

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE

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SERIES: Philippians (Count It All Joy)

TITLE: Program 15 – Beware Of Dogs!

FRIDAY

OPEN

For every truth there is a lie and you and I need to realize, Beloved, that truth is not going to go unchallenged and that we are in a warfare, and that what the enemy does is he comes along and he plants his seeds. He plants the false among the true in order that he might lead God's sheep astray. You and I need to beware of certain things, and that's what we're going to look at today from the Word of God.

PART ONE

Hello dear student of the Word of God, the one that is hungry to know truth for yourself. I'm so proud of you. We're in Philippians 3, as you know, if you heard our last program. And we are looking at Paul's concern that they are aware of, that they are watching out for three things that he tells them. He says, **"Beware of...dogs. Beware of...evil workers. Beware of the false circumcision."** (Philippians 3:2) And then he says, **"For we are the true circumcision who worship the Spirit of God and glory in Jesus**

Christ and put no confidence in the flesh.” (Philippians 3:3) So when you look at these men, when you look at the dogs. When you look at the evil workers, when the look at the false circumcision, this could be all wrapped up in one person or it could be three different types of persons. But whatever it is, whether it’s all wrapped up and embodied in one person or it’s in three different kinds of people you and I need to keep on being aware because these people have their appetite as their belly, not for God. Now what I’m going to do is before we look at these three, I’m going to go over to Philippians, chapter 3, in verse 17, where he makes this statement:

“Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern that you have in us.” (Philippians 3:17) In other words, we’re the true circumcision. And he’s going to go on and tell you what he is like. He’s going to go on and tell you what his passion is and what his desire is. And we’re going to look at that later, but I wanted to jump to the end of chapter 3, and of course the chapter divisions are man made. But they were made in this book according to the flow of thought and they’ve done a good job on them in this particular book. And so he brings it to a conclusion and he says, **“You join in following my example,”** and he says, **“observe those who walk according to the pattern that you have in us. For many walk, of whom I have often told you.” (Philippians 3:117-18a)** I have told you this before. I have kept telling you this. I am telling you again, beware, beware, beware. He says, **“I have often told you and now tell you even weeping,”** even weeping. He says, **“As I write I am weeping because they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, whose glory is...their shame.” (Philippians 3:17-19a)** Now remember, Paul is set on the glory of Jesus Christ, but these people, their glory is their shame, **“who set their minds on earthly things.” (Philippians 3:19b)** Now once again there’s that word minds and you’ve got to mark it. You’ve got to put an A over it. And so he says they “set their minds on earthly things.” So we have some additional clues. Now having these clues I want us to see who are dogs? What are they like? Who are evil workers? Who are the false circumcision? So that we can

understand, so that we can look at Paul's pattern and look at Paul's example and know that if these people do not match up to his example then you be careful. You don't follow them. You don't get near them because he's saying that they are walking in the wrong way and because they are they will lead you astray. They are very destructive in what they teach, and yet you don't know it, unless you know what to look for. And he says, **"...They're enemies of the cross of Christ."** (Philippians 3:18b) I want you to remember that as we look at these important things. Well first of all, who are the dogs? When we think of dogs we think of turning on the Animal Channel or whatever it is and watching the dog shows and watching all those beautiful groomed dogs that are so well behaved. But in, in Jesus' day and in Paul's day, dogs weren't like they are today. They weren't the wonderful, wonderful pets. He's talking about scavengers. He's talking about these dogs that menaced a city, that would get into the garbage and in the trash and eat the filth and be vicious in a sense in that they would come after you if you had something in your hand and they wanted it they would come after you. Now when he says this, we can go back to Isaiah 56:11. And what you want to do is you want to write down these cross-references and then later, after the program you may want to take a pencil and write them right in your Bible next to these verses, because then if you go to show someone else you'll have the verses right there. In Isaiah chapter 56, verse 11, and he's talking about the faults. And he's talking about blind watchmen in verse 10, They're knowing nothing, **"all of them mute dogs unable to bark."** In other words, they don't have anything to say. **"And dreamers lying down who love to slumber."** And then he says in verse 11, **"And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. They are shepherds who have no understanding."** (Isaiah 56:10-11a) In other words, here are people that are dogs that are shepherding others and they don't have any understanding of the truth. You watch, and a lot of times what you will see is you'll see one teacher pick up the message of another teacher and there will be waves of things that are hot, waves of things about health or prosperity or new insights and revelations from God. And I just want to say, Beloved, check

out every revelation according to the Word of God. The problem is we rather hear those than we would hear the Word. And these word are God's word. So you need to be careful. It says, **"...They have turned to their own way...."** Now listen. **"...Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one. 'Come,' they say, 'let us get wine. Let us drink heavily of strong drink and tomorrow will be like today, only more so.'"** (Isaiah 57:11b-12) In other words, it's going to be wonderful today. It's going to be wonderful tomorrow and everything's going to continue as it is, and they are ignorant of what is happening in the times. So when we look at dogs, they're defined by God in the book of Isaiah as greedy. They are defined as having no understanding. They are described as going after unjust gain. These are the dogs. All right now, if they are greedy, if they're going after unjust gain then it makes you think automatically of the false teachers, because remember, they're shepherds with no understanding. So go to 2 Peter chapter 2. Now 2 Peter chapter 2 and the book of Jude are very, very similar. And what is so interesting is if you are reading through the Word of God, by the time you get to 2 Peter you're getting near the end of the book. By the time you get to Jude you're getting to the book that is just before the book of Revelation. And so it's like God is closing out His message, and in Revelation He closes it out with His judgment upon the world of the ungodly. And as He closes it out He wants us to remember something. He wants us to beware, beware, beware. Now if you missed the last program beware is in the present tense. It means keep on being aware. Keep on watching. Keep on observing. Keep on looking out for. You're to have your antennas up. And some people think well it's just gracious to accept anything that is taught. It may seem gracious and it may be gracious in the society in which we live and in the culture in which we live, but it's not biblical. And what we have to remember is what is gracious in the culture is not always biblical, and we have to be biblical. And that's why this program, Precepts for Life, is here and has been raised up by God to take you through the Bible so that through His precepts you get understanding and you hate every false way. It's not here for you to believe what I'm saying. That's why we have a study guide. That's why we teach

you how to study the Bible for yourself. That's why we recommend that you get the New Inductive Study Bible that does not tell you what to believe, but how to discover truth for yourself. Well, he says in 2 Peter chapter 2, **"...False prophets also arose among the people just as there will be false teachers among you who will secretly introduce destructive heresies....,"** destructive heresies. This is why he's saying beware, beware, cause they come with **"...destructive heresies, even denying the Master who brought them and will bring upon themselves swift destruction."** He says, **"Many will follow their sensuality and because of them the way of truth will be maligned."** (v. 2) It says, **"In their greed they will exploit you with false words. In their greed they will exploit you with false words...."** (2 Peter 2:1-3a) They will teach you things and get you to respond in order to get an offering, in order to get more money. Now listen, every one of us that's on radio needs money to be on radio. It takes money for them to run the television stations and the radio stations. And it takes money for us to produce programs and it takes money for us to buy airtime. And so money is necessary. But you ought to give because God is leading you to give. You don't give in order to get. You don't give in order to gain because then you've lost your focus, because then your focus is you instead of your focus being Jesus Christ. So greed is a characteristic of the dogs as we saw. Now we'll see more when we come back right after this important announcement.

PART TWO

Welcome back, Beloved. Isn't truth liberating? Do you realize that when you're studying along in the Word of God that you are fulfilling, that you're an answer to Jesus' prayer because Jesus prayed just before He went to the Garden of Gethsemane. And this is what He prayed: **"Father, I don't ask You to take them out of the world, but I ask You to keep them from the evil one."** (John 17:15) This is in John 17 if you want to find out where it is. In John 17:17 He says, **"Father, sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth."** (John 17:17) And Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and

the truth shall set you free.” It sets you free from a lie. It sets you free from the power of Satan. It sets you free from deception. Isn’t that wonderful! Well let’s go back to 2 Peter, chapter 2. Remember he is saying, “Keep on being aware of dogs.” Remember in Isaiah we saw that dogs are greedy, that they go after unjust, unfair gain. We saw in 2 Peter, chapter 2 that there is a warning of false teachers. We saw in the program before this that Paul was concerned and he told the elders at Ephesus to beware of these wolves that are going to come in and seek to lead the flock of God, the people of God astray. And now he’s telling us again. And as we drop down now, I just want show you one other thing because so many times we think you know I’m not sure that’s right. And then we think, well who am I to say that’s not right? Listen you’re a child of God. You have the Spirit of God and you have the Word of God. The Spirit of God becomes your teacher of the Word of God. You have the mind of Christ. The way you know that you’re thinking properly is when you’re thinking according to the Word of God. God expects you to know truth for yourself, and He wants you to understand that there are false teachers. And it says, **“In their greed,”** of 2 Peter 2:3, **“they will exploit you with false words. Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.”** (2 Peter 2:3) God is saying, “Hey, I’m God and eventually I’m going to deal with them. Eventually I’m going to deal with them.” You say, “Well doesn’t He deal with them now? Why doesn’t He wipe them out right now?” Because you know what? They’re left to test you. If you go through the Old Testament you’ll see that certain things happen to people. Like I think about Hezekiah and when the envoys from Babylon came. They came to test Hezekiah to see if he would believe God or if he would believe somebody that was wrong. And so God puts us in tests. And He expects us to pass the tests and He gives us the Book. It’s an open book test. And He gives us the open book, which is the Bible so that we can study it, so that we can pass the exam and we can pass it with flying colors. All right now, let’s go back to 2 Peter chapter 2 and this is what he says in verse 15: **“Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam....”** Balaam was an Old

Testament prophet. **“...The son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.” (2 Peter 2:15)** In other words, Balak promised to give Balaam all this money if he would prophesy against the children of God, and Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness. And he goes on to say, **“But he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey...,”** a donkey that couldn’t speak spoke, **“...speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.” (2 Peter 2:16)** When the prophet was striding along on his donkey, all of a sudden the donkey ran into the side of the mountain or the hill and he says, “You stupid donkey.” And the donkey turned around and talked to him, said, “I’m not the one that’s stupid. I’m trying to stop you from going your way, because God is going to get you if you don’t listen.” So he goes on to say, **“These are springs without water....”** In other words, they’re offering you things but there’s no water in it. They are **“...mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. For speaking out arrogant words of vanity. They entice...,”** now watch, **“...by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error.” (2 Peter 2:17-18)** In other words, they come in after the flock and they’re enticing by their sensuality. Do you realize what I’m doing with you right now? Let me stop and explain it. We have gone from Philippians 3 where it says in verse 2, “Keep on being aware of dogs,” okay. We have gone from there to Isaiah to get a description of dogs, and he tells us that they are greedy. He tells us that they are without understanding. He tells us that they go after unjust, unrighteous gain. All right, so what we’re doing now is we’re comparing Scripture with Scripture. We’re letting Scripture interpret Scripture. And the best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture. Why? Because God never contradicts Himself. And so when we want to understand a passage we need to go to other passages to find out what God says. So we took the word dogs, we went back to Isaiah where dogs are mentioned. We got the characteristics of dogs. Now we’ve gone to 2 Peter. He does not call them dogs, but he’s talking about their greed. He’s talking about their sensuality. Now watch. He says, **“Promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption....”** It says,

“...For by what a man is overcome he’s enslaved.” (2 Peter 2:19) In other words, these people are corrupt by their fleshly appetites. They are corrupt because as we saw in Philippians, chapter 3, they are enemies of the cross. You see the cross brings me to the point of death to this world. **“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” (Galatians 2:20)** I’m in the world, but I’m not of the world because I’m crucified to the world. And I’ve crucified my flesh with all of its lusts. These are people that have confidence in the flesh. Well watch what it says about them. **“For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...” (2 Peter 2:20a)** In other words, they have some understanding. **“...They are again entangled in them and overcome the last state for them is worse than the first.”** It says, **“It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than having known it to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb, ‘a dog returns to his own vomit.’” (2 Peter 2:20b-22)** In other words, these false teachers are like these dogs that you need to beware of, because what they have done is they have returned to their own vomit. They’re like a sow after washing returns to wallowing in the mire. So God’s concern for us is that we understand the truth of Scriptures. Now when we come to the next to last book in the Bible, when we come to Jude, this is what we see. In the book of Jude he tells us in this one chapter, he says, **“...Certain persons have crept in unnoticed who were long before marked out for condemnation, ungodly persons who turned the grace of our God into licentiousness and denied our only Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” (Jude 1:4)** Licentiousness means that there’s no moral restraint, that there are no absolutes, that black is not black and white is not white; it is gray. Licentiousness means that you can live any way you want to live. Licentiousness means you’re going after the flesh. So God warns us that they’re creeping in among us. That’s why, Beloved, you must know the scriptures. They’re precepts for life.