

Part III of “Awake Ye Watchmen!!”

Message by: Leroy Surface

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
Ephesians 4:11

To the Pastors:

It may come as a surprise to some to learn that this text in Ephesians 4:11 is the only place in the New Testament that the word “Pastors” is used. The Greek word translated “pastors” in this text is “*poimen*,” and is used eighteen times in the New Testament, correctly translated in every other case as “*shepherds*.” If you are a “pastor,” you are given to the church as a “shepherd” to the “flock” of God. In I Peter 5:4, Jesus is referred to as the “chief shepherd.” We then are “under-shepherds,” given the “oversight (I Peter 5:2)” of the flock by the Lord Himself. The twenty-third Psalms clearly defines the duties of the shepherd over the flock. Let us take note:

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want... The pastor is to feed the Lord’s flock until they “*want not*,” meaning they shall not “*lack*.”

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters... The pastor is to lead the Lord’s flock to “*still waters*” that they may freely drink, and to “*green pastures*” that they may graze and find rest.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake... According to Hebrews 13:17, the pastor is to “*watch for the souls*” of the Lord’s flock “*as they that must give account*.” Do not misunderstand, pastor, it is not your flock you are given to watch, but the Lord’s, and we will give account for that flock. Even Jesus “*gave account*” to His Father at the end of His earthly ministry, praying, “**Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled**” (John 17:12). He gave account for all whom His Father had given to Him. In watching for the souls of the flock, the pastor is to seek the good of every sheep or lamb in the flock for their spiritual health and welfare. He is to lead them in the paths of righteousness “*for His name’s sake*.” Whenever the flock strays from the “*paths of righteousness*,” it is the Holy name of the Lord that is profaned (Ezekiel 36:20). Do not misunderstand; the pastor (shepherd) will give account just as will all those that stray. It is an awesome responsibility to be the pastor over the Lord’s flock. Notice also that the pastor is to “*lead*” the people. He cannot “*drive*” the sheep, but they will follow wherever he “*leads*” them. If the pastor is “*worldly*” the flock will be the same. If there is sin in the pastor, it will fill the congregation also. If the pastor earnestly and fervently prays, soon the flock will also. The pastor is not a lord over the flock, but an example to it (I Peter 5:3). There is no way to lead the flock in paths of righteousness but by example.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me... It is here that the pastor’s responsibility as a “*watchman*” begins. With the faithful shepherd, the sheep need “*fear no evil*,” because their shepherd (pastor) is “*sober*” and “*vigilant*.” He knows the “*lion*” is on the prowl, seeking “*whom he may devour*” (I Peter 5:8). The faithful pastor “*watches*” and “*prays*” while the sheep are at rest. If he does so, he will know when the “*sheep*” are in danger of the “*lion*,” the “*bear*,” or the “*wolf*.” It is at this point that it is discovered whether the pastor is a “*good shepherd*” or a “*hireling*.” Jesus said, “**But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep**” (John 10:12-13).

The hireling is discovered in his every interaction with the sheep. He may take them to “*stagnant*” waters and “*polluted*” pastures. He leads not by “*example*,” but seeks to “*drive*” the sheep in the course he would have them go. He has no love for the sheep, but uses and abuses them for his own purposes. He is as God said in Ezekiel 34:3-4, “**Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.**” God continues His assessment of the sheep in the hands of the hireling in Zechariah 11:5, “**Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed be the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not.**”

The hireling views the sheep as being for his own profit, rather than the other way around. The sheep are seen as the “*source*” of everything the hireling has need of, and he looks to the sheep to provide it. Far more attention is given to “*shearing*” the sheep than to “*feeding*” them. They shear the sheep for the wool, kill the sheep for the fat, and sell them for their own prosperity, while all the time they are saying, “*blessed be the Lord, because I am rich.*”

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

I John 3:16

Jesus told us how we would know the “*good shepherd.*” The good shepherd will “*give his life for the sheep*” (John 10:11). I am persuaded that there are hundreds or even thousands of pastors in America who love the Lord’s flock just that much, but they do not understand what it means to “*lay down our lives*” for the sheep. I pray that God will give us greater understanding of what it means to be a faithful pastor and watchman as I bring this message just as God has burned it into my heart.

The Lamb and the Bear!

Early in the summer of 2003 a young lady and children’s minister of our congregation told me of a dream she had. In her dream she had to fight with a bear. Her friends and family were all telling her how to fight the bear, but she could only tell them “*I can’t fight the bear that way.*” Very short and simple, that was the sum of her dream. She came to me as her pastor and told me the dream. My first response was this, “*God has chosen you to be a ‘David.’ You will fight the bear in the name of the Lord, and you will win.*” Within thirty days of that time, this young lady was diagnosed with malignant breast cancer. What a shock this was to all of us, but especially to this thirty seven year old mother of three children. Immediately we began to pray for her. Her friends and loved ones, true to her dream, began to tell her what she should do. I tried to encourage her: “*This is the bear of your dream. Fight in the name of the Lord and you will be victorious. You will overcome the bear in the name of the Lord.*” Further testing at the MD Anderson cancer center in Houston Texas revealed that the cancer had already invaded her liver. There was no cure, only the hope of slowing the growth. Every prognosis was bad. For a short time she was devastated, but “*we had been forewarned that it would be a ‘bear’.*” I had entered into a time of fasting and prayer shortly before the diagnosis. Several from our church began to pray nightly for our sister and friend. “*Lord, help her! Heal her! Strengthen her! Give her grace to go through this horrible fight with the bear!*” It seemed we were all helpless to do anything, and the situation seemed so hopeless.

A Rude Awakening

One night I was at the church praying for this lady. “*God, lift her up! Encourage her! Give her grace to rise up as David against the bear!*” Suddenly the Spirit of God spoke to my heart, and what a shock it was to hear what He said. “*She is not the David! She is the little lamb of the flock the bear has come to devour.*” What an eye-opener to me. What the Spirit told me next really shook me. “*You are the one I sent to keep my flock! You are the under-shepherd and protector of my flock! Will you ‘rise up as David’ to slay the bear in my name? Will you seek my face continually until I arise with healing in my wings? Will you ‘tarry’ before me until I*

clothe you with power over all the power of the enemy?" I was devastated. I had been guilty of praying for the "lamb" to receive grace, as the "bear" devoured its body. In I Peter 5:1-9, Peter was exhorting the elders as "under-shepherds" of the Lord's flock. **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away"** (I Peter 5:2-4). **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world"** (I Peter 5:8-9).

Too often we have stood by "*helplessly*" while the lion and the bear ravaged the flock of God. We "*rejoiced*" that we were safe from their attacks. Somehow we were more blessed than many others, with better health, strength, etc. We were able to "*believe God*" for ourselves, now "*they*" must learn to trust God for themselves. Why then did Peter warn us as "*overseers*" of the "*flock of God*" to be sober and vigilant? He said there is a lion walking about, seeking "*whom he may devour.*" Was this warning for the protection of the shepherd, or for the sheep? I have found that God expects us to "*watch for their souls;*" to "*stand in the gap;*" to "*make up the hedge;*" and when necessary to "*wrestle with principalities and powers*" for the flock of God.

A Man After God's Heart

And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.

I Samuel 13:13-14

Saul reigned as king over Israel for forty years. God had purposed to establish the "*house of Saul*" to reign over Israel forever (I Samuel 13:13), but after just two years God told Saul that his kingdom would not continue. The reason given: **"The LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart..."** Saul was not that man. According to the time frame given in the scriptures, David was not even born at this time. In Ezekiel 22:30, God said, **"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."** How many times has God "*sought for a man and found none?*" Certainly there are plenty of "*men.*" Thousands of young men have been stirred during times of revival and sincerely committed themselves to the Lord, saying, "*I will be that man.*" Repeatedly they have been turned aside to other things. Most, while seeking "*greatness*" have found only "*mediocrity.*" Some have achieved worldly fame and glory even in the realm of the church, receiving the praise and adoration of the people, while God is yet "*seeking for a man.*" It cannot be just any man. He seeks a man to "*make up the hedge and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it.*" Notice that God said they must stand "*for the land.*" It must be a man "*after God's own heart.*" In Isaiah 59:16, God "*saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor..."* Again, He was seeking a man to be an "*intercessor*" before Him for the land. Hebrews 5:1 tells us that every high priest taken from among men is "*ordained for men in things pertaining to God..."* The second verse tells us that God ordains those "*Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way..."* Certainly this must be a man "*after God's own heart.*" God yet seeks that man.

I Have Found David!!

And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Acts 13:21-22

I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

Psalms 89:20-24

Saul had reigned over Israel for ten years before David was born, while God “*sought a man after His own heart.*” Another decade and a half passed and no man had been found. David was now in his mid to upper teen years when the prophet Samuel was sent to the house of Jesse to anoint a king from among his sons. David was the youngest of Jesse’s eight sons and was in the fields, tending the sheep that day. Each of the seven elder brothers was brought before Samuel, and one by one God rejected them all. “*Is there not another son,*” Samuel inquired of Jesse? David is called in from the fields unto Samuel. God immediately tells Samuel, “*arise, anoint him, for this is he.*” I Samuel 16:13 says, “**Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.**” The great heart of God was rejoicing: “**I have found David...a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.**”

What was there about this young teenager that so stirred the heart of God? I believe the answer is found in I Samuel 17:34-36: “**And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear.**” David’s father Jesse had entrusted the sheep to David’s care while he was still in his early teens. Certainly Jesse had no thought that David would ever encounter the lion or the bear while caring for the flock. David probably never told his father about the incident, but God, who sees and knows all things, saw David’s reaction. A little lamb was taken in the jaws of the lion. David heard it’s bleating and without hesitation went after the lion, smote him, and delivered the lamb out of his mouth. The lion then attacked David, and with his bare hands he caught the lion by the beard and killed him. Not only did he kill the lion that day, but when the bear came he killed him also. David had a heart that was ready to lay his own life down to rescue a little lamb of his father’s flock. I believe it was here that God almighty cried out, “*I have found David, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.*” If David was so faithful to his earthly father; if he so loved his father’s flock that he would lay his life down for a single little lamb; there is the heart of the “*good shepherd.*” Jesus said in John 10:11, “**I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.**” David’s heart was as God’s own heart, to lay down his life for the sheep. What a shepherd this “*David*” would make over the flock of God. This young man would give himself for the deliverance of Israel.

A Living Sacrifice

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 12:1

Jesus gave His body and blood, a sacrifice for us, hence, “**...while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us**” (Romans 5:8). He died for the “*ungodly*” (verse six). He died for “*enemies*” of God (verse ten). Jesus did not die as a sinner, but as a sinless sacrifice. Every sacrifice is offered at an altar of sacrifice: His was in the Garden of Gethsemane, just moments before He was arrested and condemned to die on the “*roman cross*” where He “*laid His life down*” for the “*sins of the world.*” We are told to present our bodies a “*living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God...*” This can only be done at the “*altar of sacrifice.*” This exhortation is not to sinners; Paul said, “*I beseech you therefore brethren...*” It is not a call to “*die to sin,*” for this is finished for us at the cross of Christ and accomplished in us at salvation. It is a call to “*live unto God,*” yet, stronger than that, it is an “*abandonment*” of ourselves, body, soul, and spirit, unto our Lord and God, that He would live “*in us*” and

do His wonderful works “*through us.*” A child of God does not “*die to sin*” everyday as some teach, but we must “*present*” ourselves everyday to be “*renewed day by day*” (II Corinthians 4:16).

For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

Hebrews 5:1-2

The things spoken here are the purposes and requirements of God for the person chosen under the law to be high priest over Israel. They are given to us as a foreshadow of Jesus Christ, our great high priest. They also reveal what God will have in His ministers today. There several points I will bring our attention to in these two verses:

“...taken from among men...” The man (or woman) of God will be separated from the world. The writer of Hebrews wrote of our great high priest when he said in Hebrews 7:26, **“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”** According to the meaning of the Greek word translated “*separate,*” there was a vast space or distance between Jesus and sinners. This “*space,*” however, could not be measured by inches or feet, or by any human measurement. It speaks of the vast distance between what they are. Jesus ate with publicans and sinners, even going into their homes. The scribes and Pharisees harshly condemned him for doing so, yet He was totally separate from sinners. He was “*set apart*” by what He was, and the sinners knew it. Such a “*separation*” drew them to Him, to know Him. The Pharisees knew He was different and hated Him for it. The sinners and publicans knew He was different, and desired to be like Him. Make no mistake, man of God, you will be different, separated, and “*taken from among men.*” The “*difference*” will be God.

“...ordained for men...” God has always sought for men to be intercessors “*for the people.*” Abraham was such a man (Genesis 18:17-33), as was Moses. In fact, Moses, the man who spoke with God as to his friend, “*face to face*” (Exodus 33:11, Deuteronomy 34:10), made intercession for Israel numerous times when God had determined to destroy them. In Exodus 32:9-14, God was so angered against Israel that He would have “*consumed*” them and made a great nation of Moses and his seed. How many could God find that would have refused such an offer? Moses turned the LORD down flat. In fact, he “*preached repentance*” to the LORD God; **“Turn from thy fierce wrath, and *repent* of this evil against thy people.”** He reminded God of His promise to Abraham, **“Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.”** The next verse simply records, **“And the LORD repented...”**

In Exodus 32:32, Moses was so bold in his intercession for Israel as to say, **“Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.”** The Apostle Paul expressed the same love for Israel in His day, saying, **“I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ *for my brethren,* my kinsmen according to the flesh”** (Romans 9:2-3).

The great prophet Elijah, after seeing such wonderful victory over the prophets of Baal at Mt Carmel, later made intercession “*against*” Israel (Romans 11:2-4, I Kings 19:14); **“And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”** Notice in the fifteenth and sixteenth verses, God did not “*feel sorry*” for Elijah. Instead, upon his intercession “*against*” Israel, God immediately commissioned Elijah to go and anoint two new kings, and **“Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet *in thy room.*”** It was not a good day for the prophet; the day he “*made intercession to God against Israel.*”

“...in things pertaining to God...” The man of God is ordained “*for men,*” but only in things “*pertaining to God.*” He is to stand before God, hear the word of His mouth, and speak His word to the people (Ezekiel 3:17).

The man of God is not to be a philosopher or a psychologist to the people. He is not to be their banker or financial adviser, neither their handy man nor their auto mechanic. His mission is not to recommend the best doctor, or to be their dietician. Being ordained by God, for men, in things pertaining to God, the man of God is to give himself continually to *“prayer and to the ministry of the word”* (Acts 6:4). Seeking to and receiving from the Lord daily, the man of God is a treasury of *“good things”* for the people (Matthew 7:11, 12:35). The sick will come and receive healing out of that good treasure; the lost will be saved, the broken hearted will be healed, and the captive will be set at liberty. The first impulse of the people will not be to *“go to the emergency room,”* but to *“find the man of God.”*

I attended the national convention of one of the major denominations this year, representing *“The Shepherd’s Voice”* publication. I was deeply disturbed to find one of the highly respected ex-officials of the movement presenting a *“multi-level investment plan”* to every pastor he could bring into his *“booth.”* At the same time, while visiting the publishing department, we were saddened to find they were selling the printing presses and book making machinery. Next we were shocked to discover that we were printing and distributing free of charge, more *“The Shepherd’s Voices”* each month than they were of their national publication. This great denomination, with its thousands of churches and hundreds of thousands of memberships, could be (should be) flooding the nation with gospel literature free of charge, but instead it was seeking through carnal means to enrich themselves, and so destroy their own movement. May God almighty open their eyes that they might see.

We have freely received; we are to freely give. Hear the words of Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 10:7-9, **“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses...”** They went, they preached the gospel, they healed the sick, and they lacked nothing (Luke 22:35). Peter’s words to the lame man at the gate beautiful of the Temple were, **“Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee.”** What Peter had could not be bought with silver or gold. It was not a *“philosophy.”* It was not a *“counseling session.”* No *“twelve step plan”* was in Peter’s possession. He recommended no *“therapist;”* He had no *“herbal remedies”* that might relieve the man’s pain, but, Peter had something, and he said to the lame man, **“Such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”** Peter had received a miracle from the Lord to give this lame man. **“And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God”** (Acts 3:7-8).

The proper arena for the man of God is in those things *“pertaining to God.”* He is ordained by God to do the works of God. It is too easy to dismiss these things today by saying, *“but that is not my calling, I don’t have those gifts.”* Nonsense! God has called no one to be a *“miracle worker,”* but He has called all of us to be *“intercessors.”* Begin your day, each day, by *“weeping”* in the altar of God for the people; for the lost, for the sick and afflicted, for the bruised and the broken hearted, for the possessed and all that are oppressed of the devil. Soon, the Lord will arise upon you with healing in His wings (Malachi 4:2), and will stretch forth His great hand through you to the people (Acts 4:30, 11:21).

“Who can have compassion on the ignorant...” This last ingredient of those who God **“takes from among men...for men...in things pertaining to God,”** is **“compassion on the ignorant and those that are out of the way.”** In John 8:32, Jesus said, **“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** Not everyone knows that truth. In fact, there are multitudes in the churches that do not know that truth. Many have repented, been baptized in water, joined the church, and are faithful tithers, yet they continue to struggle with sin and temptation in their lives. They are *“ignorant”* of the truth of the gospel that would make them free. By definition, this *“ignorance”* has nothing to do with their *“IQ,”* or their ability to learn. It is rather as the apostle Paul said in Ephesians 4:17-18, **“...henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”** There are those all around us whose only *“walk with God”* is in the *“vanity of their mind,”* and they are *“alienated from the life of God”* by no more than their *“ignorance”* of the truth of the gospel. They believe that sin and failure are the *“norm”* for the Christian walk, and because

of this they are continually in the *“snare of the enemy.”* It is easy to have contempt for them, but if you would be that man (or woman) of God, have compassion on them. Shed tears for them in the altar of prayer. Seek God to give to you exactly what they need. Remember what Paul told Timothy concerning such; **“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will”** (II Timothy 2:24-26).

The Wolf Cometh

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the 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.

Acts 20:28-29

The Apostle Paul was leaving Asia. He had called all the elders of the church to meet him at Miletus. It would be his last farewell to them. Paul had been a faithful *“watchman”* for them. For three years he had watched for their souls as one who must *“give account”* (Hebrews 13:17). He had held back nothing that was *“profitable”* unto them, but had taught them publicly and from house to house, *“repentance toward God, and faith toward Jesus Christ”* (Acts 20:20-21). Paul knew that the blood of the flock would be required at his hands if he failed to be a faithful watchman (Ezekiel 3:16-21). He said he was *“pure from the blood of all men”* because he had not shunned declaring all the counsel of God to them (Acts 20:27). He had *“warned them with tears”* both day and night for the duration of his stay (verse 31). Now, Paul was leaving Asia and would see them no more. With his departure, the responsibility of the flock would fall upon the elders. He reminded them, *“The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.”* Then He gives a final warning to them, **“after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.”** They must watch. They must be sober. They must warn the people with tears, giving them the whole counsel of God. They must sound the alarm and cry aloud when the wolf sought to enter in among the flock. If they are to be faithful watchmen and not lose the flock to the wolf, they must spend much time every day in the presence of God in behalf of the flock.

As I began to write this chapter, I thought to give a *“warning”* against various different *“grievous wolves”* that would seek to come into the church to *“kill, steal, and destroy”* (John 10:10). Almost immediately I realized, the things I would warn *“against”* are already in most churches today. I have seen them creep in during forty years of my ministry. I have cried aloud and sounded the warning throughout the years, but to little avail. Now, it is too late to warn that the *“wolves”* are coming, because they are here! They are among the sheep. They have killed; they have destroyed in the flock of God, yet there are few that recognize them for what they are. Please understand as we go further in this message, as Paul said in Ephesians 6:12, **“we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers...”** We view every person on earth as a *“soul”* that Jesus died for, worthy of redemption. There are, however, many that are deceived by other spirits and doctrines and are thus carriers of deadly poison for the sheep. Others, even though they are sincere Christians, have been deceived by many devices, and fallen into the snare of the adversary.

Grievous Wolves Among the Sheep

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Matthew 7:15

God poured out His Spirit upon the hundred and twenty on the *“Day of Pentecost,”* some fifty days after Jesus' death and resurrection at Calvary. The year was 30 A.D. Before the end of that first century, all the Apostles had died a martyr's death except John the Beloved. The Jewish persecution of the Christians at the hand of Saul of Tarsus made havoc of the church. Later in that first century, Nero's persecution of the church slaughtered untold thousands and tens of thousands of Christians. These persecutions could not stop, nor even slow the growth of the

church of Jesus Christ. It was the entrance of false teachers who perverted the gospel that destroyed the church and brought it into a period of over a thousand years called "*The Dark Ages.*" Reformation did not come until the sixteenth century, when Martin Luther and others of his period began to openly preach "*justification by faith.*" The message of "*sanctification by grace*" came with the Wesleyan, or Methodist revival. The old sanctified Methodist circuit preachers were instrumental in bringing Christ from east to west across America. The "*great awakening*" shook the colonies in their day through the Puritan preachers. Later, the Finney revivals prepared America for the Civil War and the emancipation of the slaves. Finally, on the first day of the twentieth century, January 1, 1901, God began to "*pour out His Spirit*" once again with all the evidence of the "*Day of Pentecost.*" In just a few years it swept across America and around the world. God confirmed this "*Pentecostal Revival*" through great demonstrations of His power and glory such as was not seen since the first century, and has not been seen again since the middle of the twentieth century. History repeated itself. Both the first century and the twentieth century revivals came "*suddenly from heaven,*" (Acts 2:2). Both spread around the known world like fire in the midst of great persecution. Sadly, neither survived their century. Both, while being unstoppable by persecution, were destroyed by false teachers and doctrines. The "*grievous wolves*" Paul warned about, came in, and did not spare the flock.

Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 1:3-4

In the late 1950's, about the time I was saved and filled with the Spirit, a number of well-known preachers met with some incredibly wealthy businessmen and devised a plan to make "*Pentecost*" acceptable to all peoples of all religions. It is worthy of note to point out that when God poured out His Spirit in the first decade of the twentieth century, in each case it was upon groups that taught and believed the truth of "*sanctification by grace.*" Their "*roots*" were in the "*sanctified*" revival. Even a casual study of the "*Azusa papers*" from the "*Azusa street revival*" would convince the reader that these who were "*baptized with the Holy Ghost*" were already "*sanctified*" by the blood of Jesus. For the first fifty years of the Pentecostal revival of the twentieth century, it was commonly known that the Holy Ghost would not dwell in an "*unclean vessel.*" The goal of the "*reformers*" of the fifties was to "*broaden*" the revival, to make it "*acceptable*" to the masses. In so doing, they laid the foundation for the destruction of that which God almighty had done in His church.

First, they changed the language of "*Pentecost.*" In fact, they would no longer call it "*Pentecostal,*" but the "*charismatic renewal,*" hence the birth of the "*charismatic church.*" They would no longer "*speak in tongues,*" they would "*practice glossalalia*" (the Greek word for speaking in tongues). Later, the "*glossalalia*" would be redefined as "*the prayer language.*" When I was saved in the late fifties, it was still the common practice to continue seeking the Lord after salvation for the wonderful "*baptism with the Holy Ghost.*" Sometimes it would come immediately upon salvation, as it did for me. If not, the new "*Christian*" would "*wait,*" or, "*tarry*" as Jesus told us to, until we received this "*promise of the Father*" (Acts 1:4-5). Sometimes for weeks, or even months they would spend much time in the altar of prayer, seeking the Holy Ghost. When the Lord baptized them, there was no doubt about it. Everyone knew the Holy Ghost had "*fallen*" upon the seeker. The "*charismatic reformers*" told the people there was no reason to "*wait,*" "*tarry,*" or "*seek.*" Just "*receive it by faith,*" they instructed the people. "*Take a deep breath, and just start speaking anything that comes into your mind.*" Such instruction was unheard of until less than fifty years ago. You may receive a "*spirit*" through such means, but it will not be the Holy Ghost. I would not be a faithful watchman if I did not tell you so. People who had never been saved began to "*speak in tongues,*" or, "*receive their prayer language.*" One man "*received*" and actually said, "*This charismatic renewal is so good, I believe I will try the 'new birth' next.*" Sad, but true!

“Warnings”

The first "*prophetic*" warning I received from the Lord was on June 21, 1965. I was a young preacher, just twenty-five years old. I was attending a wedding at a "*Catholic*" church. Waiting for the wedding to begin, I sat looking at

the building around me. I saw the “*images*” of the “*saints*” along each outer wall of the auditorium. Above, I saw the pictures depicting the “*stations of the cross.*” I followed them in sequence to the last one, which was of Jesus’ body being placed in the tomb. I looked in vain for the picture of the “*resurrection.*” There was none! I was indignant! I wanted to stand and shout aloud, “*Don’t you know He’s alive?*” Suddenly the Spirit of God spoke to me. I was shocked to hear what He said. “*In the last days, a harlot will arise out of Pentecost that will be more vile in her affections than the Roman Catholic Church of the dark ages.*”

The decade of the sixties was a time of upheaval and drastic change in America. It was a decade that saw the rebellion of the youth against their parents and all established authority. Early in the sixties we saw many young people become total “*drop-outs*” from society. They were called “*beatniks.*” They were probably as close as anything I have seen to what the scriptures called “*children of belial,*” meaning, “*worthless children.*” These were followed by “*the flower children,*” somewhat cleaner in appearance, but given to experimenting with “*mind expanding*” drugs, such as LSD, etc. As the Viet Nam war increased in intensity, they became the “*peaceniks,*” and later what became to be known as the “*hippies.*” During the course of their “*evolution,*” they changed from being totally passive dropouts, to activists that would demonstrate for any cause as long as it was against the established order. They brought in the “*new morality*” which Billy Graham said was the same old “*immorality*” masquerading under a new name. Their total aim in life seemed to be for more drugs, sex, and rebellion against authority. Their motto was “*If it feels good, do it.*” They were “*marked*” by long hair and psychedelic art on their clothes, their cars, and on every wall and building they could find. That generation in America was the “*seeds*” of America’s destruction. Today, straight out of the rebellion of the sixties youth culture, we have thousands of university professors, federal judges, and politicians whose only purpose in life seems to be the total destruction of Christian values in America. The almost daily horrors that are coming against the “*Christians*” in America are a “*gift*” from the rebellion of the sixties.

In July of 1969, I received another “*warning*” in the form of a “*vision*” from the Lord. For brevity I will only say that I saw “*another spirit* (II Corinthians 11:4)” come to the church, pretending to be the Spirit of God, and many received it as the Holy Ghost. The year 1969 also brought the beginning of a move in the “*church*” that many thought was the greatest outpouring of the Spirit since the day of Pentecost. “*Revival*” broke out at Notre Dame College among the Catholics. Many thousands of Catholics were “*swept*” into the “*Charismatic*” movement, with the “*evidence*” of “*speaking in tongues.*” About the same time, thousands of “*hippies*” became interested in “*Jesus.*” They saw him as the ultimate “*peacenik,*” and a “*rebel*” against the established order. He wore sandals, long robes, and, they thought, long hair. By the thousands they “*received Jesus,*” and became known nationally as “*Jesus freaks,*” or, “*The Jesus people.*” Many inner city churches were overwhelmed by vast numbers of them. Some churches totally rejected them on the grounds of their “*appearance,*” while others opened their arms and doors to them. Surely this was an opportunity to reap a harvest for the Lord, but it wasn’t long before it became obvious that something for the most part was very wrong. This was the first “*revival*” to my knowledge that changed the direction of the “*churches*” more than it changed the “*converts.*” It had always been the case in past times of revival to see people “*repent,*” be “*saved,*” and immediately change their appearance, habits, conduct, etc. It was the miracle of a “*new heart,*” and a “*new spirit*” just as God had promised in Ezekiel 36:26-27. This was not the case with the “*Jesus people.*” Maybe it was the sheer numbers that overwhelmed them, but the churches that “*received*” them began to “*conform*” to the image of these “*converts.*” A “*gift*” to the church from the “*Jesus*” movement was longhaired men, common law couples, and a general decline in morals in the church. It had been known that drug addicts, alcoholics, homosexuals, etc, were not only people who Jesus died for, but people who were also yet lost in sin. That is not so today. It seems that everyone is saved if they claim to be saved, as long as they are in a “*counseling program.*” Certainly, the “*wolves*” have destroyed in the flock of God.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

II Peter 2:1

In the early seventies I heard “*faith teachers*” telling the people of God to “*stop praying, and start saying.*” Out of this came the so-called “*name it and claim it*” doctrine. Whatever you want, just “*speak it into existence.*” Positive confession was the order of the day. Incredibly, by the middle nineties, there were those preachers telling the people

to “*stop praying, and start laughing.*” Nevertheless, prayer almost became a thing of the past during the decade of the seventies, and has scarcely returned even today. During this thirty-year period we have lost our nation to the “*pagans,*” chiefly because we brought them into the church itself.

In the early eighties, prosperity became the “*message from heaven,*” according to the “*wolves*” that were now in the pulpits of the churches. They believed God’s greatest will and purpose for man was that we would “*prosper and be in health...*” Covetousness found its place in the church. Jesus had told us to “**take no thought for tomorrow, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink...but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you**” (Matthew 6:31-33). The prosperity message was dedicated to causing the people to “*take thought*” for those things that Jesus said “*take no thought.*”

In the late eighties and early nineties, the message became “*judge not, lest ye be judged.*” The perversion of that truth produced a generation that could not make a moral judgment. Even in the church it seems no one can call sin what it is, SIN. “*Who are we to judge?*” Due to the “*blindness*” that comes from a total lack of moral judgment, unclean spirits have flooded into the church, and into our nation. The word of God tells us that if we can’t judge in the church, we will never be able to judge the nation. America will fall because the “*church*” cannot judge itself.

Unworthy Vehicles

David found out the hard way that a “*new oxcart*” could not carry the “*ark of the covenant*” of God. The only way to carry the “*ark*” was on the shoulders of holy priests of God. David tried to move the ark on a “*new cart,*” the same way the “*heathen*” Philistines had, and it ended in disaster. Not every “*vehicle*” can carry the message or presence of God. Let’s look back to the sixties again. The “*vehicle*” of choice for the “*Jesus people*” to communicate “*Jesus*” to the people was their “*psychedelic art.*” A youth leader of that time tried to bring these things into our church, but I knew at that time, this was not a proper “*vehicle*” to carry the gospel. “*Psychedelic art*” has long since gone by the wayside. Some of the “*Jesus people*” of the sixties have become solid citizens and Christians; of that there is no doubt. Yet, much damage has been done to the church. Many “*new carts*” have been brought in that can never carry the message or presence of God. If you are truly saved, yet are “*offended*” by the things I tell you, it is because you never knew how it was before the “*new carts*” were brought in. I have been in services when holy men and women of God would lift up their voices in praise to the Lord, singing the old hymns, until the glory of God’s presence would fill the house. The saints would weep in the presence of God, and sinners would literally run to the altars in repentance. I saw when “*rock and roll*” came into the churches. It was thought to be a “*vehicle*” to reach the youth, but it will never, ever, bring the presence of God almighty and conviction for sin. Neither will the modern “*rap*” music, nor even the old “*blues.*” They will never be worthy vehicles. The “*strobe lights,*” the “*black lights,*” the “*smoke*” and “*vapors;*” none of these have any place in the house of God, most especially not in the youth or children’s services. Why would we bring the nightclub atmosphere into our churches for our children? Are we so foolish? In many churches, “*entertainment worship*” has become the order of the day. Some have built huge congregations through the means of religious entertainment, but it will never carry the message or presence of God. The church in America is dying for the lack of God’s presence, and most do not even know it. They have substituted “*excitement*” for God’s presence. They have “*learned how*” to “*speak with tongues,*” “*prophecy,*” and “*operate the gifts,*” but in so learning, they have left God behind.

My wife and I went to Israel in 1982 with a small group. There were five from our church, and eleven from another church of a major Pentecostal denomination. I had just met the “*host pastor*” and found him to be dedicated and very sincere. Several days into our tour, he asked me to speak to the group when we visited the place on the Mount of Olives where they believe Jesus stood and “*wept*” over Jerusalem. As I spoke briefly, I was amazed at the powerful anointing God gave to me. When I sat down, there was a hush, no one moving or speaking until the tour guide stood up with tears in his eyes to speak. Several days later the head deacon of the host church asked me to walk with him through Tiberius, by the Sea of Galilee. What he told me left me in amazement. “*I appreciate my church,*” he began, “*because I have learned so much about the things of God. We used to believe we had to wait for the Holy Ghost to come upon us before we could ‘speak in tongues,’*” he said, “*but we have learned that it is our ‘prayer language’ to use at any time. We have learned how to prophecy, and to operate all the ‘gifts of the Spirit.’ We know now that these are our ‘gifts,’ and we can operate them at will.*” He continued, “*The praise and worship in our church is beautiful. All the nine gifts are in operation in every service.*” Then he told me the reason for our

visit. "When you spoke at the Mount of Olives, I felt the Spirit of God for the first time in many years. Will you pray for me? I want His presence with me again." This conversation really took place that day. I was astounded. Here were people who had once known the presence of God. An "angel of light" came to them (it was not the host pastor, but one previous), enlightening them that they "need not wait for to Spirit of God to operate the gifts of God." They were doing it all, and the presence of God was not even with them. How sad this is, because it is not the "exception," it has become the "rule" in most "Spirit filled (?)" churches of today.

Conclusion

All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.

Isaiah 56:9-12

This text is an open invitation for "unclean spirits" to flood into the church and into America while the "watchmen" are asleep. Some may not be "asleep," but even as they have seen the "enemy" creeping into the church, were afraid to "speak." Others are "greedy" and have been "bought" by the promise of "prosperity and riches." Finally, some are "shepherds" that simply do not understand. "They all," Isaiah said, "look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter." If this state continues in the "church," America is doomed.

Awake ye watchmen!! Look around you! There is a "storm" that is "tossing" the people "to and fro!" (Ephesians 4:14-15) It is the "winds of doctrine," the "fad religion" of our generation. Recognize the "sleight of men" and their "cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Wake up and clean house! Speak the truth in love! Rid the "Father's house," which is a "house of prayer (Matthew 21:13)," of all that the enemy has brought in. Shut down the "rock bands." Throw out the strobe lights, the smoke machines, and the black lights, and bring the light of "truth" in. Tell your "youth director" to get a haircut and be an example to the flock for the Lord, and not for rebellion. Get the "social drinkers," the "nicotine users," and the "fad followers" off your platform and out of every position in the church. For the rest, if they "will not pray, they must not stay." Yes, you will offend some. You will lose some, but Jesus "lost some" when He "purged" the Temple (Matthew 21:12-15). Afterwards, the "lame and blind" came in and He healed them. He did not lose the children, as the deceiver would have you think. Notice verse fifteen, "...and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David..." After Jesus "drove out" the merchandisers, the "children" were found in the Temple weeping and worshipping Jesus, the Son of God.

Pastor, if you are still reading this at this point, there is great hope for the future of the church. Before you do any of the above, spend several weeks or a month in the altar, both morning and night, weeping for the souls of God's flock He has given under your charge. You must know that if you do anything "in the flesh," you will end up in a real mess. First, obey God's instruction to humble yourself and pray, and seek His face, and turn from *your* way (II Chronicles 7:14). Seek to be "filled" with the Spirit of God everyday you live. Stay in that altar until it happens. Tarry there until He "endues (clothes)" you with "power from on high." Then, go! He will be the "word" in your mouth, and the "healing" in your hands. He will drive out the enemy, and save the people. You are just a few weeks away from seeing the glory and the power of God

God is still seeking "intercessors." He is seeking for righteous men and women who will weep in the altars and fervently pray. He would have spared Sodom for the sake of ten righteous: He would have spared Jerusalem for the sake of even one "among them" that would "make up the hedge and stand in the gap" before God (Ezekiel 22:30-31). He did spare the children of Israel at Sinai because of Moses' intercession. If you, pastors, and if you, elders, will weep in the altars before God for the welfare of the congregation, God will pour out His Spirit. He will utterly destroy all that "grievous wolves" have brought in and done in the house of God. Perhaps even those we thought to be "wolves" may be delivered from the enemy also.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

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