

# Beware of Dogs

*Book of Isaiah*

By Ken Wimer

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Text:** Isaiah 56:9-12

**Preached on:** Sunday, September 9, 2012

## **Shreveport Grace Church**

2970 Baird Road

Shreveport, LA 71118

**Website:** [www.shrevegrace.org](http://www.shrevegrace.org)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/shreveportgracech](http://www.sermonaudio.com/shreveportgracech)

From Philippians chapter three and there Paul wrote even in his day:

“Beware of dogs... beware of the circumcision.”<sup>1</sup>

And so clearly this message is a warning for us to beware of any who pretend to represent God, represent Christ in their leadership roles or as preachers and yet in reality are the contrary. So here I verse nine of Isaiah 56:

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.<sup>2</sup>

So here, as we often find in God's Word, a transition. If you remember the previous verses that we looked at last time, brother Isaiah comforting the Lord's people with the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and looking forward to that time when Christ would lay down his life and redeem his people as he did. But now passes to warning if you will, words of reproof, words of conviction and, really, as we would look at the next few chapters this is going to be the emphasis. You see, the gospel is a double edged sword. Yes, it is a message of good news for those who are the Lord's, but at the same time it is a message of warning to any that stand outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. And for one to faithfully declare this Word just as it is written here, you are going to get that.

I know people in this generation don't want to hear any bad news. As one preacher said when a journalist interviewed him, “Why don't you ever mention sin in your preaching?” He says, “Because I try to keep it positive.”

---

<sup>1</sup> Philippians 3:2.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 56:9-12.

Well, that would be like a doctor trying to make a patient comfortable who is dying of a terminal illness and just turning of the air conditioner or turning on the music to give him little bit of help to be comfortable, but never really dealing with the terminal illness. Sadly there are many even at this hour that are meeting around the world that that is all the preachers are doing, pacifying and making them feel better about themselves so that when they go out for a Sunday lunch they are not having heartburn over the message. We need some heartburn. I am talking about where the Spirit of God would be pleased to deal in these hearts and show us our desperate need for Christ and to cry give me Christ or I die. But there are many as Isaiah even in his day described as dogs that slumber. As it says, dumb dogs.

We will get back to this, but did you ever try to raise a watch dog that barks at everything except for the thief coming in the back yard? That is a dumb dog. It howls at the moon. It keeps people up, but, you know, when a thief breaks in you are thinking, where was the dog? That is how Isaiah describes them.

“His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.”<sup>3</sup>

So there is a lot here that we want to look at, but in verse nine the first thing that we see here is how the Lord has purposed judgment. Again, this is not a word that men come to worship to want to hear, but it is so. The Lord has purposed judgment here described as:

“All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.”<sup>4</sup>

Now Isaiah may well have been referring to the impending judgment that the Lord would bring on that nation. And, again, as you look at the context, for what reason for these very religious leaders that trifled with the glory and honor of God, that did not instruct the people to the honor and glory of God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so the Lord here is warning them of impending judgment. It could well refer to that particular era. But we know also it could refer to even the generation that our Lord himself faced, because in the context the verses previous that is what we saw in verse seven and eight, how the Lord through the work of the Lord Jesus Christ would gather unto himself a people. You can read it there in verse seven.

“Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”<sup>5</sup>

And we saw that all people meant Jew and Gentile.

“The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.”<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 56:10.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 56:9.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 56:7.

Even as Christ said in John 10:

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring.”<sup>7</sup>

So the context that Isaiah writes of here would be forward looking even to the time of Christ coming to this earth. And what did he face? Well, the same sort of religious leaders and dogs, blind leaders of the blind that were in the Isaiah. Nothing has changed. We have the same thing today. And what sort of impending judgment was there in Christ's day? Well, he warned them, because the temple at that time had been rebuilt. Here Isaiah predicted its destruction. It was destroyed. They spent 70 years in captivity and then it was rebuilt. And now enters Christ into that temple. He is the fulfillment of all of those things. And yet who was it that turned thumbs down on our Lord Jesus Christ? Well, it was the religious leaders of his day.

And man by nature does not change. Even given millennia, he will be the same unless the Lord is pleased to open his eyes.

You stop and think about the multitudes of institutions today where preachers are trained and everybody is all excited. Just look at all the numbers of Bible institutes, of seminaries, colleges and you think about the hundreds of thousands of people that are graduated every year coming out into the world and most that you would talk to would say that is a good thing. We are flooding the world with the gospel.

Well, dear friends, it is not the gospel. And I got myself in trouble in England one time when I was preaching a number of years ago. The preacher become very offended that I would stand up in his meeting and say this and the problem was that he thought it was his meeting. But I told him you could shut down 99.999 percent of what goes on in the name of Christianity today and it would not affect one whit the work of God as far as truth is concerned. And I still believe that. There are a lot of people that are being sent out, but they are nothing but proselyte, proselytizers that go out and as Christ said of them, once they have crossed land and sea they make one twice fold the child of the devil that they were before. There is no greater blindness than false profession, people thinking that they are the Lord's based on something other than the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, exclusively.

And so Isaiah faced it. Our Lord faced it. You think about where the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ was plotted. It was in the synagogues. It was in these religious centers. Where do the greatest number of God haters meet today? It is not in the bars and the pool halls. It is in places of worship. If you don't believe it—and I have threatened to do this many times. Sometimes I am out driving and I see a parking lot full of... I have often thought, what if I went in there and most of these places give opportunity to people to stand up and give a testimony. And I thought, you know, what if I went in there just like our Lord did, went in the synagogues and given an opportunity to speak stood up and for

---

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 56:8.

<sup>7</sup> John 10:16.

five or 10 minutes did nothing but point out this Word and his gospel and who he is and what he came to do. How long do you think they would give me to speak? They would do just like they did with our Lord. They would run you out. Who are you to think that you should come in here and talk in such a manner? But that is the nature of religion. And as I said, some of the worst God haters are those that meet supposedly in the name of Christ. So it is a time to weigh our own hearts before the Lord.

But the Lord purposed. And I would just give you these references, because I want to stay here, but you can look at what our Lord said about his generation and what the purposed to do in the destruction of Jerusalem, particularly in Luke chapter 17 and then also over in Luke 27 if you just take the time or Luke 21, I am sorry. Luke 17 verses 26 and 27, Luke 21. Read those. He describes in his day these beasts:

“All ye beasts of the field, come to devour, yea, all ye beasts in the forest.”<sup>8</sup>

He is not talking about their literal beasts, but he is talking about him giving people over to judgment and destroying them.

Where I want us to focus is in the rest of these verses, verse 10 through 12. And that is the reason why these judgments are given. I have said it many times and I can't help but repeat it here, because it is in front of us. The reason that the Lord destroys a nation is not because politically it is either left or right. The reason the Lord brings a nation down as you read in Scripture, is because of false worship. And I marvel at the patience of the Lord even with regard to our nation, political rhetoric aside, even if your candidate gets into office, conservative or liberal. These are things the Lord puts up. The Lord sets down. But there is an underlying reason that if the Lord were ever to destroy this nation and to bring it down it would have to be due to the way we worship. But we live among people that don't even consider that to be an issue. That is not for many the issue. But you think about how many places of worship, number one, have never been founded on the gospel. You could trace their origins all the way back to Cain, the works of Cain, because there really are only two particular religions in the world regardless of the number of denominations. It is either of Cain or it is of Abel. They either worship God according to that blood sacrifice alone, that God has accepted, the death of his Son by which sinners stand righteous before him, or they come as Cain with the works of their hands. That is it. I don't care what title or denomination is on a building or an organization. It means nothing. It doesn't even mean anything to have the word sovereign grace on it. I have sat through many a meeting and scratched my head and thought, why do they even have the word grace in here? It has nothing to do with the grace of God.

Do you realize any grace with mixture is not grace? And so much of grace preaching is just that. But a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Men will take grace. And let's just throw in just a little experience of man here just to keep this practical. You know, there it goes, in the soup. Start stirring it. Well, maybe we need a little more. And the next thing you know there is poison in the pot. There was poison in the pot from the very thought of either adding to or taking from what this Word has to say about how God saves sinners.

---

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 56:9.

And the word that most people—and I will say even grace preachers—they detest and they will get angry and upset with you is when you say alone. Christ alone is sacrificed exclusively, the single, solitary work of Christ alone is either all my righteousness or I have none. There is where you see deviation. Listen to people carefully. Listen to these supposed watchmen that Isaiah calls here blind.

You know, a blind person physically might have a number of senses about them, but there is one problem. They can't see. And so therefore they cannot aptly describe for you, they can guess. They can take a stab at some things, but they cannot aptly describe for you what is true, because they are blind. They get a sense about it, but often those senses are wrong. And so these are the reasons. This is the reason here that our Lord through Isaiah declares these warnings. What were the reasons for these judgments?

Well, the shepherds who should have been the watchmen of the flock and to beware of beasts of prey coming in to keep them off, protect the sheep, were actually the problem. They were treacherous. They were careless. They weren't minding the business of the sheep or caring for them. They were preying on them and so that is what Isaiah addresses here. His watchmen are blind.

When it says that you notice:

“His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant.”<sup>9</sup>

Let's just state it as it is. They are lost. They are lost. This is a shock to many people, because the preacher looks like somebody you could trust. They have got the Bible open and they are telling people to turn in the Word. And they are praying. Maybe even from the standpoint of morality there has never been anybody in their eyes more moral and upright than such a one and yet lost. That is how Isaiah describes them here. And if lost, then utterly unfit to be where they are. That adds to their condemnation, the fact that they would dare stand up and open their mouth and speak for Christ and yet all that is within is darkness.

If you look over, keep your hand here, but look over in Matthew chapter 15. Again, this is the generation which our Lord faced and which we face today. Nothing has changed. In Matthew chapter 15 the Lord addressed her the hypocrisy of the people, much as in Isaiah's day. In fact, he quotes from Isaiah. You can see in verse seven:

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.<sup>10</sup>

That is what it is to be lost, is to have a heart that is far from the Lord, in other words, dead.

---

<sup>9</sup> Isaiah 56:10.

<sup>10</sup> Mathew 15:7.

Verse nine.

“But in vain they do worship me.”<sup>11</sup>

People look at it and think, well, we had good music today. Wasn't that a powerful singing time? People get all fuzzy feeling about their times of worship. If they walk away feeling better than they think, well we have had a good worship service, haven't we? But the Lord said:

“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”<sup>12</sup>

That is the fundamental error.

“...teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”<sup>13</sup>

It is amazing how people like to be told what to do. As much as they talk about freedom, they want you to tell them the standards so that they can go out and try to live up to it and come back feeling good about it. It is like a man in Africa one time after he heard me about two or three times, he said, “Can't you just make this simple? Give us a list and just let me know what it is we need to do.”

And I told him. I said, “If...” I took the Bible. I showed him this Bible. I said, “If you set out right now to try to obey every bit of commandment that is in this book you would still be condemned. You would be condemned from the get go, because the trial is over.”

When Adam fell we all fell in him. But men still blind leaders of the blind will invite people to come so that they can teach them principles of living, pursuing holiness, how to have a happy marriage, how to raise your children in a godly way and people will just flock to hear them.

But do you know what? And I am telling this as straight as I can from this word.

“But in vain they do worship me.”<sup>14</sup>

Because that is not what it is about. If the truth were known, we would all have to confess what a failure each one of us is before a holy God. Quit talking about having raised your children in a right way or being a good husband or a wife. There is not a one of us in this room that can raise his hand and give testimony to that. And if that were the standard upon which God would deal with us, he would have... we would split hell wide open. But that is what people come to hear.

I ought to do a little better next time.

---

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 15:9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

Well, here in verse 10 he says:

And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:  
Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh  
out of the mouth, this defileth a man.<sup>15</sup>

All the while men are teaching others to clean up the outside, clean up your act, turn over a new leaf, get better at holy living, however, they put it, it is nauseating, because the problem isn't on the outside. According to what the Lord says here it is not what goes into this body that defiles a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth. This defiles the man. This is one of those testimonies that I was talking about of you could go into some of these meeting places and stand up for 10 minute and just read this. How long has it taken me seven minutes just to talk about this? You would have a fight on your hands.

And you can see the disciples, verse 12:

“Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?”<sup>16</sup>

Well, they ought to be offended. Not with Christ, but they ought to be concerned about their own manner standing in a way that opposes the very glory of Christ. But what did the Lord say?

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.<sup>17</sup>

Well, that is why we meet apart. That is why we meet here at this corner of Baird Road and Macadew. I know some people have kind of criticized us and said, “Well, why don't you just go into these places and try to change them?” It is because the Lord said leave them alone. You cannot mix places of worship. You can't mix grace and works. This matter of worship requires us to come unto God just as he has declared in this Word. And I don't care whether the parking lot is full or not. The Lord said where two or three are gathered in my name there I am in their midst. And I am thankful to be associated with the two or three. This is how the Lord has taught me.

You know, it is not for lack of talent or ability to preach or to carry on programs like these other congregations. But do you know what? I am dead to that. The Lord has caused me to be dead to that, thankfully so, separated me out. And I am thankful if it is the Lord whose feet I lay at and do nothing but cry unto him as a needy sinner and thank him for that work that he has accomplished. I thank him every day that he has been merciful to such a sinner as I. And you should be thankful if the Lord has so taught you.

---

<sup>15</sup> Mathew 15:10-11.

<sup>16</sup> Matthew 15:12.

<sup>17</sup> Matthew 15:13-14.

That is where his blessing is. It is not in the multitudes. It is not in the numbers. It is not in the greatness of the preacher or their eloquence. We all know that from listening to different men. They might be eloquent and still be telling you a bald faced lie. In fact, the more eloquent they are the more likely they are. There is something wrong.

But come back here to Isaiah 56. These are the ones here that the Lord caused Isaiah to describe as dogs. They were blind watchmen. They could not discern the danger and therefore the Lord describes them here as dumb dogs. As I mentioned, a dumb dog is one that doesn't give warning when it is supposed to. You know, the wolf is praying on the sheep but the dog lays there as if all is well. And that is how the Lord describes these dogs.

Now there is two extremes. There are some that fiddle while Rome burns. Men's souls are in grave danger. And yet it is all about music. It is all about the programs it is all about making people feel better about themselves. That is one dog. And you notice there is two types of dogs that are described here in verse 10. You have the dumb dog and I would say that describes the preacher so many that we have run into that say, you know, I just don't want to stir things up. If I preach like that then, you know, it might split the congregation. And so they literally are dumb. They shut their mouth to declaring anything of substance that sinners need to hear, particularly with regard to the glory of Christ and his work accomplished. They are dumb. Dumb means silent. They preach and raise their voices on issues that don't matter and yet they are silent on those things that are vital to men's souls.

One old preacher said, "If I raise my voice and as a general leading an army in every area and cry, 'forward,' and command the troops to go forward in every area except for that one area where the enemy is attacking, then I have failed that army. I have failed my people. And I believe that is who is described here.

But, secondly, do you notice in verse 11.

"Yeah, they are greedy dogs, which can never have enough."<sup>18</sup>

So you have got dumb dogs in verse 10 and then you have got greedy dogs. And so when we say that beware of dogs, there are different kinds of dogs, the dumb dogs, but the greedy dogs. Greedy dogs are those as Bob read in Philippians chapter three that barked at God's prophets, bit on them and troubled the sheep. See, there are some that are lulled to sleep but there is others that would trouble the sheep. And they care only as it is described here for themselves.

"...they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter."<sup>19</sup>

I have had preachers sitting around a cup of coffee tell me, "If I tried to preach like you do," and they have told me, "I am not saying it is not true and I am to saying I don't see it

---

<sup>18</sup> Isaiah 56:11.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



in the Word as you do, but if I tried to stand up and preach that way, I would be out on the street. And I have got to be able to provide for my family, et cetera.” Those are greedy dogs. They care more for their own well being than they do for the glory of Christ alone.

Over in Philippians three, if you will come back here Philippians chapter three there is nothing new under the sun. Isaiah was led of the Spirit to write this in his day. Fast forward several hundred years later, Paul’s day and Philippians chapter three he says in verse 17:

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ...<sup>20</sup>

To be an enemy of the cross of Christ doesn’t necessary mean that a preacher stands up and necessarily preaches against it. To be an enemy of the cross of Christ is just simply not to preach it. Be silent about it. Or to preach it in such a way as not to get people upset. And I have had some people recommend messages to me to listen to and they have said, “Listen to this one. It sounds like what he is saying is pretty good.”

Well, if all you listen to is what he said, you might come away thinking, well, that, you know... I don’t see anything wrong with that. But, dear friends, it is not what he said. It is what he didn’t say. And you get the sense they are holding back. They are not declaring the whole counsel of God in the sense of telling people in black and white what these Scriptures say.

If I determine today so as not to get people upset just to stand up here and tell you that Christ died for sinners, would I be wrong in just saying that much? Well, I would say if that is all I say, yes, I would be wrong, because that is not what the Scriptures say. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul said that the gospel is how that Christ died, what, according to the Scriptures.

I can avoid offense if all I do is just say Christ died for sinners. And that is what you need to believe and that is it. Let’s don’t make it any narrower than that. Well, you still have to describe who that Christ is. You still have to describe what that death accomplished. And you still have to describe what it is to be a sinner. But there are a lot of preachers that won’t do it and they are enemies of the cross. And people that follow it is the blind leading the blind and, as it says, both fall into the ditch and perish. But there is the problem right there, verse 19.

“...Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Philippians 3:17-18.

<sup>21</sup> Philippians 3:19.

In other words, they care more about themselves than they do the glory of Christ. That is how they are described here by Isaiah, but wrapping this up in Isaiah 56 and verse 12.

How is it that they entice so many? Well, verse 12 says:

“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.”<sup>22</sup>

In other words, health, wealth and prosperity. Don't worry about your soul. If you made that decision for Jesus you are good. You are as good for heaven as your own name. Believe it. Drive the stake today. And come on. Let's just ... let's have a good time. We have got people drunk on the wine of profession, of free willism, of works, of will worship. In other words, drunk on themselves. You know, that is why most people go out and keep drinking. They want to feel better about themselves. That is why they can hardly wait to get out the door on a Friday afternoon and hit the bar over the weekend. They want to forget all this stuff. Let's just go out and eat, drink and be merry.

Well, sooner or later that is going to wear off and you still have to deal with reality. And I fear that that is how many people approach a holy God. It is not based upon truth. It is based upon somebody making them feel better about themselves and encourage him to just keep doing, keep working, keep striving, but in the end it is destruction.

Oh to have faithful preachers. You know, if the Lord takes away our economy, so be it. If he brings this nation into difficult, more difficult times with unrest, so be it, but, you know, the one thing that I pray that would never be removed and that would be the faithful voice, gospel, someone that would be faithful to continue to declare Christ and him crucified come what may.

You know, I am not going to be here forever. But I pray that anybody that stands in this pulpit, that would be the one message that would be declared, Christ and him crucified and be faithful to your souls, because nothing else matters. Nothing. And may the Lord grant us hearts to love him, love his gospel, love his work completed, that single solitary work of Christ above our own lives. If he has so blessed us in this day and all of that is going around in this world, giving us a place right here, as simple as it may seem to people driving by, but I thank God for this place and I thank God for you, that he continues to draw back week in and week out for one purpose and that is to feed on this bread of life. And I am thankful if, indeed, he has done that work of grace in your hearts.

---

<sup>22</sup> Isaiah 56:3.