

# 7 Things We Desperately Need

by Shane Idleman

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*The church desperately needs to return to its core principles of absolute truth, love, discipleship, and holiness to experience revival and be effective in ministry*

**Duration:** 42:50

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 15:11-32, John 14:6, Acts 1:8, Philippians 3:8, James 5:16, 1 Peter 1:16, 1 John 4:8

**Topics:** "Spiritual Revival", "Christian Discipleship"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the foundational principles of the Church, highlighting the desperate need for truth, love, discipleship, holiness, prayer, power, and ultimately, Christ. It calls for a return to the basics of faith, repentance, and a deep relationship with God, stressing the importance of embracing God's truth, love, and power through prayer and a life surrendered to Christ.

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## Transcript

What I wanted to do is share with you that the Church Westside Christian Fellowship was built on seven core principles. If you want to know anything about me, anything about the church, these are those principles. And as I was putting this together I was reminded I love Vince Lombardi, I don't know if you remember him, Green Bay Packers 1960s, and I love his quotes because they're manly quotes, you know, it'd be things like he would say things like any man's finest hour and that his greatest sense of fulfillment is when he lies exhausted on the field of battle victorious.

And I parallel that with football, I parallel that with ministry. When I leave here exhausted in ministry and preaching and we see men and women coming to Christ and young adults and you're exhausted, but you're on the field of battle victorious because you're putting Christ first. But I remember he took the Packers in 1961 and they just lost the year before, the devastating defeat, and he walked into this locker room, you've got 38 guys on the Packers who know football, I mean this was a good team, and he picked up a football and he said, gentlemen, this is a football.

And what he was doing is going back to the basics, back to, let's get back to the basics, this is a football. And in the church we could say this is a Bible, this is prayer, this is what we need to get back to the basics. And I believe that this was what God put on my heart to start West Side Christian Fellowship.

And these are those seven principles. If you would call it that, I really call it, what I think of these seven points, I think of the church being desperate for more of God. If you want God back in our culture, you

want back in the church, these things are foundational.

Number one, we need to recognize the desperate need for truth. I'm a big truth guy. I love absolute truth, I preach absolute truth, I believe in absolute truth, I embrace absolute truth.

The church is built on absolute truth. So we're not a church that wavers. I don't know, did God really say this? Did Jesus do it? Yes, it's the inerrant, inspired Word of God completely without error, because that's God's inspired truth.

And this is what I call a hill on which to die. You know, military term, there are certain hills that you must take, you must maintain. This is a hill on which the church must die.

This is a truth. The truth of God's Word must remain unchanged and unmovable. And I was reminded, actually I don't have it in my notes, and I was just reminded this morning of a story I think my mom told me many years ago.

And many of you in the older crowd, I'm not gonna say how old I am, but you'll remember this story. And it parallels what's going on today, but it was of this battleship that was out, I think, off the coast of Alaska. And it was midnight, they're doing deep water exercises.

It's just pitch black out. And they see a little vessel approaching them, this light coming at them, and they said, well, signal to that vessel. You better have him reverse his course very quickly.

And so they signal to the vessel. And the signal came back, please change your course 20 degrees. And the captain said, I just told him to change his course 20 degrees.

And he said, signal back, let him know I'm the highest-ranking official in the United States Navy. Tell them to change their course immediately. And the signal came back, Captain, with all due respect, change your course 20 degrees.

And by now he's furious. I mean, this is a battleship, they're out in the middle of the ocean, and this vessel's coming to challenge a battleship? Have you ever seen battleships and the destroyers, they've got submarines around them? I mean, this is serious business. So he signaled back.

He said, sir, I am the captain of this Navy, and if you do not turn your vessel around and move it, I will blow you out of the water. I'm a battleship. And the signal came back, Captain, with all due respect, I'm a seaman, first class.

Change your course, I'm a lighthouse. But isn't that, folks, that's what's happening with truth. See, truth, this can't move, this can't get out of the way.

Everybody says, get out of the way, let's ordain gay clergy, let's abort millions of children, get out of the way. Our culture says, get out of the way, but it says I can't. I stand as a lighthouse given to guide men, anybody who will embrace me, I will guide you, I will direct you, you can't move it, you must embrace it.

And that's what the church is desperate for more of truth. Everybody's debating truth. It doesn't need to be debated, it needs to be proclaimed.

As a matter of fact, pastors aren't called to share, we're called to declare. Preaching is not a little fireside chat, it's not a little conversation, it's declaring the counsel of God. So we have to recognize, as our

church, we recognize that truth is a hill on which to die.

And many of you are familiar with the Southern Baptist, one of my favorite pastors from there, Adrian Rogers. If you're talking about contemporary, if you're talking about older pastors, it would be Spurgeon, Charles Spurgeon. But Adrian Rogers fought in the Southern Baptist Convention to keep truth at the forefront.

They were coming in, liberal theology, and to remove the inerrancy of scripture, remove the deity of Christ, remove all these things, and he fought for truth. Truth is the foundation. If you want to rebuild your marriage, rebuild it on truth.

You want the church of God to be on fire again, build it on truth. The truth of God will not let us down. And I don't know about you, but is anybody concerned about the direction of our nation? I mean, when a man is voted Woman of the Year, and when, and please don't, I don't say any of these things to mock whatsoever.

I have people that I mentor or want to reach out to that struggle with same-sex attraction, all these things. But the problem is you can't hide, love doesn't hide the truth, love embraces the truth, because we point people to the solution. But our nation is drifting away.

They're mocking God's Word. They're calling good evil and evil good. The standard that once was the standard is no longer the standard.

Our nation is adrift. And people always, is there any hope for our nation? I say, I don't know. The Titanic has been struck, and it's hard to turn this around.

Only one thing will turn this around. It's something I've been praying for for years. It's a mighty move of God's Spirit.

Revival. It's the only hope. It's the only hope.

When I raise my kids in this society, I pray to God that he would revive his church. Wilt that not revive us again, that we may rejoice in you? God, I remember all night prayer meetings. I remember when we weren't in a hurry to get out of here.

I remember when prayer and fasting would come before the church service. We don't care if there's six worship songs or eight worship songs. We're here to worship God.

We need to get back to that point of revival. And it starts with the embracing of truth. You don't, you don't.

We never call to make the truth tolerable. We're called to make it clear. See, that's one of the problems in the church in America.

They want to make the truth tolerable. We're not called to do that. We're called to make it clear.

This is what the truth and preaching it in love, this is what it says. So you bring back truth by preaching it and obeying it. That's the first thing.

We must recognize the desperate need for truth and we must return to it, but we also must obey it. Now the second point is probably one of my second biggest concerns, and we need to recognize the desperate

need for love. Because you see, this without love is, you'll become a Pharisee.

You'll beat people up with them instead of love them to the truth. You'll yell at them instead of love them to the truth. You'll quote scripture out of them instead of hold them and support them.

This without love is void of God's Spirit. And that's one of the problems is we can have all truth, and with truth I can quote your Bible, but we gossip and we slander and we backbite and we bicker and we pull everybody down. That's not love.

And that's not really truth. Because truth, Jesus, the embodiment, John says, truth, Jesus was full of grace and truth, both. So we have to have the truth, but we also have the love.

I mean, correct me if I'm wrong, but Paul said you can speak with the tongue of men and of angels, but if you have not love, it profits you nothing. You can have great faith, great prophecy, and understand all kinds of mysteries, but if you have not love, it profits you nothing. You can even sell everything, and if you don't have love, it profits you nothing.

You can give your body to be burned at the stake, and if you have not love, it profits you nothing. At this point, people say, well, you sure convicted me. Good, good.

It's time to start convicting again. I'm back in the business of convicting, because we don't change unless we're convicted. Rarely, rarely, rarely, rarely will a person change unless they're convicted by Almighty God to change.

And that's love is convicting. Love and truth is a powerful combination, and one of the books you have in your library back there by Philip Yancey, he said this, Jesus reserved his hardest words for the hidden sins of hypocrisy, pride, greed, and illegalism. I mean, that's enough to chew on all morning.

We forget, sometimes we think, Jesus, you go get those sinners. Well, he caught the woman, the woman caught in the act of adultery. He said, go and sin no more.

I don't condemn you, but then he would call the religious leaders, you brood of vipers. John the Baptist would say, you brood of vipers. Jesus would say, you whitewashed tombs, you're wonderful on the outside, but inside, you're dead man's bones.

They would actually come and mock John the Baptist at the Jordan River, and he would say, you brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath that is to come. Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance. Love should be an outworking.

Somebody truly feel the Spirit of God, show me truth, but show me love. You've got to have both. And that's one of the big problems in churches that would have tons of truth.

They've lost the love. The sailboat of love is sailed away many, many years ago. And you have to bring that back.

But love only comes from a humble, broken heart. It has to be broken, has to be crushed. And from that, that's where that love comes from.

And honestly, think about this. Will others know that we are Jesus's disciple by how well we translate the Greek? Well, if you tell me all about your pneumatology, your theology, your eschatology, your

humanities, your homiletics, you tell me all about that, we've got a little, you know, fish on the side of our car, we've got the big Bible, everybody knows we're a Christian. No, he said, they'll know that you are Christians, my followers, because of your love for one another.

And that's what breaks my heart. And trust me, I'm preaching myself here. I have not walked this line perfectly, but the church has got to get back to loving each other.

We need to guard each other, not gossip. We need to protect and build up, not pull down. So when you catch yourself doing that, recognize that that's not the love of Christ to tear down.

It's to build up. Being filled with love is being filled with the Spirit of God. That's what it is.

And that's when we can actually get things done. When you have truth and you have love, you're filled with the Spirit of God. We've got ministries from sex trafficking to abortion to abuse that are happening in the homes and neglect.

We've got so much need, but not enough helpers. A lot of armchair quarterbacks. Well, the church should be doing this and this and this and this, but not the love of in our own hearts doing these things.

So desperate need for truth, the desperate need for love, and those actually go together. Number three, and it just springboards off of love. When we built the church, we had to recognize the desperate need for discipleship.

That's an understatement. We have so many people, men, women, that need discipleship, and it's sad we don't have enough people to help, to mentor. If everybody just take one person to mentor and disciple, we would see a major difference.

And really discipleship is love with shoes on. It's love with shoes on is what discipleship is. We've got, I've told a few of you, but we've been given the privilege of ministering inside of hospital homes inside the Antelope Valley.

These are six, seven patients per home. A lot of them don't make it out of there. And terminal, just, it's one step between hospital and coming out of a normal hospital and death.

And they're saying, would you come and pray with us? Would you come and minister to us? Would you just read the Bible to us? And we're building relationships, but we don't have enough helpers. And these people, and that's ministry 101. That's ministry 101.

So we've got tremendous need, tremendous need, but not enough people to do that. And the reason is, I'll be honest with you, the flesh doesn't want to, right? The flesh just does not want to. The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

And that will be the constant struggle from here on out. Now let me, a few of these next points I'm even more so passionate about, believe it or not. Number four, recognize the desperate need for holiness.

And holiness is not some weird, outdated word. Holiness is being set apart for God. Come out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord.

And we live in a culture now where Christians are putting pornography at the top of the list. Christians are putting all these shows and movies about vampires and witchcraft and the occult at the top of the list.

Christians are filling their homes with things that actually pull them away from God.

And there's a desperate need for holiness. You've got a banner right there. Come, let us worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

There's a holy standard there. There's a beauty there because God says, now you can come and worship me. When we come holy and broken before Him, we say, Lord, create a clean heart, renew a right spirit in me.

I will put nothing wicked before my eyes. Let my mind be like Christ. And we come in and we worship the power of God's presence in that place.

He feels worshippers are holy and set apart. Now this isn't perfection, as I like what John MacArthur said. It's not about perfection.

It's about direction. Nobody's perfect. And I'm not talking about holiness, the old Methodist movement you would call the holiness movement.

They believed that you could actually become perfectly holy in this lifetime. Didn't carry a lot of scriptural basis, but nice thought. It's not possible.

We can't be. But there's a big difference between somebody saying, I don't care what I watch, what I listen to. I don't care anything.

I'll just come to church as if I'm doing God a favor. And somebody who cries out and says, Lord, I don't want these things in my life. I want to be holy.

I want to be set apart before you come. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. The priest could only go into the holy of holies when they're holy and they're set apart for God.

Paul said, come out from among them. Be separate. There should be a distinction.

Our Facebook posts shouldn't look like the world. We shouldn't, you know, I see all this, you know, all this, the party lifestyle in Vegas and these things in the world. And we're watching these things and all, 50 Shades of whatever, 50 Shades of Garbage.

But it's Christians doing it. And we wonder why we have no power in the church. We wonder why our marriages are falling apart.

We wonder why the Bible's boring. We wonder why worship would hurry up and get over because we're hungry. Because we don't have the power of God in our lives via holiness.

Holiness is powerful. Because when you come out from among them and be separate, God says, now I have a separate vessel, a broken vessel, humble vessel, a vessel who's empty. And now I can fill you with my Spirit.

There's a desperate need for holiness. R.A. Torrey said, he lived about a hundred years ago, contemporary of D.L. Moody. He actually helped publish something called the Fundamentals.

And you remember, that's why Christians were called Fundamentals, Fundamentalists. Are you a Fundamentalist? And I often say, depends how you define it. If you're talking about adhering to the

fundamentals of the Christian faith, absolutely.

If you're talking about some Bible-thumping person who's angry at everybody, no, I'm not. So as a side note, he wrote the Fundamentals, I think, in the early 1900s. He helped to publish that.

It talked about the inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth, the things that are hills to die on, the things that why we can't fellowship with the church a half mile down the street. Those kind of fundamentals, the fundamentals of the Christian faith. He said this, the gratification of the flesh and the fullness of the Spirit do not go hand in hand.

In other words, you cannot gratify the flesh and be fulfilled with the Spirit of God. They don't go together. This is one of the reasons I fast on Saturdays.

I try not to eat Friday night. I don't eat again until Saturday night. Not because I'm spiritual, but because, God, I need to starve this flesh.

I need to starve it so it's submitted to you so I can preach your word, so you fill me with your Spirit. I read books a hundred years ago. There was fasting and prayer.

Where's all this stuff at now? Now it's gimmicks and gadgets, and everybody's in a hurry, and no wonder, no wonder the church is declining. And if you don't like what I'm saying, guess what? It's because you need to hear what I'm saying. I'm just here to shoot you the truth.

I will not take a opinion poll when I leave. I'm not going to say, oh, what'd you guys think? I just say, God, I did what you called me to do, to preach your truth, because I truly believe that lives are radically changed when a person gets out of the way, and they say, God, what do you want to say? That's how congregations change. That's how you experience revival.

I mean, just think on this issue of holiness. I was thinking about this even years ago when I started speaking, but in my lifetime, we've went from, I love Lucy, and leave it to Beaver, to dating shows and reality shows that are a stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy, pure God. And what should offend us now entertains us.

And be very concerned, because when something that is an offense to God entertains us, our heart is not in a good spot. And sometimes we need a wake-up call to wake up. The whole point of hearing difficult things like this is to wake up and say, God, I mean, if you think this is difficult, go read Isaiah and Jeremiah someday, and the prophets Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, and Amos, and Obadiah, and Jonah, and Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, Zechariah, Haggai.

They were calling the nation back to God. How do you do that? You do that with a wake-up call. Because Jeremiah, is not your word in my heart like a burning fire? It's shut up in my bones.

I'm weary of holding it back. Jesus said, if you believe on me, as the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. So I want to ask, where's these rivers of living water? Jesus said it, so where's these rivers of living water? Where healing's taking place, and ministry's taking place, and the church is growing, and we're protecting, we're guarding each other, we're filled with the spirit of God.

The main reason is because there's a kink in the water hose via holiness. And let me explain that analogy real quick. A couple of summers ago, I had my son out back, and we had the water on full blast, and it was

just dripping out.

He said, Dad, what's wrong? I said, I'll tell you what's wrong. Three areas. That kink, that kink, that kink.

He removed all the kinks, and he couldn't even hold the water hose. Because it was just, and that's what happens in our lives. Without holiness, no one will see the Lord.

Without holiness, that holy standard, it's putting the flesh in submission, and being filled with the spirit of God. Then the floodgates open. Then you can understand that scripture.

I mean, how many of us, don't raise your hand, but how many of you can say like Jeremiah? His word is in my heart. It's burning. How many of us can say like Jesus, that out of my belly is flowing rivers of water? How of us can relate to John the Baptist when he said, there's one coming greater than me.

I can't even unloose his sandals. When he comes, he's going to baptize you in the power of the Holy Spirit and with fire. Who can say amen to God? I know exactly what they're talking about.

Not many people. Because spiritual life is being cut off, because there's not that holiness. So holiness isn't some weird word.

It's being set apart for God. Christians look different. He who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in him.

Well, Shane, how do I know? What do you watch? What do you listen to? How do you spend your time? How do you spend your money? Basically, show me your calendar. Show me your checkbook. I'll tell you who you worship.

This is very easy stuff, right? Back to the basics. This is a football. And my job and my goal is to get us back to those basics.

Holiness, who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Don't we want God's presence in our life? And the psalmist asked, who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart and has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor has he sworn deceitfully. That's who can stand in God's presence, those who come with a broken, humble heart before God and say, Lord, use me. I'm emptied of myself.

I want you to fill me. And then number five is not a secret to anybody. It's the most important aspect and it's the one we miss most often.

Recognize the desperate need for prayer. Oh, God, I remember when the church prayed. The national statistics now are the average Christian prays three minutes a day and the average pastor five.

They say, oh, God, help us. There's your problem, folks. We have so much time for Facebook and the media, but no time for God.

And a prayerless church is a dying church. Prayerless Christians are dying Christians. E.M. Bounds, I'd recommend any book by E.M. Bounds on prayer that you can grab, grab them all if you can and just saturate your mind with that at night.

You'll wake up hungry for God. He said, when faith ceases to pray, it ceases to live. When your faith ceases to pray, you will cease to live spiritually.

It's like that fig tree that Jesus cursed. He said, I curse you. There's no fruit on you.

And it withered and died because there was no fruit. But you have to fight against the flesh on this, too. The flesh hates prayer.

Oh, does it ever. Wants to stay in that warm, cozy bed. But you've got to change things.

For myself, I read at night and I'll go to bed a lot earlier than I used to so I can get up and spend that time. Things have to change. God, I truly believe God wants to know how bad do you want it? How bad do you want it? Do you want it bad enough to seek me with all of your heart? See, we love to quote the scriptures, if you seek me with all of your heart, not some, with all of your heart.

And I taught on this a few months ago at our church. That word in the Hebrew, seek, is bakash. It means to seek something as if you lost it.

And if you can imagine losing your child in the mall right here in Palmdale, how would you act? Would you say, well, I'll just go look later after I eat. And let me, you know, I've got, what time is, no, you, everything would be consumed about finding that child. Everything.

I don't care what time it is. I don't care if I'm hungry. I have to find that child.

That parallels. Now when you read, if you seek me with all of your heart, you will find me. That's what God's talking about.

There's a desperation. There's a desire. I've got to seek him in the morning.

Yes, it's difficult. Yes, the flesh hates it. But I've got to find him and I'll do whatever it takes, God, to find you.

God says, then you'll find me. But as much as I love the book, the five-minute devotional, that's not going to cut it in these dire times. I'm going to say something that might get me in trouble, but I'm going to say it anyway.

In these dire times, five-minute devotionals and Joel Steen sermons are not going to cut it. We need back to the basics of repentance and revival and renewal and restoration. Yes, we need to feel good and be encouraged.

But we've been encouraged all the way to hell. We also need to be challenged. That's what God would do.

Many of you know the Old Testament, right? Not very good history there. God said right before the fall of Jerusalem, reminds me of America often, right before Jerusalem fell, God said, I sent messengers rising up early and sending them because I love my people. I had compassion on my people, so I sent my messengers.

But they mocked my messengers. They despised my word and they scoffed at my prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against his own people until there was no remedy. If you don't like it, that's biblical.

That's truth. Because a loving father would say, turn back, turn back. You're going the wrong direction.

Please turn back. That's a loving father. That's not a mean God.

He's a mean God because we don't want to listen to what he says. That's why he's a mean God. Well, he's making me do all these things.

No, there's guardrails. Why don't you just remove all those guardrails off God's Pass? Oh, we would never do that. Well, that's what we do when we remove God's absolute guardrails.

They aren't to prevent us from enjoying life. They are to protect us from falling. And holiness is in prayer and they're such a powerful combination.

E.M. Bounds, who was born in 1835, began his three-hour prayer routine at 4 a.m. To him, prayer was not a prelude, it was a priority. Edward Payson, who ministered during the Second Great Awakening, he was said to award grooves into his hardwood floors as a result of prayer. Adoniah Judson attributed his success in Burma as a missionary to a life of prayer, as did Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission.

George Mueller petitioned God for millions of dollars to fund his orphanage in the 1800s through prayer. John Fletcher, one of the leaders of the Methodist movement, actually stained the walls of his room with the breath of his prayers until his death in 1785. Prayer moves the hand of God.

Where is the church that prays again? Where is the church that's on her knees, on her face before Almighty God praying? That's the weapon, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Your AR-15 is not going to cut it. I know everybody's got their gun safes full, but their prayer closets are empty.

That's the problem. Don't worry, I'm a member of the NRA, so I was raised with 12-gauge shotguns and .357s, but our hope is not in that. I'm all for ownership, I'm all for Second Amendment, but sometimes I see, and it just breaks my heart, that that's what we're trusting in.

Listen, if the day ever comes it gets that bad, AR-15 is not going to cut it. God, we are so blessed in this nation, we don't even realize it. There were people by the name of John Wycliffe, William Kindle, John Huss, were burned at the stake for simply doing what I'm doing.

They had the audacity to challenge the corrupt Roman Catholic Church and their doctrine, and they were burned at the stake for bringing people back to the truth. That's how important this is, folks. I take this very seriously.

This is a call of God and a call to his people to come back to me through prayer. Church is boring. Why is church boring? Why are many churches dying? Because the power of God has vanished from the pulpit and the pew.

Prayer pulls heaven down. Prayer moves the hand of God. Prayer moves the heart back toward God.

Prayer will revitalize a dying church. Prayer will reunite, rebuild, and restore. I often tell men who have anger problems, get into the prayer closet.

You'll come out a better husband, a better father. Instead of hitting your wife, you'll grab her and you'll hold her because God broke you in the prayer closet. As a mother, you'll come out a better wife.

Instead of screaming at your children, prayer changes everything. And the enemy knows it. That's why he'll do whatever he can to pull you away from the prayer closet.

Every excuse comes up, but that's the power. The power is in the prayer. That's the weapon of our warfare.

It's not carnal, but it's mighty through God for the pulling down of what? Strongholds and principalities and every arrogant thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ, bringing every thought into captivity under the obedience of Christ through prayer. I don't know about your thought life, but my thought life goes haywire sometimes. And I have to bring it back into the obedience of Christ through prayer.

Prayer breaks me. Prayer humbles me. Prayer restores me.

Prayer reunites me. The Word of God becomes living and active in a heart that is praying. The desperate need for prayer.

Oh, my Lord, we've got enough potlucks and committees. Everybody wants to have another meeting. You have a prayer meeting.

I bet you're lucky to get five people here. Isn't that true? I just heard something Joe reminded me, and I've heard it before, but you can tell how popular the church is by how many people come on Sunday. You can tell how popular the preacher is by how many people come on Sunday night.

But you can tell how popular Jesus is by those who come to the prayer meeting. It hurts. Folks, this is meant to hurt.

I don't know about you, but I didn't change until I was hurt. Most marriages aren't healed until they're first hurt. It's a wonderful gift of God to hurt and convict, because it's only the broken and contrite heart that comes back fully to God.

And God says, a broken and contrite heart I will not cast away. That's the sacrifice I'm looking for. As a matter of fact, he told one of the prophets, put away from me all your streamed instruments.

Put all this stuff away, but let justice run down like a river and righteousness like a mighty stream. That's what God's looking for. He's looking for the heart.

We must be desperate for more prayer. Number six, recognize the desperate need for power. Ooh, this will give you a whole sermon on itself on this one.

But let me just get right to the point. The Holy Spirit is not some weird mystical force. He's part of the triune nature of God.

And here's a concern I've seen in many churches. You can be straight as a gun barrel theologically, but you're just as empty. It's the Spirit that gives life.

It's the Spirit that gives life. And we're so worried sometimes about, don't talk about the Holy Spirit. Don't mention the Holy Spirit.

We don't want to get weird like that. Really, I don't know what you want, but I want what the Bible has. I want to be filled with the Spirit of God.

And that's not weirdness, that's power. You ever go through the book of Acts sometimes and watch what happens when the Holy Spirit is active in presence. There's power and there's authority and there's

boldness.

See, a true work of the Holy Spirit is not weird and rolling around doing cartwheels acting like a dog. A real work of the Holy Spirit is boldness and authority and speaking. No man ever spoke like this man, the disciple.

They said of Jesus and they said of the disciples. Nobody can match their language. There's boldness, there's power, there's anointing, there's unction.

See, I'm not afraid of those terms. We need those terms back in our pulpits again. We need pulpits that are on fire for God.

John Wesley said, come and light yourself on passion and watch your people burn. It just comes, the unction, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Spirit. And that's not a weird thing, that's a very healthy thing.

Jesus, after he's baptized, was filled with the Holy Spirit. Paul, after he was, his savior on the road to Damascus was filled with the Holy Spirit. Peter, the Bible says that he was filled with the Holy Spirit, the desperate need for power.

And why we don't experience revival, it's often a question, here's the answer. Why don't we experience revival? Because we are comfortable to live without it. That's the truth.

This is why we don't experience revival, because we are comfortable to live without it. And I don't know about you, but I want all of what God has. I'll say, Lord, I'll fast all day, not for some weird things, but to kill and starve the flesh and spend time in your word and spend time in prayer.

And that God begins to fill you with his Spirit. And then you go about, you can pray for people that are actually healed. You can set people free.

You've got discernment, you've got wisdom, because you're filled with the Spirit of God. I don't know how that's a bad thing. So the enemy will always come in and take the original and try to corrupt it with a counterfeit.

So now we've got churches so worried about the Holy Spirit that they don't want to talk about the Holy Spirit. Or you've got so many churches focused on just the Holy Spirit and all this weird stuff, and if it's odd, it's God, whatever goes, goes. That's not the Holy Spirit either.

The Holy Spirit is a perfect embodiment of grace and truth, that light overcoming the darkness. If there's boldness, there's authority. And many people know 2 Chronicles 7, 14, but we've failed to apply it.

If my people are called by my name, I'll humble themselves, humble themselves and seek my face and turn. Uh-oh, you're not going to hear that one very often. Turn from their wicked ways.

Then I will hear from heaven, I will forgive their sins, and I will heal their land. That's a wonderful verse. We put it up on tapestry, we quote it, it'll be in our bulletin.

Isn't that wonderful? But look at what it says there, if my people. Not Hollywood! Not Hollywood! Stop worrying. Hillary's not your biggest enemy right now.

The enemy is. If I ever say Donald Trump for the other side of the audience. That's not, as much as I love to put godly people in office, we are putting too much stake into people.

If my people, not Hollywood, not Washington, not the media, not the culture, we get so mad at the culture, the culture's doing what the culture will do. But if my people, who are called by my name, remember this was a command of Solomon who was going to build the temple of God. And God said, when I bring pestilence, when I bring famine, when I bring these things because you've drifted from me, if my people who are called by my name will simply humble themselves and pray and seek my face, not my hand, not what I can give them, but my face and turn from their wicked ways, I'll hear those prayers and I'll heal that land.

That's powerful. That's the desperate need for power, for God's power. And the final point, it should be the first point, and I'll be out of your hair.

I usually don't get this emotional, but recognize the desperate need for Christ. Here's the problem, folks. If current statistics don't change, we are losing an entire generation.

They'll either continue to reject Christ or they'll believe in a glamorized Christianity that bears no resemblance to Jesus' sobering call to repentance. Why is it when we get to this point we want to avoid all the difficult stuff? I've heard of worship teams, big churches in my area, don't talk about the blood of Christ in their worship songs. Really? Don't mention the cross, don't mention sin, don't mention hell, shame, don't mention death.

Really? Well, the last time I checked, that's what put Christ on the cross. And we're not going to talk about the very thing that put Christ on the cross. There's a desperate need.

A.W. Tozer said, life is a battleground, not a playground. Tozer went on to say that I love Jesus Christ because he's my savior, but I fear him because he's my judge. So you've got to have the whole Bible, not just, oh, God's mercy, God's mercy, God's grace.

Okay, but let's talk about the other side. No, we don't want to mention that side. It's the complete gospel.

The simple gospel is the complete gospel. You have to recognize your desperate need for Christ. And I've thought about this before.

We talked about it at Westside a few months ago or a month ago. But just for a minute, it's especially important to do this before communion sometime, is go back 2,000 years ago, and if you could just stand at that place called Golgotha, the place of the skull, and you saw, you saw the face marred beyond recognition, you saw the thorns, you saw the nail appear, you saw Christ right there dying, and you realize that's for me. Wouldn't that change how you live your entire life? If not, then there's a problem there.

But if you witnessed the Savior dying for you, you saw what he went through, you would be changed. That's why communion's so powerful, is you remember the cross. You remember what was done.

And the beautiful thing about this, it's not scary. It's a beautiful truth because God says, if you just repent, all you have to do is repent and believe. The book of Acts, this sermon's amazing, Peter told the people that you crucify Christ.

This same Christ, who is Christ and Lord, he signifies that he's Lord, he's Christos, he's Christ, he's a Messiah they've been waiting for. He's both Lord and Savior. He said, you stiff-necked people, you put him on the cross.

And they said, what must we do to be saved? And Peter said, repent. It's a beautiful word. Why don't we hear that word more often? Why don't we hear that? It's a beautiful word, repentance.

John the Baptist comes on the scene saying, repent. Jesus sent his disciples out saying, go and repent. All the prophets came with one message, repent, repent.

All that is to renew and restore that broken relationship with God. Repent. It's a wonderful term.

And I can just picture that in Jesus' or Peter's day, it's after Jesus died. And the crowd's wanting to come to Christ and he just says, repent. Repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of your sin.

And somebody probably comes up to Peter and they say, Peter, I'm the one. I'm the one who made the crown of thorns three inches thick and I stuck that on his head and I saw the blood come down his face. But Peter, and he said, but repent.

Peter said, repent. It's okay. But Peter, I'm the one that beat him.

I mocked him. I spit on his face. I slapped him.

Peter says, repent. Another man, but I'm the one who had the 10-pound sledgehammer. I drove those nails in his wrist and I saw his anguish in his face.

And I pounded his feet. He was a mess and I mocked him. Peter says, repent.

I don't know about you, but he went through that for me. Either we believe it or if we don't. If we don't believe that, why are we in this room? Why are we even here? But he took on that wrath.

So the single mom says, but I aborted my child. Repent. Or the young adult that says, I've drifted so far.

I'm suicidal. I'm in despair. I'm cutting myself.

Repent. Repent. Come to a loving father who will take care of you.

But Shane, I've done too much damage. No, you haven't. Repent.

In that song we sang, amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I mean, how do you sing that without welling up inside? How? I was blind, but now I see. I was lost, but now I'm found.

It was grace that taught my heart to fear and fear relieved. Oh, precious, how precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed. But through many toils and challenges, I've already come.

And it'll be grace that's brought me here thus far. And it'll be grace that takes me home. Folks, at the end of the day, he's all we have.

We call him at Westside an all-sufficient Savior. He's not a partial Savior. He's an all-sufficient Savior.

You can call on him at 2 in the morning. You can call on him when depression is overtaking, when anxiety, when fear, when you don't know where to turn. When life is falling apart, you turn to the Savior, who says,

I will never leave you.

I will never forsake you. Come to me all your weak and heavy lady, and I will give you rest. That's the most important part.

Everything is built on this. And because of my relationship with Christ, I love the truth. Because of my relationship with Christ, I want to be filled with love and the Holy Spirit and disciple people.

Because of Christ, I want that prayer time. If you truly believe that prayer is calling on God and talking to God, why aren't we doing that more? If we truly believe it, you see, there's a disconnect. I don't have a problem with how to.

I have a problem with want to. We want to do these things, and God wants us to spend time in his Word and be filled with the Spirit of God. So I would just encourage you.

I don't know where you're at tonight, but I shouldn't be here. I should be buried in Lancaster many years ago. Everything from alcohol to crystal meth to steroids to the party lifestyle to God radically changed my life.

And so I know there's hope. You know, sometimes it's hard to share the testimony sometimes because people come up, oh, you don't deserve to be a pastor then. No, actually, those who have been forgiven much, love much.

It's through that broken, independent relationship now I rely on the shepherd. I wasn't raised in a leave it to beaver home, and I didn't go to seminary and have all these wonderful things and nothing ever fall apart. Life killed me.

God broke me. And then through that brokenness, through that humbling process, God says, now I can use you. Now I can use you.

And he'll say the same thing to you. I want everyone to leave here very encouraged. If you're not in right relationship with God and you've drifted, God says, come home.

That's why I love the prodigal son's story. The father just waited and waited. And the Bible says, when the prodigal son came to himself, he says, I'm living with the pigs.

I'm living with the swine. He says, doesn't my father have room for me? And he came to himself. So I would just encourage you, if you need to get back to God, if you're the prodigal son or the wayward daughter, it's time to come home.

And if you don't know him, you say, Shane, I've had a religion all my life. Listen, you can go to church, but when you stand before God, your parents aren't going to be next to you. You're not going to say, well, I read the Bible.

I went to Juana's. I went to church. Doesn't matter.

It's what did you do with my son? What did you do with my son?

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32116.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4i5dtpLrCzM.mp4>

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