

# Don't Give Up - Keep Watering!

by Shane Idleman

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*Don't give up, keep watering: a message of spiritual maturity and perseverance in the face of spiritual immaturity and carnality.*

**Duration:** 44:39

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 3:1

**Topics:** "Perseverance in Faith", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of perseverance in faith and parenting, urging both men and women not to give up but to keep nurturing their spiritual lives and families. He draws parallels between the nurturing role of mothers and the need for spiritual growth, highlighting that just as a mother provides essential nourishment, believers must continually seek deeper understanding and connection with God. Idleman uses the metaphor of the Chinese bamboo tree, which requires years of watering before it shoots up, to illustrate the necessity of patience and faith in seeing spiritual growth. He encourages the congregation to contend for their families and communities through prayer and to remain steadfast in their faith, trusting that God will bring the increase. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to spiritual maturity and a rejection of carnality within the church.

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## Transcript

The message this morning is, don't give up. Don't give up, keep watering. Don't give up, keep watering.

And I have not forgotten what day it is. Don't worry. We all know that we're here to thank and appreciate our moms, Mother's Day.

It's a time we'll remember them. Let's clap for them. And of course, as I mentioned at the first service, I thank my mom, who's been just an inspiration, my wife and mother-in-law.

And we thank all the moms out there. What you do is something that men cannot do. I tried to watch all five of our kids one day for an hour, and it was tough, especially with a little baby.

But I do that often. I just, I know how hard it is. And we just look to you, we thank you, and we want to honor you.

And this message, though, is actually for both men and women. So don't tune it out just because it's Mother's Day. It's a very important principle.

This is actually a biblical principle. Keep watering. Keep watering.

Don't give up. I'm going to get to it in just a minute. But I'm going to read a, when I was preparing this message, I came across a short story.

It's not true, of course, but it goes something like this. God was making woman. He was putting into her compassion and understanding and fortitude and strength and all these things.

And the angel said to God, that's too much. You can't put that much in one model. Why don't you rest for a while and resume your creating tomorrow? The Lord said, no, I cannot.

I'm choosing, I'm creating someone very special. I've already come up with a model that can heal herself when she is sick, who can feed a family of six with one pound of hamburger, who can persuade a nine-year-old to take a shower and do many other things. Then the angel looked at the model of motherhood a little more closely and said, she's too soft.

Oh, but she's tough, said the Lord. You'll be surprised at how much this mother can do. Can she think, asked the angel.

Not only can she think, said the Lord, but she can reason. She can compromise. She can persuade.

She can convict. She can embrace. She can love.

All these different things. Then the angel reached out and touched her cheek. This one has a leak, he said.

I told you, you couldn't put that much into one model. And the Lord said, that's not a leak. That's a tear.

What's a tear for, asked the angel. Well, it's for joy and for sadness, for sorrow, for disappointment. And the angel said, you're a genius to put that into her.

And the Lord said, oh, but I didn't put that in there. Life brings that out. Life brings that out.

When you sow in tears, you will reap in joy. There's something about tears. There's something about travelling for our families.

There's something about just grieving in a good way, this anguish for what is going on. And I've noticed without that, there is no prayer closet. It's that anguish and that contending for our families and contending for our marriages and contending for our nation.

Anybody want to contend for our nation these days? Just read the headlines. We have lost our mind. And it's that anguish that drives you to the prayer closet.

So it's tears, because those tears do not go unanswered. God hears the cries and prayers of His saints. And I'll get to that in a minute.

But I want to jump to chapter 3 in 1 Corinthians. We're going through the book of 1 Corinthians. Answers for a Confused Church is the series.

And Paul is writing to the church. And remember, this is a living, vibrant church. And did you know that living, vibrant churches need rules? Just like your children.

Just like our kids, we need rules. And so Paul would give out these commands to the church in 1 Corinthians. It was a pretty carnal church.

They were growing. They were new. They were abusing the gifts.

They were allowing all kinds of things. And Paul, in this chapter, he said something very interesting. He said, brethren, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but as carnal.

Now imagine them receiving this. That would be like me coming up here and saying, hey guys, I just want to let you know, I can't speak to you as spiritual people this morning. You're all carnal.

Nobody's getting up yet and leaving. But that's what he's doing. He's writing to the church.

And he's saying, I want to speak to you as spiritually mature people, but you're carnal. You're babes in Christ. That's okay if you're a new believer.

But he said, I fed you with milk and not with solid food. How many of you know that's very good for a newborn? Don't put a stake in front of her or him. They have to be fed milk to match their development.

So I fed you with milk and not with solid food. For until now, you were not able to receive it. So Paul's basically saying, hey, we're at a point now where I've been feeding you the milk, you know, the elementary things and the simple things.

But now, you need to step up. You need to take the meat of God's word. Meat is going deeper with God.

In times of prayer and worship and fasting and pressing into God, that's going deeper. There's a hunger there. There's a meat.

Oh, that his word would be meat to me and strength to my body. And then he said, even now, you are still not able. You're still carnal.

Okay, so what's going on? Where's this all coming from? Well, Paul doesn't leave us guessing. He clarifies here. For you are still carnal, for where there is, where they put are, for where there are envy, strife, and division among you, you are, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? Basically saying, church, why is there envy in here? Why is there strife? Why is there division? Why is there all this? This is carnal nature.

This is that carnality in a person. It's in all of us, but the immature believer walks by this mindset. Their character is reflected of this.

They're envious and they love strife and division. And then he said, for when someone says, I'm of Paul, and someone else says, I'm of Apollos, and I'm of this person, are you not carnal? So that's what carnality is in a nutshell. It's what Paul just defined.

I'm going to get to that in a minute. But before I get there, I think he's talking about breast milk. Milk of the word, milk.

He's paralleling with a mother, because breast milk provides the ideal nutrition for infants. It has nearly perfect mix of vitamins, protein, and fat. Everything your baby needs to grow.

But at a certain age, that's real cute at six months, but at six, what happens? The nutritional needs of the baby begin to exceed what can be produced by the mother's milk. Same way as a person grows in Christ, that deeper walk has to form. Always, always stick with what God wants to do.

Maybe just a shout out for those who want to keep doing that. Much better choice than formulas, by the way. Just a side note for you.

What comes from the mom, how God designed us, and remember, what you consume, so does the baby. And you can bring all that nutrients and that life to the child. So that's what's happening.

When the nutrient need exceeds the milk, it's time to increase to solid food intake. So here's a spiritual parallel. Newborn agains, which is somebody who's newly born again, they're young in the faith, they need milk.

God loves you and encourages you and just start to read the Bible and say a quick little prayer on your way to work and you start to, you don't want to overwhelm them. Hey, I just repented and believed and got baptized last week, I'm ready. Okay, now you need to start on a week fast.

I want to find you here every morning on your face for two hours at 6am and we're going to, what is this? It's not necessarily bad if a person is led to do that, but there's a seasoning, there's a discipleship and they're growing in God's Word. You don't have to explain a lot of big theological terms to someone who's new in the faith. You know, let's talk about pneumatology and theology and all these things and like, what is that? I just love Jesus.

But there's a time and a place for all these things. So the definition of spiritual immaturity is this, according to Paul, you're still carnal if there's envy, strife, and division among you. Are you not carnal and believing and actually behaving like mere men, like the world is what he's saying.

So do you want to have a quick family meeting? Well, that wasn't encouraging. Let's talk about these three. Envy, what does that mean? A feeling of discontent or resentfulness against someone who has something you want.

Or their circumstance is a circumstance you want, and you begin to envy that person. Now, as a word of encouragement, that not good characteristic, that ungodly feeling comes in many of us. Many of us, we feel that.

But what do you do with it? Say, Lord, I'm thankful for what you gave me. That's not a right thought. I'm not going to go there.

And we give it back to God. And we don't entertain that. But those who entertain that, they begin to envy.

Why don't I live there? My marriage and their home and their money. And we begin to envy. And what it does is it you start to get bitter inside at God, and you start to put them down.

You'll start to pull them down. So now you've got this envy going on. You're not satisfied in what God gave you.

And that will, oh, envy and bitterness, it's a root of all kinds of ungodliness. Because it's just evil at its core. It's not being happy when content with what God has given.

But then strife, he says, if envy isn't bad enough, here comes strife. Do you know what strife is? It's causing conflict. Do you ever have family members or friends, when you see them coming, you're like, oh, no.

It's going to be like rubbing sandpaper on my hand. You know those people, right? Oh, what's wrong with them? There's conflict. There's friction.

There's discord. There's disagreement. There's arguing.

There's bickering. And praise God. It's not the characteristic of this church, but there are a lot of churches where it's just the clicks.

And if you don't do things the way we've done it, there's no move of the Spirit. There's no prayer. There's just this growing resentment.

And this side's divided here, and this side's divided here. And they're upset over the color of the carpet. And all these paintings and painting of the wall.

Just there's so much division in the church. So you see this church, they're envious. They're coming in.

They're just full of strife. And then he says divisions. Divisions for when one says, I'm of Paul, and another says, I am of Apollos.

Are you not carnal? Here's what's happening. We do the same thing today, many people. We become divisive.

I listen to this speaker. I gravitate towards these beliefs. And then what's the other person says, I'm a this person.

I'm a this person. I listen to this person. Or I'm of this denomination.

I'm Baptist. And Baptist got it right. What does this person say, I'm Pentecostal.

At least we're not dead like you Baptist. And another person says, I'm, I'm reformed theology. I'm very smart.

And I can quote John Calvin and all the five tulips, points of tulips, total depravity and unconditional election and limited atonement and irresistible grace and perseverance of the saints. And I'm Calvin. And then somebody else quotes John Wesley.

Well, I'm Wesley. I'm of this. And we get out and we get in these little tribes and these little camps.

And it's okay to have beliefs and discuss them. But when it begins to bring division into the body, and you begin to look at yourself as superior, and you begin to put others down, and there's, there's, we come into church, let me just tell you this, unless you're not sure. When you stand in heaven, there is zero denominations, no denominations, you're not going to argue about, about all these other non essentials, you're going to say all hell King Jesus.

Now I love that song, all hell King Jesus, that's going to be the song throughout heaven. So it's, it's, it's this corrupt, carnal church. And that's really what an immature believer is.

That's why I often say that you can be an immature believer, even though you've been a Christian 20 years, or 30 years. And they're still operating in this flesh, you know, that person, you call them here comes some negativity, they're going to put down the church, or cause division, or because we should be protecting each other. Do you go and put down your family and your kids in front of others and your wife? I mean, some people do, it's not good.

But you protect them, you guard them, right? As much as my, my son and daughter sometimes don't get along. If some other boy tries to do something mean to her, oh, watch out, right? Because you're protecting. See, that's how the church should be.

We're protecting each other. So Paul's calling them out. Why are you? I'm after Paul, I'm after Apollos.

And, and he's saying no, it's about Christ and who Christ is. And really, this type of identification is pride filled, filled with pride. Carnal Christians are filled with pride.

They don't want to be challenged. Unless they're wanting to change. I mean, I get this all the time.

Anytime I challenge carnal Christians, whether it's in articles or sermons, their only response is you're arrogant. You're legalistic. You're mean spirited.

No, I just don't think you should watch those movies and get drunk all the time. I'm not arrogant. You're being carnal in your nature.

And you don't like people calling you out. You have no prayer life. You don't walk closely with the Lord.

You're bored during worship looking at your clock. That's carnal. That's carnality.

You're allowing the flesh to govern your decisions. So mom and dads, we have the same role to play as Paul. Did you know that? We have the same role to play as Paul.

Feed them solid food. Feed them solid food, even if they don't listen right away. That's why the title is Don't Give Up, Keep Watering.

Don't give up, keep watering. You want to see how hard it is? Just try to do a family devotional. I just haven't done one in three days.

I want to get back to it. And it's sometimes it gets so challenging. I was just doing one last week on we're going through systematic theology for kids.

And it doesn't, you don't need a lot of time. You want to pray with them and teach them. And I was, I thought I was doing good on talking about how we know who God is through his word, through his invisible attributes.

Things are clearly seen through morality in our heart. And I'm like, oh, this is great. I'm like, do you have any questions? And my six year old raised her hand.

Like Kylie, all right, what's your question? She goes, I want some of Gracie's peanut butter. No, no, no, no, that's not right now. Questions about what we're talking about.

But you fight for, you contend for, you keep watering, you keep persevering, you don't give up. You have to fight for this. It doesn't come naturally.

What comes naturally? Let's just all glue to the entertainment center for hours on end. That comes naturally. You have to fight for this.

I'm saving this for Father's Day, but I'm going to read it this morning. In the 1940s, the church in Germany was weak, filled with unbelievers or carnal Christians. The church would sing louder when the train cars that were taking the Jews to the death camps passed by so they wouldn't hear the wailing of the people.

And much of what was considered the Protestant church in Germany actually supported Hitler. But think about it today. A lot of the church supports agendas that are clearly outside of God's will.

The church is even divided. Anytime I say anything about LGBT or gay rights and gay marriage and loving that struggle, but also preaching the truth of God's Word, that it's not right, it's not good, it's not given, it's not God-given, it's not godly, the majority of emails I get are from Christians. You're a hater.

See, back to this. You're a hater. You're arrogant.

You're mean-spirited. No, I'm just reading the Bible. If God created that, I'm just reading the Bible.

That's what God's truth is. And we have to not be scared of that. We actually need more Bonhoeffers.

We need more Niemöllers and preaching and being bold in the midst of a dying and decaying culture. Moms and dads, don't give up. Because I'm tempted to do that.

You look at the news, you say, what is the point? What is the point? But remember, you plus God is a majority. There's no majority above God. We need people to stand up and be bold to pray and pull down heaven.

The church is sleeping, lulled to sleep. How are we lulled to sleep? Well, here's a few ways. The NFL, Avengers, Game of Thrones, smartphones, whatever it is.

Rockabye, baby. Shane, you're saying I can't go to the movies? Of course not. But if all you do is get your mind focused on today's culture, today's world, today's media, you love the things of the world and do not love the things of God, then you do have a problem.

Because you cannot serve two masters. The Bible says you either love one and despise the other or be loyal to one and hate the other. You cannot serve both God and this world.

Where are your affections going? Where is your love? Where is your heart? Where is compassion? Where do you drift? In the right direction or towards the world? It's very clear in Scripture. Where there is no holy living, there is no Holy Spirit. Did you know you only pray as well as you live? Ian Bowne said this many years ago.

I highlight him. He is absolutely right. Of course, he goes on to explain it better.

But you pray as well as you live. In other words, you show me somebody holy, filled with God's Spirit, living for God, they've got a prayer life that's powerful. Somebody who is carnal has no prayer life.

Your prayer is only as powerful as your life. They go together. Holy living produces Holy Spirit inspired prayer.

Nobody is going to live carnally all week and then come and fall on the face before God for an hour and a half and pull down heaven and contend for their family. Why? Because they go, that's boring. This is true.

Thank God not in this church a lot, but out there. I believe I run into more people out there in ministry out there just as much. But I run into people and they say, pray for my son, pray for my daughter.

I say, I will, but have you thought about fasting and coming to early morning worship and spending? Oh, no, I can't do that. I'm too busy. Fasting.

I love Burger King. See, we want God to move, but we don't want it to cost us anything. David said, I will not give God something that costs me nothing.

Really, the cost shows the seriousness of the commitment. When something, when we're serious, when we're serious, if we can instantly swap the Chinese government with our government overnight, you'd become very serious. I bet we could fill up this church every morning for prayer.

Because the seriousness of what's going on. So practical application so far, are you encouraging spiritual health in your family? Moms, dads, are you encouraging that? Are you striving towards that? You don't see results. Many times, I don't either.

I don't either. I'm going to jump ahead and tell you about the Chinese bamboo tree. Anybody heard of this wonderful tree? You plant the seed, and you water, and you water, and you water.

Water, see where I'm going? Months and months, years go by. Research it. I would have given up, if I don't see anything sprouting within a couple weeks, or a month, I'm done.

But they know. They water, they water, they water, they water, year after year, I don't know how many years, like four, five, six years. Then it shoots up 80 feet in six weeks.

The Chinese bamboo tree. But see, we would have given up. But you don't give up on God.

That's what you do. You water, and you water, even when you don't see anything. I tell you, that's true persevering.

That's true praying. That's true praying. It's easy to pray for the prodigal daughter, when you get the text that says, Mom, Happy Mother's Day, I'll come see you.

God's working in my heart. Oh, you'll rejoice. But when you don't get the text, when you don't hear from anyone, that's when you got to go to prayer, and anguish, and pull down heaven, and say, God, I don't see anything.

But your word is true. Your word is faithful. I trust in you.

When Zion travails, sons and daughters are born. He who sows in tears will reap in joy. And you seek, and you push, and you persevere, because the results are up to God, not you.

That's the secret. Persevere. And I thought, a lot of people say, I want to honor my mother.

What do I do? What gift should I buy? If you truly want to honor someone, finish strong. Finish well. Don't go get a card and roses.

That's wonderful. But finish strong. Be men and women of character.

I spoke at a memorial Friday. The best friend of my dad passed away, and I spoke at his memorial. It was so ironic where he was being buried about 50 feet away was my dad's headstone, the same grave site, same location.

And I looked at their kids, they're actually older than me. And I said, the best way to honor him is to finish strong. Isn't that what all parents want? I just see it so much, especially in our culture.

They want to raise the next Michael Jordan or Mike Trout. Say, I don't care if he can hit a baseball, I want to see him have some character. I want to see him treat his spouse well.

I want to see him raise his children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. You will be swimming against the culture, Christian. Get that out of your mind right now that you're going to be a friend of the world.

Because when you say, I'm going to follow Christ, you're swimming against the current. Everything you do, how you spend your money, your marriage, your movie choices, how you live, is against the culture. It's called counter-cultural.

You go against the flow of society. But we want to be part of it and enjoy it. And I'm all for enjoying life.

Thank you. But true Christianity goes to war with the culture. Did you know that? You are at war with the culture.

Do you know I'm dressed for battle? So are many of you. Where's your AR-15? Where's your bulletproof vest? Where's all that? Oh, no, no. This is spiritual battle.

Paul said, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they're mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments and every hying that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. Watch out for the trickery, the wiles of the enemy. Therefore, putting on the breastplate of righteousness, right standing before God, thank God for Jesus Christ, and living holy, righteous lives.

Putting on the belt of truth and allowing the truth to gird and hold everything together. Shod and covering your feet with the preparation of the gospel and going out and being a minister. I told Satan this week, I said, I'm going to grab you by the throat and I'm going to choke you.

I'm so sick of what you're doing in this culture. I have a confession too. I have a confession.

I cussed a little. I know it's hard. Sometimes I can let that guy have it.

And you have the shield of faith. The shield of faith. Don't give up.

Isn't that true faith? Because faith is the evidence of things hoped for. The evidence of things not seen. You're not exercising faith if you see the answer.

Faith is actually believing and trusting God, despite what I see. For without faith, it's impossible to please God. Why? Because I'm trusting you, despite how things look.

Bruce Ball, in an article recently, wrote something amazing. He said, here are some of the things some of our small children are learning today. They learn that the world's morality is the way to go.

If it feels right, it is right. They learn humanism. God doesn't exist and we're fully capable of everything ourselves.

Oh, God, help us. They learn that man descended from monkeys. Has no value.

We live in a society that Jeremiah spoke of. A society that does not even know how to blush. Did you know it's okay to blush? We've been so desensitized now, we don't even blush.

What used to alarm the church 40 years ago, now amazes the church. Now amuses the church. We would have never allowed into our homes.

Now it's amusement. And be careful, because gradually, the unthinkable becomes tolerable. Then acceptable, then legal, then praised.

Are we getting close? The unthinkable becomes tolerable, then acceptable, then legal, then praised. We need godly mothers and fathers, he wrote, who will stand up and say, I will teach my children to walk in the way of the Lord. We cannot let the most important thing in our children's lives be left up to chance or up to somebody else's false teaching.

We must stand up and be accountable as parents for our children's spiritual safety. Have you ever thought about that? The most important decision your children will ever make is what do they do with Jesus Christ? Or your grandchildren. Any grandparents out there? There's a lot.

The power of interceding. And here's where it gets encouraging. Verse 5, Paul says, who then is Paul? Paul is saying, who is Apollos? But ministers through whom you believed as the Lord gave to each one of us.

See, that's why you want to be careful. Don't exalt man. Please, exalt all hail King Jesus.

Don't exalt man. Preachers, pastors, they should not be exalted. They are fellow workmen going alongside of you.

But we elevate these people. And God said, no, I called Paul. I gave to him.

And Paul says, I planted. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase.

That's why you see some of those big rallies. Billy Graham used to do a great glory. All these people come down.

You're like, oh, man, amazing. Oh, no, no. Those seeds were planted years ago from praying parents, praying grandparents, pleading before God, pleading before God.

Don't give them the credit. I know they wouldn't want it. Why? Because God gives the increase.

This will remove a lot of stress from your life. Because it's not up to you what the results are. Your kids are not going in a healthy direction.

You say, Lord, go get them. I've done all. I'm not discounting important parenting.

But I'm saying we put too much. Oh, look at what I've, you know, it's all my fault. It's all this God's children are Bill.

He gives the increase. Your job is to water and water and water and pray and not give up. And I do believe if you train a child in the way they should go when they're old, they will not depart from that way.

They will eventually get back. Why, Shane? I've been praying. I've been praying.

Here's why. In the human heart, there's something evil called pride. And they will fight God as long as they can.

And usually it gets worse before it gets better. Because they've got to break that pride out. The carnality in the church.

It happens in all churches. Oh, God, even in this church. Even in this church.

I talked to a lady who's ready to move out. She's had enough in this church. The husband puts on worship music so she doesn't know he's looking at porn in the room next door.

What's wrong with us? We have lost our mind. The carnality of the church. Thinking that God doesn't care that he just winks at sin.

That's no big deal. We must bring back the fear of God and the reverence of God and the adoration of God and sing those songs. All hail King Jesus.

All hail King Jesus. Because God sees through your carnality. You think we're fooling God? You're fooling yourself more than you're fooling God.

And God gets us to a point of desperation. But again, like a garden, like the bamboo, your words begin to grow in time. Galatians 6, 9. I love this verse.

Let us not become weary in doing good. For at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. You have to remember this.

I heard this from David Wilkerson as well. Anytime God begins to renew a church or a nation or a state, he puts a man or a woman into a position of anguish. He basically baptizes them in anguish.

What does that mean? You begin to feel what God feels. You see the sin and the depravity. You see the direction of some of these school districts and the curriculum.

You see governors of our states allowing us to abort children at nine months. And you begin to be anguished. And you begin to cry out, Oh God, oh God, hear the cries of our parents and hear the cries of our children.

And you cry out and God hears that cry. It's a lot different than just walking around, well Lord help us, bless us, yeah, whatever. He hears the cry of his children, the anguish, the brokenness.

Come on, you know it as parents, don't you? Just this week I'm laying on the couch reading a book. Oh, it's so relaxing. Don't you love to hear your kids playing outside? Oh, they're getting along.

It's great. It's wonderful. I'm sitting there, it's just, ah, taking it in.

But then, but then I hear crying. It sounds like somebody's getting beat up. Daddy, daddy, my little, daddy, daddy, daddy.

Oh, that book, I threw that book to the ground. I almost broke down the screen door. And I took off the bike that fell on her.

And I threw that bike and I said, Here I am, see what brought me there. It's the cries and saying, Daddy, daddy, daddy, I need you at some point. Church, you've got to humble yourself and fall on the altar and say, Daddy, we need you.

Daddy, we are broken. Daddy, we're calling good evil and evil good. We're a perverse society.

We're leading our children astray. Oh, daddy, how God help us. And you go into anguish and in that pit of anguish and despair.

That's when God says, I hear you. I hear you. He calls us to intercede.

Look at all the scriptures, especially in the Old Testament, dealing with intercession. He told the prophet Isaiah, he said, I saw there was no man, no man and I wondered why there was no one there to intercede for the people. Psalm, he said, therefore, he said, I was going to destroy the people had not Moses interceded for the people.

What about Ezekiel? Incredible book of the Bible. He told Ezekiel, I sought for a man from among them. Who would build a wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the people, but I found no one.

Listen, you can go throughout the whole Bible when the walls of Jerusalem were torn down. The people were in distress. They told Nehemiah.

The king saw Nehemiah's face. He said, what's wrong with you? This is nothing but sadness of heart. He said, the place of my father's tombs lies in waste.

And he became a man who took on an anguish and he fasted and he made a difference. And Elisha took on this anguish and Paul for the church, Paul weeping for the church saying, oh God, he even said, I'd be accursed if you would save my people. There's an anguish, Jesus, oh Jerusalem, did you know Jesus Christ wept over the city of Jerusalem? He looked over her and he said, I see when Titus is coming in 7 AD, I see in 40 years from now when he's going to wipe out this city.

Million Jews slaughtered, blood running down the streets. I can see it, yet your visitation is right here. Your Messiah is right here.

Oh Jerusalem, oh I want to gather you as a mother gathers her children. But you were not willing. Pride of the heart.

Pride of the human heart. You're waiting for me to start preaching. It already happened.

So we're almost done. Traditionally, this is a day when we give back to moms or cherish moms. You might be married to a mom as well, husband.

You've got to finish well. You've got to finish well. Men, you are called to lead your family.

You're called to die for your family. I better stop. I'm just tired of Christian men who are lazy.

They don't want to lead their families. They don't want to pray. They don't want to worship.

They want to complain. They want to bicker. They want to look at porn.

They want to watch sports. They don't want to have anything to do with training and guiding and leading their family. I'm tired of it.

So here's just the final closing thought. Don't give up. Keep watering.

Don't give up. Keep watering. That water brings nourishment.

Just a few weeks ago, my kids, they plant a little garden. They said, Dad, all the flowers are dying. And there was brown was coming on the sides.

I said, no, it's not. We need to pick up the what? The watering. The watering.

See, the sun. As the sun heats them, the elements, the wind, it begins to. That water has to increase.

You have to bring in more nutrients than what's being taken away. Same thing spiritually. How in the world are you going to get through in these dire times with one coming to church on Sunday? That's the nourishment.

You need more water. More water. That's what Jesus said.

He who comes to me, if you believe on me out of the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of loving water. He stood up among the city. I guarantee he wasn't quiet.

And he said, whoever thirsts, whoever thirsts, come after me, the fountain of living water. He sat on the well with the woman at the well. And he said, woman, if you drink of this water, you will never thirst again.

And this wonderful picture we have of taking in more of God and more of God. Did you know that? The more you take in of God, you don't get full and sick of it like food. It has the opposite effect.

The more you want and the more you want more of God, you're hungry for the things of God. And trust as we close this. Remember, it's God's sovereignty.

Rest in God. Trust in God. Water, water.

Do whatever you can. Don't give up. Allow God to bring the increase.

Allow God to choose and do what he wants. I remember when he chose David. It was amazing.

He chose a shepherd boy to be a king. And he gets right to the point in Psalm 89. He says, I've exalted David.

I've chosen David. I found David. David didn't find me.

I found David. I called David. And what did I do? I took my holy oil and I anointed him a king over my people.

And I strengthened him with my right arm. When God says, I strengthen you, watch out because he'll strengthen you. He said, I strengthened David with my right arm.

I lifted him up. No enemy will come against him. No one will plague him.

No one will outwit him. God goes on to say, I will beat down David's enemies. New King James, look it up. I will beat down before the young adult saying, I'm going to beat you down. God was saying it a couple thousand years ago. 200, 2,800 years ago to be exact.

Right in there. Or 3,000 years possibly. I will beat down your enemies because of my faithfulness.

I will see you through. And just remember, a praying mom is stronger than any earthly ruler. And a dad as well.

Your prayers, you are stronger. Did you know that? You're stronger than any earthly ruler when you pray and you pull down heaven. Because prayer can do anything that God can do.

Let that sink in. Prayer can do anything that God can do. That's why the enemy wants to distract us.

Listen, you can tell how popular a church is. I'm sorry, you can see how popular a pastor is by who shows up on Sunday. You can tell how popular Jesus is by who shows up at the prayer meeting.

That's how you gauge the health of a church. That's how you gauge the health of a believer. Through the prayer closet, through the prayer meetings and pressing in for God.

So I don't want to close, though, without saying this as well. And I want to give you an invitation. Maybe your parents have been praying for you.

Maybe your mom or your grandparents. We don't know. But if you came here not knowing who Jesus Christ is, I want that to change this morning for you.

Don't allow pride to keep beating you. Don't keep fighting God because of pride. Well, I want to understand everything.

Well, so do I. But I realize that's not going to happen. I like what somebody said. I'm more concerned with what I do know in the Bible than what I don't know about the Bible.

What I do know is we are all sinners under God's wrath and condemnation. And we need to turn to Christ and be saved and be set free. So if you don't know it in this morning, you've been going through the motions, I want to encourage you, take that step.

The Bible says just repent and believe. Just repent and believe in the gospel. Do you truly know Jesus Christ? Do you truly know about him or do you know him? Do you have that relationship with him? What a special day on Mother's Day for moms who have been praying for their children.

I close with a verse from Psalms. From the Psalms. God says, because he, you can obviously say she in there, because they have set their love upon me, they will safely abide in my presence.

I will deliver them. I will set them high. I will be with them in times of trouble.

Where are you setting your love? Where are you setting your affections? Who do you love? Listen, is God who you love on Sunday? Who do you love on Monday? Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday? Seek ye first the kingdom of God and everything else will be added to you. God's got to be the priority. We've got to bring God back to the forefront.

Not the background. The forefront of our lives.

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