

In Gods We Trust

by Shane Idleman

In 'In Gods We Trust', Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of using our blessings to serve others and prioritize our spiritual needs over physical ones.

Duration: 55:31

Scripture: Psalm 82:3, Isaiah 58:10-11, Ezekiel 16:49, Matthew 25:35, James 1:22

Topics: "Materialism", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need to dethrone the idol of materialism and abundance in our lives by giving to those in need. It highlights the importance of repentance, restructuring our lifestyles, and extending our souls to the hungry and afflicted. The message focuses on the transformation of the heart, seeking God's will, and finding peace and joy through obedience and generosity.

Transcript

It's usually when I'm preparing sermons, Sunday morning, I'll wake up tomorrow morning early. Actually, tomorrow I've got to preach somewhere, so I won't do that tomorrow. But normally I wake up Sunday morning and I start to just read over the text and pray about it, start to write down a lot of different notes and develop that even on Monday and possibly Tuesday.

And so by the time Wednesday rolls around, there's a lot to talk about. I just feel that, you know, God's been pouring a lot into my own heart. What does the text say, practical application.

But then I start to edit it down a little bit and kind of, you know, narrow it in and bring it into, you know, it has to flow. It's not just this thought and this thought and this thought and this thought, and you'd be going, where's he going with all this? That's kind of what I ask myself most weeks. I try to try to get it all into what I believe that the text says, what God wants to say.

And a lot of times you just can't go right through that. You just can't go, well, we've got to hurry up and get out of here. And it's just, you know, it might take a few weeks to kind of get out.

And what's interesting is a lot of times what I didn't say on a certain day, but I say in the following week, people are touched by it. And then what I said earlier in the week, but didn't get to on the last Saturday, people were touched by that. So it's God uses different areas of the sermon, I think, to speak to us where we're at different areas of our lives.

And what happens usually is as I'm preparing, as I'm writing things down, they hurt my heart a little bit too. It's like, oh, Lord, are you sure? And you know, this is tough. And I know and I need to acknowledge that I need to Lord, would you help me in this area? So I know is when I'm when I'm coming up here, and then I'm giving it to you.

It's already had a little bit of heart surgery happening in my own life, especially on this topic, as you can see, in God's we trust. And we were talking about following Christ and I gave out I think if you didn't get these, let us know we gave out 100 of these, I think, or maybe 80, we had a box ordered, free of charge. It's a it's KP O'Hanlon's ministry there in India, in Asia, and we're giving out books just to kind of get spark our interest number one, but number two is you don't realize how blessed we are in our country until you look outside of our country.

And I went into PetSmart this week, and I don't know if it was sad, or funny. And I just left there going unbelievable. But our animals live better than majority of the world.

Our animals live better than the majority of the world, especially if they're part of third world countries, where this a lot of this takes place. Our animals, I just I was driving home going, Lord, I mean, they had outfits Green Bay Packer outfits for a poodle. And I laugh too, but I'm thinking, unbelievable, I can go spend \$25 for a Green Bay Packers outfit.

That's not your team, whatever your team is, I'm sure they have it to fit your poodle fit your cat. I mean, just the beds, nice soft beds, better beds than what kids sleep in. And for me, it's it's kind of like a just a wake up call.

However, let me say this. Oh, goodness. I don't want to say it the wrong way.

And I don't want to not say it. But on one hand, we don't I don't think we should feel guilty either, when God has blessed us. And I don't know how quite that looks.

But it doesn't mean I think we should walk around saying, Oh, woe is me, I can't believe I've got this. We should be thanking God Lord, thank you for blessing our nation, Lord, thank you for blessing our prosperity. But the reason he gives prosperity is so that we can be a blessing to others.

So we live kind of in this unique state of, I want to feel a little conviction because I think most of us own too much. We do. We buy too much, we spend too much.

But I don't think we should also feel guilty and say, well, you know, I can't believe this and God done this. And I don't want any of this. My kids need to go just, you know, not have shoes and they need to go live outside for a while.

And we should say, Lord, thank you so much. How can I better use your resources? The resources you've blessed me with, Lord, how can I better use those resources? I want to be a blessing to others, Lord, would you show me how? And be careful when you pray that prayer because things will need to change. As a personal testimony, this has been hard for me living in America and you know, every you know, once my trucks hit, you know, 60,000, 70,000 miles, I've always traded in for a used one.

And, you know, and now I've pushed that and I'm like, OK, Lord, and, you know, it hurts a little bit. But we've had to structure our lifestyle in such a way that we are able to give more to people throughout the month. A good chunk of what we would make goes to this type of organization, goes back to this church,

goes to Care Net, goes to Families in Need.

We just took last week with the church, found out about a Muslim family, actually, whose kids were sleeping on the floor in an apartment. No, they just don't have anything. And so they asked if we would help.

And well, of course, I know a scam when I see it sometimes. So I went by the apartment, meant that it's like, wow, they're really they have no furniture. They're nothing.

The kids are sleeping on the floor. So we got them four mattresses, found a discount store. I went, picked him up with my truck, got him a food card or target card.

And the ironic thing is they were absolutely shocked. My point person with that, his name is Solomon. He's a converted Muslim.

Now he's a Christian. He's ministering to his family. They're actually considering coming to the church.

They want to know what is what is this? This is not the American, the nation of Satan that we heard about. You know, that's why I think Jesus said, go to your enemy, feed them. And they're not my enemies, of course.

But, you know, I'm saying, why don't you just some people get upset? Why don't you just care for your own? Well, Jesus said, I'm whatever I see a need that pricks my heart and I can go make a difference. Now show them the love of Christ. They want me to come in and sit down with my little son and have tea with them and tell us more about why are you doing this? So I mean, and those are happening weekly, these issues.

And so if but if we live in such a way that all my my bills are tapped, I'm tapped, I'm spent. You can't do that. You see what? And so I think and that's why I want to be careful with the sermon, because sometimes we can leave here feeling beat up, worthless.

Oh, my goodness, I shouldn't even have a car now. And I don't I don't know if that's the case. Some people might feel inclined to sell a lot of things and get rid of everything.

And that's fine. But I think we also need to focus on the real issue here is God has blessed us to be a blessing. God has blessed us.

Have a vehicle. Have a reliable, reliable vehicle. Have a decent place for your kids and your family and be thankful for what God has done.

But if we're not an outlet. We can become polluted and sick inside. And I thought of this.

Many of you drive up to the high Sierras, right? You see, you know, past Mammoth, Mono Lake, and I've talked about this before. But this analogy really hit home this morning as I was kind of up on the aqueduct thinking about everything and how blessed we are. And you think, Lord, we don't deserve this.

But it's interesting that they have the Sierra Mountains, the freshest snow water around flowing into this lake. It's fresh, it's good, but the lake is contaminated, it's polluted. See, there has to be an outlet.

Because what happens is the toxins and the pollutants stay in that lake. What happens with an outlet is fresh water is coming in and there's, you know, fish are swimming, there's debris, not Mono Lake, there's brine shrimp, I think it's all there is. But that's why there's an outlet because toxics build up, poisons build up, and you've got to let it out.

And that's what one thing is, God has blessed us. Thank you. There's more people in America hearing the word than all over all the other countries.

Millions of podcasts. You listen to Alistair Begg on the radio, you ever hear him? I just heard the stats that they have like a million downloads a year. So I'm like, where's all the changed lives? We're fat on the word of God.

We've got it flowing in. But if you don't release it, you become just polluted like Mono Lake. I will too, because we were not created to receive and receive.

Because what happens when I release it, the pride has to go. The envy has to go, the idolatry has to go, all the junk that's built up has to go when I release it. Because the only way you dethrone that God is to give him away.

Because if not, he becomes an idol. So we receive, and that's the important part about budgeting and, Lord, what do you want to do with your resources and paying bills and different things. But then we also have to give it a little, so its hold isn't as strong.

So I think a lot of people, they're inundated with the word of God. I'm amazed at how many people listen to sermons on a weekly basis. Podcasts, downloads, iTunes, Vimeo, YouTube.

And we have tons of problems in America. Therapy, Medicaid, everything's on the rise. What's going out? Because there's no outflow.

There's no outflow. Because when I give, it hurts. It hurts to let that go.

And, Lord, I am going to humble my... I'm going to go... You know how busy I am to go pick up four mattresses for a Muslim family? Lord, do you think I've got time to do this? Oh, absolutely. You better make time to do it, because that's the outflow, to clear that junk out of you. And it was so refreshing.

I mean, I'm driving, finding these things. And I'm not trying to say, you understand, right? I'm like, oh, Shane, good job. Boy, boy, you're so spiritual.

No, it hurts. I didn't want to do it. Ask Matt.

I was trying, Matt, is there anybody, any way they can go pick up the mattresses? If I... I know they don't have a truck, but you know what? I'll just go do it. I'll just do it. I want to meet this family.

And now there's a connection there from that. But I had to let... I had to... I'm trying to make that outflow point. I had to give it.

Because the more you give of yourself, not just money. So don't think Peter wants money. No, the church is doing very good.

We don't want money. We don't need money. God provides that.

But I want to explain that you've got to let release it financially, or with your time, your energy, your resources. I've talked about before that we have a lot of young adults, especially the 530 service. And I could plug in about 10 mentors right now of young adults, mainly men saying, can I meet with somebody? I need help in my walk.

No, we're all too busy, aren't we? Outflow, outflow of your time. Yeah, it hurts. You come home from work, you're tired.

Now I've got to go meet with somebody, help them. Yeah, it hurts. That's what it's called carrying a cross and finding that out.

The ministry, if I knew it was going to be this difficult three or four years ago, I think he tricked me. Just go up there and preach and people will be changed, and I didn't know it's difficult. It's hard.

Ministry is hard because you're ministering to others. You're helping them. You're doing what the flesh doesn't want to do.

And as I was preparing this sermon, I noticed something. The flesh, all it wants to do is it wants to sleep too much. It wants to eat too much.

And when you go to work, it wants to do the least amount of work possible and be paid the highest amount of dollar. And then when the flesh gets home, it wants to sit in a vehicle and then sit in a lounge chair for three hours and relax. And then it wants to go back to sleep and repeat that whole thing.

And we allow, okay, flesh, just guide me, guide me. That's why we need alarm clocks. We sleep too much.

Many people don't do this. They get to work. Do most people not want to do the least amount of work possible? Right? I want to be paid as much as I can but without doing the least amount of work.

And then we get home, plop down the TV, big meal, oh, I'm so full. I just want to sit here all night. And then you go to fall sleep and it starts all over again.

So you've got to crucify that flesh. That's what I'm learning. You've got to tell the flesh, no.

No, we're going to bed early. We're getting up early. And not only that, we're going to work and we're going to be the best employee on that job site because I do everything I do, I do for the glory of God.

And I'm not going to come home and sit in a recliner for three hours. I'm going to come home and help others. So it's a constant fight against the flesh.

I think we forget that. We think it's like a day in the park, being a Christian. Jesus said, no, you have to carry a load.

There's a cross to carry. And that's where we kind of picked up in this message all these things that I didn't get to last week. But before I get to the actual message, a lot of that introduction wasn't in my notes.

It was just something I've been filling all week. I want to remind you that your deepest needs are spiritual. My deepest needs are spiritual, not physical.

The problem is we try to fill our deepest needs with that. The deepest needs are to connect with God, to worship God. And then I believe from that flows everything else.

Guard your heart, the writer of Proverbs would say, for it affects everything you do. It is the wellspring of life. So from that heart and the right relationship with God, then flows everything else.

Our deepest needs are spiritual, so they must be meant spiritually. So when we think that's going to fill our deepest needs, money, this, whatever fame, I mean, you can fill in the blank. We forget that, no, it's spiritual.

My needs are spiritual first and foremost. The second point, peace does not come without effort. Many times we think, oh, just peaceful.

But peace does not come without effort. If I want peace among people, Paul says, as much as it depends upon you, live at peace with all men. I've got to work towards peace.

If I want peace in my marriage, does it just happen? Got to be quick not to get the last word in. What can I do to help? Not express my agitation. It takes work.

So to have peace, genuine peace given by Christ, it takes work by starving the flesh and dethroning these idols. And then the peace of God will rule your hearts and minds. It took a little bit of effort there, didn't it? Actually, if you don't work on peace, it doesn't come.

That's why we feel flustered. That's why we feel in a hurry. That's why we feel burdened.

Because working at peace, the peace of God comes with a price. God says, hey, I've lined it out for you what to do in my word, follow that, begin to obey that, and that's where the peace of God comes from. Of course, we know this, this God never satisfies.

We must starve it. We must cut off its fuel source. And I said, what chain are you talking about? Just money? Nope, I'm getting somewhere.

Hold on, let me get there. But first, I'm turning to this again. I want to read this.

I just couldn't put this book down. I know some of you have told me the same thing. But on January 7, 2011, more than 50 women from a tribal village in West Bengal got together to sell their children at the market.

First, I thought it was a misprint, the author says. People go to the market to sell vegetables and material things, not to sell their children. As I read on, however, I learned that their entire village is impoverished.

None of these women were able to care for their children anymore. The article continues. Among the women there was a lady named Maletri who had lined up her five-year-old daughter to sell.

I will sell her at whatever price I get. The money is not important. I just want my daughter to be taken in by a family which will give her food, shelter, and education.

We are not being able to sustain ourselves as well as our children and the elders in the family. And he goes on to say, I don't know if any of these women actually sold their children, but if someone offered these mothers money, I think they would have done so. Sadly, I read that it's not uncommon sight to see women going from door to door trying to find a buyer for their son and their daughter.

And this isn't just emotional, Shane. You're just getting... No, this is what's happening. And we say, well, I can't really make a difference.

I got hit with a sledgehammer this week when God said, it was almost like, wow, it came to me that, Shane, I don't call you to make a difference. I'll make the difference. I call you to be faithful.

Because I'm so worried. I don't even know these people. Okay, I've sponsored a few kids.

I don't know. He doesn't call us to go and make the difference. Although we do make a difference when we help, he calls us to be faithful, to do what he's told us to do, to relinquish this idolatry and to give more and to help more.

And then from that, he'll bless our endeavors. Matthew 8 is where we left off last week. And this is where Jesus said, then a teacher of the law came to him and said, teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.

Jesus replied, foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the son of man has no place to lay his head. Another disciple said, Lord, let me go and bury my father first. But Jesus told him, follow me and let the dead bury their own dead.

And then Luke 14, 26 gives us a parallel here. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and his mother, his wife and his children, his brother and his sister, yes, his own life, he cannot be my disciple. And we talked about what that meant last week.

So if you weren't here, go back and listen to last week's sermon. If I take up the time now, it might take up too much time. But in a nutshell, he's just saying you have to prefer your mother, your father, your sister, your life.

You have to prefer those things less than me. I have to be the priority. People might say, well, that seems like a weird thing.

Why is Jesus... No, you don't understand. From our relationship with Christ, everything else is built on that. So if he's a priority, then everything else will fall in place.

Not perfectly, but in place. When he's not a priority, when we put everything else above him, and like I said before, keep him in a pocket, he's in my back pocket, just in case I need Jesus later on, I've got him right here. He's not in the foreground or in the forefront, he's in the background.

So that's what he's saying here. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. And this carrying the cross issue, I wish I had some time to talk a little bit more about it.

But in a nutshell, what is he talking about? Jesus had to carry his cross. I mean, it's torture. Carry this cross, you're going to hang on that cross, and you're going to carry it to the site.

Well, Jesus is saying, basically, carry your own cross. What does carrying the cross have to do? These guys had to carry their own cross into submission to Rome. Rome said, carry your cross, you're going to be crucified on it.

It's a submission issue. They have to submit to Roman authority and carry their cross. So Christ is saying, listen, submit to me, carry your cross, submit to my leadership, to my agenda, die to self.

Because when you're carrying your cross, you're going to die. When Christ calls us, I didn't realize he's saying, Shane, come and die. Not come and build a reputation, not come and build a church, not come and build this and do this and this, come and die.

Come and die and then I'll build the church, I'll build the people, but you're just a slave, a doulos. We've taken that out of many of our modern translations. It's not a bond servant.

The actual word is slave. I'm a slave of Christ, a doulos. Wherever he bids that I go, I go.

Whatever he says, I say. Not perfectly. I do it complaining sometimes.

I do it faltering and failing. But nevertheless, I've got a cross I've got to carry. And the only way to know the abundant life that Christ spoke of is to do that.

And the ironic thing about this is when I carry the cross, then the peace and the joy comes. It's like, oh, that seems, yeah, but I'm carrying this cross for Christ. As I'm delivering mattresses, I felt more joy than I felt all week.

But when I try to jockey things and get my comfort zone in, then that's where the fights and quarrels come from. I'm not getting my way. This is difficult.

But when you're carrying the cross, come what may. Talk to my boss, not me. Life gets challenging.

I'm just carrying the cross. The finances aren't there, like I thought. I'm just carrying the cross.

They're not my finances anyway. Hey, God, I'm making a little bit less. Your money's not coming in like it used to.

What do you want me to do? That's the kind of attitude we should have. And it's difficult. We're challenged weekly on this, if not daily.

But I think sometimes we need to remember that we're called to carry the cross. Christianity is not a lot of what you see on TV. We like it, right? I mean, there's motivational sermons.

God's going to raise you up. He's going to call you to this great ministry and this great position. Maybe so.

But don't go with that on your mind. Go with dying to self, because then he can build you up. He who humbles himself, God will exalt you.

But he who exalts himself will be humbled. See, the way to go up is down. The way to go up in Christianity is down.

I talk to people all the time. Emails probably once a week on guys that want to be pastors all over our nation. They watch the videos and now they think I have the solution.

Right? Oh, you've done it? Well, God did it. Because He can. How can we promote this? And marketing plans and demographic studies.

No, no. The way up is down. Humble yourself.

Humble yourself. Let Him exalt you. Let Him promote you.

When it's all about Christ and Christ alone, that's where the solid foundation comes from. He's going to grow your church, not you. You can spend \$10,000 in advertisements and have five people show up.

Or you can let God build His church. And I know these guys are kind of like, come on, Shane, there's more. No, no, no.

Seek Him. Let Him direct you. There's not a lot of tricks and try this and here's a seven-point checklist to do.

I do have a seven-point checklist. It actually begins at early in the morning on your knees and face saying, God, I can't do this without You. I can't do this.

You need to show me how to lead your church. I need to get into Your Word. I need to get direction.

Then from that, I need to serve. Not be served. I need to serve.

Where's Harold at? There he is. Harold. I spent some time at his house the other day, too.

It's such a treasure to just go to Mira Loma and spend time with him. You guys do that. You'll feel tremendous joy and peace that you've never felt before, but you got to get through that wall of, I don't feel like it.

Guess what? I don't either. You know what my wife and kids were doing before I went for church? They're my in-laws by the pool, relaxing. You think I didn't want to just, guys, I can't make it tonight.

Somebody fill in for me real quick, tell a story, play a video. My flesh feels that way. But then, when you submit, say, Lord, I know you need me to be there.

I've committed to this. Then the joy comes. The worship starts.

Thank God I didn't stay at home. See, joy and peace are byproducts of obedience. Many times, I'm not experiencing the peace and joy.

No kidding. Getting obedience to God's Word. Many times, I counsel people, especially you guys, I don't know if you go to the Christian Post much, but they ran an article last week that got some more negative emails again, and the KKLA radio did an interview with me last week on this issue of depression, mental illness, depression.

I definitely see the need for meds if people need those at some point, but why are we running to that and not running to the one who has the answer? The people I talk to, a lot of them are feeding their mind with a bunch of garbage. They're not having an outlet. They're not giving of themselves.

They're not worshipping God. They have no time for prayer, no time for devotional. Yeah, you might be a little depressed and anxious.

I'm not trying to minimize those things, but I am saying you better check the obvious. Before you go fill a prescription, check the obvious. What does God's Word say? Are we doing those things? Well, I don't feel like it.

No, the Bible doesn't say, oh, if you feel like it. If you seek me with all of your heart, the seeking doesn't feel good, but then I'll find you. Then you'll find me.

See, it's always be doers of the Word and then the reward comes, the peace and the joy. So when it comes to issues like this of giving ourselves, giving our finances, letting that little go, giving more, it hurts. But then the joy comes later and the peace comes later.

I really want to get that point across because I think once we cross that bridge of feelings, then you can experience the abundant life that Christ spoke of. I've learned that, yeah, you can't go through ministry and living as a victorious Christian by your feelings because I don't feel like doing it a lot of times. Counseling on the phone, meeting people, this, neither do you, right? I don't feel like it.

I don't feel like giving this in this area, but we've got to break those feelings. And here's a real quick test. Take spiritual inventory.

This is healthy. I've done this often. Are you carrying a burden? Are you carrying a burden for the gospel in your soul? Does your life go against the culture? Do people mock you, make fun of you, tease you? That will happen.

The cultural hate, anything that exemplifies Christ in your life. Do you make the right decisions in difficult circumstances? Is your heart filled with the fruit of the Spirit? This is important. Is your heart filled with love and joy and peace and contentment and gentleness and kindness? Shane, you've talked about this before.

Right. This isn't rocket science. This isn't quantum physics where we're going to discuss a new theory next week.

This is truth. And it needs to be repeated and repeated often because what I've found is people say, oh, brother, the culture hates me and I'm proclaiming God's word. Yeah, but you don't have the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

There's no love and joy and peace and contentment and gentleness and kindness. You're just as rigid as a two by four. That's not spiritual.

That's arrogance. So be careful there. Ask yourself, do you have the fruit of the Spirit? Is such and such, are you filled with peace and joy and love and goodness and gentleness and kindness? Are you filled with these things? That's the fruit of the Spirit.

If you're not, if I'm not, then some serious change needs to take place. We need that outflow. It's coming in.

I hear it. I hear it. That's why I often say you can hear it and leave here nothing change because it's just intake and there's no outflow.

Do you lack purpose and peace? Is God's will elusive to you? I hear people say, I don't know what God's will is. I have no clue. You know, it's funny there's, and I hate to use myself as an example sometimes, but this issue really isn't, hasn't been in the last 10 years.

Like what's God's will? I don't know what he's doing. I know what he's doing. I just got to follow the course.

We know what he's called it to be holy, to be set apart for him, to worship him, to be saved, to be sanctified, to be filled with the Spirit of God. Once we start doing those things, his will becomes clear. The problem is for many people, if they hold on to this and God's we trust and we don't trust the one true and

living God, I don't know his will, Shane.

Of course you don't know his will because you're not going in that direction. That's why peace and joy seem elusive. God's will, I don't know what God's will is.

Now of course I say, I don't know what God's will is. What's he going to do next year? Where's our building going to be? Those things. But I'm not driving the bus.

He is. But you got to get on the bus, get to the bus stop. No, I'm not taking that one.

Let it come by. I'm not taking that one. Just let it come by.

I don't know what God, we got to get out and we got to move and do these things. To follow the true God, we must dethrone the false gods. And what I mean by this basically is in our culture of materialism.

These things hold us. Our bank accounts, our materialism, we hold on to everything. Because I don't know why some people do, but most of the time, the more we can save the better.

And there's a safety there, right? I've talked to many men, they've got \$100,000 in the bank account and they love money and these things. I say, hey, I know of churches in India, you could build a church for \$6,000. That would only put me down to \$94,000, Shane, I got to make sure I have a cushion in there.

What do you say to that? These are just real examples. Now am I telling you to do that? Of course not. But I'm saying it's got to hold on you.

You can make it with \$100,000 in savings, but not \$94,000. You see how this works? With the bottom line is we just don't want to do it. It's going to hurt a little bit.

And that's how you get rid of this God, is you hurt him. Let me give you a little bit of that. Not saying drain everything and then go live in the desert.

You got it? Because people always get upset. Oh, you don't know the economy and the present and this and that. I don't know, you're right.

But all I know is I'm trusting in God, not the Democrat or Republican. Who's running for Republican next year? I have no idea. I'm looking to him.

I'm looking to him, that's who I look to. So in this whole issue of trust, but think about that. Don't we do that? We hold on to as much as I can.

I can't give that up. This guy can plant a church in India and pay 10 pastor salary. Or I can sit in Wells Fargo for the next 30 years.

So you got to kill that throat. I'm preaching myself too. You know that, right? That's why I didn't go get a truck.

I used that to explain that a couple weeks ago. I don't want to explain it again. It hurts still.

Every time a fairly new Dodge drives by with a large cab, oh man, Lord. And I get excuses too. My family's growing.

My kids are big. Their feet are up against the next seat. I need this.

Need or want. But once I made that decision, we sponsored four kids this week, and again, I don't say this, oh, look, I'm just saying it hurts, it's hard. But that's where peace and joy came from.

The kids are looking forward to finding out who they're sponsoring. Get rid of this stuff. I don't care what.

You know, that's how you dethrone it. Because guess what? Next month, he's going to want to take residence again. He's going to come up.

I'll be honest with you. I've got another story. I don't know how much I should be honest with.

We've always wanted in our backyard, you can see all the sheds out in front of Home Depot. You know, the nice wood, I don't know what they call those, backyard sheds. Made out of wood.

They're nice. They're painted. Home Depot.

\$1,500 installation. My kids, they put the toys in there and get their bikes out. But for the last three weeks, me and Morgan, we've saved for it, finally, finally, finally, we can go get it.

Finally, we can go get it. And I'm like, oh, man, \$1,500 for a stupid thing in the backyard, I can just put their bikes on the side of the yard. Do I need it or do I want it? You see these struggles? This is real life.

Because, no, we don't need that. They can go on the side of the yard and I can have a dirty backyard. But why do I want it? Organization.

Organized. My backyard's clean. Everything's in there.

That's not a bad thing, but it's sure not really a good thing. When I read stories like this. So can we find one that maybe somebody giving away at half price and then go do the other half? See, that's the challenges you go through.

But once you make those decisions, there's peace and joy because you're giving up that God. I don't want to simplify these things and say, oh, that sheds a God. No, but I'm showing you how money can have a hold on it.

We just don't want to give it up. And of course, I didn't find the cheapest model. I went to the bigger, best, what's the biggest I can go in my backyard, 12 by 8, county standard.

If we do this, you know, and then this whole month we're thinking, just to make the backyard look better. So it's a heart check for me. Looking at some of your faces, I shouldn't be that honest next time, right? But I'm just, yeah, I'm just, because this is what we all go through and I'm trying to help.

This is how you dethrone that God. If it is a God, it is in many of our hearts, you say, listen, it's not going to happen. I'll spend half the money.

I'll get something smaller and then I'll do the rest. Why don't you give it all away? Yeah, you could do that too. Then it hurts a little more.

So you always want to hold on to it a little bit more. So that's how these things work. Excuses get in the way.

I could make so many excuses. Better gas mileage is the tax write off, you know, bigger for our kids, everything. All those excuses need to jump out of the way sometimes.

But here's the thing. We focus, if we focus too much on a checklist or practical application, that doesn't work. And they're saying, you guys got to do this, you got to do this.

All this really is about, it's everything I talk about every single week. It's heart change. It's heart change.

When your heart changes, then these things happen. So Shane said to do this and do this. Well, not then you just did something and there's no change there.

And what does Paul say? God loves a cheerful giver, a cheerful giver. I'm not preaching on this topic because I want you to tithe more. I wouldn't do that if I gave out books.

All the people are sending their extra money to this organization I'm hearing. Good. That's the point.

To give and to help. And there's so much here, I don't know what I'll get to, but in case I forget, you don't have to do this. One of my points was, what has God put on your heart? Is there a family, is there a single mom next to you who can't even make rent? Is there Care Net Pregnancy Resource Council? Is there Concerned This and That? Where are some areas you can make a difference in? God gives us a passion and we make a difference there.

The sex trafficking that's happening in the United States. I have figures that blow your mind, if children make you want to do something not good to these people. And exercise my Second Amendment right.

But this is ugly. It's in our culture. Now, what about people who want to give to those organizations and help that? Great.

God gives us different passions in different areas to help those in need. And God will often engineer our circumstances to crush our gods. And I see many people go through difficult financial things sometimes, and God wants us to crush that God, but what we do, we hold on tighter.

We hold on tighter. And some people might say, well Shane, I'm doing really good financially, I don't think that's the case. Well, how are you doing with God? Is there peace? Is there joy? Is there love? Are you filled with the spirit of God? Do you have a love for his word? No, Shane, all those things, I don't feel those.

Your circumstances are saying that there's a neglect in this area here. You won't live as comfortably as you once did, but you will have, you will live free, you will live blessed. And I want to get that point across.

We want comforts, and I think some comforts are good. You want a comfortable chair or do you want a steel metal chair out at the building? You know, we want to replace all these with just metal chairs. You know, some comfort's good.

Comfortable be a comfortable home. I want my kids to be comfortable. I want my wife to have a comfortable, you know, so those things are, what I'm talking about though is you won't live as comfortably as you once did, meaning our flesh wants to be comfortable.

It wants to sleep too long, you know, I went over all this earlier, I'm not going to go over it again, but you won't be as comfortable as you once were. So when you make changes like this, it's not as comfortable as

it once, as you once were, but it is well with my soul. It is well with my soul.

I'm blessed. I feel the blessings of God. I feel this, the abundance of God, I feel the spirit of God.

I feel these things. So what would you rather have, \$3,000 leather couch or a decent one in the comfort of God? This isn't rocket science. Again, this is just how these things work when it comes to this area of following God.

And I've noticed that when we are tapped out, there is no peace. You notice that? When we are tapped out, when everything's maxed and we're running high gear, everything, we're tapped out, there's no peace. Peace can't be found.

We're worried all the time. We're anxious. Why? Many times we're trying to feed a God that can never be satisfied.

We're trying to fill a savings account that can never be full. We're trying to work towards this and all our labor is in vain. Unless God builds your house, they who labor, labor in vain.

Unless God is the workman and the craftsman, unless he builds that house, you just built it in vain. Unless God builds your life in these areas, we labor in vain. Should we have maybe something where when we get older, there's a retirement to pull from? Sure.

We've got to use wisdom. I want to be clear on this because sometimes people think I'm just talking about the more poor you are, the more spiritual you are. That's not the case.

I know some very prideful poor people, very prideful poor people, and they're Christians. Oh, the Lord has taken away everything and just life's so difficult, but I'm so spiritual and might be able to afford some groceries this week and I'm so, well, you guys have too much. Sometimes we need to rebuke, but sometimes we need to be encouraged as well and say, Lord, thank you for these things.

Thank you for your blessings. So I just want to make sure we're clear on that point, that it's okay to have some of these things. Now, Jesus said in Matthew 25, 35, I was hungry.

I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in.

See, giving has to hurt. Giving has to hurt us a little bit. If I'm giving to somebody or something, my time, my energy, my resources, it hurts a little bit.

It doesn't feel good. Somebody's hungry, giving them food, giving them shelter. What's funny about this, I'm preparing the sermon, I want to say, no kidding, no kidding, no kidding.

We know all this. Come on. We know all this.

Help those in need. We know all this. That's like, why don't you preach on God is love, Shane? We know all this.

Then why aren't we doing it? Because it's in one ear and out the next. And we think because I know I'm good. God says you're deceived.

You're deceived if you know and do not do. Do you have a proof text for that? Yeah. James 1.22. Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

James was writing to some believers who were living in deception. They thought they were spiritual. They thought they were wonderful.

He said, do the word, don't just hear it. So when Jesus, oh yeah, Jesus, I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. When I helped, well, actually the church helped, the Muslim family.

I thought of the scripture. Who's he talking to? Whoever I come in contact with that has a genuine need. When kids are sleeping on the kitchen floor, that's a genuine need.

Especially when I can go and make a difference. And then you do it in the name of Christ. This is real American Christianity.

Here's what it looks like. So when he didn't say just Christians here, he said anybody, anybody's hungry, you give them something to eat. Thirsty.

You gave them something to drink. I was a stranger. You invited me in.

It's a heart of compassion. But one of my concerns for the mission field is you can feed the soul, feed the stomach, but destroy the soul. The gospel has to be primary.

The gospel. The good news, if we just feed the stomach but fail to relate to the soul, we're also going in a dangerous direction. So here's some quick steps to freedom.

Begin by doing what I did. Lord, I'm sorry. I repent.

I've been wrong. I've been hoarding. I've been trying to save too much.

And a lot of it's not bad. We don't have any boats, jet skis, toys, nothing. But I'm worried.

If you've ever been poor before and only had a couple months to live, I mean a couple months of income, you hold it. It's through a series of events of losing a lot of things in my life that I can't have that happen again. That was too close of a call.

Or was it? Or was God just saying, let me show you who your idol is? I mean, talk to people in the Great Depression. My earlier generations, that's why they worked so hard and saved. Because they were so fearful of going through that again.

And rightly so. I think we need to have some provision in there. But the first step is always to say, Lord, help me in this area.

I think most of us in this room can probably say that, right? Lord, we need to be, would you show me? Lord, show me, where can I help in this area? And then we have to give to break the hold. So it's one thing to say, Lord, help me in this area. Thank you.

Nothing happens. This kind of prayer has to be backed by action. Once we pray and say, Lord, show me this area, then wherever it hurts, that was the next thing.

Let go of what you hold most dear. And not just all of it, but whatever it is you're holding on to, that's your, I know guys that real estate or stock or whatever it is, give a little bit of that up. The guy, a good example, had \$100,000 in his bank account.

Go plant a church or \$6,000, you'll still be fine. If you can't make it off \$94,000, you're sure not going to make it off \$100,000. You have to get, that's how you release its power.

See, it's not the \$100,000 is bad, it's what we want with it. Money is a terrible, terrible master, but a wonderful servant. It's the love of money, it's not the \$100,000, it's the love of that.

So if this man could say, listen, I'll give \$10,000 to go plant a church somewhere. Here's a missionary organization, here's this, let me go feed a single mom and their kids, let me pay their rent up for a year, it has no hold on me. I still got \$90,000, but I just gave \$10,000 up.

You see, that's how you release it from your life. It's not like everything's gone, we have nothing ever again. God's saying, just release the hold it has on you.

Not everything, just the hold. And how do you release it? By giving it away. I know it's a difficult message, but we need to hear it.

And then the fourth thing, obviously, is you've got to restructure your lifestyle. We're not going to be going down to Disneyland this summer and spending \$2,000 staying in a hotel. Go to Walmart and get a \$50 water sprinkler, then play in the backyard.

Now, are vacations bad? Of course not. But when they've got every single month and you're spending tons of money, something's got to give. Lifestyle's got to be changed around a little bit.

We might have to sell some things. Some things, not everything. And the wonderful part about a sermon like this, we all know, God's got our number.

We're convicted right now that you don't need that. You don't want this, this, this, this, this. I don't have to do it.

I just have to say, listen, let go of it. And this is wonderful because God says, keep most of it. Keep most of it.

I blessed you. Keep it, most of it. You're fine.

But would you let go of its hold so I'm still on the throne? Because you can't have God sitting high and lifted up, holy is his name, up on the throne when we've got other gods up there. They've got to be dethroned. They've got to be crushed.

Now, three points on this area of giving. Where should we give? Number one, we give where we're fed. So if we're fed here, myself included, minister, this is one of the places I give.

You give where you fellowship, you give where you're fed. That's just, that's common sense, that's biblical, that's scripture. We're not doing offerings, we're not doing a big push.

That's just what the Bible recommends. But also, we give according to what God puts on our heart. This thing, the Muslim families I come into contact with, whoever you, you know, what God puts on our heart.

And we give it to those in need. In other words, you know, if you're leaving, say, listen, somebody's about ready to lose their house payment or their house. Actually, this is a funny story.

I just thought of it as I was giving this point. Up in Rancho Vista, a guy came into me, he's upset. Shane, we got a three-day notice on his house.

Oh, man, his kid's got some type of cancer. I'm thinking, well, that can't happen. Absolutely not.

So we'll help out. You know, I'll be at your house tomorrow, you know, or later that day. I went to his house and I was shocked.

Two Mac laptops, 50-inch big-screen TV, a movie collection. He might have got a Hollywood. I want to say, well, you can start there and there and there and there.

Those two toys out in the garage, you can get \$1,500 for those. I learned a very valuable lesson. Do your research, do your homework.

I had to fulfill my obligation, my commitment to him, but I left there going, well, that guy really got it went over on me. Or here, we'll help you, but you need to sell those things and pay the church back. You got to let it go.

But he had, they had more in their house than I would ever dream of. The stereo equipment, the Mac laptops and the stuff in the garage, easily, easily, you know, you need a computer, right? You need two, you need this. So they could have sold a lot of that and had two, three, \$4,000 just in the house quickly.

So I think a lot of times that we want to hold on to these things and God says, so maybe he was teaching him to let some of that stuff go and I came and got in the way. They call that an enabler. I enabled that lifestyle in that person because I stepped in, but I can't go, oh, too late.

I see all this stuff. So I learned a very valuable lesson that day. And this is interesting.

I got to hurry up. The key in the Old Testament, how often do we talk about the word repentance? A lot, right? Old Testament, the prophets called the people to repentance. Shane, you say that all the time.

Have you ever stopped to think about what they repented of? This, Jonah, those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope in God. Isaiah, those who fashion idols are nothing and the things they delight in do not profit them. Exodus 20, you shall not have any other gods before me.

What about this one, Ezekiel? Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom. Remember Sodom and Gomorrah? We all say, oh, that perverted place. Yeah, there's perversion taking place.

But now this was the sin of your sister Sodom. She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed, and unconcerned. They did not help the poor and the needy.

I don't know about you, but some of these things just leaped out at me today because we always think, oh, yeah, they had to repent. They had those homosexual guys are trying to beat down the door and they're so perverted in that culture. Well, the number one sin of Judah and Israel, northern, southern kingdom was their idolatry.

God had blessed them so much that their blessings became their curse. They worshiped these things. They overspent.

They overfed. They neglected those in need. That was the sin of Sodom in addition to the perversions we saw.

And I never really made the connection too much that we always think the big sin, adultery and this and all, they were terrible, and they were. But much of it relied on how they were treating the people there. They weren't helping them.

And as I was doing research, I also noticed this. Do you know the top killers in America, right? You know what they are, heart disease, all these things, obesity, things. The top killers in America are because of our abundance.

The top killers in third world countries are because of their lack. Abundance is killing us. Lack is killing them, malnourished, malaria, all these things they can't treat.

You get the flu there, strep throat or something, good chances are you might not make it. Our abundance is killing us. Overfed, overnourished, all these things, our abundance, all this abundance, the top three things that kill Americans have to do with abundance.

Too much of this and too much of this and not enough of that. I just said they're amazed. Everything God has given us is killing us, and because we're not giving it, that's what's killing them.

Psalms 82.3, defend the weak and the fatherless, uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. And this is interesting. This is the role of the father.

God calls us to be the role of the father, to feed, to clothe, to provide for. And I don't want to get people worked up in a frenzy, what do we do now? Oh, you have to say, Lord, how do you want to use me? I need to get rid of some of this stuff. How do you want, what do you want to do? And that's one thing the church is, we're sponsoring missionaries, we're doing different things.

So if you don't know what to do, ask us, we can get you plugged in with this book or different organizations. We can point you in the right direction, but something's got to take place in your heart. For many people, it already is.

This isn't a message I know for everybody. To dethrone these gods, this God basically, preaching won't do it. I'm aware of that.

I'm aware. Do you realize when I preach year after year, people go, my husband's not changing. My daughter's not changing.

Nothing's changing. They hear you week in and week out, Shane, and nothing's changing. They're just as arrogant as they were last year.

I get frustrated. You realize that preaching won't do it. Attending church won't do it.

Thinking about it won't do it. Being convicted won't do it. Worship alone won't do it.

And stagnant prayer is useless against this idol. He must be crushed. This idol must be crushed.

You crush him by giving some of it away. Whatever you're holding on to, give some of that away. I know people that own cars outright.

They give it to families in need. The families in need are breaking down crying. God brings them a different vehicle, the person who gave away their vehicle.

God's always a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. You can't go wrong out giving God. And one of the errors, I'll be honest with you, one of the things that West Side Christian Fellowship, where I felt they kind of dropped the ball and people have told me I have, is I avoid this topic of money for this very reason.

Because if the one guy says you're just in it for the money, I'm going to reach hundreds of other people. I mean this sermon will be heard by 10,000 people next month on the radio and internet and different things. So it's not just you I'm reaching.

If just 1% of that, if 1% of that would just do something and get their hearts in right relationship with God, we would see miracles. We would see God moving mightily. And we hold on to these things.

I had examined my own life and that's why it hurts. But attending church and everything we're doing right now is not enough. You have to crush this idol.

This doesn't just happen in the heart, Lord, I'm sorry, would you help me? And then nothing changes. That idol's still on the throne. Isaiah 58, prayers weren't answered and their fast was useless because of this.

God said, then your light shall break forth in the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily and your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call on the Lord and he will answer.

These prayers weren't answered. People weren't getting their answer. Have your prayers never been answered before? Your fast is useless.

Everything you're trying to do, it falls like it's falling on deaf ears. God says, if you extend your soul to the hungry, and I was amazed as I was studying this topic, it's everywhere. It's everywhere.

It's in Ezekiel. It's in Jeremiah. It's in Isaiah.

It's in prophets are condemning Israel because of their abundance. It's in the New Testament because of the, it's everywhere. But we're selective.

If you extend your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then, then and only then will your light dawn in the darkness and your darkness shall be as the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually and he will satisfy your soul in drought. He will strengthen your bones.

You shall be like a water garden and like a spring water whose waters do not fall. In a nutshell, giving opens the door to God's blessing, but again, not financially necessary. It is well with my soul.

It is well with my soul. You remember that old hymn? It is well with my soul. Turn to page number 242.

It is well with my soul. And they would sing that. That's what it is.

It's not, you don't think, well Shane, my finances aren't doing great. It's well with my soul. Listen, you can say, you're not going to get your, Shane, you might not have any income next month.

I don't care as much as long as it's well with my soul. If it's well with my soul, I can handle that. That's why you have millionaires doing this, Hollywood actors overdosing, millionaires living in New York, ODing, why? It's not well with their soul.

This idol promises but never delivers. So I would just encourage you, just do a heart check and see what God wants to do in your own life in this area.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/K8lZik2ktJl.mp4>

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