

Gifts Are Not Always Served On Silver Platters (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of stewarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit with caution and discernment. It highlights the need for grounding in God's Word while being open to the supernatural manifestations of the Spirit. The speaker addresses the divide between conservatives and charismatics, urging for unity and understanding. The message concludes with a call to salvation and a plea for the continual filling of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Joel 2:28, 1 Corinthians 12:4, Acts 2:17, Ephesians 4:1, John 14:26, Romans 8:26, James 1:5

Topics: "Stewardship of Spiritual Gifts", "Unity in the Body of Christ"

Description

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Transcript

The title is gifts are not always served on a silver platter. Or gifts are not always served on silver platters. And I actually borrowed that title, I turned it around a little bit, but I'm reading a book by Mark Batterson, and he said that blessings come by doing God's will, God's way.

And that really jumped out at me this week, because so many people do God's will, but not God's way. Well, Shane, what do you mean? You can do God's will. You can take the word of God and you can do God's will, but not God's way, because the heart's wrong.

Bible thumping, have you ever heard of that? Throwing scripture at people? Being mean and nasty and everything, but it's God's will. But you've got to do it God's way. That's many times I believe that blessings, gifts from God come by doing God's will, God's way.

But the sermon is not on that. We're getting into the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And what I mean by gifts are not always served on silver platters.

You know where that saying comes from? It's like, well, they've had everything handed to them on a silver platter. You don't know anything about hard work. You've had everything given to you on a silver platter.

And I'm going to be careful on this, of course, because we do get gifts on a silver platter. Salvation, hello? God's grace, that's what grace is, unmerited favor. And you just have to repent and believe and exercise faith in that God bestows wonderful gifts on us.

I don't want to take away from that. But at the same time, the blessings of God aren't always on silver platters. You've got to fight for every inch of it.

Isn't it interesting when God said, okay, the promised land's yours. Guess what, Joshua? You've got to overcome, what, 21 kings? I don't know exactly. The Malachites, the Amorites, they're all coming against you.

The Hittites, the Ivites, all those vites. It's going to be challenging, but it's yours. It's yours.

And I get excited because God says the same thing to us often. It's yours. Your children can walk with God, but it's going to be a fight.

It's going to be a battle. Are you willing to get on your knees and contend for them? Oh, it might not come on a silver platter. There might be wrestling.

There might be travail. There might be all-night prayer meetings. God might wake you up at 2 in the morning, and you fall on your face, and you begin to seek the heart of God, and God begins to move in your family and in your personal life.

There's a battle. There's a struggle often. Amen.

Are you trying to overcome something, but it's not easily being overcome? Amen. It's called a stronghold, and you often have to fight. Fight for that.

My preaching upsets the little ones sometimes. It's like, oh, who's this guy? I'm scared now. But we must steward our faith.

We must steward our faith, and some things are not served on silver platters. So I'm going to set the stage for you where we're going the next few weeks, and especially this morning. And I'm going to read Acts 2. We're going to have it up on the screen.

Acts 2.17. You can turn your Bibles to Acts 2. Beginning at verse 17. And what I'm doing by setting the stage is, this is what we're experiencing now in the days we live in. And Paul is quoting the prophet Joel.

Joel prophesied, meaning he spoke God's word at a very important time in Israel's history. He was calling the nation back to God. Sound familiar? Amen.

And same thing. Financial prosperity, God's blessing, turned into a curse because they started to worship the gifts and not the gift giver. It started to turn into adultery.

So Joel is prophesying. And Peter, hundreds of years later, is proclaiming this in the New Testament. He said, Now prophesy is, of course, foretelling.

Prophets would foretell. But more importantly, it's foretelling. Meaning what does God's word say? Speaking boldly and powerfully into the lives of people.

Your sons and your daughters will speak my word with boldness when I pour out my spirit on all flesh. Personally, I think this is a personal promise to those individuals at that time in this sentence. And then I believe he shifts to us.

And your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. He's talking to them. But then he says, And on my menservants and on my maidservants.

Basically, and going forth from here on out, 2,000 years later, for those who call on the name of Jesus Christ and who are filled with the spirit of God, I will pour my spirit upon them because they are my servants. And it's a promise. That's a promise you can take to the bank.

See, here's the problem I have. I'm going to tell you a problem. Balcony, listen in.

Once you experience the genuine fire of the Holy Spirit, you can never go back. You are seeking it all of your life. You're holding on to it all of your life.

That's why my preaching upsets people. Haven't you got it? It convicts the fire of God. It convicts the heart.

It convicts my heart. And I get excited to preach the wonders of the Holy Spirit moving and operating in the lives of believers. Once you've experienced that, you can never, never go back.

Hold on to the power of the Holy Spirit. It's life-changing. It's life-altering.

God goes from born and dead to living and vibrant in the life of someone filled with the Spirit of God. That's why I want people to experience it. My heart cries.

It's not anger. So many people say, well, you're sure angry. I'm not.

I'm sad. If I could weep, I would weep for the people who come in without the power of the Spirit. How do you get through life without that? It's hard enough with it.

If you take out the active role of the Spirit in your life, church becomes boring and dead instead of the priority. So as we get into the gifts of the Spirit, I'm going to set the foundation. I believe it's found in Ephesians 4. We're going to put that on the screen as well.

Ephesians 4. And I believe Ephesians was written, well, we're going to get to 1 Corinthians. It's written after 1 Corinthians. But this is so important.

If you're somewhat interested in stewarding the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or if you're interested in being used of God in a mighty way, in your own home, within your family, in your generation, whether it's worship, serving, preaching, whatever it is, this is crucial. Paul said, I therefore, I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, I beseech you. Paul is begging.

You can't get any stronger language than that. I beseech you. I beg you guys, listen.

To walk worthy of the calling which you were called. So Paul says to walk worthy of the calling, which tells me I can walk unworthy. And I can walk in an unhealthy direction.

And I can go a different direction. So he's calling the church back saying, walk worthy of the calling which you were called. Here we go, the convicting part.

With all, not some, with all lowliness and gentleness, with long suffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Paul, could you be a little more clear? Why is this so important? Because I've seen so many people counterfeit the gifts of the Spirit. I've seen bizarre things.

I've seen people jump up but have no character. I see them just praising, saying all the amen, speaking the right, saying the right thing. We call it Christian-ese.

But no power, no character, no depth. And a lot of it has to do with this. So let's look at these real quick.

Steps to stewarding God's blessing. And that's what I meant by blessings come by doing God's will, God's way. For example, you can go out with the Word of God and you can beat people up with it and see very little fruit.

I think this is what is meant by that Scripture that the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. Did you know that there's millions of people knocking on doors with the King James Bible? And they're reading from the King James Bible. Well, the letter kills.

It has to have the Spirit of God infused in it. What I mean by that is mainly cults. They use our Bible often.

But it's void of the spiritual power because you have to do God's will, God's way. So first thing we can learn here is Paul is indebted to God's will. He is indebted to God's will.

What do I mean by that? Well, you have to keep that perspective. That will really help. God, You are worthy of it all.

Ron, you didn't know it, but that song fit perfectly with these points. I'm keeping that perspective. God, You are worthy of it all.

I'm just a servant. And then in that type of setting, we walk out in lowliness. What is lowliness? It's a word we don't use too much.

Here's what it means. Authentic and humble. But keep in mind, this is different than making a humble decision.

See, we can say, well, that was a humble decision. You showed some humility in that. But lowliness is actually walking in that.

That's who you are. You don't just do humble things and be a prideful man. You walk in humility.

It's a mark of who you are. There's so much judgmentalism in the church. Lowliness would remove that.

I mean, I can just see it now. I saw that song come up with the smoke. I'm like, oh, there goes some complaints.

There's smoke on the screen. There was smoke in the tabernacle. Well, the lights are kind of low.

Well, I guarantee Southern California Edison wasn't on the upper room. But see, we don't walk in lowliness. We walk in arrogance often and pride and pointing out the flaws and faults and trying to find things that just don't fit our model.

I'm all for standing up in truth, but I think there needs to be a lot more lowliness. And then here's a difficult one. Gentle.

A tender temperament. Not harsh. Anybody need help with that? Wow.

Okay, there's two people out of many, many people. Some in the balcony. Okay.

Let's try that again. Anybody need to work on being more gentle? There we go. I thought so.

Because it is hard to have that tender temperament and not be harsh, isn't it? I mean, this happened to me. I had to hold back this morning when I heard, Carly, I think you mentioned that Instagram has a page where you can celebrate your abortion. I felt some things rising up.

But some of that can be good. Righteous indignation. The things that break God's heart.

When we celebrate the death of the innocent, that is something to be appalled at. And shocked. We should be shocked at what's going on in our nation.

What about longsuffering? You are patient in spite of troubles. Read the last half. Especially those caused by others.

We're going to a very interesting week. A lot of people are going to be around a dinner table. Longsuffering.

Longsuffering. Patience in spite of troubles. Especially to those caused by others.

And then bearing with one another. You're helping to carry others' burdens. You put up with them.

That's where that phrase comes from. I just put up with you. Well, that's biblical.

As long as the heart's right. So bearing, helping one another. Make sure they feel heard, loved, and encouraged.

Well, Shane, this is quite a load to carry. I know. But this is the only way you can properly steward what God is doing in your life.

You can't come out guns a-blazing. You can't come out prideful and arrogant. And harsh and critical.

These things have to be a mark of someone filled with the Spirit. And then endeavoring. You're trying hard to make things work.

I'm endeavoring. I'm trying hard to make this work. Like Paul said, as much as it depends upon you, live at peace with all men.

So there's this endeavoring. There's this working towards reconciliation. And then, of course, the bond of peace is like glue that keeps everything together.

And I want to remind you at the beginning that Paul said, I beg you. I beseech you. And just so you know, this is one reason why I try to stay consistent on these themes of lowliness and humility and brokenness.

Because we need to be reminded often of these things. Begging, beseeching. We need to get back on track.

Anybody get knocked off track during the week? Sometimes. Okay. That's the point is to get back on track.

And now where we finally wanted to get to 1 Corinthians 12. 1 Corinthians 12 verse 1. Now concerning spiritual gifts. He's going to talk about spiritual gifts through chapters 12, 13, and 14.

So this is my problem with those who say this doesn't apply anymore. I can't come to that point. To me, it'd actually be harder to say here's why these three chapters don't apply anymore.

Well, the love one, you're okay with that one in the middle. Then to say, well, let the Word of God speak for itself. We need the power of the Holy Spirit just as much today as they did back then.

1 Corinthians 12. Now concerning spiritual gifts. So there must have been questions about the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

He said, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that you were Gentiles carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. But Paul's not being very seeker sensitive.

These people were Gentiles before they came to know Christ, before they repented and believed. They're Gentiles. And they're being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by idolatry.

And they're going to here and they're going there. Don't you see that a lot today? People run to horoscopes. And then they'll run to a palm reader.

And then they'll run to Buddha. And then they'll try Eastern mysticism. And then they're just kind of floating.

And Tom Cruise comes out of Scientology. Now what's he doing? They're always just popping around to different types of things. So Paul said, you were Gentiles.

You were carried away by dumb idols, however you were led. You went wherever you were led. So because of that, because of your past, do you know your past plays a role in how you interpret Scripture? We all look at the Scriptures from our experience.

That's why we have to be careful. And we should never interpret Scripture based on our experience. But we must interpret our experience based on Scripture.

So we all read through the lens of Scripture a little bit differently based on how we view God. Based on how we've experienced God. Those who feel like God just pulled them up and saved them will probably gravitate more towards a Calvinistic position of salvation.

Those who believe that God was chasing them and they had to repent and believe and exercise faith, they will probably gravitate towards a little bit different view of salvation. Those who've experienced the gifts and the power of the Holy Spirit, everything that Paul's writing about, they might take this a little seriously. They might say this is for today.

Those who never experience what we're going to go over are going to lean toward not believing in them. And I found this pretty ironic over the years. I've talked to, I'm sure you have thousands of people who believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not valid for today.

And 99.9% of the time they've never experienced them. I rarely meet someone who says I've experienced exactly what Paul's talked about but I don't believe it. So they've experienced the power of the Spirit.

So he said, verse 3, Therefore, because of all these things, therefore, I make known to you, I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed. And no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. So whatever was happening there, things were happening, possibly tongues, possibly people, God moving among His Spirit, and he said nobody speaking by the Spirit of God is going to be cursing Jesus.

And that's what happens a lot of times. Now people, let's say they're given this gift of tongues and they're praising God, people say that's of the devil. Why, I can't, nobody speaking by the Spirit of God is going to curse Jesus.

It doesn't work that way. Or when you see things that maybe you might not agree with in a church, especially if a church is on fire. If you have somebody from a very conservative background, and they go to a very conservative church, and they walk into our Sunday morning service, they might go, oh my, these people are a little too excited.

What's going on in here? And they're not used to that. They haven't experienced God in that way. They might have experienced God in a different way.

I'm not minimizing that. But you look at the fruit. So anytime anybody puts down what we do here, I say look at the fruit.

Look at the fruit, the thousands of lives over the years that have been radically changed by what God is doing. On one hand, we don't allow whatever, just whatever happens, happens. No, I believe that God is a God of order.

But we also don't want to put handcuffs on people. Sit down, sit down, sit down. All you guys raising your hands, put your hands down.

Don't get too excited. We'll save that for the Super Bowl. Relax.

Why are we doing 30 minutes of songs? Relax, guys. What's wrong with all of you? And we try to calm down what God is doing. So he said you're ignorant.

He said you are ignorant. And you know that's really not a bad word. What does it mean? Lacking knowledge or awareness in general.

They're uneducated in certain areas. So we can actually say, and I've told people this. I try to word it differently.

But when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, I've said you are ignorant in this area. But not in a bad way. Exactly how it's defined.

You're lacking knowledge or awareness in general. You're uneducated in a certain area. And we can all become ignorant in some areas, right? You know, if I start to talk about astrology, what's a good thing? Astronomers, right? Where they study the stars.

Not the worship. Just studying the universe. Let's just stick with that.

If I start to talk a lot about that, you can just change. If I start to talk about brain surgery, a brain surgeon's gonna say, you're a little ignorant. You don't really know what you're talking about.

Correct? So we have to be open and teachable in this area. So what's happening here in the church? The supernatural was happening. The supernatural was happening.

Those with spiritual gifts, inspired by the Holy Spirit, cannot blaspheme Jesus. So here's where critics better be careful. They better be very careful.

And you can look this up on your own, because I won't have a lot of time to now turn to that passage. But we often think, and it's true, when we use the Scripture, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Right? I mean, the general answer is, well, they were rejecting, the conviction of the Holy Spirit, they were rejecting Christ.

Correct? And that's what it is. But the context is, they were contributing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan. Just read it.

Jesus was doing these mighty works and the power of the Holy Spirit, and they said He was doing it as Satan's instrument, as Satan's tool. So I think we need to be careful, because how many people are attributing true works of God and saying that Satan's doing that? Yet there's undeniable fruit in the verse four. This will help too.

There are diversities of gifts. That means there's different gifts, but it's the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but it's the same Lord.

And there are diversities of activities, but it's the same God who works in all. And don't we see that today? There's different giftings. There's different ministries.

And there's diversity of activities. We're doing different things, but it's the same Lord doing those things. That's why one of the hardest jobs I have here at this church, believe it or not, is to try to keep all of this united.

Because certain groups will feel alienated. Why doesn't everybody care about the persecuted church? Shane, why aren't we protesting abortion clinics? Go for it. Why aren't we doing this? Why don't we have this? Why aren't we doing this? And whatever your passion is, different giftings.

Shane, where's our homeless outreach? What's wrong with you guys? Go for it. See, so you have a different passion than I do in many areas. But see, we shouldn't use it to judge each other.

It's to complement each other. So those who, like myself, have a direct message for our nation and wanting to call our nation back. Pastors who have a teaching gift and they just want to go through the entire Bible and teach systematically and expositionally, which is great.

We should complement each other and encourage each other, not shoot each other. So as long as it's doing something for God and impacting lives, there's going to be different ministries. But it's the same Lord

who works in all.

And that's what I mean by one of the hardest times because people that are doing things on the outskirts sometimes get frustrated. Why isn't the church doing this? Meaning, why isn't that the church's main focus? And there's a person I knew who gets really excited. It's a good thing.

Like the shoeboxes for Christmas. Franklin Graham. You should hear the story on how that got started from him.

It's amazing. And how many children it blessed. I mean, they're doing like six million I think of those now.

And it gets into the hands of millions of kids. And there's people who have a passion for that. And like, Shane, why can't the church be all about the shoeboxes for a month? Why can't the church be all about abortion? Stopping abortion for a month.

And prayer meetings. Why can't the church be all about missions? And see, we have different giftings. Outreach.

Why aren't we outreaching? Why aren't we going to the community? We say, go run with it. But see how we can become easily judgmental? There's not a lot of agreeing, but I know it's happening. Why aren't we doing this more? Why aren't we doing that more? It's because of different callings.

Different giftings. But verse 7, but the manifestation of the Spirit, don't get freaked out by that word. Manifestation simply means revealing.

God reveals Himself. I've noticed this over the years too. Once charismatics use the word manifestation, people go, uh-oh.

But a conservative can use the same word and the same Scripture and nobody flips out. But see, we already have stereotypes. God manifesting Himself.

God revealing Himself. So He says here, the revealing of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of themselves. Who's paying attention? The profit of all.

Once we realize that, I think it will really help understand that we need to go out and use our giftings. Church isn't to come and get fed and fed and fed and fed. We're actually to go out and be a blessing to others.

So my gifting, your gifting, our giftings actually are for the profit of all of us. It's to benefit all of us. But here's where I want to kind of just spend a minute.

We need to be very careful in the conservatives versus charismatics conflict. Now in case you're unaware of that, well, how's the best way to explain it? Throughout church history, there's conservative Christians. We don't get too loud.

We don't do anything. We don't get carried away. We just kind of stay conservative.

We're the quiet type. And we're just, you know, if you start to raise your hand, an usher's going to come and say, uh-uh, uh-uh. We don't do that here.

And there's conservative. Don't worry, I'm going to mock this side too in a minute. And the irony is, I kind of lean towards, I mean, I'm conservative.

I'm like not a jumper, clapper, singer. You know, my wife can tell me bad news and she's like, it didn't even affect you. I'm kind of just, I don't know, conservative in that sense.

Not easily emotional until the Holy Spirit begins to just bring tears to your heart and tears to your life. So conservative. But then you have, whoo-hoo, you guys.

Praise God for the charismatics. Amen. Amen.

Every time I see them, they're just jumping. Give me a hug, brother. Give me a hug.

I'm like, settle down. Settle down. I don't need a hug every time I see you.

And they're just kind of like, when's worship starting? When's worship starting? Come on, come on. Like, hold, relax. But then, right, this, you know, just, just quiet and conservative.

But these two sides will fight. I can't believe I did that over here. But these two sides will fight each other and tear each other down.

There is websites. There's YouTube pages. Mainly, I'm going to get in trouble here.

But mainly from this side, shooting this side. Primarily. Because most charismatics are just, man, I love God.

I just, I'm not going to say anything. I'm just going to love God. And they feel deeply.

And that word charismatic comes from charisma in the Greek. It simply means bestowing spiritual gifts. So those in this camp who are called charismatic, I get emails once a week, what are you? Are you conservative? Are you charismatic? Are you a fundamentalist? Are you a Baptist? Are you Reformed? Do you look to Luther, Calvin, Swingly, or Knox? Are you Episcopalian? Do you believe in one who saved all we saved? Are you Pentecostal and charismatic? And just, what's the Bible say? I don't remember my point now.

I was over here. Charismatics. I didn't think this was going to be a funny sermon today.

I was very serious this morning. So that's all charismatic means. Well, charisma is this charismatic personality, but in the Greek language, in the New Testament, the word comes from charismatic.

They believe that the Holy Spirit is still bestowing spiritual gifts. And then from that, you'll have like Pentecostal. Pentecostal would believe that the speaking in tongues is the evidence of the baptism and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

And then you have conservatives who really don't believe in some of that. But then you have conservative charismatics who believe in the gifts of the Spirit, but they're more conservative. So you have this mix of all kinds of people.

And that's one reason we are identified as non-denominational. And believe it or not, we get chided for that too. Those non-denominational churches, they don't like to be under any authority.

They just want to do their own thing. They're rebellious. They need to come under some type of denominational banner.

And they're just crazy. That's not true either. Non-denominational, there's still accountability.

It's just we don't identify. For example, you have to actually sign off on things. I'd have to sign off on the Calvary Chapel Distinctives to be a Calvary Chapel.

And I don't quite see the way they see it on the rapture or end times eschatology or salvation. And then you could be part of Acts 29 movement. It's a reformed movement.

A lot of younger churches. But then you have to sign off and say you're a reformed church. And then you agree to all the points of reformed theology from total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace.

And I'm like, I can't quite sign that. Now if you fall under Baptists, you better start wearing a suit and tie. You better bring the hymnals back.

And things that are good necessarily, but they're not necessarily something we can identify. So that's the whole point between non-denominational and other denominations. I love denominations.

The heart of God is to allow people to express themselves differently and that's why you will see different denominations. Anytime a cult says, oh see, you guys have denominations, you can't agree on anything. No, it's usually because people gravitate towards what they believe.

So if you're Lutheran, you're going to gravitate towards the teachings of Martin Luther and communion, consubstantiation, and how Lutherans do things. If you are Methodist, you're going to gravitate towards what John Wesley taught and his theology and the afterglow events where they would wait on the Holy Spirit. And so you'll be part of that.

Now I think John Wesley would roll over in his grave if he saw what they're starting to do within that denomination. Anytime a denomination becomes a movement, it loses momentum and it becomes dangerous sometimes. You have to keep the power of the Holy Spirit operating in that.

How many denominations have you seen just go sour over the years? But that's the big divide in this is conservatives and charismatics. And conservatives say, but I'm defending the truth. Well, it looks more like you're poking fun in the spirit of arrogance.

Be careful of what you read online as well. Be careful what you read about other churches online as well. Or other ministries as well.

Be careful. Be careful. Are they see-through with grace? Are they trying to show both sides? Because a lot of people are judging, especially, this wasn't 30 years ago, but a lot of people are judging certain churches and certain ministries and certain music based on what they've read online.

They don't even know the people. The people writing the critique might not even be believers. Or they might be a very arrogant, arrogant type of ministry.

And they just want to really tell people off. And then we read that and now that's how we view churches or other pastors or other believers. I'll give you an example.

In January, and people do not like this. There's a guest speaker here coming in January. Very popular.

You can look him up online. Dr. Michael Brown. Messianic Jew.

Has a line of fire. Writes for many different Christian publications. Very well known.

But I'll get an email saying he's part of the NAR, the National Apostolic Reformation. He's part of this group. And I just text him.

Hey, can we talk? Can we email? Talking to him over the years. I don't see any of those things. I don't get any of that when you talk to the person and you hear their heart and you see their ministry.

And it's usually the conservatives who are going after the charismatics. When you start to say, I believe that the Holy Spirit still moves. I still believe He can give people prophetic words.

And the Spirit of the living God can come upon you and you begin to praise God and speak in tongues. Now I'm on their hit list. Now I'm a false prophet.

Be careful though. It happened in Paul's day. It happened to the New Testament believers.

So are you really saying that now the same thing, the same exact thing that is happening that is happening now, now is of the devil and everybody's making it up? Granted, I know some things are confusing. I know that television has not helped things. When you blow on people and throw their jacket and the whole audience falls over.

I got it. I know. But I also would read about when John Wesley would preach.

He began preaching and people began to just literally fall out on the pews because of the weight and the conviction of sin. John Edwards, he actually read his sermon just like this. The title was Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.

And New England experienced revival. It was said that people are holding on to pews not to fall into the abyss of hell. When Whitfield would preach, people would cry out, demonic, people would try to stop him because when the Spirit of God is moving, lives are radically changed.

I guarantee, sometimes I pray for it and they say, oh God, stay your hand because we'd be in trouble. If the Spirit of the living God descended upon this place like He does in revival, you think you'd just be casual? Some people would run for that door and never come back. Other people would find their way to the altar and fall on their face.

When the Spirit of the living God, some people might just be contagious with joy, a fruit of the Spirit, but also charismatic. They need to be very careful. I say we because I'm in both camps.

I'm conservative, but I also believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. But so many I've met over the years, and that's why I say if it's odd, it's God. That's not good.

This side would say, but if it's odd, it's God, brother. God's moving. It's odd.

I know it's odd, but it's God. No, it's not necessarily God. It could just be your temperament, your personality.

Does it line up with Scripture? Is it edifying? Does it build up? Every thought that comes to your mind isn't always God. Again, talking to you guys. Charismatics.

A good impression isn't always a God impression. I'm going to get to that as we get into the prophetic. I believe that God wants us to be still and know that He is God.

Sometimes just be quiet and let your character speak. Because what charismatics like to do sometimes is use the shotgun approach. When they say, thus saith the Lord.

Or whatever, prophetic. The shotgun approach. And they say, Shane, look at the target.

Look at the target. I hit the target. I hit the target with 50 BBs.

But yeah, there's 200 BBs in a shell and you missed it all 150 other times. See, we have to be very careful when we're handling the Word of God. And I believe that's what gives this side a bad name.

This side should be strengthened in the Holy Spirit. It's not just whatever goes, it goes. And people need to be held accountable.

If you miss it, you miss it. You need to be held accountable. We're going to get to that in the weeks to come.

More next week on all of this. And also, this is where that saying comes from. We can be so heavenly minded that we're no earthly good.

Now, I don't really believe that. The more heavenly minded you are, the more earthly good you can be as well. But what happens is, let me try to explain this right.

I just love worship. I just love coming to church. I just love prayer meetings.

I just love... And maybe even give people words of wisdom or operate in your gifting. But you're not doing anything for others. See, we're filling.

We're being filled. Fill me up, God. Fill me up.

But then we're not going out and allowing our gift to work in the lives of others. So that's what happens a lot on this side. They're all at the worship times.

They're at the prayer meetings. They're just, man, God, fill me up. But when it comes to doing something for others, nope.

Nope, it's all about me. So we have to work on that as well on this side. If you're convicted, that's okay.

It's a conviction alert. But we do need to be careful. I'm not skeptical of God at all.

I'm not skeptical at all of God. Do you know who I'm skeptical of? I trust God a thousand percent, but not me necessarily. How do I know if God's wanting me to say something? How do I know if that's truly God? Because I have a lot of good ideas.

Anybody have a lot of good ideas that have failed? And you look back and you're like, okay. So see, we can have a good idea, but is it a God idea? And that's what we're gonna talk about in the weeks to come

on how to wait and use discernment in these areas. Sometimes God gives us immediate answer to immediate response, but many times we have to just sit and ponder because I don't wanna give away too much, but we can really damage people.

We can hurt them by saying, well, I believe God told me to do this. I believe God told me this for you. And I'm all for that.

But if that person begins to live their life based on what you told them, I don't think that should ever go above what God is personally speaking to them. What I do when somebody gives me a word, it goes right here, pocket for later. I don't live my life based on that.

I live my life on what God is speaking to me. I don't believe you always need someone else to tell you what to do. I think you can go to God directly.

And I've seen people make mistakes moving. I've seen people make mistakes marrying. I've seen people make mistakes getting into business deals because they allowed someone else.

And that person might have a good idea. Their intentions were great. Good, sincere.

But they allowed the person's counsel to control their decisions. So I believe that when somebody has a genuine prophetic word from God, and we'll get to that, I'll explain what those are later, that it's going to confirm often what God is already doing in your own heart. And there's major decisions where we do need confirmation, amen? Right now, there's two families in Arizona praying about moving here and a family in Minnesota praying about moving here to be involved with this church because of what God is doing.

They need to hear from God. They don't need me telling them. Now, if somebody comes alongside and gives them a prophetic word, man, the Lord woke me up tonight.

This has been so heavy on my heart. Whatever this means. And you share that with them.

For example, one of the families, I went back and forth on email with him for about 10 years. And out of the blue, I don't even know where it came from. After I sent it, I was like, uh-oh.

He watched the sermon, and I said something like, okay, great, have you ever thought about moving here? I'm like, where did that come from? And that prompted a discussion. Actually, I have been. Why did you ask that? Mmm, I don't know.

I honestly don't know to this day. But I would say don't move on that alone. But see, don't you need confirmation sometimes? Because Lord, I trust Me.

I mean, I'm sorry. Woo-hoo-hoo! Thank you. Glad I caught that before it went on the radio.

I trust you, but I'm not sure about me. I need confirmation. And I'm not going to explain all the different things, but when we bought the radio stations, I need a lot of confirmation.

It's on our website. You can read about it on the radio website. A lot of confirmation going into God's will.

And I don't think God's saying, no, you don't need any confirmation. He wants us to trust Him fully. But I think part of trusting God is, Lord, I don't know Me.

I don't know who's planning thoughts in my mind. I want to hear from You. I want confirmation.

Lord, I want You to direct me. I think God will honor those prayers. And too many times, charismatics get caught up, but not caught up in the Word.

That's where they need to be spending the majority of their time. In the Word of God. Not what are the prophets saying, but what is Jesus Christ saying to you? What is Jesus Christ saying to you in His Word? And this, that's for next week, but I'll tell you now.

In this movement, and that's why we don't really resonate with a movement, we try to stay in the middle, but with this movement, there's a lot of what they would call prophets. And it gets confusing because one person says God's judging America. The other one says God's bringing revival.

Well, what is it? You can't have both. Well, God's doing this. I've had a dream.

I've had this. There's so much confusion. There's so much confusion.

And I don't believe God is the author of confusion. So many times, I wonder if these people are having a good idea or a God idea. And I think we just need to be careful when we steward the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And here's just a general statement. Please don't take this wrong. I know you won't hear, but maybe some listening will.

Often, what I've seen, again, my experience, those who are often given into dreams and visions and prophetic words, and they're not very grounded. They're not very grounded. They've got a lot of issues in their life financially, relationally.

They're not solid. They're not stable because they're tossed back and forth. They need to be grounded in God's Word.

These things are supplementary, not foundational. For example, I'll just share this with you. I guess you don't need to come next week since I'm sharing all this.

Oh, I've got to get to the end of the sermon. It's getting close. For example, I had a dream, a very vivid dream.

I shared it with a few people a few weeks ago. Do you ever have those that wake you up? You're like, whew. That was a close one.

But I had this dream. It was of this black jaguar, very clear, just black jaguar coming at me. And somebody said, just put the light in front of him.

The light of the gospel. The light. And he'll turn.

He'll leave. I put the light. He goes around it.

I go into a different room. This jaguar is always on me. Not biting.

Nothing. Always. Always.

I'm like, this big black jaguar is scary. But it wouldn't listen. The light didn't affect him.

I was getting anxious, fearful, frustrated. What is going on? Well, I told a few people. Okay, that's interesting.

Let's see what happens. Well, on the day that I had the Jehovah Witness come over for two hours, he comes in dressed in black. And none of this even registered until later.

Would not listen to a thing I said. Here's the gospel. And that's the most frustrating conversation I've ever had in my life.

You know when you're frustrated and you're mad? And you're sad? And my kids were there. I said, kids, come listen to this. So all my kids were listening to this.

And that just came to me right in the inside. Ah! Oh! Praise God! Praise God! God was preparing me for a very difficult season. A very difficult encounter with this darkness that did not want to hear the lie of the gospel.

And you keep pressing it. They won't want it. And you keep pressing it.

Shane, it doesn't matter. I'm gonna show you that not everybody's receptive to what you have to say. So now you could just say, well, that's just coincidence.

Maybe. I don't know. But that's how the prophetic or the dreams or visions would work in the Bible.

It shouldn't be something that's weird. I don't know where it got into the weird definition. Is it weird that Joseph had a dream to take Jesus away? No.

Of course not, Shane. Is it weird that the wise men had dreams to leave? People say three wise men. It wasn't three, just so you know.

A little Christmas embellishing. We don't know how many. There's three gifts, so we assume three wise men.

Also, December's 25th's not Jesus' birthday, in case you don't know. And when they have the wise men going to see a little newborn baby, probably wasn't a newborn. Herod had all the kids killed under two.

So there's a lot of, I just went on another rabbit trail. I'm sorry. Keep it.

So the wise men had dreams. Joseph had dreams to remove Jesus. Daniel had dreams.

Peter had a dream where God said, arise, take up and eat. And he was able to minister to the Gentiles. So God will communicate to people if they're open and the word of God is they're grounding.

In other words, I'm not gonna have a dream. Morgan, I dreamed I was in Nashville preaching. Let's put our house on the market.

Let's get out of here. Why? Because those things don't control our lives. They are supplemental.

And God uses them. I thank God for the gifts. I actually feel sorry for people who say, all we have is the word and that's all we need.

Yes, we do. But I also need some confirmation because I don't trust this joker. I'll tell you this as well too, Marilyn.

I hope it's okay. But what's the old saying? Don't ask for permission. Ask for forgiveness later.

But this isn't bad. It's not a bad thing. But you remember about a year ago, I was just so frustrated that not a lot of people came to one of the events we had.

And I was gonna share my heart that morning. And I was like, God, Lord, I can't do this. I can't do this.

It's weighing so heavy on my heart. And I'm right back there. I remember exactly where I was.

I'm praying. I'm like, Lord, I can't do this. I know you want me to do it.

And I think the floodgates opened. It was a turning point for our church for sure. And I'm praying.

And all of a sudden, I see Marilyn get up off the altar during morning worship prayer and comes back and talks to me and says, God wants you to share what's on your heart. Don't hold back anything. And then she goes back.

Isn't that interesting? Well, that can't be God, right? But see, that's a gift for the encouragement of all of us to encourage the body. Because I'm not gonna turn to John chapter 10 and go, oh, yeah, I'm supposed to do that today. See, I'm not minimizing the word.

I'm actually elevating the word. All we have is the word for living godliness. You sure do.

But you need the power of the Holy Spirit to also, especially in these dire times, oh, I need to discern the spirits. I need wisdom. I need to hear from people speaking life into the church and using direction and having it grounded in the word of God.

We need that today. So be open, but be cautious. So he says, gifts, ministries, activities for the profit of all.

And Christ gave to the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and we'll get to all of that next week. But let me just close with this. You know I opened with Joel, the prophet Joel, in the beginning.

Here's what else he went on to say that many people don't read. And a lot of this is Old Testament imagery. I don't have time to go to the Old Testament and show you exactly what it means.

Some commentators are divided, but we do know the power of the Scripture. God says, I will show wonders in heaven above and signs on the earth beneath. Blood and fire and vapor, smoke, the sun shall be turned into darkness.

Wait a minute, he just said, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. I will pour out my spirit on your men's servants and on my maid's servants.

And then God continues, and I will show wonders in the heavens. I will have blood and fire and vapor, smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.

And it shall come to pass. Here you go. All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

I believe that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in these days is for that we will proclaim the truth. Not to just hold back and just go live in our comfortable homes, but to preach and say, all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Not might, not maybe, not you might make it through this narrow gate if you just, you know, are on God's good side list today.

He said, whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. So I'm gonna close. I said that already, but I'm gonna really do it this time.

There's a new song out that I just keep hitting repeat. You ever do that? You ever find that song? After you're about a minute into it, repeat. A minute into it, repeat.

It opens with this. All the money that the world could hold, mountains made of solid gold, riches that could buy my dreams, you are better than all these things. You are better than all these things.

God, we give you the honor. We give you the glory. We give you the praise this morning.

You are better than all these things. Get our hearts focused once again on you. As our nation drifts from you, let us pull people back.

As our state drifts from you, let us pull people back. Let us speak the word of God with authority again. But I wanna lovingly challenge you, if you've never called on the name of the Lord to be saved, you need to do that today.

Many people have a false assurance in the church. Jesus has been presented as a butler or a genie in the bottle or something. Just try Jesus.

Come on, life will be better. They've never seen the wretchedness of sin and the total depravity of man. Like Ray Comfort says, they've never been shown the law of God and the justice of God and the judgment of God.

Then they turn to Christ with all their heart. He is their Redeemer. He set them free.

He is their Savior and your Lord. You wouldn't even have a debate of is He Savior and Lord? That shouldn't even be a debate. Once He saves you, He is your Lord.

Yes sir, I sign up for duty. I've been filled with your Spirit. You've redeemed me until the day of salvation and I want to follow you with all of my heart.

You are my Lord. I bow my knee to the only name that saves. And you're filled with God's Spirit to go out and do great exploits.

That's why it's called the filling of the Holy Spirit and why it's a continual filling. We take our cars to the gas station. Why don't we think we need to take our Spirit to the gas station, so to speak, and fill up with God's Word.

That's why I love that song too, Fill Me Up God. Lord, fill me up. God, fill me up with your Holy Spirit.

And then the conservative churches will mock that. They'll say, fill me up. Who do you think? You're brainwashed? Oh Shane, fill me up, fill me up.

La, la, la, la, la. Yeah, because you've never experienced the filling of God. Once you've experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit and you see that that filling is dwindling and dry and maybe sin has crept in, you cry out to God again, Lord, fill me up again.

I'm not leaving this place until you fill me up. The old prayer warriors 100 years ago would grab hold of the altar and not let go until God answered and God filled them again. It was said of Charles Finney that when he would fill the draining of the Spirit, he would go out in the forest and not come back until it returned.

John Wesley would fast until the filling of the Holy Spirit came back. George Whitfield would get on his knees before God and ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit. How much more we need as men and women of God the filling of the Spirit.

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