

Dealing With Disappointment and Regret

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman's sermon addresses how to confront and transform disappointment and regret into opportunities for spiritual growth and renewed purpose.

Duration: 54:20

Scripture: Philippians 3:13

Topics: "Overcoming Regret", "Surrendering Emotions"

Description

This sermon addresses dealing with disappointment and regret, emphasizing the importance of surrendering these emotions to God. It highlights the impact of regret on confidence and enthusiasm, urging listeners to resist the devil's attempts to steal their joy and confidence. The speaker shares personal experiences, like low attendance at a service, to illustrate how to combat disappointment by focusing on serving God wholeheartedly.

Transcript

Dealing with disappointment and regret. Dealing with disappointment and regret. Is there anybody in here dealing with disappointment and regret? The first service wasn't very honest.

I'm looking for honest people at the second service, okay? Because it was just me up here, you know. Oh, I'm the only one? Okay, good. If we're honest, everybody's dealing with disappointment and regret.

And it's interesting, I found, you've seen this before. What is regret? Regret is terrible because it's a loss of confidence and enthusiasm. If the devil can get you disappointed and regretting, he will take the enthusiasm away from you.

He will take the confidence away from you. As a real example, it just happened to me tonight. You want to hear it? Mother's Day is supposed to be the third highest attended service all year.

Well, guess what? That's not the case tonight. Everybody's gone. So disappointment comes in, and I say, Lord, I don't care if there's 50 people, I'm going to preach my heart out.

That's how you deal with it. You've got to take that thought captive. Oh, it's me, I better just hurry through this.

No, no, see, that's what the devil wants. And in your life too, he wants to rob you of the enthusiasm because how much better do we do when we're excited and enthused and motivated? So he'll take that away, and we just get through life with no enthusiasm, no confidence. And if the enemy can discourage us, he can manipulate us.

What happens is misguided priorities lead to misguided choices. Here's how it works. If he can get me off my train of thought, if he can get me disappointed, if he can get me regretting certain things, then now I will make choices based on that regret.

I will make choices based on that disappointment. And then now my life is playing into the hands of the enemy because he wants now to guide me in a different direction. And the more I thought about it all week, the more I realized this is a very important topic because if we're not careful, we can actually live a life of regret and remorse and disappointment, and then that can zap our energy, zap our strength.

And as a result, do you think you become very positive and fun to be around or disgruntled, negative, always down? And I struggle with that from time to time. I know it's hard to believe, but it happens. We're all in the same struggle, you know, depression and disappointment.

So I want to talk about that, and it's interesting. I was just curious, what are the top regrets? The top regrets in the minds of Americans. And as I was putting this together, I thought, wow, this is speaking to the majority of the people in the church as well.

Number one, well, actually they weren't in order, but the first one I put down, romantic regrets. The one that got away. Do you ever have those? If you see my wife shaking her head, we're in trouble.

The one that got away. Do you regret that? Some people do. I don't.

I can be honest with you. I don't regret the one that got away. And please understand me here.

My heart, I told the first service, this type of sermon, I'm not discounting the deep emotional pain that people go through, the struggles, the disappointments. I'm not trying to trivialize any of those things. Depression, it's real.

But I do want to remind you that God makes provision for all of these things in his word. The provision's there. He makes that provision.

And I've seen this a lot on romantic regrets. The one that got away. The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence.

For every person I have says, I'm leaving. God just wants me to be happy. I have another person coming back five years later saying, that was the worst decision I ever made in my life.

The grass is greenest where you water it. Is greenest the word? Well, it sounded good, right? The grass will be the greenest where you water it. I want to encourage you in that area.

That regret has to be hit head on. This area of regret and disappointment, we've got to hit this head on. Water the correct side of the fence.

Water it at your home. Your home. That's where we should be watering that grass and not looking for the one that got away.

Remember the famous country songs? Thank God for unanswered prayer. Oh, Lord. Thank God for unanswered prayer.

If he gave me everything I prayed for, I wouldn't even be here. I'm pure of that. So thank God for guiding and directing.

What about relative regrets? Oh, we don't have any of those. Family members? Disagreements or arguments that got out of hand? Any relative regrets? My mom knows. She would tell you.

One regret is I want to get closer to my brother and sister. I want to get to know them better, not this big distance here. You know, and trying to do that.

And it's a regret, and you have to work towards that. And I'm partially responsible for that. And what do you do with that regret? Oh, education regrets.

Anybody have any regrets that they didn't further their education? There's not a month that goes by that I'm not asked, What seminary did you go to? You're not a real pastor unless you go to seminary. And I remind them, you're not a real pastor unless God calls you. That's the criteria.

And then, of course, you study. But sometimes I regret it. You know, like, oh, that would have been cool to say, I have a Ph.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary.

But I know me, and that's what I'd be telling everybody. Have you heard of me? What about Master's Seminary down there? You know, I got a Ph.D. from there. Did you see the back of my book and my business card? But that's what it does.

God says, no, you got to stay humble and broken before the Lord. But that's why we have some of these regrets. Hopefully I can talk about them a little bit later.

But career regrets. Anybody have any career regrets? Financial regrets. And here's the big two, parenting regrets and health regrets.

Most people wish they would have taken better care of this billion, trillion-dollar body. We can't even put a price tag on it. We treat it like garbage, and then we regret the choices we made.

Now, here's the encouraging thing. I'm going to get to parenting regrets too in a minute. I want to encourage you that you can take this principle to the bank, that God not only adds to our life, he multiplies.

And once you learn to take regrets and turn them into stepping stones, and have a thankful attitude, a thankful heart, and put these things, God can begin to multiply and repair and build and sustain all these areas you thought were impossible, all these things you're regretting over. There's a wonderful scripture God talks about, I will bring back what the devourer took, I will replenish the canker worm and the locust, and all these things what they took from you. Now, we can't take that scripture and say, oh, that applies to me.

But the principle does. When we get our hearts right back on track with God, and we start to make decisions that honor him, he can begin to multiply things back into our lives that we thought were lost. So regret then turns into passion.

Disappointment turns into purpose. Because I gave it to God and now he multiplies it. That's the wonderful thing about this.

The enemy wants you to live in regret, God wants you to take that regret and make it a stepping stone. I regret that I spent money on terrible things for 25 years. I got really sad this week when I read that the average person will make \$2.5 to \$4 million in their lifetime.

I said, where's that at? Where did that go? Where is this? Where? So you can live in this regret, but God says, I will multiply it. But had I not had that regret, now I can make better financial decisions. Had I not hurt somebody in my 20s, I cannot now love somebody better now.

I mean, how do you develop patience if you're never tested? How do you develop unforgiveness if you're never wrong? How? We can't. So you can actually use regret as a stepping stone. Man, I regret what I did to my marriage.

Well, now you can use it to repair your marriage. I regret what I did in my 20s. Well, now you can use it to repair your life in your 30s and 40s.

Because the enemy wants to keep you in regret and disillusioned and disappointed. Here's why. Because when I live in that state, I can make excuses for sin.

I can make excuses for my terrible attitude. I can make excuses for everything because of regret and disappointment. If it wasn't for my parents, you should never say that.

We cannot hold another person responsible for our choices. Yes, they influence us. Yes, there's different dynamics that take place.

But ultimately, we have to take responsibility for our own actions. Here's what Paul said about this. But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.

If I could only have one verse this whole sermon, this would be it. One thing I do, I forget, which tells me I can remember. Right? Common sense.

I forget those things which are behind me and I reach forward to those things that are ahead. I don't regret the lessons learned. I still learn those lessons.

But now I've got to reach forward to what God has called me to do. I can't live back here in regret. You know what's been said, right? Why does a car have one little rear view window and a huge window to see where you're going? The same thing in life applies.

We can't be set in looking back. And I don't know if it was God kind of putting this in my path this week, but I thought it would fit the sermon well. I read an excerpt from a book.

It talks about embracing rock bottom. And the author writes this. Maybe you've hit your rock bottom moment.

Maybe you're there right now, so I've got good news for you. Many times God does his best work in our lives when we are at the rock bottom. Can I say and just stop for a minute and say hallelujah, let me give you a testimony on this.

Had it not been for rock bottom, I wouldn't be pastoring. Had it not been for rock bottom, I wouldn't have had a devotion to God's word, a desire for his word as a deer pants after the river. Had it not been for rock bottom, because it's when the rock bottom, I can't go any lower.

I got to look up now. But so many people, they hit those hard spots. And what do they do? They hunker in and they stay there.

But she says it's a great point. It's a biblical point. When you're finally there, you know that you have nothing else to do except to look to God.

And let me tell you, that is the best place to be. Embrace your rock bottom moment. Realize that while you're at your very lowest point, possibly the lowest in your life, God doesn't want you to stay there.

Interesting. When we get to these rock bottom, we get these low points. The goal, God's goal is not to just like, I got you under my foot.

Now you're going to stay there. The whole idea many times is to say, listen, call on me now. Call on me.

Now I can save you. Is my arm not short or my ear not heavy that I cannot hear? Call on me and I will save you. I will deliver you.

But you have to say, I need to deliver to call on him. And that's one thing about cozy, comfortable Christianity. It doesn't lead to a strong, vibrant relationship with the Lord often.

Because by default, we drift. If you could take 100 Christians from America and 100 Christians from the underground church in China, you would see a much different view of Christianity. Why? Because they might be arrested.

If your thought was, okay, here's where we're meeting location. We might be arrested. You could lose your finances, lose your job.

In some countries, you lose your life. Do you think they might worship a little different when they get there? Do you? Absolutely. Without a shadow of a doubt, they're not in a hurry to get out of there.

They don't care what time it is. They're not hungry. They're there to worship God.

Why? Because of the furnace of affliction. Because of that rock bottom. Because of the persecution.

We shouldn't desire it necessarily, but it does purify you. That's why she goes on to say what the psalmist said in Psalm 34. Many people say they've done this, but they really haven't.

How do you know? Actions speak louder than words. Most people have not cried out with all their heart in suffering, and say, Lord, I need you. There's tears sometimes because they got caught, but there's not genuine sorrow there in turning to God.

Your greatest failure and your lowest point, your rock bottom moment may very well be the precise time and place that God is choosing to begin a great work in you. If you're willing. If you're willing and humble.

If you're willing to humble yourself and allow him to start the process. Think about this. How many people have lost everything, gone to drug rehab, come out much different? A whole new person.

I don't even know who they are. How did that happen? Rock bottom. A person going through marriage problems or family problems, terrible problems, unlike anything they felt before.

They're losing sleep. They've got all these issues going on. Rock bottom.

And they come out stronger. They come out stronger, trusting in God to get them through. Two, we have to realize that these rock bottom experiences or these difficult experiences are almost like in the spiritual what it is in the physical with lifting weights.

If a person doesn't move their muscles, they don't grow. They don't become stronger. And perseverance is a spiritual muscle to persevere through things, to get through things.

That's why I said before, you know God is your provider when he provides. I mean, so many people say, oh, God is my provider. I've got so much money.

I don't need, and I guess he, you know, is my provider. It sounds good. But when you're about ready to be evicted, you have nowhere to go.

Now I know why people become homeless. Now you've got all this, and then God begins to open doors. Now you think you might know him as provider more than the other person? Of course.

So don't despise these moments. What we learn from Paul's story on this, forgetting those things that lie behind and pressing towards the mark that is in Christ Jesus, is that perspective changes everything. That's what he's saying here.

You have to change your perspective on how you view life and how you view God's word. A funny story I came across this week as well said this. A man was driving in the country one day, and he saw an old man sitting on a fence watching the cars go by.

Stopping to pass the time of day, the traveler said, I never could stand living out here. People say that about here too, huh? I could never live where you live. Well, go visit the majority of the world, and you'll thank God for this place.

If you could just go look at how most people live, you would thank God every day for running water, hot water, air conditioning. You would thank God. I need to get that thankfulness back into the church, people.

We become so complacent, so complaining, we forget the things we take for granted. People don't even have water, and I'm watering my grass? And it grows this high, and I pay a guy to come cut it down this low? Oh, there's a drought coming. Yeah, there probably is.

Maybe that will get people on their knees. Water rationing. I mean, we're so comfortable, and I don't think we realize it.

So anyway, the man that was traveling stopped. He said to the old man, I could never live out here. You don't see anything, and I'm sure you don't travel like I do.

I'm on the go all the time. The old man on the fence looked down at the stranger and said, I can't see much difference in what I'm doing and what you're doing. I sit on the fence and watch the cars go by, and you sit in your car and watch the fences go by.

It's just the way you look at things. And that is very true on this area of disappointment, despair, discouragement. We have to take and change our perspective.

Because when Paul says, one thing I do, I forget those things which are behind me, tells me that I'm going to have the tendency to remember. So forgetting, I have to forget. Now, you don't forget the lessons learned, right? You better remember the lessons.

But you forget, you don't live in that past. Oh, whoa, the what ifs, the could ifs. Could ifs, right? Could ifs.

See, I caught that one. What if, could if, what shoulda. All these things, we live in this spot, and the enemy loves it.

He goes, now I can, now you live in this area of regret and disappointment. Because a person who regrets their marriage, are they more inclined to have an affair than the person who loves their marriage? If the person regrets their life and they're educational, they didn't pursue education, they didn't pursue a career, and they just live in that, do you think they're going to be happy to be around at home? Or do you think you'll hear this every month when you get in a fight? If it wasn't for you, I'd be single and happy and rich. But now I gotta, oh, I see some of this, don't do that.

You just missed the whole point of the sermon. But think about it. If he can keep us, me too, in regret and disappointment, then he can manipulate and control our decisions.

Why did I pastor? Why didn't I just stay in real estate and relax? Why? If I just live in that, do you think I might treat you guys a little differently? Oh, yeah. But you can't live in that. You can't go back into there and keep revisiting.

Basically, it all boils down to what I talk about all the time. Bring your thoughts captive. Bring your thoughts captive.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Philippians also says, think about things that are noble and pure and honest. It's taking your thoughts captive versus your thoughts taking you captive.

Because where the thoughts go, the feet follow. There's not new truth. This is all truth that's been around for millennia.

Philippians 3.12. Paul says, not that I've already attained or I'm already perfected, but I press on. That word there, it's like you've got this force and you're pressing it. It's easy to go back and back here.

No, but you gotta press forward and press forward and press forward. When people say, oh, the Christian life is difficult. Yeah, it's a battle.

You're in warfare. Go ask a Navy SEAL if he's ever pressing in or if it's just a cakewalk. Same thing with us.

We're pressing in. So Paul says, I press in that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended Christ, but one thing, in other words, he's in the process of following Christ.

I'm in the process of following him. I haven't apprehended him yet. I'm not on that side of eternity yet.

I'm still living in the sinful fallen world and sin is still influencing, but I'm pressing forward to Christ to eventually lay hold of him. But while I'm doing that, here's what I do. I do not count myself to have apprehended him, but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind me and reaching forward.

It's another action. I've got to reach forward. I'm pressing.

I'm reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward. What's his problem? He's talking about pressing and reaching and pressing and reaching.

He's trying to get us to understand it's a battle. You're pushing. You're pushing against spiritual influences that are hell bent on destroying you.

There's a fight there. We wrestle not, or to say we pedicate not. We just, we wrestle.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenlies, principalities, strongholds, demonic influence. You wrestle against those. I wrestle against those.

As soon as I put down my guard, here he comes. So Paul's saying press, reach, press, reach. And as you're doing, forget.

Forget the past. Sorry, devil. You should have got me 20 years ago.

Now I'm on God's side and you're in trouble. Sorry. Forget.

No, I don't care what I did. No, no. I care what I did, but I'm not going to let it control me and manipulate me.

I press toward the goal for the price of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. It's interesting. He says, therefore, let us, as many as are mature, have this mind.

What is that mind, Paul? He's saying those of us who are mature in the faith have the same mind that we're all going to be reaching forward and pressing forward together, forgetting the past. But if any of you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.

Let us be of the same mind. Now a couple things real quick I want to talk about before I move on. Paul pressed forward in his attitude and in his actions.

You might say, well, Shane, come on. We all know that. No, I don't think we do.

Because a lot of people press forward in their actions, but they're grumbling and complaining the whole way. Yeah, I'll do this because I have to do it. Or we'll have a cheerful attitude.

Yeah, wonderful, great, but I'm not doing nothing. So if you want to get past this disappointment and regret and despair and all that God has for you, you know, there's going to be a tongue twister, you have to do both. You have to have the right attitude, pressing forward with the right actions.

Do it. Do it. This is a great point in the sermon to remind you, where does the power of the Word of God lie? In the application.

So see, you can have the attitude but not apply it, and you're only doing half. Forgetting is a mental discipline. Forgetting is a mental discipline.

It's a battle. Because the devil, do you believe the devil plants thoughts? If not, who's planting all those thoughts? The flesh, yeah, and the devil and the world. They all work together.

So it's a mental, it's a mental discipline. Shane, remember who you were in the 20s? And remember how you ruined? Remember all that? Remember? It's a mental discipline, taking thoughts captive, and saying, devil, now you just upset me. Now I'm going to get up extra early tomorrow and spend time with God.

I'm going to worship Him. I'm going to turn that into the stepping stone. Now this is interesting too.

Paul said, as many as are mature, as many as are mature. And I actually spent quite a bit of time in the first service. I'm hoping I can remember everything because it's not in my notes, and God just, I felt, gave me a lot of things on this point.

Here's the thing about spiritual maturity. Do you realize that you can have a Christian who's been a Christian 25 years, and then there's a believer who's been a Christian for four years, and this person can be more mature? But see, that doesn't work, logically. Wait a minute.

You worked at Boeing for 25 years, and you've only worked for four, and you're more, we don't see it like that. Maturity, when the Bible talks about maturity, it comes from obeying the Word of God. As I obey the Word of God, as I follow after Christ, everything we talked about, I mature in my faith.

I don't need this. How would that look if I use this for water? But folks, we laugh, but that's true. You will never mature in your faith.

That's why you can say, I've been a Christian 20 years. I've been a Christian 25. I've been a Christian 30 years.

You're acting like a five-year-old. It doesn't matter how much time you've been on the time clock. It matters how much you've been changing as your heart.

When the Bible says, do not let unforgiveness and bitterness reign, if that's all you've been doing, you're not maturing. When it says, step up, be a man, if that's not what you're doing, you're not just counting down the months and years. You're not maturing.

You're stagnant. You're growing. You're a little baby in the faith because you're not following what the Word of God says.

Paul says, those who are mature. Peter says, those who are mature. The Bible talks about maturity, maturity, maturity.

It's a direct result of obeying the Word of God. As I obey the Word of God, I become mature. As I'm tempted to be unforgiving and bitter and resentful, as I cast that away and follow Christ and obey it, I become more mature.

As I deal with heartbreak and disappointment, biblically speaking, I become more mature. As I love my wife, as Christ loved the church, or try, I become more mature. Now, have I done all this perfectly? Not even close.

But there's a big difference between a heart saying, Lord, I want to do this right, and falling forward, and doing it and getting back up and putting these things in practice. Listen, I have as much difficulty as anybody else not allowing unforgiveness to creep in. If you ever want to be hurt, plan a church.

I'm just telling you up front. Never, never so difficult than planning a church life. But if you handle it biblically, God is chipping away stuff in me, too.

Oh, you see that little bit of pride? We better knock that off. Uh-huh, everybody likes the way you speak. Well, we're going to strike that off.

You're going to be a jerk to people now. They're not going to like you. And it just keeps chipping and chipping and molding and shaping and chipping and chipping and molding and shaping.

So it's for both of us. Iron sharpens iron. But that's how you grow spiritually.

Has anybody told you that you're just not a mature believer? The reason is you're not applying the Word of God. Listen, if we're going through the same problems year in and year out and year in and year out and year in and year out and there's no maturity, it's immaturity. It's an immature believer.

And that's how you grow. You don't measure it by, I've read through the Bible three times now, and I've been a Christian 22 years. You measure it by, is your heart growing? Are you maturing? Yes, you should be reading the Word of God, absolutely.

But the Pharisees read it. I mean, we can get caught up in this checklist. I mean, there's people in this room, you've been Christians longer than me.

And there's other people, I've been Christians longer than them, and they are very mature, more mature than I was at that age. So with God, we can't keep playing games with, I'll follow God today, but not this day. I'll compromise here, not there, and we never mature, we never grow.

You ever feel, I'm just stuck, I can't get out of this? This is why. We need to start applying the Word of God to our lives. Is it easy? No.

Very challenging, very difficult. If me and Morgan get in an argument, sometimes it happens, I know it's hard to believe. And I take a drive, and I'm convicted the whole way, I have two choices.

Go home and apologize, or just hold it in and just be bitter and angry. Do I mature that way? Or do I mature the other way? And then I set an example for my home, and apologize to my children. I grow in my faith, I become mature and stronger in my faith.

That's what spiritual maturity is. It's not how long you've been a Christian, although length is good. Paul says, don't lay hands on no man suddenly.

Actually, you can't appoint elders if there have been novices, because there needs to be some time and some seasoning. But for the majority of believers, when the Bible talks about maturity, it actually says, it's interesting, it doesn't say, in 20 years, you'll be mature. It just says, be mature.

The active sense of the verb in the Greek language is it's an active, you're doing something, you're being mature. You're being mature. You ever tell your kids, you're being immature.

What do you gauge that on? How old they are, or how they're acting? Oh, how old they are, okay. How about both? You're being so immature. What does that mean? They're acting the way that does not fit their age.

If my 2-year-old is acting the same as my 10-year-old, and I tell my 10-year-old, you're acting immature, I'm not going to tell my 2-year-old she is, because that's how 2-year-olds act. You see the difference? We should be growing. We should have mature believers who want to apply the Word of God to their lives.

That's how you'll mature. And here's the interesting thing. We're either maturing or we're immaturing.

You're not going to find this happy medium where I don't have to change. Because when you shoot for the happy medium, that means I'm not going to obey, I'm not going to do certain things, I'm not going to change my attitude, and you're actually immature. And that's honestly one of the hard parts with having a church, or just in general, talking to people.

And talking to them and saying, listen, haven't we talked about this 4 years ago, and 3 years ago, and 2 years ago, and last year? What do you want me to say? It's different. The problem is you're not growing, you're not maturing. So Paul is clear that we have to be mature.

There's an aspect there where we have to say, okay Lord, I've been immature, I've been dealing with disappointment, and regret, I need to mature. I need to put these things behind me, and press forward to what you have in store for me. And then he says in verse 17, Brethren, join in following my example, so we're supposed to follow the example of Paul, and note those who so walk according to Paul, according to Christ like character.

That's your pattern, verse 17. Verse 18, for many walk of whom I've told you often, and now tell you even in weeping, that they are enemies of the cross. Is it possible for a person to go to church and be an enemy of the cross? It's strong language, but it's true.

And in a nutshell, what Paul's saying is, if a person, I'm not talking about perfectionism, right? I'm talking about just following after God, not perfectly, but the best of our capability. If there's not a Christ likeness in them, if there's no fruit, there's not a resemblance of their master, there's not a hint of their Lord, they're not following as Christ would have them follow, they are enemies to the cross. In the church, in America.

In this church? Yeah, probably. They're enemies of the cross. And why do I say difficult things like this? To awaken, to stir.

Here's how we know. Paul, could you be more clear? Verse 19, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who set their mind on earthly things. I don't know about you, but that was profound when I read this week.

Those who actually set their mind on earthly things are an enemy of the cross. Again, not a struggle. We all struggle with, you know, my flesh loves things, my spirit says nope.

But when you actually set, it's like that word there, if I can remember, it was like setting a bone, or setting something. You actually set your mind on earthly things. So I'm gonna set my mind on earthly things.

I like the dark. I like the demonic. I like the sexual immorality.

I like these things. I'm gonna set my mind on these things. I'm gonna come to church and play Christian.

So you all, you know, that's what good people do. But I'm gonna set my mind on earthly things. Paul said you are an enemy to the cross.

If you don't agree, I need a scripture. Because, where do you wanna begin? He who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in him. And he who loves the Father is not gonna love the things of the world.

You cannot serve two masters. You'll either love the one and hate the other. There's a lot of scriptures about this area.

Now I'm assuming most people here, obviously I'm not talking about, man, I just watched a movie I shouldn't have. Well, who hasn't? But do you, I have, yeah. You guys don't believe me? I can't think of a recent one, but there's been a few.

But you're setting my mind on it. Like if I setting my mind, like man, as soon as I tell these guys all this stuff, I'm gonna go home. I've got American Horse Story ready to go.

I've got all this darkness. I just wanna feel my, everybody's like, uh-oh, I caught me. I'm just saying be careful.

Whatever you set your mind on. A believer should not wanna go set their mind on things. If they're planning on sinning, I can't, I'm gonna stop somewhere.

I'm planting my mind on these dark, deceptive things. That's dangerous. We should not wanna set our mind on these things.

The Bible says, finally, brethren, whatever things are pure and noble and honest and upright, set your mind on these things. Meditate on these things. That's what I just read.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of a good report, if there's anything worthy of virtue or anything worthy of praise, set your mind on these things. Can I give you guys a bit of advice on this? I would, if I were to, well, I don't bet, so let's say, if I were to bet, I would say the majority of people in this room, at least 90%, that verse just went in one ear and out the next, and that verse can literally change your life. That verse can change your life because we are not thinking about things that are pure and lovely and honest and of good report and things worthy of praise.

We're actually thinking often of all the opposite, and we wonder, why God won't get me out of this problem? Think about this. Are we dwelling on things that are true? What is true? That would eliminate half of the phone calls to our friends. Did you hear? Did you hear? What? True, true.

We're feeding gossip and negativity and backbiting and disunity. There's disunity in the church. Did you know that? And we say, hey, if it's not true, I don't want to talk about it.

There goes half your conversations. Whatever things are pure, pure, holy, righteous, of a high standard. Whatever things are pure.

So if we did that, that means set in our mind things that aren't pure, are unholy. We don't need to go through the whole list because we know what those things are very well because we set our mind on those things. So this verse could, this is probably, you could ask my mom.

She does a lot of counseling too. But if people could apply this verse, you would see a lot of changes in their families and in their own personal lives. If you could just say, listen, can you meditate? Can you just think about throughout the week things that are pure and noble and lovely and of good report and that are honest and work.

Can you just think about those things? No, no, I can't. I can't. I'm upset.

I'm mad. I'm going to throw out, I'm going to spew out things on everybody. Well, then I can't help you.

I can only help a person to the degree they are going to apply the word of God. You can only help a person to the degree they will apply the word of God to their life. Because we're not genies in a bottle.

We can't just, okay, here's what you need to do. Take seven pills, call me in the morning. Here is the answer.

That's why so many people hear this verse, they can quote it. They can quote this verse, but they don't live it. Paul's saying here, finally brethren, whatever things are pure and noble and honest and upright and good and worthy of praise, just meditate on that.

So remove the filth from our mouth. Remove the negativity. Remove the darkness.

Remove the arrogance. Remove the pride. Remove all those things.

We're not left with much because we don't focus on these things. That would change your heart. That would change your life.

I'm going to focus on the good I see in other people. I'm going to focus on praiseworthy things. I'm going to focus on things that are noble and right.

That's what I'm going to focus on. Why? Why? Because where the mind goes, the feet follow. You can trace the majority of problems back to this verse.

Just not happening. Memorize this verse. Whatever things are pure and noble and true.

Is something true? Then why meditate on it? Why? If it's not true, why sit there and meditate on it? That's one of the things I just hate about Facebook. All these people struggling with fear and depression. Well, they're posting everything from the eye.

The IRS is coming after your money and the government's coming after your guns and conspiracy theory. People are coming after your chemtrails and these people are coming after you, you know, ISIS is coming to Idaho and they're coming up the Mexican border. It's just fear factor mode.

All the time. I say, I can't handle it anymore. Because the God I serve is still on the throne.

He's sovereign. He's in control. His word tells me not to sit and meditate on those things on a daily basis, on an hourly basis.

You wonder why everybody's in panic mode. Why medication is skyrocketing. Why are we so afraid? Because we're not applying the word of God to our lives.

So don't come up and cry about it. Go home and live it out. The power comes in the application.

And I only say this because I've got a dozen people right now asking me for help on fear and anxiety and depression. I'm saying, if I posted all that stuff on Facebook, you're posting, I'd be fearful too. Have you seen this one? Pastors are not going to be able to speak against gay marriage.

You're going to go to jail, Shane? I don't know. I'm not worried about that right now. I've got a church to lead and a family to raise.

And who's coming with me? ISIS is coming up from Mexico. Well, they're going to have to get through about 30 million gun owners first, aren't they? I mean, who's on the throne? The earthquake. It's going to take us to Portage, California in the ocean.

Somebody told me, just go watch this movie. I think it was one of you guys back there. Randy, you did, huh? I said, I'm not going to go watch that movie.

I live on the San Andreas fault line. But think, am I going to feed those things? Or am I going to get worship on in the word of God and say, I don't care, enemy. There's a God who rules and reigns over you.

I'm not going to fill my mind with all this garbage and all this junk, because every single news story is talking about pedophilia, same-sex marriage, persecution, abortion, killing, killing, killing. The human mind was not meant to comprehend those things. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true and honest and noble and upright, meditate on these things.

Guess what it says after that? Then you'll have the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything in prayer and supplication, make your requests known to God, and you'll have the peace of God that rules. I'm sorry, the peace of God that doesn't make sense, basically.

That's my version. The peace of God. The peace of God.

Do you want that peace? Look at your mental diet. I'm just being honest. I go on the news for 20 minutes.

My whole person, I'm like, we're going to Hell in a handbasket. I'm just selling it. Why even lead a church? Why even show? We're going to.

Forget this. Kids, hunker down. Can we build a bomb shelter in the backyard? Because it's coming.

Iran's going to bring a nuke to Los Angeles. It's going to blow you away. It's like, how can you guys live like that? You forget who's on the throne.

And actually the Bible discourages all those postings and all those fearmongering. Should we know what's going on? Of course. Yeah.

But when you begin to dwell on those things, you know I've got to give a sermon like this once every six months, right? It literally drives me crazy. When I see all, it's just Christians posting all this stuff. Instead of fueling the racism, we should be helping.

Blacks, whites, Mexican, Latino, everything coming together. It's all one body. In Heaven, guess what? We're all the same color.

We're all brothers and sisters in the Lord. And we need to act like that. Instead of fueling, are we fueling the fires? Of racism and rage? Or are we quenching them? I see Christians post stuff on Facebook.

I'm like, oh, that did not help things. Wow. You either hate Fox News or you hate CNN.

And both of you guys better not meet each other. I mean, it's terrible. It's embarrassing.

It is absolutely embarrassing to see what we allow into our minds. We have no time for the Word of God. We have no time for worship.

We have no time for prayer. Yet we have the audacity to sit here and grumble and complain. Folks, the bottom line is right here.

Right here in the Word of God. Whatever things are pure and noble and honest and just and upright. Boy, I got a lot more to go.

I'm going to try to just get through some of it. That's a good test, too, if you said, oh, man, I'm hungry. I wish you'd hurry up.

Heart's not in a good spot. I'm hungry, too. How do we view God? Do we trust in Him? Do we obey Him? How do we speak about our situations, about our life? Do you know that grumbling and complaining is not a good character quality to have? Let's just be up front.

We all suffer with it. Except my mom. I don't think I've heard you grumble and complain in a while.

We do. We grumble. It's our view of God.

It turns into grumbling, complaining, regret, disappointment. I don't know if I should go over this, but I think it will help. I want to talk about the romantic regret and all the other ones I mentioned earlier.

This one I kind of talked about already. The grass is greener where you water it. We put more trust in our feelings than God's sovereignty.

You know, the one that got away, that regret. You can't live in that state because that will damage your marriage. Relative regrets, parenting regrets.

Anybody have parenting regrets? No? Okay, my mom didn't raise her hand. I do. That's a good spot to live.

But we have parenting regrets. I do, and my kids are little. If I would have just got him when he was two, I would have changed that little rebellious streak.

Right? Parenting regrets. Here's just a word of encouragement. The perfect father had disobedient children.

God, the perfect father, had disobedient children. So don't beat yourself up, whether your kids are grown, whether they've done things. Don't beat yourself up because God calls you to be faithful.

Salvation is not your job, it's his job. Leading them and directing them in their older ages is not your job. It's his job.

We're just called to lead and train them in the fear and admonition of the Lord as they grow and as they mature and nurture. There you go, Lord. So you cannot beat yourself up for the choices of others.

Because a lot of kids like to say, my parents made me do this, or my parents made me do this. And kids have to take their own responsibility as well. We cannot blame other people.

Education regrets. Anybody have those? This is a good time to remind you that a degree from the master is far more valuable than a master's degree. Now, if you can, further your education, go for it.

Do it. Pray about it. Just make sure your motives are right.

Ask, Lord, why do I want to do this? Why do I want to do this? That's why I want to pursue a Ph.D., so I can put it on the back of a book. Just being honest. Have you seen my new business card? I got my Ph.D. last week.

I wrote my dissertation on God's sovereignty and man's freedom to choose. I got a Ph.D. last week. Did you see that? He has to keep me humble.

You're just a country boy that can barely speak. You better just thank God every time you step up to that. Now I can use you because you're humble before me and pliable.

I can't rest on anything. Where did you go to school? School of hard knocks. This is God.

It's God. So when he says, how did you guys start a church on Saturdays with 10 people? It's God. Eventually, someday, get a building.

How? It's God. I have no clue it's God. It sure wasn't me.

So he gets the credit. What about career regrets? Remember this one? If it wasn't for you, I would be career regrets. You know what I've noticed? That's really a status regret.

A career regret is really a status regret. I wish I was the vice president of Lockheed. Why? Status.

I wish I was this. Status. So again, stop letting the world guide our thoughts and get back to what God's word says.

Financial regrets. Anybody have those? Remember the average U.S. citizen earns between \$2.5 and \$4 million in their lifetime. Where did all that money go? We regret it.

But use that as a stepping stone now. Say, Lord, help me get back on track. Help me with my budgeting and my bills.

And even in this area, it's funny. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true and noble and honest and upper. If you think about these things in all areas of your life, it'll help to flourish.

But when you bring in negativity and falsehood and impurity, it hurts and affects all areas of life. And the final one, we talked about health regrets. We live in a body worth trillions and trillions of dollars, yet we trash it.

And one of the reasons people don't like sometimes when I talk about this, I guess you've got to separate your physical and your spiritual. But I see them often as parallel. When I'm taking care of the gift that God has given me to minister to others, I feel much better.

You would not want to hear me up here, right? After four hamburgers and a bit. I'd say, man, Matt, can you handle this one? You got a backup sermon? Because I'm just tired. I'm going home, going to bed.

I'm not going to minister to people. So we forget how much that affects our physical, affects sometimes our spiritual growth as well. It affects different areas.

So let me just break this down. Learn from it and make changes. Again, God doesn't add.

He multiplies once we give it back to him. I want to close from something I read in 2013. I don't know.

Some of you will know that Michael Jordan retired in 2013. Did you guys know that? Remember him? I'm dating myself. He was one of my favorites.

Michael Jordan. Now you know how old I am. Anyway, he was a really good basketball player.

You guys don't know. But the ESPN senior writer spent some time with him in 2013 and Michael Jordan lamented, I would give up everything now to go back and play the game of basketball. When asked how he copes with the devastating fact that he will never be who he was, Jordan states, you don't.

You learn to live with it. The man has left the court, but the addictions won't leave the man. See, and I like the guy too, but it's idolatry.

That's why he's miserable. The whole reason I read that is to say this. If Michael Jordan is miserable, what in the world makes us think we're going to be fulfilled pursuing things outside of God's will? It's impossible.

You need to restore God to the highest position in your life. He cannot help a man or a woman who has dethroned him in their heart. Take time now and give God his rightful place in your heart.

Instead of using discouragement to lead you to further despair, use it as a stepping stone. And I want to encourage you to do it after the service. Instead of using discouragement and disappointment and despair, instead of leaving here still caught in that, use that as a stepping stone.

And say, okay, devil, you had me for a while, but I'm coming back. I'm coming back stronger, I'm coming back harder, and I'm going to flourish. Because use that as a stepping stone.

That's the whole point. That's what Paul said. I forget those things that are behind and I move forward.

I press forward to the mark which is towards Christ Jesus. He's the mark. He's the goal.

But let me tell you, folks, it's a struggle. It's a battle. It doesn't end this side of heaven.

Don't give up. Because I've seen God turn some amazing situations around. Disappointments, regret, and now people have tremendous joy and peace.

And sometimes it's interesting. We don't feel the joy and the peace until we feel the difficulties. Think about it.

If somebody's right here and they can see the flames of hell, and they're falling, they can literally feel the demonic element pulling them down, and God pulls them up, saves them. You think they might have a little bit different view of worship and of seeking God? Why? Because they felt. They felt the other end of it.

Now they feel God's grace and forgiveness. Now there's an appreciation. It's the same way.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/sOo1VuZDPSU.mp4>

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