

God - Fairytale or Fact?

by Shane Idleman

The sermon argues that God is a fact, not a fairytale, based on the evidence of creation and the complexity of the human body.

Duration: 56:15

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Psalm 139:14, Isaiah 40:28, Luke 17:20-21, John 6:35, Romans 1:20, Ephesians 1:13-14, Colossians 1:27, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Hebrews 11:3

Topics: "Relationship with God", "The Existence of God"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the question of whether God is a fairytale or a fact, emphasizing the importance of understanding God's nature and character through a spirit-filled theology. He discusses the evidence of creation as a testament to God's existence, highlighting that the complexity of life and the universe points to a Creator. Idleman encourages believers to seek a deeper relationship with God, warning against quenching the Holy Spirit and the consequences of a lack of spiritual fervor. He calls for a revival of passion for God and a commitment to living out one's faith actively, rather than passively attending church. Ultimately, he challenges the audience to consider their own beliefs about God and the implications of those beliefs in their lives.

Transcript

The message this morning is God. Fairytale or fact? Is God a fairytale or is it a fact? And what I just started a week or so ago is a series called Theology on Fire. Now, you know what theology is, right? It's the study of God and it can actually be very boring if it's in an academic setting where the professor's not filled with the spirit and the students are bored to death and it's just another class.

But I believe that theology can be very interesting, can actually keep us on the edge of our seats if it's on fire. Theology on fire, talking about God with the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking to our hearts about his nature, his character. And I'll just tell you honestly, this whole week, it's been tough because, I don't know, maybe my thinking is wrong.

I'm trying not to do this too much because on one hand, we want to look at ourselves and create an image of God. But when I talk about God and when I'm presenting God, it reminds me of a little ant in my backyard trying to tell the ants about me and my house and my family. I mean, the magnitude of God, the weight of God, the character of God, the nature of God.

And I'm just gonna come up here and talk about this incredible, eternal God. It weighs on me in the sense that I want to do it justice. I want to be careful because I don't think we can just come up here and flippantly talk about the creator of the universe.

It's a very heavy weight. Unless you've felt it before, you might not know what I'm talking about, but it's a responsibility that you feel trying to represent God in the right light. That's why I've been praying this all week is that he would show us who he is, his nature.

Obviously, I can't even scratch the surface. There are big, thick books, 1,000 pages that do it justice. There's a sermon series we could do for three months, but I'm gonna try to do it in 30 minutes on this area of God, fairytale or fact.

My goal is to spark a hunger in you to read books on God, on creation, on redemption. Last week, we talked about the Bible, truth or tolerance. Is it true or do we just tolerate it? Is everything really, Shane, do you really believe that? Or can we bend some things? So listen to that message.

That will get you up to speed. And I've just got a few quick points on God, fairytale or fact. I'm gonna look to the Bible alone on these.

Number one, in theology, there's a whole section written about God in creation and God creating things. And the question often comes up, especially from kids, right? Two of mine have asked so far. I'm waiting for the other two.

Dad, who created God? Hmm, well, nobody. Well, how does that, that doesn't make sense. Well, hmm, he's a spirit and those who worship him worship him in spirit and truth.

God has always been. Well, how can you be always been? Is there a time back then? And it's like, it's hard to fully explain that, but we do know this, a creation cannot create itself. So God cannot be a creation because who created God? So our finite minds cannot fully grasp how God has been forever in the past, forever in the future.

There's no, he doesn't live in the parameters of time. I mean, it's eternal, omnipresent being that is everywhere. Very, very interesting concept, but we know that creation cannot create itself.

So God, that answers that question, right? We don't have to look at philosophy and different things. We just know that God has been eternal. The second point is this, the fact that we see amazing creation all around us points to a creator, right? I mean, who's gonna walk into this church and say, I bet all these pews just set up the way they set up.

I mean, we know that somebody did that. How much more ought we look at creation from God's perspective? I'm gonna read Genesis 2, Genesis 2, chapter two, verse seven. I don't know if we have it on the screen on this one.

It's the amplified version. If you don't know what version of the Bible is best, listen to last week's message. But this is an amplified version.

It says, then the Lord God formed, that is, he created the body of man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And the man became a living being, an individual complete in body and spirit. So we have this image of creation where God actually took the dust of the earth.

Many would say, and I agree, that it was like clay, clay in the hands of a potter. So that the moisture, the clay, there's this clay, and God began to form man, and he breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living nephesh. It's a Hebrew word meaning a living soul, a living being, a living person.

Now, just that in and of itself, you'd say, okay, well, either you believe it or you don't, right? I mean, that's what most people would say. But I actually like to take it a step further. If that is true, if the Bible's true, wouldn't we think to find within us some of the same ingredients, I guess, if you will, that are in the earth? I mean, if we're made from that, wouldn't it be interesting to find out if what's in us is also in the soil? Well, I've got an article for you.

I think we handed it out from Answers in Genesis. The earth's crust contains most of the minerals, nutrients that our body requires. Oxygen is the most abundant element in both the human body and the earth's crust.

The human body is made up almost entirely of 13 elements. Oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen make up 96% of our body's mass. The other 4% of the body weight is composed almost entirely of sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium, iron, phosphorus, sulfur, chlorine, and iodine.

Guess where you find those exact same trace minerals and other minerals? In the soil. So it's interesting. I'm gonna take a rabbit trail here.

Back to fasting, right? Taking care of everyone. When you consume plants, the food, right? Potatoes, strawberries. When you consume that, the soil, these minerals that has been growing and nurturing the plant, then when we take that, we consume it as our digestive tract.

Actually, that's what we do. Well, I won't get into detail there. But the body takes the food, you know it does, and it pulls out the life-sustaining minerals, vitamins, electrolytes, different things.

They call it phytochemicals, these powerful plant things in the soil, into the plant, redeposited into us. And that's life-sustaining food. That's how God created us.

So when you don't consume life-sustaining food, what do you think you're going to see more of? Chronic illness, disease, because we're not feeding the body what it needs. But interesting, you see the same makeup, 13, I think it was, elements in the soil are actually also in the human body. So see, science confirms the Bible in many different aspects.

I've asked atheist friends before to email me, where does the Bible miss it in regard to biology or science? Like where the Bible's like so far off, it's embarrassing. We just don't see that. Science will confirm the Bible.

Now, this is so obvious, okay, that we have the same elements in us that are in the Earth's crust. It is so obvious that many people don't deny it. Have you heard the word Carl Sagan, a famous atheist? He went on to say, and so have many others before him.

I heard it, I think, at the college when I debated the atheists and different people, is that, well, Shane, we came from stardust, because obviously we came from the same thing. So how can you say that with a straight face? Like it just sprinkles down from the stars, and here we are, and it forms the DNA that you don't even want to get into the three point whatever billion letters involved in the DNA and the structure of life, cellular activity, cell division, all these things that just kind of happen from stardust falling, and with a

straight face. See, they can't ignore the fact that this is a foundational truth.

And also, I'm gonna see, I don't know if we have a picture of the stained glass window. Jason, if you wanna put that up, I shared this at the college. I wanted to share this with you as well today.

That is a picture of a stained glass window at St. Peter's Church in York, okay? Let me see if I have this, if it works. This one, I believe, I can, this is a stained glass window at the church in York. Any idea what this is? That's a double helix of your DNA.

That's your DNA, that's in your body. Now, to just say all that just happened, obviously, nobody's gonna see that this stained window has just happened. How much more the complexity of the molecule, of the DNA structure of a human? See, creation screams creator.

That's why the Bible says, the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. That's foolish, it's utter foolishness to think we came from stardust, to think that all this just happened. And there's one person, he was an atheist, that he's switching over, I think he's agnostic now, because he realizes this.

Okay, let's just say we came from premortal ooze. How did the body know to create a male and a female? And how'd the body know to then procreate and bring forth life, conception, DNAs meet, chromosomes meet, and they form life? You know what he said? Well, you got me there. No atheist has been able to figure that one out.

It's impossible, it's impossible. So we need to start giving God the glory due, the creator, the magnificent creator. So you have to ask yourself, fact or fairy tale? I mean, have you ever studied the pollination by bees and what bees do? It's amazing, it's just absolutely amazing.

So you have that from the sun to the moon to the human body to the DNA to the birth of a child that all screams creator. That's why Romans 1.20 says this. I think we have it up as well from the New King James.

For since, since the creation of the world, God's attributes, his invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. So I am made, I can clearly see that there is a God, even his eternal power and Godhead so that they are without excuse. Mankind is without excuse.

So the next time somebody says to you, what about that little boy in the jungles that have never heard about Jesus? They know, they are without excuse, all of us, because right here, we see his invisible attributes. Well, what are those attributes, Shane? Well, logic, unity, consistency, beauty, purpose. You see the handwriting of a creator all over all of creation.

It's there. Not only that, Romans 2 says that our own conscience bears witness of God. It says something like this.

The Gentiles, even when they don't do the law or do the law, not even knowing what the law is, it's actually been written in their heart, it's in their heart to do the things that their conscience either excuses them of or doesn't excuse them of. They know it's written in their heart, in their DNA, that there is a creator. So let's talk about this for a minute.

We see a cataclysmic event occurred where things died rapidly, right? I'm talking about creation. Now, God says the flood, creation of man. You can see that there is, most will admit this, yeah, something

happened, a massive something happened where there's just fossils laid millions and millions just laid down, something cataclysmic happened.

Well, the Bible calls that a flood. Why are there seashells found in the Himalayas? Did you know that? There's seashells found in the Himalaya Mountains. The Grand Canyon, throughout the whole Grand Canyon.

Actually, the Grand Canyon's limestone layer contains tens of millions of fossils with nearly one in seven fossilized standing vertically. You don't die vertically, right? Unless there's a massive flood that takes place. Recently, too, you can find all this.

There has been soft tissue found in the bones of dinosaurs. I don't know if soft tissue's gonna stick around for millions and millions of years, right? They're finding these things. It's just everywhere you look, it screams creator.

You have to actually go out of your way and force things. You ever heard that saying, putting a round thing into a square peg? It's not working, but that's what we do when we go around forcing evolution, forcing this concept that there's no God into a square peg. Yeah, it'll fit if you grab a sledgehammer, right? But it's gonna break everything else.

And see, I told you it'd fit. They're so adamant about it fitting that they don't care that it really doesn't fit. They have to force it.

You have to make, you have to have a wild imagination to think there's no God, don't you? The wild imagination. And how did the universe start? Well, huh, how did gravity, hmm? Light, well, hmm, and you start imagining these things. I said this a few years ago, but it was, I don't remember which one, but just amazing mind.

I don't know if it's Hitchens or Dawkins or any of those atheists, but when he was pressed on this, he said, well, maybe we were delivered here on the back of crystals by aliens. Who created the aliens? I mean, where does it just, it's absurd. It's absurd.

But the human heart is so depraved and is at enmity, at war with God that they will do anything to remove him. That's where this comes from. The fool says in his heart, there is no God.

Obviously, someone created all of this. That's why there's no excuse. That's why there's no excuse.

It's clear that there is something out there greater than me and you, and there's no excuse. God's eternal power, it mentions here. God's eternal power is evident.

Did you know that nothing, now nothing is being created out of nothing? When God spoke, that same energy, that same matter is just recycled. You're not seeing new things being created out of nothing. When he spoke it, it was done.

You just see the recycling of energy and of matter. We can't create something out of nothing. The sheer mass of the universe illustrates his eternal power.

Have you ever went on and looked at pictures from outer space and there's some that say, you are here. This little, like you can't even see the earth and this big solar, I mean, the Milky Way, and it's like, wow, that's amazing. It's like, oh, that's not even one one billionth of the universe, I mean, that's just a speck of

the complete mass of the universe.

I mean, it gives you a headache. That's the God we worship. That's the God we look to.

That will change your perspective when you start to pray, won't it? Oh, God, this problem's too big. I don't know what you're gonna do. Well, I hung Saturn.

I handled Neptune. I keep them from not colliding. I have the gravitational force just right for you.

That should demand worship. Oh my God, and then he wants to have a relationship? I mean, this just blows my mind. So let me just answer a few questions here on this concept of creation.

It's only one aspect of theology. People ask me often, you know, Shane, what are you in regard to whether it's the age of the earth or theistic evolution and God-allowed evolution, different things. It's very simple.

I'm a biblical creationist, a biblical creationist. Well, what does that mean? I'm glad you asked. For one, let me just start here.

And again, I'll just tell you up front that there are great men of God divided on this, great women of God divided on this, but personally, I can't stretch the six days of Genesis into millions and billions of years. I personally, I've tried, I don't know. I looked at the Hebrew, I looked at the word yom, Y-O-M, and the day, is it really a day? And personally, I can't make that connection.

And it's ironic, people drop off books, read this, read this, read this. I don't wanna read books, I wanna read the book. Because you will go wrong reading books.

So let's read it. Genesis one, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. Now, let me just, this is in my notes, I just thought of it now. Between verse one and verse two, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. Some people who think that there have been billions and billions of years call this the gap theory. God created, but then it could have been millions and millions of years before he moved forward into creation.

But just reading it, I don't know if I'd get that. So the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. So we have this darkness.

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, let there be light, something science still cannot understand. Ask PhDs in molecular biology, that might have to do more with the body, but in physics and different things, ask them to explain light.

Well, it bounces off certain things and particles. No, explain light. We still can't explain light.

But he spoke, and light came into existence. And God saw the light, that it was good. And that's where we have this idea that light represents Christ.

Light represents redemption and purity and wholeness. What does darkness represent? The demonic side. Do your kids wanna go out and play at night? Or when the sun's out? We have this internal alarm

clock in our own system that we know.

God saw the light, that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness. So there was a division. God called the light day, and the darkness he called night.

So the evening and the morning were the first day. So personally, I can't see that word day, which is yom in the Hebrew, and it can mean a long period of time. But just the context and a normal reading of this supports, again, in my opinion, there was the first day.

Then God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the water. Again, people are debated on this, or there's debates on this, but a good book is Henry Morris, the Genesis account, if you have that. He goes into a whole section on this about how the earth coulda had a canopy, and it divided the waters and different things.

The bottom line I'm trying to get to is verse eight. So God divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above, and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven, and so the evening and the morning were the second day.

So that's what I mean by biblical creationists, and I would encourage you to be one as well, because people say, no, no, no, no, but watch this video. I don't wanna watch a video. I wanna read the book.

Read this book. Well, I wanna read this book. Now granted, we get extra resources to further our study, right? You're going to read someone like Hugh Ross who believes it's millions and billions and billions of years old.

You'll read someone like John MacArthur who's young earth, and you see they both present decent, I mean, MacArthur's side I respect 100% more, but you read the other side, and you're like, well, that's interesting. I mean, okay, that could work if you move some things around and kind of make some assumptions. I guess if you assume that, if that scripture in Job you think applies to that, I guess I could see where you're coming from.

But we can't go by articles, books. There's people that tell me, Shane, you've gotta read this. He makes a good point that Adam and Eve weren't really historical figures.

It was more of an analogy. Check this out. I don't wanna check this out.

What's the Bible say? We can glean a lot from the history, the historical account, and I'm fine to go in front of God someday in heaven and say, you know what? This read just like it was an actual day. My bad. I mean, that's how I read it.

That's how, no translation. But see, here's what happens. Time to step on some toes.

We can be so embarrassed about our faith that we grab onto an evolutionary concept and try to have evolution fit and billions of years fit with secular society so we don't look foolish. That's where it comes from, in all honesty. Most people don't wanna look foolish to the scientific world.

So they'll, oh, sure, yeah, I agree, I agree, but have you thought there might be a creator? I mean, he might have allowed evolution. There's pastors that don't like me very much, but they believe in theistic evolution in this valley that God allowed evolution from premortal ooze, right? The first cell, and he allowed things to happen. And it's because we wanna be so recognized by the secular society.

We want the PhDs in evolution, if that's even a PhD, can I get it in evolution? I don't know, but we want them, right, to respect us as Christians. Well, the world's never going to respect us as Christians. We're not checking our brains at the door.

It makes perfect sense. When God spoke things into existence, did the world, was the earth first soft and subtle like a little baby? You know, the rocks were nice and round and very soft like a newborn baby. And then after billions of years, they became jagged and hard, and see, we can see the age of the earth.

Or how do you know when God said, that's, when he created, that's how old it looked? As I've said many times before, when God said, Adam, breathe in you the breath of life, you became a living being. Was he a little one month old, right out of the womb? There was no womb, sucking his thumb? You know, and he grew up? Or was Adam, looked like a 30 year old man when he was three seconds old? I mean, you have to ask yourself these questions. So, of course, things look old.

Well, Shane, the earth looks old. Yeah, when God said, bam, and the universe expanded, it's still expanding, they say, and he created, I mean, this, we can't even put a number on this massive upheaval of matter, bam, yeah, it's going to look probably old. It's going to look rugged.

When mountains explode, and when the deep waters were, the flood were broken up, and the earth, a cataclysmic event happened, it will age things very quickly. So there's no problem taking the biblical account and looking at what we see today in the world. And also, the way we measure things can be flawed.

See, maybe it's just me, but I think we put too much emphasis into science and things, even though I love it. I study it, I've got books on it, but that can't supersede the Bible, right? Back when they used to think that bloodletting was okay, where you would, you know, I think it was cut open and let all your blood drain out so the disease would go out and, or take cat dung, or cow dung and whiskers of a cat and put it on your sore, what's the latest? Oh, 100 years ago, smoking was very good for you and encouraged. I mean, so see, you can't, you gotta be careful who you trust in here.

Now, we look to science. I love science. I love medical studies.

I love to see how the body works, but does it line up with Scripture? Here's why I have concerns. The ways we measure something can be flawed. For example, the speed of light, no one understands it.

Carbon dating, the rate at which the universe is accelerating. Many times, people are just guessing, and they're off in their guesses. I mean, it's, I would read somebody, they're like, the universe is 34 billion years old.

Somebody says, 17 billion. Well, you guys are off 17 billion years. Who, where do you get your numbers from? And it's from these things, this is how they do it.

They measure the speed of light, carbon dating, and the rate at which the universe is accelerating. But we have to be careful here because radiometric dating, let me say this about it. We don't know how much radioactivity was in a rock when it was first formed.

Additionally, there may be instances of very young rocks being dated very old. For example, recently, in a volcano, rock was taken from a volcano in Alaska. It was 100 years old, but was dated 5.5 million years old.

And recent articles, I can give you many of them. One article is entitled this, New Rate Data Supports a Young World by Russell Humphreys, PhD. Another one written by John Baumgardner, PhD.

Carbon Dating Undercuts Evolution's Long Ages. Another article by Russell Humphreys, PhD. Nuclear Decay, Evidence for a Young World.

So you have PhDs at both levels saying, no, no, no, we're off on these areas. And others saying, no, it's billions and billions. So we look at what the Bible says.

And Silence, it's called Science Daily. It said this about the speed of light. There's coming a theory, there's coming out a theory that challenges Einstein's physics.

It could be soon put to the test. The idea that speed of light could be variable and not consistent. So what they're using to measure the depth of the universe could be variable.

It's not necessarily consistent. I know these are big things, but suffice it to say that science in many areas proves a historical biblical account of creation. So is it fairytale or fact? That's the question you have to ask yourself this morning.

Is it fact or fairytale? Are we worshiping the true and living God? And then another part of theology is the knowability of God. The knowability of God via a relationship. Now imagine this, the God who created all of this desires a relationship with us.

That to me is the most profound thing that we've read so far. Romans 1, Romans 12:1. Because although they knew God, although they knew God, how did they know Him? They saw evidence for Him.

They did not glorify Him as God, but rejected, I'm reading the Amplified again, they rejected the evidence. Nor were they thankful, but they became futile, which is unproductive in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.

So Romans 12:1 says this. Although they knew God, His evidence is clear, right? I mean, you can just walk outside, you understand that somebody did this. They did not glorify Him as creator.

They don't come out and go, my goodness, there is a God, this is incredible, I glorify you, I worship you, show me who you are. Instead, what do they do instead? They reject the evidence, they're not thankful, they're haughty, they're arrogant, and what happens? They become very unproductive in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts are darkened. See, when you open up to God, the light comes in.

God speaks, God wants that relationship, but when you close Him off and you ignore Him, the darkness sets in in our own hearts. The light came into the world, but the darkness did not comprehend Him. The darkness doesn't wanna have anything to do with Jesus.

That's why you can sing about Jesus, mention His name, but if somebody comes in who's in darkness, they hate that name. The same name you love and you're worshiping, they hate, and they'll yell at you and let you know it. I've had speaking engagements where people have done that.

They yell and they leave. What happened? I just said Jesus. We talked about Jesus.

What happened? Because that darkness is penetrating your heart, but there is freedom if you look to Him this morning. Luke 17, 20, 21, here's the relational aspect. When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when

the kingdom of God would come, he answered this.

The kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor will they say, see here or see there, for indeed the kingdom of God is within you. Now this word kingdom's interesting because as we know, the kingdom of God will come, and that's where He's ruling and reigning under His subjects and He's in the position of authority. But this kingdom is something different.

It's not a territory under the rule of a king. It's royal power and it's actually dominion. So the kingdom of God is within you.

Once a person believes in Christ, has that relationship with God, the Holy Spirit, God's Holy Spirit, comes and resides in the person. He's not in their muscle and in their fibers. He's spirit.

Those who worship Him worship Him in spirit and truth. But somehow that Holy Spirit comes in and indwells the believer. So now the kingdom of God, His dominion, His authority, His power rests in the heart of the believer.

It's not going to be seen, Jesus said. It's within you. Christ in you, Colossians 127.

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Second Corinthians 4.7, we have this treasure in earthen vessels. What do we have? What's an earthen vessel? You are.

I hate to ruin your morning, but you are, I am considered an earthen vessel, just a piece of broken clay. That's it. But we have this treasure inside earthen vessel.

It goes on to say that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. So what the Holy Spirit in us is what brings that value and that spirit-filled life. First Thessalonians 5, 16 through 19.

Do not quench the spirit. See, now it's making sense, right? You believe you have the Holy Spirit residing in you, the kingdom of God, the dominion is within you, and then Paul says, but don't quench that spirit. And I believe that's why many of you feel dead this morning if you are Christians.

That's why you feel dead. The Holy Spirit has been quenched and grieved. Instead of this all-consuming fire that should be in us, it's barely kindling, it's barely flickering.

Right, you ever move those coals around? Oh, there it is. There it is. I thought the fire went out, but it's right there.

God says put newspaper on it, put more wood in the fire, which is worship, the word of God, repentance, letting all bitterness. Do you know we come in with judgmental, critical hearts? That's one of the ways the enemy gets us most often. We come in with judgmental, critical, bitter, arrogant hearts and you don't think that quenches the Holy Spirit? That quenches and grieves the Holy Spirit.

So we have this relationship. We can either fan the flames, put more firewood on, and be filled with the Spirit, or continue to live day by day, week by week, year by year, quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit. We call it barely getting through, barely getting by.

And I thought of it this morning during worship. How sad, maybe it's a wake-up call for many of us here. Can you imagine living the majority of your Christian life with the Holy Spirit quenched and grieved? I don't have the statistics, but it was appalling, if not alarming.

The Southern Baptist Convention, I think they took statistics of tens of thousands of their members, and it was something like 97 or 98% have never spoken about Jesus to someone, led them to the Lord. Hold on, wait a minute. Did I just read that correctly? But see, that's what happens.

Here's a sure sign you're quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit of God. You don't want to talk to anybody about Jesus anymore. Why, because there's no longer a consuming fire.

The fire's been kindled, it's been put out. There's been water thrown on it. So how, can you imagine going our whole lives, or let's say it was good a few years, and then the rest, next 10, 20, 30 years, we allow pride to come in.

Right, knowledge puffs up. I know the Bible pretty good. I'm a Bible thumper, I can tell you off.

Pride comes in, legalism, critical spirit, rigidity, and we live our whole life without being filled mightily with the Holy Spirit. Talk about a wasted life. Can you imagine that? Going to church, going through the motions.

Shane, would you stop now? I'm getting, no, I'm not gonna stop. I'm about ready to turn on the gas. Right, we come to church.

And here's another statistic now. I've shared it before. 30, 40 years ago, you know, people were at church.

Now, the new trend is like, they'll try to get church twice a month. That's directly related to being filled with the Spirit often. Now, some people do it just out of commitment, right? I've been coming for so many years, and I gotta go to church, that's what good people do.

That's not what I'm talking about. There should be an all, there should be a fire to want to experience God. There should be a fire to wanna worship.

I wanna be in the service as well. If it's not there, then it's been quenched in grief. So what we do now is, yeah, I think church is gonna fit my schedule this week.

I think so. But now we look for anything that'll take us away from it, right? Anything that'll take us away from it. Birthday party for a third cousin I haven't seen in 22 years.

Oh, it's on Sunday. I guess I better go to that. Right, got some sniffles this morning.

Think I'll just sit in bed and watch a live stream. But we look for things. But when you're full of the Holy Spirit, you have to get more of God.

And this is a big rabbit trail, so I'm hoping it's for somebody, because you have that, as a believer. If you're not a believer, then you don't have that. You're just in darkness, you're upset at God.

God says, repent and believe. But if you're a believer and you've been quenching and grieving the Spirit, God has so much more for you. So much more for us to do.

I wonder how much more we would do. Let me, let's be real. How pathetic is it? I'm talking about myself.

I've been there. You can go a whole month and you'll never mention Jesus to anybody. I lived my whole 20s, throughout my whole 20s for a decade.

I would mark Christian on a form if I had to fill out something. But it was embarrassing. It's embarrassing to talk about, I'm not gonna be a Jesus freak.

I'm a macho guy. It was much bigger back then, right? And we don't talk about that kind of stuff. And then, hey, are you a Christian? Yeah, I am.

Keep it down. Don't talk about it. Can we go outside and talk? Why? Because you've quenched and grieved the Spirit.

The very God who saved you, you don't wanna talk about. And I will tell you right now, as a living witness, when you're full of the Holy Spirit, you have to. I mean, it's like, you might as well try to hold back Niagara Falls.

It's like you're just excited. You're bubbling over. You see a single mom barely getting by.

Can I help you? Can I pay for that? Have you heard about Christ? What? I did when I was little. Where's this coming from? It's the Holy Spirit. That's the problem in the church.

We don't have enough Spirit-filled believers, filled above capacity, wanting to do exploits for God. And God says, I want that relationship with you. 1 Thessalonians, do not quench the Spirit.

Romans 15, may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him. Are you lacking peace and joy? So that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Here's one good indication as well.

If you have been quenching and grieving the Spirit of God, you are a believer, but you've put fire. I mean, you put water on the fire. You will lack joy and peace.

You will lack joy and peace. Church will become rigid. Serving will become rigid.

You'll start to pull people down instead of build them up. You'll start to have a critical negative spirit and it needs to be repented of. By the way, I'm preaching to myself.

That can slip in you, that's not right. No, it's not right in you either. It can slip in, can it? The critical heart, the negative heart.

And we become filled with ourself and not the Holy Spirit. Repentance, faith, and belief open the door to the kingdom within. So those hearing this later, YouTube, different places, radio, they need to know this and maybe some of you in here.

You have to repent of your sin, you have to put your faith and belief and trust in Christ and that kingdom can come within. That's why so many people, when they finally repent and believe, they feel this burden has been lifted. Right, you ever read the Old Pilgrim's Progress? That's where that song, Belua Land, if I pronounce that right, that's where it comes from.

It's an old hymn written in the 1970s talking about the Pilgrim's Progress. John Bunyan writing about when he's coming to that land, that land that being heaven. He understood the significance there.

So you have to repent and believe in order for that kingdom of God to come within you, the relationship. And then we read in Ephesians that once that happens, we are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit who

is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. So without the Holy Spirit, we have nothing.

You wanna hear me preach without the Holy Spirit? Do you wanna see, do anything without the, it's dead, there's nothing there. So Holy Spirit is also given to us as a promised deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. So it begs the question, fairy tale or fact? You have to answer that question if you don't know him.

You have to answer that question. As believers though, I think we have to as well. No, Shane, this is a fact.

This is a fact that the Holy Spirit resides in believers and I've been quenching and grieving the Spirit of God. I would love nothing more than revival this morning for people to once again be filled with the Spirit as deep repentance takes place. The only thing that stops you from being filled mightily with the Holy Spirit is you.

Not God. It's never God. And two of the most common reasons why a person is not, it goes like this, I don't need that, I receive that.

Oh, I was saved 30 years ago, I don't need that. But over 30 years, you've been throwing a lot of water on the fire. Or we say, I don't wanna give up my sin, right? I don't wanna give up things that I know God is calling me away from.

Because as you surrender those things, God begins to fill you with the Spirit. That's one of my big concerns for the big opiate crisis, the big marijuana now legalized, alcohol is everywhere, is that people are medicating with the wrong things. They wonder why they don't feel that fire of God anymore.

They wonder why they lack joy, they lack peace. It's because other things have crowded out your relationship with God. And I'm not saying that being mean.

I'm not being judgmental. I've walked that fence, and it's not a fun fence. But you have to get to a point where you want more of God.

Because you keep coming to church, nothing changes. Been there, done that, for 10 years, right? I would get to it when it was convenient. Easter, Christmas, feeling bad, feeling convicted, bad day.

Sit in the back row, get out quick enough. 10 years. And then one day, have an experience with God, have a filled mind with the Holy Spirit, and that one day accomplish more than 10 years.

Than 10 years of people sending me sermons, giving me books that I didn't read. Sneaking in and out of church. One encounter with the living God.

And that will radically change your life. He desires that relationship with you. So the knowability of God, the knowability of God is a theological truth.

We can know Him. Do you have this relationship? See, I feel, this might seem funny, but I feel like I know God better than I knew my father. I know God better than I know a lot of other people.

Just from that deep abiding relationship, the knowability of God. Do you have this relationship? Do you have this peace that surpasses all understanding? What about unspeakable joy? See, here's another issue, too. We can have head knowledge, but not heart knowledge.

Many people can talk well about the Holy Spirit, talk about doctrine and theology, but not the heart. The heart's not broken before God. When you marry the two, that's a powerful person.

When you can take head knowledge that has experience and heart knowledge, that's theology on fire. You can't have one without the other. I mean, shouldn't this be the most important topic of the day, of the week, right? Not like, oh, man, number 27's gonna be starting out that starting line, NASCAR, right, or I gotta do this, I gotta do this, the most important thing, and you can tell where your passions lie by how you've quenched and grieved the Spirit, or you're filled with the Spirit.

Because filled with the Spirit gives you the same passions that the Holy Spirit desires. Intimacy with God, watching things that build me up, not distract me, loving people, loving others, wanting to do things that are edifying, wanting to take care of the body that God has given us. The Holy Spirit gives us godly desires that line up with Scripture.

So what we're gonna do this morning, we're actually gonna do communion. And how we do communion is during worship. We're gonna have it up front and in the back.

And this is a time where, well, let me just read it. John 6, 48, 51, it's not up on the screen. Jesus said, I am the bread of life.

What nourishes us more than food? Water, oxygen, of course, but bread, you get the, well, just like I explained with the soil, right, the nutrients, the different things. The bread of life, Jesus said, I am the nourishment, all that you need, I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, this temporary bread that God gave to sustain them physically, yet they died.

But here is the bread, talking about himself, that comes down from heaven, which if anyone may eat, he will not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever.

This bread is flesh, which I give for the life of the world. Looking at that in context, nobody would think that that is talking about people actually eating Jesus's body. He's giving imagery there of the same bread that brought you temporary life.

This bread, if you believe on me, will give you eternal life. And actually, from that teaching comes transubstantiation in the Roman Catholic Church, where the wafer and the juice, wine, actually become the, actually, really, that's why there's this whole system there the priest does, it actually becomes the body and blood of Jesus, the actual DNA that's called transubstantiation, I believe. Now, we don't believe that, we don't teach that, but then there's something called consubstantiation, where he doesn't really become him, but he's in that aspect.

He's in, I think the confession says, in and of the elements. And then there's a reformed view, that spiritually speaking, Jesus is here with us, and then there's a memorial view. It's having, just doing this in remembrance of me.

So what we believe, what we teach, is what the Bible says. Jesus says, remember, you can't go wrong here, Jesus says, do this in remembrance of me. But we also understand that there are far-reaching consequences of communion, because Paul said, do not take this in an unworthy manner.

Do not drink, you'll drink condemnation onto yourself if you take this in an unworthy manner. And too many people beat themselves up about this, but too many people just take it flippantly. Because what we're

saying is, I'm gonna go walk to the front, or go to the back up there, and I'm going to take this, Jesus, thank you for shedding your blood on the cross, thank you for being beaten beyond recognition, the crown of thorns placed on your head, piercing your skull, the blood dripping down your body, being beat by the Romans, being accused, thank you for that, thank you for the redemption of sin, thank you for setting me free, thank you for calling me out of the darkness, but guess what, I'm gonna continue in my sin.

I'm not gonna give that up. I'm gonna take it with a critical, arrogant heart. And Paul says, be careful, be careful.

Many of you are sleep-dead and sick among you, because you do not discern the Lord's body and the blood and what it did for you, and you take it haphazardly, you take it flippantly. They're actually getting drunk and eating too much, and neglecting people. So we remember as a memorial, but we also look at the magnitude of what happened, of what took place on that cross.

Through communion, we remember. Because I don't know about you, but as weeks go by, I kind of forget. And that's one concern I do have sometimes for worship and church, is you kind of get in this routine.

And I was just thinking about the lyrics and the songs today, I'm like, do we have any idea of what we're singing about? Who we're worshiping? It's almost like, here we go again, next week, here we, but we have to stop and remember, because that's why we get bored, right? Okay, four songs, hope he's coming up quick. This is getting boring. What are those things up there for? I don't wanna come forward, can't they serve them to me? I don't like that song.

I don't know the lyrics to that one. And we start to get critical. We start to not get excited.

So you have to remember, remember. I just looked at pictures five, six, seven years ago of our children when they were little. Does that change your heart? Oh, Lord, I prayed, Lord, I wanna slow down a little bit.

I wanna, look at how little she was. Oh my God, I remember, I remember. I wanna be a better husband.

I wanna be a better father. I wanna take time again. Ah, the remembering brought me back to how special it was.

That's what communion, the point of it, is you remember what Jesus did for you. How much more what he did for our children. That brings me to tears sometimes to think that Jesus died.

Jesus died for your little children, your grandchildren, the little two-year-old, the little four-year-old. He gave his life for them. And shouldn't we be the most thankful people on the planet? The most joy-filled, not the most sour.

Right, sour, grumbling, complaining. Oh, me, a wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this body of sin and death? Oh, I'm just barely getting by, brother.

It's just this mode we can get into. But I believe God wants us to break out of that this morning. Let me say this.

If you don't know Jesus, you've never repented, you never believed, don't take communion. But use it as a wonderful opportunity to get your heart right, then take communion. You can't take it and remember that he hasn't done anything for you.

The Bible just says if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Christ, you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. You repent. You say, I see sin the way God sees it, and I don't like it.

See, there's a difference, isn't there? I see sin and I like it, versus I see sin and I don't like it. God, I want you to take this way, I'll repent. That's the difference.

The heart is changing. So repent, believe, take communion. You just come up, the cups, there's two, you have to take both, they're attached.

One has the wafer, one has the juice. And you just take your convenience during the first song, during the second song, during the third song. Pray with your spouse.

What a wonderful time to get our hearts right and say, Lord, I'm remembering the cross. I'm remembering the blood that was shed. Would you help me be a better husband? Would you help me be a better father, women? Would you help me be a better wife? God, would you help me love people? Anybody need to pray that? Or is it just me? God, help me love people.

God, give me a compassion for you, for the things that hurt your heart. Give me a compassion for other people. Of all people, the Christian community should walk around with broken hearts instead of walking by people that just need prayer, just need encouragement.

We're so full on the word of God that we forget to give it out. Do you understand that? We don't just come here to get full. We come here to take in and then to give it out.

We have to change this consumer mentality that's all about me, all about self. Feed me, feed me, feed me. I've got theology books this high, but it doesn't matter if I don't bring that out to others and give them the bread that comes down from heaven, the water that you will never thirst again.

You can tell people that. If you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you can stop the drunk on the sidewalk and say, I've got water, I've got a drink on which you will never thirst again. This high will never let you down.

This high will never bring depression. This high will give back and never take. Let me tell you about Christ.

You can do that if you're filled with his spirit. Listen, I'm tired of church is normal. I'm tired of going through the motions.

Oh, brother, preach it. No, you go and live it. That's where the rubber meets the road.

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