

# Mis Direction - Failure Is Not Final

by Shane Idleman

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*Shane Idleman emphasizes the importance of fasting, belief in God's promises, and humility in seeking divine direction amidst challenging times.*

**Duration:** 49:45

**Scripture:** Genesis 15:6, Proverbs 16:9, Isaiah 64:1, Joel 1:14, Matthew 6:16, Romans 8:28, Romans 8:38

**Topics:** "God's Promises", "Fasting"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes that failure is not final and encourages believers to seek God's direction through fasting and prayer, especially in light of the moral decline in society. He calls for a corporate fast for the nation, urging individuals to starve their flesh and seek a deeper relationship with God. Idleman highlights the importance of believing in God's promises, even when circumstances seem dire, and reminds the congregation that misdirection can lead to growth and learning. He reassures that God hears the cries of His people and that nothing can separate them from His love, encouraging them to strengthen themselves in the Lord amidst challenges.

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## Transcript

Isaiah 64, oh God, would you rend the heavens? Would you rip them open and come down and visit your people? Look at the ungodly legislation that you might be able to murder a child after they are born pretty soon. You better wake up, Californians. You better wake up.

And people email me from different states. Well, poor California. But as California goes, so goes the nation.

So you better all wake up across the United States of America. And unless you didn't see the article, haven't been on the social media, we're calling a corporate fast. We are fasting for our nation.

Like in Joel, call a fast. Call a sacred assembly. We have books free you can take on fasting.

I don't know where to start. Start somewhere. Starve the flesh somehow.

Tell King's Stomach no breakfast, no lunch. It's not that difficult. And instead, you use that time to seek the heart of God.

It's amazing what God will do with that person who has been set aside for Him. And that's what fasting does. I don't know why this doctrine was lost over the last 50 or 60 years ago.

It used to be very rich in Christian history and church history and early church fathers and the didache or didachte, however you pronounce it. They would say fast before you even get baptized. And it's not a works-based thing.

It really starves the flesh so you can be more full of the Holy Spirit. And you will not die, okay? I don't say this to brag and people have already slammed me on Facebook, but I began mine and tonight will be five days just having water. You're not gonna die.

I'm gonna preach and I feel, God, I could weep right now. The power and the presence of God is so powerful when you begin to starve the flesh and tell, be quiet. My children are more important than my appetite.

My nation is more important than my appetite. This church is more important than my appetite. You've gotta tell your flesh to shut its mouth and sometimes it takes a little sledgehammer to come in and break and crush the addictions of sugar and caffeine and food and say, God, I'm more hungry for you.

It works, trust me. Now, if it's a works-based thing, you think you're spiritual? No, Matthew 6, 16 applies. Jesus said, go fast in secret.

That's an individual call, but there's also a corporate call. Thank God Esther told people to fast. Thank God Ezra did.

Thank God they called a fast in Nineveh. Thank God Joel said, call a fast. It's not something we need to avoid.

What I found is people who don't like me talking about it are the ones who are convicted. You shut your mouth, you do that privately. No, I'm gonna shout it from the rooftops because we need to call a fast and pray for our nation again.

I will tell you it's one of the hardest things I've done. I will tell you that. But I get to a point where, I'm just telling you this to encourage you.

You get to a point where you just don't want the food. My daughter's making brownies. They've got homemade food and I don't want it.

My flesh has been crucified to that. There's a greater desire for God's hunger because I've made up my mind. Come hell or high water, I will see this through.

If I have to miss church, if I have to call in sick, if I'm done with making excuses. I used to say, oh, I can't do it. I've got high blood sugar.

Well, guess what? I was addicted to sugar. That was a problem. I'm gonna be a faint every five hours.

Now that's because I needed my addiction to keep going. Now you have to be careful. You have to be sensitive.

I spent months and months and months putting together these books that you can grab for free. So that was a rabbit trail that's not even in here. I hope that benefits someone.

But isn't it true? Desperate times call for desperate measures. You look at what's going on. What's it gonna take to wake up the church? Parental rights are being, I mean, the public schools now are just battlegrounds.

The president or CEO of Disney has children that are binary and panary or whatever those different definitions are and wanting to change the culture of Disney and infiltrating the minds of our children. That's how it works. That's how it works.

Whoever shapes the mind, shapes the heart, influences the next generation. From Genesis 15, and if you're new, again, we are, I think there's six new families here this morning. Praise God, love to meet you sometime.

Genesis 15, and what I'm doing instead of verse by verse, it's more principle by principle, concept by concept. We wanna go through the Bible. You can actually go back and begin in Genesis 1, catch up to 15, and we're going through the whole Bible.

It's very, I set that discipline up in my life 20 years ago to get through the Old Testament once a year, the New Testament twice a year. And I'll tell you, you really understand the nature of God a lot more. And you don't start to just pick certain Scriptures.

That's why this whole movement now on transgenderism and sexual identity and different things, it's why they're so confused is they just say, well, God is love. God is love, who are you to judge? Well, yeah, like you can pull out and you can have Scripture say whatever you want. Actually, it says you are to judge.

Once you remove the plank from your eye, you come with the right heart, you are to judge, you are to discern, you are to call out sin as long as the heart is right. God is love. Yeah, but He's also holy, and you have to balance all of His attributes.

So I promise, gonna get to the text now. So, God's covenant with Abram. He's not yet Abraham.

His name will be changed. God's covenant with Abram. Chapter 15, verse four.

And behold, the word of the Lord came to him saying, this one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir. Now, what's going on here is God was gonna bless Abram. As many of you know, he had a child at 100 years old.

His wife was 90 years old. And Abram said, that's not possible. So I must, my heir, my lineage is gonna pass on through my servant.

I mean, that's how God's gonna do it, right? You ever question God? No, God's not really gonna do this. I think He's gonna do it this way, because this makes sense to me. Listen, when it comes to God, remove, don't remove wisdom, but remove this doesn't make sense.

My physical eyes are not seeing what my spiritual eyes are seeing. And they often don't line up, because God is thinking later and moving and orchestrating things. We're thinking right now, who wants immediate needs right now? I've been praying for God to end my fast since Friday.

But He doesn't do that. Then He brought him outside and said, look now toward heaven and count the stars if you're able to number them. And He said to him, so shall your descendants be just like the stars, and here's the key.

And Abram challenged God or doubted God or didn't believe God? No, he believed what the Lord said. That might be for someone this morning. That could end all your problems.

Right now, today, believe. Believe what God said. Believe what His Word says.

And that's why I get frustrated in our culture today. It's like there's so much confusion. We don't know.

It's really, just believe God and His Word. It eliminates most confusion. We all get confused in our fallen state.

Even I'm confused with what we should do with morning worships. You know, Lord, what are you doing here? But eventually as we wait on Him, His will will become crystal clear. And here's the key.

I'm gonna tell you right now what is foundational in the Christian faith. All other religions, here's where they divide. Many, many areas, of course.

But all religions are works-based. Let me work my way up to God. I'm a good person.

I give, whatever, you fill in the blank. I'm working myself up to God. And then he'll see this where Christianity is God reaching down to man in his depravity and saving him.

So there's a big difference. Religion looks up, trying to work their way up. God comes down.

And here's why. He believed in the Lord. And as a result, result, result, God accounted it to him for righteousness.

And they're gonna reference that scripture more in the Bible. Christian theologians often reference that Bible. That word accounted is an accounting term.

It's like a bookkeeper. Anybody bookkeepers? It's your reckoning. Your reconciling.

So he counted it to Abram. He counted it as him being righteous because he believed. And see, that's why we don't add works to Jesus's finished work on the cross.

So that belief, and God says because you believe in me, you exercise faith, I'm going to account it to you as righteousness, as you can stand before me holy and righteous. And then they, the Old Testament saints would wait. They were waiting for Christ because Christ would ultimately cover their sin, their in that waiting time, waiting.

Maybe Abram's bosom had something to do with this, but they looked forward to Christ. We look back. And so their belief made them right in right standing with God.

And a lot of people can't quite comprehend that. Shane, that doesn't make sense. Well, again, doesn't make sense.

And to me, if you read the Bible, it makes perfect sense because there is no way to earn God's favor. Our righteousness is but filthy rags. No one is good.

No, not one. And so we believe that God is who He is. We have faith.

We exercise that faith. We believe in Jesus. We repent of our sin.

And God counts that to us as righteousness. The gospel is very simple. It's a simple gospel.

I think there's a worship song titled that. We should do that one again. Hint, hint.

So Proverbs 16, nine, I think we have that up there as well. A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps. This is very important for you to realize.

Abram is planning his way. Okay, I'm gonna use my servant. And I guess that's where my lineage will come from, the Isaac, Jacob, and all that.

That will come from my servants. I've gotta do something. So I'm gonna plan my way, but then the Lord directs the steps.

So this is something important about determining God's will. I just talked to somebody this week about this. Like, I don't understand.

I'm getting frustrated because I thought God wanted me to do this. I thought God wanted me, right? What's going on? Okay, He does, but what He does is He gives you the desire, and then He removes the selfish motives, the selfish ambitions, the what you don't see, and then He shifts you. So you're still going that direction.

He just, let me nudge you over here a little bit. For example, this is a perfect example. When I first came back to the Lord, I said, I know God wants me to write books, which made no sense because I barely graduated high school.

I couldn't write books, and start a website, start a ministry to help people. And I thought, obviously, it's physical health. Obviously.

I came from physical background. I have a fitness background. I have a lot of knowledge.

I studied kinesiology, and I was getting into how the cell works and helping people and overcoming diabetes, especially type two, because it's diet related. No, this is what He's going to do. He said, close.

You're close. You'll be speaking. But let me shift it a little bit.

And we get discouraged in the shifting instead of rejoicing in the shifting, because God, You know best. I'm going to be a little transparent again. When Joe and Dave, they're both here, they approached me and said, hey, would you consider coming up to Leona Valley? Leona Valley? That's kind of far.

I mean, God told us to plant a church in Lancaster. That's what we're doing, but thank you. Well, would you pray about it? But we feel we're going to plant a church in Lancaster.

That's where we're at. We'll pray about it, and then we're driving here, loving the area, love the people. And then, okay, I could see how God could shift.

How many other times can we think of that? And we get frustrated, but this is not what He's called me to do. A lot of times, He changes that because I truly don't know what's best. I truly don't know His will.

I think being in Lancaster would have really affected us during COVID with all the little shenanigans going on and just being protected back here. And it's just wonderful to see what God does in those areas. So be encouraged.

He will direct you. But here's the key to this. You have to be willing to follow the humble He teaches His way.

Commit that to memory. The humble He teaches His way, but He resists the proud. So if we need direction from God, it begins with humility.

And I've been there, trust me. We've been there ourselves. Lord, wherever You want us to go, whatever You want us to do, I will do it.

And boy, can He work with that life. And then verse 7, then He said to him, I am the Lord who brought you up out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to inherit it. In other words, I'm the Lord.

This is going to happen. And Abram said, Lord, how shall I know that I will inherit it? So He said to him, bring me a three-year-old heifer. It's interesting, you can see the sacrifices.

A heifer, a she-goat, a ram, a turtle dove, and a pigeon. It's actually down the financial qualifications of people. Those who are very wealthy would give a heifer.

Wow, we don't use that, that's a funny term. But a rich family could bring that. And then the poor, we even see Jesus' parents bringing a dove.

And so you see it from the rich to the poor. That might be one reason. I don't know, I don't want to read too much into it.

And then He brought all of them. And then He said, cut them in two down the middle and place each piece opposite the other. But He did not cut the birds in two.

And if you study ancient history, God is relating here, I believe Abram could relate, to where they would actually do this and they would walk a figure eight and they would seal their covenant with blood. A man's word was very, very important back then. And it should be still today.

I can remember when my dad, when we had a construction company, they never had contracts. He would go out and say, okay, this is going to be about \$3,000. And okay, that was it.

And then as soon as we started working with the city of Palmdale, I believe it was, to start drilling retention bases and storm drains and things like that. That's when, what's this? I said, I'll do it. I'll do it.

And I remember the handshake, that was it. Handshake and a man's word. And so we can see this covenant was serious back then.

And the birds, obviously either they were too small or there's other ideas if you look at different theological works, what that represents and putting those birds together. And so we don't want to look too deeply in this, but the point is that it's okay to ask God how shall I know? How shall I know, Lord? And I do that often. Lord, I feel You're sensing us to do this, but how am I really going to know? How many times have I told You, I trust God.

There's not even a question. I don't know, I don't trust Me. What I mean by that is, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? Like I might have this great idea. Let's buy the radio stations. Is that You, God? Let's do this.

Is that You, God? Lord, is that really You? And I think if you come with the right heart, God honors that. He says, I'll show you Gideon, the fleece. That's where we get that idea from.

Now, I'm not a promoter of the fleece. You know, I don't think... I mean, at some point you step out in faith. You do what God says.

You follow His principles. And you're not always pulling out a fleece for this. But on serious decisions, on things where, man, I don't want to make a mistake here.

Marriage, hello? It was quiet in that one. I need to know. See, a lot of times I think the problem is we don't want to know.

We just want to do what we want to do. And I remember my wife told me, she'll remember this too, it seems like, Shane, every time you do something, God blesses it. You know, what's going on here? And I said, because I don't move quickly.

And again, I'm not boasting. Oh, look, there's so many things I've messed up. Way more than I've succeeded at.

But whether it's the books or the church or the ministry or the radio, I don't just do it. There's like, I'm waiting. I'm praying.

God almost has to say, come on, Shane, push me into these things. And so when you finally do it, whether it's buying a house, whether it's this, when you finally do it, you have peace and assurance because you waited on God. So it's not that I made great decisions because I've made many poor decisions, but certain ones, when you wait on God and let Him open that door, because I'm not going to say, let's do this if I don't think God's in it.

That's what took me so long to plant the church. Like, I can't do this if You're not in it. This will fall apart in six months.

Or another book, let's say, I never, I'm like, Lord, I don't want to write it. I told Him that seven years ago. But He keeps putting out my heart and wanting me to do it and I just don't have no desire.

Oh, it's so difficult and time consuming and humbling. But He'll show those who are willing to follow. And again, I just want to clarify because people, you know, they critique me often.

I don't share my stories and share all these things to talk about myself. I try to give you, and I prefer not to ever mention anything about me or my life whatsoever. Zero.

That would make me very happy. But it helps people. It's transparent so they know I go through the same things that they go through as well.

Not seeing how things will play out is not necessarily challenging God. Not seeing how things, Lord, I don't see how this is going to play out. Can You show me? Because He could have a great idea, a great decision saying, but Lord, I'm not sure.

Can You show me? I just want to make sure it's me and I'm sure it's You and not me. Verse 11. And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, so you can picture all the sacrifices out there.

God, this is what they call the Abrahamic Covenant that God made. And you got the Davidic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant with Noah, David, Abram. They've got these major covenants in the Bible.

This is the one with Abram. And so this is a major, major, major covenant that God's gonna bless His people. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, 12 tribes of Israel.

Here comes the Messiah. You know, pretty important. And so the vultures, though, are coming down to get on these carcasses.

And can you imagine they're circling? And if you've ever seen, I've seen it, I think it was in Colorado, elk hunting many years ago. And those things are ruthless. And when they see something, they don't care if you're close by.

They're big and there's a whole bunch of them. They'll just come down. They'll just begin eating on it.

And there's nothing really you can do unless you go and scare them or shoot them away or something. But he drove away. Abram began to drive away what was trying to stop him.

See, we need to get in a position of doing that again. He drove away. He drove away what was trying to stop him.

And a friend of mine that some of you know, Todd Coconato, you can follow him on Remnant News. And we just spoke yesterday. He made a great point.

I was asking him, hey, how many women follow your ministry? Because looking at Twitter, Facebook, all these other things, everything, it's like 65% women follow me and West Side Christian Fellowship and what we're doing. He goes, that's the same with me. Where are the men? Where are the men at? The women are hungry.

The women want more information. The women want truth. The women are contending for their families.

The women are at the prayer meeting. Where are the men? Men of God, would you rise up and take a stand? Drive away. Drive away what is trying to stop you.

Could it be that you're the problem to the family? Listen, I came here, both guns loaded. Could it be? Could it be? You are to drive them away. Thank God for moms that pray and women that contend.

We need more of them. Do not stop one bit. But where are the men of God? He drove away what was trying to prevent his miracle with God.

He drove away what was trying to distract him. See, I'm learning. You've gotta drive these things away.

As much as you pray, Lord, just let me have a wonderful day today, no problems, no issues. Praise God, this fast is gonna feel like I'm walking on clouds all the time. I'm gonna be on a spiritual high all week long.

No, no, no, no, no, sir. Sometimes you've got to drive away what is trying to stop you. You've gotta push it away by what is trying to prevent you, what is trying to distract you.

You've gotta come against it and push away. This is how I fight my battles, on my knees with arms raised to God, worshiping and praying, and you pull down heaven and the armies of heaven begin to battle for you. It's called spiritual warfare.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into obedience to Christ. You take it captive, you push it away. You push it away, you drive it away.

You have to, you are in battle. And I'm actually getting into that more tomorrow on restoring spiritual passion. But the enemy is trying to undermine.

He is trying to cancel. He's trying to sabotage, subvert, threaten, damage, impair, deny, and destroy what God is doing. And you've gotta fight against it.

But you know what really encourages me is I'm not really fighting. Think about it, I'm not really fighting. I'm positioning.

God says, Moses, having done all, stand. Joshua, stand. Stand and hold the line.

Stand and worship. Stand and pray. Kick in high gear and worship fast and pray.

Get into the Word of God. Live into the Word of God. Let it saturate your mind.

Begin to obey those principles. That's how you fight. God goes out and fights for you.

The storm that was sent to break you may be the storm God uses to make you. That's just not clever language. That's the truth.

And I appreciate the feedback from our sermons. I know Pastor Abram will say the same thing. All I hear a lot is thank you guys so much for standing up for the truth and thank you for what the West Side's doing.

In the midst of there, there's this negative Nelly's and critical Kathy's and I think some people just like the page on Facebook because they're trolling it and hired by George Soros to put you down and stuff like that. So, but the storm that was sent to break you may be the storm that God uses to make you. My point is what you're hearing from this pulpit is because the storms, the storms that are sent to break me and break my family and the enemy who's tried to derail me and knock me off course, the storm is coming.

The storm is coming. Are you built on the right foundation? If you read about the storm that Jesus talked about, He said it's coming. Rich, poor, Christian, not Christian, the storm is coming.

The wise man, the foolish man, the wise man built his house on the rock of Jesus Christ. He said when the storms beat upon that house, it did not fall because it was founded, grounded, anchored to the rock of Jesus Christ. And it's not just grounded to the rock, it's actually obeying His principles, obeying the Word of God.

He who hears my saying and does them, I will liken him to a man who built his house upon the rock. And it's that doing, doing God's Word, but not works-based, relationship-based. You know there's a big difference? It's like, oh, Lord, look at all I did this week.

I mean, I did these works, I did these works, and look at the good I did. I made this, I didn't go to those bad movies, I didn't do this, I didn't smoke, chew, or hang out with those that do. And Lord, I'm just, man, look at this, look at this, look at this, look at this.

Versus God, I desire holiness. I desire a deeper relationship with You. I want Your power and Your presence.

I want You to move in my life and the lives of my children and my family. I'm going to seek You. The more I seek You, the more I find You, and the more I find You, the more I seek You, the more I obey You, the more I'm filled with Your Spirit.

See, relationship, not rules. And you can always tell the rule followers who are Christian, you know, I just realized recently, is there's very little fruit of the Holy Spirit. Love, joy, peace, contentment, gentleness, kindness, long-suffering.

But they have the truth. God's Word says, ba-ba-ba-ba-ba-ba, where's your fruit, my friend? Even the devil can quote Scripture. And of course, my favorite fruit of the Spirit, thank God for it, the one I missed, self, wait a minute, self-control, controlling self.

So the more I'm filled with the Spirit, the more I'll be able to control self because it's not me, it's the Holy Spirit. I really hope this is helping some, because none of this is in my notes most of the morning. It's like, I'm going to have to tell you to come to the second service now.

Verse 12, now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. Isn't it funny how God's getting ready to do something, here comes attack. I just told somebody this morning, I don't remember who it was exactly, but when God is getting ready to do something or is doing something, here comes the attack often.

You get knocked out. I mean, I worry sometimes, and I mean, new believers at this altar, they're crying, they ran the heavens, God's full, they're full of God, and I don't see them for a month or two. What happened? Shane, you would not believe.

Yeah, I would. Yeah, I would. I got excited.

Do any of you guys hear blessings might go out a few times? I got excited. I'm like, okay, all right. The devil wants to play.

Trying to distract, trying to discourage. Now, that could just be a gremlin in the system, I don't know, but anytime you're doing something for God, sometimes it'll be hard and difficult, spurge and depression. Other Christians that you read about, John Bunyan spent 12 years in a prison writing Pilgrim's Progress some of that time.

Paul spent a lot of time in dark areas. And so this horror and great darkness fell upon him. Then he said to Abram, know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and will serve them and they will afflict them for a hundred years.

Sound familiar? We know where the children of Israel ended up, in Egypt, Pharaoh, affliction, they serve them. And also know the nation whom they serve, I will judge, and God did judge Egypt. Afterwards, they will come out with great possessions and they did.

Isn't it amazing when they were leaving, leaving to the promised land, leaving Egypt, under all this bondage, the Egyptians said, here, take my gold, take my silver, get out of here. I mean, I don't know, I would love to hear some of those conversations, like, okay, we'll leave if you give us this, or if they're just being, I don't know what happened, but they came out with great possessions. Here's a fun fact.

You can actually thank Luke, he made me think about this. If you count backward, this is only Luke, you can tell right here. If you count backward 430 years from 1486 BC, that's when they left Egypt's slavery, you arrive here at Genesis 15, 13 at 1916 BC, known as the Abrahamic Covenant.

So, what some, I don't have a lot of time on this, but what's interesting is some teach that they were in slavery to the Egyptians for 400 some years. Actually, there's a lot of good evidence showing that this verse could be talking about from the time of Abram. So Abram, Isaac, Jacob, the 12 tribes of Israel, all that time, they're not in their land.

And that, along with the bondage in Egypt, the accumulation is of 400 some years. So, do with it what you want. It's not a hill to die on.

And Paul talks about in Galatians, I mean, there's a lot of different places we could, there's two different places we could reference, but all we know is that they are gonna come out with great possessions, they're gonna go into bondage. All of that was fulfilled. And it reminded me of prophecy.

Prophecy. 2 Peter 1.21, for no prophecy has ever been made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. That is the definition of prophecy.

You don't have to worry about that word. I know hypercharismatic churches have damaged that word and there's some weird things out there, but prophecy is God's idea. God is speaking things into the future and moving men to write those things down in the Word of God.

And so it does get into an interesting topic that is, people like to argue about it, but to me, it's pretty clear that once we have the Bible, we don't need prophecy in regard to equal with Scripture. There's no prophecy now, prophetic, that's equal with Scripture. Scripture is Scripture inspired by God, it's God breathed.

Any type of prophetic ministry would sit underneath the Word of God, it is not equal to the Word of God. That's why I don't believe there's capital letter A, Apostles. Now, there's an apostolic calling.

Apostles just means sent one. So there are apostles that are sent, but that apostolic capital A to where they're the original apostles, we don't see that. Or prophecy, if I believe God's just preaching through me and speaking boldly and prophetically, it's not gonna be equal with Elijah or any of the other prophets.

Now, it could be to the same degree where God's moving in our spirit and different things, but we don't put that equal with Scripture. You see, that's what happens in some of these places is they take the prophecy, the prophetic Word, let's say they take the prophetic Word and they'll say they'll put it equal with Scripture. Well, this person said that, yeah, but the Bible said, well, yeah, but this is a new prophet.

If it's new, it's not good. If it's new, it's not true, it's true, it's not good. It's not new.

Or Roman Catholicism, that's where they get the papacy, has a final say, the Pope, and they interpret the Bible, no, the Word of God has the final say. And so we have to be careful in this area of prophecy. And when I talk about, I don't mean to upset people, I'm not trying to step on toes, but if you look at even in the Mormon complex there and their new prophet or their prophets and these things supersede what God's Word says, that's not good, that's not biblical.

And so we have to be very careful. Prophecy, the biblical definition of prophecy is when God spontaneously brings something to mind that I'm not otherwise thinking. I mean, I remember reading about Spurgeon, his biography, he was preaching, he said, he just said, young man, those gloves you have on, you stole them, you need to take those back.

Whoa, the guy was just broken, humble, gave his life to the Lord, I believe, and took those back and got his heart right. What is that? You better be careful on that. But see, that's God spontaneously brings something to someone's mind.

And that's the whole gifts of the Holy Spirit. That's why if they're done biblically, it's a very beautiful thing. Because it's the Word of God and then the Holy Spirit comes and compliments the Word of God.

That somebody might come up to you and say, hey, I know this has been on my heart for a week and I just, I just gotta share this with you and you just, you come to realize, that's God answering my prayers and giving me confirmation. But what the person tells me is not over God's Word. Does that make sense? All of that sits underneath God's Word.

And so how the Scriptures were written, I will talk about that in the future, how the Bible came together. All Scripture, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, 2 Timothy 3.16. What really stood out to me on this verse, if you think about it, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This is interesting.

And it's profitable. You would think many woke churches today or liberal churches today, they would read it like this, and it's good for encouragement and love and grace and that's all, brother. No, it's actually, it's profitable for doctrine, a right understanding of God.

It's profitable for reproof. You know what that is? Have you ever been reprovved by your parent? Scolded? It's also good for correction, getting us back on course. It's also good for instruction on how to live righteously.

Could it be that many places are missing the power of God's Word because they're trying to soften it up? Instead of just letting it speak to us? You can be woke but not awake. And as I talked about before, God's plans often involve difficulties and challenges. If you're going to give birth to something that God has put on your heart, get ready to parallel it with natural birth.

Gestation period, morning sickness, I don't feel good. Oh, it's going on. And then you have to give birth to pain.

And giving birth to what God has called you to do is challenging sometimes. And then verses 15 through 21, Abram will die at a good old age. And the prophecy that in the fourth generation they will return here for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.

Then it covers the land given to his descendants. So that's that whole area there. Now this iniquity of the Amorites is interesting.

It could mean until the fullness of their sin is realized and God begins to judge them or there's other views on that as well. Again, I don't want to argue over debatable areas. We just know that there's a time, a waiting time.

And that's another reminder of God's timing. Anybody not happy with God's timing sometime? Oh, I've got some prayer requests. If he would just hurry up.

If he would just hurry up. And you get discouraged. And you get disappointed sometimes.

So you have to strengthen yourself in the Lord. I'll be talking about that a little bit more on Monday. Chapter 16, I'm going to sum it up for you.

Abram's wife had no children. And so, most of us know what their master plan was. Was to allow Abram to sleep with her maidservant.

And that was actually kind of common in that time. That someone else would have the child and that child would be yours. And so, the Lord restrained Sarah from having children.

And so she said, please, go into my maid. Perhaps I shall obtain a child by her. And then Abram heeded the voice of his wife.

Don't let delay knock you off course. Don't let delay knock you off course. They couldn't see how God was going to do this.

This must be how God is going to do this. And so, you run ahead of God and can get into trouble. Very, very bad trouble.

But thank God the whole title of my message, I don't even know if it got the title. Misdirection, failure is not final. Misdirection, you're off course, failure is not final.

And so, Sarah and Abram said, we're going to go ahead and do this our way. And this delay knocked them off course. What I believe, what you would do in this situation is say, Lord, we don't know how this is going to happen.

We're going to wait on you. We're not going to go until we get orders from headquarters. We're going to wait on you and see what you want to do.

And then as a result, delay often leads to discouragement. So, I'm discouraged, I'm frustrated. Now I'm going to take a course of action that is not healthy.

How many people run back to their old habits because they're discouraged? Only one hand. Let's try this again. How many people have ran back to old habits when they get discouraged? Oh, there we go.

Balconies are more spiritual, but that's okay. But isn't that true? Frustrated, delayed, and I get discouraged. I'm going to go back to that thing that makes me feel good temporarily.

And then Hagar became pregnant, and it caused a great deal of friction. I bet it did. As a result, Sarah, she'll be Sarah.

Her name will change too. She dealt harshly with her. And Hagar fled from the presence, but the angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness and told her to return.

The angel of the Lord said to her, I will multiply your descendants exceedingly so that they shall be counted as a multitude as well. And now you see this is the Middle East conflict. Did you know that? This is the Middle East conflict.

Ishmael of the flesh, Isaac of God, Arab nation, Jews, began a long time ago. And that's still, so God used this misdirection and still began to tell them failure is not final. Praise God.

God said, listen, don't worry, I will still bless you. Thank God for Romans 8.28. He works all things for good to those who love God and who are called according to His purpose. Thank God for that verse.

But it's interesting here. A non-Jew woman was told about her lineage. Try to find in Scripture even Hebrew women where God told them and blessed them and told them about their line that was to come.

It's God's amazing grace even to this non-Jew that God loved a lowly concubine. And the angel of the Lord said, behold, you are with child and you shall bear a son and you shall call his name Ishmael because the Lord has heard your affliction. He shall be a wild man.

His hand shall be against every man and every man's hand against him. We see exactly this playing out right now. And he shall dwell in the presence of his brethren.

The Palestinian conflict, the nation of Israel there. You can even bring in if you wanna talk, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, that whole area there is just a hotbed of discontentment. And I think I'll get to the end here in a minute if I have to come back to this when I preach on Genesis again, I will.

But the interesting thing is, Ishmael's name means God hears. God hears. Now as we go, I think it's Genesis 21, we're gonna see that Ishmael, by the time Genesis 21 is written, he was 15 to 17 years old.

But, I'm sorry, in Genesis 21, we're gonna see that God heard a boy crying, a little kid crying. And so when we get to that, I'll try to clear up that conflict. I believe that Ishmael was a little child.

Was a little child when they were told to go away. And this maiden was gonna leave him there to die. Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her and said, you are the God who sees.

You are the God who sees. So I wanna, here's where I wanna get to. I wanna give you just four takeaways.

Misdirection. Failure is not final. No doubt there's people listening even here.

You're not on the right course. You've drifted off course. But you need to hear today that you need to hear today that God can get you back on course.

You can get that direction back. Remember, delay is not deny. Anytime God is delaying something, it doesn't mean He's not necessarily denying it.

Sometimes there's a growing process. There's a time to really strengthen yourself in the Lord. Delay is not deny.

And mistakes can be investments. Did you know that? Mistakes can be investments. I don't remember who it was, but there's an incredible story.

I think it's one of the big car dealerships back in the 1940s. This man made like a \$100,000 mistake. And back then, that's a lot of money.

It is today still. But the owner of the company came to the man. He said, I'm gonna go ahead and quit because I know you're gonna fire me.

And he goes, fire you? I just made a \$100,000 investment into your education. But isn't that true? Mistakes can be investments. What I mean by that is don't make the mistake, but you learn from those.

And this made me a better person. So this stumbling block instead becomes a stepping stone. And then obviously, don't let discouragement.

Oh, I'm sorry. Let discouragement encourage you. What I mean by that, that might not make sense, but let me explain.

Anytime, like the letters R-E, you put that in front of something. Renew, revive, restore. With D-I-S, you put that in front of courage.

It's actually meant encouragement, discouragement. You put D-I-S in front of it, it means the opposite of. So I'm discouraged.

Well, how can that be a benefit? Because let discouragement encourage you. God says take courage many times throughout the Bible. And I wanted to list a few of those up there for you.

Discouragement. God says take courage from Psalms, from Chronicles, from Deuteronomy. Wait for the Lord.

Be strong and let your heart take courage. Wait for the Lord. So that tells me this person's probably not very encouraged.

If you have to tell someone take courage, that means they're not encouraged. Be strong and let your heart take courage. All you who wait on the Lord.

See, there's a waiting time. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or dismayed.

Look at what's going on around you in California or in the United States. Do not be dismayed. Take courage.

Be strong, the fourth one. Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them for it is the Lord your God who goes with you.

He will not leave you or forsake you. There are many verses, amen to that. There are many verses where it talks about take courage, strengthen yourself in the Lord.

And one of the scriptures I've been meditating on, I think I told you a week or two ago and for Monday night is that wonderful scripture as a deer pants for the brook, my soul pants for thee and thee alone. My soul cries out for the living God. But then right after it says all night my tears have been my food.

I'm discouraged, people are mocking me. But I will strengthen myself in the Lord. I remember the joy and the gladness of my heart.

Oh my soul, why are you cast down? Why are you disquieted within me? We will begin to encourage ourselves in the Lord. And my discouragement is gonna propel me to the cross. I'm gonna come away from that time with the Lord encouraged and built up and strengthened.

And then finally, a verse I love and I wanna encourage you with when it comes to this idea of misdirection and getting off course. Realize that nothing, if you are a true child of God, a true child of God, nothing can separate you. I'm gonna put Romans up there because I want you to see this.

Yet in all these things, all the trials that were going on, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded, I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing. Paul, do you think you could clarify? I mean, that's how you clarify nothing can separate you.

Nothing can separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. So see, you anchor yourself in that. And like Paul, you say, I'm persuaded, I'm convinced that nothing can separate me, nor height, nor depth, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, nor any created thing can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

They might try. They might try to bring discouragement and fight against me. They might try to threaten with this.

But God says, strengthen yourself in the Lord. And I was excited about Genesis 21, so I just wanna end with this scripture from Genesis 21. It won't be up on the screen.

Remember the name Ishmael means God hears. And the handmaiden, the maidservant, whatever you wanna call it, there's a lot of different names. She took the baby, probably two, three, I would say, underneath this tree and left Ishmael there to die.

Because I can't care for this child. I've been cast, I have nothing. And parents, have you ever seen, you wanna give yourself a distance, I would say probably a football field or more, you can't, the cries of your child will draw you back.

The cries of your child draw you back. But verse 21, I'm sorry, in Genesis 21, it's very interesting, God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, what is the matter, Hagar? He heard the cry of his children. He heard the cry of that child.

And so God will hear the cries of his people. If we begin to humble ourselves before him, we begin to say, God, you don't have to physically cry. I'm not saying that, but there should be a, the word cry isn't always tears, although it can be.

In this case, it definitely was, but when the Bible, I cried out to God, and there's what it is, it's from the innermost being of your soul, you cry out to God. There's a yearning, there's a desire, like a deer pants for the water brook, a deer that's just going along and almost ready to probably pass out and has to find, I've gotta find the source of strength, I've gotta get to it. As that deer goes, that's how my soul cries out to God.

And it's not necessarily crying and, oh, woe is me. Sometimes it's a yearning, it's a desire. I don't know about you, but I need God to bring down heaven.

I might starve King's stomach for a season and begin to seek the real King of kings and Lord of lords. There's a desire, I might get on my face Sunday mornings for worship. I might come every night this week.

There's a desire, there's an unction, there's a hunger. Oh God, I cry out to you. And God says, that's a sound I can't ignore.

That's a heart cry I cannot ignore. It's a time of contemplating everything that was said. What did God's Word say to us? Do I need to make some changes? And as we begin to just press in through worship, now that the heart is open, we might be a little bit more receptive.

And so we might do a few songs just for you to be built up and encouraged in your faith.

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