

# God, Change Me and Please Hurry

by Shane Idleman

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*The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life, highlighting the importance of humility and obedience for genuine change.*

**Duration:** 1:02:33

**Scripture:** Romans 8:5

**Topics:** "Role of the Holy Spirit", "Transformation"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgent need for personal transformation through the Holy Spirit in his sermon 'God, Change Me and Please Hurry.' He explains that the Holy Spirit's role is not only to change us for our own benefit but to empower us to be a blessing to others. Idleman warns against the dangers of relying solely on self-discipline or passively waiting for change, stressing that true transformation requires humility, obedience, and a willingness to confront our own shortcomings. He encourages believers to set their minds on spiritual things and to actively seek God's guidance, reminding them that real change is a process that involves both divine assistance and personal responsibility.

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## Transcript

The title of the message is God, Change Me, and Please Hurry. Anybody else say that, or is it just me? God, God, change me, change me, and please hurry. Get right to it.

And we're in a series entitled Theology on Fire, the role of the Holy Spirit. What is the Holy Spirit's role in our lives? And the Holy Spirit's not a mystical force. It's not like Star Wars.

It's the third person of the Trinity is how theologians would describe the role of the Holy Spirit. And let me just say this. I wrote this down this week, and wanted to mention it last week, but the Holy Spirit changes us so we can be a blessing to others.

It's not I wanna get full of the Spirit and keep it to myself. We wanna be filled with the Spirit to be difference makers in the lives of others. And it's been said that the Holy Spirit is in us for us, but he comes upon us for others.

And we talked about that last week, that the Holy Spirit coming upon believers. And people are kind of frightened by that word, but Jesus himself said that the Spirit is upon me. He has anointed me to do what? To be a difference maker, to open the eyes of the blind, to preach the gospel to those who are receptive.

So the Holy Spirit coming upon us is so we can be difference makers in our own lives. However, in order to do that often, he has to do a work in us as well. He has to change us.

So two weeks ago, I talked about just one point on who the Holy Spirit is as a person. Two weeks ago, or last week, we talked about a few other points. This week, we're talking about the Holy Spirit changing the believer.

The Holy Spirit is conforming us into the image of Christ. And it's not an easy process, is it? Imagine taking a hammer and a chisel. And see, they gotta knock that pride off.

Oh, we gotta get rid of this. We gotta get rid, so the Holy Spirit, one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to change us. However, in that type of, it's called systematic theology, and you work through it, and you get to the part about the Holy Spirit, and you get to the part about the Holy Spirit changing us, there is a couple different views.

One view is, you guys can be this side, where the Holy Spirit just kinda just waits, and we change ourselves. You know, if I could just apply more self-discipline. Have you ever thought that? You know, I really need to change.

Okay, coming tomorrow, tomorrow morning, I'm gonna stop doing that. I'm gonna change myself. I'm gonna withdraw from that.

I'm gonna, oh, oh, oh, I'm gonna just say no, and I'm gonna really change myself. Now, we all know where that gets us, right? Usually back into not changing, because it's too much emphasis, because actually willpower, self-control, these are all fruits of the Spirit, so we can't ignore them, can we? Because the Bible calls us to be disciplined in certain areas, to exercise self-control, but if we're counting on that, we often will fall again, because that is an area of pride, and I'll change myself. Now, the other side, though, you can be the, I won't call it the lazy side, but that's kind of what it is.

It's the side of where the Holy Spirit's gonna change me, and I'm just gonna sit here and wait for Him to change me, and I know I've joked about this before, but there's a lot of truth in it. The person who wants to get healthy or get in shape, Holy Spirit, God, change me in these areas. Anybody pray that? I do.

Lord, I have to work on this area. I have to do this. Lord, please help these appetites as we're heading to Krispy Kreme.

So wait a minute. I just prayed for God to change me in these areas, but I'm heading towards a place that I shouldn't, or God, help me. Pray for, I pray for, Lord, remove this lust.

Lust, anyone prayed that? What's going on, Lord? Remove this lust from my heart. What's going on? But we're fueling that desire by what we watch, what we listen to, what we put in our mind. We're fueling the very thing we're asking God to change in us.

So we can't just sit at home and wait for God to change us. Actually, the Bible talks about a partnership. It's the Holy Spirit's role to change us, but he comes upon a broken, humble vessel obeying the principles of God.

So as we work as, okay, Lord, I will obey your word. I'm relying on the Holy Spirit to change me. That's where real change takes place.

And if you really want to change, I'm talking to those who really want to change, okay? Here's the first step. You have to humble yourself. Oh, it's quiet in that point.

But to really change, don't we? Because humbling ourself, in humbling ourself, we say things like this. God, I can't change. I'm wrong.

Oh, that hurt, just saying that. How often do we go around saying, you know, I was wrong. I apologize.

I need to work on that area. It's usually the opposite. So if you really want the Holy Spirit to change something in your heart, in your life, you have to admit it and say, Lord, I need help in this area.

I'm not all that and a bag of chips, whatever that meant. I've seen shirts like that. What does that mean? What does that mean? Explain to me afterwards, but you're not the captain of your own destiny, right? It's all about me and making excuses.

So in order to see change, you have to come with a humble, broken heart because God says that type of sacrifice I will not turn away. The Bible also talks about God leading those who are humble in heart. So that's really the scriptural course that I see is we obey the word of God, even when we don't feel like it, and as that obedience takes place, we become a willing, humble vessel.

God begins to change us through the work of His Spirit. So you won't have one without the other. You can't just do it on your own and you can't just say, well, Lord, take these things away as we head to the thing or to the place or do the things that we're praying for help in.

And I know it's, I've mentioned this one before, but I've seen it so many times. A person will pray, Lord, help me. God, help me, I need it.

Would you take away alcohol and gambling? God, please, as they're on the 15 freeway heading to Vegas. I mean, it just makes no, but that's how we think sometimes, don't we? We don't want that to humble ourselves. And is it the 15? Think so? It's been a while, okay.

So you have to humble yourself. Negative, critical, pride-filled people rarely grow because they are not providing an environment for growth. See, you have to provide the environment for growth.

You make the difference in that area. What's that song we sang before? You provide the fire. If I provide the sacrifice, isn't that so perfect? God, bring your fire.

We often pray that. I want the fire of God, but I don't wanna lay on that altar. I wanna be filled with God's spirit, but I don't wanna empty myself.

So there are things that we do have to do. Negative, critical, pride-filled people rarely grow, again, because they're not providing the environment for growth. Here's the key with humility.

Humility is the rich soil where spiritual health flourishes. You have to, to get something to grow, you have to plant it somewhere, right? Have you ever seen a watermelon grow on top of concrete? The watermelon seeds do a great job of getting in between the concrete and coming outside and different things, but you have to plant. Humility provides the soil for God to work, the rich soil for God to work, just like plants.

They have to grow in soil, right? A good soil is a combination of sand and clay and moisture, and they provide the perfect soil for God to work. That's what humility does. Does that make sense? You're actually

providing this environment for God's Spirit to flourish in your life.

Romans 8, five, for those who live according to the flesh, think about this, for those who live according to the flesh, and if you wanna change, don't live according to the flesh. The problem is we're living often according to the flesh, and that's why we want to change, because a spiritual believer wants to get the flesh out of them. Now, you'll never have it on this side of heaven.

There will not be, the nature of man changes because of salvation, but the nature of sin doesn't. One of the Puritans said that, I think it was John Owen, that grace changes, God's grace changes the nature of man, but it does not change the nature of sin. So that's why you go, what is going on? What is going on is there's a little gremlin in here, right, the sinful nature that wants to rule, the sinful nature wants to reign, the carnal mind, the part of me that is the fallen man is at enmity with God, is at war with God, so you have this great struggle.

Paul would go on to say that there is a struggle inside. I want to do certain things, but I don't want to do, and we're never free from this conflict. That's why he would say, oh, it's a cry, I believe.

Oh, wretched man that I am. Do you ever say that? Oh, wretched man that I am, who will deliver me? Who's going to deliver me from this body of sin and death? The apostle Paul said it. Who? And he said, thank God, for with the mind I served the law of sin, or with the mind I served the law of the flesh, but with the, something like that, I haven't quoted in a while.

But somehow he gets a mind focused back on Jesus Christ, setting him free. That's the only way a person is going to truly change from the inside out. But be encouraged, it is a process.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. Have you ever heard the phrase, set a bone? You know, we need to go and set that bone, set that broken bone, or somebody breaks their, have you ever seen a nose that was broken? It's like, and you know what has to be done, you know what has to be done, and you don't want to do it. What do they have to do? You know, they have to bring that nose back.

Give me the Vicodin beforehand, right? I would not encourage that, but if you have, but so they have to set that back. They have to set the bone back in place. It's the same type of language here.

Where do you set your mind on the things of the flesh? But those who live according to the spirit, if you want to live according to the spirit, you set your mind on the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. You know, as a little side note here, I'm talking spirit-filled believers for a minute here.

I know there's a combination. What I mean by that is somebody who's abandoned it all and given everything to Christ, they're full of God's spirit. They still struggle with things, they still, you know, but they're full of God's spirit.

They love his word, they love worship, they love righteousness, they love holiness, they love the things of God. Okay, you people, do carnal Christians drive you crazy, or is it just me, right? They just, oh. No, you don't have to make beer at your Bible study.

You don't have to still experiment with marijuana. You don't have to look at pornography. You don't have to love the things of the world.

Carnal, they just love the things of the world. It drives me crazy. You got the little sign of the fish on your car, but you're smoking dope driving.

And they say, brother, it's a liberty. It's a liberty, God created it. God created it, and we're just gonna go watch the movies we shouldn't.

We're gonna act the way we should. We're gonna say things we shouldn't. And it is carnal.

They're living by their carnal nature. So here's a tip. You're either full of God's spirit, or you're full of the world.

Now, usually, nobody does this perfectly. Right, it's usually a struggling. It's a match there.

Who's prevailing? Because even spirit-filled believers, they struggle with the carnal nature. And we wanna be filled with the spirit. So when you set your mind on the things of the world, on the carnal things that do not edify, they do not glorify, they do not build you up, they do not strengthen you, when you set your mind on that, you begin to quench and grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

It's like, imagine a big, roaring fire in your living room. Maybe not a good example in the summer. Let me think of something else.

Well, let's go there for a minute. Think about the snow, right? There's snow everywhere, and this big, roaring fire, and you actually have to stand back from it, don't you? Like, oh, this is too hot. But then in a few hours, you can't even feel it.

You see the little coal there? But it's like, I can't even warm a glass of water. I can't feel anything. What happened? You quenched, that fire's been quenched and grieved.

That's why so many people, they have the Spirit of God, they're saved, but the fire is out. It's gone. It's just a spark because they are quenching and grieving the Spirit of God by what they set their mind on.

That's just biblical truth. I was reading this week. One sentence just stuck out.

I put the book out, and I just began to pray and worship God. I was reading a book on, and I would encourage you to read old books on revivals and men and women of God who came before us, and it just sets your heart right. Instead of what's popular on Netflix.

Actually, whatever's popular on Netflix is probably not popular on God's list, okay? Just a heads up there. I know it's a gimme today, meaning you probably know that, but sometimes it doesn't register, and it's funny, when I talk about these things, people inevitably come up sometimes, they'll say, well, yeah, but what about this, or what about that? I'm not making absolute statements. I'm just saying be careful.

Be careful what you set your mind on because things will either build you up, build me up in my relationship with the Lord, or it will draw me away and draw you away. So back to the story I was telling. Where was I? The book, okay, I was reading a book.

You remember this book. I don't know if I told you, but it was on, I hope I pronounce this right, the New Hebrides Revivals off the island of Scotland, I believe, or the islands of Scotland down this area in the 1950s, and this huge revival broke out. Duncan Campbell was a man that was heavily involved.

Bars were closed down. People were on their face in their homes, worshiping God. People on the side of the street just stopping.

When God's presence truly manifests and reveals itself, people are changed. And I have these books. I hear about these accounts often in different things.

But anyway, decades later, this young man decided to interview one of the prayer warriors in that revival. And he asked the man a question. Tell me about that revival.

What happened? Where did it go? And he could tell the old man, his eyes lit up with the fire of God. He could see the fire of God. He lit up, and he said, I will tell you this.

When you find God, when you find God, never, never, never, never let go. And I was so, I was, oh, I just felt it. I felt like the book was pulsating.

The old man, his eyes lit up. What lit up? The fire of God. That passion, that anointing, that unction.

When you have it, you scream out, never, never, never let it go. I want the fire of God. I need the passion of God to reignite a hunger that has died many years ago.

Come back, Lord, would you visit your people? Wilt thou not revive us again so we can rejoice in you? God, visit your people. We are broken people. We are hungry people.

We are dehydrated. We are dying spiritually. God, ignite us and renew us.

Renew this fire in us. God, please. That has to be the cry of your heart.

Where is it, God? You think if I'm serious, God's gonna say, oh, not right now. He's gonna say, that's what I'm looking for. My eyes go everywhere to find a pastor that would cry out, that would find a people that would cry out for more of me and not more of the world.

That's the difference maker, to be filled with the flow. I could stand there for a while. To be filled with that fire.

Where is it? Where is that fire? You go to church and people are bored to death. How can you be bored when you're worshiping the true and living God? You're looking at his word that has eternal benefits. You're looking at his word that says, come to my word.

It is living. It is powerful. It's sharper than a double-edged sword.

It will pierce your joint and your marrow. It is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. The word of God.

Why should that, there should be a kindle, just a blazing fire. Shouldn't you feel it when you walk in? I mean, it should be like, well, I'm on holy ground. We're walking into holy ground.

There's a passion for it. The reason is, who you are all week is who you'll be on Sunday. What are you setting your mind on? Is it the carnal nature? Or is it being filled with the spirit of God? And I don't say that with anger.

If you could see my heart, it's weeping. It's hard sometimes to not hold back tears in this place. Knowing that that living water just steps away.

Come and drink Jesus. I mean, it's so amazing. We put all these rules on things and Jesus has just come.

Can you imagine? I would love to see that sermon. I don't think he was in low volume there. Like, what did he say? He said, come, come, all that are weak and heavy laden, come to me and I will give you rest.

If you drink of the water that I give you, you will never thirst again. I see the pleading, the fire of God, the passion of God. And when you have it, you do say never, never, never let it go.

Oh my Lord, I'm about ready to sit down and just go into worship. You all want a sermon, right? That's a sermon. That's a sermon, to be filled with the spirit of God.

To set your mind on the things of God. You think you do that over the course of time that God's not gonna, to fill you with his spirit? Setting your mind on the things of God. Page one still.

Set is to put in place. And I think we forget this sometimes as Christians. When he says to be carnally minded is death, to be carnally minded is death, we instantly think, oh, well, to die in hell, and I know I'm good there, I'm good, and that must not really apply to me.

Actually, scripturally in the Hebrew, or actually in the Greek, the New Testament's written in the Greek language, this word, if you look it up, is death, is interesting. We think immediately of the grave, don't we? But the word actually means separation. Now, it can mean the sensation of life, but it also is there's a death there that takes place, a separation from God.

So to be carnally minded is to die spiritually. You're no longer living with the fire and the presence and the power of God. You are dying to those things, and you're living in the carnality of your mind, and being led by that.

So a death takes place. If you've been there, you know it. Do you know how many people say, Shane, I want that again? No, there's crocodile tears.

I want that again, I need that again. What do they say? I feel dead. I feel dead to the things of God.

Where did that separation took place? We need to set our minds again on the things of God. Let me just show you about what this word means later on. I forgot to write down the reference.

But Paul said, crucify, put to death the things of the flesh. Put to death the self, the carnal nature. What do you mean, you separate, you get rid of that.

Romans 8, 12, if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. There's an exchange that takes place. And let me just encourage you like I did last week.

It can be a process. It is a process often. Give yourself a little grace.

It's one thing I learned over the years. Give people grace. Give yourself grace.

Right, a lot of the time we want to run right to the judgment hammer. I knew they would fall. Yeah, you want that same hammer being swung at you? You got it, by the measure you judge someone else, it'll be

judged, it'll be put back on you.

So in this area of change, show grace to others. People cannot often live a perfect life like you do. I had to.

I wanted to since the first service, I held it in. But isn't that true? We raise the standard on others. What I've noticed, usually we raise the standard on others, but we lower it in regard to ourselves.

We want God's mercy and grace on us, but we're not willing to allow it in the lives of others. Change is often painful as well, isn't it? Change is often painful. Because what happens, here's how a lot of times how we change, that hurt, I better change.

How do kids eventually learn not to touch the hot stove or the play on the whatever they shouldn't be playing on? They get hurt. So change often hurts. So you will be humbled in the process.

So instead of when you're humbled, just a side note, don't get defensive. Allow the change to take place. Because when somebody's say confronted on something, and you confront or you're confronted about, who knows, gossip, slander, whatever it is, instead of being excuse-driven, humble yourself.

And say, you know, that's right, I need to work on that. Fertile soil, fertile soil, I see you growing. I see you developing.

Versus, you don't know, you don't know what they did. You don't know what they caused in my life. And we make excuses instead of changing.

So part of the process of change is it will hurt. So when he said here, put to death the deeds of the body, the deeds of the body are sinful actions. So Paul says, throughout the New Testament, put to death the sins of the body.

You put them to death, you crucify them. You get rid of them. And I mentioned before, I don't remember who said, I think it was J.C. Ryle in his book on holiness.

He said, but today we love to coddle our sins, not crucify them. You know what coddle is, right, like a baby. Back to sleep.

You can wake up later, right, but not right now. We coddle our sin, we don't want to get rid of it. Why, because it's dear to us.

Our sins are as dear to us as our children. But the Bible mandate is to crucify and to get rid of and to remove. So my point was, this purifying work that we've been talking about for 15 minutes is called sanctification.

In theology, it's called sanctification. Do you ever hear that term? Believers being sanctified, the teaching of sanctification. That's what this is.

How you start as a Christian should not be how you end up. There should be growth and change and spiritual insight and more growth and who, can you look back and are you embarrassed on who you were 10 years ago? Or 15 years ago? Or is that just me? Don't leave me hanging up here, come on. Right, you look back, oh Lord, thank God for sanctification.

Oh my goodness gracious. Now here's what's sadder, a person in the same spiritual condition they were 20 years ago. There are people, have you ran into them? You know them? Five years go by, it's like, like I ran into people at my high school reunion.

Nothing has changed. Still wanna get drunk, still wanna do a beer bong, still wanna talk, I'm leaving early. I gotta preach in the morning.

This is ridiculous. 35 years, am I dating myself? No, 30 years, 30 years. Nothing, the same lingo, the same languages.

I'm like, I was just, I couldn't get out of there quick enough. Come on guys, 30 years now. How many more divorces you want? How many more rehab centers you wanna go into? How many more Xanax prescriptions you want filled? So it's the same thing though with Christians.

Can you imagine going five years, 10 years and there's no change, no difference, but that's what happens when you stay stuck on carnal. And there are Christians, I know, that we went to church with them in 2003, four, same exact behaviors and attitudes and character. What, 15 years later? They're not growing because they're stuck on that mindset, see setting your mind on the things of the world.

And their excuse is, it's freedom. I have this freedom to do this. You guys are too old fashioned.

Your kids are gonna grow up, I love this one, your kids are gonna grow up sheltered. Yeah, let them watch our movies at their 12 and serve them some wine, that's a great idea. I mean, but see, they stay stuck in that car.

See, one or the other is governing you. We get so proud of ourselves, I'm on my own man. No, I'm either lead of the spirit or I'm lead of the flesh.

Or there's a battle going on in most of us. That's usually, there's a battle there and it's whatever we set our mind on. But people do say, but Shane, I'm not growing.

I'm not growing. Okay, are you obeying? Well, what do you mean? Well, you know what I mean. Are you obeying? Are you submitting? Are you humbling yourself? And see, I'm not minimizing a struggle.

Has anyone ever struggled with something? You don't just wake up and it's gone. Hello? I mean, that's why it's called a struggle. That word really is an interesting word.

It's a contending, it's a fighting match, a struggle where you're winning one round, you're losing the next. You're winning, it's a struggle that goes on. So don't be discouraged.

I'm not making a blanket statement here that covers every situation. I know that there are legitimate struggles. Mental illness, for example.

You're right, you can't just tell us, oh, come on, think positive. What's wrong with you? Just go take a jog right now and your serotonin level will go through the roof. That doesn't work sometimes.

There's a struggle, there's a process, but many times we have to ask the question, am I obeying what I know to be right? Am I submitting to the work of the Holy Spirit? Am I humbling myself? Because I do tell people, Shane, I'm stuck on this, whatever it is, I can't keep doing this. But you ask the question, are you obeying the word of God, are you submitting, are you humbling yourself? Because God's word says this, it

says, if you flee, I will make sure they don't catch you. If you remove gossip, I will fill you with my spirit.

If you say no, I will strengthen you. If you abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul, I will reward you, I will fill you with my spirit. Here's how temptation works.

It usually hits a high point, and that's usually when most people blow it, right? It's just, oh, I said I wasn't having chocolate today, but forget it, and I eat a whole pound, right? It just gets to this crescendo, and there's this high point, and that's the time that temptation is looking for that opportune time. And just another word of encouragement, there is no temptation that has overtaken you that is not common to all men. But God, who is faithful, will not give you more than you can handle, but with the temptation becomes a way of escape.

See, so I don't think Christians can say, I couldn't stop, I just had to, the devil made me do it, my favorite, right? I just couldn't stop. Well, the Bible, I mean, either that's true, or this verse is true, that whatever God, he will not give you more than you can bear. But see, he uses the word bear there.

It means there's a load to carry, there's a choice to make. So every Christian, with the door of temptation, when it swings open, you can also go out the exit. God gives us the strength and that power.

What it looks like is if you're going through a struggle, and you wanna cave in, you don't look to the media, you don't look to carnal methods, you pray to God, you say, God, take this away, this isn't right. I'm humbling myself before you. Would you remove this temptation? And if you resist the devil long enough, he will flee.

That's when most people get it, right? It's at the height of that temptation. When that temptation hits the highest point, that's when we tend to cave in. And there is, God makes provision in his word.

So let me just give you a few practical steps. Examine yourself this morning. Search me, oh God, Psalm 139.

Search me, oh God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there is any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way of everlasting. God, search me.

Now be careful when you do this, because you better have a piece of paper and a pen. I've never done this and came away an hour later and go, well, that's awesome, I have nothing to work on. That was pretty cool.

I haven't experienced that before. Right, Lord, search me. Is there anything you want, is there anything I need to work on? We'll be the person who says, no, I've arrived.

Go ahead and add pride to the top of your list. And so there's a searching that takes place. Lord, search me, show me, and be careful, you better be sincere.

Because those things will start hitting your mind, you never thought of relationships you need to fix, that tongue you need to, you know, I thought of something, an example I gave at the first service. Let's say gossip or slander. I don't know if you, see, it's hard to relate.

If you've never struggled with something, you can't relate to the person who struggles with that. Like an alcoholic, somebody will say, why can't you have one beer? You have no clue why I can't have one beer. Why can't you stop at this? Why do you have to do this? Why do you have to always gossip and slander?

Why do you have a same-sex attraction? What's wrong with you? See, we can't relate if we don't experience that same struggle.

So, but in this area, say, of gossip and slander and God providing a way, he says, you don't have to do that. You don't have to do that. But the person keeps doing it.

Well, one imagery that came to my mind recently was getting some super glue. Bring it right here. And now on the upper lip.

Close it, right, for about two weeks. See, you can stop that. Now, don't really do that.

But that, see, there are ways. When Jesus said, if something's causing you to sin, if your hand is causing you to sin, cut it off. Not physically.

Because you can cut off your hand and still be sinning. What he's saying is take whatever drastic measures there is, see, that's one problem in the church. We haven't raised our standard and missed it.

We've lowered it and we've hit it. We haven't, there's not a standard of holiness to shoot for. I remember the old church saints and the old books I read, it's like, and there's some good ones today.

Don't get me wrong. Please, I'm not saying that. But they would crucify sin.

They would say, not on our watch. They said, you're dying, sin. We're removing you.

We are cutting off whatever it takes. I am removing you. You are hindering my prayer life.

You're out of my life. I keep stumbling back into this. I'm removing you.

There's friendships that need to be removed. Ah, but they're a friend. I don't wanna do that.

Well, how long are they gonna continue to take you down? That's not really a friend. That's called an ungodly influence. A friend sticks closer to you than a brother.

A friend comes and supports and builds you up and encourages you to walk in the Lord. Personally, if somebody's discouraging you from the Lord and bringing you down, I know we call it a friendship, but you have to be careful with that. You know them, there's an acquaintance, but if they're pulling you away from God, be careful on that terminology.

Because a true friend is somebody who encourages you in the faith. Now, I know we all have unbelievers that we are friends with, and we want to continue that relationship and build them up and strengthen them. But it does, you do have to ask yourself this question, am I building them up or are they pulling me down? Well, it's a quiet room in here.

Right, is this person building me up or pulling me down? So you also have to reignite your passion for God. You have to reignite it, you, you. God, give me a fire for you guys.

Like what Pastor Shane said 20 minutes ago, could you rewind that? That's what I want. Well, you have to pursue it. You have to fight for it.

You have to ignite that passion. You schedule God's word when you're fresh and you're not distracted. Why does God get the mold of cheese in the back of the refrigerator? Right? Oh, I guess I gotta use it, it's

all I have left.

Let me pull the, let me pull the mold off and, you know, make sure it's grass-fed, organic, and those, you know, things. But I'm kidding there, of course, but my point is we always give God the end. Right, after we've watched our favorite movie, after about right or false, oh, where's that five-minute devotional? I promised myself.

And we wonder why we have no passion for God. We have to ignite that. We have to reignite it.

So schedule God as first in priority when you're fresh and not distracted. How can we sit and watch Facebook for two hours but we can't give God 20 minutes? We have to get back into that place of putting him first. And then also, you need to remove distractions.

We just talked about that. Whatever hurts our growth, whatever hinders our prayer, whatever stifles our maturity must be removed. I like what John Bunyan said about prayer.

He said, in prayer, it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart. See, that's what happens in the lives of many Christians. We have a lot of words.

But our heart is not there. I don't wanna offend people, and please don't take this wrong. I'm not talking about anybody in particular or this church in particular.

But some of the most powerful prayer meetings I've ever been to have not had a lot of words. All right, Bill, your turn for five minutes. All right, all right, Steve, go for five minutes.

Chris, go for five minutes. Hey, we prayed for an hour. What did we accomplish? I'm not minimizing that.

I'm not saying that's not a good idea. But where's the fire? Where's the passion? I've been, like, nobody says anything for 20 minutes. But it's not just, what is it, it's quite, there's groaning, dealing with God, oh, God.

God, save our nation. I don't even know how to pray. I don't even know how to pray.

Now you know, now the scripture makes sense. It says the Spirit comes alongside of us, and I don't think it's the Spirit's groanings, necessarily. It's our groanings, and direct, because the Spirit's not like, oh, I don't know what to pray for.

The Spirit knows what to pray. He's not confused, he's not upset. It's the Holy Spirit of God.

He comes alongside our groanings, our yearnings. I mean, a real prayer, New Testament prayer is a birthing room. It's travail, and you can't work it up.

You can't, like, okay, Shane said to be loud, or Shane said to do, no, it's coming from, it's like this deep, like, Lord, look at the school shootings. Look at the suicide rate. Somebody else now, a CNN anchor, some fashion designer in New York, 45,000 suicides a year in our country.

Where it is happening, there's no hope. They're hopeless. So from that, in our prayer closet, there should be a groaning, God, help this nation, turn our nation back.

Lord, I don't even know what to pray for. The prayer request is a mile long, but Lord, you know, pinpoint my heart in the right direction. Oh, God, give us clean hands and a pure heart.

Lord, who's going to stand in your presence? Who can stand in your presence? He who has a clean hands and a pure heart. Lord, if we've lifted up our souls to an idol, forgive us, God, we don't even know what to pray for. And the heart is praying.

So it's not in all these words, because sometimes we think we have a prayer meeting for an hour if we go around the room for 10 minutes. And everybody's bored to death, let's be honest. That's not a true New Testament on fire prayer meeting.

It's needed, it's good, do it, wonderful. But I often wonder, what would Paul do if he snuck in that thing? The people who spent 10 days in an upper room when the fire of God fell, what would they say if they came into our prayer room? You know what they'd say, Shane, is this an accounting meeting? You guys accounting the books here? I mean, what's going on? This isn't prayer, this is going around the room. And again, I didn't want to make fun, because I think that's important, that's where it starts.

Right, I've been in many of those, and that's a good spot to start. But normally what happens is our minds are so carnally minded, we're not ready for the deep prayer I was talking about. So we pray according to what's in our heart.

You ever hear a spirit-filled older man or woman pray? I mean, I've got, on recordings, I've heard Leonard Ravenhill pray. I say, I don't even know how to pray. There's, you can hear the old men and women of God praying, and their souls are lifted up.

Why, they're not super spiritual, they've set their mind on the things of the Spirit. See, who you are all week is who you are when you come here. I can tell by how you're worshiping by what you set your mind on all week.

Same with the pastor, who he is all week is who he is when he comes to the pulpit. If he's busy playing golf, busy putting his mind on carnal things, busy watching the things he shouldn't be watching, busy studying but not letting the Holy Spirit study him, preparing a sermon but not letting God prepare his heart, who he, how he comes up to the pulpit is going to be the fruit of that labor or that lack of labor all week. Same with worshipers, what they've been filled with.

Because it's almost like sometimes you park your car and you want, if you could jog, you could jog in here, right? And there's worship starting, and the presence of God, we're coming into a holy worship service. Why, because you've been feeding that all week, so when you come to church, you want that appetite to increase. Right, you know, come on, like if you ever, somebody ever give you a little bite of a chocolate sundae? Oh, that's all you can have.

Oh no, you just started the passion now, you give me that little whipped cream and that banana, I'm gonna consume that whole thing, watch out. Watch out, that's why don't give me just one donut. Right, it starts the appetite for more.

Who can have a little, just a little piece of meat, your favorite meat, if you're a meat eater. Just have this one, you just woke up Goliath. But how is that any different with worship service? Because what you've been feeding all week is an expectation to come and worship God.

So as you're feeding on that, the appetite is increasing for God, not decreasing. So it's ironic, when you have people come in here, I know some of you are here today, so I won't say too much about this, but every so much, we wanted to do every six months, we had a meet and greet for all new people under six

months. I thought there'd be like 12 people, there was 40 who signed up for it.

And they came and we met them, it was a great group, and we keep doing this. But I know, I know all 40 aren't gonna stick with it. How do I know? Because sometimes, people often, I'm not talking about that group in particular, so if you're here for that, I'm not talking about you, I'm just mean in general, not everybody sticks.

Because if they're filling their mind with the carnal things, the carnality of the world, they like the things of the world, their mind is set on the things of the world, they don't like Shane Idleman telling them the opposite. Who are you to ruffle my feather? I'm not going to that church again. I like my carnality.

I don't want to be challenged by God's word. That's why I love what God did. God totally did this.

When he called me and my wife to plant the church, he gave us a passion for everything you're hearing, and those who stick, stick, and those who don't want to, we're staying the course. This is how God is building his church, so we don't have to like, well I hope, well I gotta keep this group, and I don't want to talk about this, I gotta keep this group. It's just you, let's just let the word of God fly and see who he brings in.

You find out who sticks. And that's, so that's what happens, that's what whets your appetite for more of God. Oh boy, oh boy.

Yeah, page one is right. How'd you remember that, were you in the first service? Who said that? Oh, you said that. And you're from, I want to induce, Leslie and her husband Phil, they're from Minnesota, they listen online in Minnesota, and want to do, and I told them, it's much better in person than on livestream, so.

But there's other reasons we're here too, visiting kids, and so we just acknowledge you guys and thank you for being here, and take the fire back, and warm that place up, that's for sure. Right, isn't it 40 below sometimes? All right. Okay, back on track.

Well, what I was gonna talk about, guiding the believer, so number four, another role of the Holy Spirit is to guide you. Does anyone want to be guided by the Holy Spirit? Hopefully every single, do you want to be led of the Holy Spirit? Right, that's what led of the Holy Spirit means, it means to be led, or to be guided. So here's the key for this.

We are often waiting for God to download directions into our mind, aren't we? Like God, show me, mm. Okay, I need to go do that. He's actually often waiting for you to obey.

Waiting for you to step out in faith. He's waiting, but we want, okay, Lord, you show me, God's saying, I'll show you as soon as you step out in faith as soon as you obey me in that area you've been ignoring me on. See, we think God's going to forget about what he told us to do and continue to lead us.

He goes back, no, remember what I told you to do? No, yeah, I know about that, but go ahead and lead me. I know, remember what I told you to do? Yes, I do, but I'm not gonna do that. So would you lead me? No, I'm not gonna lead you, until you go back and do what I first called you to do.

Ironically, here's the irony, the same steps that lead to change lead to direction. So if you want the Holy Spirit to change you, the same steps that we need to do for change are the same steps that we need for

guidance. God actually guides you based on how often how you obey his word.

See, there are principles outlined in scripture. As you obey the scripture, God's will becomes clear. As we disobey the scripture, God's will becomes fuzzy.

And it's hard to get direction, isn't it? Because if we're not living in that area of obedience, now I do wanna just be grace-filled on this point, because nobody lives in God's will perfectly. We disobey, I disobey, we miss things sometimes. And God, in his love, in his grace, will continue to guide us.

But if you wanna know his will, you have to obey his principles. I think it was J.I. Packard who said, forgive me if I miss quote, but God is more inclined to guide us by his word than through inner voices, right? You gotta watch out for those inner voices. They can tell you to do stuff that's not biblical.

You always, does it line up with scripture? So, for example, okay, it's biblical, God, you want me to do this? I'm honoring you, I step out, I'm obeying. Now his will becomes clear. Now I'm making job decisions based on his word, not on my carnal nature.

Now I'm starting to make decisions based on godly principles. See, he leads us often through his word. And so many people, especially in charismatic churches who are open to the leading of the spirit, they get led away by the wrong voice and not anchored to God's word.

They'll do things that don't line up with scripture. Well, I thought the spirit was leading me. Well, that kinda went against his word.

Well, yeah, but God, no, he doesn't make exceptions. That's the best way to know God's will, is to stay, to pray, and to obey. Stay in his word, obey his principles, and continue to pray for direction.

And then next week, I'm gonna talk about regenerating the sinner. You know what that means? Regenerating the sinner, where God will actually change a person. And I don't wanna get into it now, because it's a long study, or it can be.

But God does changes through the work of his Holy Spirit. And let me just say this on this point. Real change, real changes here.

If you don't know Christ, you must be born again. So I know, like, oh, Shane, come on, we're in church. Yeah, there's a lot of people in church who know about God, but they don't have a relationship.

They've never been born of the spirit. They've never been born again. So the Bible says, repent and believe in the gospel, and you'll be born again.

That's how you really change if you're an unbeliever. That's the only way to change. And to give your life and surrender your life to the one true and living God.

So if you are an unbeliever, or you're hearing this later and you're an unbeliever, are you resisting the work of the Holy Spirit? Because the Holy Spirit works in us. Even he works in you in salvation. I'll talk about this next week.

The Holy Spirit is working in salvation. He's drawing, he's convicting the world of sin and of righteousness, of the judgment to come. There's a drawing of the Holy Spirit.

Are you resisting that? The Bible talks about turning from that and turning to God and being born again. And usually, if a person is an unbeliever, they lack peace and joy and hope, correct? Do you lack peace and hope this morning? Do you lack true hope this morning? Let me read a story I came across. On December 17th, 1927, long time ago, wasn't it? An S-4 submarine was rammed by a Coast Guard, a Coast Guard cutter off the coast of Massachusetts.

It sank in about 100 feet of water. The entire crew was trapped in a prison tube of metal. Every effort was made to rescue the crew, but every attempt failed.

They sent divers down to see if there were any survivors on board. And the divers went from one end of the submarine to the other, tapping with metal, listening for a response. Finally, one diver heard a response, and he recognized that it was Morse code.

He could make out what the code was. This is all history, you can look it up. The diver was able to spell out the message that was being tapped from within.

It was repeating the same question. They said this, is there no hope? Is there no hope? And he responded back, there is none. And all of those people perished, 1924, 1927.

But isn't that the same question people are asking today? Is there no hope? Don't you see that's what's lacking? Don't, the suicide rate, 45,000? I thought it was about 4,500. You know, if I were to guess, 45,000 a year, people taking their life because they're hopeless. All these kids depressed, gender identity, confusion, suicide, shootings, what is it? Because when you remove God from your homes, when you remove God from your nation, when you remove God from the church, and you remove God from the schools, and you tell the kids, you come from monkeys, there is no hope, there's no direction.

What do you think is going to be the result? This is a dying and lost world. You have to offer them and you have to stand your ground, be filled with the spirit of God. And you say, not only is there hope, there is assurance, turn to the one true and living God, this God, he wipes out all armies.

He commands the seven seas. He created life out of nothing. He will lead you through the fiercest battle.

Defeat is not an option. Victory is his name. That's the God we serve.

That's the hope. I've got a memorial service to do today at four, and that's where my heart's been, on this topic. Because that's what's, don't you, that's what's happening.

The world is hopeless. Hollywood is hopeless. The government has helped the schools.

Look at the decline, look at the attitudes. When I was in school, it was like, yes, Ms. Johnson, yes, Ms. Johnson, get in line, stay in line, be quiet. Now they say it's a jungle.

We can't even teach. Where is this coming from? It's a hopeless and dying world. You need to be filled with the spirit of God.

And if you're a believer and you're hopeless this morning, let me quote Robert Murray McShaney. He was one of Scotland's most anointed preachers. He died at age 29.

It was said that when he would come to the pulpit, just come to the pulpit, people would begin to weep because the anointing of God was so strong. See, they used to spend hours in the prayer closet. I read

books, I get so convicted, it's like I spent four in the morning till seven a.m. before I preach my sermon.

Well, no wonder they had that fragrance and the aroma of God. Have you ever felt the anointing of God when it comes and that God is just in that place? So he said this to his people, if you could hear, if you could hear Christ praying for you in the next room, you would not fear a million enemies. Can you imagine? I just thought of that this week.

If you see Jesus Christ praying for you, interceding for you, going before the Father, that's saying Christ wants to guide you and lead you and direct you and you have to cry out and you say, Christ, answer. I want to answer your prayer, your call to me. Can you imagine Jesus praying for you? Who are you gonna fear? North Korea, bring it.

Russia, bring it. China, bring it. ISIS, ISIS, bring it because Christ will defeat you.

He's praying, he's calling, he just, oh man, I'm stopping. Do you understand who you are in Christ? It's amazing because we don't live distant. Oh, he's up in heaven somewhere.

He's an ever-present help in time of need. Doesn't matter if it's two in the morning. Doesn't matter if you're on vacation, he's not.

And you have a high priest that goes before you, enters the room, intercedes on behalf of God. Jesus Christ is there. That's why those scriptures, when you can relate to those scriptures, he who believes on me, he who believes on me will never be lost.

Out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. He told the lady at the well, he said, woman, I have water of which if you drink, you will never thirst again. Oh, there's so moments if I could just go back, couldn't you, wouldn't you love to see that? A well sitting on top of a well, the well of living water, coming out and crying out to the city of Jerusalem.

All who are weak and heavy laden, come to me and I will give you rest. All, all of you who are weak and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come to me, I am gentle, I am lowly at heart.

My yoke is easy, my burden is light. Oh, I might keep going here for a minute. That, that, you gotta, you gotta set your mind back on that thing.

You gotta get fired up. We get fired up about the NBA playoffs, but who gets fired up about Christ working in their life, overcoming hell, death, and the grave, overcoming darkness, driving out the darkness so the light can reign. That Christ is interceding.

That Christ built this church. That Christ drew you here. That Christ is going to be the salvation for your children.

That Christ is going to protect them and your grandchildren. Who is going to protect them from this declining and decaying world? Oh my Lord, if that doesn't bring, doesn't grip you with fear, what does? And it shouldn't because of what I just said. Christ, go before them.

Go before me. Conquer. I mean, we have this idea, just Jesus, he's a nice little lamb, but he's coming back as a lion, right? You've heard me say this before.

He's not coming back as a nice, mild, meek-mannered lamb. He's coming back as a lion. As a matter of fact, from the tribe of Judah, the fierceness and wrath of God is going to be poured out.

He's not going to ask for directions. He's not gonna negotiate. He's not gonna beg.

When the Lord of light comes, the Lord and the King of kings get here, all at knees and all tongues will profess his name. All knees will bow that that is the risen Savior. They can't do anything.

What army, what battle plan? Nothing can work. When Christ comes back, the Bible says that he will tread the fierceness and the wrath of almighty God. Have you ever seen the wrath of God poured out and Christ is going to walk on it like you crush grapes into a wine press? That's the imagery.

And Revelation goes on to say that out of his mouth goes a sword. Not a feather, a sword to rule the nations with a rod of iron. He will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

He will judge mankind. He will tread the wine press in the fierceness and wrath of almighty God. And the people that doesn't penetrate are the people who've been setting their minds on carnal things.

That's why they don't feel the fire of God. Actually, their flesh wants to run and get out of here. Our carnal mind is so destructive.

I don't know if it's God telling me things or the devil sometimes, but I'll run to people that go, oh, we love, I love coming to church, but my spouse can't handle it. Well, thanks for telling me that. Oh, my teenagers just hate it there.

Oh, I know why. Because we're not serving pizza and Coke next door watching movies. We're trying to save them by honoring God and his word and holiness.

Where's the fear of God? Where's the, has that vanished? You would just start reading the Bible. They feared the Lord. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

The fear of God is the beginning of understanding because they did not fear the Lord. And it's just this, I just have this image of the church being on fire for God, full of his power, full of his glory, full of his presence, fearing God enough to change the way they live. Holiness is that environment that fosters not only spiritual growth, but the filling of the Holy Spirit.

I've never, actually, we're having a big revival conference in here. I don't like to use that term revival, but it's a big conference. Even though I like the term, people get this weird thing.

Because in October, we have speakers coming in, and they actually want me to talk about the cost of genuine revival. Because it comes with a cost. I will tell you right now, if you want to be truly filled with the Spirit of God, stop negotiating with your flesh.

There's a cost. There's a cost. People make fun of me every week.

Ah, he doesn't watch the same things. You're absolutely right. I'm not gonna watch a movie where I fantasize about some other woman other than my wife.

I'm not gonna watch these things that are about horrors and darkness and vampires and the occult and witchcraft. Yeah, you're absolutely right. I live a little bit differently.

Poke fun, because I'm the one filled with the Spirit of God. I'm the one filled with the Spirit. I'm not saying that prideful, please don't understand.

But I'm saying there is a cost. It's a cost many Christians do not want to pay. Because it does cost you friendships, doesn't it? It costs you fun, doesn't it? I mean, the flesh likes certain things, right? My flesh still misses Laughlin and the river and jet skis and Corona.

My flesh, every summer, my flesh reminds me, remember those days, remember those days 20 years ago? I do, but I remember the mornings. I remember the hangovers. I remember the depression.

I remember, see, you don't tell me those things, do you, flesh, you little liar? You don't tell me the bad things. You don't tell me the vomit and almost dying. You don't tell me those things, do you? You're a liar.

You have to set your mind back on the things of God. Because it always presents some wonderful things, doesn't it? I don't know why, but it always goes back, oh, I remember that. Oh, but do you remember the next day? Do you remember staying in the sheriff's station on Avenue J all night? Getting a DUI, oh no, I forgot all about that when I was 17 or 18.

I don't remember how old I was. See, it doesn't show you that. It doesn't show you the broken marriage.

It doesn't show you the abortion that might take place. It doesn't show you the depression and the anxiety from walking from God. The flesh will always present you with the appeal, but not the consequences.

All right, I will stop. I think there's enough to chew on now, right? But God just put all this on my heart this week, just to, that's the big, the number one, salvation is by far the number one priority for unbelievers, but the number one priority in the life of a Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's your, well, I love theology.

Well, wonderful, are you filled? Well, I love Bible studies. Are you filled? Well, I love men's events. Are you filled? Oh, I like that potluck, and I like when you do that.

I like the worship. Are you filled? That's the number one priority, to be filled with the Spirit of God, and the reason many aren't is because it costs you something. It costs you.

There is a cost to pay. Somebody said, I don't remember, maybe you can remind me afterwards, carry your cross and follow me. I mean, somebody, I don't know, somebody pretty noteworthy said that.

Right, Jesus, pick up your cross. Actually, he added, die to self. What is the self? What the self wants, not what the self, what the self wants, die to self, carry your cross, and follow me.

That tells me there's two different paths. There's the path of self, and there's the path of following God, and there's a cost. You have to choose.

You have to choose to pay that price. I don't present a gospel that is candy-coated. You can't just cherry-pick certain scriptures.

You know, you'll have a million people watching on TV when you tell people what they want to hear, but what we want to hear is not what we need to hear.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31948.mp3>

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