

Changed God Takes Nothing & Makes Something

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman emphasizes the transformative power of God's word and the necessity of daily devotion in a believer's life.

Duration: 1:04:27

Scripture: Matthew 1:18

Topics: "Redemption", "Gods Grace"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's grace by highlighting the genealogy of Jesus, which includes individuals with broken pasts like prostitutes, harlots, and adulterers. It illustrates how God can take brokenness and turn it into something beautiful, showing that no one is beyond redemption or transformation when they submit to God's work in their lives.

Transcript

Lord, I pray that they would leave here knowing you in a fuller way, in a richer way. Lord, if they're confused, if they're anxious, if they're fearful or begin to ease those emotions and bring the comfort of your spirit. Jesus said when he leaves, he will bring the comforter and he will guide us, he will lead us, he will direct us.

Lord, I pray that you would not allow me to go beyond what you want me to speak tonight. Lord, but I do pray that your word would carry power, it would carry weight. And it would go and it would transform the lives of those here tonight.

It will go out on the Internet, Lord, the radio and begin impacting lives because your word has power. The power and the word of God is nothing to be taken lightly, Lord, and we want to look at you tonight, we want to look to you, Lord, open our hearts and open our minds. And we pray this in Jesus name, Amen.

I was really going back and forth on whether to just cancel this message in worship tonight. It's a struggle going back and forth. And I think God's put something on my heart for you tonight and I hope it benefits some of you.

If you haven't been here before, we welcome you to Westside Christian Fellowship. And I don't know if you know how blessed you are to have a worship team like that. I've spoken to a lot of different churches.

I've spoken to a lot of different churches and conferences, and it's hard to find, you know, spirit filled worship where the heart's right. And we just thank Chelsea. And that's actually her brother and her other brother and her husband on drums.

And then her friends up here as well helping. So it's good to hear that. And I just come up here with a really burdened heart tonight.

I don't even know where to start, but we're starting in Matthew. So if you have your Bibles, you can turn to Matthew chapter one. I do have a lot of announcements, but they're just not fitting right now.

So I want to get those at the end of the message. So if I forget anything, you have permission to stand up and remind me. But the burden of my heart is.

As we're starting Matthew, we're going to be starting Matthew chapter one, verse one, obviously, but I just wanted to express how much I think God has for us as we look to his word. And I'm talking to so many Christians nowadays. I'm saying, how much time are you spending in the word of God? And it's it's close to nothing.

We have an hour, hour and a half in the reruns on Duck Dynasty, but we have very little time for the word of God. And that is God speaking to his people that you want to know what God's what's God's will for my life. What's God saying to me? Look to his word.

Look to that. That's the only anchor in this shifting society that we live in. In a culture where the government, the nation, everything is just spiraling.

Nobody seems to have answers. Well, there are answers. There's answers that transcend time and space.

I believe that with all of my heart. Absolute truth of God's word. And I'm actually getting more and more questions asked from people on this topic of how do you study the word of God? Shane, what do you what does your what is your devotional look like? Time look like you're you're saying do this and do this.

You got to worship. And what exactly? How does that look? So I actually want to just take a few minutes before I begin, Matthew, because I could I could spend a whole week or two just talking about about the book of Matthew and the historical background and the contextual relevance and the historical data and all the stuff that you might say, oh, that's wonderful. But how does it affect my life? You know, so I want to really focus on the centrality of the message of the gospel and how it changes our lives.

But with that said, I did want to just share with you briefly and I hope it helps on what I found to be most productive. I brought this from home. I usually don't bring it.

It's almost like a treasure. You know, those of you studied it and I've had it 14 years now. We don't worship the Bible.

We look to the Bible, to the one we worship. It's just the avenue of that. We don't want to put it on more of a pedestal than God does.

But what I do and you don't have to do this because the Shane Eidelman model is not going to fit for your lifestyle. But I want to throw out some points real quick, because I want to encourage you to start in Matthew chapter one, verse one. That's where we're starting as a church and we're going to go through it

all expositionally verse by verse.

And I go back and forth sometimes on topical or expository, and we're going to spend a lot of time in expository. But I'm also going to bring out a lot of topics that are relevant. So what I do is again, I don't want I hate to say what I do because, oh, then that's what I must do.

And for some people, the evenings are better. But for me, the mornings are the best. I haven't used alarm clock in about 15 years now unless I'm trying to catch an early morning flight.

But I let my body obviously just with the background of health and fitness, I know the importance of proper sleep and all these things. So I just get up if it's, you know, 4, 4, 15, 4, 35, whenever I get up and I know, you know, I've had a plenty of sleep. That's when I get up and I begin to pursue after God.

And I want to remind you that it's never easy. It's the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. See, a lot of times I don't feel like it, but that's why we can't trust our feelings or gauge our feelings, because God wants to know how bad you want it.

How bad do you want a relationship with me? Do you want it bad enough to get up early, even when you're tired, when it's cold, when you're hungry? Do you want it that bad? Because if you do, that's when I reveal myself to you. That's when I open my word, because I want to know how bad do you want it. And God rewards that discipline.

A lot of times we forget that. Well, I just don't feel like it. Yeah, well, neither do I half the time.

If I could be honest with you, I don't feel like being up here right now. Well, I do now, now that I'm up here. But earlier today, I was like, how can I get out of this one? I just want to sit at home and relax because I don't feel like it.

But then when you get here and you hear the worship and now I'm ready. Now, now all the preparing. Now I feel, Lord, now I've worked past those feelings.

Now I'm ready. I'm ready to unload the gun that you've put in my heart. But it starts early in the morning, 4.15. I got up and I said, oh, boy, I bet I could go back to sleep for another few hours.

But I felt fine. It was OK. So I got up.

I take I take the Bible and usually I have a prayer list and it's good. I would encourage you to have a prayer list of things. Everybody in this congregation that I know that we're praying for.

I think of you and I'm praying for those areas, praying for the ministry, praying for the church, praying for my kids. Lord, would you protect them? Lord, would you guide them? Would you keep me help keep them healthy? Lord, would you I give you my marriage again today? Lord, I need you to hold this foundation together because without you is the rocket will fall apart. And before I know it, 30, 40 minutes has gone by.

I'm just praying and petitioning God and asking, would you again break me, Lord? Because arrogance has crept in. Can you break me of this this this attitude and this arrogance? Can you, Lord, would you? And you just spend time. Sometimes I don't even open this.

Oh, I can't believe the. Yeah, I don't. I don't.

Other times I open it for hours. So you're not set on the schedule. It's worshiping and seeking God.

And then I'll begin. And what I do, I've got four areas here. And it's OK to to mark up your Bible.

I do it like look back in 2001. I was in Proverbs 31 just finishing. And I remember when I met Morgan saying she has the qualities of this in August of 2001 and remembering that and going through in my life is in here.

It's OK to write on it. And how does God speak to you? So I have four areas. I'm in Exodus reading about the Passover.

I'm in now Ecclesiastics. So I'll read a whole two pages, flip over, move this over. And then I'll go to Ecclesiastics and talk about vanity.

All is vanity. It's under the sun. I'll be Lord.

What am I pursuing things that I should not be pursuing? Because when it's all said and done, I can't take any of this with me. It gets me in that right perspective. All is vanity, everything under the sun.

And then I turn to Matthew. And now Jesus is being led as a lamb to the slaughter. He's he's he's instituting the Passover with his disciples.

I just read about that earlier, how they put the blood of the Passover lamb on the door. So when the death angel came, our our Passover is being fulfilled in the New Testament. So it all starts to connect.

And then I have another tab in Second Corinthians. I'm in Second Corinthians three where it talks about carnality and what the results of having a carnal lifestyle. And a sermon came to me, the casualties of carnality.

I already have the points. I'm already, you know, God's working, you know, in my heart in these areas. You might say, well, that's great, Shane.

You have to prepare a sermon. Yeah, but you have to prepare your heart. You have to prepare your life.

And this speaks to you. If we believe it's God's written word revealed. If you don't, then let's sit down for an hour and I'll convince you that it is.

Then why wouldn't we look to this daily? It's our anchor. It's medicine to our soul. So that's how I start my day.

I start my day with the prayer list of things, because you have to have a plan. And I pray for these areas, pray for my kids, my family, the marriage, a church, you guys, financial doors open, different things going on, all those things that they're praying. And usually I'm I'm begin thanking God.

Thank you for everything. Thank you for the blessed nation we live in. Thank you for the roof over our head.

But and you just turn it to a heart of thankfulness. And then I'll put on some worship music, maybe with headsets and just begin worshiping God with with different songs and songs you enjoy. Put those songs on, begin worshiping.

Before you know it, you're in it. You're just you're an hour's gone by and you're worshipping God. He's answering prayers.

Your heart's being broken. It's being built up. It's being restored.

It's being renewed. Then you look to the word of God and it comes alive and it comes alive. You look, I look and it's seven o'clock in the morning.

I start at four fifteen. But see, it's not. Oh, you spent so much time.

I didn't spend so much time. God spent that time with me. He took me and began to speak to me and begin to reveal his will to me and begin to the scriptures came alive.

So that's what it looks like. But who has that much time in the morning? Well, I usually don't unless I get up early enough. They got little kids running in at seven thirty, want me to do stuff.

So I've got to I've got to make that time, because if you don't guard your morning, safeguard your mornings, everything will come against it. Now, I know people have to leave for work at five in the morning, like I did in construction. Well, then you have to have some time in the evening.

Set aside. Turn off that dynasty. I know I'm joking or joking around, but we've got so much time.

We don't realize it. You had so much time, just turn off that time and begin to live in the word of God and pray for things. Well, I don't feel like it.

No, you don't feel like it. The feelings come later. It's that discipline.

God is a rewarder of those who discipline or actually who diligently seek him. He is a rewarder, Hebrew says, of those who diligently seek him. And that diligence, if you study that language, the Greek, that Greek word, it's almost like a dropping of water hitting a stone.

Those diligence and within time, there's a little groove in that stone. Those who seek him diligently, they will find him. It's that that diligence.

It's and I don't know why this happens to me. I almost didn't tell my wife, but somehow it came out. I was at Toys R Us today with my son and my little daughter.

And we're walking at the front. He saw something he liked and we get all the way to the I've told the story in a different way before, but because it happened today, I have to tell it again. So I'm with her and he's over here and I'm looking for the next thing I know.

He's gone. Nowhere to be found. I'm walking up and down the aisles, up and down the aisles.

I'm the heart is getting a little, you know, and as I'm looking for him now, I can't find her because she can't keep up with me. So I'm like, I'm like, Gracie, Shane, people look great. You know, I'm just getting almost in freak out mode, but not quite there yet.

So I see her. I stay with me. I grab her.

I'm holding her. I'm down the aisles. I'm looking.

Where did he go? And, you know, people people don't care. They're oblivious to the fact they're shopping. Mike, where's my son? When? Where's he at? I've got to find him.

I don't care what else happens. I don't care how loud I am. Hear me.

Where's he at? I'm going to the front. I'm going to make a scene, lock this place down until I find him. And as I'm making my way to the front, there he comes smiling with his little toy.

And I'm like, do not do that again. But it's a good reminder of how we should see God. If I don't find you, if I don't find you, I'm not going to make it.

I can't get through life without you. I can't I can't make it another day, another breath. Well, Shane, that's radical.

That's no, it's biblical Christianity. We've lost that in our culture today. When I read the Bible and especially in the New Testament, where is that today? It's because we don't have a heart falling hard after God.

That is the the the the the problem with a lot of the church today. And I don't like to beat up on the church because it is the bride of Christ. But sometimes the bride needs to be challenged.

And I would just encourage you to get into that devotional life, because looking back of all the things in my spiritual journey that led me to this point, to be able to preach without a shadow of a doubt. It's that devotional time. Is why I'm up here today, you times that two, three hours, you times that over the course of a week, over a course of a month.

And there's a couple thousand hours of seeking God. All all preaching is is you're unloading the gun that God loaded in the prayer closet. And people always say, well, how many times, how much time do you, especially young pastors, how much time do you spare? Do you prepare your message? How long should it take? And I mean, I've seen John MacArthur's 20 or 30 hours.

I've seen other guys at five hours. But I usually say, well, you've got to make a differentiation there. How much time is spent preparing the message? But how much time is spent preparing the messenger? See, I can have 15 hours of good study, but zero hours of preparing the messenger.

So I try to equal it. I need eight hours of preparing the messenger and I need eight hours to prepare the message throughout the week. You find those hours, 15, 16 hours of of that.

So when you come up here, you know that God has put this on your heart for a reason. So with that said, I'm going to start Matthew one, but I just want to encourage you to get into the word of God. And before I do that, I want to talk about a mission statement I put together for this whole series.

And if you're new here, we're just now starting the book of Matthew. We're going through it verse by verse. What I want to do is it took some time to say, OK, Lord, what exactly are we trying to do? Because corporations have mission statements, right? You've heard that word mission statements.

Basically what it is, it's like here's what we're doing. And we're actually still working on one for the church. It's been two and a half years.

I've been kind of dragging my feet on that. What's your mission statement? I don't know. I'm just going to preach and, you know, but you have to have a mission statement as a point of reference.

Here's what we stand for. Here is our goal. Here is what we're doing.

So everything you do or most of it should line up with that mission statement. That's how you can tell if you're on track. So what I wanted to accomplish was this.

Number one, I want to bring centrality and relevance to Jesus's words. So what does that mean? Well, it means a lot. I want to bring centrality.

What that is, is central. How can we bring the words of Christ into our lives and make them central? Centrality. Everything's built upon that.

And then also, how can I make them relevant? You know, there's so many statistics I look at, the young adults are walking away from the church or getting out of organized church and all this, and it's because of this, it's because of this. I think a lot of it's because we're not making Jesus's words relevant. I can sit here and break down the Greek and the nuances of the verb and the conjecture and the commentaries and historical documents and all this stuff.

And a 22 year old is going to leave here going, I have no idea what that means to me. I'm struggling with lust, I'm about ready to make this decision, I have suicidal thoughts, that doesn't mean anything to me. So my point in this whole thing is not only to bring the centrality of Jesus's words to our lives, but the relevance.

How does it relate to us? That's one of the mission statements. The next one is to understand theology in a deep, yet impacting way. To understand theology in a deep, yet impacting way.

And we shouldn't be scared of that word theology. You know what that means? The study of God. It's very healthy, very good to have good theology.

And what I mean by that is some, I'll listen to people or I'll read theological books, and I've got to read the chapter three or four times. You know, what's he saying? It's so like deep and theological, which is good, but I want to bring theology, but also I want to have it impact us. So we don't just miss the whole point.

The next point I want to accomplish is to compare, and here's where it's going to get a little, you know, people are going to get a little upset sometimes, but I want to compare and contrast biblical truth with error. So when we look to the Bible, what does the Bible say? What does Jehovah Witness say? Where's the difference? What do Mormons say? Where's the difference? Here's where I'm going to get in trouble. What does Roman Catholics say in the papacy? Because they say a lot that's not in here.

So as I'm going through, I'm not picking other religions apart. What I'm doing is showing here's the difference. Here's the distinctions.

You see how that works? Either everything's true or nothing is, or the Bible is. I mean, we have to show where these certain areas where we're divided on these issues. Because usually a lot of it goes back to Christ.

Who is he? What has he done? The inerrancy of scripture. All of it usually hinges on that, because if the enemy can get those things, then the whole foundation crumbles. So the next thing I want to do, I want to allow the power of the gospel to truly shape and to challenge hearts so that deep, meaningful change takes place.

In a nutshell, I want to magnify the message. So when I study this, it's not just, oh, let me get through this. I want to, this is my mission statement that I'm going to revisit often because that helps keep me on track.

I also don't have a set plan or fixed scriptures. OK, Matthew 1, I've got to get through verse 25 tonight so I can start at 26 next Saturday. I'm not going to be that rigid.

I'm going to be very open to whatever, you know, if we want to stay on a verse for a week. So I'm not going to try to get through and have this plan in place. I'm not going to look solely to commentaries.

And what I mean by that is a lot of people go right to commentaries. Well, what does John MacArthur say? And what does, you know, R.C. Sproul say? Or what does Wayne Grudem say? Or what does, you know, Matthew Henry say? Or what does Charles Spurgeon say? Or John Wesley or this whole thing? Well, what does God say first? Let me let me internalize this. Let me see.

And then you open the commentaries up to make sure you're going in the right direction. And basically, you're seeking God to counsel on some points that aren't real clear. Am I going in the right direction here? Help me, Lord.

And you bring in wise, wise men of God who have made this journey before and you get their thoughts on it. And also, I don't want to be one sided. And I'll explain that in a minute.

I want a balanced approach. And what I mean by that is, and this might not sit well with some people, but nobody, including me, has perfect theology. Because somebody's wrong somewhere.

Do the gifts of the spirit, are they still available or are they gone? Well, there's a big divide in the camp. Is a rapture coming or are we going to go through the tribulation? There's a big divide in the camp. How do you run a church? A plurality of elders or one man leading? Big division in the camp.

Dreams, visions, all these things. Are they for today? Some say yes, some say no. See what I'm saying? Nobody has perfect theology.

Now, we have a perfect book that contains perfect theology, but in our human frailty and our weakness and in our own experiences. Those who have experienced the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit have a hard time saying that the spirit does not operate today. Those who have never experienced it say, oh, that's not available today.

So see how experience can play a role in our theology as well. So my goal also is to show you both sides, because on some of these issues, there is some there's some healthy tension. And I want to just here's what both sides say.

Here's what I believe. But also, I want to I want to open that up and not just be so one sided. Total depravity or does man have a free will? Churches divide on that one, too.

Who's right? Who's right? You see that you see how all this can play in. So that's that's my whole goal with Matthew. I want to set that up so you know.

So with that said, who was Matthew? Well, most people can say he was a tax collector and nobody likes tax collectors, right? Especially this time of year. I owe taxes. I've been owing taxes for 12 years.

So I do not like that particular just everybody is excited about April. I don't like April. That's just the way it works.

But he was a tax collector. And what happened is, I mean, I could spend a whole night, a whole night on Matthew. So I'm trying to get through, OK, Lord, what what what is relevant? What exactly are you trying to say to us? But he was transformed by the power of the gospel.

Was he not? Jesus said, stop what you're doing and follow me. So this man who was a tax collector was an unbeliever, was transformed and challenged and changed by by his relationship with Jesus Christ. And that's the question I presented on Easter.

If you weren't here, go listen to our message, that Easter message online, because I asked the question, if the message of the gospel so radically changed their lives, why does it change the lives of many people? Because the disconnect is not in the gospel. It's usually in the heart of the person receiving it. So that's who Matthew was.

His life was radically changed. And then he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write one of the gospels. And you have Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

And you'll hear a word often that's referred to just the first three, the synoptic gospels coming from the word similar. So Matthew, Mark and Luke write in a similar fashion, a similar form, a lot of the same account. But then you have John who just talks about more, more of a different area of Jesus and so much unbelief.

And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we behold the only begotten of the father, full of mercy and grace and truth. And he has a whole different angle.

So Matthew was one of these writers. Now, here's a question that many are going to ask. Why can we trust him? And for more on this, I'll refer you to the Easter message as well.

But I have a few things to say. And there is some truth in the fact or in the in the statement when you say, well, it requires a level of faith. Now, on one hand, that's not true because we don't check our brains at the door.

The Bible lines up in many different areas. But on the other side, there is a level of truth to that, that believing in God, there's a level of faith there because faith, Hebrew says, is the substance. What? The substance of things not seen.

It's the substance of things that we hope for. So we have this thing called faith, right? We have this thing called faith that we can't see really what we're believing in, but we're hoping for a certain thing. So faith is very important.

But we don't just come into a blind side and say, well, I just believe whatever. So there but there is an element of faith. And I was reminded of that story of that man who walked across.

They set up a tightrope. He walked all the way across both buildings, like 300 feet high. All the way across.

And he said, tomorrow, I'm going to push a guy across in a wheelbarrow. On the tightrope. And everybody said, no way, I cannot.

That's not going to happen. There's no way you could do that. He said, yeah, I've done it before.

I'll do it again. And so this one guy he found, he said, I actually have faith. I believe that you can do that.

I believe that you can push that wheelbarrow across with somebody and it can get to the other side. I'm counting on you and I do have faith. I believe it.

So the guy said to him, well, I need somebody to sit in the wheelbarrow. Well, you all know what happened, right? No, not going to sit in that wheelbarrow. Well, what happened? But see, we see that a lot today, don't we? Oh, I believe in God.

I have faith in God. But we don't live our lives as if we do. That's why we've got to save so much and manipulate here and connive there and do all these things, because, God, your plan B, you're not plan A. I've got to have all these things in order.

And that's why when you see the economy now taking a nosedive for a while and Lord knows what's going to keep happening and all hell's breaking loose, pretty much, you're going to see the suicide rate increase, unfortunately. You're going to see people lose their mind, go out of control, more shootings. Why? Because they have faith in an ungodly system that lets you down every single time.

There's no genuine faith in God, because when you truly, genuinely believe in the sovereign hand of God, you can sit in that wheelbarrow and you can say, bring it on. Yeah, I might be anxious a little bit. I might be fearful, but I know who's in charge.

That's faith. Faith is the substance of things not seen, but it's what it's hoped for. So there is a level of faith in this.

So as we open up Matthew, you've got to take a step. I've got to take a step and say, Lord, there's a level of faith here. Lord, I believe, I believe.

But you can also say like the man who Jesus healed the son. Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief. See, that's honest.

God knows our difficulties and our challenges. Some scriptures I'll get to, and that doesn't make any sense. Read Hebrew six tonight.

When he talks about for those who have tasted and have been enlightened and who have partook, if they reject the son of God, there is no more sacrifice for them. They will not find repentance. Yet all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Total depravity, man is totally depraved, yet God reaches down and saves man. How does that work? Are we just a puppet or is there something? Has God given us the ability to receive or reject the gift of salvation? All these complexities. So that's why there's a level of faith saying, Lord, I don't know everything.

And that's a healthy stance, because the more people I meet who think they know everything, the more arrogant they become. So one of my rules is when great men or women of God are divided on certain issues, I'm going to hold my opinions really loosely. Because who am I to say, well, I found it.

One guy just belittled me this week for not observing the festivals and the feasts and the Jewish, all this stuff, tradition. And I said, why are you so arrogant and mean and judgmental? I don't see any fruit of the spirit in your life. So obviously something's not working.

Have you read Galatians? Oh, foolish Galatians, who have bewitched you? Will you finish in the flesh while beginning in the spirit by following all these rules and rigid things? Now, if you want to observe the Sabbath and the festivals and all that, God bless you. I would love to go through that once in a while and just see and enjoy that. But that can't become the standard of truth that now we're going to judge everybody else.

So you have to ask yourself, if you're taking a stance for something, is that stance leading to love, joy, peace, contentment, long-suffering, gentleness and kindness? If it's leading to arrogance and rigid and anger, that's not a filling of the spirit. That's an arrogant man or woman trying to be judgmental. I've been guilty as charged.

Remember, I've admitted that to you before. I could put down everybody from Rick Warren to Joyce Meyer to all these people. I could just put them down five, six years ago.

So I looked in the mirror and said, you better shut your mouth. Although I might not agree with some things, I've got to remove this judgmental spirit. Jesus said, I think he said, remove that big old plank from your eye before you dare, dare remove that speck from your brother's eye.

And I wish more people would do that. And it's also on that thing, regardless of, you know, what you believe with Rick Warren or not, the fact that he lost his son this week and their church is grieving. And some of the comments I've seen belittling that situation have brought, it's just from so-called Christians saying mean things.

It's just unbelievable. That's why I say so-called Christians. The judgmental spirit comes out and you better be careful.

Take heed lest you fall. Because I've often noticed this one thing we begin to judge people else out. Guess what's coming soon? One guy just told me this week, I don't have a problem with pornography.

Oh, brother, take heed lest you fall because you are going, the devil loves to hear you say that. He just loves to hear you say that because watch out this week. Guess what? He's coming because that judgmental spirit fosters something.

When I start to judge everybody, I'm not talking about having discernment. I have a lot of discernment. You know, I've talked about Rob Bell before and these different emergent church leaders, Brian McClaren, Doug Padgett, Tony Jones.

They are very dangerous men in the pulpits of America saying things that ought not be. And as a church, we have to sound the alarm. Hello, not in a spirit of anger, judgmentalism, but saying here's where these men are in serious error.

That there's no hell, that you can embrace a homosexual lifestyle and still live in accordance with biblical Christianity. That's what these guys are saying. So I have to say, guys, now that you've said that, I've got to come out and counteract it.

So don't call me judgmental. We're supposed to discern from right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil. So just be very careful on that point.

I'm getting way off and all this isn't even in my notes. But there's a level of faith involved here. And some of you have to know this verse, 2 Peter 1:21.

For prophecy, for this never had its origin in human will, but in the prophets. Though human, they spoke from God as if they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. And that's where Christianity, really the distinction is.

We believe in this being the inspired Word of God. And if I had a couple Saturdays, I could do a whole series on the inerrancy of Scripture. And why do we believe that? Because I don't check my brains at the door.

Let me do some archaeological research. Let me do some historical research. Let me see if all this lines up.

Let me check the manuscripts. How do we get the canonization of Scripture? Why do we not use the Apocrypha that the Catholic Church uses? Why do we choose just these books? Christianity has done its homework. We don't check our brains at the door and just say, well, I'll just believe it.

I guess it's true. It's a Word of God. But God says, I moved through my prophets, through these men.

I moved through my Holy Spirit to get the inspired Word of God written. Written over 1,400 years. Over 1,400 years on many different continents by 40 different types of peoples.

Kings, shepherds, priests, prophets, all saying the same thing. All consistent from Genesis to Revelation. The consistency is amazing.

I joke about this with my mom a lot, but I sent her an excerpt for one of my books I'm working on. We can't even agree on the editing of an excerpt. One page.

I don't want to say that. You need to say, I don't want to say that. There's no consistency.

If she wrote it, it would look way different than if I wrote it. How does that happen? Written over 1,400 years. 40 different authors on many different continents.

Yet it's saying the same consistent theme. God created. Man rejected.

God redeemed. You accept it or you reject it. And God not only does that, He shows archaeologically.

They're still finding. They're finding all these sites. Oh, there was a King David.

There was a Jerusalem. There was a Jericho. All these things.

Do you know on that point that not one place in the Book of Mormon has ever been found? Never. Ever. Ever.

Not one tool that they used. Not one city. Not one battleground.

Nothing has ever been found. It's okay to say that because it's true. Let me read a recent report on this note.

According to the Book of Mormon, at least 230,000 men died in battle at the Hill Cumorah. This battle was about one-tenth the size of the battle which took place at the same location 1,000 years earlier. However, there is not a trace of archaeological evidence to support the claims that so many men died in this battle on this tiny hill now owned by the LDS Church.

Also, I like what Thomas Stewart Ferguson wrote. With all these great efforts, it cannot be established factually that anyone from Joseph Smith to the present day has put his finger on a single point of terrain that was in the Book of Mormon. Nothing.

And the hemisphere has been pretty well checked by competent sources. Thousands of sites have been excavated and nothing has been found. Why? Because it's a fable.

It's false. It's ungodly. It's a message of the Antichrist.

Shane, you're being a little hard. Well, that's what the Bible says. He who denies his son is Antichrist is against him.

And I remember I was at an elder's house, an elder Mormon a couple years ago, just sitting in his living room. And when I started to challenge him, he got visibly upset and he told me to leave his house. I said, sir, I can speak with you about truth all day long.

Why are you getting up so upset? Well, because this and this. You're telling me I'm wrong in here. I'm telling you're wrong here according to the Word of God.

You're in error. You're leading people astray. Your book is written by the devil.

Well, that was it. It's time to leave. But why can I sit there calmly and talk with him about truth? Challenge me.

Challenge Christianity. Challenge us. You can't challenge the truth.

You can try to challenge it. But he was getting irritated and frustrated because I was breaking down the foundation of everything his life is built upon. A young boy finds gold tablets that now nobody can find, translates all these things, opposes the Word of God, goes in a distinct and different direction.

There's no salvation outside of the Church of Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith. All these things. I'm going to be a god someday, and I'm going to rule planets, and have celestial sex, and have children.

That's pretty different than the Word of God. So it's okay to say that and challenge. Listen, this is a fable.

This is fake. This is false. And I had Jehovah's Witness come to the door last week, and I didn't say anything this time.

I usually, you know, you listen for a minute and you say, you're not a Jehovah's Witness. I'm a Jehovah's Witness. You're a false prophet.

Wow, why are you saying this? But anyway, don't do that. I'm just saying. So they left a little magazine, right? You know, their little magazine.

I told my wife, I'm going to sit down on the couch and read this. You might say, oh, you shouldn't do that. Well, it's okay if you're not saying, oh, I wonder if this is true.

Let me open my mind. Let me see. I don't know.

I'm reading it already knowing it's not. But boy, was it laid out good. You could do a Bible study from the Old Testament.

This is interesting. And then you get to the little box about Jesus Christ, and that He was created just like we were. Isn't that nifty and convenient? Why is that? They want to get rid of Christ.

Every false religious system has to get rid of Christ. They have to. Well, God created Him like He created us.

You see, it's all these little nuances and fake truths. And the devil doesn't mind if you preach the Word of God, as long as you leave out some key elements of the truth. So why do I believe in this? First, the evidence for the Bible.

We don't check our brains at the door, but the physical evidence is absolutely incredible. We have over 20,000 manuscripts in existence. 20,000, and they're consistent.

All of them are consistent. The earliest textual evidence we have was copied 100 years after the original. In contrast, Caesar's Galactic Wars was written in the 1st century BC, and there are only 10 manuscripts in existence.

The earliest textual evidence we have was copied 1,000 years after the original. And it's amazing. Atheists or agnostics have no problem with this work, Caesar's Galactic Wars written, you know, of course it was written.

But they have a problem with the Word of God that has tons more evidence there than it actually existed. So we don't check our brains at the door in that area. Not only that, the archaeological evidence, all the findings that they're proving, and there was a Jerusalem, there was a Judea, there was a king this, there was a king that.

So I wrote this down. Why would they record very accurate history but not accurate truth? Now, the Bible, granted, is not a good history book because it wasn't written to be a history book. It doesn't give links, and it doesn't give this sometimes.

You have to kind of put... So it's not a history book, but it gives very accurate history to the minute details. These kingdoms did exist. The Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Persians, the Hittites, the Amorites, all these things existed.

The nation of Israel went from here. These promised land, these areas, all these things existed. Everything lays it out.

So it has very accurate history, very accurate archaeologically. So why then would it not have accurate truth? Because like the Book of Mormon, they're going to fabricate everything. It has no accurate truth.

It has no accurate history. Everything's fabricated. So if you want, I have tons of books on the inerrancy of Scripture.

I'm not even doing justice because you can look at the different texts that have come from... There's different, like the NIV, some of you use. Some of us use the New American Standard or New King James, and even those manuscripts, although they have variants, which are minute differences, they're saying the same thing, and they're saying the same thing. And I do have a few thoughts on, well, why don't we have a perfect Bible? And I would say we have a perfect truth, but if we had a perfect Bible, we'd probably have it up on a pedestal and we worship it, and we bow down our homages because it's perfect, and there's nothing wrong with it whatsoever.

Now, let me qualify that. There's nothing wrong with the truth in the Bible, but different manuscripts have different variances in it. Like the New King James will say something, Jesus didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The NIV will say, Jesus didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners. Where's that word repentance? Well, it's consistent throughout the NIV and other areas. And that's why when I debate King James only fanatics, that the King James only is the only written, inspired Word of God.

You cannot have other translations. You can't. But they don't understand that the King James actually went through 32, 34, 35 different translations.

It used to be called the wicked Bible because thou shalt commit adultery. It said that. They had to reprint it.

Well, yeah, that's not very good. However, I like the King James Bible. That's where I learned.

That's where I studied. But all I did was look at, I compared the Greek and the Hebrew of the King James and the Greek and the Hebrew of the NIV. I looked at where these thing and what are these? It's the message is the same.

Actually, the manuscript that the ESV, New American Standard, English Standard Version and then NIV. A lot of times it actually translates certain things better and clearer than the old King James about the blood of Christ in this. And somebody said, even using the new King James, somebody came up to me and said, well, you're an heir.

You're being led astray into this new world order. I'm like, wow, that just can't really. I can't really fathom that.

How am I doing that? Would you show me one verse? They said, no, I can't show you one verse. It's just throughout. I said, well, throughout what I read is I'm a broken sinner in need of Christ.

The blood of Christ has saved me. I need to repent of my sin. Consistency here and consistency in the King James.

You know, whatever it is there, it's consistent. However, I'm also very careful with Bibles like the New Living Translation, the Message Bible. Those are not what they call formal equivalents.

They're dynamic equivalents. And the difference is, don't let me lose you on the big words. Some of these are word for word.

What were they saying word for word? Okay, much better for study. The NLT and the Message Bible, if you use them, it's okay, but get a good study Bible, are thought for thought translations. Well, here's what they were saying.

And I don't agree with a lot of Eugene Peterson's things in the Message Bible. If you want to look at it, but I wouldn't use it as a study and I wouldn't read from it because there's too many things. We're talking, well, that's definitely not what I get from it.

You know, and they say that though. They said, this is just a paraphrase of what we're saying. So you do have to be careful with certain translations.

I think they might even be coming out with the gender neutral Bible again that they tried or this new Bible that's removing the word repent. You know more about that, right? I talked to, what's it called? The Mirror Bible. Yeah, endorsed by Rob Bell probably.

Yeah, I think so. So you got to be careful in the translations. I'm not trying to mock it because I love it.

I've studied it though. And I see where people can get hung up on a certain text because we begin to worship that text. And you might say, well, if there's variances, if there's a little bit of difference, how can it be trusted? Well, very easily, God used imperfect people to give a perfect message.

So I take great comfort in God using imperfect people to give a perfect message. The message of the Gospel, the message of the Word of God, there is no error. There's no variance there.

It is crystal clear. But if I might, this manuscript says, this king was called this. Well, actually, this one says his name spelled a little differently.

I'm not going to lose any sleep over that. We're not saying, this one says Jesus died for our sin. This one's saying Mary's mother died for our sin.

We're not getting that distinction there. There's a complete truth. So on that note, I'm getting back to the sermon.

Change. God takes nothing and makes something, but you have to embrace His absolute truth, which we pound from this pulpit on a weekly basis, so I won't do it again. But for those of you who are new, if you want God to change your life and to take nothing and to make something, you have to embrace His absolute truth.

There's no other way around it. You cannot embrace Mormonism and be changed from the inside out. You cannot embrace Jehovah Witness or any other religion out there and be changed from the inside out.

Because as I said last week, many religions have reformation where you'll be better, you'll do good, you'll do good things, but it doesn't change the heart. That's why this stands alone. And we have to look to it when we do that.

Internal consistency. We talked about that. Now, let's get to Matthew 1. Do I have any volunteers that want to read all those names? No, good.

I'm going to get to that in a minute. But I'm going to jump ahead of all those names. Okay? It's good.

It would take the time. You can research those names and I'm going to in a minute. But I just want to say this about the genealogy.

You're going to see that Matthew, his account traces the lineage from Abraham to Jesus. 41 generations. But if you go to the Gospel of Luke, he records the ancestry from Adam to Jesus, which is 76 generations.

So you see, Matthew and Luke have differing views there. Now, there is a theory that says, and I say a theory because I don't know if we can take it as truth. I don't know if anybody's exhausted it enough, but they hold that Matthew traces it, obviously, Joseph's line, the legal line.

So Jesus had the legal line through Joseph, not really his father per se, but his, I don't know what you would call that. His earth father. Okay, I'll go with that one.

So he's got the legal title to the throne through Joseph. Then Luke gives the lineage of Mary. So now he's got the bloodline.

So now he's not only got the legal right to the kingdom and the kingship, he's got the bloodline. So that's why there's two different genealogies. Okay, so don't worry too much about that just yet.

But I want to read verse one. I'm sorry, chapter one, verse 18. Oh, goodness, I'm going to get through this.

I've got four pages left. I'm going through two. So we'll pick up next week.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. After his mother, Mary, was betrothed to Joseph before they came together. Now that's kind of like a courtship or an engagement.

And if you want to proof text for not having premarital sex, I would say that's a pretty good one. After his mother, Mary, was engaged to Joseph, but before they came together in that intimacy, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. So what happens? Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, he was a good man, a man of integrity, and not wanting to make Mary a public example, because if she got pregnant and they weren't yet married, you know what that means? Well, if you don't know what that means, talk to me afterward.

But yeah, exactly. It's going to be viewed as, wait a minute, we broke the law. We had sex before marriage, and now here's the fruit of it.

She's pregnant. So what would normally happen is they would stone her. Boy, have times changed.

Thank God. In some regards, I'm not minimizing that that's wrong. I'm just saying, thank God, yeah, for a lot of people.

But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid. Take you and marry your wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And this is pretty mind boggling, and it's hard to understand that.

But we have to understand that Joseph and Mary didn't bring Jesus into the world. Joseph was just the earthly father to raise and rear and lead the family. Mary was just the vessel.

And God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, placed Jesus into that womb. Now, of course, it makes sense later if you read some of the other messages I gave because of the sacrifice and born to die in that perfect sacrifice and to be the son of God and to come human form, hypostatic union, fully God, fully man to die for the sins of the world. But we're not there yet.

We're still back on this point that she was she was pregnant because of the Holy Spirit. He somehow somehow that happened. But while Joseph thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid.

Take Mary as your wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a son and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. Some of you in this room need to hear that again.

You've heard it so much that you become callous. And this is the most important text in all the Bible. Jesus Christ came to save you and to save me.

And in our arrogance and our pride, we continue to reject him and reject his call to repentance. And this is a wake up call to some of you or might hear this later. The most important message is rarely proclaimed.

This boils down to Jesus will save his people from their sins. Verse 22, so all this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet saying, Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and he shall call his name Emmanuel, which is translated God with us. Basically, the prophetic book of the Bible, the prophets foretold of this time that Jesus would come.

And he's just reminding Joseph, listen, this is what the prophet spoke of that your wife will conceive and his name will be Emmanuel. And then it picks up. And she had brought forth her firstborn son and he called his name Jesus.

And I don't know, I'm going to have to just go back on some of this later, but I wanted to get the first takeaway from this because it's important that he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Right now here, here's where I'm going to get the difference between biblical Christianity and Roman Catholicism as well. The reason this happened, number one, it shows that salvation ultimately must come from the Lord.

See, if Mary was involved and it came from her DNA, well, what's that kind of ruins things for us, doesn't it? Because that's in nature. So what that and actually, I'm not smart enough to come up with all this stuff. It comes from systematic theology by Wayne Grudem.

It's a 1200 page volume that I encourage you if you're going to read any book on systematic theology. This is a good one. We have a few differences on the church replacing Israel and different things, but overall, it's consistent with what I believe.

So it shows that salvation ultimately must come from the Lord. God said, I'm going to put a child in her womb they're going to bring him into the world. Second, the virgin birth made it possible that the uniting of full deity and full humanity in one person.

So because he was conceived by the Holy Spirit without sin, all of deity, fully God, yet fully man conceived into the body of Jesus Christ. And we do get a headache if we think about that too much, how that works. That's what theologians call the hypostatic union.

How these two unions came together, fully God, fully man. The third, the virgin birth also makes it possible for Christ's true humanity to come without inherited sin. See, Christ has no sin because the Holy Spirit planted there, not the DNA of Mary, not the DNA of Joseph.

It was planted by the Holy Spirit. Now, here's where we differ. Roman Catholics.

And again, we have friends. I was an altar boy. I've said this before.

So I'm just saying, here's the difference. You can go on their website like I did and you'll find here's the difference. So Roman Catholics on Immaculate Conception.

From the moment when Mary was conceived in the womb, the blessed virgin was kept free from original sin and was filled with the sanctifying grace normally conferred during baptism. This is one of the four dogmas in the Roman Catholic Church. And I said, well, Shane, I didn't quite get that.

Well, let me just read the first couple of words there. From the moment when Mary was conceived in the womb, she was free of original sin. That's heretical.

That's a heretical statement on their website. Mary was not free of original sin. She was highly favored.

She was the mother of God or the mother of Jesus, brought Jesus into the world. Highly favored. But she was not without sin.

And then what does that lead to? Well, now without sin, we've got to worship her. We've got to put her in front of our houses. We've got to put her at grace.

We worship Mary. How dare we? I guarantee if Mary was here today, she'd be weeping saying, do not worship me. Worship my son.

He is the only way. I'm not co-redeemer. He is the only way, the only truth, the only life.

And there's a bumper sticker I see because she lives on our street. I want to kind of drop her one of these CDs off, but I don't think it'll go over well. But it says, having a hard time finding Jesus, look to his mother.

That's blasphemy. That's blasphemy. And we can tie this back to worship of the mother earth and all these terms back in Babylon and worshipping this woman and her son.

A lot of this is rooted, a lot of what the Roman Catholic Church believes, they're going in a very dangerous direction, a lot of this theology. And when the papacy can now start putting things above the Bible, there's a big danger there. Did you know they used to kill people for saying that four or five hundred years ago? See, we don't like to talk about that either.

The church put Christians to death for saying things like this because they challenged that papal authority. They would actually call him the antichrist. Luther, Calvin, Swingly, Knox, all these reformers.

I'm not glorifying them, but what I'm saying is what this doctrine teaches. And now you're going to see it get weirder with this new guy. And you're going to see a lot of interesting stuff brought in.

Ecumenical movement. Calling Muslims our brothers. You're going to see all this stuff.

Why? Because it's built on a false doctrine of worship. All you have to do is read their own words. Another dogma is that she was the mother of God.

And because of that, on their website, her role as the mother of God made it inappropriate for her to experience the corruption of the grave, so she was taken to heaven. Mariology, it's a poor doctrine. That's why they worship Mary.

The problem is we love Mary. Oh my gosh, she was Jesus's mom. Give her props, highly favored.

Let's everything the Bible says, but don't you dare put on her a term that the Bible does not give her. She's not co-redeemer. You cannot find salvation through her and look to her son.

You cannot pray to the saints. You can't go to a priest to confess your sins every week. I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

Did you ever go to Christ? Did you ever go to Christ and repent? Those guys need to repent themselves. And I'm just saying it's love. I'm not upset.

I'm not trying to pick fights, but when you go against the word of God, I have a biblical mandate to point that out. If I'm going against it, come out and point where I'm going against it. You won't be able to.

You'll point out where I'm going against your theology. When I talked to that Mormon, he kept going back to the Book of Mormon. I said, I want to go back to the Book of Mormon.

It's corrupted. It's not good. I want to go back to this.

Oh, I don't want to go back to this. We need the Book of Mormon to understand this. No, we don't.

That's the same thing the Roman Catholic Church in hundreds of years ago. In Latin, the people can't understand it. So then Whitecliffe comes on the scene.

It translates the word of God in the language of the tongue. William Tyndale comes in. John Hus.

Then the two of those guys were burned at the stake for simply putting the Bible into the known tongue of the land. Oh, this gets deep and perverted. So it's not, what were these little differences? Can Catholics be Christians? I don't know.

If you believe in Jesus Christ, He's the only way, the only truth of life. Can a Baptist be a Christian? I don't know. Does he believe that Jesus is the only way, the only truth, the only life? But if you're in this system of false doctrine, I have some serious concerns.

Just read the beliefs. What about immaculate conception? Mary would never have sex. Ever.

No. Well, the Bible says Jesus is brothers. Why? Because we have to worship her.

Shane, aren't you afraid of both? The lightning is going to come. Absolutely not. God is very pleased with what I'm saying because we're honoring his son.

We're honoring his word. You know what that said? It feels a little heavy in here. I'm going to I'm going to close in prayer and close on this last point.

I'm going to have the band come up while I'm praying. Well, Lord, we just pray that you would, Lord, honor your word tonight. Lord, you know, I'm just a broken vessel before you.

Lord, I get passionate for your word, Lord, and for your truth. But keep me broken, Lord. Keep me humble.

Keep everyone in here, Lord, broken and humbled. We go out, we proclaim your truth because the power is in the application of your truth and acknowledging your son. Lord, I pray if there's no one in here, if there's someone in here tonight who does not know you, this is convicting, Lord.

I pray that anger subsides and brokenness takes its place. Lord, begin to challenge your heart. Show them that they do not have a right relationship with you.

They've been trusting in religion. They've been trusting in a false sense of security all of their lives. But Lord, it's time to bring them back tonight.

I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. My closing point was this, and I want to go back to, I want to go back to that genealogy because this is going to be very encouraging for some of you.

The genealogy of Jesus, the genealogy of Jesus, you know what the Jews said? This genealogy baffled them. It said, this genealogy is unfit for the royal line. That's why one of the reasons we look at the Bible is crystal clear on our human frailties and weaknesses.

If it was fake, they would have built themselves up. They put women into the genealogies. It was unheard of back then.

You don't mention the women. Not only that, you don't mention Tamar. Judah begot Perez and Terah by Tamar.

Tamar was a Gentile that tricked Judah and having sex with him, she played the harlot to conceive. Jesus came from that. So my point is, he can change anything you've gone through, anything, anywhere you've been.

You cannot be so desperate out of the reach of God. He took a prostitute. He took the seed of that and brought forth the Messiah.

Then Sam begot Boaz by Rahab, who was a Canaanite. Rahab the harlot, where the walls of Jericho came down, but she put the cord of redemption, the red cord down from the window. So when they attacked the city, they spared her household.

Jesus came from that lineage. Yes. Prostitution, illicit sex, brokenness.

He comes to save those. He says, I came to call the sinners to repentance, not the righteous arrogant. I came to break and to humble the arrogant.

God says, I will bring back what was driven away. I will heal the brokenhearted and I will forgive those who've trespassed against me. But the proud and the arrogant, I will feed in judgment.

Thus saith the Lord. He's saying, I redeemed you. I transformed you.

I took nothing and made something. Jesus Christ came from a harlot, from a prostitute. And then we get to Ruth, a Moabitess.

Read about the Moabites. They destroyed the children of Israel. Then what about David begot Solomon by Bathsheba? Bathsheba.

David killed her husband Uriah on the battlefield. He took her as his wife. The first child died within the week.

And David wept and wept and wept. And then finally the prophet Nathan came to David and challenged him and said, you need to repent of that sin. And then from a repentant heart, another child came, that

being Solomon.

Christ came through this lineage of Bathsheba. Christ came from that. After a heart of repentance and brokenness.

And then Manasseh is in the lineage. And we hate Manasseh in one sense because the prophet says, because of Manasseh, the children of Israel were judged. Their wickedness has spread to the uttermost parts of heaven.

And God has to judge Israel because of Manasseh. So you have Jesus coming through a prostitute, through a harlot, through the sexual immorality, for adultery, through all these things. He still comes.

He says, I am here to save and to redeem. That's why I've come. That's a powerful transformation of this message that God takes nothing and makes something.

But in the same way that the clay has to submit to the hand of the potter, you have to submit your heart to his work. You'll never see this change life until you submit to that work and allow the power of the gospel to change your life. That's why I love this song they're going to do right now.

The one of the lines goes, He won't relent until you have it all. God will not relent. He'll keep calling you and keep calling until the day you die, until you give it all.

He's calling. It's like a father calling his son home. And it was not until the prodigal son came to himself and said, I must go back to my father.

That's how powerful this message is that God is calling his people. That's why I get so passionate because I've seen crystal myth addicts turn overnight. I've seen a drunk come home and never drink again.

I've seen adultery stop right there at the foot of the cross. I've seen alcoholism after 20 years die that night. One step to the altar, that's where brokenness takes place and God changes that person.

I've seen abuse and molestation, all these things that God takes that and takes this brokenness and begins to rebuild it. And in the hands of a potter and he shapes that clay, he pulls it, he plates, I know it hurts. I know it hurts right now.

Don't worry. I'm getting you to a position that now I can use you. Look at what I made.

I took this clay, but you've got to soften up. The same sun that hardens that clay will melt that clay, will melt that wax if you allow it to open up. You've got to break.

You've got to come to God with all of your heart.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/U9tzjobBD0M.mp4>

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