

# Don't Play With Demons

by Shane Idleman

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*Shane Idleman emphasizes the dangers of engaging with demonic influences and the importance of walking in the Spirit for a victorious Christian life.*

**Duration:** 46:22

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:16

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Demonic Influence"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the dangers of engaging with demonic influences, warning that it is easier to be pulled into darkness than to lead others toward light. He discusses the importance of walking in the Spirit and making conscious choices to avoid sin, which can open doors to demonic influence. Idleman highlights that while demons are real, the focus should be on personal spiritual growth and evangelism rather than fear of the demonic realm. He encourages believers to renounce any ties to darkness and to actively engage in spiritual warfare through prayer, fasting, and reliance on the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, he calls for a full surrender to Christ as the only solution to the chaos and confusion in the world.

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## Transcript

The title of the message is don't play with demons. Don't play with demons. Your mom or dad, do they ever say don't play with that neighbor, right? Or don't play with that boy, don't play with that girl.

Why is that? Because ultimately those you play with, those you hang out with, ultimately many times more than us helping that person, they actually pull us in the wrong direction. It's actually easier to be pulled in the wrong direction than it is to pull people in the right direction from time to time depending on where you're at. And here's a good analogy.

Even if it's even if it's my daughter, weighs half my weight, is it easier for me to pull her up or for her to pull me down, right? So it's easier often to be pulled down into the wrong direction. So it's very careful. We have to be very careful in this area.

And this is an interesting topic because many churches, I've been guilty of this, we either don't want to talk about demons, we don't want to go there, they're gonna think we're weird, right? Charismatic, demon chasers. We don't want to talk about that. But on the other hand, you know, there's this group that it's, there's a demon under every, every rock.

I've heard I've actually not joking, the demon of caffeine, the demon of coffee, the demon of alcohol, the demon of bad attitude, the demon of anger. And I just got to get rid of this demon of anger. No, you have to watch your mouth.

You know, just just come on now. Now, but the demonic realm will work in these areas. But we don't want to give them too much credit.

And that's what's hard to find the balance. Because looking at Scripture, we know that the demonic realm was real. We know that Satan is real.

It's not a made up figure. And he's not wearing red, holding a pitchfork, easily spotty, actually comes in like an angel of light. Because if you say, Oh, I see you coming red, red dressed suit or red, you know, in that red suit holding that pitchfork, I know what you're doing to me, get away from me.

He doesn't come like that. And it's interesting, often you'll see throughout church history, false teachers, false prophets coming into a church, they actually aren't what you think. They're smooth talkers, drawing people to them.

And they come in as an angel of light to just come in and say, Well, that's not what I think because it's to disarm. It's just to disarm us and to other people around us. So I've got this information last week from the doctrine of Satan and demons by Wayne Grudem.

It's in his book on systematic theology. So some of these notes are from his outline that we passed out. Some of these are my own additions.

Last week, we talked about the origin of demons. This week is don't do not play with demons. And then I'm hoping next week how to fight them spiritual warfare, because this the this type of, of warfare, it's not gonna it willpower doesn't cut it.

You ever say that I'm not gonna do that again. I'm just not gonna do that again. They come Wednesday, I'm not gonna do that again.

Come Friday, I'm not gonna do that again. And then year after year, right, and willpower and, and these things sometimes, this kind cometh not out except by prayer and fasting many times. So hopefully I can talk about that.

But let's finish up on this one. Do not play with demons. Don't play with demons.

Throughout the New Testament, all throughout the New Testament, there is clearly a demonic realm. But the focus is on evangelism and Christian growth. The really if you look at the focus of the New Testament, is it not for those of you read it, it's on evangelism, bringing the message of the gospel to a lost and perishing world, and also Christian growth.

The Pauline epistles, you look at Ephesians, Philippians, you look at the letters to the church in Corinth, they were sometimes hard things to say, because it's on Christian growth. And, you know, whether I don't know your position is or not, but the Holy Spirit does changes. It's the Holy Spirit's work.

But we have to be willing vessels. You have to willingly surrender to the work and empower the Holy Spirit. You can't just sit at home.

I've said this before, but you can't just sit at home eating donuts and expect to lose weight, right? Same thing. You can't just sit at home. Okay, Lord, change me in this patience and this anger.

Hey, go get me that. What? What? Lord, change me, change me, right? And I will change you, he says, but you have to obey my principles. You have to look to my word, you have to humble yourself and allow the Holy Spirit to change you.

So I've only got four areas here on playing with demons. We play with them by walking with them. We play with them by walking with them.

And I get that from Galatians 16. Oh, actually, I don't have the chapter. I just wrote verses 16 to 21.

Many of you, I think it's Galatians 5 probably. But here's, let me just read the text. I say then, walk in the Spirit.

This is important. This will be life changing for many of you. Walk in the Spirit, and you will not, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Here's one of the biggest elements, maybe the biggest secret to victorious Christian living.

It's all right here. Do not walk according to the flesh. You walk according to the Spirit.

Well, can you get a little bit more specific? Yes, I can. What is walking? You're going a certain direction. You're going somewhere.

So do not make choices. Do not go in a direction of the flesh. You go in the direction of what the Holy Spirit says.

And that would be a whole nother sermon, but most of us know what that is. When I have a choice to make, do I humble myself and turn from what I know to be wrong and make the right choice and walk in the fullness of the Spirit? Walk in the power of the Spirit? Or do I make the wrong choice and walk in the direction of the flesh? Because your body can't go two different directions. Have you ever tried that? Try to go up your street and down your street.

Try to go out that door and out this way. It's the same thing. What direction are we walking? But the Christian walk isn't perfection.

Right? I've just always walked a straight and narrow. Praise God, you're a liar. Because we get knocked off course, but the choices we make.

Okay, I want to get the last word in. I'm going to keep my... I'm walking in the Spirit. Lord, you just changed him.

I want to run to my addiction. Hello? I'm going to make the decision not to do that. I'm going to walk in the Spirit.

Instead of getting the last word in, I'm just going to love them. Walking in the Spirit. Instead of looking at how we run business according to corporate America, I'm going to look at what the Bible says.

I'm not going to step on people. I'm not going to climb the ladder of success. I'm not going to act the way the world acts.

So it's actually pretty easy. I should say it this way. It's actually simple, but it's not easy.

It's very simple to walk in the direction of the Holy Spirit. It's honoring to God. It's simple.

It's very clear, but it's so hard. Right? Because most of us know what to do. I bet if we took a survey, we would know what to do.

So the problem isn't knowing what to do. The problem is actually doing it. And then when we know what to do, and we don't do it, we live in deception.

We live according to the flesh. James says, be doers of the Word and not hearers only. Because if you're only hearing and not doing, you're deceiving yourself.

And I've noticed the more you walk into the direction of the Holy Spirit, by the right choices, by humility, brokenness, everything we preach here, right? When you walk in that, you're filled with that. So when you walk in love, you're filled with love. When you're walking in joy, joy of the Holy Spirit, you're filled with joy.

When you're saying no to temptation and yes to God, you're filled with the Spirit of God. That's why Galatians, he was writing to the church in Galatia, he said, this is why you don't do the things you wish. Anybody ever experienced that? Why do I do that? I don't want to do that.

I bet everybody in this room, at some point, maybe this week, said, why do I do that? And you know, the list is long. Why do I snap at people? Why am I so moody? Why am I so bitter? Why? Lord, help me with this bitterness, jealousy. Has anyone ever suffered with that? It just eats at you? Envy? They call it a green monster for a reason.

And just why, why, why, Lord? It's often because we're walking in the flesh and not the Spirit. I hope that drives you to the next service. Walk in the light.

I have another sure if it doesn't. Walk in the light. This is interesting.

You all know the scripture. Your word is a what? Is a lamp for my feet and a light to my path. You have to remember this.

This has helped me for so many years. And again, I never want to give the impression I've mastered it because I'm just, I could be sitting in the audience. And it just, we're on the same journey.

But God's word, when it says a lamp, have you ever, you know what a lamp is? It's just right here. Perfect example. When I go walking in the desert now, and I've seen a few snakes already.

I'm looking, where am I looking? Right, right here. But I'm also, I want to see the rattlesnake before it sees me. So God's word is a lamp right here, right now, the choices I need to make at this very moment.

And then it's a light down the path that shows me, oh, that's a direction to take now, so I end up there. So the word of God is not just an ever-present help in a time of need now. It also gives us direction for the future.

For example, walking in God's word, the lamp. Should I date that person? Not me, right? Singles. It's, that's over for me.

When I said I do, I said I don't anymore. But it shows you, okay, equally yoked. Do they love the Lord? You know, we know what to do.

Okay, that's the lamp. Now, if I don't do that, the light is pointing to what this could bring about later on. The decisions we make later on.

The decisions we make now affect that. So when it says, walk in the Spirit, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The word of God gives us knowledge now and direction for the future.

Now, Galatians keeps going on. I think we have it on there. Verse 19.

This is interesting because here's the entry points. This is where the demonic realm works. And maybe I should clarify this because not everybody, maybe we're not on the same page or knows this.

But as believers, and I've talked about this before, I might even get to it now in a minute. But as believers, I don't believe a person can be possessed. And the Bible actually uses the word demonized.

It doesn't say possessed. Throughout any of the New Testament, it means demonized, harassed, and with unbeliever can control certain things. But as a believer, we can be harassed.

We can be influenced. It's like this. You ever hear somebody outside you don't want to let into your house? Right? They're outside.

They're knocking. I don't want that. Or maybe you see a guy who's not dressed well.

He's got a hoodie on, a backpack, and it's kind of dark. Why are you outside? See, so it's still outside. But if I were to open that door, I let that person inside.

So that's the demonic realm. We can keep them outside. Or we can open the door and they come in and their influence now is inside.

And it gets stronger and stronger and stronger. So now the works of the flesh. Here's what the flesh will produce.

And this is interesting. This is a great time to remind you. This is why we don't elevate one sin above the other.

Right? Because many of you could think, oh, this sin. Right now the big thing is LGBT and gay community and different things. Oh, now that shame that sin.

Oh, no, no, you you sleeping around is just this. This is high. You're lying tongue.

You liar. You just loved a lot. That's right up here.

But see how we like to throw the other ones real high and ours down. The Bible just says if you practice a lifestyle that denies God, you practice it, you're lost. And that's where it gives different references here.

The works of the flesh are this, they are adultery. And many people say, oh, praise God, I don't struggle with that. Well, what do you look at online? What are you watching? What are you fantasizing about? Are you committing adultery in your mind? Listen, remember, I promised God I would not preach popular sermons.

I would preach what just truth to help people. Because here's where the battle starts. Jesus actually said, if you look at a woman to lust for her in your heart, you've already committed adultery.

So fornication, sleeping outside of marriage, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, what is idolatry? It's putting anything before God. And we see this often in the sports arena, don't we? Or where you put anything is above God, I this I have to, I actually worship this, this which breaks my heart, even being involved when I was involved in Little League Baseball. My Lord, that's idolatry for many people.

It's just, it's just idolatry. Now I'm not saying everybody, please don't misunderstand. I think it's a wonderful organization, we're going to keep probably hopefully participating in it if things go that way.

Not saying anything wrong about it, but when it becomes the idol, right, and it's all about that, never church, all about that, I'm too busy for God, it becomes idolatry, a form of idolatry, and all of us have struggled with it. Yours truly, right? We tend to put things, now believers, it's different because it's a struggle. We often, God, I have to remove this out of my life.

I have to reprioritize because it's becoming an idol. This is, idolatry is simply putting things before God or not even knowing God. And then sorcery, we read over that, we're like, wow, glad that doesn't happen now.

I went to the hospital homes, many of you know what that is. We have, we minister in spite of I think six hospital homes now where there's patients, and when I get brave, I go in there and say, do you guys need anything from Walmart? Because there goes half my day, right? So socks, underwear, toothpaste, clothing, jackets, shoes, whatever. So I make a trip sometimes to Walmart, and you guys, you know, can do that, and we can reimburse if people need things.

There's people in the homes without shoes. I mean, can you believe that? Here's a church, we can go reach out to these people and make a difference in their life. So anyway, long story short.

So I'm in the line here at Walmart. There's a lot of interesting people. Right? We'll just, we'll just leave it there.

And I'm looking, this whole row is about magic for kids, casting spells, using your power over this, and darkness, and commanding this, and it's just a row of row of row, and little kids wanting, mommy, can I have this? Magic, witchcraft, sorcery. Or if we open ourselves up to, you know, wow, look at that tarot card reading. I'm just curious what they would say.

I'm just curious. But see, you open your mind. That's what that's what opening the door looks like.

Or look in the paper. Oh, wonder what month I am. Virgo, or however any of that works.

I've never really researched it, but you know, for obvious reasons. But you know, you open your, there's a difference though between saying, ah, let me, you know, what's this about so I can minister to my sister who's caught in it, versus saying, hey, I'm opening my mind. What, I'm curious.

And then you open, you give a foothold for the enemy. That's why I believe pornography is such an epidemic, because it opens that door in the mind of people. It begins to open that door and allow, that's why when you get, you ever get to a point where you say, this is so hard to quit.

This is hard to stop. It wasn't years ago. But now, but now, see, that's a demonic realm.

Something you used to control, now it controls you. Because the door has been opened. Sorcery, hatred, hatred.

That's what's, that's what's actually rising up now in our nation. Civil disobedience, hatred, hatred, no matter what. They just, there's just so much hate, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies.

Heresy is, I believe the definition is, is of a heresy, is a self-willed opinion that opposes the truth. So do you see anything rising up in our culture that opposes the truth? But see, then when we embrace that, when we embrace that, we begin to open the door. Did God really say? I mean, I'll talk to, well, Christians and like, but Shane, you know, but the science clearly teaches that evolution is a fact.

So God just let little cells kind of develop and well, yeah, but you know, and they start to open their mind to things that just aren't true. So it's an area we have to be careful in. Envy.

Anybody struggle with that? Murders. Have you ever murdered anyone in your mind? That's where it starts. Drunkenness, revelries, and the like, of which I tell you beforehand.

Now, I'm going to discourage at first and then encourage, okay? I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in times past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. So that's why we can boldly say any sinful lifestyle where a person practices it will not inherit the kingdom of God. Let me clarify what that means.

What is practicing? Hey, I know this is wrong, but I'm going to practice it. I'm going to, I don't care what God's word says. I'm going to practice it.

And I don't mean to keep beating up on this because, you know, I love people in this, this, this, in the, in the, in the gay lifestyle. We, we have people we reach out to, but this is where it's getting really interesting in our nation because now, right, the church is saying it's okay to practice, to still love God and practice, where you say it's not wrong. It's not, there's a difference between saying, Lord, I know this is wrong in your side.

It's obviously not how you created me. I struggle with this. Would you help me? You're not practicing.

You've repented. Now you're struggling. You see the difference? Because believers will struggle with everything I just read.

You don't think there's alcoholism in this room? Come on. This is 9 a.m. church service. I guess those struggling are sleeping in, right? They'll be here at the 11.

But that, that, it is, it's especially among young guys. And I mean, I talk to a lot of people and with my past with that, I know that's a very big stronghold and I know how it works. And it, people are struggling with that and they get depressed, but they're not practicing it.

Like saying, I don't care what God's word says. I'm going to live this way, come hell or high water. That's practicing.

It's all, it's all really the condition of the heart. All these things, right? Envy. People, and I know Christians, solid Christians who struggle with envy and jealousy.

They'll confess it. Shane, I get so envious. Why am I living in this apartment? I can never, God, please help me.

Help me with this wrong attitude. See, they're not practicing. That's, that's the difference.

So I want to encourage you if you struggle. It's a big difference. Or I also want to encourage you, if you are practicing, all you have to do is simply turn to the light and allow Christ to save and redeem you.

That's, that's, it's, it's actually that simple. Lord, I want to come out of the darkness and into the light. I repent and I believe.

So then the second point, oh, we're still on number one. Oh, it's going to be a long sermon. Feel bad for you guys.

Number two, we, we play with them by opening the door. So we play with them by walking with them. And I'm not going to spend too much time on this because we, I actually talked about the second point already.

We play with them by opening the door. That's how you play with, with, with demonic realm. And I talked to this week, or I don't know when it was, maybe last month.

I talked with somebody who's genuinely, I believe, struggling with alcohol. But they say, well, it's a liberty. The Bible says it's okay.

And I'm like, but if you're asking questions of how far you can go, that's usually a good indication that you've crossed that line. Because people who don't struggle have something a month, every month, or, you know, it's, they don't even think about it. But it's those who are, is this too much? I mean, the Bible says I have liberty, God's working, God's convicting.

And I wish I would have told him this as I was leaving. But he said, can I, you know, can I, can I have some? I mean, I mean, when I, and I thought of this, well, you can play with a snake. You can play with a snake.

But be careful. And they're fast. I saw one in the desert.

I'm like, it was about this farm. I'm like, that was close. I'm going to walk slower now with the lamp.

It was daylight, actually. But see, you can play with the snake. If I came across a rattlesnake with my son, hey, you know what, you can play with that.

All things are law. I mean, you can, it's your choice. But if you take that choice, make that choice, be careful.

So this is how we open the door. This is my one of my big concerns, even though there's there's a place for it. But with all the the opiate crisis, are you reading that that is killing more people than then? It's just like an epidemic.

And there's a time and place for things, of course, but it can open the door. I'm praying for more the last five years for more people saying Shane, it started with a shoulder injury. It started with a knee problem.

It started with a root canal, whatever it is it five years ago. It's, there's the open door. So it's just areas we have to be careful in.

And I and the reason I say that is because I haven't met anyone yet that said I feel so full of the Holy Spirit when I'm on these things. I have never now you might be full of something, right? But it's not the because they're usually full of conviction. And see my heart isn't to rebuke, my heart goes out.

Because I'm one step away as well if I open doors, just like all of us. But we have to we have to talk in order to get healing, we have to talk about the truth. How can we help people if we don't talk about the truth? Well let me tippy-toe around that topic.

I don't want to upset. I got some people who love making their own beer, so I'll avoid that topic. I don't want to upset the big tithers, right? Whoever they are.

I mean, you know, so you're tippy-toeing when God's Word says just proclaim it. Just preach it. Let the Holy Spirit go and convict and drive out the demonic realm.

Let him, if you preach it in love, genuinely concern for people weeping on the altar before the service, crying out saying, God, you have to move. Then let him move. Let the Holy Spirit, the hound of heaven, let him loose and let him convict and draw.

I don't know why, I don't know why, but God has given his Word and also through the power of preaching to change hearts. Because often we don't change until we're what? Convicted. You talking about me? You talking about me, Shane? Yeah.

What's the old saying? If the shoe fits, wear it. And you know who this preaches to before it preaches to you, don't you? So be careful as well in this area. Do not open the door.

1 Timothy 4, 1, 3, I think we have it up there. Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies and hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron. Now here's what they'll do.

Forbidding to marry. They'll say you can't marry. Okay.

You know of any churches that say that? I'm not going to go there, but you can go there in your mind. Right? Don't marry. Don't marry priests.

I guess they cross that line. But you know, don't. I would read this, I would reread this and be very fearful.

Personally. Forbidding. Forbidding because it's a deceiving spirit.

And then he goes on to say, commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. That's why I love vegetarians, but I can't quite go there with you. Because I can't forbid what God has allowed.

Now I have opinions on being very careful, eating clean. You already know all that. But this is the area we have to be careful in.

Forbidding certain things. It's a deceiving spirit sometimes. Again, most of this is coming from Wayne Grudem's book on systematic theology.

The emphasis of the New Testament is not on the influence of demons, but on the sin that remains in the believer's life. Remember what I said earlier? We don't get focused on the demon. We focus on is there sin influencing my life? Yet sinning, even by Christians, does give a foothold for some type of demonic influence in our life.

Usually how it works, it's like this. Let me be back or back here. We make a choice and go in the wrong direction.

Whether it's anything I just mentioned, opiates, alcohol, whatever it is. Once we know that and we, I should have made that choice, and then we continue to make that choice, and continue to make that choice. Then the noose around the neck gets tighter and the bondage gets deeper and deeper.

The grip of the enemy gets harder and harder. And now we're in bondage to the thing we could have said no to. Because we opened that door.

And I believe the enemy, demonic realm, how they primarily work is they will often talk you into things. Right? They can't make you do things like, I just heard a voice. No, they'll talk to you.

They'll talk you into those things. You're tired. You're lonely.

Go back to that. They shouldn't have wronged you. Go back to that.

It's interesting. I've talked about this before too, but in addiction ministry, there's something known as the halt principle. Watch out for H-A-L-T.

Hungry, angry, lonely, and tired. I said, oh, that's spiritual too. Because that's when people fall back into sin.

Hungry, angry, lonely, tired. Those are opportune times for the enemy to come in. Same thing with the spiritually.

So I believe they can talk you into things. Did God really say? Did God really say? Listen, I'm going to be honest with you guys right now. Why fasting is so hard for me? Because my flesh loves to negotiate.

Every time I set out, sometimes I do it like, you got a long day. You're watching the kids. You better have a good breakfast.

That's right. Yeah. I'll start tomorrow.

I'll start tomorrow. I'll start tomorrow. And then, okay, I'm fasting.

I'm getting hungry and moody. I don't want to be moody. I don't want my, you know, I got to eat something.

Thank you for reminding me. Weeks go by, right? Okay, I'm going to start again. Oh, but I got to preach on Wednesday.

I need to be there for the people and be fully, you know. Because when you fast, sometimes you get in a bad mood. You know that? Or cravings come.

So you can talk yourself into things. Or how many people, this happens all the time. Young couples, they break up.

Finally, I'm done with that guy. I'm so glad. I'm so glad that God got me, got me away from that person, right? Thank you.

And then a couple days go by. I wonder if they're changing. I know they hit me, but they said they never would again.

You know what? You're right. You're right. Let me give them a bet.

See how they negotiate. It's the only way they get in. They, did God really say? Because don't you know, sometimes you know without a shadow of a doubt, God's telling you to do, not anymore.

But then by the time a week goes by, there's something very powerful about the power of the made-up mind. When we say, Lord, I know what your will is. I know what your word says.

I'm going to obey it, even when I don't feel like it. That's one area, or one way we can defeat this demonic realm. Then number three, we play with the enemy by entertaining their suggestions.

And that's really what springs board off. I actually should have reversed those. When we entertain their suggestions, we play with the enemy.

Where there's a pattern of persistent sin in the life of a Christian, the primary responsibility for that sin rests with the individual Christian, not the demon. The demon can only intensify that battle. And then I had this third point, or not a third point, but a point under number three, we already talked about.

But can a Christian be demon-possessed? Let me read here what he put. The Greek New Testament never uses the language that suggests a demon possesses someone. It's more demonized.

If a Christian does not make use of the weapons of spiritual warfare, the degree of demonic attack could be quite strong. Think about that. If our weapon, if you truly believe the weapons of our warfare are not physical, they're spiritual.

And the Bible is a weapon. Prayer is a weapon. The power of the Holy Spirit is a weapon.

Worship is a weapon. I believe fasting is a weapon. We have all these things at our disposal, but we don't use them.

We wonder, why am I easy prey? Why am I getting hit all the time? Why am I growing distant from God? Because you're not engaging Him in the spiritual realm. Again, back to willpower. Because most of the time, I'm not going to do that again.

At least twice a week, I say, I'm not having chocolate again. And you're laughing, I'm dead serious. I get dark, organic chocolate, and just dip in peanut butter.

This is the last day. This is the last day. Man, it wasn't supposed to be a funny part of the sermon.

I'm relating to you. But we make, right, we make those decisions in the high point, but then when the weak moments come, that's when the door is open. That's how we fight our battles spiritually.

That's what I hope to talk about next week. But let me leave you with a couple thoughts. I'm not to the end yet.

Don't worry. Don't get excited just yet. When I talk about spiritual weapons, sometimes we, oh yeah, I know, I know.

But think about this. When you're full of prayer, you're full of power. When you're full of worship, you're full of power.

When you're full of the Word of God, you're full of power. The power to defeat the demonic realm. So whatever you're full of prevails.

So if we're full of the things of the world, no wonder we're led to like a lamb to the slaughter. Because we're filled with those things. So how can demonic influences be recognized? Well, severe cases in the gospel.

There's often bizarre and often violent actions, especially to those preaching the gospel. And we see this sometimes, you know, throughout town, you'll see people talking to themselves, and sometimes it's mental disorder. And I usually pray every time I drive by them.

You have to be careful when you talk to those type of people, because there could be some severe challenges going on mentally and brain chemistry. But I often wonder how much of that is demonic attack. How much of those are drugs, alcohol, and they have, and that demonic element is so strong that you see them, them, them just violent actions, lashing out.

I mean, I remember I got on my truck, and this guy's cussing at me. Like, oh, sorry, I don't, who are you? And he just decided to cuss at me for no reason. And do other things.

Let me tell you about with this finger, right? I said, Okay, if you need thing, let me pray for you. And he just got, okay, I'm out of here. You know, now had I been prompted by God to sit and pray, I would have done that.

But this, that's often, it's extreme cases are violent actions. Remember, there's also, when I was preaching on a Friday night, it was a prayer fest, we're outside. And I'm preaching, I think I've told you this probably twice before, but it fits.

So here we go again. But as I'm speaking, this lady over here is manifesting probably probably 50 feet, 60 feet away. And just, you know, you could tell something is wrong.

So the prayer teams over there, and they're praying for you, she falls on the grass. And so I stop and I pray for and then I just go back to preaching. Because see, that's often what that wants to do is disrupt what's going on, and disrupt what's going on.

And people do that. Sometimes it doesn't happen here. But I've preached before and people will say something and you say, Okay, I'd love to talk to you afterwards.

I'd love to talk to you afterwards, but I'm going to continue to preach. And he keeps if you continue, we're gonna have the authorities remove you, the choice is yours, I'm going to preach either way. And you take control that situation, you don't let them stop the work of God.

Because ultimately, Christ is in control. It's his church, we don't have to be cowered away. Okay, sorry, devil.

No devil work. I'm full of prayer. So I'm full of power.

Right? Same with you, what you're fulfilled, what are you filled with this morning? Let me ask that we should just I should just ask that question. What are you filled with this morning, God's power, God's spiritual authority. And here's what I've noticed as a believer, the less you're filled with that authority with that boldness with the power of God, the less likely you are to engage in any type of spiritual warfare.

You don't want to pray for people. I don't I don't want to go to hospital homes. I'll get church in, I'll get church in once, maybe twice a month.

But I don't want to do anything like that. It's probably because and again, I've been guilty of this, we're filled with the wrong things. We're filled with with the things of the world.

That's why we don't have a desire for the things of God. So here's something else blatant, false doctrine, blatantly false doctrinal statements are demonic. You know, a false doctrinal statement is to say something that God's Word doesn't say, to call good evil, and evil good.

And also when a person can sense I don't know if you've experienced this before, but when you can sense the presence of evil, of an evil spiritual influence, you can sense it. I've talked to people before I've walked into in like, I just sense that there just doesn't feel good. There's there's a sensing there, or feeling attacked by the enemy.

Also, here's something to watch for watch for constant self promotion and a lack of humility. The demonic realm always wants to exalt itself, selfishness, self fulfillment, all about self that's demonic at its core. Now that could be our human nature, you know, struggling with this, but the demonic realm will always elevate self humility.

If humility is to a demon, what kryptonite is a superman. We got that one, you ever know what superman is? All right, let me older generation. It's like throwing the house on the wicked witch of the east.

That's what that's what humility does. Humility does when you humble yourself, the demonic realm loses power. It's all about self exaltation.

You show me one demon that will ever humble themselves. They can't, they're, they're, they're, they're, they're united. They're united in self promotion.

Jesus gives all believers authority to rebuke demons and command them to leave. Did you catch that Jesus gives all believers authority to rebuke demons and command them to leave. That's why though I think many of you struggle with this boldness, because I do too from time to time.

It's because we're not continually being filled with the Holy Spirit. And once we are, we have this boldness. A policeman doesn't have authority until he initiates it.

Right? There's law enforcement that attend this church, you wouldn't even know that it doesn't matter. It doesn't, it doesn't matter at all until they say, hey, by the way. Oh, yeah.

Well, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, LAPD. You see, now they're initiating their authority. Same thing in the spiritual realm, you can be beat up and harassed by the demonic realm, you can cower down, you can do nothing for God, but you have to walk in and engage that authority.

And you actually have something a lot stronger than a badge. Because you say, I'm actually, did you know the Bible says I'm a child of God? You're messing with me, you're messing with my father, I'm going to walk into that spiritual authority, you're harassing me, I'm going to harass you. See what we hear, we hear a lot about bullying, that's what demons want to do.

They want to bully. And just maybe a quick side note, but I hope that doesn't happen in this church. Okay, kids, I'm preaching to you now for a minute.

No bullying at West Side or church. Bullying is not a good thing. It can be demonic.

I'd be careful on that one. Saying kids are little demons, right? But that's what demons do. That's what demons do.

They bully. That's all they do. They bully you.

Now I'm going to give you permission to be a bully back to them. That's one area you can be a bully. You can bully the living tar, my dad used to say, out of the demonic realm.

You can bully them because you actually have the authority. They don't have any authority. Do you realize that? If people say, Shane, there's right now every night there's witches out in the desert cursing your church.

That kind of stinks, but I'm not losing sleep over it. Because who's greater? Oh, they're going to take, oh, they're cursing the church. What's going to happen? I said, God, would you take care of this? I'm going to live broken and humble on this altar.

I'm going to live in not self-exaltation, but God exaltation. I'm going to Lord, I need you to move. God, could you handle that? Could you, could you handle that? Because I don't want to handle it.

I can't handle it. I would be very scared if God wasn't on my side. Of course, I don't like the concept.

I don't like the idea. I'm not asking for that, but they have to sit underneath his sovereign and his control. That was my fourth point.

We play with them by not being forceful. Spiritual warfare is not passive. Spiritual warfare is not passive.

We should expect the gospel to come in power to triumph over the works of the devil. You should expect that. So my closing point is obvious.

Stop playing with them. Okay? Stop playing with the devil. Stop playing with the demonic realm.

Renounce them. We hear that word often, right? Renounce them, renounce them. Well, when I read this dictionary, I got a little excited or read the word actually, renounce in the dictionary.

It says a formal declaration that you are abandoning something. You're refusing to recognize or abide any longer. You're declaring that you will no longer engage or support such activity.

So you can renounce this and you can do it in your home. Say, I renounce what you're doing in the life of my child. I renounce what you're doing in my marriage.

Yes, you've got me. You've got some good right hooks. I fell back the last six months, whatever it is.

I'm renouncing that you no longer have spiritual authority over me. I'm coming again underneath the sovereignty and the control of Almighty God. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.

Dan, that's why I get so passionate because I can feel that. I can feel his spiritual power. And I mean, if you believe what this says, the same spirit that rose Christ from the dead resides in a believer, that same Holy Spirit.

So we walk around sometimes, I think, just as cowards and, and, oh, you know, I don't know what to do. And the devil's after my house. Well, if the devil's after my house, I'm going to be after him.

Next time somebody says, the devil's after my house, and you get after him, you get after him. Take a day off. You take it for sick time to head to Las Vegas.

Why don't you take it off and pray and fast for your family? We have to fight the devil. I'm going to stop soon because it's going to get worked up here. Okay, we're going into communion during worship.

What communion is, we remember and we reinforce and we re-establish the relationship with God. So for a believer, communion is, it's up front, it's in the balcony as well. You're, you're remembering the body that was shed.

I mean, the body that was bruised, broken for you, the blood that was shed. And because you can walk in that spiritual authority, we remember the blood because of that. We thank Christ for what He did on the cross.

But I have to remind you as well, if you don't know Christ, now is the opportunity to do that. You do not want to take communion and not truly know Him. Whose control are you under? Turn to Him.

See, here's the interesting thing, turn to Him. Because in the midst of chaos, isn't that, do you see chaos in our culture? In the midst of chaos, there is peace. In the midst of confusion, there is certainty.

In the midst of darkness, there is tremendous light. But you have to repent of your sin and believe in the gospel. That's how a person is truly changed.

Because what communion is, we're remembering what Jesus did for us. How can I take communion and He hasn't done anything for me? So I would just encourage you this morning, I don't know where you're at, but say, Lord, I need you. God, I need you this morning.

I need you to change me. I need to come out of the darkness into the light. I need to come out of the demonic realm that's been in.

And you know, a person knows there's that darkness, they can feel that depression, that bondage that we're allowing into our homes and our lives. Christ just says, come to me. This is why I do get excited.

I'll just be honest with you. It is so simple. A six-year-old could say, I want that.

It's so simple. We need Christ. As believers, we need Christ.

Full surrender is not an option. It's the only option. A believer and unbelievers, they need Christ.

He's the answer. He's the answer to the darkness, the depression, the confusion, the anxiety, the fear that is gripping the nation. It's gripping the world.

He's the only answer. Why? Because he brings that light.

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