

Wolves

by Carter Conlon

The sermon warns about the presence of wolves in the church who come in disguise, target the weak, and use deception and manipulation to cause harm and destruction.

Duration: 57:42

Scripture: Proverbs 16:28, Matthew 13:24-31, Matthew 13:36-43, John 3:19-21, Acts 20:29-30, Titus 3:10

Topics: "False Teachers"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by referencing Matthew chapter 13, where Jesus tells a parable about a man who sowed good seed in his field, but an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. The speaker then highlights the importance of being aware of false teachings and wolves in sheep's clothing within the church. He emphasizes the need to stay vigilant and warns against those who would lead believers astray. The sermon concludes with a reference to Nehemiah chapter 4, where Nehemiah and his people faced opposition in their efforts to rebuild Jerusalem, but they persevered through prayer and setting a watch against their enemies.

Transcript

And I'm going to trust the Spirit of the Lord. I was a speaker at a convention dinner one time, and I was sitting at the table, and I was at the head table. It was a banquet supper type thing, and I was sitting there, and the fellow next to me never stopped talking the whole meal.

He was sitting there, and he was telling me who he is, and what he does, and the ministry he has, and of course he had a word for my life the moment he met me. Most wolves do. And I got a word for you, so he shared his word, and he started talking about the things that he does, and God's designed him to do, and all of the ministries.

And this guy had picked up every, if it's conceivable, to have a man who picked up every foolish doctrine that was floating in the church, this man had it all. And everything just came out of his mouth, and then he finally ends up telling me he's a prophet. I'm a prophet, I'm sent to straighten out the church, and everything, and so he turned to me.

I hadn't spoken the whole time, I was just nodding at him and eating my dinner, and he said, What's your specialty? And I looked at him right in the eye, and I said, Goat kicking and wolf bashing. For the rest of the meal he didn't say one word, nothing. He was all of a sudden very quiet.

He said, Is that so? And he just started eating and didn't say any more. The Apostle Paul in Acts chapter 20, if you'll turn there with me please, Acts chapter 20. Wolves, beginning at verse 28.

He's leaving now the church of Ephesus. He's been there three years, and he's been warning them about something night and day. And in Acts chapter 20, beginning at verse 28, he said, Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. So Paul is warning the Ephesian church that after I leave, grievous wolves are going to come in, and they're not going to spare the flock. They're going to tear apart, they're going to do what wolves do, and we're going to be looking at that.

Also, he said in verse 30, of your own selves, that's in other words from your own midst, shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. In verse 31 he says, Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I cease not to warn everyone night and day with tears. The Apostle Paul had such a love for the flock that he knew one day when God called him, what was going to happen to that flock.

And with tears night and day he warned them, Keep your feet on a straight path. Stay away from those that turn away from the things of God. Don't listen to every spirit that comes your way and says, I have thus and thus from the Lord.

He said not only will grievous wolves come in but also from your own selves men will arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. I remember when I was a police officer and I had a sheep farm coming home one day and I remember my wife saying there's been a report of wolves out in this area. You could sometimes hear them at night howling.

And I remember staying up a good part of that night with a gun in my hand watching the flock that was out in this little pen right behind the barn. Wolves work under the cover of darkness and they wouldn't have known I was there. You make sure that you stay down or upwind or whatever you call that from them so they can't smell you.

But any wolf that would have sunk his teeth into one of my lambs would have been in for an awful shock as a bullet ripped through his body. And I'm trusting this day that God is going to give me that same kind of an anointing. That the softest spoken word that comes from this pulpit this afternoon will be gunfire into the midst of those that are sent to devour and destroy the flock of God.

Would you join with me please in prayer? I thank you this day, Father, that you love your flock. I thank you, Lord, that you sent your Son to die a horrible death that those who believe in you, Jesus, might have eternal life. I thank you, Lord, that there's unity in the body.

You have a design and a purpose for your church that through your church the manifested glory of your Son, Jesus Christ might shine to this darkened generation. Now we know, Lord, that wolves will be sent in and terrors will be planted to distinguish and minimize the light of Christ in your body. And I ask this day, O God, that as I speak these words that you put upon my heart, that you would open the eyes of all who are gathered in this house today.

That any wolf that has snuck in in sheep's clothing and is attempting to devour the glory of God, to devour the heritage of Christ, I ask, O God, they would be exposed and their weaponry would fall to the ground. I ask that those who are in the grip of darkness and are in danger of becoming wolves themselves would see what kind of a spirit has gripped their heart and would turn from it and flee from it and repent and come and be restored. O God, I ask this in the precious and holy name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Let your word go forth and let no defense of the enemy be able to withstand this day. I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now go to the book of Matthew, please, chapter 13. Matthew chapter 13. We're going to have a little bit of fun, some of it serious, but when I get to the end of the teaching we're going to look at seven wolf repellents and that's where you're going to start writing.

Matthew chapter 13, beginning at verse 24. Jesus speaking a parable now. He says, Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which soweth good seed in his field.

But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, there then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy has done this.

The servant said unto him, Will you then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while you gather up the tares you root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. And in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them.

But gather the wheat into my barn. It is absolutely essential in this generation that you and I have a discerning spirit. If you don't develop discernment, now discernment ultimately is the ability to know good from evil.

It's the ability to know that what you're hearing, what's coming forward to you has been birthed and born in God and is of profit to your soul. And you need to know the difference between that and what is sent to cripple you, to wound you, to bind you and to cause you to lose out with God. If you're going to pray for anything in this generation, pray for a discerning spirit more than you ever have before.

Jesus said that there was a vineyard and good seed was planted in that vineyard. But somebody came along, an enemy, and planted bad seed and the bad seed and good seed grew up together. And so when they saw this, the workers of the harvest said, Should we not go and just rip out the bad seed? He said, No, you can't do this because when you do it, you will rip out much or some of the good seed with it.

You see, what goes on when wolves come into a church is beneath the ground. The root systems begin to be tangled together and they gain access and control to people's lives. And so when a pastor sometimes, I've had this experience in the past, spots a wolf in the congregation and realizes that he or she has gained access to several people in that body.

If I were to take that wolf and just rip them out of the church, and I've made that mistake in my early years of ministry, then all of a sudden you see a whole pile of people going with them because the root system

has all been interconnected underground. The wolf has been working and has gained access to the people, has gained their confidence and somehow convinced them that they are the spiritual authority in their life. Now Jesus used the characteristics of sheep to help us understand ourselves.

And those who were here for the sheep message, I hope you got to understand a little bit more about your behavior because Jesus really did know what he's talking about when he called us sheep. But he used another animal called the wolf out of the animal kingdom to describe those who come into the church who become unwitting most of the time instruments of the devil. Their main objective is to destroy the body.

Now a wolf in the animal kingdom, a single wolf is normally shy, but in a pack they're dangerous. Wolves are relentless in pursuit. They will run hours and hours and hours and hours after their prey.

They will single out the weakest in the flock and they will bypass all other victims until they have devoured the one that they have sought out. They wound the victim. Then they play a waiting game.

Wolves are really insidious. They will rush in under the cover of darkness. They will bite a hind leg or bite a sheep or a lamb on the backbone.

You know I never saw a wolf as a shepherd. I'm talking about as a shepherd of real sheep. I never saw a wolf but I did pick up the dead lambs in the field in the morning from time to time.

And I've seen the destruction and havoc they can cause. I've seen more wolves though as a pastor than I ever did as a shepherd. They wound the victim then they play a waiting game.

Then they snicker and snarl and surround and surround and watch that lamb limping and bleeding and then just wait for the right moment when the flock moves on. That lamb is too weak to move with the flock or that old one is too weak or the young one is too weak and then they pounce on it and they devour it. The teeth of a wolf are designed to kill.

Look at Psalm 55 please. Psalm 55 verse 21. Wolves speak smoothly but their teeth are designed to kill.

Psalm 55 verse 21 says The words of his mouth were smoother than butter but war was in his heart. His words were softer than oil yet they were drawn swords. The teeth of a wolf can snap the hind legs or the backbone of a deer.

Their jaws are designed to crush even the bones and devour all the meat after the kill. In other words a wolf pack will kill an animal and they will take the whole thing. They will absolutely devour it.

There will be virtually nothing left. A wolf is normally slower than its prey so it uses strategy and devices. A wolf can run all night and works best under the cover of darkness.

A wolf will generally prey on the aged, the injured and the young. They will stay away from the strong. In my flock I had a ram called Hammerhead and he was called that for a reason.

He had a head on him that big and a neck that thick. I bought him at a sheep fair, a county sheep fair. He won third prize.

He would weigh roughly 250 to 350 pounds, somewhere around there. And he was deadly. You turned your back on him for one second and you were gone.

I know because he hit me one time. The first thing he did when I brought him to my farm is he killed my other ram. Within about anywhere from two to five minutes I had a Suffolk ram.

This was a Hampshire ram. They're much bigger heads, thicker necks. Within about two to five minutes he had killed the other ram dead in the other field.

He was a dangerous ram, but he was wonderful to have out there with the flock. Generally at night he would stand right in the middle of the flock and those that were around him were safe. Any dog coming into the field, he would kill them in an instant.

All he had to do was run into the side. He was absolutely vicious. Folks, if you're ever out in the country and you see a bunch of nice little woolly sheep and you've read stories about how cute and lovable they are, I want you to beware there's a ram out there.

And they are as dangerous as any animal that I have ever known. I mean other than a bull. A bull is a little more dangerous because of their size.

But a ram is a very dangerous animal. Some of them are very, very cruel. And Hammerhead, when he was... Anybody that was close to Hammerhead was safe.

A wolf would never go where Hammerhead is. In other words, wolves will come into the flock and they will stay on the periphery all the time. They won't come in the middle where the strong are.

They won't come where the leaders are. They won't come where those who know the Word of God are. They won't come where the elders are, but they will stay always in a circle under the cover of darkness, the perimeter of the flock, and they will pick off the old ones, they'll pick off the injured ones, and they'll pick off the young ones.

Now in the church, who are these wolves? You would ask me today, who are they? I'd have to answer you and say it's sad to say that most of them don't know who they are. There was a youth pastor one time that heard this teaching and it was on tape. And after he heard this teaching, he came under incredible conviction.

His ministry was coming to absolutely nothing. And he came under conviction and he said, My God, and these are his own words, I'm a wolf. He had the courage to repent of the things that he had been doing.

And this day I can stand and tell you that God is blessing his ministry and restoring to him what the moth and canker worm have eaten. He had allowed things to come into his life and he allowed the enemy to get access to his life and instead of a catalyst for pushing the flock forward, he became a catalyst for destroying the anointing of God. Wolves come into you and into the church in sheep's clothing.

When everybody stands on Sunday morning and other nights and you all shake hands, nobody's going to say to you, Hello, I'm your local wolf. They look like sheep. They act like sheep.

They sing like sheep. They have suits like sheep or clothes like sheep. They carry a Bible like sheep.

The only difference is they're a wolf. Their main goal is to destroy and scatter the sheep. Look at the book of 2 Corinthians, please.

Chapter 11. 2 Corinthians chapter 11 in the New Testament. They look and do everything that a sheep does, but there are some real differences and we're going to look at those differences to help you understand who they are.

2 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 13. The Apostle Paul speaking about deceitful workers and false apostles in the church. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 13.

He says, For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel! For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of life. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.

They look like sheep. They talk like sheep. They imitate sheep.

But inwardly, they are ravaging wolves. Acts chapter 16. Go back there.

I'll show you some things that they can do. They can prophesy. Oh, yes, they can.

Sometimes it's even true. Acts chapter 16, verse 16. Here's a wolf following Paul.

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. In other words, fortune-telling. The same followed Paul and us and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show us the way of salvation.

And this did she many days. There was a wolf that was trying to disguise herself. But Paul, being grieved, you see, Paul had discernment.

He turned and said to the spirit, I commend thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. In 1 Samuel chapter 18.

Please don't turn there. Verse 10. Speaking about Saul after the spirit of the Lord had left him.

It says, An evil spirit of the Lord came upon Saul, and he prophesied all day. An evil spirit came upon Saul, and he prophesied. A pastor friend of mine went into a meeting one time.

And a man walked up to him in that meeting. He says, I have a word for you from the Lord. Now this is a famous intro.

A wolf intro, I call it. I have a word for you from the Lord. Boy, you really need discernment.

Especially if you've never seen this person before. And they sometimes, that's why you need discernment. They don't look spiritual, they look spooky.

There's a difference about them. Look into their eyes. Just don't stand at the floor and think that you're some kind of a spiritual pygmy that can't hear from God yourself.

Look into their eyes. And you'll see, it's their eyes, it's like they go around in circles. Like as if a wolf were looking right at you.

I have a word for you. If you ever discern somebody like that after this message is over, and they walk up to you in this church and say, Brother, Sister, I have a word for you. You tell them, you look at them and say, I have a word for you.

Pastor Conlon told me to tell you to get lost. And you don't have to apologize for that. This pastor friend of mine went into the meeting and somebody walked up to him and said, I have a word for you.

And he looked at him and he said, and he didn't know, he was a pastor, and he didn't know this man has great discernment. And he looked at him and he started to speak some things into his life that were true. And he stood there and he said, Now how could this man know this about my life? He began to speak some things that were true and then followed through with some things that were not true.

And this friend of mine looked into his eyes and said, You lying spirit, I rebuke you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And out of that man's mouth came profanities, incredible profanities. They had to grab him by the arms, the ushers, and throw him out of the meeting as he cursed and screamed the name of the Lord.

A lying spirit come in in disguise. I have a word for you. In other words, they can appear very spiritual, but their spirituality is false.

And they use it to gain control over the undiscerning, the young and the weak. Now how did these people get to be wolves? In the majority of cases, they are people with deep personal sin in their own lives that they won't deal with. I have never known a wolf that did not have deep personal sin in their own life.

The ones that I have had occasion to deal with have been bound by the sin of bitterness, another by rebellion, one by pride and another with gross immorality in his life. They have deep personal sin. Others have counted the cost of following Jesus and that cost is too high.

Somewhere down the line, as we preached on the other night, they have said no to God. God has asked something of them. He's tried to take them through the bitter places and they've said no to God.

This is as far as I'm going to go. They have said no to God and they now have to create their own salvation. You see, they've lost the salvation of God so now they have to create their own salvation by destroying the standard of God.

A spirit of delusion is upon them and they're trying to lead others along with them. Paul says in 2 Thessalonians, let me read it to you, chapter 2, verses 10 and 11. Speaking of some in the end times, he said, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved and for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.

They received not the love of the truth. Somewhere down the line, they said no to God. They said no to the dealing of their sin.

They said no to the deeper claims of Christ. They said no when God asked for everything. They said no when God asked for some of the simple things and so now they're cut off from God and all that's left, folks, I warn you, when you say no to God, all that's left for you is delusion.

You lose out on the salvation with God and now you have to create your own salvation and that's exactly what to do and the only way they can create that salvation is by destroying the holy standard of God in His

house. They have to do everything in their power to extinguish the light. They have to recreate the terms of their salvation.

How can I know who they are? Look at Matthew chapter 7, please and take a look at how you can know who they are. Gee, it's quiet in here. Matthew chapter 7 beginning at verse 15.

Jesus says, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing. How do they come? Sheep's clothing. But inwardly they are ravaging wolves.

You shall know them, how? By their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree brings forth good fruit. But a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit and neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is cut down or hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits you shall know them.

Not their suits, their fruits. They'll come into church and they will look like sheep. They will act like sheep.

They will sing like sheep. They will clap like sheep. They will dance like sheep.

They will speak in tongues like sheep. But their personal lives are almost always in disorder. Behind the scenes when they're outside of the house of God everything changes because their whole relationship with God is a facade.

It's just an illusion. So when they go home they yell at their children. They cheat on the job.

They beat their wives. Their personal lives are always in disorder. I have never known a wolf whose personal life was in disorder, was in order.

Their lives are always in disorder. They have, in the midst of this disorder, you'll find they have a compulsion to counsel others. It's an incredible thing.

Wolves running around their whole, I knew one one time, his whole house was an absolute disaster. His wife, his relationship, his children, he had a horrible financial reputation in the community but he was always at everybody's door trying to offer counsel in the name of the Lord. An absolute compulsion.

But this compulsion to counsel is just a smokescreen to cover up their own sin. In the book of Romans, chapter 2, the Apostle Paul is speaking to those who would profess to be counselors or teachers. Now he's speaking to those who are under the law but there's an application in this instance.

Verse 19, Romans chapter 2, verse 19, it says, And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which has the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou, therefore, which teachest another, teachest not thou thyself? In other words, you teach somebody else. Do you not teach yourself? You who preach a man should not steal.

Do you steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? Thou that abhorrest idols, do you commit sacrilege? You who make your boast of the law, through breaking the law, do you dishonor God? This is what Paul is saying. These men and women have a compulsion to counsel others but their whole life is in disorder themselves. The things they teach they're not willing to live.

As a matter of fact, they can't live it because the power of God is not within them. They will try to gain access to and control you by pretending to be concerned and by speaking words into your life. I had a young family once in my church that came to the Lord.

A young, struggling family, a hurting family. And they came to God and such a deep, rich love for the Lord came into their lives. They had a little girl that was out trick-or-treating before the family came to the Lord and somebody put a candy in her bag that was laced with, they claim it was LSD.

It put her in a coma for three days and when she came out she wasn't normal anymore. Couldn't think, couldn't react the same. Lovely, lovely, precious little girl but damaged by the sin of this world.

And this family started coming to church and this young family started loving God and all of a sudden he started telling me about this man that was coming to his house and this man had taken an interest and this man was giving him all kinds of money. He was giving him money for groceries. He was giving him money for clothes.

He was giving him money for car bills. He was just buying his way into his house. And I got concerned about this situation and he started telling me this man would start speaking words into his life.

Show up and say, I've got a word for you brother. I've got a word for you and start speaking and ministering. And he was so convinced that this was a godly man.

By the time I realized what was going on I went into his house and I told him, I said, get this man out of your life. This man is a wolf. He has bought his way into your life.

He's speaking words to you and his whole house is in absolute disorder. I had done some investigating behind the scenes. But he had so intertwined himself into the lives of these people that they were not able to get him out of their lives.

He had convinced them that they needed him to hear from God. That they were just new and young and he had an absolute pipeline to heaven. And if you want to hear from God then I've got a word for you.

He had began to control and direct their lives. For what purpose? To destroy them. And finally I got a call one day.

This family wouldn't listen to me. They wouldn't get this man out of their house. I warned this man but there was nothing I could do about him.

I threw him out of the church but he still had access to these people. Then one day I got a call and his name was Jerry. He said, can you come to my house? I went down to the house.

He said, this man's come into my house. And he said he's starting now to interfere with our private life. And he's starting to tell my wife how she can dress and how she can't dress.

And he's starting to tell her she's got to change her hair. He was dragging this family right into the law. And so I told this man.

I said, look what you need to do is tell him next time he comes get out of your house. By this point he was getting concerned. And so that man came to his house the next week and he walked in and started telling them all his doctrine, the words that God had for him.

And he stood up to him finally. He was not a very strong man. He finally stood up to him and said, get out of my house.

And you know what this man said? You can't put me out of your house. I own you. That man was so shaken by what happened to him and what happened to his family that he developed a deep mistrust for all authority in the church, for all of the church, for all of the leadership because he was not a, he was a very simple man to start with.

He left the church. He took his family with him. The last I heard he had been charged with drunken driving. His older boy is in jail for robbery. Slide one. You may now turn the tape over to slide two.

Amen. And devoured this young family, picking off the weak, the young, and the old. Wolves can never stay in any one church very long.

The leadership eventually spots them and challenges them and they run. And when they run, they try to take out all those with them over whose lives they have gained control. If there's a wolf sitting here today, he will eventually or she will eventually be spotted and challenged by the leadership.

But until that happens, he's doing everything he can, she's doing everything she can to get her root system interconnected with yours. So that when the pastor challenges her or him and tells them to get out of the Lord's house, then all of a sudden, when she leaves or when he leaves, they will rip all of you whose root systems are intertwined with them. They can't stand the preaching of holiness and righteousness.

They can only handle it for so long. Mark chapter 7, Jesus said, They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They'll come out.

They'll come into the house of the Lord and it's a great pretense. I've seen it myself. They come in the house of the Lord and they'll, Oh, this is wonderful.

Oh, I love this. And they'll clap and the whole intent is to destroy it. And they'll leave the church when they're first here and they'll be talking to you outside in the street and say, Isn't that a wonderful message? Wasn't that a wonderful sermon? Isn't he a wonderful pastor? Oh, I love it.

I love it. I love it. Until you're all gone, they round the corner and say, They can't stand the preaching of holiness and righteousness.

I have watched known wolves come into the church I used to pastor and I watched them come and sit in the front seat and after two or three weeks they're in the middle seat. After a month they're in the back seat and by God's grace they're out the door the week after that. That's not a slight on those folks that are in the back seat.

Lastly, they have no joy. Have you ever tried to be critical and worship God? They're always running around blaming everybody else for their problems. They have so much guilt that they have to try to balance it off by blaming others for the way they're feeling and they have no joy.

They'll come into the house and they'll really try and put on a show but you let them sit there long enough and then it becomes evident there is no joy. Now how do they operate? How do wolves operate? The main tactic is that they go for the shepherd and those in leadership. Look at the book of Hebrews.

Please. Chapter 13 verse 17 talks about it shows you the principle of leadership. Ok, Hebrews 13, 17 says Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves for they watch for your souls as they that must give account that they may do it with joy and not with grief for that is unprofitable to you.

There is one authority that God has put in the church and that authority is given to the pastor and those in spiritual leadership that he has designated to be in those positions of leadership. The context of this verse is obey them in other words give diligent heed to those things that they will tell you to do. A pastor is not given the right to control your life.

Ultimately you have to make the decisions of how you're going to obey God and where you're going to go and what you're going to do or not do. If you're in a cult then all of a sudden those in leadership will control. That's what a cult is about.

A cult is just a wolf at a higher level attempting to intertangle himself with your life and control everything about your life but those that are true shepherds of God will lead you and guide you and the context of the scripture is give diligent heed pay attention because God has put them there to watch over your souls. They have to give an account for you and they would rather do it with joy than with heaviness. Wolves will try to destroy the authority of the shepherd over your life and such cause you to be scattered.

They will themselves try to become the authority in your life and draw you away in order to scatter you. Now write this scripture down. First Timothy chapter 5 verse 19 Against an elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses.

In other words don't let anybody come to you and accuse somebody that's been placed by God in spiritual authority in that church. Prove it. Bring it to the light.

That's what it means. Call others in in authority and bring it to the light. Don't let the wolf work under the cover of darkness.

They have a pretended zeal of evangelism. Jesus said the Pharisees he said you encompass sea and land and make one proselyte or one convert and when he is made you make him twofold more the child of hell than you are. Wolves make disciples then poison, crush and destroy them.

Pastor Glenn a friend of mine in his early years he was he's now a pastor he's been a missionary in Africa but when he was first saved he went into a church and this church was on fire for God very much like you are right now and he was on fire for God God had saved him he was a school teacher wanted to live for God and there was this man in the church that was a member of the body and known for his zeal and evangelism and so he invited him out to evangelize with him in the street and so here he goes he's a new sheep and he follows out and here they are and they're standing on wagons and they're preaching the gospel and they're winning people to Christ supposedly and all of a sudden this man turns to him one day and says your pastor doesn't pay near as much attention to you as I do he

said I was later involved in the investigation of this person and we discovered that he would go into churches and with a pretended zeal for God he would steal up to one third of the church draw them out and scatter the whole works that was his whole thing that's all he did he went in and with his zeal of evangelism he drew out all the new converts drew them to himself convinced them the church wasn't loving and scattered them wolves are great organizers of secret prayer meetings boom he's right why do we need the pastor's permission or why do we have to go to the church for a prayer meeting it's so far

we've got to get on the subway we've got to that parking you never can find a spot let's have our own prayer meeting God is the author of prayer meetings we don't need the pastor's

permission the focus of these prayer meetings will often be the public confession of sin instead of bringing the healing of Christ they will get to know the deep struggles of your heart then they will use them to control you and eventually crush you that's how a wolf operates they promote false doctrine Paul says out of your own selves men will arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them but I want to show you the greatest tactic of all they come to sow division in the body Proverbs chapter 16 look there with me please Proverbs chapter 16 verse 28 I think I'm going to go over time just a little bit pastor was that the maybe we'll just go right into the next service hallelujah Proverbs chapter 16 verse 28 says a froward man or a wicked man sows strife and a whisperer

separates chief friends they like to get the new sheep alone and start whispering seeds of poison under the cover of darkness you remember the book of John chapter 3 it says he that does truth comes to the light because he wants his deeds to be proven that they've been wrought and God but he that hates the truth won't come to the light he hates the light so wolves work under the cover of darkness now here you are a brand new sheep you've been won to God your sins are washed away you're happy to be saved you're all bouncy and bubbly as a Christian and you're just out there eating in the field enjoying yourself you're usually a little bit on the outside of the flock because you're new to the things of God and you're sort of working your way in a wolf can pick you out just like somebody was

taking me on a tour of New York and they said anybody could pick you out that you don't belong here I said how do you know that and he said because nobody else walks around with their head like this all the time and when you're new to the Lord they can pick you out usually you've got a big big Bible under your arm there's just that glow that feeling you're just so happy and here you're out in the field and you're chewing away the grass I'm so glad that Jesus loves me Jesus loves me Jesus loves me I'm so glad and you're just singing away and you're just munching on the wonderful riches of his word and you're so happy to know God then all of a sudden in comes the wolf out of the bushes under the cover of darkness and here comes the veil the big cloak over top of you now here's the classic

wolf intro you know like John Wayne I saw a picture of John Wayne the other day I forget what his thing the whole pilgrim or something like that he would say and there's always been actors and people throughout the years they sort of have an intro line here's the wolf one you ready for this you're sitting there you're eating you're just loving God And here comes the wolf, whoop, here's the cape.

Now here's the wolf indra, just between you and me. Secrecy, darkness, just between you and me.

I wouldn't tell this to anybody else. And you're a new sheep. And you go, oh? Now your ear is open for the poison.

Then he goes, seems like Brother John has been having a little difficulty lately, eh? And you go, yeah, that's right, that's right. I've noticed his prayers are not quite as zealous as they used to be. Now your ear is open to receive the poison that will destroy your soul.

You're wide open. The wolf says, I think Brother John is blah, blah. You go, no kidding? Yes, I'm fairly sure of it.

And there you are out in the field and you've been totally poisoned by a wolf. Just between you and me. Write those words down if you're taking notes.

Just between you and me. Next time somebody says that to you, say, show me that in the Bible, please. Proverbs chapter 26, turn there please with me.

Remember the teeth of a wolf are designed to crush the bones. They can snap the leg of a deer with one bite. They can break a deer's backbone.

The teeth are meant to destroy. Proverbs chapter 26, beginning at verse 22, says this. Now this scripture you should write down and look at it again when you get home.

The words of a tail bearer are as wounds. They go down into the innermost parts of the belly. In other words, that's somebody that brings you a story about somebody else in the body.

A negative story. They go down into the innermost parts of the belly. Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross.

He that hates dissembles with his lips. And why does he do the things he does? Because hatred is in his heart. And he lays up deceit within himself.

When he speaketh fair, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart. Whose hatred is covered by deceit. His wickedness shall be showed or exposed before the whole congregation.

I believe that's happening right now. I believe some of you have been approached. I woke up at 3 o'clock in the morning last week.

And I don't know what it was, but I woke up and the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said, I smell a wolf. I don't know what it is, but as a shepherd when I would come home, there could be no report of wolves, but I would sense it in my spirit. Somehow I would know that something isn't right.

His wickedness shall be exposed before the whole congregation. What's happening right now as this word is going out is those of you who have been approached, those of you who have been touched, those of you who have given unauthorized people spiritual control of your life, the root system is being separated right now so that when they're plucked out, you don't go with them. Whoever digs a pit shall fall in it.

And he that rolls a stone, it will return upon him. A lying tongue hates those that are afflicted by it. And a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Now, how can I be protected from wolves? First and foremost, stay under the authority of those that have been placed over you by the Lord in the local church that you attend. Stay under their authority, their spiritual authority, and don't ever let anybody else become the spiritual authority in your life. Never allow anybody in that church body who has not been designated or authorized by the pastor to become the spiritual authority in your life.

Romans chapter 16, I want to show you what to do about people like this. Verse 17, the Apostle Paul says these words, Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine that you have learned. And what? Avoid them.

Mark them and avoid them. For they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. The Apostle Paul says in the book of Titus chapter 3 verse 10, A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition rejects.

In other words, if you have warned him once and you've warned him twice and he won't stop, have nothing more to do with him. There are some that would say, well, that's not loving. Yes, sir, that's loving.

That's the gospel. You cut them off and have nothing to do with them and bring them to a place of repentance. Bring them to an understanding that what you are and what you're doing is not of God.

You are cut off from the Lord. And those who can still hear will hear and turn to the Lord. All it takes for evil men to prosper is for good men to do nothing.

Mark them and avoid them. Now everybody that's got a pencil, please take it out quickly. I've got six wolf chasers that I want to leave with you.

When somebody comes to you and says just between you and me and tries to plant something in your heart, Number one. These are questions that you can ask and I'd like you to memorize these. Number one, why are you telling me this? Why? That's an easy one.

Sometimes you'll stop them right in their tracks. Well, generally they'll say, I'm concerned about Brother John. That's another wolf buzzword, concerned.

I have a concern. Why are you telling me this? Question number two, where did you get this information from? Where? Now usually by question number two or three they're going to be heading the trail. Number three, did you verify the facts? Why are you telling me this? Where did you get it from and did you verify the facts? Question number four.

Am I going too fast for you? Okay. Here's a good one. It's a scriptural.

Did you go to the person? Did you go to that person? Did you do what the scripture says? Anybody has ought against a brother? You see a person who's sinning? Ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness. Did you go? Have you talked to that person about this situation before telling me about it? Now if none of these four work, I guarantee you number five will. This is the clincher.

This is the punch right between the eyes for any wolf. Ready for this? Can I quote you? Can I go to that person and say you said this? If you're a child of God, you're not. Why should anything be hidden? Isn't everything supposed to be brought into the light? Can I quote you? Oh well, well, well, out the door.

Gone. And number six is a great one. I've used this myself.

Let's you and I go to that person and talk this over. If you do these things, you'll protect your church. Now one last scripture, Nehemiah chapter four.

Please turn there. Nehemiah had been sent in to restore Jerusalem so that under Ezra revival could come. Glory of the Lord could come back again.

But there were workers that were sent in to destroy that work. If you do these six things, you will protect your church. Nehemiah chapter four, beginning at verse six.

So built we the wall, and the wall was joined together unto the half thereof, for the people had a mind to work. But it came to pass that when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabians and the Ammonites and the Ashtodites, the wolves in other words, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth. And they conspired all of them to come and fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it.

Nevertheless, we made our prayer unto God and set a watch against them day and night because of them. And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall. Verse 11, And our adversaries said, They shall not know and neither see till we come in the midst among them and slay them and cause the work to cease.

That's what a wolf will do. That's why they're sent. That's what their purpose is.

To slay those that love God and cause the glory of God, cause the work to cease. And it came to pass that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they said unto us ten times, From all places whence you shall return unto us, they will be upon you. Therefore said I in the lower places behind the wall and on the higher places.

I even set the people after the families with their swords, their spears and their bows. And I looked and rose up and said to the nobles and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, Be not afraid of them. Remember the Lord which is great and terrible and fight for your brethren, fight for your sons, fight for your daughters, fight for your wives and for your houses.

Hallelujah. And that's the word of the Lord to us today. There is a glory of God in this place.

There is a purpose that God has ordained for this church. There is you worship because God is doing something special in their midst. And don't be foolish enough to think that the enemies of the Lord won't come in and try and infect and destroy and distinguish and extinguish the testimony of Christ.

But I challenge you today in the name of the Lord to set a watch against them and fight for your sons and daughters. Fight for the glory of God in this house. Fight for those that will go to the mission field.

Fight for the city of New York. Fight for the testimony of Christ. Set a watch against them and don't give them any place in the body of Christ and in your life.

Wolves come to build walls between sheep. Wolves come to break the unity of the body. Wolves come to quash the moving of the Holy Spirit.

And I remind you in the book of Acts chapter 2 there were no walls. They were all in one accord and in one place. They were unified with one purpose, to glorify God with their lives, to present themselves a living sacrifice for the purpose of God.

They were a symbol in that house desiring a fresh anointing from on high that would touch the community and their families and their nation for God. Hallelujah. In that midst, in that place, the Spirit of God moved in power.

Cloven tongues of fire fell upon them. They were filled with the Holy Ghost and went forward and changed in a short season most of the known world. That's what we're fighting for.

It's a spiritual warfare. You're not fighting against people. You're fighting against the spirits of darkness that have gotten control of the hearts of those who have said no to God somewhere in their lives.

We're not fighting flesh and blood, powers and principalities, spiritual wickedness in high places. They come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravening wolves. They have given place to the devil.

I remind you that Judas was one of the last twelve. He was a man with his own agenda, just never would lay it down. His own standard of salvation, thought he could somehow force the hand of God.

We are not ignorant, Paul said, of the devil's devices. We're not ignorant. Some of you, as I've given this word, scenarios have come back into your mind.

You've been approached. You've been talked to. Your root system has come intertwined.

You know what's a sign that you've been infected by a wolf? A wolf will bite first, then draw back and circle and watch the floundering sheep try to gain its ground. Then the flock moves on. Isn't that what happens in this church? We're changing from image to image and glory to glory.

We're moving on in God. But the wounded, those that have been bit, those that have been poisoned are stationary. They can't move because they've received something in their spirit that won't let them move.

And they struggle along and they limp on that broken leg trying to keep up with the flock but they can't. And the wolf just circles and circles and circles and circles until finally the shepherd is too far away. The flock has gone so far ahead that they just pounce on them, crush their bones and absolutely devour them.

A sign that you've been infected is that you believe something about somebody and you've never checked it out. Do you now have different feelings about that person because of something you've been told about them by someone else, especially persons in leadership? You sit here now, you can't receive ministry from them. A man or woman gets up and just pours their heart out before God.

You can't receive it now because you have been infected by a wolf. You have received something. You've never checked it out.

You don't know if it's true. 99.99% of the time it's a lie. And because you have received it in your spirit, you can't receive ministry anymore.

So the flock moves forward and you stay there. And that's the purpose of a wolf, stop you in your tracks, poison you so you can't hear from leadership. Can you only see their faults? No, and you have a hard time seeing their qualities.

When you've received poison about another person, not just leadership but anybody in the body, you can't see anything good about them now. All you see is the faults. The Apostle Paul, let me just read it to you.

In 1 Timothy, he said, I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me and counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. I was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious. In other words, I hurt the church.

Elsewhere he says, I persecuted the church of God, but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. You may have received something and been infected by a wolf, but if you will bring it into the open today, God will give you mercy. He will take the poison out of your system and let you go forward.

If you don't, you'll stay where you are. You can't grow with this poison in your system and ultimately you'll be devoured. And there are some sitting here that as this message has gone forth that maybe God would give you the courage like that young youth pastor to say, My Lord, my God, I'm a wolf.

I've been poisoning the flock. I've been ministering death. Now there are some who won't be able to hear this message.

You're just so far given to the enemy that they're not going to be able to hear it. But there are some that somewhere down the line you said no to God and the enemy is now getting control of your life and bitterness is coming out of your mouth. You're poisoning everybody around you.

Paul says, I did it in ignorance and I obtained mercy. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Repent is the only way out of this thing.

You've got to repent. Bring it into the open. If you have received something about somebody in this body in as much as is possible.

I'm not suggesting that you all come to the leadership because there's just too many people. But in so much, if you've received something about somebody in this body and it's not true, it would be good for you after the service to contact that person and ask them for forgiveness. Don't tell them what the other person said.

You'll be furthering, you'll just be furthering the devices of darkness. Just say, I received something about you. I'm sorry it was foolish.

I did it in ignorance. You're a good person. God loves you.

Please forgive me. Don't tell them what was said. You can further the wounding.

There's no sense to that. Let's not glorify darkness. I'm going to ask us all to stand.

I'm going to open this altar right now. If you've been infected by a wolf, I want you to come. Slip out wherever you are, in the balcony downstairs.

God's Holy Spirit has spoken to you and you've been infected. You received something about somebody you never checked it out and it changed your feelings towards that person. Maybe you're a person who has let somebody else who's not authorized by this church body, they're gaining control over your life.

They're bringing words. I've got a word for you. I've got a word for you.

You need to be broken out of their grasp once and for all. You need to be here. Maybe you're a timid person and they're more aggressive and they're dominating you and you feel like a cornered mouse.

You can't get out of their grasp. You need to come. It takes humility to answer this altar call today.

I'm not going to coerce anybody, but you need to come. You've received something. Somebody's spoken to you about somebody else.

I know there's got to be a whole lot more here than just this. Maybe you are one of those persons that has been speaking things you shouldn't speak. You've got to bring it into the open.

You've got to come and confess it before God and say, God, I have been speaking. My tongue has been used for evil purposes. My conversation has not blessed you.

It's not blessed my neighbor. We sang that today. Let me be a sweet, sweet sound in your ears.

Lord God, I'm singing it, but I'm not living it. I'm a hypocrite. Out of my mouth has come blessing when I worship, but cursing at other times.

Lord Jesus, help me, please. Help me, please, Lord. Everybody that's born again is filled with the Spirit.

Pray with me right now. Just pray in your heart, in your spirit. Pray for God to give courage.

It takes courage. It takes courage if you've been speaking things you shouldn't speak. This thing has got to be broken once and for all before it gets any ground in this assembly.

It's got to break. I want to encourage you. Just come.

There's forgiveness here. Bring it into the open. By coming to this altar, you're bringing your life into the open.

You're saying, either I have been a perpetrator or I have received something from somebody. I need courage now to change. Lord Jesus, I'm acknowledging this thing.

My tongue is not right. I have been in these conversations just between you and me. That's a conversation of darkness.

Darkness. Darkness. There's nothing in the body that's just between you and me.

If you can't bring it out, if you can't announce it from this pulpit, don't say it. Is there anybody else that God would speak to your heart? It takes courage. It takes courage that you would come.

My tongue has not been holy. I've been doing things I shouldn't do. I have received evil reports.

Do you know what the Bible says in the book of Proverbs? You know, you can consider yourself, you can be sitting there today and say, well, I'm just the innocent party. I was just there and this thing was spoken to me. I didn't do anything.

But Proverbs 17.15, let me read it to you. I'm just going to read it to you. Proverbs 17.15 says, that's not the one I wanted.

But in the book of Proverbs, it says that a wicked doer and a liar gives heed to naughty lips. You might say, I'm just the innocent party, but the Word of God says you're a wicked doer and a liar because you let somebody come with an evil report and you've opened your heart to it.

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