

# Brace For Impact ■ Are You Ready For War ■

by Shane Idleman

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual warfare, highlighting the need to be vigilant in the area of spiritual battles. It discusses the impact of prayer, fasting, and worship in fighting against evil forces and the need for intercessory prayer. The sermon also addresses the significance of surrendering to God, examining the power of the blood of Jesus and the impact of our testimony in overcoming challenges. It stresses the importance of examining our hearts before taking communion and the need to align our thoughts and actions with God's will.*

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 10:3, Ephesians 6:18, Joel 2:12, Leviticus 17:11, 1 Corinthians 11:27

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Surrender to God"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual warfare, highlighting the need to be vigilant in the area of spiritual battles. It discusses the impact of prayer, fasting, and worship in fighting against evil forces and the need for intercessory prayer. The sermon also addresses the significance of surrendering to God, examining the power of the blood of Jesus and the impact of our testimony in overcoming challenges. It stresses the importance of examining our hearts before taking communion and the need to align our thoughts and actions with God's will.

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## Transcript

Are you ready for war in 24? Yep, no, maybe so. I'm not talking about physical war. I'm talking about a spiritual war.

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. You're not gonna win this one with an AR-15 and 20 rounds. It is spiritual warfare.

And Christians have to be very vigilant in the area of spiritual warfare. We are in interesting times, aren't we? In many ways, I truly believe we are experiencing some of the judgment of God, without a shadow of a doubt. I don't know how you could argue otherwise.

We're not in the blessings of God. We are, because in Romans 1, it says God gave them over to a debased and corrupted mind. So a form of judgment is God giving mankind over to himself.

And so we see all this perversion, all these false narratives, all these lies out there. However, at the same time, we are called to be the remnant church that intercedes on behalf of God's people and on behalf of a nation. And so it's interesting times.

Yes, evil is rearing its ugly head, but we are able to fight against that through prayer and fasting and worship and getting involved in certain areas and making a difference and speaking the truth and love, getting these messages out there, of course, and getting your message out there, your testimony, even what you do on social media or the friends, the influence you have, it speaks volumes as to our spiritual character. And I believe in intercessory prayer. I believe that God can do whatever he wants, but often uses those who will intercede.

How many times have we saw in the Bible where God said, if you would do this, I will do this. Did you know Sodom and Gomorrah, according to the Bible, I could be wrong, could have been spared? Think about that. Sodom and Gomorrah could have been spared.

God said, hey, if there's 50 righteous, I'll spare it. And I like Abraham. He negotiated God down, didn't he? How about, that's how I feel sometimes.

Lord, God says, if there's just 5 million in the United States I'm like, 5 million really following you, fully surrender? Can we get that down to maybe a million? Okay, for a million, you know? And he was negotiating, but ultimately there wasn't very right, very many righteous people in there, and in their own right, interceding for the land. So God pulled them out and then brought judgment. He told Ezekiel, I sought for a man from among my people who would build a wall, not a physical wall, a spiritual wall before me and the people that I might not judge the land.

I sought for a man from among them who would build a wall, stand in the gap, and intercede. And I didn't find anyone. Is there anyone that intercedes? The prophets would cry out.

And we find intercessory prayer in the New Testament. So to me, that's pretty encouraging. Because I'm like, oh, look what's happening.

The devil's rearing his ugly head and evil's prevailing. I better just go run and put my head into the dirt, into the sand. Where are those birds that do that? Ostrich, yeah.

But we're actually called to fight. And in this battle, God's on our side. That's pretty encouraging.

So there's not really a reason to be discouraged unless we focus on that and we stay there. Right, if I scroll through the news, it's like, oh, I don't know why, just yesterday I saw that portion of the airplane that came apart. I'm like, I'm never flying again.

Can you believe sitting in that aisle? Is it pew, it's on this side, right? It's like nobody died. It's like, that's amazing. Just then you can see the night sky and you're like, whoa, the passengers are so calm, you know? And then of course, you know, Russia and China, and you start to scroll through and you see Epstein finally getting his little black book revealed and what's in this, and January 6th, it's like all this stuff is just coming out and you can stay pretty negative if that's where you camp out.

So I think it's good to know kind of what's going on, and have a kind of idea, but get back into God's word and be interceding on behalf. So I start to pray for these people now. I start to intercede for what's going on in our nation.

And God blesses the prayers of intercessory people. That is clear in Scripture. How many times, I mean, I could, God, there's so many rabbit trails on this topic because Jesus would heal people not even with the person knowing they're being healed.

They're just laying on a sick bed and they're healed. How did they get healed? The intercessor went to Jesus. My daughter lies sick.

Just speak the word and she'll be healed. The man who couldn't get there on his own so his friends brought him, house is packed, go up on the roof, lower him down. They interceded.

If you focus on that, that's a pretty powerful weapon of intercessory prayer. A man by the name of Hal Reese, or Reese Howells, I always get him confused. I think it's Reese Howells.

He was a powerful intercessor during World War I or II. You can read his book on that. And Gordon Cove, A.W. Tozer, E.M. Bounds, a lot of people, David Brainerd, who came here with the Native American Indians and lived with them and brought revival to the area and how they interceded and saw amazing results.

And so I think we have to be careful that fear doesn't push us back and get us disengaged when we should be engaged and hitting the powers of darkness head on through prayer and worship and fasting. And that's one reason why we have 6 a.m. worship. So I know some of you have been comfortable and bad, but there is 6 a.m. worship if you ever want to come.

We just put worship on, we go into prayer at 7.30, and that's how we fight our battles. It's important to dig in deep. So Revelation 12, a couple weeks ago, we talked about a dragon and a woman.

And now we're going to follow up with that. Still the dragon, still the woman. Let's put this in perspective.

The dragon, most would agree, is Satan. And then the woman, because of what we talked about a couple weeks ago, it appears that it's Israel. When you talk about how she's clothed and she's got the sun, I believe, at her head and the stars at her feet or the moon at her feet.

And in the Old Testament, that was a picture of Joseph's dream and of Israel. There's so many parallels. To really understand Revelation, you've got to do a lot of cross-references with the Old Testament.

I don't want to say the number because I don't want to mess it up, but Revelation references the Old Testament lots of times, like hundreds of times. And so we have to really look at Revelation through the framework of the Old Testament. And so the woman is Israel.

The beast, I guess where we would say the dragon, is Satan. So we're going to catch up. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of Christ have come.

For the accuser of our brethren, Satan, has been accused who accuses us before God day and night. He has been cast down. And I went into this a couple weeks ago that I believe, and of course, a lot of other theologians, I'm not theologians, I'm just a simple country preacher, but I can do some reading too, you know.

They say that Satan has access to heaven. And at this point, he no longer has access to heaven. And I had to think about that for a minute because we just think, well, no, it's kind of separate, but God can summons Satan like he did in the book of Job.

He was walking with the children of Israel, or not children of Israel, the children of God, the sons of God. And Satan was there with them presenting his case against Job. And we also see, how is he accuser? He

accuses us before God day and night.

So obviously, there was some access. He's not in heaven, but God can summons him. And it appears, and also a lying spirit.

Remember, God was there talking to the sons of God, and a lying spirit said, let me go and deceive the prophet. So we see that Satan had access, and it appears now that access has been denied. No more access.

And so heaven is rejoicing over this. And then it goes on to say, and they overcame him, who, Satan, by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony. And they did not love their lives to the death.

Folks, I'm gonna give you something you need to know for the rest of your life. Here is the best way to overcome a demonic attack. Number one, are you a believer? Because the blood of Jesus Christ puts you on God's side.

Greater is he that's in you than he that's in the world. So right there, you, see, here's interesting. I already know I have victory.

You have victory. God says we have victory, but I have to hold the line. That's the hard part.

The devil wants me to do what? I'm outta here. Should I try? I'm outta here. I don't wanna do anything.

I don't wanna tell people about God. I don't wanna plant a church. I wanna quit.

I wanna go just golf and live in Mammoth, win the lottery. Right, just get out of the game. I'm done, I'm out.

But we already have victory, so I have to fight from a position of victory. I have to hold the ground. So do you.

And that's how we prevail against satanic attacks. The blood of Jesus as a believer, putting on the breastplate of righteousness, not my righteousness, His righteousness, and then by the word of their testimony. I have come to find, and maybe many of you know this too, if something's not going out of me as far as my testimony, doing things, I'll become stagnant.

And that's what, you know, I wanna encourage some of you. You don't just always sit on the pew. You gotta put some feet to your faith.

Get involved, serve. And just like I mentioned Mammoth, what, you know, beautiful streams of river, rivers from the high Sierras flow into something called Mono Lake. It's disgusting.

I can drink out of Rush Creek. Ah, so good. You know, huh, Phil, we go up there, and then you get to Mono Lake, it's dead.

Like, you're talking, what, 20 feet, maybe? See, there's gotta be, now there's other insults and things, but there's gotta be an outflow, outflow. It's very healthy when you take in to be, there's an outflow. So they overcame Him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, reminding not only others, but themselves, Jesus, you have brought me through the gates of hell, and I am here to stand before you.

It is grace that's brought me here thus far, and it'll be grace that takes me home. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound. And sometimes, you know, it's okay to remind yourself about what God did for you.

Oh, if it wasn't for God who was on my side, don't get me started. Where would you be? I wouldn't even be here. I should be dead at 15 or 16.

Oh, but for the grace of God. And you remind yourself of the testimony, the trials He's brought you through, how good He's been to you. Oh, when the enemy wanted to take me out, that car accident should have killed me.

That person should have took me out, that disease, that health issue. Oh, but God was on my side. You overcome Him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of your testimony.

He's a liar. He's a deceiver. So sometimes it's okay to say, you know what, that's not true.

That's not true. You are a liar and a deceiver. You resist the devil, he will flee.

Well, you're not resisting him like this. Last time I checked, I didn't push against anything. Physically.

But I sure push against it spiritually. How about you? And by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. The literal translation, I mean, of course it's literal, but he's saying, and they did not love their lives enough that it would keep them from being a martyr.

They did not love their lives enough, like, oh no, I'm gonna deny Jesus. I don't wanna die. They did not love their lives all the way to the death.

And this is an interesting topic because all of us will struggle in some form or another, and there's something called self-preservation, you know, that we wanna preserve self. But the Bible tells us to die to self. Where we want to love self, love the world.

And that's why Jesus said, you can't serve two masters. How can you serve this master, but still serve this master? You can't. So I want to, most of us, when you're not believers, you want to not die to self.

Because it's all about self, is it not? What's the most popular thing right now? Smile. Oh, I got Rush Creek right there on my screensaver, I just noticed that. Well, that's kind of funny, ironic, huh? So, I used to have a screensaver, it said, is it called screensaver? Okay, God's sovereignty is my sanity.

That's a good one too, always remember that. So anyway, we want to selfie, self-esteem, self-promotion, all about self. You see athletes, movie stars, what I wanna be, I wanna make a million dollars, I wanna do all this, and it's about, everything is about me and my life and my wants and my desires.

Bible says, die to self and follow Christ. Now, that's why many people don't want to do it. That sounds stupid, they say.

People have told me, that's no fun. Well, I've never met anybody ever who's fully surrendered their life to God and who's regret their decision. Now, has it been easy? No, they never get to their deathbed, I don't know what that God business was all about.

I just wasted my whole life serving Him and following Him. Why? Because this one brings joy, unspeakable joy, unexplainable joy, peace that surpasses all understanding, the God of the universe is controlling my destiny, I'm trusting in His sovereignty. Wow, financially, it's tough, oh well, God's got it.

I'm sick, well, what's He gonna do? Take me home early? It's like, life makes sense. And this person, though, is fighting against everything. Nothing good, why is half of Hollywood on medication? If not more, why are athletes so miserable? Ask Michael Jordan how he feels now.

Tiger Woods, ask them. They're miserable. It's hard from going to be an idol and a god to millions can't give them that money, that money can't give them that freedom, that satisfaction, that peace.

That's what's so alluring to so many people, isn't it? It's that I just want peace and joy. I just want that so bad, and they go to search for all the things that can never bring it. They have to find the one true and living God.

That's why dying to self is so important. And also, we can learn briefly, not learn briefly, learn from what we briefly just read, that salvation always brings spiritual strength. They overcame Him.

They actually overcame the enemy. So salvation brings spiritual strength. I love that part.

You don't become weaker spiritually, you become stronger spiritually. Especially if you don't know Jesus, you can change that today. You can repent and you can believe and have the peace that surpasses all understanding and the strength that will guide you.

What often looks like defeat is actually victory. Always remember that in God's kingdom. What looks like defeat is actually victory.

These people were going to be killed, they were going to die, but it was actually victory because they overcame Him by giving their lives. What about the martyrs? Oh, they're gonna die. It's terrible.

And now victory because they're in heaven. What about Jesus? Did you know that they thought they had victory? The demons, the Bible says actually, if the devil knew what was coming through that victory, they would have never nailed Him to the cross. So they thought all hell was excited.

Can you imagine that party? They're all excited. Oh, the son, he's dying, he's on the cross. We've done it, we've done it, we've done it.

And then, uh-oh, what does that mean? It's finished. What's he talking about? Wait a minute, is that the ground shaking? Is that the tomb opening up? Is that the thick veil, the four-inch thick veil in the temple, as tall as this to keep the priest only once a year could go into the holies of holy? Is that veil being torn all the way from the top to the bottom, gaining access to, and now the dead in Christ are being risen from the grave? What happened? What happened? Guys, this is such a serious topic. I remember there was a book written when we first started the church that I actually used in a sermon illustration.

The title was, I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell. Well, they don't. And it's not a party.

You won't be laughing and having fun with all your buddies. It's a place of torment and destruction where you're never going to be close to God again. We engage in spiritual warfare with our testimony and His blood.

I'm going to talk about that when I continue in Revelation 12 in the next couple weeks. The title will be, as of now, Broken by God, the Shepherd of the Shattered. I'm going to talk about how important testimony is and give you some incredible testimonies.

Well, I'll tell you a little bit right now. I didn't tell you at the first service, but I was at a book sale. It was like a dollar.

And you know the pillow guy? What's his name? Mike Lindell? I'm like, oh, this is... And from crack addict to CEO, I could not put that book down for like three days, every night. The most amazing story, this guy, he's on crack all the time. He's up seven nights.

In a row, 14 nights sometimes. He's counting cards in Vegas. He's losing his marriage.

He's being threatened. He's like, this is an amazing story. And where the pillows came from and how God gave him this dream.

And it's like unbelievable. Unbelievable. So many testimonies.

Many of you could give powerful testimonies. And let me tell you, if you're younger, you don't need a powerful testimony. A nice, simple one is good too.

I gave my heart to Jesus at 12, and I've been walking with Him ever since. I don't know what divorce feels like. I don't know what alcoholism feels like.

That's good. Oh, praise God. That's a testimony in and of itself.

It's just as powerful, if not more so. So do not think you need to ruin your life to have some powerful testimony. It's not a good idea.

Here's a key to remember. When you pass through the waters, they shall not overflow you. When you pass through the waters, they shall not overflow you.

And this week, I read from a devotional. It's called Streams in the Desert. How many of you ever read that? It comes out every day.

You can have it automatically sent to you in email format. It was written at the same time as My Utmost for His Highest. By Oswald Chambers.

Both written in the 1920s. I believe one in 1925, one in 1927. This one actually might have been before My Utmost for His Highest.

And these writers went deep. Try to read these devotionals each day. They're very short.

They wrote this. God does not open paths for us in advance of our coming. Darn it.

He does not promise help before help is needed. He does not remove obstacles out of our way before we reach them. Hey, there's an obstacle, get out of the way.

Nope, it's usually right there, right in front of me. Yet, when we are on the edge of our need, God's hand is stretched out. Many people forget this and are forever worrying about the difficulties which they foresee in the future.

They expect that God is going to take them away quickly before they even get there. Miles and miles ahead. Whereas He has promised to do it only step by step as they may need.

You must get to the waters and into their floods before you can claim the promise there in Isaiah. When you pass through the waters, God says, I will not overflow you. So you're actually, they're at the water's edge or they're actually in the water.

And it's like, Lord, hey, hello. He says, don't worry, that will not overcome you. The fires will not scorch you.

I am the Lord thy God. Often, He doesn't remove things right out of our way. He gets us to the edge.

Noah or Moses, He had them get right to the edge of the Red Sea. What are we gonna do? There's a sea in front of us and here comes Egypt and Pharaoh and he's pretty ticked off. And it says, as soon as he was near the edge with that, and then begin to part.

Or Joshua crossing the Jordan. Actually, one account is when the priest, I believe, had the ark possibly and it wasn't until they stepped down into the water that the access was granted. It's amazing.

I wish the opposite was true, don't you? Oh, I see an obstacle coming up. Lord, can you just remove it now? Often, He waits until we're there and I think it's to develop faith and trust. That's true faith and trust.

Is it not? You see those things sometimes where some people just fall back and they're trusting that people are gonna hold them. I won't do that, but I've heard people have done that. But that's kind of what God does.

It's complete faith and trust. Just step out, trust in Me. But I might die, you might.

Yeah. But is that a bad thing for a believer? It's scary, it's a little fearful, but it's not a bad thing for a believer. It's the most wonderful thing a person can experience, being with their Savior.

And then Revelation continues. Therefore, because Satan was denied, oh heavens, and you who dwell in them, go ahead and rejoice, rejoice, but woe to you on the earth, for the devil has come down to you, having great wrath because he now knows he has a short time. So apparently in the last days, evil ramps up.

And nobody really explained this to me with commentaries that I totally agreed with, but because Satan's already here throughout the years, throughout the centuries, throughout the millennial. He's working evil, but this says he's cast down from heaven and now he is even maybe here in a more graphic way, a more powerful way, we don't know. But we do know that evil in the last day ramps up and clearly we're seeing that now, are we not? Can you just go back for a minute? Well, some of you can't because you're not old enough.

But I remember as a little boy, the Andy Griffith show, or what was that? Yeah, or Leave it to Beaver. Gee, Wally, now the filth and the garbage, I mean, it's like, if you just fast forward someone from that era, I think they would be shell-shocked. It would be like softcore porn, satanic cult.

I mean, you look at all these, and you've seen the videos, like even LeBron James doing the 666 and the breathing and all this new age stuff and all these people, it's not conspiracy theories, these guys, and Taylor Swift and what she's dressing up as and Katy Perry when she did all this demonic stuff and Beyonce and all this, it's like, it's just not even hiding it. It's very, very demonic. And the award shows, it's like, it's just out there now.

Hell, Satan. I mean, they're just, it's like unbelievable. And just go back to the 70, you take, if you took my mom as a little girl back then and then put her here, she'd be like, just traumatized because of what we're now, what has happened is we've become desensitized.

Desensitized. What should alarm us now amuses us. Just like you ever gotten to a cold swimming pool? She's like, oh, no, no, no.

But then you stand there for a minute. Hmm, this isn't too bad. This isn't too bad.

Wait a minute, now I'm at my waist? A couple minutes later, I'm swimming in what was initially shocking? That's called desensitizing. And you've got to be very, very careful as a believer. Because it can happen, it's called compromise and lukewarm.

You've got to pull yourself out of that. You've got to stop watching things that are not God honoring. And entertainment is not just entertainment, it's actually influence.

It influences us. But when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman, who many think this is the nation of Israel, who gave birth to the male child, capital C for child, for Christ. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place where she is nourished for a time, and a times, and half a time.

So a time is a year, times is two years, and half a time is half a year. And that's where the three and a half years come from in the pre-tribulation rapture view where there's seven years with the Antichrist, at three and a half years, Israel's no longer protected, covenants broken. I'll get into a lot of that later, the different views I've been talking about.

And they say that this is a three and a half year period where God protects Israel. But we also find here that persecution often precedes God's promise. So if God gives you a promise, get ready for persecution.

Just ask, I don't know, Joseph. Ask David, ask Moses. Isn't it funny, we look up to all these people, but do you ever read their life? Like Moses, like, I'm done, I'm out of here like six times.

I'll intercede for these people, okay, but I just can't continue. David, hey David, you're gonna be king, great, thanks. When does it start? Oh, after many years of hell.

Joseph, your family's gonna bow down to you. Oh, isn't that wonderful? I'll tell them my dream. Don't tell them your dream.

Maybe that's for some of us today. Don't tell everyone your dream. There are dream killers out there.

And they will kill your dream as quickly as they can. Okay, Joseph, I'm gonna do all this. Okay, but you're gonna go to prison for a while.

A while, years. So just always remember that. There's persecution often precedes the promise.

So God's wanting to do something in your life, right? Let's say, okay, you're walking God's will. What does the enemy wanna do? Boom, discourage you, sidetrack you, stop that promise. They wanted to stop the promise of the Messiah.

Why did Herod try to kill all male children under two? The enemy's always trying to stop that promise. You can ask my wife if she's here later. We were having a great, great time before we announced we were planting the church.

Then all hell breaks loose. Every kid was sick twice in a row for like months. I didn't even know what foot and mouth disease was or strep throat and then this is like, you've gotta be kidding, like I got to a point where like, I just wanna, I'm gonna have to quit.

That I can't, this is incredible. But then you spend time with God and you strengthen yourself again. Anytime you wanna start doing something for God, there is that persecution because the enemy tries to knock you off track.

But then be careful, persecution often follows God's promises. Let's say you start a ministry. Let's say you're leading a ministry or let's say you're doing something in your home or let's just whatever it is.

Okay, I'm walking in the promises of God. I'm walking and doing God's will and this feels great and the enemy doesn't want you to camp out there. That's where discouragement will come in.

And what will happen, a lot of times this people are starting a ministry. I tell new church planners all the time, you know, as soon as they start a church, they're all excited. I'll look at, we have this many people show up.

It's great, okay, wait till the honeymoon's over. Then call me. Wait till that honeymoon is over.

Months go by and now not everyone's there. Not everyone's your biggest fan. Not everyone doesn't like what you're doing.

You've got this conflict and turmoil. There's satanic forces working against you and your marriage and your testimony. That's what he does.

Now that a person says I want to follow Christ, there is a target on his head and his heart. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. But remember to be prepared, to be forewarned is to be forearmed.

See, I don't say all this to try to scare people. I try to prepare people. Because I'm like, oh, okay, I knew this was happening.

I knew the enemy's gonna try to discourage me. And we see this with ministries all the time. People want to start a ministry and then it's down to four people.

Like, okay, maybe God didn't call me. No, maybe you need to stop basing off of numbers. Success isn't numbers, success is faithfulness.

Success is faithfulness in the small things. But it can get discouraging, can't it? You start a ministry and it's going down and down and down and down. Or you want to witness to somebody, your neighbors or your kids, and it seems like the opposite's happening.

Like, forget this. I'm telling you, discouragement is the number one tool of the enemy for believers. Because when we're discouraged, what's that word? If you break it down, it's taking away courage.

So when we're courageous, that's when we fight spiritual battles. That's when we truly make a difference. Revelation 12, 15 through 17.

So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood, trying to destroy, if it's a nation of Israel. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. So again, we don't know exactly if this will be an actual event, possibly in Israel, or if it's more metaphor, but we do know that this is an ongoing spiritual war.

And the dragon was enraged because the woman escaped. And he went to make war with the rest of her offspring. Guess who that is? We're the rest of that offspring.

That's why Jesus said, talking to the children of Israel and the Jewish nation, he said, I have sheep in a fold you're not aware of. In other words, the Gentiles. So we are believers in Jesus Christ, and he is making war with us as well against anyone who keeps the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

So the enemy is coming after those who keep the word of God. Isn't that true? The word of God and our testimonies, that's what's under attack right now. Anybody know who speaker Mike Johnson is in the news? And there's a guy named James Carville, I think.

Is that his name? Did I pronounce it right? He recently said that Mike Johnson is worse than the terrorist. Why? Christian belief. The word of God.

They would rather deal with a terrorist, probably because they're on the same side of evil, than be confronted with the light. That's a big challenge you're seeing in our nation today. It's not political parties, necessarily.

It's light and darkness, good and truth, air and truth are colliding. Kingdoms are colliding. That's why we see all this ramping up, and you see there's clear lines that are being drawn in the sand now.

Look what's happening with children. Did you ever think we'd be in a country where it's okay to get a sex change for an eight-year-old who thinks they might be the opposite sex? It's not only alarming, it's just mind-blowing that people are so deceived, and they do not see it. Welcome to the spiritual battle.

So that is the spiritual battle we are in, and only going to intensify in 2024. But we need to stay encouraged, amen? You need to encourage yourself and be an encouragement to others, especially your children. Put on your game face, especially for your children and your grandchildren.

They don't need you to see you scared and cussing at the TV, and worried about all this and all that. They need to see you positioned yourself correctly in the center of God's will, and say, yeah, this is tough. This is not good.

Here's how we're gonna get out of it, or here's how we're going to fight through it. Here's how we're gonna fight our battles. Because fear is contagious, but so is courage.

It's easy to get discouraged when you think that you're losing the battle. And that's where most of us find ourselves, don't we? It's very hard to stay encouraged. Because it's not... Who's on our side? Hollywood? Who's on the side of God? Hollywood? No, no, no.

Washington, D.C.? Sacramento? Mm, mm, mm. Well, the news outlets, right? Social media? Literally nothing. Nothing.

So you see this huge wave of corruption, and you're trying to fight against it. Well, welcome to spiritual warfare. Joshua 1.9, I love it for this moment.

God said, have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. I'm so glad he said that, because that tells me Joshua was being a little bit cowardly.

Why would he say, hey, I commanded you, Joshua. Be strong, be of good courage. My servant Moses is dead, but now you, Joshua, now you're taking them into the promised land.

In other words, strengthen yourself. In other words, get your stinking thinking out of your mind and get your mind focused, again, on the God of the universe, the God who is Lord over the angel armies. He rules kingdoms and he puts down kings and raises another one up.

He is not worried, he is not concerned. So we see here the weapon of faith, the weapon of faith and trust. We also see the weapon of taking our thoughts captive.

I believe you can switch the screen. The weapons of faith and trust and then the weapons of taking our thoughts captive. When you take your thoughts captive, this will release you from the internal prison that you may be in.

What about the weapon of influence? Obeying the right influence will direct you on where and how to wield your weapons correctly. Guys, this is so important. If I could just stay here for a minute, I would on this topic of influence.

Who influences you, makes or breaks you? Isn't it interesting, the big political divide in our country? Correct? Let me tap into this for a minute. I've had people, even the last couple of weeks, all the good things, let's say about Biden, right? I don't know what they are, but there's some good things, right? And they're like, but this and this and this, and then you got somebody else and Trump or DeSantis, this and this and this. And I wanna say, do you know what? You don't know anything about, you don't know if any of that's true.

Nothing. You're being influenced, and I'm being influenced by who we listen to or who we watch. I can't tell you anything.

I just better make sure my source is good, right? They don't know any, we're just, oh, but this and this, you don't know. You're either being influenced by CNN or Fox News. You're either being influenced by the Huffington Post or Epoch Times.

You know, we're just spewing out what we've heard. And so you get into the race battle, and you get into this, you're just, all these sides and transgender and fluidity, and they're just saying what the bullet points are or the talking points of their influence. Influence plays a huge role.

So be careful who's influencing you. Here's how you get through this battle. You allow a God's word to influence you.

And you actually will begin to think like God thinks, the thoughts of God, because that's His word. Isn't that amazing? Influence is so important. I'm gonna wake you up for a minute and play a quick video of a spider-tailed horned viper.

Have you ever heard of that? I haven't either since last week. So let's push play if it works. Okay, that is actually the tail of a viper.

That's not a spider. So watch this. See that spider? That's not a spider.

Oh, look at it, the bird's hungry. Poor little bird. He thinks it is a spider.

The viper almost got that bird. Aren't you glad I did the G version so I didn't get the bird? Okay. And those listening on radio probably don't know what I'm talking about, but it is a spider-tailed horned viper that at the end of its tail, it has a little thing that looks like a spider.

And it draws birds in to get the spider. Instead, they get eaten by the viper. That's how influence works, guys.

They dangle the carrots. They tell you things that aren't true and what you want to hear. And I mean, I can get into so much even about the global warming and the climate crisis.

I mean, there's so much baloney, for lack of a better word, out there. Look at real science, real data, get your information from the right sources. Influence in this year is going to be so important.

And I believe the greatest influence we need to find is in God's Word. The Word of God lets you know God's will. Okay, this will be life-changing for some people, because I heard from the first service as well.

I want you to think about this. We hear this all the time, right? The Word, the Word. Yeah, I read the Word, pray.

I know, yeah, I got it, whatever. Okay, listen, this will really make a difference. The Word of God not only lets you know God's will, but it also transforms your mind to think more like God.

So think about how profound that is for a minute. You're going into this year, right? Who know, this year you're gonna have the same president or a new president or possibly the elections on hold. Do you know that's a possibility? If you look and study, if you get into some type of war that the president can call no election this year.

There's gonna be some funny stuff going on. So how do you respond in fear, anger? What are finances? What am I gonna do? Do you have the mind and will and counsel of God because your heart's been saturated in His Word? That's the only way you're gonna be able to respond correctly. Do you know how many people react and make too quick of decisions? And then wish they would have responded later? Because they're watching this and this and this.

I need to do this with gold, this with silver, this with 401k, this with cryptocurrency. I need to do this, I need to move to Idaho way up in the hills of, I need to go the rolling hills of North Dakota or where. And it's just like, and you're responding to all this stuff versus being saturated in the Word of God and being able to think like God.

If God gives you the thoughts, once you commit your works to the Lord, your thoughts are actually established. So then you can make good decisions. You cannot live in fear.

Why, because you have the mind and counsel of God, not CNN or Fox News for the other side, right? Doesn't matter. Dr. Huberman, how many of you have heard of him? Dr. Huberman, he's got lots of viral videos out there. He studies something called neuroplasticity.

And I'm not gonna read the whole thing like he did the first service, but I wanna read the end of it here. Contrary to what previously was previously believed, brain development does not only occur in childhood. In fact, the adult brain is still capable of self-directed synaptic growth.

Synaptic growth is between the neurons and the signal it sends. And your brain actually can be rewired. Did you know that? Well, we should, the Bible says, be not conformed to this world, but be transformed, that's what neuroplasticity is.

Neuroplasticity basically says your brain is this way, it doesn't have to stay that way. It's changing, it's developing based on stimuli or daily habits being changed. Do you ever have a pattern like why do I think this way? Why am I this way? Why am I angrier? And you can change that pattern by changing your mind.

So this is huge. The more time we spend in God's word, the more we know his will and his ways and his counsel. The more it calms our heart because now our brain is changing, instead of focusing on fear, it's focusing on faith.

You are truly being rewired. So as we go forward, make sure to put God between you and the enemy. Put God between you and the enemy.

If you sweat more in training, you'll bleed less in battle. That'll sink in on your way home. If you sweat more in training, you'll bleed less in battle.

In other words, we play like we practice. We've gotta get, you don't get ready for the challenge in the midst of the challenge. Do you know that? You know, I mean, I'm optimistic about this year.

I'm not gonna be a doomsday, you know, this, and it's like, well, we'll see. I mean, God's still on the throne. Last I checked, I've still gotta raise some kids and lead a church, so I don't know what to tell you.

I'm still married and gonna have to work on a good marriage. And what do you want me to do, go hide? Right, so we prepare. So when things happen, maybe another shutdown, maybe who knows, we're prepared as we, so we go into it prepared.

So many people go in like, ah, I'm freaking out. Where's my Xanax? Where's my Vicodin? Where's my two bottles of wine tonight to get me through this? And that doesn't get you through it, right? For the night it does, and then you wake up with more problems. That's how that stuff works.

F.B. Meyer said, our God is Jehovah of hosts. That means the Lord of the angel armies. He can summons unexpected reinforcements at any moment to aid His people.

Any moment. How many times have we seen that? Many of you could testify to that. Where God just, in the court, the court just reversed His decision.

Or something was gonna happen legally or financially or relationally, and it just, God just shifted it. Like, what just happened? Believe that He is there between you and your difficulty, and what baffles you will flee before Him as clouds before the gale force winds. So here's the battle lines as we move to the end of this message here, hopefully soon.

It's been going on a lot of rabbit trails, huh? The battle lines. Here are the battle lines. The family and our faith.

Is that not the battle line that we're in? And from security to sexuality and from freedom to fear. These are the battle lines. God's Word has something to say about everything political right now.

Did you know that? So I love when people say, oh, you're just too political. You actually give me a compliment. Because God's Word says something about all of these political hot buttons.

The thing is, you just don't wanna hear it. You don't want me to tell the truth according to Scripture. You don't think it has anything to say about borders? That's the biggest security threat we've ever had in our nation's history.

Yet, we're not gonna do anything? Well, as Christians, what do we do? We help the sojourner. We pray for those. We wanna look out for families who truly need help.

But I'm also called to guard my family. I don't know about you. We're called to be watchmen as well.

Did you know that God wants you to get your house in order first before you help others? We're to safeguard ourselves and our homes, and then we're better able to reach out to others. Perfect example. Have you ever seen those oxygen masks fall on an airplane? Do you know it has the audacity to say that you put it on before you put it on your children? How dare they? Think about that.

When they ask, put it on, sorry, six-year-old, sorry, me first. No, now because you can help. You're trying to do all this and you're dying of oxygen.

You can't help. You've got two kids or you're done. See, it's not selfishness.

It's the order that God has given us to be watchmen and caretakers and to help those, defend the fatherless. God's Word has something to say about all these issues. And boldness, boldness to secure all of these God-given areas stirs up the hornet's nest and clear demonic attacks ensue.

Kingdoms are colliding. Didn't we see this? The churches that remained open during COVID or fought a lot of the mandates and things like that, were they not the ones under attack? Absolutely. Absolutely.

So anytime there's boldness for these things, there's a spiritual assault. Kingdoms colliding. If policies, procedures, rules, and regulations favor God's Word, there's an immediate assault against them and against those who dare to shine the light in dark places.

The battle lines right now, right now what we're going into, preparing for war in 24, the family and our faith, the family and our faith, from security to sexuality and from freedom to fear, these are the battle lines. You'll be seeing they're drawing them in the sand. And I wanna read something that I'm working on an article that will really bring this home.

Boldness to secure all of these God-given areas stirs up the hornet's nest and a clear demonic attack ensues. Kingdoms are colliding. That's what you're seeing right now.

As we begin to stand strong for these areas, and what amazes me is people who never used to stand for anything now are standing up. It's like enough is enough. These popular podcasts, right? These guys, I won't mention their names, but they have millions of followers and now they're finally, you know, enough is enough.

They're seeing that all of these things are under attack. And so if policies, procedures, rules, and regulations favor God's Word, there's an immediate assault against them and against you, against anyone who dares to shine the light in the dark places. Like any person God uses, from corrupt Balaam to ungodly kings in the Old Testament, if they direct people back to God or begin to bless God's people, hell summons her best generals to bring disorder, confusion, and fear.

And you're gonna see that in this year when the two political parties begin to fight. They're really not fighting over a person's character. What we're fighting over is policies and procedures that directly affect us and your children and your grandchildren and God's Word.

That's why I get fired up about this. God's Word has something to say about these issues. God is not happy.

We're not talking about paving the roads and building bridges for the love of God. We're talking about creating life simply to destroy it. We're talking about being able to kill the elderly as they get older with assisted suicide.

We're talking about aborting a child even after it's born. We're talking about giving a 10-year-old a sex surgery. Folks, this is a big deal and we need to wake up.

You know what? You all better become political if you wanna be honest. We need to be talking about these things. A consistent theme throughout Scripture is not to fear God because God Himself fights for us.

Did you know that? God fights for you. But here's the key, we have a role to play. So here's the thing we often forget.

God fights for us, but often He doesn't fight until we're in the battle. You know, Lord, fight for me now. I'm gonna wait till you get in the battle and then I'm gonna fight for you.

We have a role to play. He told Moses to stand and hold the line. He told Joshua to march around Jericho.

He told King Jehoshaphat to go out with the worship team. I mean, if David had to grab five stones, he only needed one, just a sling and a rock. He said, I'm gonna grab five stones just in case.

I like David, don't you? That would be me. Probably one for each of the lords of the Philistines. Let me grab one for Gath and Gad and Ekron and Ashdod and all these.

And God just said, I just need one. But he still had to fight. See, that's what, when God goes before us, when God fights your battles, that doesn't mean you sit at home and watch TV.

That has nothing, you actually, sometimes you're called to stand. Sometimes you're called to make a difference. I was able to go to the thing we did, Don did at the library, where we offered something alternative to the drag queen.

I don't even know how drag queens story hour get a library, that's a whole nother talk. But we offered something for the kids and it was packed. It was completely packed at the library in Lancaster.

Just offer, see, you gotta do something. Just sitting at home praying might be good for some things, but some things we gotta go out and make a difference and shine the light and hold the line. God honors bold, tenacious faith that doesn't retreat.

Ask Peter or Paul or James, did they have to do anything or did they just sit back in their hut? They had to do things. But we don't wanna put too much emphasis in our doing. It's God who goes before us, but we have to, because in God's will, you're either advancing the kingdom, you're holding the line so you don't go back, or you're retreating.

Going backwards. And God says to hold that line. Even today when an enemy takes ground, they are often called to hold that line.

Failure to do so results in retreat and defeat. And this is where the majority of the church finds herself today. So I'm gonna go over just a few things to remind you of spiritual warfare, because armies check their weapons before war, correct? And I had a lot more to go into, but I'm gonna have to hold it for the next time.

But 2 Corinthians 10. 2 Corinthians 10, very famous verse, but this is so important for us today. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God.

And remember this, words can serve as weapons. Your words are weapons as well. That's what we're being hit with a lot of things, aren't we? In Sacramento, they're writing words on legislation.

Washington, words, and this person's speech and words, and this article, words, words can be weapons as well. Divine power is needed. Basically saying this battle is not going to be fought with our hands and with weapons that we think of.

It's gonna be a spiritual battle. For the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought, not some. Now I've got my YouTube thinking over here.

I got my conspiracy thinking over here. I'll follow this ungodly movement over here, but then try to serve God on Sunday, maybe get to Wednesday study when I can. Maybe open the Bible.

No, every thought has to be brought under God's control to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. In other words, it reads as if we have an obligation. As we're obeying God, we're to expose the unfruitful works of darkness.

That's what I said earlier, demolishing stinking thinking. And high things, he talks about high things are here. High things are proud things.

We see, are we seeing any pride today? Pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, casting down every high thing, every prideful thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. So all these prideful people shaking their fists in the face of Almighty God, we are called to pull down those things, not necessarily physically, but in prayer and fasting and worship and going in contented and make a difference in our community. Be that salt, be that light.

Every thought here, every thought, again, I wanna talk about this for a minute. Lingering thoughts that are fed can grow. Why he says every thought is because of this.

Do you ever have a lingering thought that's not probably a good one? And if you notice, if you keep feeding it, it just keeps growing. This happens a lot with offense in the church. You ever been offended by somebody in the church? Give it time.

They offended you, they upset you. And what do you do with that thought? If you continue to kind of let it straggle out there and you begin to think about it, you begin to feed it, it begins to grow and it becomes a root of bitterness in our heart. And we have to remove that as quick as possible.

Being ready to punish all disobedience. Obedience draws a line in the sand and it is a weapon. This is so important about obeying God's Word.

It's not just obeying it for the sake of obeying it. You're obeying it as a, it's a weapon. As you obey God's Word, you feel the Spirit of God.

And you can go out and do things that God wants you to do. Now I'm gonna step on some toes in a minute. You okay with this? If not, now might be a good time for a bathroom break.

I won't look. I won't look. But I'm gonna talk to you briefly.

It's really important about an often overlooked war zone that will help a lot of people this year. An often overlooked war zone. Physical health can affect spiritual health when we are convicted to make some changes and we fail to do so.

Okay? The spiritual and the physical are interwoven. I'm gonna read here from Joel, I think it's Joe Becky and Nick Thomas. They wrote a book.

If you don't believe me, spend a week sleeping no more than four or five hours, eat nothing but junk food and see how it affects your walk with the Lord, your emotions and your ability to handle life's problems. So why is this so important? Shane, why do you bring this up? Well, a couple different reasons. Everything from anger and anxiety and depression and fear and laziness, all of these things are often affected by how we treat the temple of the Holy Spirit.

So to avoid this topic to me doesn't make a lot of sense because it really, really impacts us at a very deep level and that's why I'm unapologetic on this issue. God has called me in this unique area. The fruit has been overwhelming that we hear from people and often the critics of what I'm talking about are just convicted.

So I can't allow the conviction of critics to determine which way I take the direction of the ministry God has called us to. Here's why, food can affect mood. Addiction can dull the sword of the spirit and gluttony can quench faith and rust the breastplate.

Think about it. If what I said is not true, let me know after service. But if it is true, because what I see is a lot of people not taking care of this and they're going through life very fragile, very emotional, high strung, irritable, anxious, moody.

They run to the doctor, run to their prescription. They can barely get through life. Spiritual warfare, are you kidding me? I can't even get through this life.

And a lot of it has to do with what we're putting in. Straight up, I've seen it more times than I can count. Thousands and thousands of pastors, give me a break, thousands, when I worked in all the time, all the time, it affects at a very deep level, affects at a very deep level how we can function.

And I just think I want to help those people who want to take that step and they know they are convicted. And that's why we promote fasting often. Fasting, on the other hand, increases spiritual strength.

Fasting increases spiritual strength when instead of overindulgence, weakens us. Now I'm a fellow struggler, so don't feel like I'm pointing you out. Is my problem eating too little or eating too much? Hello, I can relate.

And I know how I feel when I'm doing better. And I know how I feel when I'm ignoring the convictions of God. Ephesians 6, 18, pray at all times hmmm, pray at all times in the spirit with every prayer and request and stay alert with all perseverance and intercession for all the saints.

Now I didn't get to a lot more of what I wanted to say. I'm going to hold that on a little bit, but it ends with this, pray at all times in the spirit. Now you can, you know, some people make that into speaking in tongues.

Other people make it into something else. The bottom line is there should be, your prayer life should be in harmony with the Holy Spirit. You're praying for the things of God.

You're praying and you're making every request be known. As your heart pumps blood, life, to every cell in the body, prayer pumps spiritual life to the body. Did you catch that? Your blood is amazing.

Life and death is in the blood, or life and death is in the power of time. Life is in the blood. In Leviticus it talks about everything that is in the blood is very, very alive and brings a lot of things to the body.

And just as that heart pumps that blood to every cell in your body, prayer pumps spiritual life to the body as well. Blood brings nutrients and oxygen to the cells. Prayer is also life giving in itself.

Blood carries away physical waste. Prayer carries away mental waste and demonic strongholds. Blood fights infections.

Prayer fights spiritual contamination. Oh, if you are weak in prayer, you are weak everywhere. Amen? We should post that in our homes.

If I am weak in prayer, I am weak everywhere. Folks, to be armored up for this next year and to really have on the whole armor of God, we don't need necessarily a lot more information. We need a lot more prayer.

We need to be seeking God like never before. Some of us need spiritual dialysis. I even put it in red so you don't miss it.

Does everyone know what dialysis is? Well, if you don't, the body is no longer functioning very well. The kidneys and things like the liver and things that used to clean the blood can no longer do their job. So your blood has to go out of the body into a cleaning mechanism and then it's put back into the body.

And that's what happens to a lot of us. Some of us need spiritual dialysis. We need to be cleaned up in this area.

We need to filter through God's Word and filter through prayer and get back on our faces before God. And again, a reminder of what I started with. They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by their testimony and they did not love their life to the death.

So I don't know where everyone is here this morning, but they overcame Jesus by the blood. So number one, has the blood of Jesus Christ washed away your sins? If not, you have to start here. This is where it all begins.

That blood is so powerful, it is so precious that they overcame him by the blood of Jesus and their testimony and they did not love their life. What does that have to do with anything? Well, if I love my life, I'm definitely not gonna love the things of God. Do you see the opposing force here? Oh, I love my life.

I'm not gonna say anything bad. I'm just gonna get on the side of Mark Zuckerberg so I can use his bunker in Hawaii. I don't want you two to be upset and I love my life and I want people to like me and it's all of it no matter what it takes and now God calls me away from all that.

Whoever loves his life will lose it. Die to self. Lord, whatever you want me to do, what is your will for me? I'm yours.

That's like the complete opposite of this. This is mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. My will, my desires, the money I wanna make, the career I wanna have, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine.

God says die to that. Give it to the Lord. Lord, what do you want me to do? And I can tell you, I've never, ever, ever heard someone say when I fully surrendered my life, it was the worst decision I've ever made.

Have you ever heard that? Now they might go through some challenges. They might say I fully surrendered my life and all hell broke loose. It's not what I thought.

It's not my best life now. This is challenging. This is warfare.

But they never regret surrendering their life to God. Why? Because he's in control. No matter what happens.

Lord, this is your bill. This is your financial situation. This is my health crisis.

Lord, it's yours. My situation I'm going through, Lord, help me through. And it relieves so much pressure.

Why is this group always on medication, always depressed, and they're millionaires in many cases, or billionaires, or they've got the famous athletes. They're miserable. Because you were never designed to be an idol and have people worship you.

You were designed to worship God. That's the big difference. So we would love to pray with you this morning next door in the prayer room.

If you want to make that decision today and say I've been playing games with God. I need to repent. I need to finally repent and believe.

Not leaning on my parents' testimony. Not leaning on my past good works. I need to make this decision.

And that's why we have communion available too. So communion's going to be available during the closing worship. And communion is a time where we remember.

Quite simply, you remember the blood that was spilled. And that's what each one, you just pick up this, pick up both of them, and the element, the little wafers underneath, this is a reflection. This is a reminder of his body.

The body that was broken. The body that was bruised. I don't know why he had to go through all that.

It's just incredible when you look at the magnitude. And it was spit on, hit, mocked, ridiculed. The body was ripped open for you and for me.

And you remember that body. And then you remember the blood that was shed. Without the shedding of this blood, there is no remission of sin.

There's no removal because a penalty had to be paid. So when we know the Bible talks about the wrath of God is being poured out and we are under that wrath. We're under the condemnation of God.

What's the penalty a sinner can pay? My own blood? No way. The blood of Jesus. And so we remember both of these at communion.

And you take it during worship, you can come up at your leisure. But the Bible also says make sure to examine your heart first. And this is so important because many people, they're gonna hold on to that bitterness.

They might have, again, maybe somebody in the church. This church, they're gonna, you know what? I don't care. I'm gonna hold on to that bitterness.

I'm gonna be, I hate them. I hate them. Have you ever felt that way? No, nobody? I'm gonna give you one more opportunity.

Maybe I'm ashamed to admit it, but I have. I have. If you went through what I went through, you'd hate some people too.

But you can't stay there. You say, Lord, that's a wrong thought. If you forgave me, how much more? You say, love your enemies.

If you love a believer, what good is that? Everybody does that, but love your enemy. And you take that thought captive. Say, Lord, that's wrong.

And I repent. And you change your mind about that situation, about that person. Very quick, very easy.

Will it try to come back again? Sometimes, especially if they're a stinker. Right, they keep probing you. And they keep messing with you.

My biggest thing I have to do with this area is those armchair quarterbacks and those critics who are nasty. They don't even live here. And they're just nasty, mean people.

Say things about my wife or my kids or church or me. That hate just comes up. Boy, I hope I don't run into you somewhere.

Because I might be old school Shane Idleman. I don't know. Lord, that thought's wrong.

Help me. Lord, that's wrong. That's the flesh.

Lord, please. And as you do that, joy comes. Have you ever been there? Joy comes.

And you love them. How do I love them now? And I'm praying for them. I love them.

I truly do. And then they post something mean in a couple weeks, and then here comes the hate again, right? But when you take communion, Paul said examine yourself. Examine your heart.

And don't take it in an unworthy manner. So be like me saying, you know what? I do hate that person. I don't care.

I hope they go to hell. I'm not cussing. I'm just saying I hope they go, you know.

I don't care. And I take in communion. That's an unworthy manner.

Because I'm unrepentant. I'm unrepentant. And I'm taking the blood that's supposed to clear the record and clear my heart.

I'm taking the blood in an unworthy manner. So I think it's so important to get our hearts right. Or don't take it.

I mean, be honest and don't take communion then. If you're, Lord, I'm struggling through this. I can't get there right now.

I cannot forgive that person. Then don't. I wouldn't take it.

Because Paul goes on to say that's why many of you are sick and have died. Whoa! But I can see that. And it wasn't, you know, 2,000 years ago, somebody named Ananias and Sapphira.

God didn't play. They lied in the early church. Gone.

And I can see somebody coming in. Every time we do this. I hate them.

I don't care. I hate them. I don't care.

And they just keep, you know, a couple years go by and that bitterness will destroy you from the inside out. That hatred and that sin. Or what about, you know what? I know I shouldn't be doing what I'm doing.

I'm living with my girlfriend, but I don't care. And I'm gonna live with her tonight. And we have no plans.

And they go through communion? That's an unworthy manner. Says check your heart. I can keep going down the list if you want.

I can get your zip code at some point. Let me think here. How many people come and take communion and have no real desire to give up their porn habit? Don't take it in a worthy manner.

Get your hearts right before communion. It's so powerful. Do you know why I have them put this up here now? It's a reminder.

Do you know this used to be up front in the early church for hundreds of years? Not this? Everything, the whole service was centered around communion. And you can research, I think of the reformers and the pulpit became the primary. Which, you know, it's probably not in and of itself a bad thing, but we drifted away from the whole reason why we're here.

Communion is central. It's powerful. No other promise.

So that tells me, if it can make me sick or lead to death, could it also bring healing? There's power in the blood. There's power in the blood. Take it in a worthy manner.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/SpBD7bfvCo0.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/brace-for-impact-are-you-ready-for-war/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

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