

# Can a Dead Church Be Revived?

by Shane Idleman

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*A dead church can be revived by being open to the truth, repenting of spiritual pride and deadness, and infusing sound doctrine with love and compassion.*

**Duration:** 49:27

**Scripture:** Revelation 3:1

**Topics:** "Revival", "Spiritual Awakening"

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## Description

Shane Idleman addresses the critical state of the church in his sermon 'Can a Dead Church Be Revived?', emphasizing that many churches and Christians are spiritually dead due to pride and apathy. He calls for a revival that requires humility, repentance, and a return to a vibrant faith filled with love and action. Idleman stresses that God can revive even the most lifeless church if they are willing to embrace the truth and engage in spiritual warfare. He encourages believers to strengthen their faith and remain watchful, reminding them that God is still in control and has the power to bring life to the dead. Ultimately, he reassures that revival is possible for those who seek it earnestly.

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## Transcript

The title is, Can a Dead Church Be Revived? Or put your name in there. Can a dead Christian be revived? And that's exactly what we're talking about in Revelation 3. But I thought about this this morning. Millions of believers, there's millions of believers in America, correct? East, coast, west, millions.

So why in the world is all this debauchery going on? Like how is this, you ever look and you're like, how is this even happening? Well, it's actually not that hard to figure out. And I'm sorry to burst your bubble, rain on your parade and kill your buzz and break up your party and ruin the mood, but the church must wake up. That's what's wrong.

The church must wake up. God doesn't work through a corrupt church as we read about weeks ago. He doesn't work through a compromising church that compromises on doctrine as we'll see next week.

He doesn't work through a lukewarm church, maybe that's two weeks from now. And he doesn't work through a dead church. God only works through living, vibrant, humble, broken, contrite, spirit-filled churches who are repentant, forgiving, and gracious.

That's the problem. And I hear that a lot. Shane, with millions of so-called Christian, well, what's going on? Well, how many of those so-called Christians are on fire for God? Let's get that number down.

And let's talk about real numbers here. Now, as we know, God plus a minority is the majority. And God isn't looking, wow, if I could just have five million.

He's looking, and I don't know where there's a number, but there's gotta be a desire there. I mean, when he says, if my people, there's gotta be a certain amount there. I'm assuming he's not talking about one person.

When he says, if my people, and you'll see, I think there has to be an awakening, you know, west coast, east coast, midwest, there's just a hunger of the church. And God begins to answer with revival fires and waking up the dead church. But that's what's wrong.

Yes, there's millions of Christians, but there's not millions of people sold out to Jesus Christ. And that's why we find ourselves in the predicament we're in. And I love when people say, but man, Shane, you're just too hard.

Could it be that you're too soft? You're too loud, well, you're too quiet. I'm not trying to build a mega church, I'm trying to build a mega movement toward revival, toward going back to God. And that has to shake up things.

That has to wake us up from our spiritual slumber. You have to hear things you don't want to hear. And it's a hard message, but those who are open to it, those who are open to it, remember what the Puritans used to say, the same sun that hardens the clay will melt the wax.

See, it all depends on the condition of the heart. And I know it's, and that's my challenge. Maybe I open up too much.

And it's a different, other pastors have other challenges. Mine is I tick off a lot of people, but I also draw a lot of people to the Lord through that type of preaching. And when I get down and think, man, Lord, people are upset at this.

God encourages me and brings those who encourage people. And we had a, and again, I don't, please don't understand, I don't say any of this to toot my horn at all. I'm very careful, I don't tell you a lot of things because of that very reason.

But we have contractors working across the street, and this guy hobbles over and he goes, oh, he's at JetHawk Stadium, and he's quoting my sermon from two years ago, and that helped change my life. And then the UPS driver stops by and wants a picture. And then Amazon guy two days ago said, I love that YouTube message, just keep them coming.

I'm like, oh, praise God. And then you got these other people, get out of here, you too, you too. It's like, Lord, help me.

But see, it's that, but I understand. I understand it's that double-edged sword, and I don't preach perfectly. Sometimes my flesh gets in there.

Sometimes my anger gets in there. You try coming and speaking for an hour straight perfectly. It's not easy.

Either you're too passive and too quiet, and don't want to upset, or you can let your frustrations come out. And it's a very hard calling. And I just explained to somebody too recently, you know, a lot of churches don't want me to speak there for that very reason.

And thank God for those who do, but that's a little too much. Our people are comfortable right now. We don't want to come in and have the wrecking ball come in.

And what they're talking about though, I understand, but it's that hard calling, that prophetic voice of calling the church back to God and saying, wake up, church, wake up. We need to turn back to God. We need to, if you go back, just take time and read all of the prophets.

They were not soft. They were not easy. They told the people what they needed to hear, not what they wanted to hear.

That's why they weren't popular. They were unpopular among the lukewarm and Pharisee type people. But if a person is open and willing to hear what God wants to say through His word, they will run to the cross.

Others get upset and mad at the cross because of the hardness of the biblical message. And again, we do need encouragement. We do need hope and things like that.

Absolutely, and we give that here often, but we also need to be awakened from our spiritual slumber. So answering the question, can a dead church be revived? Yes, but they have to be open to the truth. So many churches that are dead have built this, the reason they're dead is because of pride.

And they think that, you know, the frozen chosen. We're down to 20, but we're the remnant. No, you're not nice to anybody.

You're dead to the things of God. And that's what he addresses here in Revelation 3. Jesus, not me, so be mad at Jesus. He said, and to the angel of the church in Sardis, so the messenger going to the church in Sardis, I showed a picture a while ago of the seven churches that are about 700 miles above Jerusalem in Asia Minor, I believe it is.

He's writing specifically to these different churches. And he says, these things, says he who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. Again, there's not seven spirits of God.

The Bible teaches the Holy Spirit, the triune nature of God. This could be a phrase of perfection. He says, I know your works.

I know your works. And I wonder how many churches, and I even wanna look at our church, how many churches would he walk into and say this? Can you imagine Jesus walking and saying, I know your works. I know them.

You say you're alive, but you're dead. You're dead. Because a church that is not outflowing is dead.

It's stagnant water. And so many of the dead churches come in and feed me, feed me doctrine, doctrine, doctrine, doctrine, and they don't go out and do anything. And they become very prideful.

Oh, I know your works, but you're dead. A living church has living water flowing out of it. Now be encouraged.

You think I walk around with living water flowing out and everything's going great. Don't get upset at a flat tire. And my mood is always great and everything's going my way sometimes.

Even when it doesn't, I just trust in God's sovereignty and just walk around with the joy of the Lord as my strength. No. Life is hard.

But I cling to the cross and say, Lord, help me, help me. My attitude's not right. I repent.

Get me back on track. And then the joy follows again. A living, vibrant church is what we need.

And that's why I said God works through a living, vibrant, humble, broken, contrite, spirit-filled church who is repentant, forgiving, and gracious. He said, I know your works. You have a name out on your sign.

You say you're alive because we're alive. Look at us. We've got life.

We people come into the sanctuary and we have church. See, we're alive. Jesus says, no, you're dead because nothing good is flowing out of you.

The springs of living water aren't flowing out of you. You're argumentative and arrogant. And He says, you have to repent of that.

He said, you are dead, nekros. That's where we get a word from there, I won't say. Nekros, dead and lifeless.

Dead and lifeless. Strong's exhaustive concordance of the Bible. I just put strong's because that's easier.

Said this, they are destitute of life that is devoted to God. Wait a minute, they're coming to church. Right, but you can go through the motions.

Amen, anybody been there? That's not devoted to God. That's going through the motions. They have given up to trespasses and sins.

Now what sin is very evident in this church? Because you would say, well, these hard, dead, doctrine-oriented, fundamentalist churches, I mean, Shane, they seem to be doing pretty good on sin. I mean, they call it out. They're not, you know, I don't cuss or chew or hang out with those who are due.

I don't, you know, do the, but what's their sin then? Well, it's actually spiritual pride. Spiritual pride. They're dead because of spiritual pride.

And you guys know, I've talked about this, how deadly that is. What is spiritual pride? It's taking pride in my knowledge about God. I know what the Bible says so I can tell off so and so.

I know what the Bible says so I can judge you when you fall. I know what the Bible says is so I can chastise you when you come in. Is that dress down to your knees? I mean, down to your ankles? Do you have too much makeup on? Did you go to the movies last night and saw your car parked in front of the Cinemark? And I looked on the marquee, it's only junk.

It's only PG and R stuff, so what were you doing there? You'll never make, what, you fell again? I heard from your wife, you fell again. Unbelievable, you are worthless. But that's a legalistic dead church because they have doctrine, but not the love.

And as we'll learn in a few weeks, the other church, Laodiceans, have the love, but no doctrine. And Jesus rebukes both. And it's sad, but traveling throughout the last 23 years or something, coming back to the Lord, and there's nothing against small churches.

We were a small church, then we became a medium church, then we became a large church, and so God does different things. But a lot of times you get those 30, 40, 50 people, and it's the frozen chosen. You can't, nobody's coming in.

Nobody's coming in, and people are going out, and they just get smaller and smaller and smaller. They're dying. And you'll talk to them, well, brother, we're just the remnant.

We haven't really found any other church in this whole area that seeks God like we do. No, I don't think that's a problem. I think spiritual pride is the problem.

But it doesn't mean growth is of God, because cults grow. You have to look at the faithfulness. And there are many small churches that are doing wonderful things for God.

God has all sizes of churches. That's why I don't, oh, you know those small churches. You know those home groups.

You know those mega churches. Is it, God will bless people in certain ways. He'll give the talent to five talents or 10 talents, or this person is fit for it.

He'll bless it in many different types of ways. But over the years I've seen, I've noticed, if we're not careful, we can measure our decrease and think that we're being spiritual, and people just can't follow this type of deep teaching when really it's spiritual pride that's pushing them out. And that's what this dead church is.

You have works, but you are dead. And so we ask the question, are they filled with love? Are they filled with love? Because you can have very strong doctrine and still love people. And say, hey man, just get up and fight again.

It's okay, we've been there. Or maybe we've never been where you're at, but by the grace of God, I'm not there, but I could be there. See, when you realize that the sin nature is in all of us, you'll look at people differently and go, if it wasn't for the grace of God, that would be me in Lancaster laying on the curb.

Versus, how could they? I'm so spiritual. I would never, never, never, be careful, Pharisee. You may never, never, never enter the kingdom of God.

And the reason this is so important, do we all not recognize that the Pharisees had doctrine? That's why Jesus said, do what they say, correct doctrine, but don't do what they do. Wrong attitude, wrong heart. And so, we love doctrine here.

I'm not mocking it. And those who are convicted right now will say that I am. But I'm not, I love it.

We follow sound doctrine. We love theology. But you've got to have the unction of the Holy Spirit, the love of the Holy Spirit, married with that.

That is true Christianity. And so, you know those people, are they filled with love? Do they talk about Jesus to others? Because often the dead Christian won't. They've got their say, they think, and maybe they are, who knows.

And they've got their doctrine, they love to do their little Bible studies, but they're not going to, they don't witness to people. That's below them. They might tell somebody about Jesus, they end up riding next to someone on an airplane for four hours and they're forced to do it.

But usually, there's no outflow. Why? Because the Holy Spirit, when a believer has sound doctrine and is alive with the Spirit of God, what flows out? Pride? Arrogance? Haughtiness? Or, love? Joy? Peace? Gentleness? Long-suffering? Compassion? Yes, self-control? So the more I'm filled with God's Spirit, the more love is going to come out. You're somewhere and the little kid, is his mom not taking care of the little kids bothering you? Well, you fill up the Spirit, you'll begin praying for them.

And say, can I pray for him? Is he okay? See, there's a love, there's a heart of Christ coming out of you. It's not the heart of the Pharisee. Don't you know how to reprimand your children? I've got 14 books on it.

Here's Dobson's Strong Willed Child. Here's this. Why don't you do this? What's wrong with you? Why can't you parent? Oh, I'm sorry, I'm a single mom, and he just lost his grandma yesterday.

See, it changes your perspective. Love and compassion. The dead church accomplishes nothing.

There are many churches dying. They are the frozen chosen. They put all these rules on people.

They do not talk about Jesus. This is vastly different than arguing theology. This group, this type of church loves to argue theology.

Why? Pride. I want to show them how much I know. And I want to subtly put them down.

Correct? I ran into this group, man, I'm just coming back to the Lord. First year, I'm back, I'm on fire for God, and thinking God can still heal people. Thinking we can get excited.

Can we do a worship night? Can we do? And then you start to hear, oh, no, brother, that's emotionalism. You know, just sing the hymns only. Don't sing this contemporary stuff.

Oh, don't pray for healing. Don't pray for healing. God doesn't do that anymore.

Like, oh man, and you become frozen. Like, well, what can we do? I mean, can we be excited about God? See, there's no joy. They stifle.

And that's what the dead church does. They will stifle those who are living. When a living, vibrant Christian ponders or walks into a dead church, let's say they move and it's close to them, they go in, they leave, they're like, what was that? Man, I feel like I just went to the cemetery.

And they have to get out of that deadness. But those stuck in the deadness, sometimes people like that. You know, everyone in the cemetery is on the same page.

And spiritual pride will attract others that are proud spiritually. Spiritually. And they start to argue over silly stuff.

Picking fights over the color of the carpet. Dead churches have theology, but no fire. Theology, but no fire.

They have sound doctrine, but no love. They are sin-sniffers, but not grace-builders. They have a ritual about their services, but there's no deep relationship with God.

And that's why I do believe, and I'm careful to say this, because I know when I spoke in Texas, that church was alive with God, for sure. And they have to stop their service at a certain time, because they're parking. If you don't park in their parking, there's no more parking.

There's like a freeway. But many times, churches want to get them in and get the dead church. You know, here's a song.

Hey, Brother Bill, come up and make some boring announcements. And let's talk about this. Gladys, could you come up and just do another couple of hymns? And my message is 35 minutes.

We've got to get to the IHOP. And it's just going through the motions. Because there's no spiritual life.

When there's spiritual life, let's see what God wants to do today. God, do you want to camp out at a song? Do you want to have people come to the altar? Should we pray for healing next door in the prayer room? God, do you want me to change the course and direction of my message? Because I don't know, that person up in the balcony is about ready to take their life, and I don't know that God does. Are you open to the moving of the Holy Spirit? This person just found out some devastating news.

Can we take time and pray for them and tailor the message? See, the Holy Spirit is living and vibrant, working through vessels. Surrender to Him. Or the dead church has exactly down what they're going to do.

And no, God, you'd better not interrupt this service. And God will have His way in a living church. They had works without worship, effort without humility, and labor without love.

Can a dead church or spiritually dead person be revived? Yes, yes, yes. Here we go. Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain.

He goes on in Revelation here. Be watchful. Okay, this is incredible.

Jesus is giving us advice. He said, you are not alive, you are dead. However, I'm not gonna leave you there.

He never does. God never does. So if you ever leave here feeling condemned, don't.

You may leave feeling convicted. That's my job sometimes. He convicts me and then I convict you.

That's just the way it works. But don't leave condemned because God will build you back up. The point of the conviction is to get you to the cross in full surrender and repentance.

And then the joy will follow. That's how He builds us back up. And so Jesus said, He didn't say give up, close the church doors.

He said, be watchful. Be watchful and strengthen what? Oh, the things that remain. Just a mustard seed of faith.

Just the little things. So strengthen those things which remain, which could be the sound doctrine. You have that sound doctrine, but now infuse it with some love.

Things that are ready to die. For I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard.

So hold fast to the knowledge of Christ. Hold fast to sound doctrine and repent of your apathy and your deadness. Do you know how hard it is to get a spiritually proud person to repent? It's draining.

I've had two, three hour meetings with people. You are so prideful. You need to repent.

And you know what I hear nine times out of 10? Well, so are you. Now maybe so, but this is not the right time to tell me that. And the difference is, I'll admit it and I'll repent and I'll ask for your forgiveness.

You don't do anything. To say pride isn't in any of us, but to say pride is not in a Christian, I'm not sure about that because that's part of that Adamic sinful nature. It wants to rise up in self-exaltation.

Jesus said, less of the flesh, less of the eye, and the boastful pride of life are the three things you have to watch out for. So if you ever leave here wondering, I wonder how the devil's going to attack me? Well, there's the three areas. The less of the flesh, what the flesh craves, the less of the eye, what the eye goes after, wants, and the pride of life.

When Eve saw that the food was pleasant to the eye, good for food, less of the flesh, and desirable to make one wise, she took of it and ate. He got it with all three bullets. Hold fast and repent.

And it's so interesting, the last thing mentioned must become the first thing implemented. Repentance. The last thing he mentions is actually, that must happen first.

I repent of my hardness and my barrenness, and because of that, now I'm going to be watchful and I'm going to begin to strengthen the things that remain. Because of the, see, the repentance allows me to do everything else. And those who are watching or listening, you know, your children know, your spouse knows if you're very prideful and hard-hearted.

You're not known for your love and humility. It has to be repented of first. That's the first thing.

Because here's what it looks like if you don't. Nope, I'm not going to, you know, okay, I'll work on some of this stuff, but you know, and you stay hard and rigid, the other stuff's not going to flow. The other stuff flows from a repentant heart that is now ready to work on the things of God.

And he said, strengthen the things which remain. That word strengthen means to re-engage in activity that is motivated by your first love. So how am I going to, how's a spiritually proud person who goes to a dead church, how in the world are they supposed to strengthen themselves? First they repent, and then they re-engage in the things that foster that first love.

Re-engage in worship, re-engage in prayer and fasting, re-engage in humility, re-engage in witnessing, re-engage in loving people, even when they don't feel like it. Did you know that that's when love has the most value? When you don't feel like it. That's biblical love.

I mean, I can, man, look at that guy, they're so nice. I love them. God doesn't go, man, good job.

No, it's when Debbie Downer is making me a downer and negative and hard, and I have to love them despite how I feel. That's why the Bible says love is patient and kind and doesn't envy, doesn't boast, it's not rude, it's not proud, it's not self-seeking, it keeps no record of wrong done against, it always hopes, always trusts, always perseveres. That has to come supernaturally by the work of the Holy Spirit into your heart.

Much different. And I hear that a lot, I just don't love them anymore. Well, hello, that's a feeling.

Of course you don't, that's a feeling. As Christians, we have to put that feeling aside and truly love people. Jesus actually, I don't have it down, but He said love your enemies.

What is it good to love those who love you? Love your enemies. It's hard in our culture, isn't it? Especially those on different political sides. Whoo-hoo, don't get me started.

But to truly love, or a certain group of people who's doing some bad things. How do we truly love? Target CEO, who for a one-year-old can wear a onesie, I love trans, at one years old wearing a onesie, you guys have lost your mind. Can I love them? Not right now.

Right, pray for me, I'm working through that. I'm mad before, but God, okay, Lord, break my heart for the things that break yours. And to reengage, you have to become a worker, not a worshiper.

I'm sorry, I just see if you're paying attention. You have to be a worshiper, not a worker. And I might send this clip to all, we have about 100 volunteers right now.

Send it to them and remind them, you're a worshiper first. Your work must flow from the worship. If not, you'll be part of the dead church in a living church.

You'll be dead to the things of God. You'll get caught up in your work and become hard and rigid. You have to become a worshiper first.

That's why we try to tell people, don't be so busy that you're always serving. Make sure to take time off and worship. And so after he gives them this command, he says, therefore, therefore, if you will not watch, if you will not watch and do what I said, I will come to you as a thief and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

That's why he says, hold fast, hold fast, which means to stick or to bind together or to adhere to and be watchful. What does watchful mean? To stay awake. Stay awake, not with caffeine, but with conviction.

I wanna make sure you knew that. But he says that. Be watchful, stay awake, watch what's going on, discerning the times and if I'm staying awake and I see these things at Target or Dodger Stadium, it's like I can't even, I'm in the twilight zone.

By staying awake, I take these things to the Lord. Like I replayed, our weapons of our warfare are not carnal. They're spiritual pulling down the strongholds.

We are either watching or sleeping. We are either contending or we're complaining and we're either fighting or we are fading away from the faith. See, true active biblical faith is engagement.

Is it not? Sometimes we think, okay, I said a prayer, Jesus is my Lord and Savior, man, I'll need that when I die. No, you just signed up for SEAL Team Six, Christianity style. The training, the buffeting, the warfare, but it does strengthen you as well.

And I was reminded of Luke 21, 34, but take heed to yourself. Lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, with addictions, with the cares of this life, and that day, Jesus' return come upon you unexpectedly. We're always living under that umbrella of Jesus wanting us to be ready for His return.

And then when they use the word strengthen, strengthen, strengthen what remains. The foundation is weak, but it has not yet crumbled. So that's why we say, hey, listen, your foundation is very weak.

Make sure to strengthen it. Strengthen, it hasn't crumbled yet. How many of you need to hear that this morning? The foundation has not crumbled.

Not yet. Strengthen what remains. Get to that prayer room, get to communion, get to this altar after the service, and begin to seek God fervently and passionately again.

Reinforce that foundation. Reinforce that foundation. Anybody recognize the last word that's underlined? Contractors? Rebar.

Oh, how many times have I messed with rebar? Man, so much I don't want to touch it. Bend it, lift it, throw it, put it in the concrete, everything. But you know what rebar is? It's to reinforce the foundation.

And so I want to give you an acronym you can remember easily with rebar. Number one, read and obey. Read the Word of God and obey it.

This is how you're going to strengthen the foundation. See, we know this, but we need to hear it. We need to be reminded of it.

And it's not just in the reading alone because the dead church read the Word of God, but they didn't obey it. Or their obedience was legalism. Legalism.

Legalism is really the motivation of the heart. And then also E, engage the spiritual battle. Engage the spiritual battle.

Action as well as silence speaks volumes. So when God says, hey, they're engaging. They're praying for the state.

They're praying for their representatives. They're praying for their family. They are engaged.

That speaks volumes as to the direction of their heart. But so does silence. We forget that.

I mean, I just, I wish sometimes I could... No, I don't want to slap anyone. Let me sing you something. But I'll talk to pastors or talk to other Christians about what's going on.

And man, we got to get engaged. We got to go to school board meetings. We got to get, you know, just, well, no, I'm just seeking the Lord.

I'm not going to get involved. I'm not going to get involved. And as we know, they're already involved.

You're already involved. You ever have family feuds at home? Say, I just want to get involved. No, you're already involved.

You're in the center of the controversy. What do you mean you don't want to get involved? Christian, you are a pilgrim here on earth engaged in battle. You are involved.

So your silence speaks volumes. Your silence sends a message. Like all those millions of people, I'm not going to vote for such and such.

Well, you just voted for the other person. Did you know that? Same thing, same thing. We've got to be involved to some degree.

Well, Shane, I don't want to know what to do. Can you pray in fast? That's the most important weapons of our warfare. Starve the voice of the flesh and begin to seek the heart of God for a national awakening.

Bathe, bathe yourself in prayer and worship. Bathe yourself in prayer and worship. And then A, anchor your soul to Christ.

That's what I said this morning during worship. You have to anchor your soul in Christ. And millions of people are saying, there's power in the name, there's power in the name, and there's power in the name, but that's just lip service.

It's the pursuit of the name that matters. The pursuit of Christ that matters. And then finally, the last word that we read about earlier, repent, repent.

That's the rebar. That's how you strengthen the foundation. Repent, which is change your mind about sin.

Change your mind about sin. And guys, let me tell you, this is where excuses must die. Repentance is where excuses go to die.

When we know something to be right, what do we normally do? We hire the defense attorney within to defend us. And that prevents so many people, so many people from really knowing Christ. Because I believe you're as full of the Holy Spirit as you want to be.

And the Holy Spirit will not fill a vessel completely if there's a lot of pride there and arrogance. I'm not preaching to you, I'm preaching to all of us. I often wonder how full am I? Like I don't really, I mean, how much pride is, I don't know myself, but I'm going to pursue God until the day I die and repent in these areas and get right before God and clean my heart as often as possible.

You can ask my wife, I apologize to people way more than I probably should. Hey, if I did something, let me know I apologize. I want to be right.

You know, a lot of times you get like, Lord, why do I have to apologize? I didn't do anything wrong. You ever been there? Come on, folks. But see, God calls us to be the better person.

God calls us to be the initiator. As much as it depends upon you, be at peace with all men, Paul would say. So the spiritual maturity comes out when you take the lower road, which is the higher road actually, and you engage and say, I apologize.

I repent. I could have handled that differently. Now, if there's truly nothing to repent of, you don't want to be a doormat for sure.

I mean, then you enable the person, of course, but there should be a heart that wants to restore that broken relationship. And then Jesus said, but good news, you do have a few names, even in Sardis. That could be like saying, there are a few names, even in California.

You would not believe how many times I have to defend California. You're in California? When I found out you were in California, I about lost my mind. How is a church like that in Los Angeles County? What? With Newsom and Gascon and the Dodgers, how is that even possible? I don't know.

God puts us where He wants us. My goodness, folks. It seems like it's almost like we're more scared of the devil than we are of God.

I want to know where God wants me. So I have a few names there, even in California, who have not defiled their garments. Who have not defiled their garments.

And they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. But this key really, this stuck out. They have not defiled.

They have not defiled. In the Bible, defilement is a big deal. It's to make something unclean that is clean.

It's to make something corrupt that is pure. And this is really where my heart breaks for the next generation, for our children. Because it's not just an LGBTQ, transgender, it's not that, whatever, go do whatever you want in your own house.

But when you try to push it on children, and when you try to pervert children, now you just woke up Mama Bear. See, now you got a problem on your hands. Now you're not gonna just be silent.

This is a big deal. A one-year-old wearing a onesie, I love trans, that needs to go in the fireplace. Shane, that's not very, it's very loving because I love God's Word more than I do the opinions of men.

You think Jesus will be pleased about all this and not say anything? Oh, I'll just go watch the Dodgers. I don't care, let's watch these nuns dressed as transgenders mock my father. Give me a break.

You need to get your face buried in God's Word to understand his heart a little bit more. And that's what defilement is. These little kids watching a transgender in G-strings and putting money in and twerking and all the, my goodness, this is defilement at a very deep level.

Jesus said, woe be to you who lead these little children astray. It'd be better if you'd never been born than instead have a millstone hung around your neck and cast into the sea. Is that not true? I'm not gonna apologize for speaking the truth.

I can love you and hate your agenda. Did you know what Jesus did? He loved them. But he said, go and sin no more.

He never, ever condoned the sin. Ever. He brought hope, but he confronted.

He could not do many works there because of their unbelief when he preached repentance. That's defilement is taken, I just, you see a little five-year-old, six-year-old, and it's like, okay, do you wanna be a boy or a girl? Yeah, being a fireman's okay. But they don't get, that's defilement.

That's a form of child abuse. You are abusing the child mentally, emotionally, and confusing them for later in life. They need to grow up knowing what the truth is.

Understanding what the truth is. There's hope though for the remnant that perseveres through hell on earth. That's what he says, you have a few names who have not defiled their garments and they will walk with me.

In white, they are worthy. But you need to understand something, they aren't worthy because they are doing good works. They are worthy because they fully trust in Christ and their deep repentance,

watchfulness, and perseverance confirm it.

That's why they're worthy. And he goes on to say, he who overcomes. Overcoming, how often is this word used throughout the Bible? Overcoming and persevering.

Standing strong, holding on. It's a reminder that we have to stay engaged in the battle and not give up. He overcomes.

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments. Perfect picture of that resurrected body and spending eternity with Jesus. And I will not blot his name from the book of life.

And I will not blot his name out from the book of life. Now that would take about 20 minutes to kind of unpack there. Those who believe you can lose your salvation will look at it some way and those who believe you can't lose your salvation will look at it a different way.

And I don't want to use this sermon to expound into that. I will not blot out his name from the book of life. So there's security there, trusting in Christ because they are persevering.

But I will confess his name before my Father. Jesus will confess their name. Do you know you have an advocate? I mean, sometimes some Scripture amazes me.

Like I have an advocate. He was tempted in all points like we are, yet was without sin. He's an advocate standing before the Father.

And you have the great deceiver, the devil. And you have the great advocate for us. He said, I will speak your name before the Father and of His angels.

This could be on the day of judgment. We don't know. Oh, and here's that famous saying again.

How many times is Jesus going to say this? He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the churches. He who has ears to hear, get back on track and fight again.

Fight again. Can a dead church be revived? Yes, so can you. You can be revived.

Praise God for that. Revived doesn't mean, again, you're perfect. And I live in a state of bliss.

I live in a state of warfare. I don't know about you. I live in a state of warfare.

Not only is the enemy against me, people are against me. The old Shane Idleman wants me to come out and play again. Come on.

830 service, you know. You never get that old man knocking at the door. Remember those good old days.

Remember, you just go back and be as prideful and this, and you go get them. Or go back to that thing you used to go to that brought you comfort. You've been released to that years later and the old man begins to whisper those things again.

This is an honest church, guys. Dead bones can live again. Praise God.

And I know if I have time, but I'm gonna make time. I'm gonna put up that passage about dead bones living. Raquel, you'll like this one.

Are you here? I think I hear you. Raji. Okay, Ezekiel 37.

Ezekiel 37. Oh, just let this. The hand of the Lord came upon Ezekiel and he brought him by the spirit of the Lord and he set him down in this huge valley that was full of dead bones.

And God said to him, son of man, can these bones live? So I answered, oh Lord God, you know. It's so important, guys. An attitude shift is absolutely critical.

You need to turn from a negative Nelly to a positive Peter. Lord, you know. Boy, this really ministered to me because I just had a conversation with a friend, like dude, I don't know, we might be too far gone.

This country, I mean, look at how quick this stuff is coming. I don't know, man. That just quenches my, I don't even want to prepare a sermon.

I don't want to go to church because you get that wrong attitude in you. You know, I know sometimes we come against positive thinking preachers, but there's a lot of truth in that. Think about it.

What's the opposite of positive thinking? Negative Nellies. And God has a lot to say about negativity. It's the thing we don't trust in positive thinking.

Oh, just think positive thoughts. But you need to be positive and uplifting to an attitude, oh Lord, you know. And it's not about name and claim it, but desire and pursue it.

I think it's important. You can't just name and claim it, but you can desire it, a godly desire, and you pursue it with all your heart and strength. Then God said, oh son of man, I feel this can be a word to the church somehow.

Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we are cut off. But you will say to them, Ezekiel, thus saith the Lord God Almighty, behold my people, I will open up your graves, and I will cause you to come up from the graves, and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

Then you shall know that I, the Lord God, have spoken, these dead bones will come alive. There is always hope. So yes, your dead bones can come alive.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Are you willing, are you humble, are you teachable? Well, so get back on track and fight again. This battle is not over yet, folks.

It has just begun. Get reengaged again. Get into deep repentance again.

God is still on the throne. And I came across a sermon illustration for years. And I've always, I've wanted to bring it here, but I know probably some of you have already heard this before.

But I thought, you know, oh well, a lot of people haven't. And it's so important. I think we can put up the picture.

Maybe some of you know, this is a painting in a very famous art gallery in France. It's a painting of the devil beating the man in chess and they're playing for his soul. And he says, checkmate, I've got your soul.

And the man is just, you ever do that? Well, one day, they were giving a tour through this art gallery, and this world famous chess player was in the tour. And he's looking at it, and he stopped for a while, and he's

looking at it, and the tour kept going. And the tour guy came back and said, wait, what are you doing? He goes, you know, I'm a world famous chess player.

He said, you're either going to have to change the painting or change the name of it, because this man still has one more move. The king still has one more move. He has not been beat by the devil.

He still has one more move. He can actually move, the king still has one more move, and then the devil will be in checkmate. Change the picture or change the name.

You need to know that God is still at one more move in your life. God is still on the throne, even when you're, oh my gosh, have you ever been to, oh my Lord, life is bearing down, it's pulling down. I can't stand anymore, oh God.

And having done all, he says, stand there before God and let him rebuild your life. God still has one more move. The enemy cannot win on God's timetable.

Think about this as I leave you. Did the devil bring the universe into existence? God brings the universe and speaks. Mars up here, Pluto, Neptune.

Hey, Earth, why don't you hang right here? That's the God you serve. Oh, by the way, let's have the oxygen, the nitrogen, the gravitational pull, let's all this sustain life with if anything's just off a percent, nothing could exist. The sun is just the right, I mean, it's like mind blowing.

How anybody can be atheist is beyond me. Do you know why they do? It's pride. There cannot be a God, I am God.

You can't even take your next breath without God. And God says, I sit on the throne and the Earth is my footstool. You need to refocus this morning on who God really is.

He gets the last move. He gets the last move.

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