

God's Sovereignty Is My Sanity

by Shane Idleman

God's sovereignty is the foundation for our trust and hope in times of uncertainty and difficulty.

Duration: 1:01:30

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 26:3

Topics: "God's Sovereignty", "Trust in God"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's sovereignty as a source of peace and sanity amidst the chaos of life, particularly during turbulent times. He reflects on the challenges faced by the church and society, urging believers to trust in God's control over all circumstances, even when they seem dire. Idleman encourages the congregation to seek rest in God, take responsibility for their actions, and engage in prayer and fasting to prepare for spiritual battles ahead. He highlights the need for humility and repentance within the church, asserting that true revival can emerge from difficult seasons if believers turn their hearts back to God.

Transcript

I've got an important message this morning on God's sovereignty. The title is God's Sovereignty is My Sanity. On Wednesday, I'm gonna give a message at our Wednesday night service, how to find rest in turbulent times.

Anybody need rest right now from anxiety and fear and uncertainty? So as much as I would like to give that message now, it's gonna have to be Wednesday at 6 p.m. But on Wednesday, I was also gonna announce something to the congregation and maybe give you a little bit of background so you can know where I'm coming from, because a lot of you are new. I think over 100 people left the church during COVID. They moved to different states.

California has the biggest, I think, with New York coming closely, with people leaving. And so a lot of new people I don't even know. We've got meet and greets that you can sign up for where I can get to know some of you.

But last year at this time, after 10 years of preaching and leading a church, I was gonna take a sabbatical. And what happened this time last year? Yeah, COVID. I remember I was leaving Burbank Airport and I was speaking at a large men's conference in Minnesota.

And he said, hey, I'm not sure if it's a go. And I'm like, well, I'm on the tarmac. I need to know if this is a go.

So I land in Dallas, Fort Worth, and I find out it's not a go. So I have to wait in Dallas for 12 hours and fly back home. And COVID started, I came back to the church and didn't take that sabbatical.

What a sabbatical is, it's a time of where you actually unplug your cell phone, your media, church-related things, anything you've been doing, you just unplug. It's a time to just rest and seek God. Kind of like what Jesus did in 40 days there in the wilderness and seeking God.

And if you can do it, wherever you're at, I would encourage you to do it. And moms are saying, yeah, right, right with the kids. Well, you can give them many sabbaticals.

But with pastoring, it's 24 seven, seven days a week. And what a lot of you have been feeling in the media, correct, have you been feeling that? The church, we've been feeling a lot of it too with YouTube stopping some sermons and I got Facebook notices and all kinds of things. It's massive censoring that's going on.

And December, I took some Sundays off, as you know, and it was actually the busiest month I've ever had with looking into, I was part of Young Evangelicals for this current administration. And God say, you say his name, you're in trouble these days. But so I was looking at all the evidence, Sidney Powell's 270 page report, Lynn Wood's materials, the voter fraud and the, I mean, it was just a mess.

Our nation is in a mess, it's in a crisis and all the different things going on and conference calls, Zoom calls. And I was actually spending way too much time doing that stuff looking back now and not as much time focusing on what God wanted me to focus on. But sometimes we have to take a stand for righteousness.

We have to do what is right. We have to stand for those things that are right. And so I don't know what that balance is, but December was very difficult, very challenging.

I think the bubble burst in many of our lives and we realized what could, I mean, when you can shut down somebody on Facebook or Twitter, what's next? You know, PayPal just shut down a church for giving? I mean, it's just alarming where this can go. So I was going to take a sabbatical this summer, this coming up and take a break this summer, but we talked to the city of Lancaster. Again, I filled out the form for JetHawk Stadium on Saturday night.

So there goes that idea. And also we're working on something you can keep in prayer. A friend of mine who's pretty influential in the Christian community and knows a lot of people, we want to start getting stadiums in different parts of the country.

And the nation's going to change from the inside out. And not charging people, not getting big name worship leaders. I mean, you know, they can come, of course, but it's not about name and making money.

It's about getting the altar open again and seeking the heart of God. And so there's, so that's kind of might be on my plate as well for June or July, doing some of those things. And so we realized that this time of sabbatical might not come anytime soon.

And I was feeling like many of you, you know, worn out and exhausted. And I can keep doing this. You know, it's not a burnout.

The reason you take a sabbatical is to prevent a burnout. You kind of take that rest before you need it. So out of the blue, Paula, who's at the first service, she asked my wife how I'm doing, you know, as far as taking some rest and another person.

And so there's a lot of confirmation that God was giving us and talk to the elders. And so I'm gonna actually take that fairly soon. Take that time of rest, 40 days, 50 days, I'm not sure.

And I'm gonna come back better, stronger, less, you know, just, I think, I don't know what the right word is. Rested, I guess that's a good word. Rested, and we've got, Pastor Abram's gonna speak, Pastor Rob McCoy, I've reached out to him.

I don't know if he is yet or Jim Garlow, also Ken Graves. If you YouTube Ken Graves, he's a great man of God as well. And so we're gonna try to get the pulpit full.

I don't know who can respond or who can make it with COVID and different things. So it's not a bad thing, it's actually really a good thing just to step away from, I've got a new cell phone for this, no emails, no Facebook, Twitter, none of that stuff. I've never been able to get away from that and just seek God in this area.

What does he have? What's the next step for West Side Christian Fellowship? Because we're going into interesting times ahead. The real church, the capitulating church will be okay. The real church that wants to stand for God's word and do what is right is going to be going to very interesting times.

And I don't know if I ever get this opportunity again. We're going into difficult seasons and I want to just be ready for what is coming. So it's not a bad thing, it's a good thing.

I think it's gonna benefit everyone. But I'm gonna talk about that more this Wednesday. So if you wanna come for that message, that would be great.

But what has been getting me through, and I guess I should back up a little bit. What getting me through sounds like, oh, you know, what's going, are you about ready to fall apart? No, not at all. I'm strengthened in the Lord like many of you.

But it's been exhausting. It's been exhausting when you see evil get away with evil. It's been exhausting when you see the unrighteousness is being elevated.

The wicked freely prance about as wickedness is praised throughout the land, Psalm says. And you see shenanigans taking place. You see as horrific it was at the Capitol and in embarrassment.

We totally condemn it. There was some instigation going on. There's some things going on in the back end that you'll hopefully come out soon.

But now, who knows? I mean, Hunter Biden's laptop is no longer an issue. And who knows what else is no longer an issue? I mean, everything's being pushed underneath the rug. And you might see this time where evil, it begins to really dominate.

But that is when I believe the church can be even stronger. And I'm gonna explain that in just a minute. So I'm very encouraged because God's sovereignty is my sanity.

And he's gonna be your sanity. Now, I'm gonna begin with the quote of the month. Somebody asked God, why are you taking me through deep waters? Anybody feel like that? Or just me? Why are you taking me through deep waters? And he responded, because your enemy can't swim.

Yeah, let's clap for that one. But isn't that true? This isn't psychological babble. This isn't like just positive thinking.

This is the truth, that almighty God reigns on the throne. No enemy will stop him. No political figure will outrule him.

God is God, and he will be God until the day we all perish. And so what is the definition of sovereignty? You might wonder, what do you mean, sovereignty? Sovereignty means God is in full control. He has full authority, and he has the right to do whatever he chooses.

Bottom line, plain and simple. That's, I gave you just tons of theology in a sentence. Sovereignty is God is in control.

So here's the problem. When God's sovereignty is going this way, and my plans are going this way, but I thought this, I wanted this, I felt this. Isn't this best for the church? And then God's sovereignty doesn't line up with that.

And that can actually lead to depression if we're not careful. It can lead to confusion, fear, anxiety. How many people are going to seriously question their faith? Oh, it's happening big time, big time.

People are questioning their faith. Shane, what's going, I'm still getting emails of people saying, Shane, you've lost faith. You've lost hope.

What's wrong with you? Trump will win on Wednesday. Well, okay, maybe I shouldn't have went in these waters. But there's a website out there that said the inauguration's been canceled, he's got it.

I'm like, well, you better check your sources because that's the only website who's saying that. All the other ones, as much as I desired that, as much as I fought for that, as much as I thought that was going to happen, it's becoming clear that that might not happen, and people need to be prepared for that. So how many people are going to fall away because we trusted in what we thought was best versus in what God is doing? And it's going to make sense in a minute.

I know this is irritating. This whole two months has been irritating for many people. Somebody asked me how I was doing, and I said, I am beyond angry, but I am peaceful.

I am so irritated, but I'm filled with joy. So you have this battle within. And I felt like Jeremiah, oh, God, why do the wicked prosper? Why do the wicked prosper? Habakkuk wrote that as well in Habakkuk.

He said, why are the wicked prospering? And he told Habakkuk, hey, write it down on the table so when I finally speak my truth and I judge them, those who will read it will know that I am the God in heaven. Though the vision is yet for an appointed time, it will speak. My word will go forth.

God's word will always hold its ground. When it's not God's time, you cannot force it, and when it is his time, you cannot stop it. So this has been a very difficult season for Shane Eidelman to get positioned into God's sovereignty, right? You had to go through all the emotions of anger and frustration and fear.

When you can censor like that, where does it stop? Where does it stop? Our website hosting company, oh, we don't like this conservative church, boom, done. PayPal, we don't like your giving, boom, done. It's just right in our face.

So we have to rest in God's sovereignty because we have faith in God, right? What is faith? Faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for. So I can't see what's going on, but God does so I trust in him. And this is great comfort to the Christian, isn't it? You don't, very, first service look a little more encouraged.

There we go, smiling. Everybody's got In-N-Out burger on their mind. Second service.

But it's great comfort, great comfort, knowing that God is in control. I can go to sleep at night and all those nights that my kids forget to lock the front door and I wake up in the morning, go out, oh, wasn't that nice? I rest in God. Oh, you ever put the key in the door and you realize it's still outside the car? They could've took your car too.

And so resting in God's sovereignty, there's just so much joy in that. If you get your mind wrapped around that, because I get fearful and anxious, and then, oh, I just get back to God's sovereignty and taking those thoughts captive to the obedience. That's why your mind is the battlefield.

Your mind is the battlefield right now. That's why they're going after your mind with fake news and things. Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the ringing of your mind by watching Fox News and CNN, by the word of God.

That's the only source of strength. And I've come to a point now even in saying, I don't have all the answers. I don't know if that's true.

I don't know if that's true. I don't know why that, but I know that God is true. Because there's so many theories floating out there, isn't there? There's so many things going on from vaccines to the global reset to the deep state to conspiracy theories to Q and all this stuff is just like mind boggling.

And I've noticed those people focus on all those things are rarely focused on God's word. They lack stability and they get mad at me often because I challenged them. I'm sick of all that stuff, aren't you? I want to know what God's word has to say.

God reigns, he has not vacated his throne is the definition. I like what Spurgeon said. I'm going to paraphrase.

Whatever turmoil and rebellion there may be beneath the clouds, the eternal King sits above and all supreme serenity. And everywhere he is master, let his foes rage as they may. They cannot stop him.

And I love one of the prophets gave an example. Though the waves are raging. Have you ever seen those waves? I mean, I've seen guys surfing 60, 70 foot waves.

It's just, and they're coming and they're massive, but then they turn to foam. They're nothing. And the prophet said, why do the nations rage? Why the oceans roar against God? Who is going to stop God Almighty? So we trust in his sovereignty.

Thank God. But guess what? We have a responsibility with sovereignty. I gave this analogy and it is an analogy.

It's not true at the first service. I don't want anyone getting mad at my kids, but it'd be like my son saying, I can say, son, go get a job. He says, no dad, I'm trusting in God's sovereignty.

True, right? Let me put my foot up on the TV. Just watch TV. Go do some, I'm trusting in God's sovereignty.

Go do this. I'm just trusting God's sovereignty. Everybody's still on their January, their New Year's resolutions kick, right? Health and weight loss.

I'm trusting in God's sovereignty as I go to Krispy Kreme. I'm gonna, there's responsibility. God's sovereignty requires responsibility.

How many times in the Bible do we hear or see the word if in the Bible? If you seek me with all of your heart, you'll find me. If my people humble themselves and pray, if you turn from your wicked way or in revelation, even when the judgment of God is falling out, if you cry out to me, if you call upon the name of the Lord, Judah, Israel, actually before they were broken up in Southern and Northern kingdoms, he said Israel, the whole nation of Israel. I will bless you if you follow me.

And so we see there's a sovereignty we can trust in, but we will have moral responsibility in that sovereignty. And I should probably clarify for those, maybe you're new. I love our nation.

I love godly leaders. I love godly legislation. I think it's important for the church to be involved in the political process.

It's one area that God has given the church, the family, and government. Government is his idea. That's actually God's idea.

God created government, why? To govern the affairs of men, to be a tear to those who do evil. And so we want godly legislation in all these areas. But something interesting, I believe, is happening in our nation.

I wanna talk to you about that. Let me just give you one example, Isaiah 118 through 20. You know the verse, come now, let us reason together.

Have you heard that before? A lot of apologetics ministries use that. They'll say, let us reason together. In other words, sit down, let's think about this.

Let's talk about this. So come, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, it's just red, it's death, it's crimson, the crimson blood, it's terrible.

They shall be white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. And then you can imagine Israel saying, oh, thank God, doesn't that sound great? Well, we gotta keep reading.

If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat of the good of the land. But if you refuse and you rebel, you will be devoured by the sword, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. And when God says something, you cannot reverse it.

You cannot manipulate it. So many people think they can manipulate God's word. I'm not gonna listen, I'll just wait.

Eventually, he'll give up. No, he won't, he's got eternity. That's why we call it absolute truth.

When God sends truth in motion, you cannot change it. Now, there are times where the Bible says, some translations you have, they'll say God repented. Really, what that word means in the Hebrew language is when it uses it, I believe more, is God changed his mind.

That's where we get some hope as well. Because he said, Jonah, go tell Nineveh, that great Assyrian capital, that I'm going to judge it. 40 days, I'm gonna judge it.

And they repented, and God restrained his hand of judgment for about 150 years. And then he told Hezekiah, put your house in order. You're gonna die.

And Hezekiah pleaded with him, and he changed his mind. Wicked kings were gonna be judged, and God would change because of the condition of the people. So that's why the sovereignty is complex, because some things are clearly written.

He told Jeremiah, don't even pray for the people anymore. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine that if we were hit with the weight of God saying, don't even pray for this nation anymore. The judgment hand of God is falling.

Don't waste your prayers on it. But he hasn't said that yet. Praise God.

And this theme of judgment, I wanna talk about it for a minute, but people ask me, oh, why do you talk about that? Well, my convictions come from the word of God. So when you spend time in Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Lamentations, where he's lamenting over the fall, and Ezekiel, where he's in captivity, and Daniel, where he's in captivity, and Joel, and Amos, and Obadiah, and Jonah, and Micah, and Nahum, and Habakkuk, the prophet Zechariah, Zephaniah, and Haggai preaching, and you look at even, God's character hasn't changed. Because people think, well, that was the God of the Old Testament.

If anybody tells you that, you better tell them it's the same God. Same God. Now there are dispensations.

They're under what they would call the sacrificial system, the blood of bulls and goats, temporary, and now we're under the new covenant because Christ's death is all sufficient. It's all we need. It's not Christ plus something.

And so there is, in regard to salvation, and different things, and the ceremonial laws are no longer, of course, and the dietary laws are no longer. But did you know that God doesn't give things that tell you to do things that are bad? For example, the dietary laws, do you know how many of those are good? For example, sea fish, shellfish, sea fish, shellfish, not that healthy for you. They eat all the toxins, all the garbage in the bottom of the ocean.

They clean the ocean. God knew he was doing pigs, they're not real good. I could get into the worms and stuff, I'm not gonna get there.

But when God tells us to do something, it's always beneficial. Now the moral laws, though, the moral laws have not changed. When God sets morality in motion, it's still moral today.

It's not thou shalt not commit adultery, and thou shalt commit adultery. It's not thou shalt steal, not steal, and thou shalt steal. So you see the moral character of God throughout the nations, or throughout all the scripture.

And now I will give them theologians who, Old Testament, God dealt with his people differently, and there's some truth to that for sure. But it's also interesting, if you read Revelation, he says, come out of her, my people, from Babylon, come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins and receive of her plagues. Her stench has reached my nostrils in heaven, metaphorically speaking in that regard.

Paraphrase a little bit. And Babylon is judged, nations are judged. So we see that there is, there's some type of judgment when a nation, when the land becomes defiled by the sickness and the perversion of sin, because Sodom and Gomorrah, that was so perverted that God began to judge those nations.

He rained down the fire and the coal, whatever he used to wipe that out. What about before Noah? The wickedness on the earth was, there's a defilement that comes in the land. And so here's the problem, Christians live in the midst of that.

He doesn't put us on Jupiter for a while. I wish, don't you wish, Utopia? But we go through that often. Jeremiah had to go, Jeremiah, read Lamentations.

You want your heart to break? He's lamenting over a nation that drew away from God, that drifted from God, and he used foreign enemies to come in and judge them. Jeremiah, this prophet of God, mighty man of God, is weeping. Daniel, solid, he was led into the exile as well.

Ezra was in exile, coming back to rebuild the temple. Nehemiah, Nehemiah was a prisoner, or not really a prisoner, he was a cupbearer, but he wasn't, he was sad. And the king said, Nehemiah, why are you sad? He said, why should I not be sad when the place of my father's tombs lies in waste? And you see that God would judge, and there would be, his godly remnant would still be influenced or affected by that judgment.

And so how does that all play out today? I don't have exact answers. I just know the character and nature of God. I know his principles, and I know it's not looking too great.

Right? Psalm 12, the wicked freely prayed and prance about while evil is praised throughout the land. In Isaiah's, in a commentary Bible I have for Isaiah, the commentator wrote this, must the remnant of righteous also suffer with the nation? And the reason we use the Old Testament is Jesus quoted the Old Testament. Well, did Isaiah say of you? Well, did Isaiah say of you? You see, but you don't really see.

You hear, but you don't really hear. You draw nigh unto me with your lips, but your hearts are far from me. He would talk about Jonah.

He would pull in Moses. He would pull in, oh, haven't you read in the burning bush passage? Haven't you read in the, and he would pull in Old Testament to their time. Paul said the Old Testament was written as an example that you might not lust after evil things like they lusted.

And so we have this wonderful, anybody who spends significant, let me put it this way. Anybody who spends significant time in God's word, both the old and the new, they will understand that America is on very shaky ground. Bottom line.

If all you're doing is reading John 3 16 in the morning, you might think differently. But that's people, they have little Bible studies. Oh, I read this verse today.

Have you ever read through the whole Bible? No, no, just this verse for today. Well, now that's good. Please grab a verse for the day.

I do too. But that can't be your meal. That's the appetizer.

That's a good thought for the day. Now look at the whole counsel of God because the Bible makes, when people say, I don't understand it. And that's why one of the things I'm excited about is teaching through the Bible.

And it seems God keeps postponing these things sometimes. But I wanna show how it makes a lot of sense. But in our pride as a nation, we can often say like Israel, when they were being judged, a nation came in and just tore down their buildings.

And they said, but the bricks are destroyed. We will rebuild. We will rebuild.

We don't care if God judged us. Even though they have torn down our sycamore trees, we will replant them with cedar. So no, what was it? Not cedar.

Oh yeah, the cedar trees, the big ones. And we will rebuild. It doesn't matter if God's judging.

It doesn't matter. And what they do is they shake their fist in the face of God. And there's an arrogance about that.

On this issue of judgment, do you know why we're called the great Satan by Iran? I mean, it's obviously support for Israel, but America is referred to as the great Satan. The reason is they get their information from Hollywood. They realize that we're the number one distributor of pornography in the world.

Let me just read some of these things that happened in the last four years. Do you know what one of the fastest-growing online businesses is in our nation? The fastest, one of the fastest-growing online businesses in America. Child sexual exploitation.

Did you catch that? I'm gonna put a number on the screen as well. This is how many visits one free porn site, the largest, received in 2019. Porn sites receive more traffic than Netflix, Twitter, and Amazon combined.

Sex education, I've seen it, that they're teaching in our schools, is more perverted than anything we've ever seen in our nation's history. The sexual perversion that they wanna launch into your children and pass laws where they can change your sex without telling you. And you don't think the judgment hand of God is not due? Give me four more years and we'll be good.

Well, what happened in the last four years? Why is this okay? Do you know what killed more people worldwide? The number one cause of death in the whole world last year. Anybody know? Abortion, 43 million children. Number one cause of death in America, I'm sure, is the slaughtering of our own children.

And you're gonna lecture me about four more years? Now, let me tell you, I was, God's dealing with my heart. I wanted four years of Pompeo and Pence and Ben Carson. Tony Perkins, I know, at the Family Research Council.

The guys on the President's Advisory Team. Godly people are in positions of office. The lady who was over the schools for the nation, very godly Christian woman.

I wanted that, I desired that, but I begin to realize something's wrong here. They're thinking doctors are proposing now to ban gender terms on birth certificates at the hospital. So I begin to just really realize,

what are we doing? This is growing, okay? Okay, four more years of an administration that will protect the church, great.

What about if four years of a difficulty brings the church to the altar? Think about it. Nobody comes to the altar, prayer meetings, worship mornings. The church is dead.

I didn't come here to win a popularity contest, I came here to speak the truth. We need to wake up, that's what this is. This is a rude awakening that's happening in our nation, isn't it? A rude awakening precedes a great awakening.

In order for God to get your heart, he's gotta break it. I wrote this in an article you might have. The church as a whole has become comfortable.

All night prayer meetings have been exchanged for all night Netflix binges. Powerful women, powerful men, powerful worship services where the spirit of God is moving have been turned into 60-minute programs designed to entertain. We are measuring success by likes and followers rather than Christ-likeness and following him.

You know what, let me, can you put that number back? Oh, it's still up there. Any guess how many of these are in Christian homes? Could it be by the grace of God that we don't have four more years of pride and arrogance in our hearts? I know this is gonna tick people off. I don't care, I'm not reading emails anymore.

But somebody's gotta say it, correct? If what I'm saying is wrong and unbiblical, tell me. Tell me. When God said because of the sins of Manasseh, I'm gonna judge the nation, the sins of Manasseh weren't compared to this filth? They would give their children to Molech, burn them alive.

God says, what are you doing? This hasn't even entered my thoughts, but because of your giving your children to the gods of Molech, because you're perverted, my judgment is going to fall upon you. What makes us think we are any different? Because what I'm trying to do is get the church to break. Humble themselves under the mighty hand of God.

In due time, he will exalt you. Jesus says, church, cry out to me. Church, see your sins, see your depravity, see your wickedness.

Stop being the church of Laodicea because you're miserable and weak and blind and naked, but come to me and I will give you refiner's fire. Just fall before my feet and cry out to Almighty God and say, God, save me and set me free and cleanse my heart. Oh, I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell among a people with unclean lips.

And the spirit of God comes and he touches the coals of Jeremiah's words and he gives him this fire of God to call the nation to him. Nothing has changed. He said, Jeremiah, go until I send you, pull out, root out, destroy, and then rebuild.

But we got to dig deep to rebuild. What do you do with a sick branch in a tree? You prune it. What do you do with an arrogant attitude? You break it.

What do you do with a cracked foundation? We have a cracked foundation, don't we? We have to rebuild it. God has to rebuild it. So I hope you hear my heart.

I was praying for godly leadership. I was praying for legislation and leaders that protect the church. But I begin to wonder, what's it accomplishing here? If it breaks us and it humbles us, how many millions will come to know Christ? How many countless Christians are gonna finally fully surrender their life and have the fire of God because of difficulty? And by the way, did you know that persecution is the normal for the church for 2,000 years? Persecute, that's normal.

I don't like it. I didn't say I liked it. I don't want it.

But it's the norm of Christian church. Did you know Jesus Christ was born and Jesus said, I didn't come to bring peace? Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, Shane, come on. Yeah, I'm gonna have to call you on that one.

No, you're not. Jesus said, I didn't come to bring peace. Wait, he's the peacemaker.

He's wonderful counselor, mighty God, prince of peace. Right, that day's coming. But right now he said, I didn't come to bring peace.

I came to bring a sword. I'm going to divide father and son, mother and daughter. Jesus said that.

That's why you gotta read all of the Bible. What's he talking about? It's crystal clear in context. The words of life, the words of Christ, the words of doctrine, the words of truth will divide families.

Think about it. Who's, I have a pretty big extended family. Who's everyone in my big extended family upset at me? On the left.

Everybody on the left does not like Shane Idleman in my family. Why? Because of the truth of God's word. It will divide.

It's a dividing aspect. But you can grow through difficulties. This can be a great season of growth because God uses difficulties to refine us.

Let's put up Zachariah. 13, English Standard Version. He said, God said to the prophet, all these, many of these guys were prophets.

And this is interesting. If repentance isn't so important, think about this for a minute. I forgot about this in the first service.

If repentance, if God doesn't really deal with nations anymore, you know, and you know, this whole message Shane, you're talking about, you know, it's more for individuals. It doesn't deal with nations anymore. Why is a majority of the Old Testament written by major and minor prophets? What was a prophet's main job? Was to go and call the people back to God.

To call the nation to repentance. To call political figures to repent. Did you know most of the prophets were political? Did you know that? It's like, you shouldn't be political.

Well, what does that mean? They were, they will go to kings and princes and leaders. If you want to get technical, Jesus got a little political with the religious leaders. Politics just means government, governing officials.

They were the Sadducees, the Pharisees. He called them out, you whitewashed tombs. Oh, you look great on the outside, but you're dead in the inside.

You're whitewashed tombs. You're a brood of vipers. I would love to see that sermon.

I would just step back. Go, Jesus. You think he was quiet? You brood of vipers.

You guys look nice, but you're whitewashed tombs. Oh, don't get me started. I could picture.

Why? Because zeal for my house has eaten me up. These people are leading the people astray. I guarantee his nostrils are flared.

His eyes were like flames of fire and on his head were many crowns and no one knew his name except himself and his name was the word of God. He will judge the nations with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress and the fierceness and the wrath of almighty God.

He's a warrior and king. He's a loving servant. I started to cry during that song.

What can wash away my tears? Sin's nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can wash away my sin? Some of you need to hear that this morning. You need to stop playing games with God.

So God will refine us. I will put this third into the fire. The two-thirds he judged.

This one-third group of people he left. He said, I will refine them as one refined silver. They would play silver in hot fire and all the impurities would come out.

Isn't that true? That's why I often say become better, not bitter because when you go through fires, when you go through the refining process, you can get really jacked up too. Can I say that in church? Okay. But when you go through the refining fires, turn over to God.

Not everyone does. They become bitter and angry. They pick up an old addiction and they go right back into Satan's hands.

But he says, if you allow the refining fire to have its purpose, then you will call upon me and I will answer. Listen, I can tell you as God is my witness that if you call upon that name, he will answer. Folks, he will always answer that call, a call from a broken and contrite heart, a heart that truly wants God.

He will hear the cries of your heart. That call, he will never cast away. That cry, he will never put away.

When he hears his child, no matter where they're at, crying out, saying, God, help me, I need you, he hears and he will deliver. He doesn't play games. And then God uses this to drive us to him.

I don't know why I'm so emotional this morning. God, man. Oh, come on, Shane, baseball, baseball, baseball.

Baseball. God's been breaking my heart. Many people have been putting too much emphasis, too much trust in politics.

It's important, don't get me wrong, but my Lord, don't talk to me about politics until I see you on this altar on Sunday morning. Fair deal? I don't want to hear criticism, I don't want to hear a complaint until I see you on this altar. God's got to break us, and it hurts to be broken, doesn't it? Over the last six months, too, I shared with First Service, I had different ethnicities, different groups of people.

I'll just tell you, I told Pastor Abram, I've had black friends and Hispanics and things just say that sometimes how I preach can hurt them if I don't understand their side of things. And that really, that hurt, and I took it to the Lord and still take it to the Lord, and that's why sometimes your emotions come in, you know, you want to back the blue, but you don't understand this side of it, and those kind of things, or build a wall in immigration but not understand the other side of it, and so trying to find that has been so hard and not wanting to hurt people. It's a breaking process, because pride says, nope, it's not me, it's your fault.

All of us can learn from that. I remember I had one girl, she's about three years ago praying in the prayer room. She said, you know, I struggle with same-sex attraction, but every time I come here, you make me feel, you know, you beat me up with God's Word.

And I started to cry with her and pray with her, and it was so hard to find a balance, because you want to encourage people in sin, but I can't encourage the agenda. See, I have to fight the agenda trying to indoctrinate our children. I have a very strong passion for that, and so when that comes off, people can take it the wrong way.

Now, of course, we don't come up here and, how can I please you, how can I please you? Walking on eggshells. But you have to come up, and even in your own lives, you have to have an amount of humility and be teachable. And see, if you feel their weight, you feel the pain, you understand where they're coming from.

Have compassion, there's the word I've been looking for. Compassion, understanding what a person is going through. So do not run from God's refining fire.

And then John 15, two. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, God takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, which would be most of us, correct? Most of us bear some fruit.

Even that, he prunes. Even that, he prunes. What's a pruning? Can you imagine if we went unpruned? What about if I'm coming up, this is 10 years of preaching, and I've never been pruned by God, I've never been critiqued, I'd be the most arrogant, foolish man you've ever met.

So would you, correct? Isn't that that chisel of God, that brokenness? That the spouse saying, you're not all that in a bag of chips. Do they still say that? I don't know. You know, but those, that refining process of God humbling you, and God humbling you, and God breaking you, and could it be? That's why I get encouraged, because I could see the potentials there, that this is the potential to be one of the greatest awakenings that our nation has known, because it gets the church, that's what awakening is.

Nobody is revived and awakened and filled with the spirit of God and arrogance. They all have to be broken and humbled. Just like, how do you get the perfume for the ladies wear? Ask the flower.

It's crushed. How do you get the olive oil? The olive is crushed. How do you get the grape juice? The grape is crushed.

Same with us. The crushing, and the refining, and the breaking, and you come out of there stronger. That's why I love that song, out of the ashes I will arise.

No matter what you've done in your life, no matter where God has you, God will pull you up out of the ashes and set you up again, if you commit your life to him and surrender. But the pruning process hurts. So let me just give you some scripture here to really help you navigate sovereignty.

This is how we navigate sovereignty. This is how we trust in sovereignty, because a lot of us, we're counting on certain things to happen, and we may have a wake-up call here shortly. The first one is comfort.

Anyone need comfort this morning? Are you afraid? When I'm afraid, it says, look at that, when I'm afraid, I will put some of my trust in God. Is everybody following along now? All right, when I'm afraid, I will put most of my trust in God. My trust, all, everything.

You know what that means? Finances, health. The big thing for parents right now is what kind of nation are we leaving for our kids, our grandkids, amen? Or is that just me, am I being too transparent? But I'm putting them in your hands, because they're not your grandkids, they're your kids. And we put our trust, okay, Lord, here's the deal, let's just be honest.

Somebody's told me, but Shane, all this, you could get killed for it. I'm like, yeah, I'll go see Jesus quicker, what's your point? What can flesh do to me? What can flesh do to you? Jesus said, don't fear him who can kill your body, but fear him who can cast both body and soul in hell. Where's that fear now? We fear man more than God.

We fear the vaccine more than God. We many fear Bill Gates more than God Almighty. Now, I don't like this guy, but I'm not gonna fear him more than God Almighty.

That's who we need to fear. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning and understanding.

God will not be mocked, amen. And we better take that part out, Levy, because then YouTube will ban the video. It's unbelievable, unbelievable times we're living in.

How can you just shut someone down on the internet? How can you just shut, I mean, it's just amazing. Not surprising, but amazing. Lean.

Oh, no, I'm sorry. When I'm afraid, I put my trust in you, in God, whose word I praise. In God, whose word I, see, if you're not praising God's word, if you're not in a state of praise, you will not trust in him.

Because what happens when we watch the fearful media, we try to figure all these things out, and we're fearful, and you can try to change your mind, change your mind, but there's a praising of God, praising who he is. If God is before me, who can be against me? If God is before you, who can be against you? Would you answer me that? The armies of heaven encamped about his soldiers, and God would rain down fire on his enemies, and the one angel would wipe out an entire Assyrian army of 185,000. And where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

See, sometimes you gotta pump yourself up. Sometimes you gotta look to God's word, and you praise his word, and you praise who he is. And I will not be afraid.

What can flesh do to me? See, I knew I got it somewhere. What can flesh do to me? But we get the air let out of our tires, don't we? Because right now, I could really tell off Zuckerberg and Twitter and all those guys. But then you get me on a different day, you say, oh, I don't wanna say anything.

Proverbs 3, five and six, a favorite to us. You've gotta memorize this one. Do me a favor, memorize this one.

Trust in the Lord, Lord, with some of your heart. Okay, we're all following. Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, all of your heart, all areas.

Lord, let's just do that this morning. If there's areas that you have fear over, your kids, your finances, your job, give that to him this morning. Right now, just say it in your own heart.

Lord, I'm trusting, and I'm giving you all of my heart. I'm not leaning on my own understanding anymore. In all my ways, I'm going to acknowledge you, and you will smooth out my path.

You will see it through. There might be hills and valleys, there might be bumps, but at the end of the day, God, the exact Hebrew meaning is I'm gonna make a way where there is no other way. I'm gonna see you through, church or Christian.

That's the God of the Bible. I can't preach another God. There is no other God.

I can't preach another truth. There is no other truth. If you think I'd just get up here and rally the troops, and then go home and say, oh, I hope they got it.

That was a good, I'm a motivational speaker. Hope I fooled them. No, I have to live this.

I live this. God is everything. Doesn't mean I don't fumble and fall and get depressed and anxious and irritable, and often by what's happening to us, correct? Did you know that's where the word happiness comes from? That's why it's different than joy.

Happiness comes from the word happenstance, and so it's based on what's happening to you. I'm not very happy today, but you can be very joy-filled. Hey, that happened, but God's on the throne.

God will see me through. And look at the freedom we still have. Look at the freedom.

And God, I believe God's also called us to fight spiritually. I'm not giving up. I'm actually, people are, oh, he's giving up.

I'm actually revving up. I'm amping up. I'm going into spiritual warfare to get ready for what is coming ahead.

Who's giving up? We're getting ready. I heard it, maybe you've heard Jensen Franklin tell the story before, but it was a, the two lumberjacks were having a contest. One big, strong, you know, rock, the rock, Dwayne Johnson.

He was on that, he was hitting down the trees and this other old lumberjack, he's older than me, 60 or so, and he's, I know, he goes, you don't look that old. I know, I'm not, I'm still, I'm still, okay, let's get off that topic. But they were, and this old lumberjack cutting down trees too, but this guy's, you know, kind of winning sometimes, but the big guy would look and he would see, why is this guy taking a break? He's sitting down again.

Oh, this old timer isn't gonna be able to make it. He's, and he just keep, keep, keep hitting down the trees. And he'd look over a couple hours, he's taking another break.

Oh, I've got this in the bag. And when the day is over, the rock lost. He didn't cut down as many trees.

And he said, what, what happened? How did you beat me? You're taking all these breaks. He goes, I wasn't taking a break. I was sharpening my ax.

That's what many of us need to do. Prayer and fasting is sharpening your ax. This kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting.

There's a certain type of demonic realm that's not gonna come out easily. It's not gonna be fought easily. This battle is not gonna be easy.

All hell is against us. But praise God the sun is on your side. And then Psalm 37, delight.

Delight yourself in the Lord. Do you know what that means? Take pleasure in, to be excited about, to indulge. So here's a conviction alert.

Get ready for this. How many of you didn't come this morning to take pleasure in God, to be excited about, to indulge in the good things of God, but you came out of duty? Oh, there's church. Let me check it off.

That's what we do on Sunday. Or kids, my parents made me. That won't cut it in these dire times.

If you say, Shane, I can't delight myself in the Lord. I'm bored, the Bible's boring. Then you take that to God.

You get on your knees and you cry out to him and tell him the answers. You say, God changed his hard heart. I can't change, but you change me.

You watch what he does. I've seen him take the hardest of hearts and break them and mold them. I wish I could show you my before picture when I was like 270 pounds and taking steroids.

And you can probably find it on Google. But I would come in here. I would think you guys were a bunch of just weirdos.

Raising your hand and singing to God. What is this? That's for women. Let me go, I'm on my way.

Let me go bench press. But see, I was dying inside. I was weak.

I was still a boy in a man's body. Arrogant, proud. And God had to break that.

And he will break it if you let him. But you have to say, Lord, I'm an angry man. I'm an arrogant man.

God, break me, please. But you see the problem, right? Arrogance won't let us say that. The very thing we need to repent of is the very thing preventing us from repentance.

That being arrogance. Delight yourself in the Lord. He will give you the desires of your heart.

It's not a new car, trust me. He's talking about spiritual things here. It might be, I guess, if it's a good heart and for a good reason.

But as you delight yourself in the Lord, my thoughts change. Don't yours? My thoughts change in the Lord. Now he'll give, Lord, now I want to plant a church.

I used to want to go get drunk. What's the difference? Now I'll give you that desire, the desires of your heart. Or I want to go do this for you, God.

Now I have this desire to do this. Commit your ways to the Lord, trust in him and he will act. And then finally, Isaiah 26.

God will keep you in perfect peace whose what, mind is stayed on God because he trusts in God. I'm putting the word God in there. You see who? You.

Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. It's interesting. All these names they would give God.

Do a Bible study sometimes. The names for God. They will give these, you couldn't pick anything, have you ever been up by Mammoth at June Lake Loop? You know, there's a June Lake Loop, and you see that big boulder on top of another boulder.

Like, these things gotta weigh 50,000 pounds each. And you see this everlasting rock. It's the image he would give.

That's why they say, you are my strong tower when all else fails. You are my strong tower. You are my watchman.

You are my Sabbath rest. You are my everlasting rock. You are the conquering king.

You are the lion of the tribe of Judah. You will not be defeated. What army can defeat you? And they would remind the people of who God is.

God is the creator of heaven and earth. Who can stop God's plans? Church, we need to get back to being the church that is humble and broken at the altar, and our heart desires prayer meetings. You need some help? Then turn off the ungodly TV and get your face in God's word.

Well, Shane, that's boring. I know, I've been having withdrawals from my phone all week. It's addiction, isn't it? What's Twitter say? What's Facebook say? What's Parler say? Oh, no, I can't check Parler.

What CNN says? What's the Drudge Report? What's the Huffington Post says? What's really going on? Why is the National Guard at the Capitol? Oh, is this really? Double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. I'm just telling you the truth. If you can come up and tell me what I'm saying is not the truth, I'll hear you out.

So let me close with this statement. Is God's sovereignty your sanity? Do you truly know God? Because you can be a good person and it won't matter. Morality will keep you out of jail, correct? But only Christ can keep you out of hell.

And so it's inventory time. I believe as much as I wanted certain things that we all wanted, I believe that this can be a great harvest time because now people are desperate and repentant and broken and they need answers. Shane, my life is falling apart.

Do you know the rock, Jesus Christ? Isaiah 12 says, God is my salvation. I will trust in him and I will not be afraid. Listen, some of you, you might not hear from me again, some of you that don't come all the time or this might be your last visit or I won't see the same group of people again.

Are you listening to the word of God? Because God says in the book of Hebrews three times, when you hear my voice, harden not your hearts. When you read the prophets of the Old Testament, what would

they tell the people? Harden not your hearts. Jesus would say, well did the prophet say that these people with dull ears, they do not hear.

They have eyes they do not see. Hearing, listen, listen, listen what the spirit of God is saying. He's convicting, he might even be convicting some of you of arrogance and pride.

You know the Bible so well, but does the Bible know you? I'm tired of all these theologians telling me how much well they know the Bible. I don't even see them at the altar ever. Don't talk to me about doctrine until you can tell me about weeping for your nation and for sinners.

Oh, that hurts, good, it's supposed to. Go home and think about it, take it to the Lord. Why am I talking about hearing? Why is that so important? Because the last thing, did you know when you're dying, when a person is dying, the last thing to go, the last sense to go is hearing.

Our nation is dying. Many families are dying. Some of you are dying spiritually.

Some of listening out there are dying spiritually. And the last thing to go will be the hearing. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit of God says to the churches.

He who has ears to hear. So God's working in our hearts individually, all of us this morning. What is He convicting you of? What is He showing you? What is He wanting you to do? Because as West Side goes further, we're gonna keep this theme of revival and repentance.

This is gonna be a shelter, I believe, a safe haven where people come and they get saved and experience revival. It's a living, vibrant church. But it's not us, correct? And don't go out there in the community and say Shane's church.

Never say Shane's church. People say, oh, this is God's church and there are lots of servers. I'm just the loud mouth on Sundays.

Big difference, big difference. We need the whole body. None of this gets out there if we don't have media.

None of you come here if we don't have servants. It's the body of Christ and this church will make a difference. This is not stepping back in failure and being defeated.

This is ramping up for warfare. That's why I'm taking the sabbatical, honestly. You think I'm just gonna, vacation time.

Fasting and prayer and seeking God and getting through the whole Bible and Lord, what do you wanna say to the church? Get us prepared, ready for our spiritual battle. Begin to pray for you individually. Prepare for this church.

We pray the revival hits this church. We pray that our giving goes up and our attendance goes up while I'm down. You know what happens in most churches, right? Well, pastor's gone, I better not come.

Let that not be the said here. And usually it's not. Last summer, this is a great body of believers.

And I did wanna encourage you. I know sometimes the messages are hard. And I'm not apologizing for that, but I also wanna encourage you.

Many people, many of you are hungry. That's why you're here. And when you hear messages like that, you say, amen, thank you.

But if my message bothered you, let me tell you, after 20 years now of preaching, it's because you need to hear it. As God is my witness, if what I said bothers you, it's because you need to hear it and God is dealing with you in your heart. You have a choice.

You have a choice. What do you do with that knowledge? Come and let us reason together. Though your sins be like a stone, like scarlet, I will wash them.

If, if. So, oh Lord, as we close today, worship team comes up and leads us in worship. God, you are worthy.

God, many of us just repent of our being sidetracked. Lord, you've got our attention now. Show us what you want us to do.

Lord, we realize there is no hope in the media. There is no hope in social media. There is no hope in the government.

There is no hope in political figures. There is no hope in anything but you and you alone. But God, I do pray you begin to make a difference in all of those areas.

Bring revival, awaken your church, have governors repent, have senators repent. Lord, change us from the inside out. Let the wellspring of living water flow out from the church into our communities, Lord.

Change the heart from the inside out. Lord, give us boldness as we look to you. But Lord, with our boldness, I'm seeing a lot of boldness, but not a lot of grace, not a lot of love, not a lot of compassion.

Lord, we need that as well. Give us that fine balance like Jesus. He was the embodiment of truth and grace.

We pray this in Jesus' name, amen, amen.

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