warned us in the last days, there would be a great falling away. He warned us.

He said, you're going to be hated of all nations for my namesake. You can't escape that. That's a promise in the word of God.

We're going to be hated. It's starting now. You're seeing it in society.

You're seeing it in the workplace. You can't even have an opinion on things anymore in this generation that we're now living in. Let me say it clearly now.

Abortion for the cause of birth control or so that I understand there are extenuating circumstances. So please don't misquote me on this. But for the cause of just birth control or for the cause of having sexual pleasure not having to deal with the life that it can create is sin in the sight of a holy God.

It's a terrible sin in the sight of a holy God. In America today, the deliberate gender confusing of our children in grade school is sin in the sight of a holy God. In our high schools, forbidding our children to pray and creating this fictitious division between the state and the church, which doesn't exist.

If you really study it, you'll understand it never existed. It was created by the godless. Forbidding our children to pray in our schools is sin in the sight of a holy God.

In our colleges, allowing godless professors to rise up and mock God and radicalize a whole generation against even their own nation that was founded by God for the purpose of being able to worship according to the word of God and freely by conscience is sin in the sight of a holy God. And the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Praise be to God.

Hallelujah, hallelujah. So let this society despise him. Let them consider him ordinary.

Let them rebel against his words. But this day, as Joshua once said, if it'd be hard to follow the Lord, that's your choice. Choose this day, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

By the grace of God, we will not bow before the wolf in this generation. By the grace of God, we will stand for the truth of God. By the grace of God, we will pray again.

We will pray again as a church aid. By the grace of God, we will stand up unashamed for the truth of Jesus Christ. We stand on the side of victory.

We stand on the side. We stand on the side of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, hallelujah.

Glory, glory, glory, glory. Glory, glory, glory. And as David the king once did, we will stand in this generation against the lion and the bear and everything that comes in to devour our children and to devour the people of God.

It's time for the church of Jesus Christ to rise up. It's time for the people of God to fight back. It's time for us to begin to pray.

It's time to run for public office. It's time for teachers to speak. It's time.

It's time for the people of God. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. Glory, glory, glory, glory.

The true shepherds of God in this generation are going to care more for the people than for their own safety, more than our own reputation. It's not going to be an easy road, but I don't know about you, but I'm not giving up this generation to darkness. I'm going to stand because the word of God stands forever.

The opinions of men are like grains of sand on the seashore. They'll fall into nowhere, but the word of God abides forever. Now, here's where I conclude.

If you're living in sin, I plead with you, while there's still time, turn, turn from it and trust God for the strength. I know there's some sitting here or listening online or they're in the annex and they say, you don't know how deep the bondage is. You don't know how powerful the draw is.

No, I don't, but I know the spirit of God is more powerful than all of that put together. And I know the promise of God is that we will have a new life, an eternal life. The days of living in Christian ease is over in America, folks.

It's over. We're about to join our brothers and sisters in China and other places who are being persecuted for what they believe. In Iran, who are being jailed and put to death for believing in Christ.

We've lived a very comfortable, very lazy Christianity in America, but those days are over. The wolf is now at the door. Pray for those of us who lead in any capacity that God would give us courage.

As I pray for you, that God will give you a cleanness of life and practice and heart and give you the courage to speak up in whatever environment you find yourself in. Our children are starving for truth in this generation and they're wide open. There's only a few Goliaths that claim that they have the power to keep us from being the people of God, but they don't.

So I challenge you with all my heart, turn from sin, find that new life in Christ and rise up and be the person that God's called you to be. We're going to sing and for just a few moments, you're going to worship. I guess Melville College is just twofold today.

For people to say, oh God, help me please to turn from this thing in my life. I don't have to tell you what it is. You already know.

Help me to turn away from watching pornography. Help me to turn away from drink. Help me God to turn away from that flirtation in the office.

Help me God, help me God to stop railing. Get me off, get me out of the seat of the scornful and help me to walk with the righteous. Deliver me God from cowardice and put a love for people in my heart that casts out all fear.

Give me a voice to call this generation back to you again. God help me not to cower under the fear of the repercussions that will come all of our way. You know, I was in Washington and there's an ex-general there who really gives courage to my heart every time I meet him and talk with him.

And essentially what he would say if he was standing here is, you have to fight for a cause higher than your own preservation. If it's just about preserving yourself, you'll flee when the enemy comes. If it's about others, you'll stand.

May God give us the courage in this generation to stand for those that don't have a voice for themselves, for our children, for the unborn, for our high school students, for our college students, for every mother, every father, every child in this country that needs to know there's a savior who died for them. Give us the grace to be kind and compassionate to all, not judging anyone, we leave that to God, but reaching as far as we can reach into this massive fallen humanity with this message of incredible grace that belongs to every person who turns to it through Jesus Christ. So Father, I thank you, Lord God, that you will today cause your kingdom to advance.

You will give us the strength and courage that we now need as a people to stand against the onslaught of wickedness that wants to extinguish the testimony of your life and word. Lord Jesus Christ, I pray for courage for your people as others throughout the world have had to have. God, deliver us, Lord, from this life of ease that so many of your people have known and bring us into the true fight for the souls of men.

Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ. God, we yield our bodies today to this purpose. We thank you in Jesus' name.

So we're gonna stand in a moment for those who just, you just know you have to turn from something. And for those who wanna turn towards Christ, maybe you don't have a struggle that I'm talking about in your life, but you say, God, I'm stuck in neutral. I'm not going anywhere.

I'm not going back and I'm not going forward. But today you say, I want to make a difference. I want my life to count.

I want my voice to have authority. If that's you, we're gonna stand. I'm gonna ask you to make your way here.

We're gonna pray together and believe God to answer our prayer. In the annex, you can make your way here. We'll wait for you in the campus churches.

Step between the screens, if you will. We'll be back in just a moment. Every time I look at people at this altar, I see a mighty army of God.

I do, I honestly do. So Father, I pray today, Lord, that you would give every man, every woman, every young person who is at this altar, who are responding in our campus churches or at home, courage, courage, Lord, and compassion. Lord, your word speaks of a perfect love that casts out fear.

So God, give us a love for people that we would not be afraid to speak truth without condemning them, without railing, just loving and speaking the truth. Father, help those that are caught in sin to turn from it. Help us as your people, my God, to be clean.

We who bear the treasure of Christ in these earthen vessels, cleanse us, God, of impurity and mixture and things that cause your voice not to be heard or your heart not to be seen. Give us the grace we need to be the people of God. Lord, help us, help this nation.

Give us a moment of mercy, Lord, to turn back to you again. Give us the grace to pray, heal our homes, our families, our marriages, our children, my God. Deliver us, Lord, from those that crept in to our schools and our colleges and our high schools, Lord, took captive our children.

Deliver us, God, from this moment as you delivered your people out of Egypt. Deliver us, God, from those who are throwing our children into the river of confusion. Forgive us, Lord, as a people, as a nation, for what we allowed in our laziness to come into our borders.

Forgive us, Lord, God, for abdicating the training of our children and giving it to others, Lord, who took advantage and began to steal them from your kingdom. God, help us now to take our rightful place. Help the fathers here to take their place as the head of their home, as the guide, the spiritual guide of their families.

Help the mothers to understand the incredible power that they have. Lord, it is truly said that the hand that rocks the cradle shapes the nation. That's true, that's true.

I pray, God, for every woman here. God, I ask today, Lord, that even from this meeting today, people would rise up and find your will and walk into it, Lord, with faith. Whatever it is, wherever you lead us, take us, Lord.

We dedicate our lives to you, Lord. We dedicate our futures to you. We thank you for covering our past and our present failure and giving us the promise of new life into the future.

Lord, we will not despise you. We will not turn our faces from you or lightly esteem you. Your word is the truth, Lord.

It is the only guide we have into eternal life. So God help us, Lord. Help us to learn your word, to study your word, to know your word and to cherish your word.

Father, thank you for the great fruit that will be born into your kingdom just from the lives that are here at the altar and on their knees in their homes right now. Just thank you for the great fruit that will be born for your kingdom's sake. Lord, we bless you and we praise you in Jesus' name.

Amen and amen. Praise God.

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