

Protecting from False Teachers

Detailed Outline

Part 4 of 4

XII. Application: Under-Shepherds Have a Divine Mandate to Guard the Flock from Wolves

A. As a parent, I can hardly think of anything that elicits more emotion than a sexual predator.

1. The thought of a molester enticing and deceiving my children for their own sexual pleasure makes me feel emotions that I didn't know I had.
2. Everything inside me wants protect my kids.
3. If I knew they were in danger of being molested, I would do absolutely everything in my power to protect them from the predators.
4. That's the feeling you get when you read this chapter.
5. I remember watching the news last year where they did a study on one particular pedophile who teamed up with his wife, and went to parks, and recorded unsuspecting children. I will never forget the emotion I had hearing about their diabolical and sick ways of exploiting the weak.
6. I can't help but think of Peter and Jesus wanting to guard the little lambs from the wolves.
7. *"Six years ago, Alicia Kozakiewicz says she was just a normal 13-year-old girl. That all changed on New Year's Day 2002. Today, she recounted for Congress how an online sexual predator befriended her in an Internet chat room, then kidnapped her, drove her across state lines and locked her in a cage in his basement, where he beat her, tortured her and raped her." – Matthew Jaffe, ABC News, Oct. 17, 2007*

B. The emotion that we should feel when it comes to protecting our children from that, is the same kind of emotion we should have when we talk about false teachers and false teaching.

1. This doesn't mean that false teachers are beyond repentance, and this doesn't mean child molesters can't receive grace.
2. But what this does mean is that we need to protect ourselves and God's little lambs.

C. This section has three major points: False teachers will be punished, false teachers are arrogant and bold, and false teachers frustrate and mislead people.

"I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears." (Acts 20:29–31)

1. Elders, guard the flock because false teachers are coming!
2. The whole history of the church can be explained with this passage.
 - a) The archenemies of the church are the false teacher and false teaching.
 - b) Acts 20 is the key passage!
3. Elders are to protect the flock!

D. Protecting is the *negative* aspect of eldership and proper shepherding.

1. The New Testament teaches that one of the major aspects of the elders' work is the *protecting*, or the *guarding*, or the *watching ministry*.
2. "Guard the flock," Paul says, and we must be obedient to this command.
3. We must guard the flock!
4. The under-shepherds of the local church are to have a protecting ministry.
5. Part of the overseeing responsibility of the elders is to protect the flock from wolves.

E. This is a qualification for a shepherd-elder.

"He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it." (Titus 1:9)

1. I am amazed at different Christian leaders on the News, or Larry King, who when asked about hell or homosexuality, skirt the issue, or say, "Well, I don't really see that as my job."
2. *"I am frankly amazed and appalled at how many pastors today deliberately shirk this duty. 'It's not for me to criticize what other people are teaching. I just want to be always positive, and we'll let truth and error sort themselves out.' But if you try to do that, you are not fulfilling the responsibility Paul **positively** assigns to every faithful minister . . . No one is a faithful shepherd who refuses to deal decisively with dangers that threaten the flock."*

– Phil Johnson

F. The summary of exhortations on protecting the flock:

1. Be alert (Acts 20:28, 31).
 - a) "Pay careful attention" means to "be on guard" or "pay strict attention" (28).
 - b) It is an imperative verb and implies continuous action.
 - c) The opposite would be to be negligent or inattentive or preoccupied with other matters.
 - d) Bruce Ware spoke at the Bethlehem Baptist Pastor's Conference. That year Bruce was the president of the Evangelical Theological Society.
 - 1) My question: "What's the biggest problem in the [evangelical] church today?"
 - 2) His answer: "Oh, there are many. Pick a doctrine. Pick any doctrine and it is under attack. Like little brush fires. Twenty years ago this was not the case, but

today almost every doctrine is under attack.”

- e) There is a surge of false teaching and aberrant theology.
- f) Among Bible-believing, conservative Christians, twisted doctrines are exploding.

2. Don't be naïve (Acts 20:29–30).

“I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things . . .”

Clear false teaching: theological liberalism, the prosperity gospel, claims that Jesus isn't God, “good works” religion, Mormonism.

- a) There is a lot of talk today about Mormonism and Mitt Romney. I have no problem seeing a Mormon as president. Makes little difference to me. In the words of Luther, “I would rather have a competent Turk than an incompetent Christian.”
- b) But what I DO have a problem with is people like Joel Osteen who this week said that Mormons are brothers in Christ.
- c) I think THAT'S destructive! A bad president can ruin a nation, but a false teacher who distorts Scripture can ruin souls! And I am WAY more concerned about that!

3. Admonish (Acts 20:27, 31).

- a) You protect by admonishing.

“... For three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears.”
(Acts 20:31)

- b) The word is “*noutheteō*,” which means to instruct, admonish, warn, exhort.

XIII. What is True of the Under-Shepherds of Flock, is Also True of the Shepherds in the Home

A. Parents, particularly dads, you have a responsibility to protect your family from wolves.

1. Maybe you have taken precaution and guarded your home from predators? Maybe your home is burglar proof? Maybe you are ready to guard against the wolves with a round of Remington's?
2. Is your home safe in *other* ways?
3. Is there a safeguard of worship in your home?
4. Is there a safeguard of the Word in your home?
5. Is the TV a wolf in sheep's clothing? Is the internet a wolf of sensuality?

B. The parents have a protecting ministry, just like the church does.

1. What is the condition of the little church, your home?
2. Have destructive heresies crept in unnoticed?

C. Specific application for protecting your family:

1. Examine your family.
 - a) Analyze your family. Where is your family vulnerable? Where is your family weak? Where is there trouble?
“Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds . . .”
(Prov. 27:23)
 - b) Shepherds are to do this, but so are parents.
2. Offer good literature to your kids.
 - a) Buy some good biographies. Pay them money to read them!
 - b) Read the book of Proverbs. That was the whole point of Proverbs, that parents would teach it to their kids.
3. Teach and model the Bible to your home.

A church is made up of families. If that family suffers, the church suffers.

“I’ve long thought, as I’ve looked at my parents, that the worst kind of Christian home to grow up in is one where there is large spiritual pretensions but low spiritual performance. The best kind of Christian home to grow up in is where there is low spiritual pretension but quite high spiritual performance because the best stuff is caught, not taught.”
– D. A. Carson