

Hindrances to Holiness

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a holy life, separated from the world and following the principles of God's word, in order to experience the power of the Holy Spirit and have a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ.

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Scripture: Leviticus 19:31, 1 Corinthians 6:20, Galatians 5:19-21, Philippians 4:8, Hebrews 12:14

Topics: "Christian Living", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of holiness and separation from worldly influences. It challenges Christians to hunger and thirst for righteousness, remove pollutants from their lives, and approach holiness as a soldier approaches battle. The need for prayer, repentance, and a fully surrendered life is highlighted to experience God's power and transformation.

Transcript

I want to talk to you tonight about probably one of the most difficult topics among Christians. And I don't say that flippantly. It's one of those topics where when you talk about holiness, the holiness of God, they say preach it.

But when then you show what it looks like in application, they label you a Pharisee or legalistic or narrow-minded or a fundamentalist. Because it's okay to talk about holiness, but when we get to the practicality of it, you will be labeled. I will be labeled.

But let me remind everyone in this room that the power of the Spirit-filled life doesn't lie necessarily in our words, it lies in our actions. It lies in the condition of the heart. And that's why Isaac Watts, the famous hymn writer from centuries ago, said true Christianity where it reigns in the heart will make itself appear in the purity of life.

Let me say that again because it's profound. True Christianity. I'm talking about genuine Christianity, not somebody who clicks Christian on Facebook.

I'm talking about genuine Christianity. Holiness is a byproduct of a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. Holiness, the holiness of God, talking about who He is, what He stands for.

As we talked about last week, I'm going to remind or make some points that I made last week because I've got to set the stage. There's some new faces out there, number one. Number two is we need to hear it again in many cases.

Because as our culture is submerging itself into a cesspool of perversion, they are taking the church with them. I can't even look at the news anymore. With all the perversion that's out there, the debauchery, if I may use that old term.

One of the fastest growing businesses in our nation is clinics for those who are sexually addicted. The Christian community is putting these programs that I said last week were a stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy, pure God. The Christian community is putting these at the top, the number one ratings, box office hits, best shows, all these different things, the Christian community.

And I think it is a time for us to come out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord. And what I said last week still pertains this week, that the lukewarm condition of the church hates conviction. They will not like this type of message.

They probably won't come again. Because what it does is it challenges the idols of the heart. When we love the things of the world, and we begin to follow those things, the Bible refers to that as idolatry.

And the nation of Israel set apart for God would often be led astray by what? The pull of the world. It's not that God let them down. It's not that his word was untrue.

But that strong pull of the world. And that will be your constant battle here in this life. Because as Elisha said, calling the people back as they begin to worship Baal and the prophets of Baal.

He said, people, how long will you waver? How long will you falter between two opinions? If God is God, follow him. See there's no mediocre Christianity. There's no lukewarm Christianity.

There's no Saturday or Sunday only Christianity. It is a fully surrendered life or no life at all. Now I need a big fat disclaimer in there because I'm not talking about perfection.

We're not going to be perfect and do everything right. But there should be a heart broken. And looking at the condition of our family, looking at the condition of what's going on.

And I said last week, we just we watched Leave it to Beaver for the first time in a long time. It's almost like you don't even live in the nation anymore. The respect and this and look how far society has declined in 50 years, not 500, 50 years.

The perversion now that's filling the internet and it's Christians. Half of men attending a promise keepers convention said were interviewed or they got statistics that half of them were looking at pornography in the bedrooms at a promise keepers convention. The need to come out from among them and be separate has never been greater.

That's why Isaac Watts can say true Christianity where it reigns in the heart will make itself appear in the purity of life. A genuine conversion when somebody is genuinely converted, there's a heart after the things of God. And what happens is when we talk about holiness, and I see it all the time at conventions or conferences or talking with people and yes, the holiness of God, yes, preach it brother, preach it.

But when we talk about obedience to the word of God, that's when you're labeled. See it's okay to talk about it, but what does holiness look like? See I don't want to talk about it, I want to see what it looks like. I need practical application.

I need to know if my heart's falling wholeheartedly after Christ. And what happens is a lot of times you know how I like to do the pendulum swing and getting out of balance and a lot of times we get on this side and we say it's all about us doing this and doing this and not watching this and not watching that and not watching this and doing here, I can't go there, I can't, I got to do, do, do, do, do, do. That's holy.

Not necessarily. Because you can do a lot of things and you'll be religious but not holy and set apart for God. Because the Pharisees did a lot of things.

So it's not about doing, doing, doing. Now granted a broken, surrendered, humble life seeking heart after God is going to make a lot of choices that resemble certain things. But then we have the other side over here that says you don't have to do anything, brother, just sit at home, let God's spirit change you.

It's that sanctification, it's God's job, he'll change you. And that's true. But you've got to surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit by obeying the word of God.

I mean, if we could sit here for an hour, and I could probably take more than an hour and go over every scripture dealing with obedience to the word of God. And I've talked to counselors before, marriage, family therapists, all these different, and ask them, what is the major crisis, what's going on? One thing, obedience to the word of God. You would eradicate 90% of all counseling appointments if there was obedience to the word of God.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church. You would kill half of them right there. You wouldn't need to call the pastor, you wouldn't need to make a counseling appointment.

Your marriage would be transformed. Wives, show your husbands the due respect, honor him too, and cherish him. You'd eradicate some more.

See it's about obeying the word of God, but I don't want to get caught up on this legalistic, you got to do this, you got to do this. You don't have to do anything. But one of the signs, and hopefully I can go into this at some point of a life that's been truly reborn, is a hungering and a thirsting for the things of God.

Blessed is the man who hungers and thirsts for righteousness, for he shall be filled. There's got to be a hunger and a thirst and a desire and wanting to obey the word of God. If there's no desire to obey God's word, you have to wonder, have I truly been converted? Because that is a sign.

There's no way around that. Genuine conversion comes out in the purity of life, seeking hard after God. Now I want to read a few scriptures on this issue of holiness.

If you don't think obedience is required, listen to this. First Corinthians 6:20, you have been bought with the price, therefore glorify God in your body. That tells me I have a responsibility to glorify God in my body.

I mean, I didn't translate the Greek today and I didn't try to understand the nuances there, but that's pretty clear. Therefore glorify God in your body. First John, all who have this hope in him purify themselves just as he is pure.

We purify ourselves, making ourselves holy. Present your bodies, Paul would say in Romans, as slaves to righteousness, which produces sanctification. See, when you present your bodies as living sacrifices saying, God, have my life, take it, do what you will with it.

When you do that, that leads to righteousness. That leads to holiness. And let me be clear here.

I'm not talking about holiness about, you know, wearing a big gown and a hat and we see halos in some of these pictures and aren't they so holy and he's this and he's a bishop of this, he's the most reverend of this. Many of those people are not holy as the way the Bible defines it. Holiness is being set apart for God, come out from among them and be separate.

Holiness stands above all the other attributes of God, even more so than God is love. Holiness stands out more than any other attribute. The angels fell down in the holy presence of God.

Leaders, kings, priests, prophets fell down in the holy presence of God. John had a vision and said, oh, he fell down. And he stood John up and said, get up because the holy presence of God, Isaiah said, I saw him high and lifted up the train of his robe, filled the entire temple.

And I realized I was unclean. I was dwelling amidst the people with unclean lips. Lord sanctify me, Lord rejuvenate me, Lord change me.

This holiness of God, there's a holy standard that can't be compromised. It can't be debated. It can't be missed.

It can't be, and that's what's happening in the church. The problem isn't that we raise our standard and miss it, it's that we lower it and we hit it. Let me say that again.

We do not raise our standard of holiness and we miss it, we lower it and we hit it. Don't worry, I'll be teaching on the love of God next week. Let me get this out.

It's burning. His word is in my heart like a burning fire. It's shut up in my bones.

I'm weary of holding it back and I cannot. This message of holiness. I believe God is calling the church to a place of holiness, not weirdness, holiness.

He often called his people. That was the whole role of the prophet. Do you realize that? The whole role of the prophet, of course, to prophesy, foretell all these different things, but was to go and call the people back to God.

Jeremiah. God says, before I even formed you in the womb, Jeremiah, I called you and I sanctified you to be a prophet among my people. He said, oh, but I am too young.

God said, you're not too young, Jeremiah. You will go to who I send you. You will preach what I tell you to preach.

You will do what I command you to do. And the Bible records that God touched the mouth of Jeremiah and he said, you will pull down, you will root out, you will destroy the unfruitful works of darkness. Jeremiah, that's your job to convict the people because without conviction, there's no turning to God.

He was called to do that. He was created to do that. Yet in our modern comfortable churches today in our society, we don't need that anymore.

We're good. No, we're not good. We need that more now than ever before.

And halfway through Jeremiah's ministry, he's pushing forward and God says, listen, Jeremiah, go tell the people that they're listening to prophets who are prophesying of their own vision, of their own heart. Don't even listen to them. They're telling the people, peace, peace, when there is no peace, there's no safety.

Tell the people don't listen to these guys because what are they doing? They're causing the people to walk according to the dictates of their own heart. And God says, I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not prophesied to them, yet they spoke.

But had they truly stood in my counsel, had these teachers truly stood in my counsel, they would have turned the entire nation back to God. Is not my word like a fire, like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? He told Jeremiah, tell my people, they have perverted the words of the living God by not warning and instructing and encouraging and calling the people back. Did I get the point across? That was the role of that prophetic element in the Old Testament is to call the people back.

And sadly, we read in 2 Chronicles that God said, I sent my messengers. God said, I sent my messengers, rising them up early and sending them because why, I had compassion on my people. That's why I sent these difficult messages.

See, it's not that God's angry, he's calling a church back to him. It's not anger, it's love. You better check your definition.

An angry God would say, you're done. All of you are toast. But he called, he said, I sent messengers to my people.

What happened? Did they listen? No, he said, they mocked my messengers, despised at my word and scoffed at my prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against his own people until there was no remedy. What do you do when God says, you want it, you got it? See, he calls a church back. He calls us out of the world.

Be not in the world, or you're in the world, but be not of the world. Come out from among them, church, and be separate. But the great cry today is, that's legalism, Shane.

No, it's wisdom. That's Bible. Now, if we start to live like the Bible tells us to live, now we're labeled as fanatical, way out there, Jesus freak, extreme.

Well, that was Bible 2,000 years ago. That's what a disciple of Jesus Christ was. Holy, set apart for God.

Now we're allowing all this junk into our minds, into our homes where there's no difference, there's no distinction. And those of you who weren't here last week, go online, get part one of this message from last week. I gave an analogy of what that looks like.

How can we be in the world? We live in the world. We're here. We work in the world.

How are we supposed to come out from among them? Well, 1 John says, love not the world, nor the things in the world. For he who loves the world does not even have the love of the Father in him. You

might say, what is he talking about? That word world there is cosmos.

It means the world's mindset, the direction of the world. A Christian is swimming upstream. You're always on battleground.

Life is a battleground, not a playground. Life is a battleground, not a playground. A.W. Tozer said 50 years ago, in every generation, the number of the righteous is small.

Make sure that you're among them. See, there's this remnant that's called out. Church, come out from among them, be separate.

And you will not know the spirit-filled life until holiness becomes a part of your life. Because when you begin to separate yourself and remove sinfulness and these sinful activities, when you begin to remove those, God's spirit overflows you. And that's what Pentecostals refer to as a spirit-filled life.

The life surrendered to God, exchange life. You can call it spirit-filled. You can call it baptism spirit.

You can call it unction. You can call it whatever you want, but you better have it. See, I would rather miss the theological term and have the power of the spirit than miss the power of the spirit and get the theological term just right and impress PhDs down at master's college.

I would, I would. I'd rather have, I don't know what you want to call it. You've got to have the power of the Holy Spirit in your life.

And the power of the Holy Spirit comes upon a broken, humble heart who's holy and set apart for God, period. God does not negotiate. He doesn't say, try this, consider this.

He says, here it is. I lay it out, obey or not. That's it.

And young adults, especially, oh, that's so hard. No, as I've said many times before, and I'll keep saying it from here on out, God's principles are guardrails through the canyons of life. They're guardrails.

They don't prevent you from having fun. They prevent you from falling off the cliff. If holiness is so needed, desperately needed, what's the problem? The problem is, and I just alluded to it, is the love of this world.

See, I've noticed that people often don't walk away because Christ fails them. They don't walk away because God's word fails them. They walk away because the pull of the world.

The world pulls them. Jesus talked about this many times. One example was when he said, there's good seed, it falls on good soil 25% of the time.

But other times it falls on hard soil. The enemy comes and gets it. Other times it falls on rocky soil, so there's no root.

So when trials and tribulations come, it withers away. But one of the most dangerous parables is this parable about the seed that falls in and weeds grow up with it and it chokes the good harvest. Why does it choke it? Jesus said, because the cares of this world.

We live in such a blessed nation that the cares of this world just pull our flesh. The flesh says more, the spirit says no. The flesh says, I want more.

The spirit says, you better get back to putting God first. The flesh and the spirit are not friends. The Bible says that the flesh is at enmity with God.

It is at war with God. And that's alarming because you know what, who I'm afraid of more than anything else? The potential that's inside. That's why Paul can say, Paul, the writer of most of the New Testament, oh, wretched man that I am, who can deliver me from this body of sin and death? For with the mind, I serve the law of God, but with the flesh, I serve the law of sin.

It is a battle. It's a constant battle. What happens is the love of the world comes in, loving the things of the world, caring for the things of the world.

And we just get sucked right in because say, it's no big deal. Everybody's doing it, right? It's no big deal. Everybody's doing it.

As I was preparing for the sermon up in a few months ago, actually, I was working on the series. I came across a story of a governor back in the deep South, probably a hundred years ago now, and certain trends were coming and being popular with the young women. And he told his daughter, you're not gonna wear that.

You're not gonna start dressing like that. And she said, but daddy, everybody's doing it. It's the end thing.

It's in style. Daddy, it's in style. He looked at her daughter and he said, young lady, you do not follow the styles.

You set the styles. May I present the same argument here with the church? You do not follow the pattern of the world. You come out from among them and be different, be distinct.

I'm not talking about a Pharisee where everybody hates us, but I'm talking about somebody who there's a difference there. There's a distinction. He has set apart for God.

The problem is, let me get to that next. I don't wanna jump ahead. That's gonna be a good point.

Oh, actually I'm there right now. It will cost you. Holiness will cost you.

I'm here to tell you without a shadow of a doubt, holiness will cost you. Do you wanna hunger and thirst for righteousness? Do you wanna know God more? It will cost you. It will cost you.

It will cost you many things. But as I often used to tell people losing weight in the fitness industry, whenever you subtract something, say from your diet, you better add something beneficial. What happens in this area, you can't begin subtracting all these things to become a recluse and never add anything.

If you're going to remove the opinions of men, you better add the opinions of God. If you're gonna begin to remove worldly pleasures, you better add godly pleasures to your life because you're subtracting all these things out. You better start feeding on the word of God.

Because if you sweep your house clean and seven demons come back, it says the last state of that man is worse than his first state. Now, contextually, that's not dealing with holiness. I got it.

I understand it. But the principle still applies. That when you remove things from your life, you've gotta start adding the word of God.

You've gotta start adding godly relationships and godly choices because you've gotta fill that void. And it will cost you. And the first thing I wanna talk about, we talked about this briefly last week, is it'll cost you the opinions of men.

Let me say that boldly. Let me say that loudly. Let me say that clearly.

No sleeping on this point. It will cost you the opinions of men. It will.

And we don't realize how hard this is, but it's very hard. Oh, we don't want people to think I'm fanatical or this or extreme. And me and my wife, we sometimes laugh about this, and it's really not funny, but it is funny.

I mean, so many people, and you guys are so gracious, and we get emails that people say, we love the messages, keep preaching the truth, brother. Church has gotta hear this. We gotta do this.

But nobody wants to post on Facebook. I'll go listen, but I don't want people to know I'm identified with that radical guy. See, there's 20 friends that might like that message, Shane, but I'm worried about the 400 who won't.

No, we see it all the time. Nobody wants to post anything. Why? I've been guilty of it myself.

The opinions of men. What will people think? Then I'll be labeled a radical, a Jesus freak. I'll be labeled all these things narrow-minded.

Now, I'm not expecting a surplus of this message to go on Facebook, okay? I'm not saying that, but the point is, you know exactly what I'm saying. We're worried about the opinions of men way too much, and that's why Jesus said, woe be to you when all men speak well of you. When you seek holiness and seek hard after God, there will be friendships that will not stand.

They cannot stand. I saw this 1999, 2000, I must have lost a dozen friendships, and it wasn't, you know, and they're like, oh, you're so much better than us, and you're so much better, and you gotta, no, I'm not so much better. I wanna follow hard after God, and I don't care what it costs me.

It's because I'm not much better. It's because I see my need for Him, my need to follow wholeheartedly after Him. These relationships keep bringing me down.

And it's not that you're better. It's not that you're uppity. It's not that you're arrogant.

It's not that any of that. It's that I cannot engage in that lifestyle anymore. I need to come out from among them and be separate.

And it's usually Christians who aren't following wholeheartedly after Christ that are gonna have a problem with it. Oh, you've changed. You went and got spiritual.

You went and matured, huh? No, I'm just, I'm seeking holiness, and this is not gonna work anymore. I mean, it was 1999, I told a friend of mine, after a trip to Lafayette and jet skis and lots of Corona, I said, I cannot keep doing this. This is ridiculous.

He called me a super Christian Jesus freak, and I don't think we've maybe said hi a couple times since. I can't, I can't do that anymore, guys. That's what I would say.

I can't, I gotta, you can call me whatever you want. You can call me whatever you want. I've gotta follow God.

And it looks funny to the world. It looks funny to many Christian friends. Now, I'm not going out there and saying, blow all your relationships, cut all ties.

I'm just saying, when you begin to follow Christ and say, I'm not gonna watch that. I'm not gonna view that. I'm not gonna keep getting drunk.

I don't wanna keep getting hung over. I don't wanna keep having those conversations. I don't wanna keep going to those places.

I don't wanna keep spending my money there. I don't wanna keep wasting all my time doing this, cause I gotta spend time in the word of God. You will be labeled.

And we don't wanna be labeled. We don't. We don't.

You think I like to be labeled? No. People run to me and say, you're that guy that preaches for an hour. Like, okay, I guess that's, that's all right, right? Gosh, like, I should go back and listen to the Puritans and read those hour and a half, two hour sermons.

Come on. It takes me 20 minutes just to get through the introduction. But it'll cost you the opinions of men.

Number two, it'll cost you worldly passions. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, where they, where they, oh, I'm sorry. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

You've got a hunger and thirst for righteousness. And I'm gonna walk a very tight rope here on this topic. Because when I talk about worldly passions, there are some things that are good.

So I'm not coming after all the, there's some things that are good. But let me remind everybody in this room that the enemy often destroys the best with the good. That's one reason I don't want my kids in soccer and baseball and hockey and basketball and 4-H and this club and that club and busy, busy, busy, busy, busy.

We're all so busy. We have no time to seek the face of the Father. He ruins the best with the good.

Some of these things are absolutely great. Of course, we do them. But he gets us so busy and busy and doing all these different things in our community, in our culture today.

And there used to be a saying back, again, I'll mention the Puritans. It was in their chapters of their books. It was in their sermons.

They used to always say, and I love this phrase, others may, you cannot. What does that mean? Others may do something, but you cannot. They might be able to live this glamorous lifestyle and be doing all these different things and busy and working overtime, working under time, doing all these different things.

And isn't that so great? And now Facebook really helps us, doesn't it? Because now we know what everybody's doing and they paint this picture of really who they want people to believe they are. And it will cost you some of those worldly passions. Some things need to be given up to fully surrender and go after

holiness.

But you have to go in your own heart and ask what these things mean. What these things are. For me, I know many times I've been made of fun of going to bed early sometimes so I can get up at four, 4.30 a.m. and spend time with God.

Yeah, you can ridicule me and do whatever you want, but I cherish that time. I wouldn't give up anything for that time. Men play golf, that's wonderful.

But if you're playing 18 holes four times a day, your kids never see you, you have no time for the word of God. There's a problem there. We're so busy with our worldly passions and our culture today.

We want the broad road. I'm sorry, we want the narrow road to be broad. We want the cross to be light.

We don't want to carry any burdens. We don't want to make any distinctions. We want to live in the world.

We love the world. But God says, come out from among them, be holy, be set apart for I am the Lord thy God. And again, I'm walking a fine line here because a lot of these things are good.

There's nothing wrong with it. But I'm saying if you truly want to have holiness in your life and seek after God, there's some things that you need to go through your lifestyle and remove. Easy, very easy.

Is this helping me? Is this helping my relationship with Christ, with my family? Or is it pulling me down? Because he can get the enemy. Once God has you, the enemy wants to keep you so busy that you're not effective. You're not filled with the spirit.

You're stressed out. You're doing all these things and there's no time for him, no time for fellowship, no time for the word of God. Worldly pleasures have to go.

The ones that are pulling you down, again, big disclaimer there because some of those things are good and God-given and we need to be entertained and relax and go out and shop or vacate. I understand all those things. Thank God for those things.

I'm looking forward to a few of those. I'll be fly fishing out with the kids up in the lakes at some point. The wife, of course, she'll be there.

So I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with these things, but it's when we get so busy and I hear that. I think I hear that more than anything else. Shane, I try.

I wish I could, but you must have a lot more time than I do, but I'm so busy. They say I'm so busy and you've got to eradicate those areas that are causing a distraction in your life. He'll come in and he'll get you with those little things, those little distractions.

The next point, it will cost you. I don't even know if I want to give this point right now, but it has to be said, it will cost you genuine holiness, seeking hard after God. It will cost you your sins.

Uh-oh, you can hear a pin drop. You all know the verse, if my people are called by my name, will humble themselves, pray, seek my face. But wait a minute, that's where many churches stop.

That's a big divide right now in the churches in America. We all talk about humility. Isn't it great to be humble? The postmodern church says we're so humble because we don't really know the truth.

Aren't we so humble? And then other churches say we're humble because we're serving God and that's true. And then they all say, pray, yes, we have to pray. All religions pray, right? We're not necessarily praying to the same God, but all religions pray.

And then all most places and religions and churches say, seek God, he's there brother, just find him. You know, as long as you're sincere, you'll find him, just seek God. But it's this fourth point that gets us in trouble.

If my people are called by my name, will humble themselves, pray, seek my face and turn from their wicked ways. See, that's the kicker. God, get mad at him.

I just read the Bible verse. If my people turn from their wicked ways and we hear that word wicked, we're like, whoa, I can't, I'm not wicked. Wicked is just anything that opposes the wills, ways and nature of God.

That's wicked, wickedness, sin in our lives. Myself included. There are areas in our lives that we've got to turn from it to truly seek holiness in the spirit filled life and the surrendered life and to have a passion for the things of God.

Let me read what J.C. Ryle wrote on holiness 100 some years ago. Holiness will cost a man his sins. He must be willing to give up every habit and practice which is wrong in God's sight.

There must be no separate truths with any special sin he loves. Our sins are often as dear to us as our children. We love them.

We hug them. We cleave on them. We delight in them.

To part way with them is as hard as cutting off a right hand or plucking out a right eye, but it must be done. The parting must come. There are areas in our lives that prevent holiness.

Guys that are hooked on porn think it's no big deal. They are seriously misled. If we're not treating our spouses right with anger, if we're not treating others right with jealousy and envy and backbiting and gossip, if we've got all these little secret sins we love, it's just the way I was raised.

It's just how I was born. It's just my nature. I'm German and Irish so I can get upset now.

We have all these excuses. We want to hold on to these little sins. God says you must eradicate them.

You must remove those hindrances to holiness. Now, I know this type of message is going to ruffle some feathers, but that's the purpose is we've got to start looking at our lives and saying, Lord, is there areas in my life that are not pleasing to you? Now, for the title of the message, hindrances to holiness. Separation must occur.

I know I've made this point across, but now we're going to get into the stepping on toes part of this message that I'll be glad when this is over. Don't email me for a few days. Let me just rest at home.

Separation must occur. Come out from among them. Be separate.

See, what we don't realize is when you separate from the world, that's when you influence the world. That's when you impact the world because now you step out. You're separate.

You're holy. You're set apart for God. Now he can use you.

If there's no distinction, there's no difference. We look just like the world. Jesus said, you're lukewarm.

I'll vomit you out of my mouth. There's separation must occur to be truly influenced. I'm going to read 2 Corinthians 6, 14 through 18.

Now, listen up. This is vitally important. No cell phones.

No talking. We're going to get to the meat of it. Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

Now, we use that often in marriage counseling, of course. But look what he's saying here. Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or Baal, however you want to pronounce that. Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. And God has said, I will dwell with them and walk among them.

I will be their God and they shall be my people. Because of this, therefore come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you.

I will be a father to you and you shall be my sons and my daughters, says the Lord God Almighty. And then he finishes in chapter 7, Therefore, since we have these promises of doing these things, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything. That's pretty dramatic.

Paul would be written off as a legalist right there. Right there, that Paul, he sure is a legalist. He's not wanting us to have any fun.

Paul says, remove everything that contaminates the body and spirit. Perfecting holiness. Why? Out of reverence for God.

That reverence there, that fear of God. See, there's another thing, we don't want to talk about the fear of the Lord. But the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding. Jesus said, don't kill that man who can kill your body.

Fear him who can cast both body and soul in hell. Jesus said that. This fear, this reverence for God, we should want to live holy lives because we have this respect and awe and coming out from among them and be separate.

This is where we do not follow the styles, we've got to set the styles. We've got to come out from among them and it's never been harder than any other period in history. I am afraid for my kids growing up in this culture on one hand.

On the other hand, of course, there's great peace in knowing God and having him be their true heavenly father and guide them. But look at how sick and perverted our society has become. The need for this type of separation has never been greater.

The first point I want to hit on real quick, holiness. Holiness cannot flow through polluted relationships and polluted unions. Now, I'm going to be careful here too because I have a lot of friends that aren't believers.

We all do. So we have to be careful here. Holiness cannot flow through polluted relationships and unions.

Paul says, do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. He says, for what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And for those of you who don't know, yoked together, it's like what the oxen used to wear. Those big yokes that would sit on their neck and they would pull.

They would plow the field or they would pull certain things. They'd have this yoke and they're yoked together. They're pulling in the same direction.

But what happens when a believer and an unbeliever, you cannot be yoked together. You're not going in the same direction. You have to go in unison and you're not.

So this has a lot to do with contractually, contracts, marriage covenants, a believer and unbeliever. Now, if that's the case, you've married an unbeliever, well, then there's grace. Paul says a lot of that and touches on this in 1 Corinthians to stay with them and to hopefully God will win them because of your chaste conduct.

And that's okay. There's grace there. There's forgiveness.

So don't think I'm pointing fingers directly at you at this point. But what I'm saying is if you've not yet married, the need to be equally yoked is one of the most important decisions you will ever make as a married person or as a single. Bar none, without a shadow of a doubt, there's got to be an equal yoke, an equal passion for Christ.

I tell young adults all the time, follow wholeheartedly after Christ and see who catches up. That's who you should be dating and courting. What? Yeah.

Follow wholeheartedly after Him and see if they catch up because if they don't and they begin to pull you down and pull you away from Him, there's an unequal union there that God's saying come out from among them and be separate in this area. Another area is contracts with employment as far as your business partner. You're entering in and you're entering into a union, a business partnership.

You want a tithe or offering? I don't want to, you know, get any mean emails on this one either. We call whatever you want. If you want to give to the church and this other person doesn't want to, they want to, you want to do this with the money.

You want to honor God. They want to cook the books. They want to inflate their profit margin.

They don't want accurate P&L statements. They want to lie to the board of directors. This person wants to do everything upright.

You think there's going to be a conflict there? To be totally set apart, there cannot be this union. It'll fall apart. Now, this is different than working for somebody and you collect a check for a job well done.

Basically, you're there, you do a job and you're not yoked with them though. So it applies in many different areas. You have to come out from among them, be separate.

The other area of this, what part has a believer with an unbeliever? Let me say that again. What part has a believer with an unbeliever? I've been talking to some guys lately in the community that I know and they're wanting to come to church more. They know they need to turn their life over to Christ but these destructive

relationships come in and they pull them away.

Destructive relationships pull them away. Let me say right now, if you're curious if a relationship is good or bad, what direction is it leading you? Is the relationship pulling you in the right direction or pulling you in the wrong direction? Let me give you an example. Destructive friendship.

It's a guy who says, I love going to Vegas with Vince and Laughlin to Larry. Those guys can party like nobody's business. That's a destructive relationship because that darkness, actually they're pulling you out of the light into the darkness.

That's a destructive relationship if they're pulling you. Ministry looks like when Vince gets back from Vegas and Larry gets back from Laughlin, let's get lunch, let's talk, let's go out, let's play golf. Then you're in control of the environment.

You're in control of the situation. I'm tired of people compromising so much in these areas. Say, but Shane, we're winning them.

Winning them to what? To the fully surrendered life? Winning them to holiness? Winning them to true discipleship? Winning them to cross carrying? Are we really winning them? You're winning them and you're quoting scripture as girls walk by in G-string bikinis and free drinks are delivered every 30 minutes? Really? You're winning them? I don't think so. Come out from among them and be separate. Be set apart.

Now, a lot of these are examples of what I came out of. I did a lot of those things, Laughlin, Vegas, Palm Springs, Spring Break. So I'm using things for my own life.

You never admit it. I mean, you can go there and make a difference, of course, but you've got to be very careful in these areas. Come out from among them, be separate.

Because W. Graham Scrooge said, I know he's got a funny name, but it's a good quote. He said, Light and darkness, right and wrong, good and evil, truth and error are incompatible. You can't compromise them.

You can't compromise them. When you do, it's the light, the right, the truth and the good that are damaged. That's what's happening in our life.

You cannot compromise the light and the darkness, the right and the wrong, the truth and the error, the good and the bad. You try to compromise them, it's the good things that are damaged. And the next point on this, holiness cannot flow through a polluted mind.

Holiness cannot flow through a polluted mind. What communion, Paul says, what communion has light with darkness? And what a chord, like on that piano, you're playing a chord, it sounds great, but you start beating it and it's, what a chord, there's no chord, there's no accord, there's nothing, there's no union with Christ and Belial. What accord is that? This word Belial means the epitome of evil.

It's used for Satan, for the Antichrist. He's not mincing words here. He's not kind of canticoding anything.

He says, what communion, basically, what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with the epitome of evil? And that's where it's happening right here, the battles in the mind, the mind gate. The mind gate, Psalms tells us not to put anything wicked before our eyes. 1 Timothy says, be examples of decency and purity.

Philippians 4, 8 should silence any debate in this area. Finally, brethren, whatever things are pure and honest and noble and upright, meditate on these things. The media is everything, everything is not these things.

It's everything but these things. Whatever is not noble, whatever is corrupt, whatever is evil, whatever is this, meditate. We're meditating on everything but what God's word says when it comes to our media choices.

Let me read to you Romans 12, 32 from the English Standard Version. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do whatever they wanted to be done. They were filled with, now let me see if this sounds familiar today.

They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanders, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Though they know God's righteous decree and that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but they give approval to them. And here is my concern with our media choices. We are giving an approval to these things.

When we do not confront, we confirm. And what entertainment is, you've gotta be careful because you are allowing things to come in your mind. You are approving these things.

Let me watch this. Let this influence me. Let me enjoy this.

But Paul says, do not be conformed to this world but be transformed, how Paul? By the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable perfect will of God. So we allow all this junk into our minds and we wonder why we have no passion for the things of God. We wonder why we're not filled with the Holy Spirit because we're allowing a cesspool of things into our thought life.

It's hard enough as it is without outside influence. It's hard enough as it is. But we just keep adding these things, adding these things.

If you want me to name shows, go and watch last week's. I'm not gonna do it necessarily again this week. But all these things that God would call an abomination we are enjoying.

And never ever once in the Bible will you find that we are to be enthusiastic about things that God forbids. Never. Not even once, Shane? No.

Never are we to be enthusiastic about things that God forbids. Let me read some Scriptures to you in light of some of the favorite movies out there today. What we're allowing into our mind.

See, the challenge for me is, I don't want to make this bigger than it is in a mountain out of a molehill. But at the same time, we are being deceived and led astray and we don't even know it. We wonder why we're not filled with the power of God.

Wonder why God's Word is boring. I never want to read it that much. Church is okay.

God seems distant. It's because you're feeding your mind with things that directly oppose the will and way with God. You're not coming out from among them, be separate.

So the need, almost on one hand, is to discuss this more than we are. And have I told you guys before, I had one pastor tell me, Shane, you shouldn't mention anything about movies. Don't mention titles.

Don't mention this. You should just talk in general terms. The problem is when you talk in general terms, nobody thinks it applies to them.

Oh yeah, you should see Bob, my neighbor. You go, what he watches. Look what he does.

Look at what he... No, you, we've got to be specific. And the reason I'm so passionate about this is God radically changed my life in this area. When I moved in with my mom, I've told this story before, I didn't have television hooked up.

I began to pour through the Bible, read through it year after year after year after year. Memorize, memorize, memorize, memorize. Read church history.

Read systematic theology. Read hermeneutics. Read homiletics.

Read the early church fathers. Read the Puritans. Read inductive theological books.

Read systematic theological books. I read as much as I could. I was hungering and thirsting for the things of God because I removed the pollutants out of my mind.

And this was at the point when God radically filled me with the Spirit of God. And I felt a need to preach and to live holy and to call people back to Christ more than I've ever felt in my life. I went from dead, lethargic religion where I didn't even know if I knew God to a vibrant life filled with the Spirit of God simply because of the immediate choices.

So you don't think I have a passion in this area? And when young adults, young Christians can look at me and they have no problem glorifying vampires, the witchcraft, the occult, I have a serious problem with that because there's no such thing as nice witches, pleasant enchantments, good familiar spirits. It's not. It's not.

What happens is we get on the slippery slope of compromise. We slip down and we compromise. We slip down and we compromise.

We're feeding our mind with things that directly oppose the will of God. And I know this subject upsets people, but I'm gonna preach it till the day I die because it is an abomination in the sight of God. There is no excuse for allowing these things into our home to filter, especially the mind of our children.

When they walk around, they think it's no big deal. Well, Shane, does the Bible say anything about that? Well, I'm glad you asked. Do you have a minute? Just a minute.

Isaiah. Now, if anybody thinks these scriptures are out of context, what in the world else do they mean? Philippians, let your mind, or I'm sorry, Philippians says, finally, brethren, whatever things are noble and right and honest and good and of good report, meditate on these things. You don't think that applies to our media choices? I mean, come on.

It's simple, simple. Hermeneutics 101. The Bible's pretty crystal clear on some of these issues.

Isaiah 8, 9. And when they say to you, inquire of the mediums and the necromancers, a necromancer was somebody inquiring of the living for the dead, going to somebody who was dead, familiar spirits, asking them for advice, asking them for things. And they inquire of these people who chirp and they mutter. Should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? Look at Leviticus 19.

Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits. Do not seek them out. And so make yourselves unclean by them.

I am the Lord your God. And for one hour straight, my eyes got caught on this word. Give no regard.

Give no regard to these things. No regard. Well, in the Hebrew, it's an interesting word.

It means do not consider, do not gaze at, and do not pay attention to. Wow, that's exactly what we do. Not only do we consider it, we gaze at it, we pay attention to it, and we love it.

Feed me more and more and more. Oh, but it's no big deal. Woe be to the man who says no big deal.

Woe be to the man who calls evil good and good evil. These are crystal clear issues. For when you're filled with the Spirit of God, if these things don't hurt you, something is wrong with your spirit.

It's not legalism, it's wisdom. Legalism says, oh, I'm so spiritual and I'm so great and I follow all these rules and I'm in much better shape with God than you are. Wisdom says, Lord, I'm broken.

I need you. I don't wanna lust after women other than my wife. I'm gonna watch my immediate choices.

I'm not gonna let these familiar spirits and wizards and witchcraft and vampires and all these things in the occult influence my children. Lord, I wanna follow wholeheartedly after you. I wanna stand up like Joshua and say, choose today whom you will serve.

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. You can call me narrow-minded and critical and arrogant, legalistic, but I want God to know that I'm seeking hard after him. And these things, he says, they are an abomination in my sight.

I could have brought 50 more scriptures. Give no regard to familiar spirits. Do not seek them out.

Now, Galatians, now the works of the flesh are evident. He lists whole different things. And he says, and sorcery.

I warn you before as I warned you before. I warn you again as I warned you before. Those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, Shannon, are you saying that somebody watches this? Is it participating? Absolutely not. But I'm saying, how can something that is going to keep somebody from the kingdom of God entertain you? Look at this. He says, the works of the flesh are idolatry.

And the media loves to put idols up there. There's an American idol out there somewhere. There's all these different things that we want idolatry, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, dissensions, divisions.

They feed all these things. Second Chronicles, and he burned his sons as an offering in the valley and used fortune telling and omens and sorcery and dealt with mediums and with necromancers. He did much

evil on the side of the Lord, provoking him to anger.

A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer, Leviticus 20, shall surely be put to death. Now, granted, that's the verse that a lot of them used back when our nation was founded for the Salem witch trials. But they don't tell you about the three Christian men who brought that whole thing to an end, do they? It's that point, they wanna keep pointing fingers and pointing, look at, see, look at what you guys did.

Leviticus 20, if a person turns to mediums and necromancers whoring after them, this is strong language. I will set my face against that person and cut him off from among his people. And you have to ask, are these movies drawing you closer to Christ? Are your media choices drawing you closer to Christ or further away? I wasn't gonna say it, but I'm gonna say it.

When I wrote on this issue last year, it was disheartening. When I said, hey, you might wanna consider this Harry Potter series and all this. They said, oh, Shane, you should go and watch it.

So I went and rented it. I am more convinced than ever before that this stuff is an abomination in the sight of God. I'm sitting there watching a girl levitate, bleeding out of her mouth as a snake comes and bites her and as they're casting spells and spirits, oh, that should entertain the church.

I almost wanna throw up. It's not legalism, it's brokenness. This is ridiculous, guys.

See, and there's a battle I have to fight every Saturday. And Lord, I do not wanna say this, but it has to be said because these things, God, I could not find one scripture that supports our viewing habits, not even one. As a matter of fact, they all go against it.

We're committing adultery in our mind by what we're watching. We're allowing these things and the enemy does not just push you off the building. As I said before, he takes you down one step at a time, one compromise at a time, one wrong choice at a time.

And it's no surprise that these people who are filling their mind with all this junk are not spirit-filled believers on fire for Christ, living and ministering and winning people to the Lord. Very rarely. They might win them to their lifestyle, say a little prayer.

Yeah, sure, nothing has to change. Winning them to what? There's no dying to self, no crucifixion of the world, no falling hard after God, no love of God's word, no rejecting those things that will pull you down. All these different things.

What are we winning them to? Following Christ is not about saying a little prayer. It's about dying to self, saying I'm a sinner in need of a Savior. Lord, I give my life to you.

I need you. I will follow you. If we had time, we could talk about Jesus saying, go sell everything, follow me.

Big man said, I can't. I've got too many possessions. Jesus said, if you even, if who even loves his father, you've got to hate your father and hate your mother and prefer me.

People say that's pretty strong. Well, in the original language, it means to prefer one above another. Christ is saying, you've got to prefer me.

You've got to die to self. That is a spirit-filled life. Just remember, as a man thinks in his heart, so is he.

What you put in is what you get out. What we're putting into our mind, there's no such thing as good evil. There's no such thing as good evil.

We cannot keep making all these different arguments about things that God has forbidden. The reason is he wants to protect our heart. And he wants us to follow after him.

I know I'm really driving that point home, but I have to, because that is the fully surrendered life. Just hit an hour again. I'm trying to be under the hour sermon guy.

That's all right. I knew it was going to be a little long. That's why I told Jordan to do three songs.

I had it planned out a little bit. But you know what? I'm not going to go on much longer, but I want to talk about these things of coming out from among them. We've talked about different things.

I want you guys to consider all areas of your life. Look at Facebook. Look at what we're posting on Facebook.

Look at the pictures. Look at these things. You're not coming out from among them.

You're not being separate. There's things on there that are not glorifying God. The way we're dressing, women especially, tight here, alluring, this, pull down, up.

Oh, look at me. Isn't that great? No, you're supposed to be holy and set apart for God. And Facebook should represent God, not weirdness.

I got it. I'm not talking about weirdness, okay? I'm talking about hearts that are truly broken and wanting to serve God. You follow me around for a week, you'll probably see that I don't make right choices all the time either.

We've rented plenty of movies and said we should have not have been watching this. I have no problem with that. I have no problem if somebody goes and sees Hunger Games or Twilight or Potter.

If that's what they want to do, I have no problem with it. But don't you dare say that God's word doesn't have anything to say about this stuff. Don't dare say it won't affect your mind.

We're not neutral. You realize that human beings are not neutral. What we put in is what we get out.

And the closer I draw to God, the more corrupt this media becomes. I said this before, there's Carl's Jr. commercials that make a Playboy model blush. Nobody seems to care.

It's no big deal. The church is watching it, guys. It's a wake-up call.

The church is putting these ratings up. The so-called church of Jesus Christ, the blood-bought church, the bride of Christ, who when Jesus said, I will return for my bride. We are watching these things.

Music, all these things, you just got to watch. Watch what you do. Now, I'm going to close right here.

The solution, then you might say, what is the solution? Well, often when I talk in this area, the solution is in the pulpit, and the solution is in the pew. The pulpits of America have to again go back to God's righteous standard. This used to call the church back to God.

It's okay to do that. It's okay to do that. Like I quoted Jeremiah.

He called Jeremiah, his very purpose for existence. Jeremiah, you are called to root out and to pull down and to destroy. Not guns, not weapons, not warfare, but with the Word of God, going out of the power of the Holy Spirit to radically change and convict people.

You don't see that anymore. We don't think we need that anymore. Now, it's about building big churches, big audiences, politically correct.

It's about doing this. It's all about me. You know, it should be about brokenness and preaching God's Word.

The pulpits of America have to be aflame with righteousness again. The problem is many people do not like this type of message. They do not want it.

But I'm not trying to grow a big church necessarily. I'm trying to honor God's Word and to prepare a people for a soon coming King. Leonard Ravenhill.

Many of you have heard of him. He died probably 30 years ago. He wrote on this.

I want to read something briefly. He uses the word prophet, but I switched it with preacher because there's so many negative definitions that go along with that term. But he said the preacher in his day is fully accepted of God, but totally rejected by men.

The degree of his effectiveness is determined by his measure of unpopularity. Unpopularity. Compromise is not known to him.

He has no price tags. He marches to another drummer. His messages repent and be reconciled to God.

He is the villain of today and the hero of tomorrow. He is excommunicated while alive and exalted when dead. He eats daily the bread of affliction while he ministers, but he feeds the bread of life to those who listen.

He walks before men for days, but has walked before God for years. He hides with God in the secret place, but has nothing to hide in the marketplace. He is ordained of God, but disdained of men.

That is why many of us do not like to talk about this subject. If it was not for the power of the Holy Spirit within my life reading his Word, I would not preach this message. I would preach your best life now and I would encourage you and I would have you leaving here filled with joy and peace and that's wonderful.

But if there's sin in our life and we're not following God and there's no obedience, I am being irresponsible in what we are commanded to do. Paul told Timothy, Timothy, preach the Word. That's it.

Be ready in and out of season for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. The pulpits must again be proclaiming these truths. Not every single week.

I'm talking about the love of God next week, God willing. Because I understand we have to balance the menu. The problem is we've got so much.

America just thinks they're so wonderful and it's like that church in Revelation, Jesus said, you think you are rich, but you are poor, you are blind, you are miserable, you are naked. Told another church, you

better repent and return to your first love. You've got all these works, but you've left your first love.

He's got some scathing words. Why can't we say it in love? Why can't we? He did. See, what we want to do is we want to pick out the good stuff.

Jesus said, turn the other cheek. He said, treat your enemies nice. He said, oh, he forgave the woman caught in the act of adultery.

Yeah, but he also told her, go sin no more. Oh, we don't want to read that part. No, you got to read everything.

Everything there is many. There's as much warning as there is encouragement. Now, here's what has to happen in the in the pew.

That need for holiness has never been greater. The only way we're going to win this battle is to be holy and set apart for God. You must hunger and thirst for righteousness like never before.

You don't know what that looks like. Go to God and ask him. Get in his word.

Look, this is what hunger and righteousness looks like. I didn't just memorize all these scriptures to impress people. I memorized them because I had to.

I was hungering and thirsting. It was fuel for my soul. You have to hunger and thirst for that.

You have to remove the pollutants from your life. You must approach holiness as a soldier approaches battle. Let me say that again.

You must approach holiness as a soldier approaches battle. You must make the word of God your primary influence. You must make prayer your greatest weapon and sin your greatest enemy.

We have lost the power of prayer as well in the churches of America. I've talked about this before, so I won't beat this drum again, but we are not a praying church anymore. The disciples didn't come and say, Jesus, teach me how to preach.

Teach me how to witness. Teach me how to teach. They said, teach me how to pray.

Where are the voices today? Where are the Nehemiahs who said, I wept and I prayed for days. Why should I not be sad when the place of my father's tombs lies in waste, he would say. Ezekiel, God said, Ezekiel, I sought for a man from among them who would build a wall and stand in the gap on behalf of me, but I found no one.

He found no intercessor, no prayer warrior. Prayer is the hardest discipline, but it's the most important. You think these sermons, as I've said before, come from a computer or eight o'clock at night? They come buried in the prayer closet, stained silk where God's pouring in, breaking my heart, for having me repent and turn.

Lord, I need you more than ever before. I don't want to say these things. Give me the spirit of wisdom and knowledge of understanding.

Lord, I want to pray like Solomon. Help me discern between good and evil. Help me preach your word so the prodigal returns.

Help me preach so the wayward daughter returns. Lord, help me preach so conviction goes forth and it changes somebody, that they leave here different when they arrived. Because I cannot play church.

As Jordan and Salem come up, we're going to go into a time of communion. And I just want to remind everyone here, there's too much at stake. There's too much at stake at this topic.

We don't look at this topic well enough because God says, you were bought with a price. That cross costs something. You were bought, I was bought at a price.

Therefore, he says, glorify God in your body. This issue of holiness is so important that the writer of Hebrews says, for without holiness, no one will even see the Lord. See, sinful man cannot stand in the holy presence of a righteous God.

So what happened? Christ on the cross, bore our iniquity, imputed righteousness, which means we take on the right standing with God. Now we can intercede. Now we can stand before God and say, Lord, I'm holy and blameless and set apart because of what Christ did on the cross.

I don't want to confuse holiness and sanctification with holiness unto salvation. Some of you need to truly repent and surrender your life tonight because without holiness, no one will see the Lord. Not your good works, not your mom, not your dad, not your... Nobody will stand before you in the day of judgment.

It's what have you done with my son? He is the righteous standard. He is the only standard. And we repent and we trust in him.

And what I like about communion is you're going to come up at your own convenience. You come up, you can take the elements back to your seat. You can go in the corner.

You can whatever you want. And you take them, you take the blood, the drink that resembles the blood shed on the cross, the bread, the broken body. And what Paul talks about in communion is this is a time of examination.

He says, do not take the Lord's body in vain and righteousness and have these things in your heart. This is a time of seeking God and saying, Lord, I need you. I'm not in right relationship with you, but I want to fellowship with you again.

I want to partake in communion. And that's what this time is. It's just a time of examination.

Lord, I pray tonight. Lord, this is a weighty message for all of us, Lord. But I know that you are a God who hears.

Lord, I know that you're a God who wants us to live righteously and holy. Lord, not like modern day Pharisees or legalists, Lord, but just hearts that are broken over the condition of the church, the condition of our family, Lord, the condition of the homes, the condition of our culture. As we see a culture sliding on a highway to hell, Lord, we need you like never before.

Lord, I pray that you would awaken a spirit of holiness and revival and seeking heart after you, Lord. Remove the opinions of men from our lives, Lord. Have people leave here not caring necessarily what people think, but what you think of them, Lord.

Have them leave here with the hunger and the desire for the things of God. Lord, have them turn from those areas in their life, sin that we can call sin, Lord, that you call us away from, Lord. Have them turn from that tonight.

Men who are addicted to porn, Lord, begin to release them of that. Have them get into the word of God, Lord. Have them get accountability partners or throw the computer out, whatever it takes, Lord.

Women that are so caught up in gossip and jealousy and backbiting or men too, Lord, just begin to clear our hearts, Lord, with the righteous standard that you have set before us. As we go in this time of communion, Lord, I pray that you would pierce the hearts and we thank you for sending your Son. We are thankful that we can do this communion tonight and remember what Christ did on the cross.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/_EONJQb_Aig.mp4

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