

Full Throttle (Revelation 1)

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman's sermon 'Full Throttle' explores the messages of Revelation, emphasizing readiness for Christ's return and the relevance of its teachings today.

Duration: 50:02

Scripture: Revelation 1:1

Topics: "The Role of the Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Readiness"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgency of being spiritually prepared for Christ's return as he begins a series on the seven churches in Revelation. He discusses the various interpretations of Revelation but focuses on its relevance to contemporary issues like personal struggles and societal decay. Idleman encourages believers to seek a deeper relationship with God through the Holy Spirit, highlighting the importance of prayer and spiritual readiness in the face of persecution. He stresses that true faith is demonstrated through perseverance and a heart aligned with God's will, urging the church to be 'full throttle' in their faith and actions.

Transcript

The message this morning is from the book of, you ready? Revelation. Revelation. The title is Full Throttle.

And I'm going to do a series, I don't know how long, entitled A Survey of the Seven. We're going to be talking about the seven churches. Boy, oh boy.

On Revelation, let me just tell you this up front. I've got a study Bible, and in the study Bible, it gives eight different scenarios. Pre-millennial, post-millennial, mid-this, post-this, amillennial, amillennial, preterism, and all these different things and different views on the book of Revelation.

And part of my challenge has been this. As wonderful it is to know what the bulls are, we've got marriages falling apart. As wonderful it is to be able to dissect the Babylon, the woman who rides the wild beast, and all these things.

We've got people addicted to different things, and marriages crumbling, families disintegrating. So I don't think I'm going to spend the next year in Revelation. There's just so much more on my heart in different areas, but I do want to get through at least the first three chapters.

I'm not sure how long that's going to take. And part of the mystery around the book of Revelation centers around this. The disciples, believers, we were always called, always supposed to be ready.

Ready for what? For His return, for Jesus returning. So if it was 2,000 years ago, and if it's today, we're supposed to be ready. You don't have a book that was written just for them, you have a book that also applies to us.

Now if you take the historical context of many of the things that are going on, you will see that a lot of it was written to the believers of that day. But then there are overlapping principles that apply to us as well. And it also breaks down to this question.

Is the book of Revelation, many of you have read it, I'm sure. If not, go for it, and just try to put all that together. Make sure you have the Old Testament next to you, because there's a lot of Old Testament imagery that's going on there.

But is it literal, or is it figurative? Well, are the bulls literal? Are the trumpets literal? Is the beast literal? Are the lambs, the Lamb of God, is it a literal lamb? Locust, is it a literal locust? A bottomless pit? Is it a literal 1,000-year reign? Is there a chained devil with a big chain on him? Does John really eat a book? Is it a number 666? So you can see that when people ask this question, we take the Bible absolutely literally when it calls for literal interpretation. But obviously Jesus isn't a lamb. He was the Passover lamb in Old Testament imagery again.

He's a foreshadowing. The Old Testament Passover lamb was a foreshadowing of what's to come in Christ. So that's why he's called the Lamb of the world.

The lamb that was slain before the foundation of the world. The sacrifice. And you have, say, bulls, for example.

We know that in the Old Testament, bulls were what? The cup and wrath and indignation of God being poured out. Jesus coming on a cloud. Is he riding a cloud like a cowboy would ride a horse? Or in the Old Testament, clouds are often dark clouds, often God's judgment, God's coming judgment, especially on pagan nations such as Babylon.

So it would take quite a while to sit and try to, and just so you know, I don't hold to a strong, you know, oh, this is it, without a shadow of a doubt. I see the difference. I see what would be called pre-millennial, pre-rapture, and how the church that some believe is raptured out before the wrath of God.

Others believe in the mid-tribulation, that we are taken out mid-tribulation or post-tribulation after the wrath of God. And he pours it out, but he spares his children. And then there's problems with the rapture as well.

I mean, you just read the Bible, literal interpretation, and I can plug some holes or put holes in many different theological beliefs, and that's why there are different types of belief systems. Many of you have heard of R.C. Sproul. Look at what he believes.

Look at John MacArthur. Look at Dr. Michael Brown. Look at Jack Hayford.

You're going to get different views because there isn't a clear cut, this is when it's going to happen, this is why it's going to happen, and we just kind of come to this book with a lot of questions. But sometimes there is a lot of certainty as well. We know that Christ is coming again.

We know that he's going to judge. We know that out of his mouth goes a sword, a literal sword, or a figurative sword, that he's going to strike the nations. He's going to rule the nations with the rod of iron.

He's going to tread the winepress and the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Is he really going to be stepping on grapes? But that imagery there is stepping on grapes, that crushing, treading the winepress and crushing those grapes and having the wine poured out. So it's Old Testament imagery many times.

It's a very interesting study. But I'm thinking, is this how I want to spend the next ten months here at the church, going through bowls and trumpets and judgments? And many of you say, yes, please do. The reason people want to know is, Shane, what do you believe? That's why I get emails once a month.

What is your take on the book of Revelation? What do you believe? Is there a millennium coming, a thousand-year reign of Christ? Or are you amillennial? That's more of a figurative example of what's going on in church history. And all these different questions, because people want to know where you're at with that. And I feel my calling, West Side Christian Fellowship, is to focus on what we do know more than where all these different questions are leading.

So that's probably what I'm going to do, is spend some time in the first three chapters. And it often comes up, when was the book of Revelation written? When was it written? Well, you have one side that says before A.D. 70, when Titus conquered Jerusalem. And if it's before A.D. 70, then a lot of Revelation would fit towards the conquering of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by Titus.

Many say it's A.D. 95, much, much later. And then that would point to future events. So you see the challenge, right? Because nobody knows when it was written.

There's good speculation and there's some good guessing involved, but we just don't know. Where was the book of Revelation written? On the island of Patmos by John. He was exiled there.

He was suffering for his faith. Why was the book of Revelation written? Well, I'm glad you asked. Now we can read it.

I'm going to begin in Revelation 1. You can follow along. We'll have it up here as well. New King James Version.

The revelation of Jesus Christ. So we see that Jesus is revealing things to us. Which God gave Him to show His servants.

Now isn't that interesting? God gives Christ a revelation to show His servants. It's interesting. Things which must shortly take place.

What does it mean? Things that must shortly take place? And He sent and signified it by His angels to His servant John. Who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ. To all things that John saw.

So Jesus is revealing some things to John. John is going to write down everything he sees. Blessed is he who reads those and who hear the words of this prophecy.

And keep those things which are written in it. For the time is near. So this is one reason why one group would take Revelation more in the context of it.

Much of it already happening. Because the time is short. It's coming near.

It's not 2,000 years from now. It's when John wrote the book of Revelation. Others would say, well, no, hold on a minute.

Does this mean that prophecy is going to begin shortly? And it's ongoing effects? That's what some would say on this side. They would say, no, that just means that prophecy is going to begin. And it's ongoing effects over the course of human history.

But this side would say, right, or the prophecies are going to be fulfilled very soon. So here's the difference. Is it a progressive fulfillment? Or is it an immediate? I'm sorry, this side is immediate.

Is it an immediate fulfillment? These are being fulfilled. They've already been fulfilled. It's immediate.

Or is this progressive? Now you see the divide between great brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. And my concern is I've seen churches almost split over things like this. I've seen friendships end over things like this.

I've seen words such as heretical be used if somebody doesn't quite agree with your theological persuasion on this. That's just sad, no matter how you look at it. So that's why there is a difference.

It's really, is it past or is it future? Is it a local event that happened in Jerusalem? Or is it something worldwide to come? Obviously it was written to what? To prepare them. Persecution was, is going to be in full throttle. Persecution is coming.

John is actually in tribulation on the island of Patmos. Something is coming. So he's writing to these believers.

So he says, greeting. This is actually the greeting to the seven churches. John, verse four, to the seven churches which are in Asia.

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come. And from the seven spirits who are before his throne. There aren't seven spirits, many suggest.

I would agree with them. Seven is often a number of completion. Six is a number of falling short.

You've got six, six, six. You've got seven, seven, seven. Which number do you like better? Seven is a number of completion, perfection.

God uses numbers very interestingly. If you've ever listened to say Chuck Missler or other people who study numbers of the Bible. It's amazing.

Some of the mathematical. Some things I don't quite understand. They get a little too carried away.

But many times when you look at the numbers in the Bible, it's amazing how God put everything together. So the seven spirits. It means the completion of God.

The spirit before God and his throne. And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness. Jesus is the faithful witness.

The firstborn from the dead. And the ruler over the kings of the earth. So John is clarifying.

He is the firstborn of the resurrection. He died. He rose again.

He's the firstborn of that resurrection. Coming back to life. And he is the ruler over the kings of the earth.

Not one ruler. Not one among many. He is what? The ruler of heaven and earth.

And also, it's interesting. When he says to write this letter. Write this to the churches that are in this area.

There are seven churches. It's going to be a greeting to seven churches. But in my opinion, again, it's not just written to seven churches individually.

There is five areas of concern and two areas of praise that Jesus is giving to the churches as a whole. That's why we can still take these letters and look at them and see how they apply to our life. Because we have to remember they were way up in Asia.

Right? Asia. I'll show you a map in a little bit. Not right now.

But Jerusalem was way down here. Jerusalem. Judea.

Samaria. The church was built. The church of Jerusalem.

Then it started heading north, north, north. Up into Asia. Up into Greek.

The Greek. Boy, lots of Croatia. I just said Greek.

Italy was over there a little bit more. So the church is up in this whole area. So it's not necessarily just seven churches only this is applicable to.

It's writing to a whole region that has overlapping application to all the churches. Five churches we're not doing well. Two we're doing well.

And this is very important because it applies to our lives personally. If you want to know what Jesus thinks about the church, we're going to get into that. Are you curious at all? What Jesus thinks about the church? And you're going to find it's interesting.

It's not one song. Announcements. Three songs.

Thirty minute sermon. One song. Then let's hurry up.

Let's get to the next service. Oh, we might want to throw communion in there. Bop, bop, bop, bop, bop, bop, bop.

We did a church service. He's got more to say about the character of the heart. Because out of the issues of the heart flow everything.

You get the heart right. You get the church filled with the Spirit of God. Wanting to seek God.

Wanting to pray. And it will fall into place. And it might not look like a normal cookie cutter type church.

You might walk in. What's going on here? This is a little bit different. This is not what I'm used to.

That church down the street doesn't do it like that. My old church doesn't do it like that. So let's see what Jesus has to say about the churches.

I mean, wouldn't you want to know? I mean, I'm just dangling the carrot for next week. Right? I'm going to throw that carrot out there and roll it in. Continuing.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood. I just, all week, just loved us. He washed us from our sins in His own blood.

The blood of Christ washes. It cleanses. And John is reinforcing that.

And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The reason they say that is once we have a relationship with Christ, we are what's known often as grafted into the kingdom of God. We are children of God. So we sit in that place of spiritual authority.

You've heard king kids, right? My father's a king. And it's part of that kingdom dynamic. But also priests.

This is interesting. New Testament believers are called priests. That's why we disagree with Roman Catholicism in going to a priest to intercede on behalf of me to the Father.

You can go boldly into the throne of grace and petition the Father because we have Christ who intercedes on behalf of us. There's no need for a separate priest to go to Him first then to God. And it's interesting.

You'll find people, I've got to get to the priest this week. I've got to get to the priest this week. They go to the priest, they confess to a man, and then they leave.

Oh, I'm good. Stop by the liquor store. I'll go next week.

And it's never this. You always see priesthood of the believer. The priesthood of the believer.

Christ is our high priest. We go boldly to Him as intercessor. I'm so glad He's on our side.

I mean, if you think about that for a minute, it's not Satan and Jesus going back and forth trying to find out who's going to win. Who's got more power? Who's got more authority? Satan's got me today. Jesus, come and get me.

And there's this battle. He sits in a position of authority. He is authority.

He rules over kingdoms. He has dominion over the earth. He sits on the right hand of the Father.

So we just go to Him. We bypass Satan. We just go to Him.

Sorry, you stay down there. You make my enemies my footstool. You can do that to Satan.

You're not always on the run. You can get him on the run. I'm going to talk about this a minute.

I got up at 2 this morning. I wrote down a whole bunch of stuff I'm going to share with you. And then my phone switched to 1 a.m. And I got a load of just... It was 1.59. I'm looking.

Now it's 1. But I just started writing some things down I'm going to share with you in a little bit. Again, we're not cookie cutter, right? We want to follow what Jesus is doing. More so, we want to do what the Holy Spirit is doing through Christ.

And that's what a lot of people forget. God the Father sent His Son to die for us. To take our place.

But then Jesus sends the Holy Spirit. See, we love to look to the Father. But we neglect His work, the Holy Spirit on earth.

Changing us. Conforming us to the image of Christ. Filling us with His Spirit so we can worship.

The reason many people have a problem with worshiping God is they're looking to the Father without being filled with the Holy Spirit. It's a vital, important role in the life of a church. Now if you get too crazy, what happens? Don't worry, I'm not going to talk about the Holy Spirit again.

But if you get too crazy, it's just bizarre. But if you neglect the work of the Holy Spirit, you have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Word. I have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Word.

Not filled with the Spirit of God. So it's a very important point on that. So to Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. This is the Gospel.

He loves us enough to tell us the truth. It's important to reinforce our faith often. Isn't it? Don't you need that reinforcement some days? You're feeling a little bit low.

The gas tank's empty. You need that reinforcement of the Gospel. Verse 7. Behold, He is coming with clouds.

Is He going to be riding on a cloud like a cowboy? Remember? He's coming with the clouds. And every eye will see Him. And even they who pierced Him.

And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, amen. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

It's interesting. I want to show you an Old Testament imagery here from Isaiah 19. One.

A prophecy, it says, given against Egypt. See, the Lord rides on a swift cloud and is coming to Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before Him.

And the hearts of the Egyptians melt with fear. That cloud they represent. Because I guess we take it for granted now.

But when you would see the thunderclouds rolling in thousands of years ago, I mean, it doesn't. Now we just go into our comfortable little homes and look at the weather channel. We see what's going on.

But back then, can you imagine that just a nice, beautiful day, and here come this rolling, thunderous clouds. And God would often use that imagery to speak of His majesty and of His wrath and of His judgment. Verse 9. And I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation.

So He says, I'm your companion and I'm your brother in the what? In the tribulation. And the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. Why was He on the island? Was Christianity very popular back then? No.

No, it's not getting very popular now, is it, either? See, one thing we've missed in the American church is we don't quite understand persecution. Persecution always came with belief many times back then. You believed there was some type of persecution coming, that it just came with it.

There was suffering. See, we read the Bible, you hear about suffering, and oh, that I would know Him in the fellowship of His suffering, Paul said. And that suffering often drives us closer to Christ.

Verse 10. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Uh-oh, you ready to get a little controversial? I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice as a trumpet saying, I am the Alpha and the Omega.

That's basically Greek letters of the alphabet. The beginning and the end. The first and the last.

And what you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches, which are in Asia, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea. So Jesus is saying, or John is saying, I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and God spoke to me. And God told me certain things.

And it's often funny, nowadays if somebody says that, we say they're weird, but back then it was okay. You know, you're spending time with God, you're fasting, you're worshiping, God speaks things to your heart, and you share it with somebody, like, oh, you're getting a little out there. That's not comfortable Christianity.

God doesn't do that anymore. But we believe that God is the same yesterday, today, and evermore. But we also look, does it line up with Scripture? Because I'm worried about those people who have a vision or a dream every month.

And you look at the charismatic circles sometimes. There's 30,000 prophets saying 30,000 different things. Judgment is coming.

Revival is coming. Well, what is it? This is going to happen? No, that's going to happen. My point is, don't get caught up in that.

Find out what is Jesus Christ saying to you every day in his word. That's the key. And then God will speak to you, he'll show you things.

I've shared this many times before. In 19, I think it was 2001, I moved back home. I was with my mom.

I can still remember the room. I had this dream of just walking out of something like this, walking out and just seeing a whole sea of people, and I'm going to speak to them. And I woke up and thought, what in the world? There's no way that's going to happen.

But God's showing. So when it begins to happen, oh, okay, you confirmed that, didn't you? You showed me things. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man the things that God wants to do for those who love him.

See, I can love Scripture, but when God begins to paint that picture, I mean, I could ruin you this morning to show you what he showed me with this church. Thousands of people worshipping him someday, raising their hands, singing and praising God. Oh, that didn't get an amen.

All right. Well, I'm just saying, maybe you're so just taken in by the Word of God, I don't know. But he shows us things like that.

But see, you don't get weird, right? You don't get, oh, out there. You just, okay, let's take it in. Because not every dream is from God.

Not every vision is God's vision because the flesh is in there. The devil likes to throw things in there. The world, we have wrong desires, wrong nature.

So I've never lead my life based on anything like that. It doesn't happen very often. But God will show things sometimes to his people.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. But before I talk about that, I think it's important to look, just so you get an idea. The seven churches, we're going to put a map up there.

The seven churches that are in Asia. See, way down here, that's Egypt. That's Israel.

Jerusalem. So the Gospel spread all the way up here to Asia. So you have the seven churches.

And guess where John is? Right there. Yeah, in the water. But I think it's important to talk about this for a minute.

Because people do ask this question. And it does come up now and then. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day.

Well, in the Spirit is led by the Spirit. We look at Acts. We studied Acts already.

Paul said he was pressed in the Spirit. I was purposed in the Spirit. John 4, Jesus said, I think it was Jesus, talks about worshipping in God in spirit and in truth.

So see, this is kind of when a church brings up this phrase, people are like, oh, I hope he doesn't get weird right now. I really like this church. And I hope they don't get, I hope they don't start talking in some language and start getting bizarre.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day. Let me show you the other side of this. Sometimes it's easier to see the negative.

I was in the flesh that day. We all know what that means, right? I was in the, I'm so sorry, my flesh spoke. My flesh got angry.

I was so messed up that day. I wasn't doing good. I was in the flesh.

My choices, my attitude, my character, my demeanor, I was in the flesh that day. So when it says I was in the Spirit that day, when you're in the Spirit, there's direction, there's wisdom. I'm pretty sure that John was worshipping on that island.

I'm sure he might have even missed a meal or two. We don't know how he got the meals because normally people have to bring you food and clothing in those types of prisons. They wouldn't, it's not like the system today.

Three square meals and TV and it's more comfortable than many people that live in other nations, other worlds. So we have this picture here of John being in prison. He was, I'm speculating here, may have been fasting, worshiping.

He's in the Spirit. His mind is in tune with the things of God. His heart is in tune with the things of God.

And when you're in the Spirit, it leads us down the best path. It leads us down the best path. And many people might be wondering, how do I, how am I in the Spirit? How am I filled with the Spirit? Well, it first begins with the song we sang.

I surrender. I surrender. I surrender everything.

I surrender my agenda, my time, my resources, my motives. Lord, what do you want to do in me? I just, I give you everything. I surrender.

And you look to the Word. You look to worship. You look to godly counsel.

You wait on God. And you're led of the Spirit. You're in the Spirit.

You're making decisions that line up with the Spirit. And if the culture's going one direction, often the Spirit's going the other direction. Isn't that the case? So led of the Spirit is often doing things that don't line up with the culture.

It's not listening to the culture. And sometimes, well, I shouldn't say I crack up, because that's probably disrespectful, because I don't crack up. But I just, when I hear things like, you know, Harvey Weinstein in the news and Kevin Spacey, and I'm like, what do you think? They're promoting the very things they are accused of.

They're putting it on the big screen to influence a nation. You don't think they themselves have been taken over by that corruption in their hearts? As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. That's not led of the Spirit.

That's what? Led of the flesh. In the flesh, doing the things the flesh craves, what the flesh desires. So to be in the Spirit is to be led by the Spirit.

So when John was in the Spirit, I believe, I'm going to go out on a limb here, you can say I was in the Spirit at church this morning. Anger was put at bay. No bitterness.

No envy. I wasn't mad, gossiping. I just felt the joy of the Lord.

I was worshiping. I was in the Spirit. I'll just give you a little secret.

That's what I pray just about every Sunday. Lord, I've got to be in the Spirit. Your Word has got to come alive.

I've got to empty myself of myself. I need to be led of you, directed of you, so I can help pierce the heart and challenge the heart and be led of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit. It's interesting.

We want to be filled, but we don't want to suffer. Do this sometime. Look at all the suffering in the Bible.

Suffering, filled mightily. Suffered, filled mightily. Persecution, filled mightily.

Suffered. Persecuted for the faith. Filled with the Spirit of God.

You don't often see prideful, arrogant people full of themselves filled with the Spirit of God. So the next time you get upset at suffering, you might want to embrace it. Now, I know that's hard.

Just saying it's hard, isn't it? Oh, Shane, did you say what I thought you said? But when you suffer for your faith, you don't have to get the last word in. You don't have to be right all the time. There's a suffering that goes.

And we're so blessed. I mean, talking about suffering in America is a little ironic, isn't it? I mean, are you reading what's going on in the news under ISIS control? I mean, it's that suffering. Unless you've seen your little child murdered in front of your eyes for your faith, I don't want to hear about you didn't get a close parking spot.

The Lord's after me. The devil's after me today. I'm getting phone calls on my cell phone.

Too many of this and too many of that. The devil's trying to attack my marriage. And all these things that we think is suffering, and I don't want to minimize those things at all, but I also want to put things in perspective.

We want the wisdom, but do we want the pain? We want the wisdom, right? I want the wisdom of John, but do we want the pain? I want the direction, but do you want the persecution? Here's the interesting thing about persecution. It will purify you. It purifies you.

My wife will tell you just this morning I got not a good e-mail from somebody who knew me 20-some years ago, and they're still chiding and rebuking. And who, you know, this whole thing about God's Word and different things, and it's just what we would call persecution, but to me it's like, no, that's not persecution. That's just life in America.

And it's coming, and I hope we're prepared, because as they often say, if you will not live for him today, you will not die for him tomorrow. When the heat is turned up, here's the truth. Here's the God-honest truth.

When the heat is turned up, those who have a very weak faith run. They denounce their Savior. I mean, if they're not living for him now, when that heat is turned up, when that job is taken away, when these things start to get difficult, they're going to begin, oh, maybe Jesus isn't that important, because that's why they call it the refiner's fire.

All those impurities begin to come to the surface, and true, true believers persevere through persecution. That's actually one of the best ways you're going to be able to tell, and personally I believe when the Bible talks about a great falling away, depending on what your theological position is again, a great falling away, it's going to be a great falling away from truth. We've never seen such a divide in our nation before, have we? Trump sure didn't fix anything.

There's a huge divide in our nation. There's a huge divide, and it's not improving. It's actually getting worse and getting worse.

Moral upheavals, battlegrounds are being drawn. Things are being said that are alarming. It never got away with 20, 30 years ago.

We're seeing this coming type of persecution. That's one of the reasons that Fox News had me come out to New York, is they said, Shane, this is going to be a controversial issue someday, not being able to preach what the Bible says about Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians and homosexuality, not being able to preach about that again. When the flames turned up, do we cave in, or do we stand for what we know to be true? See, there will be a great falling away.

Falling away from what? From the truth. What will bring that falling away? Great persecution, because that's the best. You'll cut a clear-cut line right down the middle, right now, when that happens.

For example, if it were to happen and somebody came in and said, Denounce Christ, or you will die. How many would say, See ya, I'm out of here. Granted, I don't like this scenario.

Your thoughts of your kids are going through your mind, but that's where the rubber meets the road. Because that's what would cause the martyrs. There's martyrs who would be burned at the stake, tied up, bound, and they would still be praising Christ.

And these people in their rows would be, Recant, recant. I'm giving you one last to recant. They would yell, You recant, you wash, wash tomb.

You're going to spend eternity in hell. Let that flame go. Where does that come from? How can you deny Him? I think it was Polycarp, actually, who was being burned at the stake.

He said, I've walked with Him these, how many years? 90 years. I can't deny Him now. See, that's where it really is going to make a difference, and the faith comes to light.

And here's a mistake I think many of us make when it comes to being filled with the Holy Spirit. This is probably one of my top topics. I love revivals.

I love reading about the Holy Spirit working, because without that, it's just a social club. And I've seen a lot of churches where we just come in kind of like robots. We've got the one song.

We've got the announcements. We've got the quick message. We've got the couple songs.

See you next week. And that's not church. That's not a healthy, vital, living church filled with the Spirit of God.

So one of my desires is revival. One of mine is prodigal sons, wayward daughters, repentance. You know, you hear it all the time here, right? But this one is, here's where I see many people make the mistake on this issue of the Holy Spirit and being led by God.

They say, well, I'm still here. I mean, I have a job. I'm at church.

I'm married. I mean, but many are going through the motions. They're going through the motions.

That's why they can't wait for the Dodger game to come on, but they have a hard time getting to church. I mean, when you wake up and you're like, I can't wait for church. I can't wait to worship.

See, it's a different, you're being led by one or the other, led by the Spirit or led by the flesh. And it's true. They say, let me see your checkbook.

Let me see your calendar, and I'll tell you what you're led by. But isn't that true? How we spend our time, how we spend our money tells us what is leading us. And so the only reason I bring this up, the only reason, I never bring this up as a kind of mocking, ha, ha, ha, ha.

You know, you're not filled with the Spirit, most of you or some of you. My hope, what drives me, what gets me up in the morning and gets me praying is I want people, I want you to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit full throttle. You know what full throttle is, right? They used to call it pedal to the metal, back when cars had metal flooring.

But so many people are just on idle. Just put it in neutral, let me coast down the street. The Bible is a book of full throttle.

Think about this. The early church, where did Christ go? Oh, he's gone. He just said, hold on, go and wait.

Wait for the promise of the Father. I'm sending you the Holy Spirit. And when he comes, the whole room was lit up.

It said the clothes of tongues of fire came down the fire, the manifest presence of God. And they left here the same. Peter that denied him was now standing before an entire audience and said, You put Christ on the cross through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Everywhere they went, healings, deliverance, being set free. They lived the heartbeat of Christ because of the Holy Spirit. That's what I want.

I want full throttle. Listen. Right? Here's what I like to say at this point.

You can call me a Jesus freak. You can call me fanatical. You can call me radical.

But that's biblical Christianity. And many people are not full throttle. I want you to get so agitated, you go home and you get upset at me.

I didn't like what he had to say today. Believe it or not, I hear that quite often. You know, I started coming.

I really didn't like what he had to say initially. Oh, thank you for telling me that. But the more God kept working on my heart and the more I found myself back again.

I don't like what this guy is. And I'm back. Where is that coming? It's that war of the flesh and the spirit.

Right? Isn't it the war of the flesh and the spirit? Oh, goodness. I'll get to this a little bit next week. But I'm going to fast forward to verse 17.

And when I saw him, when John saw Christ, I fell at his feet as dead. Listen, these guys I see on TV and these things that, oh, God's visiting us. And when you see God, you fall and your face is dead.

When you see, when you truly have a glimpse of who, ask Moses. He prayed, show me your glory. He said, I can't or you will explode.

Hide your face in the crevice. Let me walk by. And look at the backs.

Show me your glory. Anybody, Joshua fell down. Isaiah, oh, Isaiah.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord high and lifted up. The train of his entire row filled the temple. He said, I'm not worthy.

I'm a man of unclean lips. I fell down in the presence of God. Paul knocked off his horse, whatever he's riding.

Who are you, Lord? Fell down in the presence of God. When you truly, when you truly have an experience with God, you are radically changed. He said, who are you, Lord? What do you want me to do? He fell down on his feet as dead.

He said, when God truly visits a place, I wish you would read some of the revival books I read. You would go to bed starving for more of God. He would hit a prayer meeting and they would be in the same spot at six in the morning.

It started at six at night. Oh, that's weird change. No, it's just weird to those who aren't filled with the Spirit.

Because when you experience the presence of God, it's actually not weirdness, it's boldness that results. It's not wavering, it's solid. Actually, the word dynamite comes from dunamis, power, in the Greek.

You shall receive power in the Holy Spirit, what? Comes upon you. Full throttle. I like what Jim Symbola said.

I recommended his book, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire. Even if you read it ten years ago, read it again. We're reading it as a church.

And you know, we had the pleasure of visiting there on a Tuesday night prayer service and worship service a couple weeks ago. I told Morgan, boy, if we could put this in a bottle and fly it back. But you can't.

See, it's the same Spirit. Holy Spirit's not going, oh, that's Brooklyn, they're better. He's looking.

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 know this is hitting a lot of you, because half of this is not even in my sermon. I always get upset, I'm like, we're not going to remember any of this for the second service.

So you better always come to the first, right? But Jim Symbolist said this, only a visitation of the Holy Spirit will burn the holiness of God in you. That's why the enemy is so busy at trying to make what I just said look weird. A visitation of the Holy Spirit? Manifestation? What is this? It's all biblical terms.

Do you know the word manifestation is in the Bible? It just means God revealing himself. God visits his people. See, if you're solid, because that's why I say I don't care how high you jump, I want to know how straight you walk when you come down.

If you're solid, you're filled with the Spirit, you're grounded in the word of God, this cannot get weird. In what the Bible considers weird. Now when God visits a place and hits a prayer meeting, it's not very comfortable.

I mean, those who are just there to just kind of check it off their list will just, oh, I'm out of here. I don't want to stay and pray for hours because of the Spirit of God. I can't even explain it.

I don't even know what I'm trying to do. It's this yearning that just, oh, Father. It's just this pouring out, the tears and this pouring out and worshipping and worshipping.

And you just can't get enough of God because he's pouring into you. He's beginning to reshape that pain that you felt. He's beginning to take away that character deficit.

He's beginning to show you his love and his glory. And who's in a hurry for that? Father sent the Son, the Son sent the Holy Spirit. You cannot discipline the flesh.

See, so many of us are trying too hard to discipline the flesh. Oh, he got me again. I'm just going to try harder tomorrow.

See, any time you remove something, you have to add something else. You remove the things of the flesh, you add the Holy Spirit. Because if not, what did Jesus say? The demonic realm goes around.

He goes back, oh, he finds that house all swept and clean, nothing in it. And he brings back seven more. And the last state of that man is worse than the first.

So are you full throttle? Or is the engine not even on? And I want to close, of course, when I close, I want to take you back to Christ. Everything must go back to Christ. You submit, we surrender to him.

Really, the Holy Spirit points us to Christ. The Holy Spirit in me, I don't go around preaching the Holy Spirit. Isn't that interesting? I go around preaching Christ because the Holy Spirit's work in my heart, in your heart.

So we need to go back to Christ, back to this power of the Holy Spirit, back to full throttle. And I remember when prayer at church was full throttle. Do you remember that? I've talked about this before.

I'm just going to show you because you probably don't believe me. Chicken scratch. Two in the morning, chicken scratch.

I hope it's from God because if not, we're in trouble. Full throttle prayer. Genesis, he spoke the universe.

He holds the seven seas in the palm of his hand. Exodus, he split the sea and annihilated the most powerful army on the face of the planet. Numbers, the earth swallowed up Moses' enemies because he prayed.

Joshua said, son, stand still. And it stood still. King Solomon prayed for wisdom and God answered his prayer overwhelmingly.

Elisha called down fire from heaven. Elisha, his protege, raised the dead to life. Ezra brought back worship to Israel because they prayed.

Nehemiah, what did Nehemiah do? He overcame all obstacles and rebuilt the wall. Job even said, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. Man of prayer petitioning God.

Hezekiah, this one blows my mind. Hezekiah came to God and he prayed. And you know what God did? The death angel flew over the entire Assyrian army of 185,000.

That's a rose bowl filled twice. I don't know who you know, but the God I pray to can go like this and 185,000 can fall. That's why he said 100 of you will what? Put 10,000 to flight when you're filled with the spirit of God.

When you're filled with that passionate prayer. Psalm said, he who guards Israel will never sleep. He will never slumber.

Hey, where does your help come from? Look to the hills. That's where my help comes from. This is the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

He inclines his ear to the broken hearted. Can you picture that? God actually, is that a cry? Is that a cry I hear of desperation? I run to weakness. I run to the prayers of my people who are weak and say, God, we need you.

Psalm also says, Psalm says that they cried in their trouble and he heard them. And he delivered them from their destruction. Listen folks, ask him.

Ask him. If Jesus said, whoever asks shall receive. What are we doing? What are we doing? Why does prayer get a little footnote at the end of the sermon? Well, we got it five minutes.

Let's try to squeeze it in. What is that? Ask him and you shall receive. If ear has not heard, eye has not seen, neither has it entered into the heart of man.

The what? The good things the Lord has for those who love him. He cannot fail. God cannot fail.

Have you ever thought about that? He says, try me, test me in this. You cannot fail when I am with you. God cannot fail the prayers of his people.

And this might be a good time to remind you that prayer is not one of many weapons. It is the weapon. The weapon of our warfare is not carnal.

It's what? It's mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds. I got a little excited. I'm just going to tell you up front.

I looked up, pulled down in the Greek. It means to demolish, to destroy. Hold on.

To hunt down and to overcome. Wait a minute. The devil is after me.

Did you realize? No, when you pull down, you're after him. He is running from you. It just says it right here.

Hunt down. We are called to hunt down the enemy. Oh, you're coming after my family? Guess what? The hot shot, not on my watch.

I'm going to hunt you down. I'm going to annihilate you. I'm going to overcome.

How are you going to do that? I'm going to get on my face before almighty God, and I'm going to pray until he hears that's what I'm going to do. I told you I came in my preaching clothes today. I just could not believe it.

I almost just had to run at three in the morning. Hunt down. Hunt down.

Do you see that? Pull down strongholds. I'm going to hunt you down. Maybe it's me, but you know you walk around like the devil is after me.

He's going to get me. He's hunting me. He's hunting me.

He's hunting my kids. What are we going to do? Oh. When you're filled with the spirit of God and Christ is on your side, prayer is your weapon.

He runs for cover. He hates worship. He hates prayer.

God's not in heaven saying, let's make a deal. He's saying, this is the deal. If my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face.

See, fear used to grip God's enemies. I'm just reading the Old Testament. Fear used to grip God's enemies.

Is that the children of God? Do you know what they did to Pharaoh? Do you know what they did to the Egyptians? Is that the children of God? Joshua comes in the city. Are you God's people? Gideon's about ready to overthrow an army. The Gideon, the sword of Gideon, it's nothing but the sword.

They feared God's people. Now it's the opposite. We walk in that fear.

Just a mind-blowing concept. ISIS, North Korea, they don't even control their next breath. God, God, Daniel says, the God who holds your very breath in the palm of his hands and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.

And Daniel rebuked the king. So what reverses all of this? Returning to God. Returning to God and worshiping.

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