

“Wolves Dressed as Sheep”

Acts 20:17-38, ESV

INTRODUCTION: In every church, there are wolves dressed as sheep. Paul warned of this reality in his address to the believers in Miletus. Yet, this declaration is not original with Paul; it originated with Jesus (Matt. 7:15). This text is unique in that this is the only one of Paul’s sermons in Acts delivered to Christians.

1). Paul sends word to Ephesus of his desire to gather with the elders (*elders, overseers*) [v. 17].

2). Paul offers a defense of his ministry (v. 18-21).

3). Paul announces his intent to go to Jerusalem (v. 22-27).

4). Paul exhorts the elders to watch over themselves and their flocks (v. 28-31).

- ❖ Pay attention to yourselves and to your flock, of which you are **overseers** by the Holy Spirit (v. 28).
- ❖ Those you shepherd are the church of God, purchased with the **blood** of His Son, Jesus Christ (v. 28).
- ❖ Paul warns that “fierce **wolves**” will come in among you (v. 29), and from among you will arise men who will **pervert**, twist, distort the **truth**, to draw disciples after them (v. 30).
 - These false teachers enter the church to **deceive** members and lead them from the faith/truth.
 - They despise **authority**; distort biblical **doctrines**; twist God’s Word to suit their own ideas.
- ❖ Be alert (v. 31). Compel your people, with great urgency, to follow the **Lord**.

5). Paul bids the Ephesian elders farewell (v. 32-38).

Application: Are YOU a wolf dressed as a sheep?

- 1). Do you **oppose** and are easily offended by biblical truth (2 Tim. 3:8)?
- 2). Do you secretly create dissension and **division** (Rom. 16:17-18)?
- 3). Is there an unwillingness in your life to **submit** to **authority** (2 Ptr. 2:10)?
- 4). Do you **appear** to be godly, but deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5)?
- 5). Do you **deceptively** teach (2 Ptr. 2:1)?