

# Beware of Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

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*Many in leadership positions Covet Power, Money, and Authority in the Body of Christ; Beware of False Ministers and Ministries ...*

**Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. “Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:28-35)**



*Since the Church in general has no spiritual discernment, wolves (false shepherds, evangelists, teachers, etc...) have come in amongst the flock, and caused confusion and division. This is one of Satan's most cunning strategies; he scatters his wolves among the flock to confuse the sheep about the Truth.*

And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: **Care for the flock** that God has entrusted to you. **Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly not for what you will get out of it**, but because you are eager to serve God. **Don't lord it over the people** assigned to your care, but **lead them by your own good example**. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor. (1 Pet. 5:1-4) NLT

### ***FALSE SHEPHERDS***

Then this message came to me from the LORD: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel. Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: What sorrow awaits you **shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks**. Shouldn't shepherds feed their sheep? You drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals, but **you let your flocks starve**. You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead, you have ruled them with harshness and cruelty. So my sheep have been scattered without a shepherd, and they are easy prey for any wild animal. They have wandered through all the mountains and all the hills, across the face of the earth, yet no one has gone to search for them. "Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked by every wild animal. And though you were **my shepherds**, you didn't search for my sheep when they were lost. **You took care of yourselves and left the sheep to starve**. Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I now consider **these shepherds my enemies**, and I will **hold them responsible** for what has happened to my flock. I will take away their right to feed the flock, and I will stop them from feeding themselves. **I will rescue my flock from their mouths**; the sheep will no longer be their prey. (Ezek. 34:1-10) NLT

### ***False Shepherds and False Prophets***

**Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!** saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye **have scattered my flock**, and **driven them away**, and **have not visited them**: behold, **I will visit upon you the evil of your doings**, saith the LORD.

And **I will gather the remnant of my flock** out of all countries whither **I have driven them**, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be **fruitful and increase**. And **I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them**: and **they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking**, saith the LORD. (Jer. 23:1-4)

This is what the LORD Almighty says: “**Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. They keep saying to those who despise me, ‘The LORD says: You will have peace.’ And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts they say, ‘No harm will come to you.’ But which of them has stood in the council of the LORD to see or to hear his word? Who has listened and heard his word?**” See, the storm of the LORD will burst out in wrath, a whirlwind swirling down on the heads of the wicked. The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart. In days to come you will understand it clearly. **I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied**. But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and **would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds**. (Jer. 23:16-22) NIV

### ***PAUL’S MINISTRY***

So you can see **we were not preaching with any deceit or impure motives or trickery**. For **we speak as messengers approved by God to be entrusted with the Good News. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He alone examines the motives of our hearts**. Never once **did we try to win you with flattery**, as you well know. And God is our witness that **we were not pretending to be your friends just to get your money!** As for **human praise, we have never sought it from you or anyone else**. (1 Thess. 2:3-6) NLT

**Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble**, thinking of others as **better than yourselves**. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but **take an interest in others**, too. You **must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had**. Though he was God, **he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to**. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; **he took the humble position of a slave** and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he **humbled himself in obedience to God** and **died a criminal’s death on a cross**.

(Phil. 2:3-8) NLT

It’s true that some are preaching **out of jealousy and rivalry**. But others preach about Christ **with pure motives**. They preach because **they love me**, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News.

Those others **do not have pure motives** as they preach about Christ. They preach **with selfish ambition, not sincerely**, intending to make my chains more painful to me. But that doesn't matter. Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. For I know that as you pray for me and the Spirit of Jesus Christ helps me, this will lead to my deliverance. For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be **bold for Christ**, as I have been in the past. And I trust that **my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die**. For to me, **living means living for Christ**, and dying is even better. But if I live, **I can do more fruitful work for Christ**. So I really don't know which is better. I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. But **for your sakes**, it is better that I continue to live. Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so **I can continue to help all of you grow** and experience the joy of your faith. (Phil. 1:15-25) NLT

I have no one else like Timothy, who **genuinely cares about your welfare**. **All the others care only for themselves and not for what matters to Jesus Christ**. But you know how Timothy has proved himself. Like a son with his father, he has served with me in preaching the Good News. (Phil. 2:20-22) NLT

As for human praise, **we have never sought it from you or anyone else**. As apostles of Christ we certainly had a right to make some demands of you, but instead **we were like children among you**. Or we were **like a mother feeding and caring for her own children**. **We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives**, too. Don't you remember, dear brothers and sisters, how hard we worked among you? **Night and day we toiled to earn a living so that we would not be a burden to any of you as we preached God's Good News to you**. You yourselves are our witnesses and so is God that **we were devout and honest and faultless toward all of you believers**. And you know that we treated each of you **as a father treats his own children**. We **pleaded** with you, **encouraged** you, and **urged you to live your lives in a way that God would consider worthy**. For he called you to share in his Kingdom and glory. (1 Thess. 2:6-12) NLT

And you must show mercy to those whose **faith is wavering**. Rescue others by **snatching them from the flames of judgment**. **Show mercy to still others**, but do so with **great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives**.

(Jude 22,23) NLT

*Ministry is Not Easy, There will be Pain, Sorrow, Loss, etc...  
But Paul Tell's Us "IT WAS WORTH IT ALL"*

For **we do not preach ourselves**, but **Jesus Christ as Lord**, and **ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake**. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made **his light shine in our hearts** to give us the light of the knowledge of the **glory of God in the face of Christ**. But **we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us**. We are **hard pressed on every side**, but **not crushed**; **perplexed**, but **not in despair**; **persecuted**, but **not abandoned**; **struck down**, but **not destroyed**. We always carry around in our body **the death of Jesus**, so that **the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body**. For we who are alive are **always being given over to death for Jesus' sake**, so that **his life may be revealed in our mortal body**. So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you. It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence. All this is for your benefit, so that **the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God**. Therefore **we do not lose heart**. Though **outwardly we are wasting away**, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day**. For **our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all**. So **we fix our eyes not on what is seen**, but **on what is unseen**. For **what is seen is temporary**, but **what is unseen is eternal**. (2 Cor. 4:5-18) NIV

### ***Would the Real Minister, Please Stand Up!***

But thou hast **fully known my doctrine**, **manner of life**, **purpose**, **faith**, **longsuffering**, **charity**, **patience**, **Persecutions**, **afflictions**, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; **what persecutions I endured**: but out of **them all the Lord delivered me**. Yea, and **all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. 3:10-15)

### ***Beware of Smooth Talkers Serving their Own Personal Interests***

And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who **cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things contrary to what you have been taught**. Stay away from them. Such people are **not serving Christ our Lord**; they are **serving their own personal interests**. By **smooth talk** and **glowing words** they **deceive innocent people**. (Rom. 16:17,18)

NLT

I say this because some **ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches**, saying that **God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives**. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. So I want to remind you, though you already know these things, that Jesus first rescued the nation of Israel from Egypt, but later he **destroyed those who did not remain faithful**. And I remind you of the angels who did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged. God has **kept them securely chained in prisons of darkness**, waiting for the great day of judgment. And don't forget Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, which were **filled with immorality and every kind of sexual perversion**. Those cities were **destroyed by fire and serve as a warning of the eternal fire of God's judgment**. In the same way, these people who claim authority from their dreams **live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at supernatural beings**. But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels, did not dare accuse the devil of blasphemy, but simply said, "**The Lord rebuke you!**" (This took place when Michael was arguing with the devil about Moses' body.) But these people **scoff at things they do not understand**. Like **unthinking animals**, they do whatever their **instincts tell them**, and so they bring about **their own destruction**. **What sorrow awaits them!** For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion. (Jude 4-11) NLT

These men are **blemishes** at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm **shepherds who feed only themselves**. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. (Jude 12,13) NIV

*This Brings Us to Our Next Lesson; (Lesson # 21)*  
**"The Six Foundational Doctrines Of Christ"**

- 1. Repentance From Dead Works...*
- 2. Faith Toward God*
- 3. The Doctrine Of Baptisms...*
- 4. The Laying On Of Hands...*
- 5. Resurrection From The Dead...*
- 6. The Doctrine Of Eternal Judgment...*