

Act Like Men

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman's sermon emphasizes the critical role of men in spiritual leadership and the importance of being watchful and engaged in their families' lives.

Duration: 47:10

Scripture: Matthew 26:41, 1 Corinthians 16:13, Ephesians 6:10

Topics: "Manhood", "Spiritual Leadership"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of men acting with strength and faith, urging them to be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, and be strong. It highlights the need for men to embrace anguish and concern, to be agonizers in prayer for revival, and to have hearts that cry for the people. The sermon also provides practical encouragement for parenting, reminding men that even God's children rebel and that they are stewards, trusting in God's sovereignty. It stresses the impact of fathers on their children's lives and the significance of being strong in the Lord through worship and surrender.

Transcript

I'm going to talk to you this morning about acting like men. Act like men. And that actually comes from 1 Corinthians 16.

13 in the English Standard Version of the Bible. Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, and be strong. And if you weren't here last week, I would encourage you to listen to last week's message.

It was on anguish. A call to anguish. And I think as men, we need to start being in a little bit more anguish and concern and allowing that to drive us to the cross.

Leonard Ravenhill said that if the church had as many agonizers as we have advisors, the church would experience revival. And believe it or not, that's true. If we had as many people agonizing and praying as they are advising us what to do, we would experience revival.

Because that agonizing heart, really what an agonizing heart is, it's the heart of God. It's the heart that cries for the people. And because when you cry for the condition of your community, you'll pray.

You'll worship. It'll change the way you live. You'll be Christ-centered and Christ-focused.

And before I get to the message, I want to offer five points of encouragement. I actually added this yesterday morning. I believe that God put it on my heart for a reason because many times, we can kind of be challenged by the word and we miss the encouragement part.

Because the word of God is always meant to challenge for change. It challenges us. It convicts us, so we change.

And by changing, you're encouraged. But as I'm talking about men this morning, and women, you can listen in because you will benefit. Kids, if you're not yet old enough to have children, you'll need this.

This applies to all of us. But let me give you the encouragement because I've seen many parents spiral downwards quickly because of guilt and regret. Regretting that they could've done a better job and feeling guilty for that.

And let me just, one point of encouragement. I struggle with that, even as a pastor and preaching. I mean, it's easy to preach it.

Try living it. I mean, I can come up here for an hour and tell everybody what to do, but that's not where the rubber meets the road. That's just a starting point.

And I look back and I wish the years would slow down a little bit. Where did my little two-year-old, my son, now he's nine here, and where did that happen? That seemed like a year ago, not five years or six years or seven years ago, and regretting, I wish I would've spent more. I wish I would've.

So be careful not to get caught in that trap though because the enemy will use that against you and beat you down. But the first point of encouragement on this issue of parenting and being a father is even God's children rebel. Because a lot of times we wonder, why are kids rebelling? Even the perfect father had kids that rebelled.

Now, in giving these points, I'm not encouraging rebellion. I hope that all of our kids are raised in the fear and admonition of the Lord. They leave it to be of a household, right? And they just grow up loving the Lord.

But that's not always the case. They rebel and it hurts. And I see it at a young age, when even my little kids rebel, it hurts.

But you have to remember that even God's children rebelled. Number two, you're not God, you're just a steward. There's a lot of peace in that, knowing that God, I don't know where these kids are gonna go.

I mean, another point of transparency, looking at the news, looking at where our nation is going, it will drive you crazy if you don't get into the Word of God. Raising kids in this culture, are you kidding me? I mean, it's alarming. Can you imagine 10 years from now or 20, what, your grandkids, your little baby, your grandkids that aren't born yet? But that's why we have to remember, you're not God, I'm not God, we're just the steward.

We just steward these wonderful gifts of God. And as we stay focused on His sovereignty, that's the next point, trust in His sovereignty, not your skills. Trust in God's sovereignty, not your parenting skills.

Now, another disclaimer, please have good parenting skills. That's important, it's wisdom, it's wise to raise our children, to have good parenting skills. But I'm not gonna trust in how I treat little Johnny and how I do

this, I'm trusting in God's sovereignty and ultimately giving them up to God and God allowing them to shape and direct them.

Here's why, I have seen, I can name them, but I'm not going to. Luckily, they don't go to this church. I've seen terrible parents produce wonderful kids and I've seen good parents produce rebellious ones.

And I don't, I mean, just the couples I'm thinking of, they won't listen to this, don't worry, they don't, but they are just, their life is a mess. And you look at their kids and like, how is, I mean, straight A's, get to bed early, don't complain about that, just wonderful kids and it might be God's grace because they couldn't handle a rebellious child because they're already in a state of rebellion, their house is, so you see wonderful parents and then what happened to these kids? Perfect example, Jim Cimbala. You ever listen to his video? I would encourage you to listen to his, the Brooklyn Tabernacle out of New York, 3,000 people on their Tuesday night prayer meeting.

That church has got it going in the right direction, do they not? And that's, and he talked about his own daughter, I believe her name was Christy, and getting hooked in that lifestyle in New York and praying and it was just breaking his heart. Godly man, what about, have you ever heard of a man named Billy Graham? His son Franklin wrote a book on a rebellious child and many pastors, many leaders have had kids that go sideways and sometimes we often blame ourselves. But again, we don't want that, we don't desire that, but sometimes you can be the best parent, Dr. Dobson, I remember hearing him talk about his son.

We can do everything we do and they still rebel just like God's children still rebel. I'm gonna get you out of Egypt, I'm gonna open the Red Sea, I'm gonna bring food from heaven, water from rocks. Clearly God's, and they rebel.

So don't beat yourself up, you do everything you can do, you pray and you fast. Number four, your kids are fighting the flesh just like you are. We forget that, right? We think, well, at 18 they'll start fighting the flesh.

No, they're starting at eight months. More, more, more, more, right? Everything's mine, they're fighting the flesh just like we are. Sometimes they need love and grace and not another lecture.

And I'm preaching to myself this morning in case you haven't noticed. Number five, those who have been forgiven much love much. And I wanna be very careful on this point because I'm not encouraging rebellion.

I encourage young adults to live for Christ. You don't want a testimony. Well, I already hear my testimony.

You don't wanna have to give a testimony if you don't have to. Your testimony should be, I've been walking with Christ since early as I can remember. He's held me, he's been everything to me and that's your testimony.

You don't have to say, well, listen to me, I fell back into this lifestyle. You don't want that necessarily. But I've noticed that when God pulls out the prodigal and he looks back on his life and he says, I should have died then and then and then I shouldn't be here.

God, you've saved me from all that because of that life that you've pulled me out of, living with the pigs, eating with the swine. God, I love you more than many others do. I've noticed that.

Those who've been forgiven much tend to love much. So be careful, pray for your prodigal. But watch, when God starts to work, that will be your next preacher.

That will be your next worship leader because God has broke them to such a point by the time they come back that they're ready to fully surrender their life and be used by God. Remember Paul of Tarsus? Killed the church, persecuted the church. So those are the five points of encouragement.

So let's get to the message, act like men. When we left off last week, I started to think about this topic last week when we read strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered. You go after the head and the sheep will scatter.

You go after the shepherd and the sheep will scatter. That's the enemy's plan. That's why he goes after leadership.

He goes after different areas because you strike that person, they all fall like a domino. Here's interesting about fathers. A dad's leadership at home should be a model of strength and authority.

They should model strength and authority, but always temper that by love and compassion. Harsh discipline tends to close down a sensitive feminine spirit. Talking about women.

This is from Dobson, Dr. Dobson. A dad's leadership at home should be a model of strength and authority, but always tempered by love and compassion. Harsh discipline tends to close down a sensitive feminine spirit.

We have this image here of yes, being authoritative, leading the home, but if we're too harsh, we can break that spirit and crush that spirit instead of building them up. The father dictates more than I think you realize. Do you know why many young women are promiscuous? Because they didn't get that attention from their father.

Do you know why we see the spike in girls 10 to 14 in suicide? Because of an absentee father. People say, well, I'm not an absentee father, I'm at home, and I want to remind you that you don't have to be home to be absent. You can still be at home and be absent.

Mentally, emotionally, spiritually. Now, I know we enjoy the TV, but that's probably one of the worst things ever designed to zap time. Because the little boys, little girls need us and we're too busy doing this.

I mean, can you imagine giving them two or three hours a day? Or your grandkids? Can you imagine refocusing that time? So be careful, because how the men act will set the temperature of their home, their spiritual temperature in many different areas. A dad must remember that he's being watched closely, again, talking about girls, by that little girl around his knees. The way he treats her mother will teach her volumes about what men and women should relate to, or relate to one another.

Blatant disrespect towards his wife will not be missed by the child. Will it? You show me a man that disrespects his wife in front of the kids, puts her down, you will see that carried into the next marriage. Unless that kid repents and lets God completely change his life.

Because that same thing is passed down often. It's called model behavior. People are like, you shouldn't quote psychologists.

Well, if the psychologist is biblically based, psychology is the study of the mind. The Bible has a lot to say about studying the mind. For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

What we put in is what we get out. And a lot of Christian therapists are realizing that the powers in Scripture, not in psychology, not in building self-esteem, not in your inner child and your inner self, back to the Scriptures, back to the Scriptures of also men leading. A man should always look for ways to build self-confidence in his girls.

If she believes that she's pretty and special, she will be inclined to see herself that way. He holds the key to her acceptance. And I wanted to read how a father affects boys and the list is just too long.

But I just summed it up in this one sentence. A father shapes his son's life more than any other influence on the planet. That's it, how's that? Now, of course, God comes in there, Christ shapes.

But the man, the father, will shape and mold his character more than anyone else. That's why crime is rampant. That's why you have the jails are full.

I mean, go and interview the inmates and look at the studies, I've read them. How many of those came from fatherless homes? 80, 90% where the men were disengaged, the men are absent and they just allow the children to do whatever they want. So I believe that strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter.

Contextually, that verse is referencing Zachariah. When Zachariah prophesied that they would strike the shepherd, being Christ, and all his disciples would flee. The context, but the overlapping principle still applies, that you go after that leadership.

And see, man, we need to stop blaming everything from God to the government and look in the mirror. I mean, I wish that could go out to 100 million men in America. America.

Wake up, that's the issue. We need to look in the mirror. We need to take that ground back and act like men.

A man affects his wife spiritually and emotionally more than any other influence. I'm gonna read that again. A man affects his wife spiritually and emotionally more than any other influence.

We can either build them up or pull them down. Strike the shepherd and they will scatter. Men, you're not called to be a passive, weak, indecisive partner.

You're called to protect, lead, and guard your family. You're to initiate prayer. You're to defend your wife, shepherd your children, and make your home a holy sanctuary, not a breeding ground for Satan.

You're called to fight the enemy, not flee from him. Everything starts, everything starts with your own spiritual character. Your spiritual life is what's going to flow out into everything else.

So let's talk about that verse, 1 Corinthians 16, 13. Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, and be strong. Number one, be watchful.

Be watchful, and my point in this type of sermon is to shake you and to rattle your cage so that when you leave those doors, something changes. Because as I've said many times before, I'm tired of playing church where everybody comes in and they know what to say. Hey, brother, how's it going? Good, and you're struggling with the same thing that you had five years ago.

You still punch holes in the wall. You still scream at the top of your lungs. When's it gonna end? You still talk about getting back in the Bible.

10 years ago, when's that gonna start? You start, yeah, I gotta be that man in the house. I gotta worship again, I gotta get, yeah, okay, you told me that six years ago. When's it gonna start? Because I'm getting tired of preaching and we don't change.

That's the whole point. This isn't for me to just come up for an hour, did my thing, and go home. It's to stir and it's to convict, so we have to be watchful.

This is the first point. What does watchful mean? Be alert, be cautious, be vigilant, be on guard, be prepared, and be ready. So are you? Are you alert? Are you cautious? Basically, it's a man, what this means, alert, cautious, vigilant, you're on guard, everything.

Everything that comes into your home, there's a filter. It's called being watchful. When your 12-year-old wants to bring somebody over to the house that might be a very negative influence, you can't say, no, I don't think so.

When they wanna watch certain things, you can say, I don't think so. Certain influences, friends, relationships, or you're watching, financially you're watching, relationally, you're not, what's the opposite of watchful? Careless, lazily, rash, you're lazy, rash, meaning quick decisions without thinking, and negligent. That's what happens when we're not watchful, we're lazy.

That's what the enemy comes in, he just comes in, let me just come in, and those are the three areas. If you just want me to break it down for you, media, influences, and I wrote something else, the third one down, oh, choices. The choices we allow our families to make.

Getting them into financial difficulties, making bad spiritual decisions. One thing that saddened me about sports is now everybody's gone on weekends for sports. When I was playing sports, Sundays, you didn't play sports.

But now you have travel ball, you have soccer, and baseball, and everybody's gone. Everybody's gone on the weekend, so we're putting that above God. We can try to fit church in whenever it works, but sports is our priority, or you name it, there's a lot of different things.

I mean, I've seen it, you've seen it too. It went from every Sunday, now attendance is like once a month, and we're proud of ourself. When did that slip in? Be watchful, men.

Alert, cautious, vigilant. And we're gonna do something a little bit different this morning. I'm gonna have the ushers pass the plate and collect your cell phones.

We're gonna check your web history and your YouTube history, and I'll tell you what you love and what you worship. False alarm, because I know some of you wouldn't be putting a phone in there. But that's a test to show you.

That's what's influencing you. Are you being watchful? Are you being cautious? Because that shows you where your heart's at. That shows you, it's all news and all sports and all God knows what, and you come to church, you're not being watchful.

You're not being vigilant. You're not being alert. You're being led to sleep by the enemy.

So watchful is so important. What we read last week, and he came and he found them sleeping again. Jesus said, are you still sleeping and resting? Rise, let us be going.

See, my betrayer is at hand. Your betrayer is at hand. Okay, here's a little wake-up call.

Your enemy does not sleep, he does not slumber. He's sent to kill, to steal, and to destroy. See, it's interesting.

We hear that on the news. ISIS, right, the gun sales are up. Everybody's ordering AR-15s and all this stuff.

Why, because there's an enemy that is sent to kill, steal, and to destroy. Do you know there's an enemy already here? He's already here. He's in your house.

He's probably in church sometimes. Maybe not this church. After hearing that worship, hopefully he flees.

But that enemy is here. He's sent to kill. He's just looking for a stronghold.

And when you say, well, that's not big deal, and that's not a big deal, and 10 years of not a big deal, and you wonder what happened, because you weren't watchful. It's okay for the Father to say, no, we're not gonna allow that into our homes. Oh, dad, come on.

Have you heard that before? Good, that was a close call. We can be very cautious about our income, about our reputation and our bank statements, but lazy in regard to the spiritual climate of our home. Listen, it took me a while to figure this out, but the most important thing you can focus on is the spiritual climate of your home.

Because how much is in your bank account right now? Where's your stock? Where's your retirement? You know, to the dollar. Where's the spiritual climate of your home? I'm not sure. I hope we're doing okay.

It doesn't work that way. We have to be watchful. I remember just six months ago, a man said to me, at least my kids smoke marijuana at home so I can watch them.

Last night I wanted to say more, and this morning I wanna say more too, but I'm not going to. I mean, that preaches itself. At least they're smoking marijuana at home so I can keep an eye on them.

Now on the flip side, and I have to talk about the flip side, there's a danger of being too cautious. There's a danger in being too cautious. And people probably think, Shane, can you really be too cautious in this area? Well, there are areas you can be too cautious in.

For example, I know this might surprise a lot of people, but do you know the main reason why we die is because what we put in here? Very unhealthy food. Heart, I think the top three killers, heart, cardiovascular, it's all tied to health. A lot of it's tied to health.

So too cautious, I'm just not gonna eat. Well, instead of dying in 40 years, I'm gonna die in 40 days. Too cautious.

Have you seen the recent statistics on driving? And how much results in accidents and deaths from driving? Well, then we never drive again. What about flying an airplane? I'm never gonna fly. So you can be too cautious.

And in this area, you can, what I call, you put too much of a hold on and you squeeze the life out of everybody. Because God calls us to resemble his son, Jesus, to be that loving shepherd, not just a dictator. And we have to be careful here.

Too many rules without a loving relationship with your kids leads to a critical spirit. Again, if you're convicted, that's okay, me too. Too many rules without a loving relationship with your kids leads to a critical spirit.

If you have a judgmental attitude, you will not be able to lead your family effectively. You will not, it's impossible. If I have a judgmental, arrogant attitude, I cannot lead them effectively.

And the dictator is almost as dangerous as the derelict who neglects his home. Because on this side, I have the derelict who's, oh, whatever you wanna do, and kids do whatever they wanna do, and that doesn't turn out good. And then on this side, I have the dictator who just stifles and kills.

And the kids say, as soon as I'm 18, I'm out of there. Get me away from here. You didn't resemble Christ.

You resembled Sudan Hussein. You resembled, what are those guys in Cuba, and all these, I don't watch the news as much as you guys, so I don't remember their names. But is it a dictator or derelict? No, you gotta be right in the middle.

You gotta be firm but loving. You've gotta allow things but not too much. You've gotta let them grow and make choices on their own as well.

Ironically, I've noticed that those educated in biblical doctrine can often be the most critical, cynical, and negative. We must avoid being a divisive person who is proud, unteachable, and eager to dispute. Paul said that.

As we learn the Scriptures, here's what happens. Personal testimony. We can become filled with pride.

We easily see the flaws in others, but we overlook our own. Blinded by pride and convinced that God has called us to critique others, we might think that we're more knowledgeable, holy, and in tune with the Spirit, and that God has obviously given me the gift of criticism. But no such gift exists.

Do you know, you will not find anywhere the gift of criticism. It's not a gift, it's actually a flaw. It's a character flaw.

Be careful here. It can be a critical attitude and not God that is leading you. And if you're not sure, if you don't know, if you have this, ask me, I'll tell you the truth.

Or ask your spouse. Stand firm in the faith. Number two, stand firm in the faith.

The Bible says, having done all, stand. Stand firm in the faith. Ephesians 6:10, finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and having done all, stand. This is interesting. That word wiles, in the King James, I believe it is, do you know what it actually is? It's the devil's trickery.

It's the devil's deceit. He comes in tricking and deceiving. So Paul says, having done all, stand.

All you do, see, men, you're in a defensive position. You don't have to always fight, fight, fight offensive. You're defending.

You're defending the home. You're defending the marriage. You're in a defensive position.

He told Moses, having done all, stand. Joshua, having done all, stand. Paul says, having done all.

You stand there and you hold the ground. It's this picture here of holding the ground. And that's why the church has lost so much ground.

That's why the nation has lost so much ground because we haven't done this and said, no, not on our watch. No, that's not biblical. That's not correct.

Instead, we do this. And what does a coward do? That's what a coward does. The definition of a coward, you all know, they backtrack, they hide the excuse.

So men, wow, this could be a whole nother sermon, but we have to stop the excuses. When it says, a person who stands doesn't have excuses. They're standing, they're holding the ground.

It's a defensive position. So those are the first two that Paul talks about. Being watchful, so what we're doing, it's watching.

And it's like, you ever take a walk in the desert around April or May? Are you watching for something called a rattlesnake? Hopefully, are you watching or are you just watching? Of course not, you're watching the decisions the family makes, where they go, you're watchful and you're standing firm in the faith. In the faith is the key there. Because many guys play tough guy, but they're not standing firm in the faith, guarding the family.

Number three, act like men. Act like men. This is a good reminder also that acting is not talking.

Because we can talk a good game, right? We get in the car, we leave here, that's right, I'm glad he said that, here's what we need to do, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And that's why you'll see in the article I wrote that our families would rather see a sermon than hear one. Edward Guest said, the lectures, talking probably mainly to people in general, but I want to apply it to dads.

Saying, dads, the lectures that you give me may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do. For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live. And that really speaks volumes.

The things you tell me may be very wise and very true. I hear that sounds very wise and true, but I'm going to get, the best lesson I can ever get is by observing how you act and how you live. That's what speaks volumes as to if God has really changed us.

I mean, can we go to church and we act like this, but then when we get home, really, that's where the true colors come out. That's where the true man or woman of God really comes out in our homes. Now, you're not gonna conquer this perfectly.

I know that. We struggle in our homes. Who doesn't? Who doesn't? But we've got to get back to these biblical principles.

Standing and firm, acting like men. Zechariah 11, 17, woe to the worthless shepherd who deserts the flock. Jeremiah 10, the shepherds of my people have lost their senses.

They no longer seek wisdom from the Lord. Therefore, they shall fail completely, and their flocks are scattered. So what's a worthless shepherd? A shepherd is one who departs from the sheep.

They depart and they say, wolves, go ahead and attack the sheep. But what happens here in our homes, we basically say, I'm not gonna take a stand. I'm not gonna take a spiritual ground in my home.

Devil, just come in and do what you want. And I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but going to church one day on Sunday is not gonna cut it. That's not gonna cut it.

Try eating one time a week. What's the difference? We understand that physically, coming to church one day a week is not gonna cut it. You need to be men in your homes, in the word of God, praying and even fasting.

Something else we don't wanna talk about. I might wanna talk about that someday and finally get it out of my system. Prayer, fasting, guarding, praying with your kids.

What about when your kids go through, praying with your kids? And you know what, I think we need a good illustration right now. Here's how this should represent you in your home. You didn't see this sitting here, did you? Biggest sledgehammer they make.

25 pound sledgehammer. What's the purpose of this? Am I gonna write a book with this? Am I gonna take out, am I just gonna fix a glass bowl with this? Get some super glue. This has one purpose and one purpose only.

What is the purpose of this? It's to do damage. So when Paul says pulling down strongholds, when the stronghold comes in against your home, pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ. This is what you do.

You walk through your home like this. No, that's not acceptable. That's not acceptable.

And you guard your family. You shelter your family. But here's what we like to use.

I mean, I would never even put pink on a hammer. And we think, well, this, no, this isn't gonna work. If I tell you to demolish a wall, what are you gonna choose? But that's what we do.

We go to, okay, I went to church and I read my little devotional this morning for five minutes and I'm good. No, you're not good. You need this.

That's what the man does. It's not, why? Why are there women at the prayer meetings and not the men? Why do we have tons of helpers, mainly women? Why do we have women encouraging prayer? Would you just pray with us? Would you just lead us? Would you read the word? They're starving. They're starving for yes, affection, but they're also starving for leadership because you're not supposed to go hide in the corner and work 30 years so you can retire.

You're supposed to come out of the corner and do business until he returns. And you guard and you break down and you crush. That's the imagery that Paul gives us.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, you pull down strongholds. You cast down those arguments. That is getting heavy.

But on that note, there is a burden to bear. This isn't easy. This is heavy.

It hurts, I'm tired. And I think that's one of the schemes of the enemy is to look for when you're tired. Do you lash out when you're in a good mood or when you're tired? Do you pray when you're tired or when you feel like it? So yes, there's a burden to carry.

You're called to carry a burden. And you will have to reorganize your entire life. You will have to remove those things that are pulling you down and your family down.

You know what they are? I know what they are. Those relationships, those ungodly activities, those time zappers where your kid's two and then four and then six and then 16. And you know more about your favorite athlete than you do your children.

That's what you're, this is, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. But they're mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds. And the stronghold isn't just once a month or once a year.

He's constantly trying to get in there. And you might say, oh, Shane, I'm worried now. Actually, you don't have to be worried if you're praying, if you're fasting, if you're worshiping, if you're in the Word, because he's going to go before you.

That's a victory. See, the victory's already been won. The victory's already been won.

I'm actually in a position of victory, not defeat. So I just, having done all, stand. Stand therefore with your loins girded about with truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation.

All these things are defensive position. So the victory's been won. I just stand and I hold the ground.

Yes, it's difficult. Yes, it's time-consuming. Yes, your flesh will fight it every inch of the way, but I don't want to get to the end of my life and regret not being a better father.

I don't know about you, but I saw there was a question they were asking men for Father's Day. If you could go back and change one significant experience in your life, what would it be and why? And most Christian men would say, I would've followed Christ sooner. I would've ran back to the altar at 15 or 22.

I would've ran back to Christ. I would've. If I could get my 20s back again, I would run to the altar, run to Christ.

But that's why we don't want to get to the end of our life. Or some of your kids are gone and you might be living with guilt or regret. Well, you don't have to because you've got grandkids.

Well, I don't have grandkids. Well, you could be an intercessor, a prayer warrior. That's a true biblical term, to intercede for the people.

All the way from Ezekiel, Joshua. What about Moses interceding for the people when they were battling? We see it consistently that if I was just, Ezekiel, I was looking for a man. God said, I was looking for a man.

My eyes are going to and fro throughout the whole earth to find a heart that is loyal to me. I was looking for a man who would stand in the gap to build a wall between me and the people so I might not destroy that

land, but I found no one. And that's interesting.

Throughout the Old Testament, God was doing this often. He was just going, hello, I just need a few people. I just need a few people to come back to me.

I can work through the remnant. I can work through somebody who would just be intercessed because God would spare the land for 50 righteous. Would you spare it for 45? Yes, Abraham, would you spare it for 35? Yes, and he got down to where there was almost no righteous left.

So God is looking for intercessors, men to stand in the gap and act like men. We are in desperate need of broke and humble men. Men who are not afraid to admit that they need God.

That's an excerpt from the article you have. I'll just go ahead and read it. I'm tired of weak, passive men who never contend, stand, or fight for anything worth dying for.

Our nation is looking for character. Our wives are looking for leaders, and our kids are looking for fathers. Act like men.

You might be going, okay, I got it, but what does that look like? Acting like men, basically, you obey what you read. We obey what we read. And I just read a few verses in Proverbs this morning that really stood out that I wanted to share with you.

Such is the fate of all who are greedy for gain. It ends up robbing them of life. Men are very greedy for gain.

I don't know if you've realized that, have you? We're very greedy for gain. Retirement, focus on income, it's all about reputation, and I gotta be this, and I gotta, the Proverbs says it robs you of life. So why don't you pursue Christ the same as you pursue riches? Because when you pursue Christ, I think I read somewhere that those who seek ye first the kingdom of God, everything else will be added to them.

Also, men, trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will direct your path. I know so many men who they will not trust in the Lord with all their heart.

They'll try this angle, and that angle, and this charge, and this contact, and this, and then finally, when it all doesn't work out, hey, God, come here, I have a problem now. I'm into this way deep, can you help me? And he just says, if you would've just trusted in me with all of your heart from the get-go, and not lean on your own understanding, but in all your ways, acknowledge me, I would've directed your path. But fortunately, he'll say, yes, I can get you out of this mess.

But there will be consequences. There will be delays, there will be setbacks. What about in Proverbs also, the Lord hates a proud look.

In case you're curious what God thinks of pride in any of us, this is it. I hate a proud look. And when God says he hates something, you might wanna sit up straight and kinda take that to note.

I hate a proud look. He says, I hate a lying tongue. I hate hands that shed innocent blood.

I hate feet that are swift to running to evil. I hate a wicked heart that devise wicked plans, and I hate one who sows discord among the brethren. That last one's an ouch verse, isn't it? Do our conversations build

each other up, or are we sowing discord, right? What is sowing discord? Have you heard, we're sowing discord.

God hates it. He doesn't say, I would prefer you not do this. He says, I hate a proud look.

I hate sowing discord among the brethren. I hate it. So acting like men, we begin to follow these things.

The integrity of the upright will guide you. Let integrity guide you. Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.

And the final one, death and life are in the power of the tongue. Dad, you can build people up with your words, or you can destroy them. It's possible to murder with your mouth, by constantly badgering, constantly belittling, beating them up with our words.

Then the final point, be strong. Be strong. Aren't you glad there's not 10 points? Be strong.

You can't be watchful and weak. You can't be watchful and weak. The world's definition of strong, you know the world's definition, right? Arnold Schwarzenegger.

There you go. He's got the money, he's got everything. He used to, now it's getting older, things happen.

But that's the world's definition, right? Bling bling, that's what kids say. The bling bling, the muscles, all this stuff, that's the world's definition of strong. And you have a strong personality, but you can still be weak.

Because Paul said, when I am weak, I am strong. See, this whole issue of being strong is we are weak in the things of the world. We are not allowing our flesh to control us.

And by being weak and saying, God, I need you, and relying on God, we become strong in the things of God. You know, there's a lot more to say on this issue of being strong. But I think real strength comes from men who worship God.

And I know this is a hard area for men. It's been a hard area for me in the past. It's not as much anymore.

But we sometimes, we have this image that worship is for women. When that's really not the truth. I can actually take you back to more male worshipers, if you wanna start in Genesis, and work our way through, than women worshipers.

Men would worship God. Paul says, I wish that every man, everywhere, would lift up holy hands and worship God. That's what a worshiper looks like.

And actually, it's not just that. You wanna know, the Old Testament image of a worshiper is this. That's it.

Lord, I surrender all. It's submitting and surrendering. It's a position of surrender and submission.

God, I surrender all, I'm submitting to you. That's a worshiper. See, that's where your battles are won.

They're on your knees. The battle's won on your knees, worshiping. That's what a worshiper is.

So it drives me, how are we bored in worship? Please explain that to me. How can we be bored in worship? And that's where real strength is gonna come from. If you say, I wanna stand firm in the faith, I'm gonna act like a man, and I'm going to be watchful and be strong, it won't happen apart from worship.

Because here's what happens. Worship breaks the heart. Worship humbles us.

We can have a worship night. We'd like to have it once a month when possible. You just wanna take a guess if there's more men there or women.

Just throw out a guess. Just, why is that? Why is that? Paul says all men everywhere should raise holy hands and worship God, I surrender all. Because men don't wanna surrender.

We wanna put God in our back pocket. I'll pull him out when I need him. I got this.

No, you don't got this. You don't got this, and you will not change, and that's my heart. You won't change until worship becomes a part of your life.

Would you be embarrassed if your kids walked in on you and saw you on your knees praying? Nothing, nothing. But you have no problem with them watching NASCAR for three hours. I mean, I just don't understand.

I just don't understand. When you start praising God, your spirit is lifted. Loneliness, isolation, anger, and frustration, they must leave.

And men deal with these issues, loneliness, isolation, and anger, and frustration. It has to flee when you worship God. And then as your day goes on, it comes back in.

As you worship God, it leaves. And as the day goes by, it comes back in. It's this process of daily cleansing and renewal through worship.

Worship heals the inner man who is sick and dying. Your kids can paint on the wall, your wife disrespects you, and the dog just got into the trash, and you're not gonna throw a fit after coming out of worship. This happens to people, right? Won't say me, because... But no, Morgan doesn't disrespect.

I'm very blessed in that area. But I have walked out of worship with Sharpie markers on the wall, dog's got in the trash, and when you come out of worship, you say, hey, it's no problem. We'll get to it in a little bit.

But if I have a venti coffee and just watch CNN News, I'm gonna explode. Why is that? Because it's feeding the flesh, not the spirit. Worship will... You have an anger problem, you better worship.

And I don't know too many men who don't, just so you know. Anger, lashing out. Respect me.

If you ever have to say, I'm the man of this house, well, then there's a problem there. That'd be like me coming up here and saying, I'm the pastor here, you better start listening. It should just flow.

It should just flow from what God is doing. So if you have a problem with anger, you have a problem with an addiction, you have a problem with pride, worship. That's why you don't want to, because there's something that doesn't want... That's why people don't fast.

It's difficult. Try going all day without food. It's nearly impossible, unless you set your mind to do it, because the flesh wants it so bad.

Same thing with worship. God says, I want your worship. The enemy says, so do I. And the way you worship the enemy is by not worshipping God.

Saying, come on, you cannot serve two masters. You'll either love the one and hate the other, or be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both.

Now, I don't think we're bowing down to Satan and all these things, but God wants our worship, and when we don't give him the worship, when we just... I don't want to do that. I don't want to do that. I'll read my Bible.

See, the safe place is here. Safe place. But when it comes to worshiping, that's where the heart is bared.

That's where the ugliness comes out, because you're submitting. It's surrender. It's surrendering to God.

It's a very healthy thing. The final point, angry men are weak, and they're not worshipers. If you're hurting, unhappy, hopeless, and tired, run to worship.

Humble yourself and lift up holy hands. Listen, guys, that's the key right there. That's where it all starts.

That's why, why do you think I like a long time of prayer and worship? Because that's where it starts. This sermon won't accomplish anything without prayer and worship. It won't accomplish anything without prayer and worship.

I'm pretty sure the devil's listening in. He just heard my whole sermon. Did it do anything for him? Is he going to repent? No, not at all.

So we can hear something. What happens, I think, I heard it, I heard it, and I'm convicted. But that's just rationalization.

That's just rationalizing. Okay, I feel convicted. I know what I need to do, and then we think that's good enough.

But that's not.

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