

Savage Wolves

Acts 20:28-31

Introduction: It's a sad fact that some Christians will fall away. Paul warned the Ephesian Elders that "savage wolves" would come not sparing the flock. Some of their own brethren would speak perverse things to cause others to take their side (Acts 20:29-30). The same problem exists among us today.

I. Savage wolves.

A. Jesus used this same metaphor to refer to false teachers (Matt. 7:15).

B. Why use a wolf to describe a false teacher? Because everyone knows what a wolf is capable of doing. Ezekiel used this same metaphor to describe the wicked leaders of his day (Ezek. 22:27).

C. The doctrine of the false teacher is the teeth the wolf uses to destroy others. Perverse teaching should be feared (Gal. 1:6-10).

D. False teachers, like wolves, don't care about the mess they make (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

E. When it comes to false teachings, we must be watchful; whether it comes from a Christian of only two weeks or from a Christian of 55 years. The false teacher's purpose is to draw people to their side or destroy others trying.

II. Our reaction to savage wolves.

A. Unfortunately, many of us react to false teachers just like we react to a savage wolf; we draw away from the situation. We excuse ourselves from defending God's word. Is that the way God wants us to handle wickedness (Ezek. 33:1-9)?

B. Some will say, "Forget about it. It's none of our business anyway. God will judge."

1. Indeed God will judge because he has made these situations our business (Gal. 6:1-2). It is our burden to address our brethren's trespasses. The righteous individual who tries to restore an erring brother **fulfills** the Law of Christ!

2. Jesus wants us to make the sins of our brethren our business (Matt. 18:15-17).

3. Consider the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36). If a brother has been spiritually stripped, wounded and left for dead by sin, whose business is it to help that brother? The priest and the Levite who both were servants of God could have helped the man but they did not. Would you help a brother who is in spiritual need or would you walk on by? Is the spiritual need of your brother your business?

C. Some will say, “Forget about it. We don’t like confrontations.”

1. I don’t like confrontations either. However, that attitude won’t help a brother who is caught up in sin.

2. Did Peter say, “forget about it” when the newly converted Simon the Sorcerer was confronted about his sin (Acts 8:20-24)?

3. Paul confronted Peter to his face about his hypocrisy (Gal. 2:11-14).

4. Paul told Timothy to rebuke sinners without partiality that others may fear (1 Tim. 5:20-21). Guaranteed, that will cause confrontations.

5. Confrontations are really a testing of our own faith (James 1:2-4). There is going to be personal growth every time we confront a brother or sister about their sin.

D. Some will say, “Let it go. We’ll just make them angry.”

1. Which is more important: a brother’s feelings for you or the eternal state of that brother’s soul?

2. James taught that when a person turns a person back to the truth, a soul would be saved and a multitude of sins avoided (James 5:19-20).

3. If we don’t warn our erring brother of his sin we could be exchanging complacency for our own soul (Matt. 16:24-26).

Conclusion: Savage Wolves are busy drawing away Christians. Are we willing to help our brethren when they are in error? Remember, their souls are just as important as our souls. Let’s not make excuses. Don’t forget about it. Let’s do something about it so all of us can enjoy a heavenly home together.