

10 Keys to Pastoring and Surviving Ministry

by Shane Idleman

This sermon focuses on providing encouragement and guidance for pastors in leadership roles, addressing the challenges they face in a culture that often rejects truth and the importance of prioritizing family life. The speaker shares 10 key principles for pastors to thrive and finish strong, emphasizing the need for humility, mutual submission, and a contrite heart before God.

Scripture: Psalm 51:17, Proverbs 15:22, 1 Peter 5:2, James 4:10, Philippians 2:3, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Proverbs 16:9, Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:12, Matthew 23:12

Topics: "Pastoral Leadership", "Family Prioritization"

Description

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Transcript

Alright, everyone, welcome to this episode of Pastors Unplugged. I don't do this one as often, but it's encouraging those in pastoral leadership. And as many of you know, especially if you're in leadership, you know, that's even getting more challenging.

Not only do we live in a culture that they don't want to hear the truth, everyone's triggered by the truth. And you can't offend, you can't upset. People pop churches like they're going through a buffet line at a restaurant every week trying to pop here, pop there, check this out here, check this out there.

You offended me. You hurt me. And then just dealing with all the ramifications of pastoring can be challenging.

So I want to cover a couple things. We're actually going to celebrate our 14th year of church planting this coming year. And then about 20, I would say 20 years in the ministry, because I used to speak and write and travel before pastoring the church.

I'm just going to share with you 10 keys to pastoring and surviving. I've got my list here to make sure I stay on track. 10 keys to not only pastoring, but surviving, because I truly believe we want to finish strong.

And I'm going to actually bring the last 10 keys in at the end, elaborate a little bit. But I want to share some things with you that if I could go back and change, I would change ASAP. And also maybe those who are just getting started, you're going to want to know this.

I would commit a lot of this to memory or write it down. Maybe some of you have fallen in this area, you need to get back up. Maybe some of you are close to that cliff and you need to repent and get back on track.

But anyway, I'm really hoping these will help. Let's look at number one I want to talk about, which I don't know how I would necessarily change it. But you've got to make sure that your family life is the priority.

I came from a hardworking atmosphere, background. And so if you take that into the ministry, you're following hard after God, you're serving, you're in the ministry and your family ultimately does suffer. So you have to make sure, okay, God is my foundation and the health and strength of my family and my marriage.

That is actually the priority. I don't want the kids to feel I'm putting church first. They will from time to time, but you want to make sure that, okay, how is the family growing spiritually? Maybe there's challenges, but am I at least handling them spiritually in a spiritual way? And then from that foundation of Christ at the bottom, then the family, then I believe you can lead the church even more effectively.

Also, I would probably change how I deal or dealt with members of the church, because remember as pastors, we're growing too. Even if you've got 50 years of ministry, you're growing and you're learning through this whole process. So people have to remember the pastor is also growing and learning.

They are called, many are not called, and that's the problem. But those who are called by God, God is also using the ministry to grow them and to shape them and to mature them into who they need to be. And so that's why mutual submission is so important.

We submit to the needs of the congregation above my needs often, and the congregation submits to the leadership of the church, the elder board, and things like that. So mutual submission, ultimately we're all submitting to Christ. So here's a couple of things I want to share with you, and I'm going to get to the 10 key points summed up that will be very helpful.

I'll try to remember to put these in the description on YouTube or Rumble. I would definitely follow us on Rumble because I don't know how long we'll be here on YouTube. But a key verse for me is, and I didn't write down the reference, I just thought that this morning, let us not be weary in well-doing for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

As a pastor, you know, and there's the majority of us don't have a million followers on different platforms and, you know, we don't have 100,000 views on YouTube and we're not the superstar rock star type pastor. And I, you know, although God does raise up some people with that prophetic voice, that motivational voice, they're just gifted and God will raise them up. But their heart is not to be that celebrity type pastor.

But most of us are not, you know, in that arena. And so we're not going to get the accolades, we're not going to get millions of shares. We're just there to serve people.

And you have to remember that God is more concerned with faithfulness than numbers. So you can have a church of 50 people and be just as effective, if not more so, than a megachurch whose pastor has went woke. That pastor needs to wake up and you are being more faithful to God, even though, you know, people don't see our fruit all the time.

People aren't paying attention. We get walked on, we get ridiculed, we get slandered. We're not supposed to get weary as we're doing this job.

And so I can look back now as we started out what would be considered a small church. And then a couple of years later, we became a medium-sized church. And a couple of years later, we became a large church.

And you stay in the large church setting until I think you're around 2,000 people. Then they say, you know, that's when you get megachurch status. And there's just, you know, again, God blesses churches to be big.

God blesses churches even when they're small. We just got to be faithful in what we're doing. So it's not really tied in here, but I just thought of it.

If you can get rid of the numbers mentality, likes, followers, who's watching, how many videos have I done, or the feedback, our church. Man, I mean, just this Sunday, just to give you an idea, and God broke this out of me years ago, but this Sunday, our attendance was down 150 people from last Sunday. So it's like, well, I mean, and I don't count, I don't look, but they kind of send me here's the numbers and the time change might have played a role in it.

But it's like, you know what, I'm going to show up whether there's 50 or 500 or 5,000. Lord, you've called me to do this. And so once you can just deal with that, ministry is so much, so much easier because we're focusing on faithfulness, not on the multitude of numbers and people.

And again, I want to reiterate, there's nothing wrong with reaching a lot of people. God opened the door for our sermons, my sermons to get on the radio networks. And we got about 80 different stations now over the United States, it's been estimated there's about 150,000 people listening to the sermons every day.

So that's encouraging to see how far God brought us. But whether, you know, we go off the radio or not, I still have to do what I'm called to do. So a couple quick things, love and humility, love and humility, here we go.

Love and humility are just as important as the truth, okay? Notice I didn't say more, notice I didn't say less. I believe Jesus was full of grace and truth. And as a pastor, more than ever, we have to have the truth on our side right now.

We have to be completely broken and humble, as well as contending for the truth. If you have that combination, you're going to be a powerful weapon in the hands of God. A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God, Robert Murray McShaney would say, but you've got to find that balance.

So some of us pastors lean too much on the truth side, and we beat people up with it. Some of us land on the grace and love side, and no, I don't want to say anything that upsets, I'm just here to love. That's not a pastor.

That might be a good friend, but a pastor has to find that balance. So just always remember that. And then another important lesson is hear both sides, hear both sides.

I think I read that somewhere in the Bible, that we're supposed to hear both sides before forming judgments on a matter. And of course, I've learned this lesson many times the hard way now, and now I just try to just listen. Okay, you know, I heard your side, let me hear this side, and the truth often is in the middle, or it could be different perspectives, seeing things differently.

So you have to hear both sides, and you kind of wait upon the Lord, Lord, show me. I'm called to lead this church and pastor this church, Lord, please show me what the truth is, show me how to move forward. I understand what they're saying, and I understand what they're saying, I've got to shepherd both groups of people.

Lord, I need your help, I need your wisdom, and I usually don't rush ahead, and sometimes that bothers people. You know, we need to make a decision. Now, sometimes you need to make this, you know, just recently, I made a very quick decision within a few hours and had to make a pretty significant decision.

But most of the time, you can, you know, wait on the Lord, and you'll often see in the waiting process, you know, people who don't like the waiting process, and the worst of them can come out, and even the truth can come out, you know, the more you wait, wait upon the Lord. Again, this is really needs to be emphasized, I had a big breakthrough, I'm glad I wrote this down. When you remember, it's God's church, and I tell people, oh, is that Shane's church out there? No, it's not.

I'm just, I'm the lead pastor, and we call my role the leader among equals. We've got an elder board, and I lead the church, but I'm among equal men qualified. We have different giftings, of course, so it's God's church.

The finances are God's church, the people coming and going, you know, that was, I don't know, in your area, you're listening, but man, people come and go like I've never seen before. When I was a kid, you know, you stayed in your church, and, you know, of course, unless there's something major to happen, but now it's like, unbelievable, pastor, you offended me, I'm going to go here, okay, and then I just, just this week, God has a sense of humor. I remember, there's a couple who left the church, they came to our church, I knew they wouldn't be there too long, because just a critical heart, and then they went, hey, we're at this other church now, I'm like, okay, we'll pray for you guys.

That's good. And I just found out now there's another church, it's like, man, guys, at some point, you do have to look in the mirror. Yes, the pastor, the leader does hurt people's feelings, and we don't handle things right.

But the strongest relationships I have right now, as God is my witness, are those of us who stood together and worked through the challenges, that's how you grow. And so if you just run away and hide and go to a different church, you know, that attitude is going to stay with you, that critical heart is going to stay with you. And so on this note, just remembering that it's God's church, it's not my church.

So even finances, we don't do big pushes, you got to give this week, man, I don't know if we're going to be able to keep the utilities on, we got to hit, we're going to lose our radio station or this or that. Oh, it's God's church, he brings in the finances, you live below your means as a church, you can step out in faith, but you want to use wisdom as well, especially when you're stewarding other people's resources, including our

own that we give as an elder board. It's in addition to other people's gifts.

And so that was a big breakthrough in my life when I realized, hey, it's God's church. I see people coming, I recommend to people, hey, if you live in Lancaster, you're closer, 20 minutes closer to this church, gas is expensive, here's a really good church, I'll let the pastor know you're coming. Hey, this church really works great for our youth group, Shane, I mean, because we don't have a youth group on Sunday mornings, we want the teens in the service.

And you know, not everyone's ready for my type of message. And if their kids are really growing at this other church and their youth group, they're worshiping and hey, man, stay there if you're growing, you know, and so you just you just have to hold on to people loosely, because God gives you certain people first season, and then often they're gone. And it was probably harder for my wife, you know, especially years ago, we talked about this and good friends, because she would, I've been hurt a lot over the years.

So my friendships are a little bit more narrow, but she would be friends and get hurt a lot because gossip and all these different things, it's like, whoa, these people are leaving because our, you know, kids did something like, you know, this or this, and, and they just know, very few people want to work through things. And that's how we grow. So my point was, she came to me and she's just, you know, upset, I said, listen, people are moving out of town, moving out of California, I think, as of this recording, we've probably have known 300 families, 300 people who've moved out of our church since COVID from California, you know, on to on to better things.

And I said, Listen, this is our life. This is God planted this church, he put us here, this is our life, like we live, eat and breathe it. But that's not the case for everyone.

It's some people, it's their church they go to on Sunday, it's not their life. Now, New Testament Church, I think it was more of a person's life, fellowship, come together, Wednesday study, Sunday mornings. But for many people, it's so well, we'll move to this state, and we'll find a good church.

And so you can't let that, you know, upset you, because God moves people on to different things. And then also allow people to make mistakes, and learn from it. You know, some of us hard truth type of preachers, I went through my Pharisee phase in 2005, I'm not going to talk about I have in many sermons, where I was just, you know, growing, I was, you know, five years back to five years back from the prodigal son statement, and became an avid reader, systematic theology, Charles Hodge on systematic theology, Wayne Grudem systematic theology, I read his whole book one summer, of course, Norman Geisler systematic theology, John McArthur's got a good book on systematic theology, Spurgeon's lectures to my students Spurgeon's commentary on the Psalms.

We've got John Calvin's works and his his the Puritans that were referred to by D. Martin Lloyd Jones, and, and man, I'm just full of this truth. And I'm just, I'm just beating people up spiritually. And it was took a hard lesson.

You know, my mom, and that's how my mom came to me and said, son, yeah, you got the truth that people don't want to be around you. And I heard something similar from my wife. And at first, yeah, yeah, they're just convicted, they don't, you know, and there's something to that a lot of people don't want to be around me or many of you, you know, when you're when you're living fully surrendered to the Lord, though, your buddy that goes to Vegas is not gonna want to hang around you.

There's just no way around it. I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about the truth will offend, but my attitude shouldn't.

So my attitude was offending my arrogant, arrogant attitude. And so now just being more gentle and God, of course, uses things to break it out of us, whatever situation you're going through, if it's difficult, it could be that God is breaking that out of you and not being a perfectionist on things. Even like I see these little white things out the cameras, you know, like these white things on the microphone, there's a little perfectionism and God will begin to just break all that out of you.

Well, if you're listening to this on audio, you probably don't want to talk about, but that's OK. We do have the video on YouTube and Rumble. And so, man, just having more gracious people and understanding, you know what, if I wasn't pastoring and I was going through what they're going through, I might return to my old self in some areas and I might fall back in that area.

And boy, marriage is tough and their spouse is difficult. I can see. And just you just have more grace and love and understanding.

And I believe you can you can speak into their lives much better, because when you when you come with the word of God, you don't throw it at them, you don't slam it at them like a sledgehammer, you don't whack them over with a bold text. You're like, hey, man, I love you. I appreciate you.

But, you know, here's some things you might want to consider. And just just that time, just allow people to make mistakes. Even your kids that that might be a whole nother podcast I should do with my wife is living in a bubble as PKs, pastor kids.

The big thing for us is we don't make them feel any different. Oh, we're pastor's kids. Don't do that.

Don't act like that. You know, we openly share our mistakes. They apologize to people.

I apologize to people. I apologize to them. We live our lives because that can really, really hurt kids, too.

But maybe that'll be a future podcast. Also, go out of your way to minister to the broken and the hurting. You have to go out of your way to minister to the broken and the hurting.

And I heard a well-known pastor, older pastor say this months ago now. I'll never forget. He said, you know what? I'm not going to do a podcast.

If that means I'm not going to go visit somebody who's shut in. If that if that podcast is going to take away from me visiting somebody at the hospital or talking to this broken family, I'm like, wow, that's a great point. So I've tried to make it a point where if there's something suffering, like as I'm recording this, it's like, well, I have to do this.

I can't go visit somebody at the hospital homes because we have little homes in our area that have four or five patients we can go visit and I'm just too busy. Then I need to remove some things and reach out more to the hurting and the broken. I actually give my number out more to the hurting and the broken myself than I do the upright and the arrogant and the haughty and the well-to-do and the rich and the wealthy.

I don't feel a connection with that group of people. I have to pastor a lot of those types of... Well, I shouldn't say that. Well, you know what? I can't even really think of anybody, honestly, at our church who I would say is too uppity and arrogant and high-minded.

I just see it a lot over the Christian community because they think, oh, he's on the radio. He's got all these YouTube videos and thinks he must be famous. Let me try to get his number and then we can mark it.

It's just the ulterior motives. And I went through that as a young pastor. I had to go through all those same things and name dropping and all the things God just humbles you.

I mean, I've got a lot of... I've got cell phone numbers here of very famous Christians that most of you know and I don't bug them. I don't call them. I don't let you know.

But it's just so important to make sure the hurting and the broken and the ones that really can't pay you back, the ones that maybe aren't givers, especially you shouldn't know who's really giving, but you can kind of tell who's just really down. And that has got to be that lost sheep. We are called to hurt the broken and the hurting, I believe, more so than any other group.

So make sure your focus is on that. Now, I'm going to break down these. Let's see how many is that? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, I believe.

Ten things, ten tips for pastors. I'm going to go quick. All these could be elaborated on.

Consume, consume, consume. What does that mean? Consume. And they're all C's, so it's going to be easy.

Who I am. A.W. Tozer said this 20 years ago. I'll never forget.

Who I am throughout the week is who I am on Sunday morning when I preach. I'm like, wow, what am I consuming? Netflix, voodoo, secular entertainment, secular music all the time. Kind of just feeding on things that really aren't good and godly.

What am I consuming in my mind? Am I in the word of God? Am I worshiping? Because that's going to be what you preach on Sunday is really an outflow of who you were all week. No, that doesn't mean, you know, man, I really blew it on Friday. Anger overcame me and I got to apologize.

Now my sermon is going to stink. Actually, no, your sermon might be very powerful because of repentance. I went in on Sunday mornings before and I preach.

I'm like, Lord, I wanted to fast today and I didn't get to fast. And I didn't even prepare this week. God, I'm so sorry that I did that.

And the spirit of God, I'm telling you, just comes upon the sermon. And it's like, wow, God really blessed an unprepared heart. But see, my heart was prepared when it came to repentance.

Now on this consume thing, I'm not going to get a lot into detail on it. I don't want to convict too many of you, but as pastors, as leaders, I think you need to be taking care of this temple a lot better than most of us are, especially as you're stewarding this gift of ministry that God has given you. So that's one reason I got off caffeine.

I might have some green tea this morning and things like that. But like coffee makes me very irritable. And so I can tell, like I'm having my coffee, like people are texting me.

They're bothering me. The kids are bothering me. That's not good as a pastor.

Now, you might have the reverse effect. Maybe. I know how cortisol works.

I know how the central nervous stimulant works. But I'll just say for the sake of argument, oh, I love my cup of coffee. It makes me very, you know, humble and gracious and low key.

Well, good for you. The majority of us don't. It makes us very... That's why we get hot tempered.

That's why we take back irritating things. And that's why we don't respond kindly. Or on Sunday, we're all irritated.

If you have a big, big amount of caffeine before Sunday service, it's going to be tough. So look at what you're consuming. Healthy, good diet, taking care of your body.

You're going to function way more efficiently than just junk food and caffeine. And even if there's a big movement now, even alcohol. Oh, I can have a beer too.

Yeah, maybe. I don't know. But you're not going to be filled with the spirit of God to the degree you can be by abstaining.

I remember I went to a pastor's conference years ago up north. And they all went to a pub afterwards. And I didn't go.

But I heard and you can tell that a good amount of them were filling it. And that's just not a good idea. You know, I've shared before.

You know, that's obviously a struggle I had in my past. And I can open that door again and possibly struggle with it again. And so we just have to really put guards up in these areas.

Consume, confront, conserve, congratulate, convey, clarify, control. Consistent, confident, contrite. Next one, confront.

We do have to confront people. We have to confront situations. The longer you let something go, the longer it's going to take to fix the problem.

Now, you shouldn't have a confrontational attitude. But we need to confront. Hey, I heard this.

Because I've noticed that thing. Oh, that'll fix itself. That'll fix itself.

I mean, there's been people I can look back now who I didn't want to really confront. Don't want to rock the boat. And they turned out to be a cancer within our church over the years.

So something very important needs to be said there. Conserve, conserve, conserve, conserve your energy. Mondays off, get a second phone line if you need to.

Or if you have something like a different type of iPhone where you can have two phone numbers. You can turn one number off for Mondays or whatever your day off is. Conserve your energy.

Rest because you can't go, go, go, go, go. We're not CEOs running a company. We are shepherds.

And prayer and spiritual attacks are prayer. If you're praying a lot with people, like many of us are, it's exhausting. Absolutely exhausting.

So is preaching. So is preparing. So is living in a fishbowl.

And so you have to conserve your energy. Congratulate. Congratulate.

Make sure you let your staff know. Sound team, media usher. Thank you guys so much.

I just told two people this week. I know nobody says anything, but what you do does not go unnoticed at all. We notice it.

Thank you very much. Congratulate. Remember, you're just a spokesperson and the lead pastor.

Without all these other people, you'd be like me sitting in my room. Like, well, I feel like preaching. Well, I can't preach because I don't have the other people to help me.

Then I put convey and contact. Convey and contact. What I mean by that is convey information to people.

I can people tell me something. Hey, I'll get back to you this week. I make a note of that and I get back to them this week.

We have to be really well known for our consistency and our follow up and our follow through. I'll contact the people. I'll let them know, here's what I'm working on.

Going ghost is not a good idea for leadership. So convey. Convey information often when you can.

There's a lot of sensitive information we can't convey either. But you convey things to your spouse. You convey things to your kids.

Convey things to the congregation. Hey, here's our financial numbers. Here's our budget.

Sometimes if you have an annual meeting, ours is coming up in April. And you just convey and you contact and you let people know. Communicate.

I guess I don't even have that one. That would be that actually been a better word. We communicate with people because many times and I know pastors because it's hard to communicate because people are like, you know, challenging everything, question, question.

But if you don't communicate and you just kind of shut down, it doesn't lead to a very healthy environment. Clarify. Oh, clarify, clarify, clarify.

Clarify is huge. Clarify things for people. I found over the years, one thing I would go back and change is I would clarify more things.

Because I was a pretty straight shooter. And you just, you know, here's what we're doing. Here's how it is.

Even with your kids like, why dad? Why? Why? No, with our kids, we often tell them why as much. But, you know, it does help. But, you know, I've come in.

That's how I grew up. I come in, I get things done. I work hard.

I'm done. You know, you know, I would just, here's what we're doing. But when you don't clarify, like, well, here's why I'd rather have this person do worship this weekend.

Here's why I'd rather take these actions. Here's why we would, we just exchange all of our pews for chairs, you know, and communicate. Here's why and clarifying and clarifying what it does, what all communicating, clarifying why all these things are so important is the enemy shoots fiery darts.

And he will plant thoughts into the minds of your members of your family. And if you're not clarifying, they're like, hmm, I wonder, I wonder what the church is doing with that money. I wonder what the church's motive is.

I wonder. And what clarifying communicating does is it, it, it, it defeats, not defeats. It really extinguishes those fiery darts.

You need to control. Okay, I'm going to talk about this important topic. You do need to control.

You're the lead pastor, but here's a caveat control without being controlling. So some of us type a people we need to put on the brakes in this area. Some of you type a type BCD.

I don't know how many types there are. You need to step on the gas because as a lead pastor, I need to control the worship service. But I don't want to become controlling.

And that's why, oh, Pastor Shane, he's controlling. Okay, what do you mean? Because I'm actually called to control. Now, when you become controlling, it means you don't let others make their own decisions.

You don't empower. You want to be in every single piece of the pie there is. You want to be in everyone's business.

And that's controlling. And that's micromanaging. And I'll let, hey, here's sound.

Here's what I'd like to see. Worship team. Here's what I'd like to see.

And I'll just kind of do it. But then I have to, I do have to control the parameters, the boundaries. I have to control the setting.

I have to control the atmosphere. That's my job. We don't, it's not like you do your thing.

I'll do my thing. No, as a lead pastor, you're, that's why we look at the whole service, start to finish as the worship service. And I remember one of our first worship leaders, I mean, years ago, we just got started.

You know, we were kind of, you know, kind of button heads. And I'll never forget. I can kind of remember where we were at dinner.

And he said, you know what? I thought, you know, you do your thing. I'll do my thing. And you kind of got to leave me alone.

Let me do my thing. Well, that's not, that's not what I had in mind. I had a mind of, you know, here's the opening set.

You know, you choose your songs, whatever. But here's the atmosphere I'm looking for. My message is going to be pretty profound.

At the end, I'd like a time at the altar, time of prayer. So we're going to have to have some type of worship song that isn't too loud. At that time, we were up front praying for people and you can't hear them.

And then we're going to go to a time. And so I have to control that atmosphere. Same thing with the church over and beyond just pastoring.

There are things you have to control. So I don't get too bent out of shape when people say, oh, Pastor Shane's controlling or he's micromanaging. Now, if I need to learn from it, I can say, okay, yeah.

Yeah, I need to pull back a little bit on that. But I would say most of the time, most of the time, I'm not micromanaging every aspect of the church. I don't know a lot of what's going on.

I empower people, but I will, you know, give a broad approach to what we're trying to accomplish. Hey, you know, contact our children's ministry. Hey, we've got a special event coming up Saturday night.

Just want to make sure we have enough helpers. Okay, good. We're set.

Or they might say, oh, I forgot completely. I forgot about that. Thank you so much.

Okay, I'm not micromanaging. I'm controlling, making sure that's going to happen. Okay, who do we have in worship this coming weekend? And they say, well, I think it's this person.

And then I talk to this person. Hey, here's what I'd like to do. And they say, actually, I know.

I think I'm leading the next Sunday. It's this person. So see, I have to control.

Office, when are we going to be open? What hours are we open this week? Are you taking any days off? Well, Shane's controlling me. He's like, no, no, I just need to know. I need to know so I can lead the church.

And fortunately, people, I haven't heard that term. I maybe have heard, you know, Shane is micromanaging one time this year. One time in the last year.

And it was because I was kind of pressuring this individual a little bit to get some stuff done. But anyway, my point is, you have to control, but you don't want to be controlling. So some of you need to just give up the steering wheel and let others empower them.

Hey, you handle it. You do what you think is best. And then you communicate the vision.

You communicate the goals. You do clarify service times if there's changes and things like that. Just don't have a controlling attitude that is arrogant and unteachable.

That's really the key. And then consistent, consistent, consistent, consistent, consistent. As pastors, we must be consistent.

If I say something, I'm going to do it. Majority of the times. One thought that comes to my mind right now is, you know, I said, hey, I want to do this for Wednesday nights.

I want to teach through the book of Psalms. Well, I didn't know that's going to take a couple of years. So we're teaching other things, too.

But I'm trying to go back to the Psalms as often as I can on Wednesday nights, because I committed to that. Or, hey, I'm going to be there to watch this or to do this. I'm going to be there.

And I'll tell people, I don't think I can make it. I'd rather have them see the truth than me being inconsistent. A consistent person also follows up and they follow through.

They're consistent. Hey, OK, let me take care of that. Let me get back to you.

They don't just drop the ball. They run with it. You might have to put, I put stuff on my calendar right now.

I put stuff on post-it notes. I put stuff on a dry erase board. And I have it set where, you know, if you use a certain email company, you can set the send to be sent tomorrow morning at 8 or this evening.

And so I'll have, sometimes I've got 20 emails and texts, because I can also text my phone for my email. And I'll have all these ready to go Tuesday at 8, Wednesday. And I just make sure I get to everything that God has called us to do, because we have to be consistent.

And finally, oh, two more, sorry. You have to be confident. You have to be confident, not in yourself.

But, hey, my wife just spoke at a Young Women's event. And, you know, she hasn't done that in a while. It's not her wheelhouse necessarily.

And I said, listen, they asked you to speak. You know God's word. You know what these women, I've heard you give counsel to young women, and you know what to tell them.

And God opened this door. He's called you to be a pastor's wife. You know what to say.

You just walk up there confident, not in your own confidence, but confident in what God has called you to do. So some of you might need to go to the Lord and see if you were even called. I planted this church, well, God planted this church that I'm leading, 14 years ago, we're going on 14.

And I can name, I remember getting together with five or six pastors, and none of them are here anymore. Just me. And so, you know, some of them, I don't know if any of them fell per se, moral falling, but most of them just, you know, it's hard.

And they weren't, many of them weren't truly called. Some were, and you can be truly called and still step down for a season. And God will use you again, because you learn from the experience.

That's true. That's still truly called. I'm talking about those who, you know, wolves in sheep's clothing, or they are just woke, and they are not even converted themselves.

And they wonder, you know, why, you know, is this happening? And they're not, they're not confident. And they're, well, I don't know if Paul really said this. I don't know if the word of God really said this.

They're not confident. And they have, they themselves have to first go to God and say, Lord, am I truly called? Am I truly called? I need to repent and I need to get back on track with you. And then the, actually the, I say the best for last, which is actually the most important.

The word is contrite, contrite, contrite, contrite, a contrite and humble heart. I will not cast away. The Lord says, what are the, what are the sacrifices you can give me? Nothing but a contrite heart.

And see, as a leader, I believe a church is often the reflection of the leadership. A compromising church will have a compromising pastor. A woke church will have a woke pastor.

A very rigid, legalistic body of believers who like that, like to be modern day Pharisees. Well, their pastor is probably going to resemble that. So that's why it's so important for you to be contrite and broken and humble and gracious and teachable and daily repentance if necessary.

That's why I've put in for years now, got up early in the morning, put on worship. God, get my heart right. Is there anything I need to work on? Is there anything I need to improve? I've got a post-it note next to me.

I'll, I'll, I'll fix some of the relationships maybe, or reach out to people. It's just, and you don't become contrite and then, hey, I'm good now for forever. No, contrite is, to me, contrite is a consistent, a consistent attitude of repentance, a consistent attitude of brokenness and humility.

When pride comes up, as it does in all of us, it's like, Lord, this is not right. Help me. And it's staying, it's staying contrite.

It's staying usable and pliable in the hands of a master potter. And it's so important. So some of you are not contrite.

You're very arrogant. You like, you know, look how I prepare my sermon. I have a PhD in this, or I went to this seminary.

And God doesn't care about any of that. I hate to burst your bubble. I'm not as concerned about a master's degree as I am about having a degree from the master.

Now, I'm not against any of that. I think people should study, be well, well read. And I would even read different.

I'd read Charismatics and Conservatives. I'd read Pentecostals and Puritans. I would try to get the whole array of Christian history.

But contrite is so important. So anyway, I hope that helped. I want to keep it around 30 minutes.

I think we got pretty close to that. Consume, confront, conserve, congratulate people, convey your message, convey information to people, clarify things, communicate with them, control. Control the church atmosphere without being controlling.

I just thought of this. This might help somebody. Fortunately, when we started the church, people come alongside.

And we have an elder board who believes in the vision. But a lot of you listening are actually your pastors for hire. You have a deacon board, a deacon board that hires you, that controls you.

What I would do is say, Lord, you know my heart. You know, you've called me to be the lead pastor. And God, I'm going to submit to these men.

Hopefully it's men. We believe in elders as men. I'm going to submit to them.

Unless it's something where, like, hey, we don't want to talk about the blood of Christ. We want you to tone it down. And, you know, repentance and these things, the judgment of God.

God might be moving you elsewhere for sure. But respect them, submit to them, and say, Lord, I want to go in there. Because you go in there fighting and it's constant battling.

The people sense it. The spirit of God is not there as profoundly because of the disunity. And just submit to that and say, Lord, Lord, I want to, as a lead pastor, I want to control the environment in a good and godly way.

Would you help me do that? And you wait upon the Lord and watch and see what doors he opens. All right. Thank you for joining this episode.

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