

Are You Ready?

by Shane Idleman

The speaker shares his testimony of how God broke him and molded him into a new identity in Christ, and encourages listeners to turn from sin and turn towards God.

Duration: 47:07

Scripture: Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 7:21, Luke 15:11-32, John 14:6, Romans 1:20

Topics: "Repentance", "Restoration"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and the need for repentance and returning to Him. It highlights the urgency of seeking God wholeheartedly, acknowledging our sins, and coming back to Him for forgiveness and restoration. The speaker passionately calls for a genuine transformation and commitment to Christ, urging individuals to come home to God no matter what they have been through.

Transcript

And when I was thinking of my testimony, I'm thinking, wow, how do you get 41 years in 41 minutes? I'm watching the clock here. How do you do that? How do you break it down? And my mom would leave me voicemails, my wife would say this, and people would say, you're going to talk, I have no, I mean, there's just so much. And I was preparing, I would add things, and I would take out things, and I would remember this, and I would forget that, you know, like just, Lord, you know, just what do you want me to say? Because giving a testimony isn't about really our life.

It's about what God has done in our life. It's not just come hear some story and go home. But what is God? Peter tells us to give every man a reason for the hope that is within you.

And on that note, I briefly talked about why I believe. Why do I believe in the inerrancy of scripture? Why have I devoted my life to the gospel of Jesus Christ? Why was I snorting crystal myth 15 years ago and up here preaching today? Why do I believe in the inerrancy of scripture? The sufficiency of scripture. I have a cd on that back.

You can grab it. They're free. And it talks about why I believe.

Because this book, I can show you prophetically, historically, archeologically, scientifically. I can show you from Genesis 1-1, in the beginning God created through the heavens and the earth, to Revelation 22-21.

Let the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Amen. From cover to cover, the consistency, the blood of the lamb throughout. There is no discrepancy.

The problem is people don't want to hear it. Don't show me that. Don't tell me that.

Because it's convicting. It's challenging. It challenges our lifestyle.

It challenges our sinful nature. So I'm not going to really delve into why I believe. Because I already did that.

What I'm going to talk about is briefly just kind of my story and what got us really up to this point. Obviously, I was born in Lancaster, California. A lot of you know that.

At Antelope Valley Hospital. 1969 to Diane Eidelman, who I see there. I remember that day as if it was yesterday.

I bet you remember it. Before pain medication and what are the things they stick in your back? Epidural. I was born to Jim and Diane Eidelman.

Very proud of that. That family and just what what my mom and dad instilled into me. And just had a wonderful sister, Meredith, who came 15 years later.

And a wonderful brother, Ryan, who came three years later. So I'm the oldest. And it was funny in Cortzill.

Growing up in Cortzill, you could look this way down 50th street and this way down 50. You wouldn't see anybody. Now you can't cross that thing and without getting run over.

And I miss that. I miss dove hunting or rancho vistas right now. Dirt roads.

I mean it was it was fun. My dad was from the farms of Oklahoma. And my mom was from Southern California.

And that makes for a very interesting mixture. Fun and camping and different things. And then my dad, hard work.

Hard, hard work. I think every young adult should go spend some time on a farm and see what hard work is all about. I know what digging bars are and jackhammers and shovels and and all these things.

It was definitely instilled a lot of that perseverance, I think. And now when I see people, you know, and we look at our work and the jobs we have, we're blessed in this nation. I mean, we are truly blessed in this nation.

And we've got to start remembering that. But as I was growing up, what became what I'm going to try to do is identify different stages so I can kind of keep track and keep on pace. With that stage of my life, I identified with baseball, with sports.

My dad bought a batting cage. Every night we'd be throwing pitches. I was throwing 63, 64 miles an hour in Little League.

And I was just, I was probably in the top two or three of Courts Hill Little League back then. And my dad helped to build that field and his grandpa, you know, on M4 there. And baseball became my identity.

My identity was in baseball. He said Shane Idleman. You knew he pitched baseball and hit home runs and it.

And then at age 13, I think it was, I didn't verify any of this. Don't hold me to it. I heard two words or a couple words I'll never forget.

Bone chips, surgery. Right here. It was over at 13.

Going to high school, I can't even throw. Throw like a girl. Not that that's bad, but you don't want, when you're a high school baseball player, you don't want to be throwing like a girl.

I didn't get picked the freshman year, sophomore year, and you know, it was hard. I mean, you're, I mean, I'm going to the San Diego School of Baseball and here it is, just crushed. But you know, God's humble.

Because we don't humble ourselves, do we? If He doesn't humble us, we will not humble ourselves. And as my identity was in baseball, it's gone. Now I'm 13.

I actually entered high school at 14 and graduated at 17. And I think I should have waited a year looking back because I was not ready for that environment. And what happened, once I had arm surgery, got into high school here locally at Paraclete High School.

Going back a little bit, became an altar boy. I was confirmed. And I still have people say, you know, a lot of times, you know, I'm Catholic or I'm Baptist or I'm Presbyterian and I need to remind them, when you get to heaven or when you stand before God, He's not going to ask you what church you went to.

Not what denomination you belong to. He's going to say, what did you do with my son? That is the only question He's going to ask. What did you do with Jesus Christ? No denomination or religious organization will save you, ever.

But as I was going through the high school and barely getting by, I think I had somebody helping me with speech. When I was younger, I remember her coming into my speech and it was hard to, my mom wanted to do some testing on reading disability and learning disability. Because when I read and still I do not like to read in public because my eyes skip to the next sentence or throw in words that aren't there, take out words and it's very hard.

It's funny. He'd have me write books and we have to edit one book, what, 20 times? I mean to get it, get it right because it's just, but God uses that. He humbles you, keeps you broken and depending on Him.

So high school was very, very difficult. Graduated with a 1.8. Is that pretty good? You young guys don't think that's good. That is not good.

That's not good. 1.8 is not good. And it was at that time I definitely met my best friend in high school who's here today, Mike, and just so, so glad to have him here and just remembering all those times.

But it was, it was, it was an identity shifter, you know, you're not Mr. Baseball, Mr. Sports. Now you're laughed at for not making the baseball team. So my identity became parting.

Parting. I can tell you all about schooners at the old location and all the different clubs and different things and that's who I was. I was the partier.

This funny, you know, get Shane Eidelman over here. Let's start the party now. And that became my identity.

You know, beginning to drink at a young age. And now I think that most alcoholics, they link them starting to drink between 12 and 15. Those are some crucial years.

For sure. So that, that became my identity in high school, is the partier. That's who I was.

That's, you know, who people knew me as. And it was kind of because you want an identity. You know, you want to be, this is who I'm known as.

I'm not a jock. I'm not an intellect. I'm, you know, this is what I did.

Unfortunately, that was a very destructive lifestyle and not remembering how I got home a lot of those nights and my mom's patience and her prayers and probably remembers me rolling a truck or two and totaling them. And by the grace of God, I stand here today. Mike was with me in one of them.

He wasn't the bad example I was, so don't think I'm going anywhere with that. And then after high school, it was very interesting because I think it was within a week, right after I graduated, went into full-time construction. And you don't know, you don't know hard work until you do underground construction.

I mean, it was, it was very hard work. And my identity at that point then shifted into weight lifting. Now I'm talking to the guys.

You want to try these little blue pills? Dianabol, started injecting cestinon, got into equipoise, which is for horses. A lot of different steroids because that was my identity. Getting bigger and bigger and bigger and ultimately a lot stronger.

The problem with that is when you inject yourself with that much testosterone, you become like an animal. Raging. Roid rage is very real.

It's almost like caffeine rage. That's a whole nother topic on fitness. But with those steroids, began to, you know, bench press 400 pounds and curl 90 pounds in each arm.

And just this was my life and become really destroying myself. As what I, looking back, but that was my identity was in, was in that, was in weightlifting and being big and strong. And I mean, isn't a man supposed to lift all this weight and drink a 12-pack of beer and win all the fights he was in? That was my, my definition of a man, basically.

So I found my identity in that and make a long story short. Was probably in the, you know, top 5% of the valley again and just you know, 270 pounds or so and a lot, lot bigger, a lot stronger back then. But when you take those things, it really hurts your immune system.

You don't have an immune system. So I got strep throat and it went to my heart as a viral infection. So I'm sitting there.

Still remember just like somebody sitting on my chest. Oh, geez, I better go to the hospital. So here comes this big guy sitting in the emergency room like, you know, I'm waiting, waiting, waiting.

You know, she finally comes in and goes, okay, what's wrong with you? Yeah, I don't, you have a, don't have a easy time breathing. Yeah, okay, whatever. She gets me back in there.

She's running a test and then she goes crazy. Stat quick, we need a cardiologist. We, a stat right now.

And they started wheeling me in this room and some of you might know Dr. Chowdhury who's local. You know, he was, he was rushed to the hospital and I'm just laying there. I was like, what's going on? He's like, well, EKG says you're having a mild heart attack at 24 years old.

Whoa, that wasn't even a wake-up call. Still rejecting God, still ain't going back into the partying when I got out four days later. But to make a long story short, he came in and he just, you know, we ran all kinds of tests and, and what the, the strep throat went to my heart as a viral infection called myopericarditis, I believe it was.

So it really wasn't, I don't know if it was a heart attack or not. I didn't feel like, I just couldn't breathe. And I mean, but they were at the hospital.

They were going pretty crazy. I mean, wheeling me here and calling Stat and, and I mean, he must have got there at 2 30 in the morning and within, within minutes of them calling. So that was a very scary ordeal for sure.

But got out of the hospital, got home, was partying again within a week, you know, just living that very destructive lifestyle. Because without Christ in your life, without God, you'll just, you'll just keep going from one bad thing to the next. One wrong decision to the next wrong decision.

And once I got out of the hospital, then I had to, you know, obviously my next, so my identity was in weightlifting and then I had to get a job, obviously. You know, and I couldn't bear it. I made it through college one month.

I said, I'm not going to do this. This is ridiculous. And, I could not sit there for, and well again, we don't want to discourage young adults.

It was great if you can do it. But anyway, with college I started working with what was called back then as family fitness centers. Right before they were opening here and I, I dove right into family fitness centers and became 24 hour fitness now.

So I was instrumental in opening up the Lancaster location in West Palmdale, East Palmdale. Started working hard, selling lots of memberships and to me it wasn't sales. I mean somebody a hundred dollars down, 15 a month for a gym like this, this is unbelievable.

So I was really believed in what I was promoting and as a result shot up, shot up the company, number one in the company of family fitness centers and awards and money and, you know, building custom house at 26 years old and you know, it was, my identity was now in success and recognition and all these things. Problem is you bring all that with you, the anger, the alcohol, you know, the arrogance, the three A's. Those are the three A's I say get me in all the time.

Arrogance, addiction, arrogance, addiction. I'll think of the next one in a minute. What was it? Oh anger, there we go.

So at the gym, met a girl and started dating, which bringing all this junk from my life, she brought a lot from her life. While we were engaged, my father passed away and that was a really hard time for me. You know, I remember, I don't know if Lisa's here tonight or not, but she called me at work and said, hey, you need to get to the hospital.

I'm like, okay, why, what happened? They're trying to resuscitate your dad and I knew that's not a good thing. Trying to resuscitate, that means he's, you know, he's pretty much has died and they're trying to bring him back or keep the heart going. And the sad thing was three days earlier, I believe it was, my mom called and said, hey, it's your dad's birthday.

You want to come to the house? And no, too busy. Got to work, got to make the almighty dollar. You know, didn't have time to go over there at night and here he is, you know, dead three days later and walk into the hospital and you know, you're in trouble when the cardiologist, Chowdhury comes in and he's crying and you know, it's over, he's gone.

And you know, and this is obviously a hard part to think of things like that. Think of that moment because he said you can go in and see him, you know what I mean, who wants to do that? So I did and pretty much lost it, you know, seeing your dad there with tubes in his mouth and just, I mean, he's just eyes closed and just looked pretty peaceful, but he was, you know, just lost it and I was just thinking, you know, as you think back, you think, you know, the hardest thing is, and my dad wasn't the spiritual leader in the home and, you know, and I don't want to candy coat or sugar coat anything and that's just the truth. He came to know the Lord very close to the end of his life, but it made me realize now and it's given me a passion for godly leadership in the home.

It gave me a passion for that because as he's lay there dying or dead, you know, wondering, Dad, show me how to be a man. Show me how to treat my wife. Dad, show me how to love God.

Show me. It's too late. He's gone.

It's done. And that's what's happening in our nation. We're burying our children, not physically, spiritually, because we have dropped the ball.

We are no longer leading. The reason our nation is the condition it's in today is because of deterioration of the family, period. End of story.

The husband has given up their God-ordained role of spiritual leaders in their homes and we are reaping the whirlwind. It's all linked back to the family. God, as God designed it.

So that was a very hard time for me. You know, going through that and then my fiancée at that time, her dad died three weeks later. So we entered into marriage very broken, very arrogant, still using steroids now and then, alcohol, not much as crystal meth and marijuana as much, but just bringing all that into marriage.

And of course we succeed financially, but fail relationally. So we're divorced in late 1990s. And that really, let me just make sure I didn't miss anything there because it's important.

But that, looking back, as funny as it sounds, you know, I thank God for that. What? I thank God that he allowed that. Because I probably wouldn't be here today.

I'd be dead. I'd be buried. But he used that to break me and to mold me and to shape me.

It wasn't until then, until she walked out, never to return, until I was demoted at work, until God to be able to bring these things out of my life, break me down. I finally cried out and said, Lord, I need you. I'm done trying this on my own.

It was a TV preacher. I won't name. But it was 1999 and I turned on the TV and, you know, a lot of those guys I don't really think are, it's a good idea to watch.

But he was at a men's conference and he was just speaking. I mean, he was, he was telling it like it is. You know, the story of Samson.

You know, your eyes have been plucked out. You've lost your vision. You've lost your destiny.

You're on a detour and you better turn around. And it just, I just, I just began to cry out and gave my heart to, the funny thing is at 12 years old, I believe that at a conference up in the mountains, I profess Christ as Lord. I said the prayer and all these things, but you would have never known it.

Never known it. The Bible is crystal clear. You'll know it.

You don't say a little prayer and nothing changes. When you, when you truly give your heart to Christ, everything changes. Everything changes.

So that's another passion of mine is to preach to that complacency or complacency that we're seeing today. A lot of people, you don't just raise your hand or go forward and okay, I don't want to go to heaven. You turn from sin.

You turn from, from sin and destructive lifestyle. You turn towards God. There's genuine fruit.

Your life is changed. You have a desire for the things of God. You're not walking to the, according to the things of the world.

So it was pretty clear to me. Now that I read the scriptures, I get very frightened because of how I was living is not in, in, in alignment with God's word. So as we ended in, in divorce and thankful, thankfully no kids, went our separate ways.

That was what brought me back to, to the Lord. But he stripped everything from me. I walked away from 24-hour fitness.

The stock, I couldn't even go to work and just focus anymore. I was like, this has been leading me astray. I want the Lord.

So I gave it up. All the stock options, 401ks, everything, \$100,000 a year and just walked away and moved back home with my mom. Talk about humiliating.

I'm wearing a suit and tie driving the newest vehicles and now I'm living with her digging ditches with my brother running into people going, what are you doing doing that? Well, you know and just he just broke me and broke me and broke me because I believe before God can use a man mightily up here, he's got to

break him greatly. And you come up here in his power, in his strength, not in arrogance, not in pride, but look what the Lord has done. Look at what he has done.

And I come up here and people ask, do you get, you know, butterflies? I shared this last week and I don't really. I come up here with the weight of responsibility. When you speak God's word and you take this, take this and hold it above everything else, there's a weight of responsibility.

We can't come up here and tell jokes. We can't become come up here and be politically correct. I must be biblically correct.

I must give an account for the words I say, the people I influence. And the weight of that responsibility begins to pull on you and you've got to just realize the necessity of relying on God and humility. And that bringing me back to my mom's house, I've told the story I think to the congregation before, but you know, first thing I want to do is, you know, hook up the TV and she's like, no, we don't have cable and whoa, what am I going to do? What? Well, that's when I started to get through this.

Read it year after year after year, Christian biographies, Christian history, systematic theology, church history. And I started to just build and build and build and it just felt like I was being filled with the Holy Spirit of God and really acquiring this boldness. And that's why I preach so hard against modern day entertainment.

Not because it's prudish or this, but it influences you. It influences you. Think about that.

What you put in comes out. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. And their nation now, I've talked about this before, is glorifying vampires and the occult and witchcraft.

And we wonder why the Spirit of God is not moving among us. Because we're filling our mind with filth and junk. And that was a turning point in my life, being filled with the Holy Spirit of God, reading his word, getting into things, hanging out with those people who built me up instead of pull me down.

And that was a turning point in my life. And that's when I, you know, moving in with my mom was probably a very, probably the most difficult thing I've ever done as far as it was great and stuff, but as far as humbling myself and just the humility thinking I have nothing 30 years wasted, but really was it? You know, he rebuilt everything and he restored everything and that was living there. You know, I was able to get back in the word, divorce his final years, a few years into it.

And then I finally met Morgan at the gym. The funny thing was I was really into country music back then. Still love it, of course, but you know, I sing Amazing Grace on one song and something about Ride a Cowboy on another and I just, these guys, I mean, it's what the entertainment industry has become.

But anyway, long story short, I was watching Craig Morgan video and she was on it on something to write home about. I was thinking, man, Lord, I'd love to marry a girl like that. Of course, just looking at looks and, you know, being selfish in that area.

But it was just funny. I said that within a few weeks I saw her at the gym and she's kind of dating this guy that works for me. I'm like, how did he get her? Unbelievable, I cannot believe this.

And I was just baffled for weeks, but come to find out they're kind of more friends and just hanging out. But the funny thing is she asked me to church and I said, sure, I'll go. I'm going to church already.

Actually here, I believe I was going. And we went to church and then went out to dinner afterwards and just did not hit it off. It was bye-bye, lose my number.

And she said the same thing. She was kind of working still in Hollywood and my ex came out of that. So it was not a good, I did not have good, well, let's just leave it at that.

Me and Hollywood are not very good friends as you can tell. But she was growing and learning too and becoming a new Christian and really, you know, struggling with, you know, what do I, you can't really do anything good down there, decent down there. So I think a year and a half went by and I was working outside, digging a block wall footing.

You know about this, right? No backhoe though. They just left me there with a digging bar and shovel and gave me 40 feet of chalk out. We wanted 18 inches deep and we'll be back in four hours.

And it was July. I remember that and I was just hot as could be. And the couple asked me, they said, hey, you want to go to church, Sunday night service over at Central Christian? I said sure.

And because it was a blind date, they wanted me to meet somebody there. And I said, oh my goodness. So I went there and that did not go too well.

I just, really just was struggling with God and saying, Lord, I want to come to church for the right reasons. Do you know a lot of people do not come to church for the right reasons? Singles, want to know how many singles are there? Multi-level marketing people want to go to big churches to increase their downline. A lot of people are not here for the right reasons.

So I repented of that and I just came, I walked in, I worshiped and I left. I walked in, I worshiped and left for about six weeks. But I had this peace of just about, okay, it's time to meet somebody and finally move on because one of the biggest mistakes you can do right when we separate it, we start seeing other people.

Biggest mistake you can make ever when you get divorced or separated, start seeing somebody. But this other person makes me feel loved and appreciated. So did your spouse when you first met.

Be careful. Be careful. Be very careful.

So anyway, I let a lot of time pass, maybe two, three years, four years. I met Morgan at the church service. She was walking, I think, down the aisle and I was walking kind of towards her and I said, hey, how's it going? Good.

Good to see you again. I'm thinking, oh no, here's this. We didn't hit it off last time.

So like, I don't know what came out but I said, you want to get something to eat? And we did. We went out and I was just, I was falling in love as we were talking because it was, it was inside. Inside.

How you want to raise your kids. The joy of the Lord. See what I did is I follow, follow wholeheartedly after Christ and I watch to see who keeps up.

When you're dating somebody, you better follow hard after Christ and if they do not keep up, they will pull you down. And she was there. She was, she was loving the Lord and we just really hit it off and I had to kind of put on the brakes because I wanted to move so quick, you know, and it was stressful and because you know, anxiety and like, oh no, what about if it happens again? And you know, so but it just started to

really, really work out.

And obviously we got married, I think a year later and just the kids that came, you know, with baby Shane and Aubrey and Gracie and just true treasures in life. And I just, you know, I thank her so much for it too because it's hard to be married to an individual like me, you know. And I don't say that, you know, in a necessarily negative way, but because of the passion God has given me, you know, it's up at 4 30 in the morning and just I need to pray and I need to read and I'm not, I need to spend time with God.

And I'm just burdened with this calling and calling the nation to repentance. And it takes a strong woman to deal with a strong type A personality, to be flexible, yet at the same time loving and stern. So God, I could tell from the get-go, it was a perfect marriage.

Not perfect, we have our issues, we argue, trust me. Usually I'm wrong. I'm trying to gain brownie points.

Is it working? So that's, so that's my story in a nutshell as far as taking 40, 30 minutes and trying to give everybody, you know, where I came from, living here all my life, not having a desire to move, just wanting to, you know, just really, you know, do what I feel the Lord's called me to do. And that's kind of where this church came about. It was on my heart for a few years, but I'm like, no, there's no way.

Morgan remembers, I'm not going to pastor. There's no way. Dealing with people? I can deal with God all day long, but it's dealing with people that get you in trouble.

And I just finally submitted to the call one Tuesday night. She left for a few hours. It took me about three hours.

I just, I'm not, there's no way. I said, okay. Well, Lord, I'll do it.

I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it if you open the doors.

And I said, if you're with me, I do not want to step to this pulpit unless God, your spirit is going to be upon me to speak your word. I do not, you can leave me at work. You can not seem with me at home when I'm eating dinner, but Lord, do not leave me when I step to this pulpit.

I need you. I will do it if you will, if you will lead me and guide me. And he began to open doors.

You know, Sean allowed us to use this facility, uh, and just as long as we need it and just door after door after door after confirmation. But what I really learned from that is waiting on the Lord. The importance of waiting on him.

See, a lot of times in our culture, we want things now. The Bible says those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. That's waiting on the Lord, testing us and trying.

How do you develop patience if you're never tested? How do you develop forgiveness if you're never wronged? How do you develop the attributes of God if you're never challenged by them? So a lot of times what we're going through even right now, what you're going through a lot of times is to mold and shape and conform you into the image of Christ. Because we won't humble ourselves, will we? We won't forgive on our own. We won't do all these things unless God begins to break and to shape us into the person he's created us to be.

And it all starts with submitting, submitting to him. I'll tell you one word, one word that'll stop you from truly knowing God. It's pride.

It's pride and arrogance. And on that note, I want to briefly shift gears and kind of close out the service with this. And it's a burden that's been on my heart.

And this is where we get a little more serious. You know, that was great story. But I want to talk to you just about three things that have been in my heart.

And you don't have to turn there. I'm just going to read from Zephaniah. He wrote in 600 BC.

Hope I can find it. Pastor, you can't find it. It's not good.

And this, you know what? What we're seeing in our nation today, let me preface this. What we're seeing in our nation today, not only are we seeing a turning away from God, we're seeing an embrace of relativism, which says what's right for you might not be right for me. Who are you to say? Who am I to say? We don't want to talk about the difficult truths of the Bible anymore.

We don't want to mention hell. We don't want to mention judgment. We don't want to mention the wrath of God.

We don't want to mention righteousness. We sure don't want to talk about holiness. We don't want to talk about the blood.

We don't want to talk about the cross. Unfortunately, those are the foundations of the gospel. That's the foundation.

You can't appreciate the good news without hearing about the bad news. And yes, we turn on the TV and you can hear about your best life now, but when do you turn on the TV and hear about the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ that we are sinners in need of a savior? We don't hear that much today. And we have to, like Amos, I quoted earlier, said prepare to meet thy maker, O Israel.

When do we say prepare to meet thy maker? If I stand up here and do not do that and preach the totality of God's word, I have missed my calling. I have missed my duty. Paul said if I was still pleasing men, I would not be a bond servant of Christ.

Jesus said beware when all men speak well of you. Why? Because when you preach the difficult truths of the Bible, lives are radically changed. That's why we're not seeing people radically change.

We're seeing people walk into churches no different when they arrived because they're not being convicted and not being challenged. And with that said, I want to just read briefly from Zephaniah and just think about where our nation is today. It says the great day of the Lord is near.

It is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the Lord is bitter. There is mighty men shall cry out.

The day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess. I will bring distress upon men and they shall walk like blind men because they have sinned against the Lord. Neither will their silver nor their gold be able to deliver them in the day of judgment.

But here's the encouraging news. Gather yourself together, O undesirable nation, before the decree is issued or the day passes like chaff, before the Lord's fierce anger comes upon you. Seek the Lord now, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld his justice.

Seek righteousness, seek humility, that it may be that you'll be hidden from the day of the Lord's anger. Do you ever hear that anymore? Why not? Because we don't want to hear it and our nation is conforming to the culture so we don't upset people anymore. Do you know that the only hope for this nation and the only hope for people who don't truly know God is repentance? When the judgment hand of God falls upon a nation, there is no plan B. There is no second chance.

You don't stand before God and give your, well, I did this and I did that. No, you will fall down on your knees and weep. When you stand before a holy, righteous God.

But thank God, Timothy tells us, for the eyes of the, or I'm sorry, he tells us that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. So Shane, this is depressing. This is bad.

It's good news. It's good news. God has created the way.

God's bridged that gap through Jesus Christ. Well, boy, you sure feel pretty upset about that, pretty angry. Why shouldn't I be when people are on the broad road to destruction? It's like a pit bull coming at my son.

What'd I tell him? Shane, you might want to consider moving. I don't want to offend you, little buddy. Hey, you might want to get out of the way.

I don't want to upset you. I know you're having a good day so far. Or would I run and grab him as that pit bull launched at him? What would you do? This is the same thing.

We're talking about the eternal destiny of souls. Behold the glory of God. But we don't want to talk about these things.

And that's that first group of people I want to talk to, those who truly don't know God. Do you know that Jesus said, I am the only way, the only truth, the only life. No man can come to the Father except through me.

He is the only way. Well, Shane, all paths lead to heaven. Yeah, they do.

I'm sorry, all paths lead to God. They don't lead to heaven. All paths, every path you take, every choice, every road, every religion you follow will lead to the judgment seat of God.

It will. But only what Christ has done if we've accepted him. Shane, who are you to say that? I'm not.

Nobody to say it, but that's what the Bible says. That's what truth bears out. The cross.

The cross of Christ. It's not pleasant. It's ugly.

It's ugly. Sin is ugly. It's destructive.

You see this? It's nice. It's been painted and probably has a coating on it to protect. But you know, the real cross was stained with blood.

A man beaten beyond recognition, hanging for the sins of mankind. It's not, there's no nice pleasant way to say it, folks. It's ugly.

The sin of mankind fell upon him at that moment. If you don't believe that, I can take you through Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy and Joshua and Judges and Ruth and 1st and 2nd Samuel, 1st and 2nd Kings, 1st and 2nd Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Solomon's prophets. I can take you through the prophets and show you Christ in every book of the Bible.

It's all about Christ and him alone. That's why I get excited. He said he's the only way, the only truth, the only life.

You won't get up to God and make a deal. You'll bow to him. God said he is highly exalted, Jesus Christ.

At the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that he is Lord. Period. End of story.

He's not some passive doormat turning the other cheek guy. John said in the book of Revelation that he saw heaven open and behold a white horse. And he was set on what's called faithful and true.

And it goes on to say that out of his mouth goes a sword. Jesus Christ, yeah, goes a sword that he will strike the nations and he himself will rule the nations with the rod of iron. And he himself will tread the winepress and fierceness and wrath of almighty God.

That does not sound like a pacifist doormat turn the other cheek. Christ is Lord. See, we say that flippantly now.

Christ is Lord. People used to die for saying that. Heads will come off.

As I told the congregation a few weeks ago, they would be led, led, and the Roman soldiers would say, deny Christ and say Caesar is Lord. And they couldn't. They'd have to say, Iusos and Kairios.

In Greek saying, Christ is Lord. Jesus is Lord. Iusos and Kairios.

And the head would come off. This is serious, folks. This isn't a game.

The cross is bloody. It's a mess. Because the sin of mankind, if you don't like what I'm saying, guess what? You need to hear what I'm saying.

If you don't like this, that's because God's convicting you and drawing you. I love this. Thank God for the blood of Christ.

Thank God for the shed blood of Jesus Christ. It's the only reason I stand up here today and I'm not buried in Lancaster somewhere. The grace of God.

Those who truly don't know God. And I can't be up here and say, yeah, there's a plan B. Like I talked about earlier, it doesn't matter if you're Baptist or Presbyterian or Catholic or any other thing. It's what have you done with Christ? Because you see sin.

It's our sin nature. We are sinners who need a savior. We cannot stand before a holy, righteous, pure God.

So he had to send his son who died upon the cross. Leviticus says, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. His blood has to be shed.

He took the place of me and for you, a savior, God, on a cross. That's not pretty. That's not pretty, folks.

That's why I get so passionate about because it's life changing. If your religion has not changed your life, change your religion. If Jesus Christ has truly not changed you, I question the sincerity and genuineness of your salvation.

And I can say that with the authority of God's word. There is a transformed life. Jesus said, he who believes on me as the scriptures say, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.

If there's no passion for the things of God, there's no passion for holiness, for purity. We look just like the world. I need to seriously have you question your commitment to Christ.

Paul said, examine yourself. Do you not know yourself? Is Christ in you? John tells us, he who says he know him, but do not do his commandments are a liar. John, little nice John.

Yeah. He said, they're a liar and the truth is not in them. I'm not saying this in anger.

I'm saying this in love. Warning, people are running for a cliff and they don't even know it. What do you say? You might want to consider stopping.

I don't want to offend you, but I don't, yeah, I don't want to say anything mean. Or would you yell and say, Lord, you've got to turn from that. That's what we're seeing here.

The cross is ugly. Christ on a cross. And we have the audacity to mock that and blasphemy that and challenge that.

Listen, it's a historical fact, historical fact beyond any doubt that Jesus Christ lived. Nobody in the right mind would doubt that. It's historic.

You have Josephus, Jewish historian. You have Roman historians writing about this guy. Either he's liar, he's lunatic, or he's Lord.

He's not a good teacher. I'm tired of people telling, yeah, he was a good teacher. No, he wasn't.

If that's all he was, he was a terrible teacher. People didn't understand. He confounded them.

Parables, reals, not too sure what's going on. He's either a liar, lunatic, or he's the Lord Jesus Christ. And you've got to make that choice tonight.

Do you realize I will not talk to many of you ever, ever, ever again. I've got one shot. One shot only.

And the next group of people I want to talk about are those who are playing games. Those who are in the church, they come on church on Sunday, but they don't, they live like hell on Monday. They come as if they're doing God a favor.

Do you know what Jesus said? This scripture about 10 years ago made me drop my Bible and drop to my face. Jesus said, many, many will come to me in that day and say, Lord, Lord, we did all these things in your name. You know what he'll say to them? Depart from me.

I don't know you. What? You think, Christ, you don't, don't remember me? I don't know you. I don't know you.

You didn't do the will of my father in heaven. You didn't truly surrender your life. You weren't, you were a, you were a false convert.

You came as if doing God a favor. I don't know you. It'd be like me seeing Billy Graham here and saying, Dr. Graham, I know all about you.

I've read all your biographies, your autobiographies. I love your sermons, especially back in the 60s and 70s. I mean, it's unbelievable.

You know what he'll say to me? Young man, I do not know you. I do not know you. It's the same thing with Christ.

When we face him, we stand before him. We'll either hear, well done thou good and faithful servant, or depart from me. I don't know you.

There's no middle ground. There's no gray area. There's no I wonder if.

No. It's either well done thou good and faithful servant. I'm not talking about perfection.

I'm just talking about a heart surrendered to him, giving a life over to him. See, you can, you can look through the entire New Testament. I can go to Acts where Peter said repent and be converted.

Paul said repent. I can go to Romans for I am not ashamed of the gospel. Paul said he's not ashamed of the gospel.

Do you know I'm not ashamed of the gospel? Try getting up there and speaking for 200 people and being ashamed of the gospel. It's not going to happen. Because it is the power unto God to salvation.

And I can turn to Corinthians that the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. Think about that. The message of the cross, what I'm saying is foolish to those who are perishing.

Now I can turn to Galatians, but if we are an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel. What other gospel? That Christ is the only way. If anyone preaches anything other than that, let him be a curse.

Let him be anathema. He has delivered us out of the power of darkness from Colossians. Hebrews said without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

Revelation says those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be saved. There's no plan B. There's no backup call. God says I have highly exalted him.

Therefore at the name of Jesus Christ every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord. If this is irritating you, if it's convicting you, that's good. The Bible says that the word of God pierces.

It divides. Even Joynton Marlin is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. What I'm doing is I'm shining the light on the darkness of sin.

I'm shining the light of the gospel. But in our pride and arrogance, we don't want that. I'm going to do things my way.

I don't need God. I guarantee when you stand in front of him, you will fall down like a child and will not be able to stop weeping. Because Jesus said depart from me.

I don't know you. Do you truly know him? I mean I could just skip right to this part and say are you ready? Do you truly know him? Do you truly know him? I want you guys to think about that as the worship team comes back up. And we're going to do a time of Chris, if you could hit the lights too.

We're just going to do a time of communion. And what that is is those who know Christ as their Lord and Savior. It says do this in remembrance of me.

What we just talked about his shed blood on the cross, his body broken. We do this. We remember that.

We have to remember that. We have to go back and remember what he did. So we're going to have people come up as they start worship and begin to take communion.

We're also going to have the prayer team up in a minute. But let me close, let me close real quick and let me have if I could every every eye up here and just just just listen to me for one second without a lot of moving around and leaving. There's a story that and I'm not working up emotions.

I'm just I'm just telling it as it is. There's a story about a girl, little baby girl. I've heard a many different ways.

So I'm just gonna have to ad lib and add my two cents to it. But she's a little girl. Apple of her mother's eye, two years old.

They live close to Rio de Janeiro, but her mom knows, her mom knows that as soon as she's old enough, she could run away to that city. And as a father with Hollywood 60 miles away, I kind of know that fear. But anyway, this little girl, she's being raised up two years old, three years old, four years old, five years old.

Just running through the house. Her mom loves her. Just apple of her eye.

She can't get enough of her and they have a wonderful relationship until one day on her 16th birthday. Her mom comes home and the notes on the table. Mom, I'm I'm leaving.

I'm moved out. I'm heading to Rio de Janeiro to find myself. I just want to be happy.

I need to move on with my life. And her mom was broken for weeks and weeks and months went by and no, she never came home. So the mom said, I know what I'll do.

I'll get a picture. I'll get a picture of myself. This big picture of myself smiling and I'll post it all over Rio de Janeiro, all over the bars and the taverns.

And she did that for months and nothing. And then one night as her daughter was walking back, she became a prostitute now. She looks 30 and she's only 18.

Just depressed beyond recognition saying, oh my God, what will my mom think of me now? And she saw that picture. She saw that picture of her mom. She grabbed it.

She wept and she held it. She goes, oh, I can't believe this. This brought me so much joy.

And she turned the picture over and her mom wrote, no matter what you've done, no matter what you've been through, come home. And she ran home. And that's what God's calling us.

No matter what you've been through out there, abortion, adultery, promiscuity. It doesn't matter. He's saying come home.

That's why I'm here tonight. I'm not here to give my testimony, tell some stories. I'm here to call the prodigal son home.

That you've been running too long. You might not have another chance. You might not have another chance.

So the prayer team is going to be up here. We're going to have Morgan and Yvette, my mom over there, myself, I think Mark and Sherry. And we're just going to be up here praying for people.

And there's nothing to be afraid of this altar. I spend a lot of time up here at this altar. I get here early.

I spend a lot of time. And we're just going to be up here. We want to pray for you if you need healing.

You need strongholds broken. You need to give your heart to Christ. You need to return.

Whatever you need. We need to be a praying church. Do you realize that prayer moves the hand of God? That's the problem.

We're not a praying church anymore. Where are the prayer warriors? Now we've got five-minute devotionals. I'll pray while I'm driving.

Where are the men and women petitioning God, crying out to God for revival, for restoration? He says if you seek me with all of your heart, you will find me. Romans 1 says his invisible attributes are clearly seen. It clearly seen.

It screams. Our universe screams creator. It screams creation.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/evLx83KFN-E.mp4>

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