

Building Faith- Don't Ring The Bell part 1

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not giving up, using the analogy of a Navy SEAL training where ringing the bell signifies quitting. It highlights the need to have faith, perseverance, and determination in the face of challenges, trusting in God's strength and timing. The message encourages believers to be desperate for God, to seek Him diligently, and to make a public declaration of faith without shame.

Scripture: James 5:10, Psalms 34:18, Romans 8:28, Hebrews 11:6, Matthew 7:7, Mark 9:24, Isaiah 41:10, 2 Timothy 1:7, Romans 10:9

Topics: "Perseverance", "Faith in Adversity"

Description

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Transcript

What you have to do when you're at your wits end, you're done, you ever been there? They have to go in front of everyone. It's heard throughout the entire camp is they have to ring the bell three times that they are quitting. And they leave their boots and they leave defeated.

And it's a heartbreak. I mean, some boys are looking forward to that for all of their life. And Chad explains that one of the reasons he made it through was he saw his friend.

I don't remember if you remember that that Navy SEAL who was actually hung off a bridge in Afghanistan and dragged through the streets. That was his friend. And he just he was just completing Navy SEAL training.

And that gave him the strength to to not ring the bell. And so my message to you this morning is with the same title. Do not ring the bell.

No matter what you're going through, no matter what, how dark it may seem, Christ is stronger. The light is always greater. And he often teaches us perseverance through challenges.

He teaches us fortitude through difficulties. Perseverance is a spiritual muscle that you will thank God for. Because how will you live for Christ someday if you don't know how to persevere? And that is one of my concerns for churches in America.

We've been taught a sugar-coated, watered-down message. Pastors want to be motivational speakers, not coaches. And we need both.

We need motivation. We also need conviction. It was ironic.

My son played football, plays flag football. And he said, Dad, Mom, this coach is mean. He said, But I like it.

Isn't that true? I look back and some of my hardest coaches, they brought out the best in me, though. Get up. Don't cry.

Let's go. Let's fall. Let's fall forward.

The cheerleaders have a purpose. But thank God we're not led always by cheerleaders. We need the coaches sometimes to tell us to get up and fight again.

You can do better. You were not created to fail. Get up and win this race.

Get back up. And I feel that I have somewhat of that calling, especially for you this morning. I don't know.

Are you at a breaking point? Maybe those listening? We just found out that some radio stations now picked up the programs. I don't know how many of you know, but these sermons are aired on about 50 different radio stations throughout the United States and Pennsylvania. We just heard this week.

And we're hearing from people all over that are ready to give in, give up. Because it gets difficult, doesn't it? Life is challenging. And if we're not prepared, we can easily ring that bell.

Here's some key indicators that might help you identify if you're about ready to ring the bell. Are you focusing more on your burdens than your blessings? Anytime I feel that weight, I remember how blessed we actually are. How blessed are we? If you're able to go to a thermostat on your wall and adjust your temperature this week, do you know how many billions of people do not have that? Ice, a refrigerator, carpet, sanctuary.

I mean, we could just go on and on. Health, health, children. I mean, there's so many blessings.

And the enemy will start to get us focused on our burdens. And then what happens is we become critical and defensive. And if you start to notice, you're becoming critical and defensive and easily angered.

There's something going on in our heart that we need to fix. What about doubt, fear, anxiety? Is it beginning to dominate your life? You start to think, here's what we start to think. I'll just give in, it will make the pain go away.

If I just give in and stop this nonsense, it will make the pain go away. And if you study recovery at all, or addiction, that's the number one reason many fall back into addiction. If I could just take this pain away.

They don't realize that the enemy shows you the fun times, but not the consequences. So let's talk a little bit about this topic of don't ring the bell. James 5.10 through 11, he said, my brethren, my brethren.

It's interesting, he didn't say take the priests, for example. Take the kings, for example. Take the people, for example.

He said, my brethren, take the prophets, as an example for you, who spoke in the name of the Lord. As an example of suffering and patience. Indeed, we count them blessed who have endured.

One thing you'll quickly realize if you are a student of the Bible is that prophets were not popular. We know, at least it's been said, that Manasseh, King Manasseh, killed Isaiah with a wooden saw. The priests of Bethel tortured Amos and then killed him.

Micah was slain by Joram, the son of Ahab. The Jews stoned Habakkuk in Jerusalem. This calling of being a spokesman for God, speaking the unadulterated truth of God's word, either convicts.

Remember the same sun that melts a wax hardens a clay. And the prophets were killed because they spoke the truth of God's word. It convicts, it hurts.

I mean, it's no secret why Oprah can have these different pastors on. We love these guys, it's all encouragement. Best selling books.

But no lives are radically changed. So he said, look at the prophets as an example who endured suffering because of the truth of God's word. And we're not seeing that today, are we? We're not seeing, and that's one of my laments.

Even churches in our area, in other areas, there's very few prophetic voices. There's very few challenging the draconian measures by our government. There's very few calling out critical race theory and the woke culture.

And it breaks our hearts. Because that's the true church, to speak the truth in love. Not with arrogance, not that we know it all, not that we're the best.

But there is a zeal for God's house that consumes me. And it should consume you. When you see that God's word is demeaned and little children can change their sex in school districts and won't even tell the parents.

And that's coming down the legislation pipe. There's a hunger, a zeal, a passion for the things of God. And that comes out in our preaching.

To call the church back to Him. To call out sin. I texted Pastor Jack Hibbs and Rob McCoy yesterday.

And I said, what percentage of churches? What percentage of churches are speaking the truth? And we all agree that 90% at least are not. I could list some big names in Southern California of churches. In Southern California.

That are embracing liberal theology. That are not speaking the difficult truths. That are teaching things that are contrary to God's word.

All to be politically correct. And if we're not careful, pastors don't spend significant time in God's word. And broken and humble, we will begin to tell the people things they want to hear.

Tickle my ears. Tell me what I want to hear. And we'll start to embrace ungodly organizations.

And we'll say, well, we need to welcome and talk about this and do this. And let's just all come together. The word of God is a dividing line.

And if anything, this pandemic has, which actually it's not. But we'll just use that language. There's no more flu now.

No more pneumonia. It's just amazing. We saw the skewed numbers.

We saw the ulterior motives. We saw now the Fauci emails are coming out about masks and different things. And oh, this might have been created in a lab.

And well, we were called conspiracy theorists a year ago. But the writing is clearly on the wall. What is happening? So let me give you an example of this topic of don't ring the bell.

It's an amazing story from Luke 8. Many of you have heard it before. As Jesus walked, I would love to have been at some of these events. If I could go back in time.

As Jesus walked, the multitudes of people thronged him. And that word there in the Greek language is interesting. They chose this word because it's pushing and pressing.

Think of a celebrity trying to get through a crowd. They have security and things. And people were just around him everywhere, touching him and crying out to him.

Because the miracles were well-known. And there was a woman having a flow of blood for 12 years. 12 years.

She spent all of her livelihood, all of her money on physicians. And she could not be healed by any of them. And she came from behind him.

You can picture this. And it says here specifically that she didn't just touch him. She said, if I can just touch the hem of his garment.

If I can just touch that hem of his garment. If I can just get close to him. And immediately, as soon as she touched him, she was healed.

I don't think this is allegory. I think this is an actual story that is absolutely true. But what's interesting is Jesus said, who touched me? I think he might know.

The Son of God. He would often ask questions to get people to publicly declare him. Who touched me? And everyone denied it.

And Peter and those with him said, Master, the multitudes are pressing all around you. And you say, who touched me? And he said, ah, but I perceive the power went out from me. I perceived that something happened.

Now, when the woman saw that she was not hidden, uh-oh, she declared to him in the presence of all. And see, there's something about that public declaration. That's why baptism is so important.

Because it's easy to say in your heart, in your chair, like, okay, Jesus, that sounds good. Hopefully nobody sees. This will be my own little thing.

Like I love when politicians say, well, my faith is private. No, sir, it's not. It should be very public.

And it's a public declaration. Declaring among all that I am bowing my knee to Jesus Christ. She declared in the presence of all the reason why she touched him.

And now she was healed immediately. And he said to her daughter, because of your faith, you have been made well. And from this story, I want to talk to you about being disappointed, damaged, defeated, desperate, determined, and then delivered.

I wasn't trying to be cute there. It just all came together with D's. I'm about three or four D's into this.

I'm like, oh, well, this is interesting. But she was disappointed. Anyone here this morning disappointed? In God, in others? She had this issue for 12 years.

She spent everything on physicians. So here she is seeking to be healed, and nothing is happening. Have you ever been disappointed with God? We need a little more honesty at the 9 a.m. service.

Most people have. Disappointed that he's not moving quick enough, or doing something, or why am I going through this? Why hasn't he taken this away? Why hasn't he delivered me of this? Why hasn't this happened? And disappointment can come in. But James tells us, blessed is the man or woman, of course, this is manhood.

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial. That word steadfast is holding the line. Don't ring the bell.

Don't run and quit. Hold that line. Blessed is that person who remains steadfast under trial.

Because what we're doing, that's why faith is so important. Faith says, I trust in God despite what I see. I'm holding fast to his truth.

And she was also damaged. In the Old Testament, it was pretty brutal. If you were a leprous or had some type of issue, this lady, for example, you were unclean.

It meant you couldn't come into church. Can you imagine us telling people, hey, you've got this defect. You're missing this.

You're in a wheelchair. You've got this medical issue. You cannot come into the assembly.

You are unclean. There goes her fellowship. There goes her church service.

And they have to live in that state. And even the lepers, the lepers will cry out, I'm unclean. I'm unclean.

Do not come by. Can you imagine walking down the street? You can't come in contact with anyone. You're crying out.

You're saying, I'm unclean. I'm unclean. Stay away from me.

And holding that and wearing that damage on your heart your entire life. And that's why we love these stories of Jesus coming up to the lepers and touching them and holding them and praying for them and setting them free. Because the love of Christ knows no bounds, no matter how deep the sin, no matter how dark the bondage.

As long as you cry out to the one who has the answers, you will be saved. You will be set free. What sin can stop God Almighty? He hung on that cross for all types of sins, all types of debauchery, all types of pride and arrogance and addiction.

And we love to measure sin. Oh, that one's way up there. And it's interesting.

Read through the Bible. The sin of pride. God said there are seven things I hate.

I hate hands that shed innocent blood. I hate feet that are swift to running to do evil. I hate a gossip and a backbiter.

One who swears falsely. One who sows discord among the brethren. Maybe that's for someone this morning.

If you're sowing discord among the brethren, God says these things I hate, they're an abomination to me. A lying tongue. But then it's interesting.

I hate the look of pride. I hate a proud and arrogant look. And God will humble the proud.

And He'll exalt those who are humble. And so she was damaged. Without raising your hand, I know the percentage is high.

How many of you have been divorced? You ever feel like the big D? Maybe early on. Damaged by brokenness. Damaged by hurt.

And she was extremely damaged. Psalm 34 though, thank God. Psalm 34, 18.

The Lord, the Lord is close to the broken hearted. Some of you need to hear that this morning. The Lord is close to the broken hearted.

And He saves those who are crushed in spirit. Now this could be a call to salvation. Because when a person is saved, they are crushed.

They see the weight of their sin and they turn their lives over to God. And God saves them. But also the application could be saving in the need of I need deliverance.

My enemies are after me. I'm caught in this stronghold. And God says if you humble yourself and you become broken hearted.

You become crushed in spirit. Like I told you a few weeks ago. How do you get the olive oil? Ask the olive.

It's not very popular. I'm sure the olive doesn't like it if they could feel things. You have to crush the olive.

You have to crush the flowers for the perfume. You have to put the oranges and grapes into a juicer. And they are spun and they are crushed to reap the benefits.

I'd love to do a sermon on that sometime. The crushed in spirit. What it looks like.

But God says I am close to those who are broken. And then she's disappointed, damaged, and ultimately defeated. Have you ever felt defeated by the enemy? Could not be healed by any other means.

I've tried it all. And many times people become Christians and they'll say that I've tried everything out there. I've tried these different religions.

I feel defeated. Romans 8.28 though, and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him. Those who have been called according to His purposes.

One thing about Romans 8.28. Very easy to quote. Hard to live it out. Defeated sometimes I can never get up in progress.

I feel like for every step forward there's two steps back. I feel like every time I'm seeking God something begins to pull me away. I can't seem to overcome this.

I can't seem to get to this area in my life where I feel God wants to work. And I'm defeated. And what do we do when we're defeated? We give up.

And then we become disappointed. And here goes that cycle again. And that's why many people stay in that cycle of defeat and damaged.

Disappointed. Delusioned. And they stay there.

And I'm sure, obviously I didn't get a chance to talk with her. But I'm sure she felt in that cycle. What do you do after 12 years? When you're an outcast and living this way? But then we see what really changed her course.

She was desperate. Desperate. And I feel that strongly in the American church that we are not desperate enough for God.

There has to be a desperation for God. And Matthew, he records something interesting. She said to herself, If only I may touch the hem of his garment, I may be made well.

Desperate people do desperate things. If only I could get to morning worship. If only I could get to the prayer meetings.

If only I could get to worship night. If only I could get here, I will do desperate things. If only I could get rid of the things in my life that are pulling me down.

I need to get rid of these relationships. I need to get rid of the sick and perverted media. I am desperate to hear from God.

And God says, I hear the cries of desperate children. Do you ever hear your kids laughing and playing outside? Or kind of crying, a fake cry? Like, come on, get over it. But when you hear the desperate cry, anyone ever heard that? The desperate cry? Mommy, Daddy, I am stuck.

Help, help, help, I am falling. Something is going on, help. Or you hear, God forbid, the scream.

You know that scream like they just saw a rattlesnake or something. There is a desperation and you will do whatever you need to do. And God's word is clear on this issue.

His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to him. There is a desperation. Folks, you have got to get desperate or you will never encounter the living God.

You cannot serve two masters. Either follow one and reject the other or follow him wholeheartedly. You cannot serve both God and this world.

There is a desperation. There is a passion. There is no half-hearted Christianity.

There is no lukewarm living on fire for God. There is a desperation. Whatever it takes, I have got to find God.

If you seek me with a little bit of your heart, you will find me. That doesn't even sound right. If you seek me with all of your heart, with all of your mind, with all of your strength.

And you can even break that down. If you seek me with all of your heart. Where is your heart? Is there idolatry in our hearts? Idolatry is when we put anything else before God.

And I have seen over the years when I was coaching Little League. You would be amazed at how many people put sports before God. They will fit God in once in a while if it fits within their schedule.

Soccer, baseball, football, motocross, you name it. It is the summer. Everybody is doing it.

That is idolatry. Oh Shane, you lost me there. We don't have little statues in our house.

Idolatry is anything that says this is more valuable than God. And you prove what is more valuable to you by looking at your calendar and looking at your checkbook. I didn't tell you I was going to be nice today.

Whatever we put before. See, if God became an all-consuming passion, the churches would be crowded. You couldn't contain them.

Prayer meetings, people say, I've got to hear from God. The flesh hates it. The spirit loves it.

The flesh, do you know your spirit is willing? Your spirit is willing to seek God with all your heart, with all your strength. But the Bible also says, but the flesh is weak. And we give in to that.

Oh, the bed sounded more comfortable this morning. There was a desperation. Seeking God with all of our heart.

Idolatry with all of our mind. What do we think upon? Where do our thoughts go? You know, the older I get, the more I realize how important that Scripture is about taking your thoughts captive. To the obedience of Christ.

We don't realize how powerful our thought life is. That's where jealousy starts. That's where gossip starts.

That's where backbiting starts. That's where slander starts. That's where when you become discontent, anyone becoming discontent or bitter or angry, where does it start? By entertaining these thoughts.

The enemy shoots thoughts into your mind, and you begin to entertain those thoughts. With all your heart, with all your soul. With all your strength.

And strength, that word, is what we do. The strength. I have time for this, but not time for God.

It's amazing to me how many men have strength to get to work, but are too tired for God. And loving God with all your mind, heart, and strength. So she was desperate.

It's good to get desperate. It's good if God has you in a desperate place, thank God for him. Because desperate people do desperate things.

Desperate people rearrange their life to put God first. Desperate people begin to seek Him unconditionally. Desperate people want to make a difference.

Desperate people read their Bible even when they don't feel like it. Desperate people begin to pray and pull down heaven even when they don't feel like it. Because your feelings are the caboose of the train, not the engine.

They follow. They do not lead us. How many times have we not felt like coming to prayer meetings or worship, or in your own home even? Feelings and feelings, and we're controlled by feelings, and we are influenced by this.

Nike, remember that slogan? If it feels right, just do it. Great marketing, terrible biblical advice. And we're led by these things.

And she was desperate. But praise God, she was determined. Determined.

She set her mind on this. And that's, talking back to this, many people who get through this SEAL training, the power of the mind, that's where you lose or win the battle. That's where you lose or win the battle, the battle of the mind.

And she set her mind, if I can just press through the throngs of people, if I don't care who's in my way, I don't care the obstacle in my way, can you picture her just pressing through? Maybe there wasn't a lot of room, and she just reached down, and if I can just touch the hem of his garment. And there was a determined aspect. Some of us need to be determined.

By the grace of God, the enemy is not going to take out my family. By the grace of God, the enemy is not going to take me out. By the grace of God, the enemy is not going to take out my marriage or my children.

I am determined to fight him. I am determined, because those songs we sing, they're not just songs, they are truth that penetrates our heart. Oh God, when you're on the throne, no enemy can defeat me.

When you say, do this, nothing can stop God Almighty. And she was determined. And she had to go against the flow.

Go against things and battle. And if you're a young adult here this morning, let me tell you up front the bad news. You will be swimming upstream.

We are as well, all ages, but especially as young adults. You don't want to look at TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, sports figures, celebrities. It's all going downstream.

The broad road to destruction, very broad. And as believers, you are swimming upstream. You're battling upstream.

You're going against the flow. You ever wonder, why are my friends not liking my Facebook posts? Why don't they like me to text them scriptures? It's a battle against right and wrong, light and darkness. But then praise God, she was delivered.

Delivered. And what happens is most people, they miss these two elements. They don't get desperate and determined.

They get stuck in that cycle of defeat, failure, and they just stay there. Well, I'm defeated, why go to church? Do you know how many people avoid even coming to church and worship because they're in a defeated state? In one week, a couple weeks ago, I reached out to three people I have not seen in a while. And all of them came back.

Because they need that encouragement. I'm down right now, I'm defeated. And you stay in that cycle.

It's like eating broccoli when we want In-N-Out Burger. Think of it physically. I don't want the broccoli.

I need it, but I don't want it. I want the double-double. Do you want me to tell you how many calories that is, or just leave that? He said to her daughter, and I was reminded of that relational aspect.

We serve a God, if you know Him, who calls us sons and daughters. You don't see God referring to us as my servants, even though we are. We serve Him.

The word is actually *doulos* in the New Testament. It's a slave. We are slaves to Christ.

We're either a slave to sin or a slave to Christ. But God refers to us as sons and daughters, as inheritance, as receiving the blessings. And He said, daughter, your faith has made you well.

Now, I should interject, we are not a church that believes in the name it and claim it aspect of Christianity. To me, it's not Christianity. It's a false doctrine that's coming to the church.

Do you know what that is? Maybe some of you don't. Name it and claim it. Say, if I just have enough faith, I got it.

The problem is our sinful hearts want a lot of things that are not of God. If you just have enough faith, brother, you'll be driving that Corvette, that BMW, that house. If you just have enough faith, and what it can do is feed selfish and prideful desires.

And those people get very unbalanced. Because they'll start to say, well, if you're not healed, it's because you have little faith. You're still struggling with anxiety and depression? Where's your faith? You have little faith.

If you just had enough faith. And it's funny, these guys who preach that, they won't let you know when they have to go to the hospital. Over the years, I've seen stories.

Now, put me under a different name. See, real Christianity, genuine Christianity understands that we don't understand God's sovereign will. There's no guarantee of health and wealth and overcoming sickness.

I believe God can heal. I believe often that God wants to heal. And I believe we should seek God in that area and pray for people.

How do we know what God's will is or is not? And faith people in the hyper charismatic circles, they're going to email me on that point if they're listening. Brother, you should never say, God, if it's your will. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

We claim it. We claim it. And I kind of see what they're saying.

Because you don't want to also pray, well, Lord, if it's your will, I'm not sure, and doubt comes in. But sometimes, Lord, I don't know what your will is. I don't know.

I need to know, God, what is your will? I know in my heart dwelleth no good thing. And that sometimes I can have ulterior motives. And Lord, I'm trying to discern your will.

And God, would you heal this person? Would you set them free? We've seen it in the prayer room recently. We've seen people be set free of drugs and addictions and heal. We believe, and it's not fake.

It's not phony. We don't promote any of that. Because on the other side of the spectrum, you can be this side, is the faith doesn't matter group.

And let me tell you, faith matters. Jesus said, because of your lack of faith. What do you do with the Scripture? I could not do many miracles there because of your lack of faith.

So you have this group that says, I don't care about faith. It doesn't really matter. They minimize it.

And you have this group. It's all about faith. In other words, it's all about me and my faith.

I'm in control. Jesus is a butler. Jesus is a genie in a bottle.

My three wishes, if I just have enough faith. But the Bible is clear that without faith, it's impossible to please God. Without faith, you will not see God move in a mighty way.

Because faith does this. God, you've called me to do this. You've called me to plant the church, for example, or contend for my family.

Your word says this. I'm stepping out, and I don't see what's underneath me. But I trust you, and I'm stepping out in faith.

I'm going to go forward regardless of what the results say. Because I trust in your word. I trust in you, whatever your sovereignty has.

And like the three Hebrew boys who said, I will not bow to you, culture. God will deliver us. But even if he doesn't, I have the faith that he is who he says he is.

My trust is in the living God. And if he calls me home, he calls me home. And you walk and you live in the faith because you're trusting in God's sovereignty.

Oh, if you could get real biblical faith, you could fight the fiery darts of the enemy. No matter what comes against you, Christ in me is stronger than the enemy coming against me. And you walk in faith.

Not in doubt. So faith is vital. You have to have it.

Hebrews 11.6. Memorize this this week if you can. And without faith, it's impossible to please God. Because what's the opposite of faith? Fear.

Doubt. If God's calling you to do something. For example, you know it's biblical.

You know it helps people. But you're like, no, no, no. I'm fearful.

Do you know how many people don't start a small group or go into ministry? I've struggled with this before. Because maybe there won't be enough people there. But what about if only two or three show up? Oh, well.

Why are you doing it? For the numbers? I've told this story before. My wife will remember. Maybe a few of you.

But our opening night at the church, opening night, 200 people showed up. We were so excited. God must be really going to, man.

And then within six months, I counted 52 people. Blessed subtraction. And I remember going home that night.

I don't remember if I was driving or I got home and I said, Lord, I don't care if it's 52 or 500. I have to do this. I have to do it.

It was humbling. Don't get me wrong. It was humbling.

But God humbles us because he loves us. And before God called me to preach, I went and spoke to homeless people. When God called me to be a pastor, before he did, I was actually, we were part of Calvary Chapel.

And they would have me go fill in when pastors weren't available or maybe removed or different things. So I went to North Edwards and Tachapi and Yucca Valley and other Calvary chapels. I remember, I'll never forget Yucca Valley.

Unbelievable. They put me in a hotel and I was on the main road, I guess is the racing strip. Two in the morning, till two in the morning, hearing these.

No earplugs. I learned my lesson. And I get there, I'm exhausted.

And there's about 12 people there. And I preach my heart out. And this big man began to weep.

And people began to weep. And God's spirit was moving and convicting. It was one of the best services I've ever been to.

And I would go there. And if you're going to the, Jesus said, I must go to meet the one. And God will use things to humble you.

And keep you humble. Because then it's not all about you. Then God says, I can use you because you don't care about the numbers.

And without faith, it's impossible to please God. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. Another translation says, he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

That word diligence is interesting. It would be like if we had a leak in our roof that was continual. And it just kept hitting right here.

You know, after a few months or maybe a few years, you begin to see that little divot. Begin to wear that diligence. And that's the word.

He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. That first drop means nothing. Lord, I'm seeking you.

I don't feel anything. That's okay. You are planting the seeds.

You are waiting for the growth later. God is preparing you now. There's a certain type of bamboo.

I can't remember what it is. But they water it the first year. They water it the second year.

They water it the third. Nothing is coming up out of the ground. And then like five years later, it begins to shoot up, growing many, many feet up into the air after the fifth year.

But see, sometimes you don't see what's going on underneath the surface. You don't see what God is working on the back end. You don't see what God is doing in the hearts of people.

And any time looking back over my life, I thank God for his timing. Because if it was my timing, I would have destroyed myself. If God elevates too soon and you are not prepared, if God begins to open doors and you are not prepared, you will fall under the weight of responsibility.

And God will begin to prepare your heart. But you have to have that faith that trusts in him. He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

So we see her being delivered. And I believe God can deliver many here this morning. We want to pray with you on certain issues next door.

You don't have to be specific. But the prayer team is going to be next door. Oh, but wait a minute.

Uh-oh, I forgot something. This delay. Jesus was actually going somewhere.

This delay in healing this woman cost a little 12-year-old her life. If some of you remember the story from the Bible, Jesus was going because a man came. The man sent the servants and said, please come, hurry, quickly.

This man's daughter is on the verge of death. Come, Jesus, come quickly. And he stopped.

And he healed this lady. Probably had a conversation and maybe did some teachings. We don't know.

But all we do know is during this time of enormous, great healing, this lady is rejoicing. There was tremendous sadness. And they said, go and tell the teacher not to come.

Your daughter is dead. Can you imagine hearing that news? Your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher.

But thank God, one thing you always need to remember, that in God's economy, delay is not deny. Anytime something is being delayed, doesn't mean God is denying it. I've actually noticed over the years that delay just means God's timing has not yet been fulfilled.

Now, it doesn't mean some things are going to happen regardless. Because we can pray amiss, James says, because you pray on your own desires. Sometimes our prayers are not focused on the right areas.

And those types of things will not happen. And I want to teach on prayer sometimes, getting prayers to answer. But this is so true with Jesus.

Delay is not deny. So Jesus says, everyone get out of the room except these individuals and his parents. Get up.

Get out of the room. And he told the child. He spoke that child out of death.

He said, child, get up and arise again. And it was a reminder to me, don't ring the bell. We don't know what God is doing.

We don't know where he's going. And sure, maybe somebody won't be healed. Maybe they're on their deathbed and that's where they're going to end up.

Well, you'll be with the Savior even sooner. I don't know how that's a bad thing. The longer I live, the more I realize that death is not a bad thing when you know who God is.

So do not ring the bell. And as I close, this is an important point here. Jesus always asks, who touched me? Maybe not in that way.

But there has to be a public declaration somehow, some way. If you deny me before men, I will deny you before the Father. There's no such thing as closet Christianity.

Secret servants. And if you're embarrassed about your faith, let us pray for you. Because when you receive that mighty filling of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of boldness, you will not be ashamed to share your faith.

There will be a desire. Priming is important. You want to be sensitive.

All these things. But there's not an embarrassment. Because I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because it is because of the cross I speak to you this morning. And God will begin to give you that desire. She declared in the presence of all.

And she went from unclean to clean. She went from unclean to clean in a matter of a moment. Same thing happens in salvation.

People are unclean in the presence of Almighty God. Their sin has had them in bondage. They are under the wrath and condemnation of God.

And as soon as they, like this lady even, cry out to God, Lord, save me. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And they call out to Christ in their desperation, in their willingness to know who God is.

They cry out to Him. And God saves them and sets them free. And they go from unclean to clean.

They stand before God because of what Jesus did. One of the early church fathers said this. He said there are two deaths.

One is temporal. Listen, listen. There are two deaths.

One is temporal. The other is eternal. There are two lives.

One of short duration and one without end. You might say, what do you mean there are two? You don't die twice. Actually, you do.

The Bible talks about dying twice. Well, can you explain that? Yeah, it's a very important principle. It's a very important truth.

We die physically. Our body is buried and we die physically. But you can also die spiritually.

Two deaths. Shane, you're just trying to scare me. No, I'm just trying to tell you the truth.

You know, it's okay to fear some things. One of the problems in our culture and in the churches is we don't fear Almighty God. Fear the Lord.

It's the beginning of wisdom. Not a fear you have for an abusive type of person. Oh, I fear this person.

This is a fear and reverence and a respect and the awesomeness of Almighty God. We should fear Him and tremble. But if you know you're going to die that second death, and you don't know where you're going to end up, you need to make that decision this morning.

And say, God, I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I repent of my sin. I embrace that wonderful sacrifice that bridge the gap between me and death.

Bridge that gap between me and you, actually. I don't want to experience spiritual death. Jesus, I need you as Lord and Savior.

He was not just a good teacher. He's not just a concept. You can't know God intellectually without also knowing Him relationally.

Actually, He's more relational than He is intellectual. Our mind should comprehend the truths of God after our heart has been changed. That's when the Bible comes alive.

You just have to pray, Lord, I confess. I confess. I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus Christ to save me and set me free.

It's not the eloquence of your prayer. It's not saying the perfect right things. Make sure you say this.

Did you say this? It is the heartbreaking crying out to God. Lord, I need you. Where are the broken hearts today? Where are those crying out saying, God, I need you? I am lost without you.

Our nation is crumbling from within. I don't have any bearing on what the truth is anymore.

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

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