

How To Strengthen Your Marriage (Video)

by Shane Idleman

Transcript

Disciples, I'm sorry, disciplines. I always get that word wrong. Disciplines of a Godly Man.

It's a great book. I think we have copies if you need to get a copy. We're going through that book the last Saturday of every month, so let your friends, family know.

Last Saturday in February, February 29th actually, that's easier to remember, it's a leap year. And then March and April, and we're gonna keep doing that the last Saturday. And it's really meant to compliment.

We already have a Saturday morning group. Phil leads that, you can talk to him or Rick on a Tuesday night. We already have men's groups, so this is mainly just to come together once a month, fellowship, and then go back out and do what we do.

So I'm gonna talk briefly from Ephesians. I don't know if you have your Bibles. I'm just gonna read to you Ephesians.

And wouldn't you know, I forgot to put down the chapter. I believe it's chapter five though, walking in wisdom. If anybody can find that, let me know.

I know I'm starting in verse 15. It's a context of marriage. So let me start there.

I don't think I forgot water this morning, that's okay. I'll be all right. See then that you walk circumspectly.

Isn't that an interesting word? See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil. Now you might say, what does this have to do with marriage? It has everything to do with marriage because the context is gonna go right into marriage, number one. Number two is we need to walk, this word circumspectly.

Here's what you can think of. I've thought of this when I studied this 10 years ago or so, I taught on this. Think of walking in a desert trail knowing there's rattlesnakes.

And I've seen them on my walks before. And you start, I'm thankful for rattles because that has saved me a few times. And you hear that, and as I'm walking, I'm looking.

I don't care what's 100 feet away. I'm walking circumspectly. And what the Bible definition means is to walk cautiously and to look around.

So Paul says, especially as men, we are to walk in these days carefully. Oh, you got water, Gabe? Thank you. We're to walk carefully and cautiously.

We're to look around. Now, what are most men doing? We're looking around in the wrong spots, looking around on the internet, listening to ungodly advice. I'm shocked.

The more I pastor, and I know young men that come here and I talk to them often, and they can't break away from these friendships that are not friendships. I've had a young man, I've invited him here many times, probably late 20s. And he says, it's hard to go to church.

None of my buddies do. I've got eight friends. They like to drink, and I just can't get to church, and I can't get in the Word.

And after a year of telling him the same thing, you have to wonder how bad do you want it? You have to break those relationships off. Come to Saturday mornings. It's by his house.

Come to Tuesday night. Come to Wednesday. Come to Sunday.

Get plugged in with guys who can build you up, not pull you down. And as men, we look often to the wrong source of strength, the wrong source of influence. If you're being influenced by YouTube and the media and Facebook and Instagram, you might wanna shut that off for a season.

It's okay to do that. Did you know that? I'm doing it very soon. Disconnecting from those influences.

So as most men, even Christian men, they walk through life, not circumspectly, they're looking at porn, they're addicted to porn, they're flirting with sin where they shouldn't be flirting with sin. They have the wrong influences and they're being hit by the enemy. Their kids are being led astray.

Their wife and their marriage is falling apart. And I know we don't like to hear this, but we set the spiritual condition of our home. We set the tone.

We set the spiritual climate. And people do come up and they say, but Shane, you don't know my wife. And I don't.

There are challenging marriages, but God calls us to do certain things regardless of how the spouse and family are acting. And I've noticed often they don't act the right way right away. It's a season.

It's pressing in. It's a consistent pattern of faithfulness to God's word. So that's the key right here.

Walk cautiously. Look around. Look around even, right now I'm counseling a few people who have really messed things up financially because they're not looking around.

They're being scared into this or they're investing into things that, why would you invest in it? Well, so-and-so told me. And they're not looking around. They're not looking at what's going on in our world.

They're not looking around and what does God's word say? They're not walking cautiously. And it's okay as a man to be cautious. I think there's a lot of wisdom there because many times we are reactionary.

Right? What happens when you get slapped? I often pray to God, God help me because I haven't been hit in a while. You know, it's been 25, 28 years. But I'm often wondering if that were somebody in a crowd and I'm ministering and they just slap me, am I gonna be able to respond in love? Or bam, right back.

It's that instinct, you know, that fight. Now it's different if you're defending your family or something because it will go down if that happens. But when I'm talking about me individually, am I going to respond in love? Is my heart prepared to do that? And a lot of times we are reactionary.

That's where anger comes from. Anger in our hearts, anger in our homes. We've maybe felt disrespected.

Anyone felt disrespected? I don't know why that's such a big deal for men, but God created it that way. He even says in His word, wives, respect your husband. Now what I think, you know, there's not a lot of teaching on, as far as the Bible teaching, you know, you can read into things.

But I think God has given us this ability to lead our family. And we're already fractured. We're already broken.

Anybody have low self-esteem issues? I mean, I was raised, I love my dad, but it was a hard environment. Always trying to measure up. Always trying to please him.

Always trying to work hard. And dad, did I measure up? So we are boys growing up now in men's bodies. And so we want that respect, meaning not forced respect, but trust my decisions.

Let me make this decision. Let me, you know, there's nothing worse than saying this or doing this and you feel like you got disrespected. A little thing last night is just funny, I never thought of this, but I left my wife a note like at 12 o'clock.

Hey, make sure you cook the turkey I left out at four, because I'll be coming home from a meeting. I got to eat and then I got to go to Lowe's and guess what happened? Oh, she didn't see the note. You know, it's 4:20, I walk in the house, I'm starving.

Which I'm not starving, you know, but you're hungry. And I'm like, oh, I had a bad mood for a minute there. And I said, you know, it's no big deal.

And so I just, I did it myself. But sometimes when we're challenged or people, you know, our spouse doesn't, don't really take what we say seriously, it can really demean men. I think it can knock us down because we're called to lead.

And when that leadership is not respected, you can really, men can become real passive. And we've seen it. Men either become explosive and angry and they rule their home with a rod of iron, or they become very passive and a doormat.

And the kids walk over them and their spouse walks over them. And so what's the answer? I believe the answer is getting back into God's Word, walking circumspectly, and even telling your spouse, hey, listen, I need to make some changes, but so do you in this family. We need to walk according to God's Word.

And they might not accept it at first. It might be difficult, but God is faithful. And you regain that leadership, not by anger, not by forcing it.

Let them watch your character, not this. I'm learning to just be quiet and let my character speak. Let my actions speak.

And a lot of times, we know that sin is not lacking when there is a lot of words going out of our mouth. The Bible says that. In the multitude of words, sin is not lacking.

So it's wonderful advice here. Be careful, the days are evil. We have to be, when have we ever lived in time where we have to be more cautious than now? You know, we can't even, when have we ever not been able to trust the news? Do you know there's fake news out there? The majority of journalists now have an agenda.

They don't care if they lie. They don't care if they give you wrong information. They will just, whatever their agenda is, and for men now to walk circumspectly, to be cautious.

And then Paul says, therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. See, you can understand what God's will is. And I know many men wonder, I pray, Lord, what is your will during this season? I need to know, especially when we purchase these radio stations.

That was a hard couple months for me because, Lord, what is your will? This doesn't make sense. What is your will? Now it makes complete sense, but when you're in the middle of something, it doesn't make any sense. What is your will? What's your will for the church? What's your will, maybe you're asking, Lord, what's your will for my marriage, for my ministry, for my employment? I need to know, God, do you want me to move? Many people are dealing with that right now.

The number, probably on the top 10 list of emails we get are people wanting to move out of California. How do I know it's not fear? How do we know to stay and fight? How do we, what is God's will in this area? What is God's will? And I usually say, you need to seek him. Don't seek me.

Seek what God says and what God is leading you to do. I will say this, don't make decisions based on fear. For example, yes, it's getting difficult here, but are you sure that's why we're supposed to move? I know people that move from their neighborhoods because they don't like their neighbor.

Okay, is fear prompting you? Now, sometimes it's good to move, and God calls us to be, to provide safety for our families. There's some areas in town I do not want to live in. I would, you know, it'd be a hard area.

And so there's wisdom there. But overall, we want to understand, Lord, what is your will? And that's interesting. He just switches, and do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation.

In other words, don't be drunk with wine which is debauchery, which is drunkenness, but be filled with the spirit. Now, this is interesting because statistics in the church, more people drink than you realize. I've had a couple people tell me recently they stopped.

One lady stopped in November, another lady. It's just because it was too much, and it begins to, what happens, unless you're very careful, there's a few people, you know, they can have a beer once in a while, once every month. Okay, well, I mean, Bible doesn't prohibit it, that's for sure, but if you have to have it every week, and maybe a couple, and you want that feeling, there's a different spirit that begins to control us.

We begin, the more we take in of the substance, the more we begin to be controlled by it, and less that we are filled with the spirit. I have never met anyone personally that drinks often who is also filled with the spirit. There's two conflicting things going on, and we run to alcohol to relax, and to get rid of the pain.

Oh, if I could just have a couple. But it's funny, for an hour of pleasure, there's a day of regret. The enemy doesn't show you the regret, he shows you the immediate satisfaction.

So even for people not drinking, Paul is using this idea of don't be drunk with wine, don't be influenced by this worldly system, but be filled with the spirit. And that's an interesting topic, and an interesting word, because if we had time, if you look at how the Greek, and that's why when people study for sermon preparation, they usually look at the original language, and you can look, is a verb, is that in an active tense? Or is that something that has happened a long time ago, it's not gonna happen again? But this is an active, it's like being filled with the Holy Spirit on a daily basis. So there's a choice that's made, there's a decision that's made.

And I can go from being filled one day to being quenching and grieving the Spirit of God the next. I know it, I've lived it. And Paul's command, therefore, is to be filled with the Spirit.

Why, Paul? Well, there's no period, there's a comma, and he says this, speak to one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs. Doesn't mean you go around singing, necessarily, but your words are filled with grace, and love, and there's a joy, there's a happiness about you singing, making melody in your own heart to the Lord. Have you ever done that before? I have, and I love it.

But usually what comes in is grumbling and complaining. Instead of singing to the Lord, it's being Spirit-filled, it's being joy-filled. I'm gonna tell you what hit me hard this week, so hold on.

Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God. Now, submission is mutual, correct? In the church setting, you know, many people submit to the leadership, but I have to actually submit to Pastor Abram on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. My son's on his basketball team.

Hey, Shane, get up, help with this. Okay, there's a mutual submission. Hopefully he doesn't do that, because I just want to relax.

I've coached enough baseball in my years. But there's a, and people don't understand this, but there's a time where I submit to the needs of my wife and kids. I don't just walk around, and this is, I'm the man, and here's what you, I submit to those needs.

Hey, the kids aren't feeling loved. You're always busy, you seem moody. I need you, and you submit to those needs.

So that's what a real man does. He knows when to submit and when to lead. And didn't Jesus submit to the will of the Father? So this whole word of submission has really been twisted, because we think they're always supposed to submit to us.

And actually, even leading this church, I submit to the needs of the body more than people realize. They need me at early morning worship. They need me to do this.

And submitting, what are the needs of the church? And it's a mutual submission in the fear of God. So it's this wonderful picture. Do not be drunk, but be filled with the Spirit in marriage.

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns. You're joy-filled. You're making melody in your heart.

And this is difficult, isn't it? Some of you guys are already checking me out and going, I can't do that. I don't want to sing melodies in my heart. Well, you're not singing a song necessarily, but there's a joy about you.

There's so much to be worried about, but how much more is there to be thankful about? Look at the house you live in. Look how God has blessed you, your spouse, your children, the career, the money, the finances that God has blessed us. Just go visit a third-world country, and you'll come back very joy-filled and thankful and filled with tears because of what God has given us.

Now, here's what hit me. I always read this. I mean, I read through the New Testament at least once or twice a year for 20 years now.

And speak to one another in hymns. Let's be joy-filled and treat each other this way. But really struck me this week as I was reading this, Paul just goes right into husbands, wives.

So what really hit me was this. This should be happening in our homes as well as in the church. Because sometimes we apply this to the church and fellowship, but we forget our homes should be filled with joy.

And melodies in our heart, and coming home instead of grumbling and complaining and upset, we usually take it out on our wife and kids, don't we? Come on, don't act spiritual now. I take a hard day out on my spouse and kids more than I should. I get home and I'm very frustrated with things going.

I'm just, and I take it out on them. Of course, I try to get my heart right before I go into the home because all hell breaks loose. You know, when you have little kids, you guys know.

Or teenagers. Now I'm gonna have two teenagers and three little kids. And so, but our home, see, it's a choice.

Being filled with the Spirit is a constant choice. It's not just, I'm filled and now I'm good this week. It's a choice to submit to others.

It's a choice to humble myself. It's a choice to ask for forgiveness. It's a choice to say, I was wrong.

It's a choice to say, God, I'm not gonna watch that anymore. I'm gonna seek you. It's a choice to hang out with people who build me up and strengthen me instead of those who pull me down.

It's a choice to say no to like what Paul said, to alcohol or things that dumb our spirit or dumb our mind or now marijuana's a big deal. I smell that stuff every week now. I'll go on a walk and I'll, who's smoking in their backyard? My Lord.

People right next to me. Out in their car. It's legal now.

I smell it, my kids smell it. We are numbing ourselves and it's not improving. Now, marijuana, medicinal use, got it.

But how many of those people really need it for medicinal use? Very, very, very small minority. Same with alcohol. Same with all these things.

We're numbing our minds to the things of God. Also, mindless entertainment. I did, I spent a few hours.

I was at my in-laws. And I said, I did not watch anything edifying. Nothing necessarily bad.

I don't watch HBO or The Junker, but just nothing, nothing. It's all about food and cars and you know, these sitcoms and it's just nothing edifying. So men, our homes, we have to go back and we have to sing psalms.

We have to, not necessarily sing, because I'm not a singer either, but do you put on worship music in your home? Do you have the big screen with worship on? Pandora and nothing but just worship, bringing in the blood of Christ and asking God to, or you have junk on there. Are you just grumbling? See, it's a choice. It's a choice how we act in our homes.

Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church. Anybody master that yet? Love to meet you afterwards. But here's what you have to remember.

God doesn't, God wants us to raise the standard. And it's okay to miss it. But you don't want to lower it and hit it.

See, I read this, I'm like, that's impossible. He says it absolutely is impossible. But that's your goal.

Shane, that's your goal until the day you die or I take her, I take you. That's your goal, is to love her as Christ loved the church. Men, you'll see the whole environment of your home change if you do that.

Now, I know there's problem marriages. I know we have to use wisdom, because sometimes, I've talked to people, if they submit to a wife and they just love them and all this, but she's gonna use him as a doormat and take advantage, and we actually then enable our spouse to continue in a destructive pattern, that's different too. Sometimes you have to address and say, your heart is wrong, your attitude is wrong, and you have to lovingly point out those things as well.

That's why I don't give a blanket approach to this, but we do know that God calls us to love our wives as Christ loved the church, and I'm gonna just conclude here shortly. He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of the water by the word. One of the things I'm looking forward to now, when I take a break, is instead of getting up and spending time, sermon prep, sermon prep, sermon prep, I'm just gonna have my wife come in whenever she's up, 6.37, and we're gonna pray.

We're gonna pray for our families every morning. I'm gonna wash her with the word, what I learned and study, what I think God is speaking to us, because remember, God's called you to lead. God's called you to lead in that area, and I believe He will speak to us in these areas of leadership.

And of course, it goes on to say, so husbands, love your own wives as you love your own body. That's hard, isn't it? I made a great salad the other night, and I did not want to give it up. Like, okay, you can have it.

Oh, but see, love yourself. Isn't it funny how the flesh just wants to always just rise up? Sometimes I wonder, where is that at? God, can't you just get rid of this flesh? Not yet, not yet. We have to keep being submitted to the filling of the Spirit.

So again, my closing point, you set the spiritual temperature of your home. If I could sum it up, I would encourage you to work on passion, purity, and peace. What do I mean by passion? Passion in your home is passion for God.

That is contagious. That is contagious. When you're passionate for God, it's contagious.

For example, when you walk into a worship service, if you see everybody just sitting around, some falling asleep, some looking at their phone, are you as motivated? Or what about if you see two dozen men up here worshipping, weeping, getting their hearts right with God? See, it's contagious. The contagious, it

maybe shouldn't be that way. I mean, we shouldn't let others affect our worship, but I know if I walk into a dead church, and I used to, I've spoken at dead churches, and I've walked into living, vibrant churches, and that atmosphere is contagious, same thing with our homes.

And of course, I can't skip this point of purity. You must fight for purity in your homes. The reason many marriages are falling apart, the reason your wife might feel like a friend, you don't love her anymore, it's because of pornography and giving our hearts to the media and different things, and women that were getting satisfied online, and then as a result, it kills the marriage.

And if you're not yet married, it doesn't improve when you get married. You don't just instantly become a man of character. You have to get to that point now.

And then passion, purity, and peace. Peace has to be fought for, peace in your home. You don't always have to say the last word, amen? I've had to put the zipper on many times.

I'm gonna take the trash out, and I'll be back. And there's been times I'll say, you know what, I'm gonna run to the store, I'm gonna go check the P.O. box, and I'll be back. And whew, you just put on worship.

You put on music, and you foster an environment. I think our homes should be places of peace, don't you? We should have, they call it a man cave. There's something to that.

Where our home should be a place of, to me, it's a sanctuary. It's a place where I go and rest. It's where I go and be built up, not discouraged, not beat down, not fighting again.

But you set the tempo of that place often. You set the temperature of that place. And I think Abram can confirm, but we're gonna have some roses that we picked up.

They're gonna be here after the service here. And we're gonna take these back, for those who want to, take them back to your wife, and just say, listen, I wanna recommit. I wanna recommit to the marriage.

I want peace in our home. I wanna love you as Christ loved the church. I need help, I need prayer.

I wanna commit to that, for those who are open to this. And let me just give you a tip. Don't say much, just do it.

Just do it. That's how we're going to influence, because our wives and our kids, they watch our words, but boy, do they watch our actions. I just thought of this.

I didn't write it down. I hope I get it right. But there's a poem that ends like this.

Dad, the lessons you give me may be very wise and very true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do. For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but Dad, there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live. That speaks volumes to us, our character.

So I'm gonna have Pastor Abram come up, and he's gonna share a little bit about marriage from his side of things, and I think it's just good.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/how-to-strengthen-your-marriage-video/>

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