

Lord, Is It I?

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing a relationship with God and not just focusing on serving Him, as well as the danger of leaving one's first love and becoming rigid and judgmental.

Duration: 46:13

Scripture: Matthew 26:17

Topics: "Self-Examination", "The Blood of Christ"

Description

Shane Idleman preaches on the significance of self-examination and the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot, emphasizing the importance of recognizing our own hearts and motives. He draws parallels between the Passover and Jesus as the ultimate Passover lamb, highlighting the power of the blood for redemption. Idleman encourages believers to not only serve but also to worship, warning against the dangers of being too busy for God. He stresses the need for genuine repentance and the importance of examining oneself before partaking in communion, reminding the congregation that true faith produces genuine fruit in their lives.

Transcript

Matthew 26, I'll be reading from the New King James Bible. And this is the plot to kill Jesus. And many of you have heard of Judas Iscariot, this is why.

And nobody names their kid Judas Iscariot, or Judas for that matter, because they know that this name carries with it the plot to kill Jesus. Matthew 26, now it came to pass when Jesus had finished all these sayings, everything we just talked about the last few months, that he said to his disciples, you know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified. Then the chief priest, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill him.

But they said, not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people. Now, we should stop there for a minute and talk about the Passover. If you've been coming to church a while, you know what the Passover is.

And if you haven't, the reason the Passover is significant is because it was celebrated in the Old Testament. They would remember the Passover like no other festival, like no other event, because that was when God delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt. And that God said, you should kill this little

goat, put the blood on your door, and when the death angel passes over your house or that area, he will not kill you.

And it seems pretty hard, but the blood saves. There's power in the blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

So when the death angel came over the land of Egypt, he killed all the firstborn, but saved those who put the blood on the door. And the application is pretty ironic because the same thing applies to us. Whoever puts the blood on it, that's why we sing about the blood.

We're not afraid of the blood. It's the blood that set me free. What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

And that's redemption. And we're not afraid of that portion of Scripture or any portion for that matter. So they were celebrating the Passover.

And let me read it from Exodus 12, 12. For I will pass through the land of Egypt, God is speaking here, on that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt, I will execute judgment. It's a good reminder that there's no other gods above God.

There's no other gods equal with God. He's going to judge them, Egypt, according to their own gods. I am the Lord.

Now the blood shall be assigned for you on the house where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you. And the plagues shall not be on you or to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

So the Passover, thousands, I don't know how many years I'd have to look, 1,500 years, maybe after Moses, 2,000 years. I don't even wanna guess there. I should've looked it up before I said anything because now I'll get emails stating how many years exactly.

But from when the actual Passover happened to when Jesus is celebrating the Passover, thousands of years. So now the true Passover lamb is going to be sacrificed. So it's just ironic that, of course, it's sovereignty, right, it's God's timing.

But I wanna just throw in this little note here because there are some groups out there that celebrate all the festivals and all the feasts, and it's usually Masonic Jews. And if they properly understand what they're doing, it's fine. But a lot of times, they'll put that on just believers in general and say, if you don't celebrate the feasts and all these things, you're not pleasing God.

Basically, it's Jesus Christ plus the festivals and plus observing all these things. And I like what an Israeli pastor said of Jewish descent. His name was Barqu Mazah, I believe I pronounced that right, doesn't believe that it is wrong for Jewish Christians to celebrate the feasts, but also explains why Gentile Christians shouldn't observe them.

He said this, the ritual aspect of the law, its symbols, hopes, and expectations all find fulfillment in Jesus. Having been fulfilled, they no longer have the religious value they had in the past. Yet for us Jewish Christians, they form part of our national culture.

The shadows have passed, the shadows have passed to give room for the reality. And it's not right for us to insist upon those shadows as if they were still in force. The reason I bring this up is there are Christians

who say you have to observe these festivals that were in the Old Testament.

And anytime you say Jesus plus something, you're running on dangerous ground. Now, if you want to observe them and remember and reflect and have that be part of your week, it's wonderful. But to put that on other people and say they have to celebrate these festivals, it's not right, it becomes legalistic and judgmental.

Shane, do you have a scripture on that? Well, I'm glad you asked. How about Colossians 2, 16 and 17? So let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbath, which are a shadow of things to come. But the substance, meaning the real thing is of Christ.

So he's talking to the church in Colossae that don't let anybody judge you on certain things, that the substance is Christ, not if you follow these rules and regulations. However, when people have like a Passover supper or they celebrate the festivals, it's wonderful to go and partake of that and be part of that and see what the festivals represent as long as we're not tagging it onto the salvation. Christ is sufficient.

You don't have to do anything because he did everything. And let's look at that few examples. What about a day of rest, Sabbath? It's not Jesus plus the Sabbath.

No, but it's good to take a day off. What about good works? It's not Jesus plus good works, but a Christian should do good works. What about Jesus plus holiness? You know, don't I live a certain way? No, it's not gonna help for salvation, but you should live a certain way.

We should be different from the world. What about loving others and loving God and loving his word? Yes, those are all important, but they should flow from a relationship with Christ. And also what should flow from that relationship is what we're doing tonight, communion afterwards and baptisms.

They should all flow from that relationship, but it's not communion and baptism save me. It's just Christ is sufficient. I remember a while back, I heard a man tell his wife that he wanted to get baptized so he doesn't go to hell.

What's that noise on a game show? Not wrong answer, wrong answer. Please, please explain this to this person. If you ever hear that, I don't wanna go to hell so I need to get baptized.

No, you wanna avoid hell because of what Jesus did and believing in him and then baptism is just an outward sign of what's been happening in my heart. So those who are getting baptized tonight, they've already made a profession of faith. So we just say based on your profession of faith, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit.

And they do that in front of the church and they make that public profession of their faith. So verse six, and when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him having an alabaster flax, a very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when his disciples saw it, they were indignant saying, why this waste? Why this waste? And I thought that just really popped out of me this week because that's what non-believers say to us.

What a wasted life. What a wasted life. I mean, I see kids, they'll grow up and their parents want them to be these major sports stars and they become a Christian, say, I wanna go to Bible college.

Like, what a waste. What a waste. No, it's not a waste.

It's not a waste. Anytime you follow God with all your heart and soul, it's not a waste. And what she was doing was a good thing.

For this fragrant oil might've been sold for much and given to the poor. So that's what they said. And anointing people with oil was, we don't do that, it's in a different way now, but it's preparing the body for burial is what they were doing.

They're anointing it. She was preparing it for his burial and it was very costly. And they said, what a waste.

But they wanna take the oil and sell it and then give the money to the poor. At least that's what Jesus said, but we know he had other plans. But when Jesus was aware of it, he said to them, why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for me.

For you have the poor with you always, but me, you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on my body, she did it for my burial. Assuredly, I say to you, whenever and wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be told as a memorial to her.

And if just a few things to glean from this passage, if everything is a priority, then nothing is. If everything is a priority, then nothing is. So she recognized the priority.

Jesus was going to his death, anointing him. And I find it ironic today, a lot of people say, why isn't the church doing this or doing that? We wanna be running in 100 different directions, but if everything is a priority, then nothing is. So you have to find what is a priority, what is the main thing and do those things.

Being with Jesus, anointing him, she put first things first. And much like Mary and Martha, you've heard this story before, but I wanna read it, Luke 10. As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

She had a sister called Mary who sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to Jesus and said, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do this work by myself? Tell her to help me, the NIV.

Tell her to help me. And Jesus basically said, Martha, Martha, you're concerned about all these things that really don't matter. But Mary is concerned about what does matter.

And this is important, this is a wonderful principle. Because if you're focused on serving only and not surrender to God, if you're focused, let me read that again. If you're focused on serving and not surrender, spending time in ministry and not time with the Lord, your walk will be severely hindered.

And I really wanna get this point across. If this, this is a whole different group. Many people don't fall in this category, but some do.

If all you're doing is serving and serving and working for God, your relationship with him will be hindered. You have to be the worshiper as well as the worker. And I see so many, and even at Leona Valley, I'm gonna talk about this tomorrow because there's some people there, there's some people here, and all they do is work, work, work, work, work.

During the worship night, work, work, work, work, work. During the service, work, work. I'm like, when are you ever worshiping and fellowshiping? And what happens when they get home? If they're not worshipers at church, they're usually not worshipers at home.

They're workers at home. So they get up, gotta do this, gotta do this, gotta do this, gotta get this for the ministry, gotta do this for the church, gotta do this for my kids. And they're just workers all the time.

And that's not healthy because you have to be a worshiper. But on the flip side, or with that said, the worshiper can obviously, sometimes, now be careful here too. Flaky comes to mind.

We can be worshiper, but where's the work? We need your help. No, I'm just here to worship and there's no help. There's no service.

And this is where that saying comes from. You're so heavenly minded that you're no earthly good. Now, I don't know if that's really possible but that's where that saying comes from.

Just a worshiper and a worshiper and that without work makes us flaky and lazy. Because is it easier to worship or work? So we have to find that balance. So the worshiper, you'll hear, you're too heavenly minded to be any earthly good.

That's the danger. But the danger for the worker is found in Revelation. Jesus said, I know your works and your labor, but you have left your first love.

So you have to find the middle ground. It's difficult. And you know who you are.

Sometimes we fall in either camp, right? Just a worshiper and a worshiper and nothing gets done. We need servers. We need helpers.

No, I'm just a worshiper. And the workers are just all about work and work and they don't have time to worship. And it's like eating.

If you don't have time to eat, what's gonna happen eventually? Your body withers and it begins to consume stored fat. It begins to consume stored muscle. Those people don't realize that.

Muscles consumed, fats consumed. And they wither away and they wither away and they wither away. Same thing spiritually.

If you're not a worshiper, you will wither away. Well, Shane, what's a worshiper? A worshiper makes time for God. A worshiper makes time for his, they schedule God in.

I'm going to worship. See, sometimes we think, if we did a poll and I asked, what does worship mean? We'd have a lot of different answers. Because some people would say, standing up, raising their hand.

Some people say, well, it's my whole lifestyle. And all these answers are right in and of themselves. But a worshiper makes time for God.

They sit and they meditate. They open God's word. They pray.

He's on their calendar. Where a worker will have work on their calendar and no time for God. The worshiper puts God on the calendar and they spend time with him.

Because during working, and working is good, visiting the hospital homes and doing everything we do, that's good. It's an outlet. We get built up.

But nothing like spending time with God really cleans the heart and challenges us. That's why I think the enemy wants us so busy. And I've said, I'm not going to go on that rabbit trail again because I could stay there quite a while.

But that's the problem in most churches. That's the problem in this church is we're too busy. We're too busy for God.

I mean, how come we can't spend an hour with him in the morning? What's the reason? Usually, too busy. Too busy. Okay, not a morning person.

How about in the evening? Too busy. This isn't too busy. No, next channel.

Next channel. See, we just don't make time. And we go to bed late.

We don't get up early enough. And then we're... Many times we get up in the morning, we're scrambling the whole day trying to catch up, right? And it just, a worshiper needs to make that time. I really want to encourage you because that would fix a lot of problems in the church.

That would fix a lot of problems in our families and our marriages. And people say, my relationship with God, Shane, just seems dull and dead. And they're a good worker, but they're not a worshiper.

So you have to bring that in. Let me just give a mild rebuke to the worker who is not a worshiper. Here's what can happen.

Revelation 2.2, I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. You've tested those who say they are apostles and are not and have found them liars. And you have persevered and have patience and have labored for my namesake.

And you've even become weary. In other words, you've worked hard. You've got sound doctrine.

You can spot out false teachers. You're doing all these things. Nevertheless, I have this against you that you have left your first love.

Remember therefore, from where you have fallen, repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place unless you repent. And at first glance, you might say, well, Jesus, that's a little hard. They're doing works.

They're laboring. They're patient. They can't bear those who do evil.

They point out false teachers. They persevere, even to becoming weary. What's wrong with that picture? What's wrong with that picture is I've seen a lot of people like this and they don't have the joy of the Lord in them.

They've lost that. So now they're rigid and they're arrogant and they're hard and they're domineering and they'll throw a scripture at you and they'll judge you. They're quick to put down.

They're just, they're high strung, bad temper, bad. But they're workers though. And that's what happens if you leave that first love because it's the love that keeps you anchored in that love, that love that keeps you.

It's Christ's love that keeps you anchored in that joy, in that peace. And that's how you stay broken and humble before God is you stay a worshiper. Yes, you work and you stay a worshiper.

If all you do is work and you know, I often throw this out there all the time, is what you're doing right now, is it leading to love and joy and peace? Let's be honest. Let's just be serious. Let's be open.

Let's take all of you, take personal inventory. Right now, not today necessarily because we have bad days and good days, but overall, overall, are you a joyful person, a loving person, compassionate, good, filled with the Holy Spirit, merciful, being gracious, being patient to others, understanding, loving? Is that who you are? Or are you hard and rigid and arrogant and condescending and judgmental and not nice? Because that's the slippery slope of judgmentalism. And it's a slope it's hard to recover from unless you become a worshiper.

Because if I'm just the worker, that's what I turn into. Because here's what happens. I've, oh, this has happened many times.

I've had to repent. Why am I doing all this stuff? Why is nobody stepping up to serve? Why is my wife getting 10 text messages on Friday because nobody can show up for children's ministry? Why, why, why, why, why, why don't people serve? Like, why, why, why, why, right? But that's the flesh. And you do it too.

And if you're serving in a high capacity, you have the tendency to say, why aren't others serving like I am? Why can't I get more helpers? If you're an usher, you say, why aren't there more people ushering? If you're a greeter, why aren't there more people greeting? If you're working hard in children's ministry, you're probably saying, why aren't there more children's ministry workers so I can take the night off once in a while? And we get caught in this area of being judgmental. That's why it takes a worshiper to bring us back on track. And I just gotta throw this out there because as you know, I love the word repentance.

And Jesus said, unless you repent, unless you repent and return to your first love. Basically, what that means is return your heart back to what it initially was when you first began following me. And here's where we get trapped sometimes.

Repentance is a change. Repentance is not good intentions. You catch that? Repentance is not, you know, that's right.

Shane is right, I need to make some changes. That's just good intentions. But real repentance is a complete change.

And many times we confuse the two and we see sincerity and we see good intentions, but that's not repentance. Repentance actually returns and does the first works. It returns back to that love it left.

Verse 14, Judas agrees to betray Jesus. Then one of the 12 called Judas Iscariot went to the chief priests and said, what are you willing to give me if I deliver him to you? Oh my goodness. Can you imagine Judas just sitting in hell remembering this for eternity? It's what I thought of.

What are you willing to give me if I deliver him to you? See, the devil's always doing that. I'll give you this. He always wants to play games.

Don't ever play games with the devil. For some reason, I heard the song in 10 years and it came to my mind this morning studying this. The devil went down to Georgia looking for a soul to steal.

He was in a bind cause he's way behind. He was willing to make a deal, right? Came up upon this young boy playing his fiddle. He said, boy, let me tell you what, I guess you didn't know, but I'm a fiddle player too.

And if you care to take a dare, I'll make a bet with you. You play pretty good fiddle boy, but give the devil's due. I bet a fiddle gold against your soul to think I'm better than you.

And that's usually, the story usually doesn't end good on that because the devil wants you to come in and play that game. What will you give me? What profit? Because there's always ulterior motives behind leaving God or doing other things. What would you give me? The devil show, this is probably one reason why we don't see a lot of people, a lot of Christians passionate for God.

And it actually sometimes drives me crazy. People on Facebook, people that say they're Christians, but you would never know it. And a lot of times it's because they believe that lie.

The devil says, you don't want to be like that guy. Shane up there in the pulpit, that's weird. You're having no fun.

Or your mom was assaulted, you don't want to be like that. What will you give me? Don't you want to enjoy the world? Don't you want to enjoy the things of the world? What will you give me in exchange for your soul? So many people give and give and give the devil more and more ground because they don't, they have this concept that following God, all the fun's going to be over. And I've joked about that, but it's true.

We don't, I've talked to young adults. Oh, I don't, I'm not there yet. I'm still having fun.

I don't want to go to the mission field. God's going to require this and I got to give money. I got to go to church all the time.

It's because the heart's wrong. There should be a desire to want to go to church. And the devil takes that and he twists everything.

He's twisted our nation, hasn't he not? I've promised myself I wasn't going to say anything about the ape that got shot, but not the 3,000 babies that are aborted every day. God help us. God help us.

Of course, the animal's life's important, but when you start to tell, say that the mother needs to go to jail or the zoo, it's, I don't know what to say. I can't say anything because it won't be good. What are you willing to give me if I deliver him to you? And they counted out to him 30 pieces of silver.

Jesus Christ was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver. It's interesting. Joseph in the Genesis was betrayed for 20 pieces of silver.

Joseph was highly favored. Jesus was highly favored. Joseph was betrayed by his brethren.

Jesus was betrayed by his brethren. And it keeps going. You can go down the list.

There's a lot of insight. Joseph became second in command under Pharaoh. Jesus, even though the Trinity is equal, the Father is in a position of superiority, at least based on the scripture I read, the Father knows, the Father, the Father.

We see the triune nature of God equal, co-equal. One God operating in three distinct persons, but the Father. And it's interesting that we see these parallels.

30 pieces of silver. So from that time, he sought opportunity to betray him. And that's where we see the slow descent of sin.

What are you willing to give me? What are you willing to give me? Jesus celebrates the Passover with his disciples, verse 17. Maybe we should stop there for a minute. Maybe some of you on the, I don't know why this is really standing out, but maybe some of you are at that point now where the devil's tempting you with something.

What are you willing to give me? What are you willing to give me? That pleasure, that choice, that affair, that going back to a certain lifestyle. What are you willing to, because it's negotiation. You know where the negotiations happen? I talked to a lot of addicts that relapse.

And it's right here. What are you willing to give me? Go back, come on, come on back. What are you willing to give me? That's what the devil does.

Because what do you, the price to serve God is too great, people say. It's too hard. I wanna go back to serving the devil because he paints a wonderful picture, doesn't he? I mean, think about the apple, look good for food.

To Eve, pleasant to the eyes, wonderful fruit. And then it led all of mankind into this hell that we're living in because of that, this fall. It's called the fall of man.

So the devil, the temptation, never forget this, the temptation always looks attractive. If it wasn't, it wouldn't be called temptation. Why do you think cookies look so good? I often wonder if a cookie looked like a broccoli, and we have to trick our kids sometimes.

I know I'll just, I'll be the first to admit it. You put healthy things in a box, it looks like it's unhealthy. Oh, look at these, there you go.

Mm. You know, put little broccoli things in a Captain Crunch box and kids just, but that's temptation. That's, he'll draw you in.

Sometimes it's making more money with a certain job and giving up everything. And I talk to people sometimes that wanna, who doesn't want sometimes a better job and more money if God's blessing them in that area. But if you're following it for that reason only, and that's gonna be the reason why you're making that decision, that could be a trap of the enemy because he's enticing.

He's enticing. So you never, in my opinion, you never wanna make a decision based on finances alone because that's a big temptation. Now, if you're considering everything, of course, but never make a decision based on that alone.

It needs to be, Lord, are you going to be, can I still continue to worship you? Is there a good church I can fellowship with? Is it gonna hurt my marriage or help? What about the relationship with my kids? Because I see a lot of young adults, men primarily, that get into jobs where they're just working seven days a week, six days a week, 50, 60 hours, and it's taken them completely away from God. And without fail, the same answer usually is, I know, I know, but next year when this slows down, couple of years when I get

retirement, that's when I'll, and it never happens because that's the devil's enticement to keep us drawn in. Verse 17, now on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus saying to him, where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover? And he said, go into the city to a certain man.

And they said to him, the teacher says, my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover. And see, they kept the Passover before Jesus dies, but you don't see them keeping the Passover now into Christian history after he dies.

Why? Because he was the Passover lamb. He was the final fulfillment. The blood of bulls and goats in the Old Testament could never fully satisfy the wrath of God.

They were a covering, not a completion. They temporarily covered the sin of the people. And that's why I had to do it every year, every year, the high priest would go into the Holy of Holies and make atonement for the sins of the people every year.

But when Jesus came, final Passover lamb, it is finished on the cross, it's done. So there's no reason to keep celebrating that. Now, again, I'm wanting to be careful because there are people who celebrate the Passover as a memorial.

It's nothing wrong with that, but remembering what Jesus did, long as we understand it's not something we have to do. Read Galatians, for example. It talks about the church who goes back to legalism, back to the law.

And Paul says, oh, church, who has bewitched you? Are you going to finish in the flesh what began in the spirit? And they're going back to the law. Okay, Christians, back to circumcision, back to the Passover, back to you gotta do this, you gotta do this, you gotta do this, and you bind people up with rules that they themselves are not able to follow. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.

So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover. When evening had come, he sat down with the 12. Now, as they were eating, he said, assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.

And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to him, Lord, is it I? I mean, can you imagine this moment? All the disciples are sitting there, and they think, you know, this is gonna be a wonderful conversation. And Jesus says, one of you will betray me. And they all said, Lord, is it I? That tells you something.

There's humanity there, is it I? Am I gonna be the one who does that? He answered and said, he who dipped his hand with me in the dish will betray me. The Son of Man indeed goes, just as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been good for that man if he had never been born.

Then Judas, who was betraying him, answered and said, Rabbi, is it I? So Judas is scared. He's actually saying, Rabbi, is it I? Is it I? Am I gonna betray you? And Jesus says, you said it. You said it, it is you.

So at that moment, they believe Satan entered Judas and there's debate on did he celebrate communion and different things? I don't think he did. The gospels are silent. I don't know if Judas celebrated communion with the disciples.

I think he went out and did what he was going to do. But Judas versus the others, both of them said, Lord, is it I? But Judas was the deceiver. The disciples were genuine seekers.

So Judas said, Lord, is it I? Knowing it was him. The disciples said, Lord, is it I? Search me. Lord, can I do this terrible thing? Examine my heart.

Examine me, Lord, please. I hope this is not me. And there's power in self-examination.

The power of self-examination. I would encourage you to do it tonight during communion because what we're actually supposed to do before communion is examine our hearts. The Bible says, before you partake, examine yourself.

Let me read a few scriptures from the New American Standard version of the Bible on examining ourselves. Job 13.23, how many, how many, Job's asking God, how many are my iniquities and sins? Make known to me my rebellion and my sin. Now be careful if you ever pray this prayer because God will do it.

If you ever sit down and say, Lord, make known to me, make known to me my sins and my iniquities, make known to me my rebellion, and the Holy Spirit will bring things to your mind. You see how you positioned yourself? You see how you exalted yourself? You see how you dropped that name, name recognition? You see all that, and you're like, oh, God, please turn off the searchlight. But that's what we're supposed to do because once you're examined, then you say, Lord, I repent.

That was wrong, and I'm going to fix that. I'm going to restore that. I'm not going to do that again.

I'm not going to lie. I'm not going to deceive. I'm not going to mislead people.

So self-examination is important. Lamentations 3:40, let us examine and probe our ways and let us return to the Lord. And this verse in context is saying, let us examine and probe our ways and return to the Lord.

That means the people have left the Lord. So when a person examines and probes, they say, my heart's not right. I've left my first love.

I'm not living like God wants me to live. I'm compromising, I've drifted. I'm examining, I'm probing my heart, and I'm returning to God.

Now, this would also be good for those of you who don't know Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior. If you never repented, you should examine your heart and examine, say, my heart's not right before God. I don't know where I'll spend eternity.

I don't love God, Shane, like you're talking about. Lord, is it I? That's healthy to say that, Lord, is it I? Does this apply to me? And examine and probe and then return to the Lord. And a group this size, I never wanna go without, if I don't have to, is just reminding you that all you have to do to return to the Lord if you've drifted or to turn your life over to the Lord for the first time is to confess, repent, and believe.

Confess, say, Lord, I'm wrong, I need you. I believe in your son, and I'm repenting of my sin. 2 Corinthians 13, five, Paul said, test yourself to see if you are in the faith.

Examine yourself, or do you not recognize this about yourself that Jesus Christ is in you? So Paul's saying to the church in Corinth, test yourself, examine yourself. Do you not know yourself? Is Jesus Christ really

in you? It's very healthy for a church, sometimes, to examine themselves. Do I have a love for God? Let me ask you this question.

Don't raise your hand, but just ask yourself this question. Do you truly love God and his word? Do you truly love God and his word? Is there a brokenness about you? Is there a selflessness and a brokenness about you? You love God, you love his word, or is none of that present? Is none of that present at all? Then Paul says, examine yourself. You know yourself, do you really know God? Because something we can't hide from is a genuine relationship produces genuine fruit, that you can't hide from the fruit.

A true believer, as hard as you try, you cannot hide from the fruit. It will come out. Boop, boop, boop, boop, boop.

It's growing. Why am I being nice to people? Why don't I wanna cuss anymore? Why don't I wanna do this? Why, why, why? Because it's the fruit. It's the fruit.

So Paul's saying, if you have no fruit, you might wanna make sure the tree's planted. Because there's a lot of people, and my heart's for this group of people, because I did it. The song, what was that last song we sang? Give me Jesus, and 25 years ago, you guys are crazy.

You guys are crazy. Jesus, dressed all weird, and turned the other cheek, and hung on a cross, and all, you guys are weird. That was back when I was strong, big man, right? And drinking beer, and beating people up, and all this, that's a man.

This guy's not a man. Look, you guys are just, there's no fruit. But now when we sing it, oh, please, give me Jesus.

I'll be the first to admit, I need Him every day. He's my Lord, He's my Savior. He keeps everything together, in Him, everything is made.

And in Jesus Christ, all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Jesus Christ. He is everything. And when I started to read the Bible in 1999, and God started to work, it took a little time, you know? I had the old friends, and old habits, and I was going back and forth, and if you've ever been there, you're miserable.

You are miserable, because you're going back to this old life, and it's not fun anymore. I remember, I think I told you before, we were in Laughlin, rented jet skis, case of Corona. I told my, I just wanna go home.

You wanna go home? Yeah, I just, I don't, something's wrong. It's not, I wanna go home and read the Bible, and go to church. It was not a fun ride home.

I was called super Christian. I haven't talked to him again since then. But there's, there's just, there's fruit there that you can't run from.

Super Christian, right? Da da da. But back to my story. I was reading just all the passages.

A conquering king, Lord over all, even the demons tremble in his presence. Every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess. The lion of the tribe of Judah, the armies of heaven will follow him with the sword going out of his mouth.

He's gonna strike the nations, and rule the nations with a rod of iron, and tread the winepress, and the fierceness, and wrath of almighty God. I said, God, this person I mocked, this person I belittled, unbelievable. When you get a full picture of who Jesus is, you'll fall in your face.

It's why Hollywood, they're coming out with these plays and different things of the transgender Jesus, and all his disciples were gay, and I just cry. Say, you guys, you've lost it. If he would show himself in that room, they would fall on their face like children and cry.

And when all of the demonic realm, all of the, I mean, I would read and start weeping. Honestly, God would show me, I'd go, Jesus, oh my Lord. He would just walk out, and a legion of demons would say, no, son of God, he'd say, out of the man, that's power.

A whole legion of demons, they're asking Jesus for permission. So we put him in this picture of this little carpenter, and got beat up, and got hurt, and he was mild, and meek, and tender Jesus, and he was, and thank God for that. But don't forget, he's a conquering king.

That nothing is equal. The devil's not equal with Jesus, regardless of what those people knock on your door will tell you. It's not Jesus's brother, they're not co-equals.

First Corinthians 11, 27 through 31. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, the communion, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing so, he is to eat the bread and drink of the cup.

For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. And the whole point of this is saying, before you go to communion, examine yourself. What was happening? They're having big festivals, and feasts, and people are getting drunk, and eating too much, and gluttons, and just, it was just a bad scene, and they would just go up, and they would just take the bread, and drink the wine, and it's mockery.

Instead of examining yourself and trembling before communion, God, this is what you, your body was broken for me. This was, your body was broken, bruised on the cross. A king died for me.

And I take this, and I remember that. Lord, get my heart right. And we take the cup, and we remember the blood that was shed.

And He said, if you do that in an unworthy manner, you're drinking judgment. And He goes on to say, there are some that are sick and dead among you because of this. The power of self-examination.

How many people come to church without examining themselves? Go into worship without examining themselves. It happens. It happens, churches all across our landscape will go, hallelujah, blessed is the Lord.

Hi, and lift it up, and then they go home, and watch pornography. Or they'll just cuss out their wife, and slap their kid, and go to the bar after raising holy hands. What's wrong with that picture? It's because we don't take God seriously many times.

We don't examine our ways. What happens is the hedge of protection is removed. He's, God is our shelter.

He's our cover. He's our guard. He's our protector.

But you have to run to the shelter. That's what happens when you don't examine yourself, and we take communion in an unworthy manner. We go to church in an unworthy manner.

We worship in an unworthy manner. And on one hand, I wanna encourage everybody, because nobody's perfect. We all come in here with baggage.

We've all got issues. I know you don't think pastors have issues, but we all have issues. You have issues.

I know you do. We all do. I've shared some of my struggles, past growing up with my father, and different things, and what that left on me.

And so we come here broken. We come here broken, but we have to run to Christ. We have to run to Jesus.

And we have to examine our motives. And then he institutes, actually, the Lord's Supper. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, "'Take, eat, this is my body.'" Then he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "'Drink from it, all of you, 'for this is my blood of the new covenant, 'which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

"But I say to you, "'I will not drink of this fruit of the vine now, "'on until the day when I drink it new with you "'in my Father's kingdom.'" And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the mountain of olives." So basically, a new covenant is when God said, I will write, I will put my law on your heart. I will write on your heart. I'll give you a new heart.

In Jeremiah, God made a new covenant with the people. And so Jesus is saying, this is the new covenant. So who partakes in communion? And when we go into it, what we do here is we don't, I'm not gonna come back up and say, now, take of the bread, take of the juice.

I do that tomorrow morning. It's more traditional there. It's more contemporary here on Saturday night.

So you just come up to the front or the back at your convenience. So who partakes? Well, a believer in Jesus Christ, who truly knows Jesus and who's examined themselves. They've examined themselves.

So we tell parents who have kids, just be careful. You know, if your kids don't, it's not just getting a snack. It's recognizing what we're doing.

So if you don't know Jesus, what a wonderful opportunity to repent and believe and take communion. And if you are a believer, it's a wonderful opportunity to examine your heart. Say, Lord, I've been drifting so far.

I'm not, my heart's not right. I've done these things. And you get your heart right before you take communion.

Because what we're doing is remembering. Baptism is all about going forward. Communion is all about remembering and going back and remembering what Jesus did.

And I don't know about you, but if you take time, take 10, 15 minutes tomorrow morning, just remember what he did. Now we have the image with the Passion of the Christ movie. And I mean, that forever changed my life.

I remember I was sitting in Cinemark. I was like, I cannot watch this. Unbelievable.

And it's all true. And he did that for you, and for you, and for you, and for you, and for me. He did that.

So why should we not remember and reflect?

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