

Faith - the Anchor of Life

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman emphasizes that faith is the essential anchor of life, especially during trials, and encourages believers to actively nurture and exercise their faith.

Duration: 52:50

Scripture: Psalm 46:10, Ezekiel 37:1-14, Matthew 9:2-7, Romans 12:2, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Faith Building", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of faith as the anchor of life, highlighting the need to trust in God's outcome despite storms and challenges. It encourages building faith through worship, fellowship, meditating on God's faithfulness, and repentance. The story of Ezekiel and the dry bones is used to illustrate how God can revive and rebuild our faith, even in the midst of dryness and challenges.

Transcript

Tonight we're talking about faith. And I found that it is the anchor of life. When life nails you with storms with with tragedy with whatever you want to put in there, the anchor, the only anchor you have that I have is that anchor of faith.

And now you know why Jesus prayed for Peter. He said, Peter, I pray for you. Satan has asked for you.

And every time I read that, I do pray, I pray, Lord, don't have him ask for me. Don't just keep us nice and quiet over there on 60th Street. Just don't don't say that Satan has asked for you, Shane Eidelman, that he will sift you as wheat.

And sifting is they would take the wheat and they would sift it against hard stone. And they would let the wheat go, the chaff would blow away and the good wheat would fall to the ground. And it's that it's that it's that separating.

It's that hard up against a stone. And Satan has asked for you that he would wants to sift you as wheat. What did Jesus say? But Peter, I prayed for you that your faith would fail thee not.

Not that you wouldn't be led into this or taken this or or crucified upside down or none of these things. He said, I prayed that your faith would not fail you. The King James is fail thee not.

Other translations say that his faith would not fail him or him failing his faith. Whatever way you look at that, because this is the anchor of life. And as we go through tragedy or we go through hard times, the only thing that's going to be able to pull you back is faith.

And so let's look at how can we build that our faith? Because what's happening in the church, I don't know if you've noticed, but faith is not on the rise. It's on the decline, and we need it, we need to build it up. So what I want to do, though, also is remind you of the last three weeks before Easter.

We talked about the enemy, the enemy coming in to kill, to steal, to destroy. And how does the enemy do that? How do we battle the enemy? How do we overcome the enemy? What are his tricks? What are the schemes? So go back and look at those sermons if you haven't seen those those messages. But we asked the question, are you creating an environment? And I still want to ask this question tonight.

Are you creating an environment for the Holy Spirit to reign or an environment for Satan to influence? See, you and I create the environment. You realize that? We don't just walk through life neutral. We create an environment for the Holy Spirit to reign in our lives or the enemy to influence.

So with this sermon, I want to ask the question, are you creating an environment for faith to grow or an environment for faith to wither? And this is something we have to think about, because faith doesn't stand stagnant either. Faith is either withering. And it's dying on the vine, and God has seemed distant.

The Bible is boring. I don't want to go to church very much. Shane, I'm just holding on.

I need something. And that faith is withering. Or what is it doing? It's growing.

It's being built up. It's being encouraged. We're being filled with the Spirit of God.

Our faith is like a mustard seed that started out small, but now it's a large tree, and we're accomplishing things for God. Sure, there's difficult times, but it's growing. There's no middle ground.

It doesn't just stay right here. It's either going one way or the other. And sometimes it does both, right? I'm having a really good day, and then, uh-oh, bad week.

And then everything's going, uh-oh, here it comes again, darn it. And it seems like it's this going back and forth. So I want to talk about that.

I want to encourage you guys. These points really encouraged me this week as well. But what we're doing is we're picking up in Matthew chapter 9. If you have your Bibles, Matthew chapter 9, use a real Bible.

Don't use a phone Bible, because you know what happens on phone Bibles, right? Oh, a text just came in. I better answer that. Look who's emailing me.

Who's, oh, I bet. And then we do, it's all distracted, but we can play it really. Oh, yeah, look.

I'm looking right here with, I'm following. You're not following, you're texting. So phone Bibles, unless you can turn off all texting and phone calls and all that, do not work very well.

Matthew chapter 9. So Jesus, so he got into a boat, crossed over and came to his own city. Then behold, they brought to him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to him, son, be of good cheer.

Your sins are forgiven you. This amazing because the guy comes in on a bed, he's saying, hey, just be happy. Obviously, he's not be of good cheer.

Your sins are forgiven you. So everybody's probably going, what in the world is this guy talking about? Only God can forgive sins. And I'm sick.

I don't need to. How do you know about my sins? I need healing. So you can already see the environment here is interesting.

So, again, Jesus said, be of good cheer. Your sins are forgiven you. And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemies.

Why is he blaspheming God? But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier to say your sins are forgiven you or to say arise and walk? But that you may know that the son of man has power on earth to forgive sins. He told the man, get up and walk. See, that was confirming.

Only God has the power to forgive sins. And Jesus said, oh, but I'll show you. I have that power.

Man, get up and walk. It authenticated his words. And the man took up his bed and he arose and he departed to his house.

Now, when the multitude saw it, they marveled and glorified God and said, who has given such power to men? That's amazing. But there's a lot I want to unpack just in that one paragraph. The first thing I want to bring to your attention is disabilities or or I don't know what you throw in the blank disabilities or fill in the blank times when we're really down.

We get hit with a left hook and everything's falling apart. It often leads to depression. And I believe that this man is saying, listen, be of good cheer.

This man comes in. And we link our circumstances to our heart often. Our focus often determines our attitude.

So what you're going to focus on, your attitude soon follows. Always remember that what you focus on over here, guess what's coming up? My attitude is going to follow on to that. So as we're going through the storms, as we're going through adversity, one of the key things we have to remember is you focus on the end result.

You focus. Our faith is grounded in heaven. Our faith is grounded in Christ.

So no matter what we're going through, we don't look at the storm. We look at the end result and who our faith is anchored with. And when God sees our faith, he is pleased.

Hebrews 11, 6, but without faith, it's impossible to please him, for he who comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. And I bet if we took a survey, most people would know that God is pleased when he sees our faith. Of course, yeah, I know that.

Who doesn't know that? Well, how is, how does he see our faith? Two A's, remember the two A's, attitude and our actions. Those two things are either going to please God or not please him. And I see this a lot in church too.

Many times people have actions, they'll go to church, they'll be involved in ministry, they'll do things for God, but their attitude stinks. They're critical, they're negative, they're always pointing out the flaws in others, that you wouldn't even know that they're a Christian by their attitude, but they have the actions. And then there's other people, great attitude, they're not doing anything, they're not stepping out in faith for God whatsoever.

They like this, I'll stay over here by the comfortable things. A good attitude, but I'm not going to trust God in those areas. And that's why it's impossible to please God without faith, because basically all faith is the same.

God, I know who you are, I know your promises, I know you want what's best for me. I'm going to trust you, so I'm going to walk out in this. I'm trusting you, not me.

And that pleases him, because he says, okay, I can guide you, I'll direct you, I'll encourage you, thank you for handing over the wheels of the car, the wheel of the car to me. That pleases him. And he's watching our actions and our attitude.

And they have to match. And you know, there's too many scenarios, I would be here until 10 o'clock tonight on how this plays out. But you know how it plays out right now in your life, because God's showing you or is convicting you of certain areas.

That you have to have the right attitude and step out in faith. There's certain things, I know a lot of times in marriage counseling, right, where people are praying for a healthy marriage. But their attitudes and actions don't support that.

They both have to come under God's will in this area. And that's why faith is so important. We read, if we keep reading in Hebrews, by faith Abraham, by faith Sarah, by faith Moses, by faith Joshua.

Everything that anybody accomplished in the Bible was by faith. Even Noah, right, Noah, by faith, being warned of God of things not yet seen, moved with fear, moved with reverence to the building of an ark and the saving of his family. How ridiculous did this look? It doesn't rain, what's this guy doing out in the building of a big old boat? Listen, God spoke to me, so now I'm adjusting my life in such a way that it lines up with what he told me.

Yeah, it looks silly right now, sure it looks foolish right now, but this is what pleases God. I've alluded to this before when we planted this church, it looked ridiculous. Saturday nights, nobody, you have no core team, there's nothing, what are you gonna do, what? I said, I don't know, I know God's called us to do this, we're gonna do it.

And then as you begin to step out, that pleases him, and then he opens the door. Now he opens this door and then that door, but I'm just walking out on what he's called me to do. Same thing in your life.

You know what it is, financially or ministry, you're calling some people to the ministry, but they're so scared of failure they never do it. Should I get transparent again? That's one reason why I didn't want to plant a church. That's probably the main reason I didn't want to plant a church.

Failure, didn't work, must have not heard from God, how stupid is that? Wouldn't that be silly? You tell your boss, hey, I think I'm doing this, I might be leaving you someday. Tell everybody we're planting a church and then you close the doors in three months. Wow.

So the fear of failure. But also we didn't just jump out and do it that week. It was praying and worshipping and the Lord asking.

Some of you confirmed it. I was praying for confirmation, you would confirm it. Okay, Lord, I'm trusting you, but I need some fleeces.

I need a lot of fleeces right now. I don't know, there's debates on should you fleece, shouldn't you. But there's nothing wrong with saying, God, would you show me? Would you confirm? I trust you, I know it could be you, but I know I got some junk in here that might be leading me in a different direction.

So could you please confirm and get me back on course? That's what faith is. It's very healthy to say, Lord, I don't know. And I know that there's some emotions in here and sin in here that could lead me in the wrong direction.

So would you show me? I'm trusting you to show me. And some of you, it was a big step too. When we first had our first child and we said it was a big, some of you can relate, some can't.

Some of you will be able to relate in the near future. But Morgan said, okay, I'm done working now. We're gonna have the baby.

When you lose half your income, that's something to worry about. But we knew, okay, God, you'll honor this. I'm not against working moms.

Don't get off on this whole thing. People try to pigeonhole me in some things I say. They say, you meant this.

I didn't mean that. I'm just saying in our situation, sometimes moms have to work. Single moms have.

I got it. But in our case, we prayed for this. We felt that God was gonna lead in this area.

And the first two months, it was not looking pretty. It's like, how are we gonna do this? I don't know. But we want what's best for the child.

We want to trust you. And then he began to open those doors after you work through that stuff in your heart. And sometimes you don't make a decision the next day.

Oh, I see the fruit. Wasn't that wonderful? Sometimes that fruit has to be tested for a week. Or a month.

Or longer. And I'm gonna get into some points that might help with the journey. Because some things can cloud our vision.

Some things can help our vision. But here's one of the key ingredients from faith. And it's more, instead of what they call expository preaching and breaking down every word and sentence in the historical context and this and that.

I just wanted to pull out some things on faith. Because the majority of counseling appointments the church here is doing is because of faith is dying. Marriages are dying.

Because faith is dying. Lives are drifting away from God because faith is dying. And I want to talk to that issue.

But here is the anchor of faith. We talk about faith, and we use that term loosely sometimes. What faith really is, is I'm believing in God even though I can't see it.

I can't see my house, but I'm gonna go home. I'm gonna walk out those doors, God willing, and the next set of doors, and get into my truck, and I don't see it. So faith is always anchored in something in the future.

Or who God is. It's not rarely anchored. When it's anchored in what's right now, and right now falls apart, guess what else falls apart? My faith.

So when God's talking about faith in Hebrews, talking about faith throughout the Bible, he's talking about faith. I know, I see the promise. What's the promise? Of eternal life with God.

Of Christ as my foundation. Of spending eternity with God. That's my anchor.

So my faith is anchored in that, not in what I'm going through. Does that make sense? And when you reverse that, it gets really ugly. Because this world was not meant to satisfy us.

Hebrews 11.1, here's the definition of faith. Now faith is the substance, it's made up of. The substance of things hoped for.

And it's the evidence of things not seen. What? Okay, so I can't see it, and it's not right here. It's something I'm hoping for.

So faith is, I'm living as if there's something there, but it's not there yet, if that makes sense. So my life structure in your life is in such a way that you're living according to the promise of God for something in the future. That's the faith.

That's how we stay grounded in that faith. And we have to trust God in the midst of the storm. Hebrews 11.35. Others, talking about the heroes of the faith.

Read Hebrews 11 sometime. Others were tortured. Still others had trials of mocking and of scourging, of chains and imprisonment.

They were stoned. They were sawn in two. They were slain with the sword.

They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains and dens and caves. All these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise.

See, all of these people died before the promise of Christ. Hebrews 11. I have to check it now that I'm saying it, but I believe it's Old Testament saints.

By faith, Noah. By faith, Rahab. By faith, Moses.

By faith, Joshua. By faith. They moved in faith, and they weren't able to see the promise of Christ coming.

And even further, the promise of eternal salvation. They acted in such a way because their faith was grounded in something that wasn't yet happening. The promise of what God said.

And anytime you live out in faith, you will live based on the promises of God. Lord, I know you'll see me through this, although it doesn't feel like it right now. You have to live in that way.

Lord, I know you're not gonna let me end up underneath that freeway and my kids be taken from me and put into this and have no food and die. I know that. And we trust in those things of who God is.

Here's the next point on this. Faith grows by exercise, and it fades by neglect. Your faith and my faith grows by exercise, and it fades by neglect.

Whenever you neglect your faith, guess what happens to it? It gets weaker and weaker and weaker and weaker. Colossians 1.21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now, God has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through His death to be without blemish, free from accusation.

But, this is interesting, it keeps going, verse 23. If you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope that is held out in the Gospel. So, we love all the Scriptures.

Don't do this, do this, flee this. But we forget about these continuing in our faith. It's an active tense.

We're doing something. And that we're continuing there is epimeno in the Greek language. Epimeno.

It's carrying on in the same direction. Okay, so if a vessel is carrying on in the same direction out in the sea, and it turns around, and now it's going away from its intended direction. Many people, that's all the enemy wants to do.

You're on direction with God, what does He want to do? Knock us off course. Now you understand 1 John better when he says, those who say they know Christ and do not keep His commandments are a liar and the truth is not in them. That we're keep there.

Chuck Swindoll taught on this, I remember many years ago. You're keeping watchful care like a ship. It's drifting off course, but you're keeping it back on course.

You're going back this way, you're drifting, but you're keeping the course. It's the same thing. That's what faith does.

If we don't keep that course, it will drift. You never see anybody walk away from Christ who was on fire for Him a day earlier. It's a slow digression.

We start to say things like, I haven't been to church in a while. I don't have time to read the Word. God seems distant.

All that's boring. I don't know what's going on, Shane. It's progression.

That's why the Bible says, having done all, stand. Stand there with your loins girt about with truth. Holding the ground.

Continuing in our faith. I'm going to help you continue in your faith tonight. How to rebuild.

This is hard with this kind of audience. Thank God for the Holy Spirit because He'll speak in different areas. Some of you are doing wonderful in this area.

You're encouraged. Other people might not be doing well. They'll leave in their car and go, why don't I feel what Shane's talking about? Other people maybe don't know God.

Other people are in the middle. They're going backwards and they don't even know it. Other people are in the point of restoration and healing and they're going forward in their faith.

It's through all those things. But here's a few areas from Scripture that will help you ignite your faith and keep you to continue in your faith. If the first thing we cannot ignore, I mentioned this earlier, it's the number one thing in my life.

It better be the number one thing in your life. This is worship. Worship.

I just met with a man this week and it really surprised me because he said he doesn't have a lifestyle of worship. He reads this a lot. He's got this down.

But his faith is faltering. Wait a minute. That doesn't make sense.

You have to remember something. This kills. What? Paul said the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

And this is coming from somebody who loves this, cherishes this, reads this, studies this, teaches this. But this, apart from the Spirit of God, is death. The Pharisees had it.

Jesus said you search the Scriptures. You memorize the Torah. You have all the festivals down.

You search all this in them. You think you have eternal life. But Jesus said they point to me.

See, this isn't meant to be worshipped. It's meant to be read. It isn't meant to be worshipped.

It's meant to give instruction and to draw us closer to God. This, without worship, turns into dead formalism. You've heard me say that term a lot, right? Modern-day Pharisee.

That's what a modern-day Pharisee is. They can quote this, but they have no love of Christ in them. They love to just quote Scriptures, hit their kids, but they don't want to hold them.

They love to rule their house with a rod of iron, but they know nothing about the compassion of Christ. Why? Because they're absent of worship. When you combine this with worship, that's powerful.

Because they're meant to complement each other, not compete. And I found, and this man admitted it, this is easier. Right? A little cup of coffee.

Oh, isn't that wonderful? Let me do a Greek study on that word. Oh, this is great. Wow, this is wonderful.

Hey, wife, I've read through the whole New Testament this summer. Aren't I special? Look at this. Wow, this is just easy.

Worship is hard. Because worship involves repentance, humility, brokenness. I could have never sang that song 15 years ago.

Oh, how I love him. This is corny stuff. I'm a man.

I drink beer and lift weights and beat up people. No, seriously, that's what guys do. Oh, how I love him.

Golly. Where do you guys come up with these lyrics? And I would poke fun. Until the Spirit of God does business in your heart.

And then I have to sing that song. I went on YouTube the other day and I found the old version of Amazing Grace. No instruments, just Amazing Grace.

And just afterwards, just trying to rewind that song. It takes a good three or four or five times rewinding it. Then I'm in my chair.

And then by then I'm just on my knees in my chair saying, Lord, would you speak to me? Lord, would you move in these areas of my life? Lord, I need you. I love you. You've saved me.

You've redeemed me. You watch over my kids and my family. You keep everything together.

The only reason we don't say words like that is because of pride. And tough guy syndrome. American men have tough guy syndrome.

We were raised on John Wayne. And you don't cry and you do this. You talk Mr. Macho.

The fact is we're dying inside. You just don't want to admit it. We're dying inside.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I was blind, but now I see. And you're not going to let that penetrate your heart.

Bless the Lord, oh my soul, bless the Lord. Just rewind and rewind. So I don't understand when somebody says they don't worship.

I can't understand that. Because I can't not worship. When I don't worship, I become very critical and upset.

Oh sure, I'm reading the Bible. I can quote Scripture to you. But it's that worship that breaks the heart.

Oh how my soul cries out to the one true and living God as a deer pants after the brook. So my soul pants after you. How many of you can say that? Not many people.

Why? Because there's a boundary there. That's emotionalism. Good.

You need some emotionalism. We need to see some tears. We need to see people turned around in their chairs.

Because that's when you go home different. That's when you love your wife instead of hit her. You hold her instead of yell at her.

When worship takes place. Because a prideful, arrogant man cannot sit and worship God very long. They get distracted.

They don't want to worship God. So anytime I'm talking with men, I'll save you some counseling appointments right now. Worship God.

Not for five minutes. Try an hour. Worship God.

Oh I can't do that. Something's wrong with your heart. Because our heart should cry out Abba Father.

Not get away from me Father. So something is wrong there. That's how you build.

If you want to build strong, solid faith, worship God. Because it's in that time of worship. See the heart's always the issue, is it not? Pride, arrogance, lust.

You fill in the blank. It's always the issues of the heart. How do you clean out the heart? How do you give the heart a shower? Let's put this in terms we can understand.

This alone? No, because I can read this and be thinking of you. Or my wife. Or my kids.

They better. Aren't they so special? Yeah Jesus, you tell off those guys. That's right.

And I can sit here and nothing happens. But when I put this down and say, oh God examine me. Create in me a clean heart.

Renew a right spirit within me. Lord I've been depraved. I've been sick in my heart.

Lord I need help in these areas. Would you come in and cleanse my heart? That's what worship does. But then if you have worship and you don't have this, you have hysteria.

All emotionalism and they want to avoid this. They want to avoid this because they don't want a check and balance system. So you have to have the power of the spirit.

Heartfelt worship and sound doctrine theology. That's how God designed it. Theology, the study of God.

God says, here's my attributes. Here's my character. You might want to consider them.

So they go together. And I just see so many people. If they're not in this, they're definitely not usually in worship.

But tell me about your devotional life and your time of worship. Why is it not existing? You tell me. I've got a young man.

I think I can say it because I don't see him here. I was going to meet with him afterwards. His wife's about ready to leave.

Gone. So come and worship. I don't want to do that.

Really? Really? You're just going to follow some little checklist and hope she comes back? Your heart has to change, folks. Your heart has to change. And the word of God, as I'm reading the word of God, it presses me into worship.

And God wants to know, how bad do you want it? How bad do you want it? Many of our ailments, many of our healing that needs to take place, many of our bitterness, many of our quarrels, many of our family issues, many of our church feuds, could all be done away with worship. Because I can't worship God and hold bitterness in my heart with you. I worship in my heart and then go and be mean to my spouse.

It just doesn't coexist. Once he gets us away from worship, then that's when all the flesh begins to pull us in the other direction. That's why I would encourage you to come Monday night, and you'll find out that you'll be too busy on Monday night.

Something will always come up. Because worship is the most powerful thing you can do. The devil hates it.

Why? Because he wants your worship. You can read this now and then. You're not going to do much damage.

You just become a Pharisee. He loves the Pharisees. But the devil wants that worship.

And God wants her worship. Well, how do you tell the difference? Well, easy. He who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in him.

If we love the things of the world, we don't have time for God. Guess who we're worshiping by default? Again, there's no middle ground. Well, I know I'm not worshiping God, but I'm definitely not worshiping Satan.

I don't know. You might want to reconsider. Where's your affections? How's your time spent? Your time, your energy, your mind, where's it going? Towards the things of the world or towards God? Now, I spend a lot more time on that point than I want to, but I want to get that across, that worship is vitally important.

The next area of building faith, believe it or not, is right here. Attendance and fellowship. Like-minded believers coming together.

Worshiping together. Building each other up. Iron sharpens iron.

And it's actually, I've been reading articles, it's an epidemic, especially in the church in America, not China, Pakistan. All these churches that are surpassing American church in their numbers. China, they think, will have more Christians by the year 2020 than America.

The way it's all growing. They're in church for hours, worshiping God. Now, we've got our whole service is down to an hour and five minutes.

We're in and out, quick, quick, quick. And we'll go on this weekend, but not that weekend. This weekend, it's just juggling everything.

There's no consistency. And we wonder why faith is faltering, because God wants us to be in fellowship together. And the feelings come later.

I've shared before, I don't like coming here every Saturday. But once I get here, the feelings come late. The feelings come.

The discipline. He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Then I leave here saying, thank God, Lord, I'm here.

Thank God you brought me here. So the next point. Worship, attendance, and of course, the Word.

This is how we build faith. This is how we build faith right here. So you thought I was discarding it.

I wasn't, was I? I was putting it as proper perspective. Worship and the Word. I just read today, Psalms.

Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord or stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart and has not lifted up his soul to an idol. You look to the Psalms. One thing have I desired.

One thing that I will seek to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. And then I turn to another Psalms. I will instruct you and guide you in the way you should go.

I will guide you with my eye. Turn to another Psalms. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

And though he falls, he will not be utterly cast down. For the Lord upholds him with His hand. And then I turn to another Psalms.

It says, the Lord sent His Word and it healed them and it delivered them from their destruction. See, this is spiritual cleaning as well. This is mental cleaning.

That's how I build faith. If we're not in this, if you're not in the Word, the Word's not in you. Listen, I can't keep finding new stuff every week.

Aha, I haven't talked about this in a long time. Let's try this. I mean, this is so basic.

God keeps coming back to the basics. Choose the old path. The old way that many saints have walked before.

The narrow road. Choose it. It doesn't change.

So along with this, what's the next thing I'd like to talk about? Our mental diet. Our mental diet. This is why many people are dying spiritually.

Why their faith is being depleted. Right here. Try this for a week.

Don't take my word for it. Take a media fast for a week. You're not going to come back and go, I don't know why I did that.

Next week you're going to come and say, unbelievable, why can't I do that more often? I mean, think about this. I don't think we were created to absorb all the whore and junk that's taking place in our world. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

We weren't created to do that. We don't need to know what's going on in Kentucky and Illinois and Florida and this and this. And we just walk around as a mental basket case.

Ready to fall apart. I don't want to get on a ferry now. Hundreds of bodies trapped.

Why can't they just jump into the ocean? I'm not taking a flight to the Philippines. They can't even find the black box. Hold on, hold on, hold on.

The cattle rancher. The cows, they're coming after me next. I know they're coming after my guns, my ammo.

No wonder I can't get ammo anywhere. We just walk around. Everything's on the news.

They're coming out. Oh, big brother's watching you. You're going down.

The chip's coming. The little 666 mark of the beast is coming. And oh, gosh, the whole world's falling apart.

I better just hide my kids in a cave somewhere. And all we do is just feed on this junk all day long. Look at Drudge Report.

Dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens of things you should not be filling your mind with. Because you don't leave there joyful and lifted up wanting worshiping God. You wonder, leave there going, where is God in all this mess? Because the mental junk house right here.

Or maybe it's just me. If it is, that's embarrassing, huh? My God, I look at the news on Facebook. I can't even buy fruit anymore.

Even organic fruit. Because Monsanto's bought all the seeds and he's going to try to kill everybody with these genetically modified organisms, these seeds. It's in the food.

And I want to tell people, well, you better start eating better. You have a Snickers and one hand a Diet Coke and you're worried about these seeds? Man. Wow.

Don't give me a lecture. Let me give you a lecture. Wow.

I just look at the news and, whoa, man, fear factor. But as I'm studying this, I wasn't created to absorb all this. I wasn't, I'm not supposed to know a ferry went down in a flight in the Philippines and Kentucky and there's three stabbings here and 14 shootings here.

I'm not supposed to know all that. I'm supposed to know locally and be aware and discern the times. I got it.

Don't write me off as some fanatical nutcase. But when those things start to draw me away from God and brings in fear factor into my home, something's wrong. So the devil loves all that media.

Think about it. Are you uplifted and built up spiritually after looking at the news or Fox or Facebook? Are you, darn it, why did I go on there again? Why did I go, why, why do I do that? Gotta find out, gotta find out. Everybody's texting me, did you hear about jars of clay? You know, the lead singer comes out and says, I don't think the Bible says anything about homosexuality.

Well, on those kind of, yeah, exactly. Well, hopefully the Christian Post emailed me and I wrote an article to offset that. It says, gay marriage, what does God say, not jars of clay? And what does his words say? And so I understand we have to be in our culture, make a difference, but at the same time, when we're inundating ourself with fear and murder and illicit sex and all this stuff, and we wonder why our faith is dwindling, I'll tell you there, start there.

Start there. I had a conversation with my mom last week too about we're seeing a lot of post-traumatic stress syndrome from the military, and that's some serious, serious things. But I'm also reminded that David, David who wrote the Psalms, saw babies slaughtered, saw babies thrown up against rocks, women cut open their children and moved, horrific things.

What was his cure? What was his cure? Worship and the Psalms. David, who saw more horror than most of our military will ever see, look to the Psalms. Now, I'm not dismissing whatsoever because it's debilitating, those things when you're traumatized, post-traumatic, after the trauma, it's stressful, and there are consequences.

I'm not minimizing that at all. But stop looking at the news and get into Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Let the Psalms heal your soul.

I mean, how can you sit there and read the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He will lead me besides still waters. He'll walk with me through the valley of the shadow of death.

He will rebuild me. He will comfort me. You're cleaning out the garbage that was going in.

I'm talking to people that want to build faith. If you don't want to build faith, you go right on out of here. You put on all that junk about vampires and the occult and witchcraft, and you do all that stuff, and you wonder why God is distant.

You wonder why you haven't talked about Jesus Christ in months to your friends. I'll tell you why. But I'm talking to those who want to build their faith.

They're tired of their faith, dying on the vine. Watch your mental diet. Turn that junk off and get it out and start worshipping God.

Transformed by the renewing of your mind. Paul says, Be not conformed to this world like clay, like a potter with clay. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

How, Paul? Philippians 4.8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are pure and noble and honest and upright, not dark and depressing and demonic and illicit and murderous and all these things, those things shouldn't even fill our mind. But what we're doing, we're filling our minds with all this stuff and we wonder, why is God distant? Why don't I have a passion for the Word of God? Why is shame irritating me every single sermon? What's going on here? As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. I could preach on this every night.

You realize that? As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Not surprised. Many of the marriages that are falling apart, the young guys I talk to, the young adults, what do they say? I'm hooked to porn.

If I hear that one more time, I'm hooked to porn. I've got all these weird thoughts in my mind. Yeah, you wonder why.

You're feeding the very thing you're called to flee. You're not going to have a healthy marriage and be sleeping with somebody else in your mind every night. It doesn't work that way.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. My faith is faltering. I don't know what's going on.

Look at what you're filling your mind with. We could end half the counseling appointments with this one issue. Get into the Word of God and take responsibility for your own actions.

Stop blaming other people. The devil made me do it. Well, you don't know who I'm married to.

Well, they need to change first. Isn't it interesting? Scripture never says just wait back until that other person changes. Never.

Never once. I don't like that part. I have to change.

I have to apologize. I have to say I'm sorry. I have to love my wife as Christ loved the church.

I have to be the initiator. I have to take the lower ground. I have to forgive.

I don't care what they do. God calls me to do it. If you would just do that, you would see the hearts of other people begin to move because everybody's waiting for everybody else to change.

They sit there and they look. Well, if he would do this. Well, if she would do this.

Well, somebody's got to start somewhere. And the Bible says it starts with you. I don't care about that other person.

Think about it. This is serious stuff. This is very serious stuff because people are walking away from the faith.

They're not completely just gone, but they're not in church much anymore. They're stagnant. They're dead spiritually.

The Bible, they try to read it, but it's too hard. And they put on worship music, but they'd rather put on Lady Gaga and all this other stuff and BET and MTV. They love those things.

Why? Because it's pulling the flesh. It's feeding the very things we want. That's the hard part.

The carnal nature wants these things. Why do I want to go click on Drudge Report? The Spirit doesn't want to. I don't want to.

I don't need to know what's going on. Russia's taking over Ukraine. How much of Ukraine? I wonder if Canada's next.

Putin's moving a battleship down by Cuba. Oh, Lord, what are we going to do? I need to get down to the gun shop and buy some more ammo. I need to try to get one of those illegal AR-15s.

That's my answer? That's what everybody thinks your answer is. You go on some of these Christian sites. Doom and gloom.

Prepare. I've got gas masks and an underground shelter to sell you for \$10,000. If I have to resort to that, you might as well take me now.

Because I'm called to do business until my boss returns. I'm called to preach and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and not fear these things. But I'm feeding the very things I'm called not to fear.

I mean, I don't think we realize how much of a trap the media is. If the devil is the prince of this world, the prince of the airways, the prince of whatever, he's just lulling everybody to sleep. Kumbaya.

Just keep watching that stuff. See, it's no big deal. Come on.

It's no big deal. Everybody's doing it. You've got to know what's going on in the world.

No, I don't. I don't think I do. Wow.

I mean, sometimes I go in there and this mom looks like she's demon possessed and she's had six babies and they're dead and boxes in her garage. I'm still not quite over that. Now it was last week.

What did I just read? What did I just read? Did she? And everybody's emailing. There's a serial rapist moving out to Lake Los Angeles. Oh, now that's what I need to hear.

Now, be proactive. Sign petitions. Got it.

I'm not saying that. But be very careful that you're not inundating yourself with the very thing we're called to remove from our life. Don't feed it.

Remove it. Number five, build on the rock despite the storms. You're going through storms.

You better build on the rock. Too many people bail out too soon or they pull themselves out of the storm. How is it 7 o'clock? I'm not even halfway through.

Randy, you told me you like Governor of Both Services because they're always different. That's why. Build on the rock despite the storms.

And I see many people, myself included, we bail out or we pull ourselves out of the storm. I'm not going through that. Let's put on Visa.

I'm not going through that. I'll send them an email. I'll get Discord.

And I pull myself out of the storm. But faith is, Lord, I'm just going to... Would you hold me through this storm? Would you carry me? Would you guide me? So once I go through the storm, now I can look back and say, He did it. He carried me.

He is my physician when I'm sick. He's my accountant when I'm in financial need. He's everything.

He's an all-sufficient Savior. As a matter of fact, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord raises up a standard against him. Oh, now He's my lifeguard.

He's everything through this storm. And sometimes they come to the church to bail them out of the storm. I say, no, maybe you need to be in that storm.

Let's not pay off your house payment or car payment just yet. Maybe there's a lesson to be learned. You ever heard the word enabler? I've enabled a lot of people.

And I've been enabled. Enabler allows someone to continue in a destructive lifestyle because they're not allowing God to let them run their course in it. So we pull them out.

We enable. Come up, man, brother, I've got to get a hotel with me and my wife and my kid. We're starving.

Oh, okay, here's 40 bucks. Right? Oh, what are you going to the liquor store for? I thought you needed to get a hotel. Enabler.

And God brings us through some difficult times. And sometimes parents just pull their kids out. Oh, I'll help you.

And they never learn. They're 30 years old living at home. They've never learned.

So be very careful. Storms are good if God is the foundation. Oh, man, I'm going to have to get to a lot of this later.

I do want to pick up on this one part. For which is easier to say your sins are forgiven you? Actually, I don't want to forget these. Number six, we must trust the outcome versus what we thought.

I think this is important. You must trust the outcome. When you're trusting in God and showing faith, trust the outcome, not what you thought would happen.

Because every time we think, oh, this is how something's going to happen, we like to put a little bit of extra money in there, a little bit extra this, not as much time. Here's how I see it unfolding. Well, that's not how it's unfolding.

It's going to take a while. But we want to jump start. We don't want to allow the process to run its course.

So trust God regardless of what you thought. Because I didn't think this would happen, did. I didn't think this, and it did.

I didn't think this, and you fill in the blank, right? So regardless of the outcome, trust that God's in control. And then meditate. Here's a great way to build faithfulness.

I'm sorry, a great way to build faith. Meditate on his faithfulness. Slow down.

Don't let the beauty of life pass you by. Slow down. Just the other day I was out with my daughters, and they're running around trying to catch butterflies.

Thinking, grown man, what am I supposed to do? I've got stuff to do. I'm busy. I've got to prepare a sermon for these people.

They're going to let me have it. I've got to keep doing it. But of course not.

Slow down. Relax. Look at God's faithfulness.

What has He given you? You've got a job. You live better than 95% of the world. You're going home to income full.

Do you know on the mission field, they don't even know what a refrigerator is. You mention a pantry. They're like, a closet for your food? I mean, look at how, just meditate on his faith.

That builds faith. The problem is we don't look at what God has done. We look at what God is not doing.

God is not doing this according to my calendar, according to what I want. But to build faith, we've got to look at His faithfulness and what He is doing. And of course, my favorite word, I can't avoid this one, repentance.

Repentance puts us back in the right direction. So if somebody has besetting sin, there's a besetting sin that we're holding on to, we're not letting go, that will kill your faith. You can't be involved in a sin that God is dealing with you on, continue it, and have strong faith.

Many people are shaking their heads tonight. That's a good thing. You know why? See, Lord, I repent.

Would you reestablish my faith? Would you rebuild my life? And I come to you, I worship you tonight. He restores the sick. He raises the dead.

He revives the broken. He strengthens the weak. He holds the feeble.

He rebuilds the brokenhearted. We have to look to Him. And I'll close with this.

In Ezekiel 37, there's an interesting story about the dry bones. I mean, it's a familiar passage. But God brought Ezekiel up into this valley of dry bones, and he looked all over this valley, and he saw it was very dry.

Very dry bones. And God said to Ezekiel, can these bones live? Can these bones live? And Ezekiel said, well, Lord, you know. You know.

And he said, prophesy. Ezekiel, speak the word of God to these dry bones. And as he spoke the word of God to these dry bones, they could hear everything coming back together.

Oh, dry. And I was thinking, oh, dry congregation. Oh, dry church.

Oh, dry Christians. Just speak the word of the Lord again. Look to Him.

Allow Him to rebuild those. Our bones are dried up, and our hope is gone, they said. And he said, no, this is the nation of Israel.

Your hope is not gone. And he breathed the breath of life into them and rose them up again. So no matter what, the dryness of our lives, dry congregation, dry church in our nation, we need the revival like never before.

We need God to revive our spirits, revive our hearts. Look to Him and look to Him alone. That's how you build faith.

You look to Him during worship. You look to Him throughout the day. That's the only way to revive those dry bones in our lives.

It's interesting, at this story I was thinking about that the man, right, he had to take his bed. And he took his bed. He was carrying his bed.

And you think, why didn't he just leave his bed there? He's carrying this, look at, this is embarrassing, it's a reminder. He's carrying his bed. And many people, I see all the time, they're carrying that reminder, whether it's divorce or, you fill in the blank again, I like to say that I guess, but you know what it is.

I don't need to sit here and listen. Divorce, you've had an extramarital affair, you've had addictions, whatever it is, you know, this man, he's still carrying the bed. And so, but why is he still carrying the bed? But you have to remember, before he met Jesus, the bed was carrying him.

You see the difference there? Before he met Christ, the bed was carrying him. So you will carry around things that have happened. There are circumstances, and there are consequences for our actions, and we will carry these things around.

But don't allow those to prohibit your faith. Allow your faith to grow. And look to Jesus, who rebuilt this man, and he'll rebuild you.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/_LBJt1DzGU4.mp4

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/faith-the-anchor-of-life/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net