

Experiencing Radical True Christianity

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of finding a balance between faith and skepticism, and trusting in God's power to work in our lives, including the gifts of the Spirit.

Duration: 51:28

Scripture: Matthew 8:2

Topics: "Divine Healing", "Gods Power"

Description

This sermon addresses the controversial topic of healing, emphasizing the need to seek God's will in this area. It discusses the extremes of strange practices and lack of spiritual openness in churches, urging for a balanced approach in seeking God's will for healing. The speaker highlights historical accounts of healings in the early church and challenges the audience to consider if God still moves in miraculous ways today, aiming to clear confusion and encourage a deeper reliance on God's power.

Transcript

I'm going to talk about a weighty topic tonight. If you can see there in your bulletins, the title is Healing, Seeking to Clear the Confusion. I want to be careful here on this topic because it is a controversial topic on one hand, but on the other hand, we can't just presume to know God's perfect will in this area.

Many people have prayed for certain things, we haven't seen answered prayers, and I want to be careful here on this topic, but I do want to talk about some biblical principles that might help. But first, I'll remind everybody what we talked about last week, that when it comes to this idea of healing, healing, if it's done, is done through God's power, by His authority, by His Spirit, and His time. And most churches are prone to two different extremes.

Right, you know that. Let me move this up a little bit so I can get around. We have, we can be susceptible to strange fire, what I mean by that, if it's odd, it's God, anything weird is excused, you know, it's just, you know, name it, claim it, all this weird stuff that's happening, but then on the other hand, we can have prideful hearts and not allow the Spirit of God to move whatsoever.

So the key is to try to find that balance in seeking this area, seeking God's will in this area of healing. And it's funny, as I read church history, as many of you know, I've read a lot of church history, you would see some healings in the early church fathers. I know that Augustine wrote a book later in his life entitled The Retractions, and he retracts some of his earlier teachings, and he believes in the miraculous power of

God, and he saw some of those things.

When I read about the Reformation, some of the Scottish reformers, John Knox, and different people, they would attest to this power of God through prophecy, through dreams, through visions, and all these different things. So it begs the question, does God still move in that way today, or has he stopped moving in that way? And that's kind of really where the thrust of this message is, and that's why I titled it Seeking to Clear the Confusion. Because is there some confusion in your mind on healing, or is it just me? Not quite, you know, it's like, oh gosh, I know the Bible talks about it, but why don't we see it? And I wanna talk about that briefly tonight.

And we are in Matthew 8, chapter 8, if you have your Bibles, hope you do. If not, try to get in the habit of bringing them. Matthew chapter 8. But before I get there, I wanna talk about two areas of confusion.

Number one is unanswered prayer. Many of our prayers don't get answered in this area of healing, do they? If we're just honest about it. So that brings in a lot of confusion.

Why aren't my prayers being answered? Why aren't my prayers being answered? And as a result, we get confused. And the other one is, here, I'll just shoot you straight, is we don't see the miraculous, like the New Testament, a lot of it, do we? Especially in America. We just come to church and that's about it.

We don't see really God moving. So both of those things, I believe, create a lot of confusion there. We don't quite understand what's going on here.

That's kinda what I wanna tackle tonight. But before I get to Matthew 8, let's talk about a few areas. Number one is, on this issue of healing, you'll hear often people talk about the gift of healing or the giftings of healing in the Bible.

And what happens is, a lot of people don't believe that those gifts are available today, that God can still move in that way. And I'm not gonna spend a lot of time here because I did on a message entitled Strange Fire on YouTube. So if you go to YouTube, you print in Strange Fire, you can scroll down, you can find that message.

But one reason why it's confusing is because we think that this is unavailable to us today. The gifts of God are unavailable. And what I wanna do briefly is read 1 Corinthians 12, verse 27.

And if you want it, it'll be worth your time if you can get home, when you go home tonight, read 1 Corinthians 12, okay? Read all of it, it takes about seven or eight minutes. And don't take my word for it, don't take anybody's word for it, read the Bible. What does the Bible say? 1 Corinthians, read chapter 12.

But if I skip to chapter 12, verse 27, here's what Paul says. Now, you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church.

So he's saying God has appointed in the church. So if this doesn't apply today, how do you remove that? It seems hard for me to comprehend that. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, and third teachers.

And it's funny that nobody really has a problem with the teacher there, but it's the first two that kind of send us into this, I'm not sure about that. Now, obviously, I don't have a big problem with this because apostles were those that were sent out. They were church planters.

God sent them out into different regions, and that's what the apostolic role was, to plant churches. And then prophets, their main role was to call the church back, to pronounce judgment. And listen, church, turn back to God.

And then he's given, so you need people to go plant the church, you need people to call the church back, and then you need teachers to teach a church. I also read in the Bible, it talks about prophets and apostles and pastors, teachers, and evangelists, and that he's gifted the body of Christ for these different giftings. And then he goes on to say, and this is where it gets a little controversial, then he's given the gift of miracles, the gifts of healing, the gift of helping, helps, administration, and various kinds of tongues.

And this is on the point, people are like, oh, I don't know, should we talk about that? I'm just reading the Bible. So either we cut out chapter 12, or we talk about chapter 12. I guess if it doesn't apply to us, then we don't have to talk about it.

Right? Keep reading there. Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? The question there is, the answer is no. He's saying, not all of these people, not everybody can do these different things.

God gives different giftings to the body of Christ because we need him, we need his giftings. And that's one of the issues, I think, people just think, we have this, we have the word of God, this is all we need. Yes, it's all we need to live in life and godliness and understand the nature, the character of God, the truth of God, but we need a little help.

That's the point a lot of times, if you look at these things, see, I look at these gifts in the context of Scripture. If God, let's see, visions or dreams, how he used to speak to people, does he still do that today? Well, if he gives somebody a very vivid dream that's reoccurring, and it ministers to their spirit, and they say, you know what, it's warning me of something, I better pay attention to this, that can be an added benefit. What about a gift of prophetic word? That somebody might say, listen, I don't know, you know, but this is on my heart.

And you speak something into somebody's life that is, they needed to hear that, they needed that word of encouragement that spoke to them. Yes, we have everything we need, but there's different areas that God can help and minister to us in, because it's all one body of Christ. So that's the whole point of the gifts.

I didn't make this up, I didn't write this. It says God has appointed in the church first. And what I find it ironic when I talk at different churches or conferences or different believers, is nobody had a problem with this Scripture 2,000 years ago.

Nobody did. Like, oh, tongues, oh, I shouldn't talk about that weirdness, this babble that possesses the devil. I mean, they didn't talk like that back then.

They said, listen, they laid out, God has appointed in the church apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, various tongues, administration, all these giftings. God has given it to the body for a good thing. But then we say, no, that's not a good thing.

Those things make us weird. And then we discount all that. And I wanna talk about that briefly.

And here's why I think a lot of people think that these are unavailable today. Number one, many verses written on the gifts, there are many verses written on the gifts of the Spirit and how to exercise them. Look

at chapter 12, chapter 14 of Ephesians and Romans, the gifts of the Spirit, there's chapters written on how to exercise these gifts.

So it begs the question, this is a question I had, what other instructions to the church do not apply today? If these don't apply today, can you show me one other instruction to the church that doesn't apply today? Just one, spiritual issues. Some of you read the Bible a lot might be saying, well, Shane, what about that head covering? Women need to wear head covering in church. That's in the Bible.

And there's churches who do that. And I have no problem with it. Just don't judge other churches that don't.

But in the context, it's in the Bible, in the context, it's submission and modesty is the issue. And if they want to follow Paul's teaching in that, I think that's fine. You're erring on the side of Paul's teaching.

But show me somewhere in Scripture where there are instructions to the church on spiritual matters that no longer apply today. Email me, because I couldn't find anything. I didn't spend all week, but I spent a few hours thinking, okay, head covering, communion, Lord's Supper, abstain from sexual morality, do not offer food, sacrifice idols, or eat food, okay.

Still not a good thing, right? If you know something's been sacrificed to Allah, just might want to avoid that piece of meat. But think about that, not to make jokes. And I don't mean to joke about this topic, because I actually, actually this topic is, you're talking about the nature and the character of God.

When you say that these things are gone, you're challenging the very Word of God. And I want to be careful there. I don't want to say these things don't apply when it says they do.

So that's the first thing. There's many verses written on the gifts and how to exercise them. Number two, there's no scriptural support.

There's no scriptural support saying that these things vanish with the early church. Well, how do people come up with it? Well, they kind of pull in some things, you know, and don't misunderstand. There's godly leaders that I look up to, I read their books.

I read their books on theology, I read their books that I love, that I just don't agree with them on this point. And this is why, there's no scriptural support that say all of this applies to the early church, but not to you guys anymore. That you just can't make that connection.

The one verse they use is that which is perfect. When that which is perfect comes, that which is in part will be done away with. And that's talking about the perfect state.

When we're in our perfect state before Christ, we won't need these things anymore. Love will never fail, love will be there, but when that which is perfect comes, we won't need these things. And Paul even says right now we look through a mirror dimly, through a glass darkly, right now.

So are we saying that we now see better than Paul? Because we have the canonization of scripture, we don't need the gifts anymore. So sorry Paul that you had to look through a mirror dimly, but now we have perfect revelation because that which is perfect has come, and now I don't need these gifts. So there's really no scriptural support for it.

So why do people discount it? Well, let me get to the third point. TV is not truth. What you see on TV is not necessarily the truth.

There's good teachers and there's bad teachers. There's true spokesmen for God and spokeswomen for God, and there's not good spokeswomen and men for God. So truth, TV is not truth.

And a lot of people, I think what happens, number one, they haven't experienced the gifts of the spirit, they turn on TV and they say, oh no, you just didn't do that, did you? Yep, they did. Oh, that is just wrong. And we click, click, and I don't want anything to do with that.

Yeah, these people are out there. So you see how that works? We base it on TV and TV is not truth. Number four is, this is the step on the toes part of the sermon.

The American church is Laodicea, in my opinion. Laodicea, the book of Revelation. Well, I'm not saying literally, but the principle applies.

To us, you say I am rich. Jesus says, you say I am rich. I have acquired wealth and I do not need a thing.

But Jesus says, but you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. The church is saying, listen, I'm in need of nothing. I'm rich, I don't need anything.

And Jesus is saying, you have no idea, you are poor, miserable, blind, and naked, and wretched. You think a church like that is gonna see the miraculous power of God in their life? Lord, I need you to move financially. Oh, Visa's got it.

I got strep throat. I think I got some extra amoxicillin. We go right to urgent care instead of the great physician.

Now, am I one of those guys that are against physicians? Of course not. Don't press the envelope. But how often do we look to God second? Or maybe if all these other things aren't working out, then we'll look to him.

So I think we just have to be careful and find that balance. But look to him, and trust him, and allow him to move in our lives. Number five in this area, skepticism prevents the gifts of the Spirit from operating.

If you are a skeptic, I'm not talking about discerning. I'm very discerning. Hello, we need more discerning people.

But if you are a skeptic and you begin to doubt what God can do, that's a self-fulfilling sin. That's a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you're skeptic, you will not see the miraculous power of God in your life.

You cannot go wrong by saying, Lord, I want you to fill me with your Spirit. I want to, Lord, humble myself. I want everything you have for me, Lord.

I don't know in this area, but Lord, would you show me? Would you speak to me on this issue of the gifts of the Spirit and the power of the Spirit, the anointing of the Spirit, the unction of the Spirit? Lord, I want that fully surrendered life. Lord, I surrender my life to you tonight. Would you show me? You can't go wrong doing that.

Remember last week, the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to him? And I'm concerned that there's too many people standing on the fence. How long will you waver between two opinions? If God is God, follow him. And skepticism does not allow the power of God to operate in a person's life.

And I've had a lot of debates with these guys, all the gifts of the Spirit are for day, this isn't tongues, all this stuff, you guys are just fanatical, weird, of the devil. Say, really, I'm glad I don't believe that. When was the last time you spent an hour in prayer? Ah, that's just emotional.

Really? No wonder you're hard and rigid and arrogant than a modern-day Pharisee. So be careful. We need that brokenness and that humility.

Ask, Lord, what do you want? Do you realize this is his word? This is his word. God has appointed in the church. No, he hasn't, not anymore.

Well, that's pretty dangerous. You wanna say that? I sure don't. Now, of course, I don't like the guys with apostle on their business card and prophet on this business card.

If you're a true prophet of God, your people will tell you you're a prophet of God. And all a prophet is, I don't have a problem with that term either, is calling the church back. It's a hard, prophetic-type message is to awaken the sleeping church.

That's a good thing. God said, I sent my messengers to warn my people, rising them up early and sending them. Why? Because I had compassion on my people and on my dwelling place.

But they mocked my messengers, they despised my word, and they scoffed at my prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against his own people, until there was no remedy. That's Bible. So God sends these people these messages, these difficult messages, to call his people back.

He calls the apostle to go out and plant churches. He calls the evangelist to go out and evangelize. He calls the teacher to go and teach.

He calls the preacher to go and preach. And then it says he gives gifts of healing, of administration, of various kinds of tongues. And we're gonna say, no, he doesn't.

God help us. We're mocking the very thing we need. And I've noticed the people who mock this stuff are the ones who need it.

They're not planting missionary organizations over the seas. They're not building spirit-filled believers in a church on fire for God. I ask them, when have you led a person to Christ 10 years ago? Oh, that's right.

You don't believe in that, that God has to call them through election. You don't preach repentance either? No, it's not my job. What in the world do you do? Think about how powerful this is.

We're called to call people to repentance. It's one body. If you had time, if you go through 1 Corinthians, Paul opens it up, 1 Corinthians 12.

He says, listen, I don't want you to be ignorant. That's a strong word. I don't want you to be stupid, Paul would say to the church in Corinth.

Look it up in the Greek. I don't want you to be ignorant, stupid, about these things. Be wise, and here's how you conduct yourselves.

The body, the eye, needs this. The body needs the eye, the body needs the ear, the body needs the hand, the body of Christ. That's why what I do, you can't do, and what you do, I can't do, and what she does, he can't do.

It's the body of Christ doing out ministering together. That's why unity is so important. That's why the enemy's gonna come after unity.

That's why he's gonna divide the body of Christ, and he's sure gonna divide over this issue. I've seen churches split over this issue. Churches, hundreds of people coming and worshiping God.

Uh-uh, we're gonna split over this issue. Really? You think God's in that? I don't think so. Now you can have differing beliefs in this, but as long as grace and humility guide your decisions and your words, you can get along cordially, but it's so ironic to me that the gifts and the power and the anointing and the unction of the spirit, the thing we so vitally need, the thing that is a life source to the church today, is the thing that people are afraid of, and they divide over.

They don't wanna talk about these things. I knew a pastor who told his worship leader to remove all the songs about the Holy Spirit. What can you say? Really? Should our songs be doctrinally sound? Of course.

Absolutely. It's a no-brainer. But to say we're not gonna mention the very thing that Christ said, when I go, I'm gonna send a comforter, a paracletus, and he's going to bring you power, the power to witness, the power to exercise these gifts.

Not hysteria, boldness. Not chaos, boldness. Not confusion, boldness.

Power, spiritual power to witness. That's how important this topic is. I don't think it should be something that's glanced over and made fun of.

If you're saying that these things do not exist anymore, you have a stronger case to make than I do. You have to prove that these things no longer exist. Now, with that said, let's read Matthew 8. When he had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

And behold, a leper came and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if you are willing, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean. Then Jesus put out his hand and touched him, saying, I am willing, be cleansed. And immediately, his leprosy was cleansed.

And Jesus said to him, see that you tell no one, but go your way, show yourself to the priests, and offer the gift that Moses commanded as a testimony to him. If we had time, we could keep reading through Matthew 8, where Jesus keeps healing people one after the other. Number one point is, we're not Jesus.

So we can't compare ourselves with him in this area, because I believe that he knew the sovereignty of God. He was God. So whatever he did was under the sovereignty of God.

There's no failure there. There's no sin, there's no mistake, there's no sinful nature. He was God.

So this is a focal point. The man said, if you are willing, if you are willing. And what many people say is, they don't say, Lord, you can do this.

They say, Lord, you will do this. That's the problem with this side of the camp. They pray really loud.

Oh, Lord, take this man, heal. And they get louder as if God can't hear. They say, Lord, you will do this.

Lord, you will do this. Lord, you will do this. I don't know, I see a lot of, Lord, you can do this.

Will you? Lord, we're just humble, broken vessels, petitioning our Father. Lord, would you do this? You can do this. Lord, would you do this? Would you bring healing here? And that's very healthy, it's a biblical health.

Worship often precedes healing. We talked about that a few weeks ago, but I wanted to make that note again. Do you realize that a lot of times people are healed as they worship God? The man came down, fell down, worship God, worship God.

Would you heal my daughter? Worship God. Would you heal me of leprosy? Worship God. Worship and healing go hand in hand.

If you need emotional healing tonight, if you need physical healing, if you need mental healing, if you need spiritual healing, God knows all of us need something in one of those areas. It begins and ends with worship. Worship, he is worthy of our worship, where a heart is crying out to God the Father, saying, Lord, I need you in these areas.

Oh, that's a prayer I want to answer. He says, that's a prayer I can answer. Cry out to me, my children, cry out to me, look to me and to me alone.

And in worship, that's where I've seen marriages restored during worship. They're not restored right now while I'm preaching. It's usually during worship, when the Spirit of God breaks them, where repentance takes place during worship, where healing can take place during worship, and that's powerful.

That's one of the things I took from this, but also what I think happens in our culture, especially in America, as we look at this topic through American glasses, like this. Oh, that's how I was raised. What about you? And we read the Bible in the American culture glasses.

I don't believe any of that. I don't see any of that stuff happening. Let's not be, what's that word? Tongues, that guy's a lunatic.

Apostles, prophets, oh my goodness, TBN guys. And we have our American glasses, right? Well, let's take them off for a minute, and I wanna read you, I wanna just rock your world for a minute with this book. Excerpt from K.P. O'Hanlon, you've heard of him.

Gospel for Asia, he's on the radio. Unbelievable things that they're doing. But I read this, and then I see America.

What's going on here? I'm just gonna give you a comparison to millions of families in this condition compared to our family here in America. Not to mention chapters on little kids praying for healing for mom for their cancer. There's no doctor, there's no nothing.

And then she's up cooking breakfast the next morning. Little kids raised from the dead. All these things that they're seeing on the mission field, they making it all up? No, they're desperate for more of God.

But does God heal all the time? Of course not. We know that the perfect healing takes place when we leave here with him. Family and friends are left shattered and broken.

But perfect healing has taken place. And we should rejoice in that, even though we don't understand it. We've all lost friends and family recently.

I can't understand that, Lord. Don't quote Romans to me right now that all things work together for good. I don't wanna hear that right now.

I'm grieving, I'm hurt. And it's okay. God says it's okay, grieve and be hurt.

Ask me the questions. Ask me. But let's take a paradigm shift real quick.

You know what that word means? Shift your paradigm, how you see things. In other words, you say you see a mom up front with her little kid and the kid's acting out. You're like, what's wrong with that lady? Can't she keep her kid under control? What's going on here? And then she comes up after the service.

Oh, I'm so sorry, they lost their father last week. I don't know what to do. Oh, it's called a paradigm shift.

Oh, I'm so sorry. And you feel stupid as you leave. I think I've used that word more in this sermon than I have in all year.

Tell my kids never to say it and here I am saying it. Anyway, life in Asia, Pakistan, all those little, what do they call that? The 1040 window, I think. After a risky home delivery on the dirt floor of the family shack, you were dried off with a dirty rag or an old newspaper.

Your home was made of tarps, sheets held together by bamboo sticks. It was pretty crowded with your whole family living in less than 100 square feet of space. The shack was right next to a railroad track and every 10 minutes a train would come roaring through.

Sleep was difficult under these conditions. When you were born, you were already malnourished. The little milk your mother was able to give you couldn't do much to ensure your growth.

You might also suffer night blindness from vitamin A deficiency. As soon as your mom had to resume her day job of cleaning streets, or soon your mom had to resume her day job of cleaning streets with a hand broom and washing other people's clothing to provide food for the family. So you were left in the care of an older sibling.

As you started to crawl, you explored on your hands and knees the open sewer trenches running along the alley between neighboring shacks. If you had any clothing at all, it was made from rags found in the nearby dump, which is where all the household treasures come from. If you think I'm exaggerating, I'm not.

According to this organization, more than one billion children around the world are deprived of one of these essential things, adequate shelter, food, water, and sanitation. A billion? I told the first congregation, this is mind-boggling. We sit here and we have the audacity to complain about our nation or about California? Everybody wants to leave California.

Why don't you go live in Calcutta? And I see so much materialism, even in myself. We had a hard week this week. I was telling my wife that I finally paid off my truck.

You know, what does any good American go do now? Yeah, go buy a new truck. Right, is that what we do? Of course, I took the test drive of the new Dodges and I'm like, oh, why did I do that? So I'm fighting my flesh all week. And then I'm reading this book, because the flesh isn't happy.

Anytime you're gonna do God's will, let me tell you, you're gonna throw tantrum tantrums. You remember little kid tantrum tantrums? Adults can throw them too. They're mad and I can't believe, and why, because this old junky truck has got 100,000 miles on it.

You know, it's like, and I'm reading this. Told my wife, I go, I can't go buy a new truck. Let's take half this payment, pay off the rest of yours.

Like Dave Ramsey fans out there, you know, we'll do that. Then the other half, let's go help some of these families for the love of God. They don't even know what air conditioning or heating is.

Remember that missionary I had speak from Africa a while back? He just, we took him out to lunch. He doesn't even want ice in his water. He goes, ice, we don't, you guys don't, we don't even have ice.

They don't have ice in Africa where their villages are. Ice, folks, ice. Cockroaches, normal, on dirt floors.

Heating, air, nothing. Bamboo sticks, holding tarps over. And we have the audacity to sit here and complain.

And materialism keeps coming in and coming in. God says, I've blessed you, nation, not to fill your cells, but to bless others. What we have to do is restructure our entire lifestyle so we live below our means so we can bless others.

I know it's convicting, it's supposed to be. Convicted me, right? Now my job's to convict you. And this isn't some plea for money and emotionalism.

This is truth. This is real life, real life. We've got stories in here, my wife will tell you, we just could not believe.

You may have heard on the news of the mom who sold her baby for a bag of rice in this area. They're interviewing the mom and she's crying, saying, I want my baby. And what happened? I've already lost one kid, my other kids, we're gonna starve to death anyway.

At least this one has a good chance to make it. They'll give us some rice to get us by. I just want my baby back.

And she's crying. Folks, what do you do with that? You just push that down, suppress it and leave here? No different? I can't, I can't. Oh, but Shane, there's so many needs.

I don't care, I'm gonna help at least one or two or three or four or five. And that's what we wanna do. We're investing in this organization for missions.

We're investing in sex trafficking here, local organizations. Of course, we're helping grace resources and care. There's so many different needs.

You've gotta pray, Lord, what do you want me to do? I mean, if I took time and talked about sex trafficking, say, oh yeah, those poor people back there. No, in New York for the Super Bowl. Folks, little girls, daddy's little girls, 10, 11, 12, 13, brought to New York and were sold.

Wow, I think we need to redo our books too on the legal aspect and what happens to people who get involved with that. There needs to be serious punishment, serious ramifications. I think they rescued like 45 kids.

In America, folks, America. It's a perverted, sick, dying country and you better wake up. We better stop being so self-absorbed and self-focused and all about us and start saying, Lord, how can I make a difference? How can you make a difference? Just remove your addictions.

America spends 100 billion a year on nicotine. Billions more in caffeine. Stop Starbucks and save a kid from walking in the sewer for the love of God.

You realize that? A month of worth of going to Starbucks, they don't even make in six months. The pastors there walking around on dirt roads with no shoes and what they're wearing wouldn't even make it as a rag in my garage. It'd probably end up in the trash.

We've got churches in this area paying 30, 40, 50, 60,000 a month in rent. There's some misapplying of some priorities going on. He talked about one church he went and visited in Dallas, Texas, \$74 million church.

And he said, we could have planted 7,000 churches with that money. Something's wrong and it needs to till that soil, but it's not easy, is it? It's hard to hear it and it's even harder to do it. We've already started the process.

Keeping my truck and help some of these kids, gonna help some of these organizations. I gotta live less. I gotta live a little bit less and do a little bit more.

I don't know about you. I think God will provide. What I'm wearing now, they could never afford.

And I usually look for a good deal, my wife does. I mean, we're not spending a lot of money on things. We always give 10% or more of our gross.

I mean, we give quite a bit of money, but to look at how much more. I mean, I'm sitting driving, test drive a new Dodge truck and then that's what any good American does, right? No, it's what any selfish American does. Where the love of this world comes up and it can grab all of us, right? There's nothing wrong with the good cars.

I thank God for it. I actually might go buy my wife a newer van, minivan. Those are cool now, you guys know that, right? When I was younger, they were not cool, but they are very cool now.

But because I want them to have something very reliable and I'll take the old truck. So these things, put them in perspective. I'm not just coming, but I'm saying, if you look at where our money goes and we're not helping a lot of people, usually when our money goes up, our standard of living goes up.

Money goes up, toys go up. Money goes up and there's nothing. God's blessed us to be a blessing.

And it really put this in perspective even with healing because I was reading about these people being healed. I'm like, why don't we see that anymore? Oh, they have to be healed. There's no doctor there.

This tumor that's growing out the side of this girl. Oh, there's nothing. They need God.

God, we believe you can do this, but even if you don't, we still believe you. So why are we not seeing it in America? Does that ever think, you kind of wonder about that? Maybe we're hoarding all this stuff and it's all about us and consumerism and materialism and the love of the world. We wonder why we never see the power of God? Because the power of God often flows through a broken, humble, empty vessel who is giving itself to others who fill with the spirit of God.

That's how you experience the power of God. You don't experience the power of God by owning six Bibles and an app on your phone and watching Christian television and studying Greek and Hebrew. It's wonderful, but how do you know the power of God as you submit to God, Lord, what do you want to do? Maybe I see a sermon coming up on that pretty soon.

I mean, this thing just really, I mean, we've all seen the commercials of kids on TV crying and this and that, and you know, it's legit, but these kinds of things that are true stories where every single dollar goes to this, it's called Bridge of Hope, where they offer medical, they offer food, they offer shelter, they offer clothing. And what I like, it's not about the social gospel, feed their tummy, build missionaries, build hospitals, it's about the gospel, converting them to Christ first. That's important because I've always felt, a lot of missionary involvement, they'll feed the stomach, they'll do this and hope people come to Christ later.

But really, the great commission is to go and make disciples, win them to Christ and then help them. So I like the focus of this organization and many others. So that's just kind of a side note.

But number two, I want to talk on this view of healing. They're often based on what we have or haven't experienced. So if you don't believe in God's healing power, a lot of times it's because it's what you have or haven't experienced.

Once somebody's healed, you're gonna have a hard time convincing them otherwise, are you not? In the same way, the agnostic says, I have never experienced God, so he must not exist. What would he say to that? Ah, foolishness, the fool has sinned his heart, there is no God. And many false teachers, here's my question for you, many false teachers hold the Bible in their hand, but why don't we discard the Bible? Many false teachers hold this in their hand, they preach from it.

Well, we don't throw the baby out with the bathwater, we denounce them, not the word of God. So don't denounce God's healing power, denounce the vessel who is corrupt, that's giving it a bad name. We have a false gospel, we have a true gospel.

We have false truth, we have true truth. We have false gods, we have the true, one true and living God. We have false religions, we have the one true way, the truth, the life through Jesus Christ.

And we have false giftings, we have true giftings of God. I see this happen all the time. And actually, what else would the gift of healing be called? Would it be called the ability to heal? No, it's not my ability to heal.

Would it be called the power to heal? No. Would it be called the capability to heal? No, it's not my capability. It would be called God's gift to heal.

He gives gifts of healings to people. So I don't look at somebody's sovereign, their sovereign act of saying he's got a gift of healing where he just heals wherever he goes because they would clear out the hospitals, as I've said before. But sometimes God will pour out his giftings upon his body of Christ and give people certain gifts to pray for the sick, pray for the diseased.

He'll give other people the gift of administration. He'll give other people the gift of teaching and preaching, the gift of these certain things. Why? To help the whole body.

It's a gift of God. Number three, this is gonna ruffle little feathers, but it's okay. Our views on healing are often based, we don't wanna admit this, but it's true.

Our views of healing or on the gift of the Spirit are often based on who has influenced us. This author or this author? This denomination or this denomination? Who has influenced us? Because after all these years, I can't say that, oh, this denomination could be wrong and my grandpappy was wrong and my parents are wrong. All these people are wrong? No, Shane, no.

This group's wrong. Well, this group says, no, that group's wrong because I've been raised in this certain denominational setting. I've been taught this.

So you have to be very careful. What does the Bible say? Not necessarily what do our influences say to us, even though you need godly influences, don't get me wrong. And people have made this statement, Acts, the book of Acts cannot be used for doctrine.

Okay? The book of Acts cannot be used for doctrine. So that's your argument against the power of the gifts of the Spirit. Well, the problem is it's the only inspired book that we have that contains the history of the early church.

So if something is happening in our lives that align with the early church, I don't know if that's a bad thing. It was good then, it might be good now. Just throwing that out there, right? It's going to early church and now we need those giftings.

We need that power of the Spirit today. I believe with all my heart, I believe the church needs a wake up call. They need the fear of the Lord again.

Then when they start operating in the fear of the Lord and giving more of their resources instead of hoarding, they'll see the power of God working through that. Because as we structure our lives, according to scripture, God can flow through that. That's interesting.

We've been conditioned to go to the doctor first and Christ second. Don't get me wrong, we have nurses in our family. Mother-in-law works at the hospital.

So very happy with nurses and doctors. We need them, thank God for them. But how often do we go to them before we go to God? The same thing I say about medication that people have got upset at me about.

Don't run to the medication, run to God first. See, I'm not saying all these things are bad or wrong, but run to the guy who has the answers, run to him. Have you spent time praying and seeking God and asking him to show things in your heart that might be hindering this? Lord, can you heal? Lord, you show me.

I want you to direct me, not them. But the problem is we often go to them and not him. Pastor told us not to go to the doctor.

No, I didn't. If anybody leaves here thinking that, I did not say that. Right? I got it on tape.

Well, there's a couple right now that are being charged. I think their second child died now for not taking him to the doctor after pneumonia. Hey, I'm not stupid.

After a few hours of praying, if I see some signs getting really bad, we're going to the doctor. Hello. But I remember, I mean, I wish I would have wrote down all the stories.

I remember we had, Morgan, remember our son was probably two and it was getting, I mean, it was, we went through hell when we planned this church that just the attacks on the family were, I wanted to quit, quite honestly. I was about ready to throw in the towel. And finally I said, Lord, I can't quit.

I can't quit. You called me to do it. And it started to lift.

But one of the things is he was sick. This, you know, you hear that croup cough and they're young, maybe even a year and a half. You know, at night you hear it.

I'm like, what is that? He's going to die. But day after day after day, I'm thinking, what is going on here? So I just spent some time. I was praying.

It's just, Lord, you got to show me. I'm getting desperate. I need you in this, boom, click.

Just something went, humidifier. Humidifier. So I went online real quick.

Oh, humidifier can take in the mold and all these things. If your son, daughter's showing signs of these, unplug it for a while. We did that.

It's fine. Oh, that's just coincidence, Shane. Well, I'm glad I don't believe that.

Why in the world do I think of the humidifier on that's been on all week? There's other times we went. I remember when we went to the doctor and all of our kids, you look down the throat. Look, you see that? It's a strep throat.

It's all the white. All our kids are sick. They're little kids.

I'm like, oh, Lord. And just for some reason, I went and bought some probiotics, some clodial silver, some echinacea, some healthy things that God's given us. God's given us these things.

Just put it down their throat a couple of times, a couple of hours, spray the clodial silver this. Woke up in the morning, everything's gone. Kept the amoxicillin in the refrigerator though for a few days just in case it's all gone.

Threw it in the trash. The prescription for all three kids, threw it in the trash. Now, was I ready to give it to them? Oh, of course.

Absolutely. That morning, going right on it. But it was fine.

They're all fine. Just coincidence. Glad I don't believe that.

You see how that works? I trust God. Lord, would you show me? Would you help me? Lord, I need you. And he might prompt, no, now, get them to a physician now.

Absolutely. And I don't wanna really make this what it's not, but I see a lot of people going right to a physician, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a drug, a medication, and not even taking it to prayer and God. Saying, Lord, what would you want? What's going on here? Either can we believe he can answer or can't we? I think it has a lack of faith.

No, God's not gonna answer me. I need to take care of this myself. And I was reminded this week, 2 Chronicles 16, 12.

In the 39th year of his reign, Asa, A-S-A, was afflicted with a disease in his feet. Though his disease was severe, even in his illness, he did not seek help from the Lord, but only from the physicians. That's interesting.

I think sometimes we love these gifted people that God has given us. Thank God for them. But at the same time, we need to look to him and him alone.

I don't wanna leave on a sour note. I wanna encourage you guys, no matter where you're at emotionally, spiritually, that God will never leave you. He will never forsake you.

Even though sometimes we can't, Lord, where are you? He's right here. He says, I'm right here. I want you to draw near to me.

Lord, I'm going through hell. That's good. I want you to experience heaven.

Draw near to me. Lord, I can't understand this. Draw near to me.

I know he will never let us down. Anxiety, fear, depression, whatever it is, stop getting your thoughts on what's going on and feeding those thoughts and start feeding your thoughts on the word of God. He will guide you.

He will direct you. He is our comforter. He is our strength.

He is everything. And I just get passionate about this because I see so many people just right there. Remember, I've talked about that before, with living water just steps away, just right, but they, I can't, I'm not quite, I don't wanna do that.

It's right there. He's asking us. He's saying, would you seek me with all of your heart and you will find me.

No matter what your condition is, no matter if you're in the condition a while and God keeps you in that condition or he doesn't heal somebody, I don't know. I don't have all the answers, but my job is to point you to the one who does and then get out of the way. You realize that, right? That's my job, point you to the one that get out of the way.

See you, thanks. Don't follow me at the camera either. They like to do that when I walk off stage.

That's my job. This is my job. Look, look to him.

Look to the one who has the answer. I just need to stand over here. I'm just a messenger.

I'm just a messenger. Look to the cross. Look to him for salvation.

Look to him for healing, for deliverance. Don't look to man, look to him. So I'm gonna have the worship team come back up.

We're gonna conclude with a few songs and actually during this time, I wanna ask that, Peyton, you can get the lights, but you guys would just stand up and I wanna challenge you. I know that everybody in this room, pretty much, has been praying for something. My prayer list is about this long.

People unsaved, things I think God still wants to do in the ministry in my own life. I've got my ankle going out, my back's going out, my elbow, I mean, I'm getting older. I'm like, I can't believe it.

All these things, I mean, I'm praying for the Lord. You gotta bring some healing here. I got little kids I gotta play with.

So, I mean, we need, we need to pray and I think so many people, they come into church and I wanna say, no, go pray. Go pray, don't go home and eat. Go pray.

Will God move if you gave up dinner and just stayed and prayed and worshiped? Pray and seek the face of the Father. This isn't a five minute devotional, microwave Christianity. This is time when we seek God and it takes a song or two or three or four as we're praying and saying, Lord, I'm not gonna let hold of you.

I'm gonna wrestle you all night like Jacob until my name is changed. Lord, till my situation is changed, I need an answer. I read the missionaries of times past.

They would embarrass us today. Adoniah Judson, Hudson Taylor, Amy Carmichael, George Watson, they would lay on their face before God until an answer came. Hours into the morning, hours into the evening, praying, waiting, Lord, I'm not moving until an answer comes.

Now we're too hungry, we're too, we can't get out of here quick enough. And sometimes I wonder, it's God just saying, I'm just asking you'll receive. Son, ask and you'll receive.

You don't tell your kids this? They always want stuff from me. I say, be patient, be patient. Sit down and be quiet for an hour.

Oh, I want it now, I want it now. Oh, now you're not getting it. Now you just ruined it.

You sit down for an hour and a half. If you keep pressing me, it's gonna go two hours. Why? Because I wanted to relax.

Be patient, be patient, son. If you're not patient, life will chew you up and spit you out. Be patient, be patient.

By your patience, you'll possess your soul. You'll say, I don't understand this scripture. Oh, I do.

Patient people are very spiritual, they're very humble, they wait on God. You know that scripture, those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up wings like eagles, they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and not faint. We forget that those who wait upon the Lord, it's a waiting, it's a waiting of a mother pleading for a prodigal son and us having to go remove her.

Ma'am, it's 10 o'clock, we've gotta close the church. That's waiting.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/gCq2pmJ6-Cc.mp4>
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