

My Sheep Hear My Voice (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being led by the Spirit of God, highlighting the need for compassion and concern for the things of God. It discusses the significance of hearing God's voice, especially in times of confusion and deception. The message stresses the need to seek God's will through positioning ourselves correctly to hear His voice and building a strong relationship with Him. It also addresses the dangers of being influenced by the wrong voices and the importance of discerning God's voice through obedience and prayer.

Scripture: Romans 8:14, John 10:27, Psalms 32:8, Psalms 37:4, Revelation 3:22, John 16:13, Isaiah 30:21, James 1:22, Psalms 37:3

Topics: "Being Led by the Spirit", "Discernment in Hearing God's Voice"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being led by the Spirit of God, highlighting the need for compassion and concern for the things of God. It discusses the significance of hearing God's voice, especially in times of confusion and deception. The message stresses the need to seek God's will through positioning ourselves correctly to hear His voice and building a strong relationship with Him. It also addresses the dangers of being influenced by the wrong voices and the importance of discerning God's voice through obedience and prayer.

Transcript

especially in America, Romans 8, 14. All those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. All those who are led by God are sons and daughters of God, right? You're led by the Spirit.

You have a compassion and a concern for the things of God. Those who are not led of God do not have that compassion for the things of God. So the message this morning, part five in the True Christian series, the title is My Sheep Hear My Voice.

My Sheep Hear My Voice. So a true Christian will hear God's voice. The true Christian will hear God's voice.

And don't we need that more than ever right now? We have declined so much. What's fake, what's real? I mean, everything that's true is being labeled a conspiracy theory, most things. And then things that aren't true are being labeled truth.

Where should policy come from? God's Word. Did you know that it used to? Something called William Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England. He used to, that's where our Supreme Court justices,

where they got their legal direction was from William Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England.

And it was defined based on Scripture. Everything from rape to kidnapping. An eye for an eye, it was God's Word was the foundation of that.

So now we ask, we've lost our mind. We're calling good evil and evil good. We're calling things that should be evil, good and good evil.

Why is that happening? Again, the spiritual battle. And the Bible warned us often, especially in the Old Testament and in the New of listening to the wrong voice. How do we hear the wrong voice? How can we hear the right voice? And that's what we're gonna talk about this morning.

And of course, with the sermon title being My Sheep Hear My Voice, that comes from John 10, 27, where Jesus said, my sheep hear my voice and I know them. A stranger they will not follow. Now that word follow doesn't necessarily mean they won't be influenced by now and then.

They won't be led astray now and then, but they won't, my sheep hear my voice and as they pursue me, they will not end up following the wrong voice all of their life. There's a, they will eventually, hopefully come back to the Savior like the prodigal son. So truly those following God know his voice as stranger, they will not follow.

So let me tell you one of the keys to hearing God's voice. I think this is a very important topic. How many of you want to know God's will? You need to know his will for moving, right, to Colorado? No, you, I couldn't resist Randy.

So, but marrying someone, dating someone, financial decisions, if this election goes south, what does that mean? God, I need to hear your voice. What are you saying to me? And I will tell you this, the real key is this, positioning, positioning. How would I be able to hear my wife's voice if she was out in the parking lot? I couldn't, I'd have to go out the doors around and in the park and hear, positioned to hear correctly.

Many people are not positioned correctly. They're not hearing the right voice. And that's what I want to talk about.

If you build the relationship with God, everything else will fall in place. As you're building the relationship with God, as you're seeking him, then the other things begin to fall in place. Commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established.

So many times we don't have a hearing problem, we have a relationship problem. Because isn't that true? You know, some of you, the closer you draw to God, the more crystal clear it becomes. And the more you watch YouTube, the less clear it becomes.

Because there are genuine conspiracy theories out there. There's all this stuff going on. And what happened, and if we spend too much time on those things, we don't hear God's voices clearly.

Because now we're giving our time, our energy, our resources to these things. And as true as some of these things might be, they're not absolute truth. And they're to instill fear.

I know YouTube creators. Some of these guys make incredible amounts of money. It's ridiculous how much.

I mean, there's videos out there where they're flipping their bottles. Five million views and they make \$120,000 a month. It's incredible.

Their goal is not necessarily truth. Their goal is to get more likes and shares. So they have to be sensational in what they say, sensational in what they do.

And it's all about conspiracy. And the more they draw you in, the more likes and shares, the more money they make. But that's not the case with everyone, right? Obviously, we could actually do commercials on YouTube right now.

But we've told the web master, we don't want the commercials on YouTube. We don't need the revenue from YouTube. We just want people to listen to sermons from start to finish and not pop up.

Hi, Downy is your new fabric softener. You know, that kind of doesn't work. So we have to be careful where we're getting our information from.

You know, for more time in the worldwide web than in God's worldwide truth in the Bible, we are going to be confused. And I've looked at a lot of these things too. And let's say, well, let's say this is happening behind the scenes, Illuminati.

You've heard that phrase or globalism or Q. And the followers of Q are called QAnons. And you have the flat earth people and you have all this, I mean, it's like, my point is, you know what? Don't take this wrong, but I don't care. I've got to follow God.

Now it's good to know some of these things, but whether the earth is flat or round, I've got a job to do. I don't subscribe to that. So don't worry.

I think it's still nice spirit. But my point is, that right there is gonna get some emails. No, you gotta watch this.

You gotta watch this. You gotta watch this. No, just stay in the word.

And so the truth many times has to be sought for. It has to be fought for. And you're contending with putting into your mind the right things and not the negative things because many of these videos or conspiracy theories are not founded in God's word.

They're not truth seekers. They are conspiracy makers. And so if you're spending, the reason I'm talking about this is so many people spend the time on this.

They send me videos. You gotta watch this. You gotta watch this.

You gotta do this. President Bush actually exploded the Twin Towers as an inside job. Like, I don't have time to watch this.

You don't need to be in that. You need to be in this. Hypothetically, what does that have to do with anything? And see, but we spend so much time in this fear factor mode.

And if this steps on toes, good. I came here to step on some toes because we gotta get back into God's word. That truth, that truth we know for certainty.

That truth will never fail. And as Jeremiah was saying, truth has fallen in the streets. That means they're not applying the truth they have.

Same thing has happened in America. God's truth is there. It's present.

We just need to grab it and hold onto it and live by it. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the churches. He's not talking about physical ears.

Is that what Jesus is saying? He who has real ears. No, he who's willing to hear, willing to submit to my will, who hears me spiritually. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what I'm saying to the churches.

And the Bible warned often of listening to the wrong voice, correct? Internally, inside, and also externally. From the outside. In the Bible, they would call that ungodly counsel.

Blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, who they would listen to old wives' tales and fables. But now, we're inundated with it. Sometimes I wish we lived back 2,000 years ago.

How easy would that be? Get away from me, negative counselor. And nope, that's not God's word. I don't have media.

Right now, I just finally had to learn how to use Twitter this week. Parlor, MeWe, Facebook, Instagram. When's it gonna end? So we're inundated by these things.

And so we have to be, I believe, on extra guard. Be vigilant in how you schedule your time. For example, Dr. Michael Brown actually wrote on this, and I read it this week, and it was so true.

Even in my, when I look back, when I was a kid, I never really heard of anyone my age that committed suicide. I didn't know of many girls pregnant outside of wedlock. But today, every single young adult knows someone who's taken their life or been pregnant outside of wedlock.

My point is how the moral decline has fallen, but also the age of information. We know way too much. We don't need to know everything out there from all these different news organizations.

So are we listening to the right voice? And we have to be vigilant. Thomas Watson was a Puritan in the 1600s. And I've always remembered, when I read one of his books, he said, take heed of drowsiness in hearing.

In other words, be careful, do not grow drowsy in hearing correctly, because it can slip into all of our lives and into our hearts. So how do we discern God's voice? Because do you ever have promptings, dreams, impressions? How does God speak to us? Well, we know primarily He speaks just through the word. He uses circumstances.

If God ever got your attention by a circumstance, or just me, He'll orchestrate certain things. Boy, this is pretty difficult. Now I'll wake up.

Now the election doesn't look too good. Now we have prayer meetings every day, rain, snow, or shine. And now, see, there's circumstances.

God will use different things. And to really fully exhaust this topic, I would probably need a series, a sermon series on it. And I've been going back and forth on how much I should share.

And I believe God speaks to us profoundly through sermons. When I came back to the Lord, I listened to a lot of sermons, especially 20 years ago, Alistair Begg. Many of you still hear him.

I listened to John MacArthur, Chuck Smith, teaching through the Bible. And I would listen, I would crave these things, and I would get direction from people out of these types of things. And that's why God has different callings.

Because I'll get emails sometimes and say, you know, Greg Laurie says the same thing a lot. He's more, you know, I'm like, yeah, he's more that calling, more evangelical. He's reaching people that need the simple gospel.

And then there's people like me, the steamroller, right? Just, wow, this guy's too intense. I need Alistair Begg that's teaching through the Bible systematically, word for word, going through the entire book of the Bible. Right, that's his calling.

So instead of judging others, we need to all thank God for different callings in the body of Christ. Because God will call up, he'll raise up a John the Baptist. He'll raise up a John the Beloved, the quiet disciple who teaches.

And there's different giftings in the body of Christ. And there's such a judgmental spirit that we have to be very careful. Because we get offended or we judge those who don't feel like I feel.

For example, if somebody has a passion for missions, and you have that, it can drive you crazy that others don't. And Shane, why are you talking about politics? We need to reach the unreached in Africa. That's your calling.

Go for it and we'll support you. But I can't shift callings if God has given me a different burden. And people, why aren't we protesting abortion clinics? And why aren't we doing more for the abortion industry? Why aren't we at Care Net all the time and supporting? Do it, do it, that's your calling.

But don't judge others because they don't have that passion, that same desire. And it can get frustrating. I get frustrated that more people don't have a desire to be in godly positions of leadership in our nation.

Because that could really change the dynamic for our children and grandchildren. We're not talking anymore about building bridges and paving streets and the union. We're talking about huge moral issues that have enormous spiritual consequences.

When we do, as a nation, what we're doing, there's huge consequences with God. That's why it's so important. Now, we have to be informed, I think.

Obviously, we see that there is a global agenda at work here. We see that the virus is being used for a political weapon. I don't know all the theories behind it.

I need to be in God's word more than I am on all the different opinions out there. Because it can lead to confusion. Because I don't think we're designed to know this much information about all these different things.

We need to be living in God's word. And I believe, that's why I'm bringing this up, that's the biggest problem. That's the biggest problem.

Most Christians, I think the recent study was eight minutes in prayer a day, guess how many hours on social media. So we wonder why we're confused. Wonder why we're anxious.

Because often we're feeding on the wrong things. But I've noticed primarily, he'll speak to us through his word and obedience to it. See, we can't forget this part.

His word and obedience to it. Obey the word. Because the power of God's word is in the application.

Not in just hearing. Be doers of the word and not just hearers. Or you live in deception.

So let me share three things with you. And then I'm gonna get into some very important scriptures. You have to realize this when you're hearing God's voice.

Patience, patience. Let's all say it. Patience, patience.

How many of us run ahead of God? We react instead of respond. And there's no patience. And we do something in confusion and fear.

And we go out and we're making decisions based on fear. Not on fact, often. Because the scripture I just read, blessed are those who patiently wait on the Lord.

Or in that case, in Psalms I read that I will patiently wait on you even when I'm in distress. So here's what patience does for me. I say, Lord, I need to know if this is you.

I trust you 100%. I don't trust Shane Eidelman. I don't trust these little promptings and these little this and little things.

Because you know, your mind can think certain things. And your flesh starts to think certain things that are more comfortable for you. Correct? How's the flesh work? Should we start a third service? My flesh says no.

Oh, no, no, no. That's not very comfortable. That's gonna be more work, Shane.

No, that's true. Let me listen. And then what does God say? And see, so patience allows you the opportunity to weigh everything.

And I say, Lord, if this is you, I need confirmation. I need to know this is you. I don't trust me.

I trust you. But Lord, would you confirm that this is your will? I'm gonna wait on you because I trust you and I want you to show me. I wanna make the right decision.

You think God's gonna go, oh, that's Shane Eidelman. Why is he waiting on me? Why doesn't he? Now, I'm assuming most of you understand I'm not talking about when you need to make a quick decision. You know, somebody's in the hospital or I mean, I need to make this decision.

I'm not talking about that. Sometimes you have to make quick decisions. Most of the time, when we're asking God for direction in marriage or finances or moving or these big decisions, there's gonna have to be some patience involved as you sort out and sort through the flesh, the devil, the influence of the world.

How many of us have been persuaded to do something different when we go to the wrong council? When we go to our friends who are gonna tell us what we want to hear? Oh, that's true. Yeah, what was I

thinking? But then God gets you back in his words like, oh, Lord. And you go back to your friends.

Oh, that's right. And then there's this conflict. And so patience allows us to wait on God.

And that's very important because as you're waiting God, faith is strengthened. And when we go out and make decisions, now we have some fortitude there, some strength there, some security there because we can go out in faith knowing I've waited on God. Those who wait upon the Lord shall lose strength.

That's how we feel sometimes, right? I can't wait, I gotta move. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, the Bible says. So as we're waiting, and it actually goes on to say, you will mount up wings like eagles.

The reason the Bible uses imagery like that is there is nothing more powerful in flight than an eagle. And then you shall run and not grow weary. You shall walk, you shall continue and not grow faint if you wait on God.

Wait, he told Moses delivering the children of Israel and even Joshua, wait, wait, don't go into battle just yet. Wait, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Having done everything you've done, stand, stand there and hold the ground.

Wait on me, I will fight your battle. I will go before you. So a key ingredient from hearing the right voice is to wait on God for confirmation and not react.

Don't most of us do that? React, it's reacting. And then the second thing before we get into scripture is this, we have to ask this question. And this has helped me over the years many times.

Is this decision consistent with God's character? Is it going to help others? Or am I running in fear? Does this align with the character of God? In other words, sift your motives, correct? We have worship auditions after the second service. And I'm not looking for talent as much as we're looking for humility. We're looking for, do these people resemble the character of Christ? Because I've been in ministry enough to know that many people want the limelight.

Would they still sing on the worship team if they sang in an empty room and we just piped in the music? Does somebody want the pulpit because of this power or authority they think it has? And you sift through the motives. Recognition is big in the lives of many people. Most of us struggle with that.

I mean, you wanna be liked more than hated, correct? I mean, but God often uses us in the middle of things that people don't really see all the time. The real workers behind this church, you don't really see. The real work that goes in behind this from janitorial to security, to maintenance, to office management.

It's amazing the stuff that goes on behind the scenes. You just see the final product. And the people watching, many times you don't see what's behind the scenes.

So making decisions, is it consistent with God's character? And the reason I mentioned moving, and Randy, we're on the same page with this and he's doing it for the right reasons, but a lot of people are moving because of the wrong reasons. Fear, trepidation. Now, there's nothing wrong if you want a better life for your family, but make sure you sift it into God's word for a season.

Make sure you've cleaned out all the negativity of the wrong influences. And does it line up with God's character? And then of course, number three, is it in his word? Now, you're not gonna see, should you

move to Georgia in his word? Or should I buy this or should I marry this person? Is anybody thinking of moving to Georgia? I don't know, that was just funny. Okay, probably not.

The principle though is there. The principle is in his word. I've seen so many people go out and make bad financial decisions because they neglected the principle of God.

Because I believe that when the Bible says, do not be unequally yoked, I think that's not only in marriage, but that's also in business partnerships. That's in a lot of things. You don't wanna be, what fellowship has light with darkness? You don't wanna enter into certain things in the wrong, spiritually speaking, in the wrong area as well too.

And so is the principle there? Many young people say, oh, I just love them. Oh, I just love them. Can we get married? No, you're in lust.

That's different. Well, no, no, we just wanna get married. But well, are you doing things right, right now? Well, no, not really.

Okay, well, and we don't know what God wants. We'll do what's right first, the principle, and then you'll be led of the spirit more easily. There's peace.

Do you ever get in this point where there's confusion? Boy, when a Christian is confused, it's not pretty because then you snap at your kids. You snap at your spouse. You're confused.

You're fearful. You're anxious. What's going on? Often it's because you're not allowing the voice of God to speak clearly into your heart because there are principles that can be followed.

So let's look at some of these principles. Let's position ourselves correctly with scripture, amen? So this is gonna help a lot of people, I believe this morning, who might have not been able to understand what God is calling them to do or leading them. Isaiah 30, 21.

We love to quote it, and I love to quote certain scriptures, but you have to get in the habit of looking at the context. Can you just pull any scripture out? I can pull most scriptures out to support anything, anything. You can support abortion with scripture if you just pull it out of context.

You can support gay marriage. You can support anything if you just, well, look at here. Look what it says here.

What about the famous one? The Hollywood loves this one, and I get emails like this. Who are you to judge? Who are you to judge? Jesus says, do not judge. Well, it's obvious you have not read the whole chapter because he said, remove the plank from your eye first.

Then you'll be better able to judge. So it does tell me to judge. John says, judge with righteous judgment.

Discern all things. We are to discern and judge. We're actually called to judge things.

I am supposed to say, this is not good for our family. This is not good for our nation. This is not good for the church.

I'm supposed to judge, but the whole point of Jesus' context, I believe John Calvin in his commentary said that it is actually, the whole point is to remove the spirit of criticism. It's to go after the Pharisee. Judging,

critical.

They just go into something. What can I find wrong? What can I find wrong here? I don't know. Those lyrics weren't quite doctrinally sound.

What's that person doing, raising their hand? What Bible translation is he using? Hmm, wonder why they spend so much money on that. Couldn't that money have went to feed poor kids in Africa? Criticism, always looking critical spirit. That's why Jesus said, humble yourself.

Humble yourself. Don't think more highly of yourself than you should. And then you can, with the right heart, go and judge someone else.

If we humble ourselves first, that would end a lot of our criticism. Because who am I to go and say something to someone? You're always pointing fingers. How could you go out and drink again? Or get high again? Or do that again? How could you? Well, snotty Sarah, haven't you ever been there before? Versus, listen, I've been through that.

I've been hurt. I've made mistakes, but you're gonna hurt yourself. How can I help? See, the right heart, humility is everything.

Being soft and gentle, but firm when it needs to be. And I think the problem, especially with men, is we have a hard time being broken and humble. Broken and humble.

That's getting convicting. I better get out of that one quickly. So scripture and context is so important.

What about the, there's another one in the Old Testament. I know the plans I have for you. Plans of hope and a future, God says.

And people use that a lot. And I love it, I use it. But the context is, you ready for this one? The children of Israel were just led into captivity and bondage.

So hold on. And it's gonna be 70 years in bondage. So the scripture is, don't worry.

God's saying in context, don't worry. After the end of this season of judgment and bondage, don't worry, I know the plans I have for you, for your children, I'll bless your heritage to give you a peace and a hope. But they couldn't apply that right then.

So context is everything. What about the famous if my people verse? If my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face, do you know what the context was? God told Solomon, he said, when I bring pestilence, is that happening right now? I don't know, COVID, that's what it is. When I bring pestilence, when I bring famine, when I bring drought because of the sins of the people, if my people turn back to me, then I will heal their lands.

And so context is so important. So Isaiah 30, and your ears shall hear a word behind you saying, this is the way, walk in it. When you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

So praise God, I'm gonna hear something in my ear, turn to the right, turn to the left, that sounds wonderful. Oh no, because I can get myself in trouble with that one. So the context is, how blessed are those who long for Christ? Well, the Old Testament, how long for God? Now, blessed are those who long for God.

There's a heart of wanting to praise and worship God. Their heart longs for the voice of the Father. They love to be in worship, they love to pray.

So they have this heart that's longing for God. And he says, oh, people in Zion, you will weep no longer. He will be gracious to you at the sound of your cry.

When he hears it, he will answer you. But the context again is relational, correct? The person who's longing after God, they're coming to prayer meetings or they're praying in their own house or they're worshiping and they have a relationship with God and they're crying out to God. Right now that's happening in our nation.

God says, then I will direct you because of that relationship I have with you. I'm praying, there's millions of Christians praying right now in our nation's history, praying, asking God and God saying, I hear the cries of my children. They will not go unanswered when God's children, when his church awakens.

God says, I love that sound. My children, do not worry. I'm still on the throne.

I raise a king up and I will pull the king down. Don't worry, I can speak the word and I can change the results of this. Or, or, or this might not go in a direction you like and you're gonna have to hold onto me even tighter.

Either way, God is still, still sovereign. John 16, 13, when the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. For he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears from the Father, he will speak to you.

So don't listen to the voices in your head necessarily. That, that will get you in trouble. But you have to, you have to be able to discern the clear, small voice of the Holy Spirit.

Because I get promptings too, don't you? I get promptings to respond to that mean Facebook post. That's not the right prompting often. But so there's, so just because it's a prompting or a voice, I'm hearing voices, oh.

The Holy Spirit leads and guides through a relationship with God and the decisions will line up with scripture. And then John 16, 13, when the spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. Now this is interesting.

Jesus is still on earth here at this point. And the Holy Spirit has not yet come yet. That's why Jesus said, I have to go.

It's actually better, he told his disciples, it's better for you if I leave. Can you believe that? How is that possible? Because Jesus could be with them all the time. He said, when I leave, the Comforter will come.

And that's what the day of Pentecost is. That's why it's celebrated. That was a powerful move of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit would only go into certain individuals. And David was filled with God's spirit. And sometimes it was removed.

Saul was filled with God's spirit and prophesied. But then the spirit was removed. The spirit came upon Samson.

The spirit came upon Gideon. But then the spirit was removed. But in a believer, the Holy Spirit is given as a final guarantee in the believer.

And believers say, well, Shane, I don't really feel the power of presence of the Holy Spirit. Are you quenching and grieving him? He's the third person of the Trinity. We can quench and grieve the spirit of God.

So you have all of the Holy Spirit you'll ever need, but does he have all of you? That's why in many circles, you'll hear the word baptism of the Holy Spirit and filling of the Holy Spirit and unction and anointing. And I believe in all of that because once a person fully surrenders everything, and they're no longer quenching and grieving the spirit, they've dealt with sin, they've asked for forgiveness, they are empowered, overwhelmed by the spirit's presence. And many people think, boy, I don't know if I was even saved.

I have such a love for God now. They were saved. They were quenching and grieving the spirit in many cases.

And there's freedom when they're finally filled. And so he said, the spirit will guide you into all truth, for he will not speak in his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak and he will declare to you the things that are to come. So it's the direction of the Holy Spirit, being led by the Holy Spirit.

But what is the context? If you give him control and you don't quench and grieve the spirit, how can you be led of the Holy Spirit if you put him in the trunk and you're driving the car? You can't be led of the spirit. Led of the spirit saying, God, I give you control of my life, financially, relationally, my kids, the church. I give you control, Lord Spirit, lead me.

Lead me, show me, direct me. You've had the fire of God. And that's why I think Jesus said to some of the churches in Revelation, remember where you have fallen and return to your first love.

Go back to your first love, get that fire back, that passion back of the Holy Spirit. And you have this fire, you have this passion, then sin comes in, besetting sin. And it comes in, you cave into it and it quenches the fire of the spirit.

I've grieved the Holy Spirit before, even as a pastor. Shane, go and forgive that person. No way.

Nope, nope, nope. It affects my preaching. Anybody have arguments at home before you get here with your spouse? Why is there no arguments on the way to Disneyland? Or no arguments, it's just on the way to church so all hell breaks loose.

But I have an advantage, I'm gonna tell you the secret. We've been taking separate cars for 10 years. But we have to, all right, I'm here, I get here at five in the morning.

What was my whole point with that, grieving the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit wants to work in your life in a powerful way. He wants to work in your life, but you can grieve the spirit through many things, besetting sins. God's convicted me before of even overindulgence, gluttony, that's a sin.

If we're consuming too much, it's all about the body and addictions or holding onto bitterness and anger. You think anger, unchecked, can quench the spirit? And so the Holy Spirit will lead us, but what about if we're quenching and grieving the spirit? It's like the analogy I gave of my son holding that water hose that was on full blast and it was just dripping out because of all the kinks in the hose. He had to go undo like

four different kinks in the hose.

And then it was all over the place. But I wonder how many, God wants to work in the lives of Christians. And if it's not overflowing, see, that is the Christian life.

We have settled for less, haven't we? The Christian life is, if you believe on me as the scriptures say, you will be boring and dry. If you believe on me as the scriptures say, a little trickle of water will come out now and then. If you believe on me as the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water.

The prophet would say his word is in my heart like a burning fire. John the Baptist said, I'm not even worthy to undo his sandal straps, but he's coming. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

That is a victorious Christian life to be filled with boldness in the spirit-filled life. The early church did not know what we have for church today. Boring, powerless church is not the church of the New Testament.

Men and women on fire for God. You might go in Walmart and be prompted by the Holy Spirit to pray for that. Can you believe it? Oh no, that doesn't happen anymore.

That happened all the time in the early church because they were bold and audacious enough. If Christ said it, I believe it and I want to be filled with the spirit of God. That's Christianity.

That is biblical Christianity. To not live in perfection, but to live in the power of the spirit. Deal with sin.

Deal with sin. Repent of sin. If my people, if my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face, we like to stop there.

Turn from their wicked way. Turn from their wicked way because sin can come into all of our lives. All of us in this room, all of those listening, you know that.

We have to deal with sin. And we've dumbed down this message over the years. The Barna study was absolutely true.

90% of churches don't talk about these kind of things because of nickels and noses. We want to build a large audience. We love the big tithers.

We don't want to upset people. Well, that's not a church of the living God. The church of the living God is like, Lord, what do you want us to say today? Do you want us to encourage? Do you want us to strengthen? Or do you want us to preach about sin and repentance? Be led of the spirit in your preaching as well, pastors.

That's crucial. That's all, I don't know any other way to preach. But if we're led by opinion, then we're in trouble.

And this was a hard transition for me. I don't just say this, my wife remembers the whole, when she met me, some of you might laugh at this, but I was actually a motivational speaker. Think Joelstein.

I would get surveys after I spoke on a scale of one to 10. That where I would speak, these organizations would have, did you enjoy the message? Was it educational? Was this presentation? And you're like, your whole life is on these things. So it was all about crowd appeal and pleasing the masses and motivating.

I have to, if I can have 99% of people leave, liking the message, liking me, and that's a motivational speaker. And I remember it was a prophetic word. Morgan remembers it.

Mario Murillo gave it to me in person. But he said, God has called you to be bold. And he said, it's not arrogance, it's boldness.

He said, but there's a shell you've got to break out of in order for this to happen. And I knew what it was, it was people pleasing. And I spent time with God, dealing with God, Lord, just remove this from me.

But I hope this comes across right. And I don't know how else to say it, but I'm not real concerned what people think anymore. I mean, I'm not talking about godly counsel and my wife saying, hey, that was a little strong.

You might wanna, I mean, those, but overall, I don't go home and go, oh, wow. Hopefully everybody sticks around and we'll see him next Sunday. Because my goal is to faithfully preach God's word and I know people won't stick around.

You know it. I mean, when Jesus started to talk about the hard things, he lost most of his audience. Are you gonna leave me too? The disciple said, Jesus asked him, he said, where do we go? You have the words of life.

And so a preacher can never gauge success on what people think. He has to gauge it on the success of the fruit that is produced. You can preach repentance with the wrong attitude and be angry.

You've seen those guys, right? All of you here this morning, you're living in sin. You gotta repent. I'm tired of telling you this every week.

It's like, whoa. But if it comes from brokenness and a heart that truly wants to help. We shared emails with people, but the same sermon, people get upset, right? They've left, they've walked out.

They're like, man, I hate this guy. But then we get an email from the single mom who says, I was so encouraged. I'm like, well, how did they get upset? They're encouraged.

This worse thing came back to the Lord and this person is now filled with the Spirit. All different results from the same message, the same tone, the same mannerisms. Often the person who gets upset is upset at the conviction.

Conviction, conviction screams loudly, doesn't it? So I'd love to write an article or a YouTube video on all these Hollywood people saying, if Trump's reelected, I'm moving to wherever. Okay, I wanna ask them, you make millions. You've got freedom of speech.

You can do whatever you want. Why are you moving? Conviction, conviction. When you start talking about abortion, the definition of marriage, morality, prayer in schools, it's the conviction that drives them out.

Why would you leave? You're rewarded from the abundance. What is there to flee from? Makes you wonder, I'm leaving, why? Why would you leave if your life won't change? As a matter of fact, you'll probably make more money, more opportunities, more movies, bigger movie star. Why do you wanna leave? Because conviction, you don't like the direction the nation is going.

Half the people in America want the nation to go this way, half want it to go this way. And that's where you're seeing kingdoms collide. And the first Samuel 3.10, this is an interesting story.

I talked about last week with Samuel, this little boy Samuel, Hannah gave birth to Samuel. Samuel was born, he was raised up to be a priest and he was in his room and he heard Samuel, Samuel. And he came out, he said, what do you need? He talked to the priest Eli.

He said, it's not me, go back to sleep. Samuel, Samuel. And he got up again, Samuel, Samuel.

What is going on? And Eli finally discerned, this is the voice of God. So next time when he speaks to you, tell him to be quiet, I'm going back to sleep. He said, what can I do? I'm your servant.

The exact wording was this. Speak for your servant listens. Speak for your servant hears.

That's you, all of you need your own devotional time, your own private prayer time where you say, Lord, speak to me, please God. As I open your word, as I pray, your servant listens. But be careful what he says we must do.

There's nothing in the Bible about rewarding partial obedience. Partial obedience is actually disobedience. And I could give you a thousand scenarios.

We all know them in our own lives. God's wanting you to give up something, but you're hanging on to it. God's wanting you to forgive someone, but you're holding on to it.

That's happened even recently with me. I've had a lot of anger towards a few different people, not in this church, not people anywhere I know, but that I believe are really hurting our nation. And God's had that process of forgiveness and the list is endless of areas God is working on.

And often we don't wanna give him all of that. But when you finally say, speak for your servant hears. So the context is easy.

Hearing God involves action. Hearing God often involves action. Partial obedience is not obedience.

Revelation 3.22, he who has ears to hear, let him hear what the spirit of God is saying to the churches. Now, is he talking about physical ears? Everyone has ears to hear unless a person is deaf. He who has ears to hear, in other words, he who's ready to obey me, listen.

He who has ears to hear, listen what the spirit says to the churches. And then Psalm 32.8, I will instruct you and I will teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye.

But here's the context. It's right after he says, be not like a horse or a mule. They have to have a bit, right? That thing in their mouth, turn this way, turn this way.

They have to be controlled by that. So he's saying here, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go, but don't be like a stubborn mule. I will teach you if you listen, if you obey.

So how many of us are stagnant in our faith because we're not obeying? How many of us are not growing spiritually because we're not obeying? That's why I've said it and I'll continue to say it. You can meet someone who's been a Christian supposedly for 20 years and they still look like they've been a Christian two weeks because they haven't matured spiritually. Maturity and obedience always go together.

As a person obeys, they grow. If they don't obey, they don't grow spiritually. It will hinder spiritual growth.

And then also Psalm 37, trust in the Lord and do good. Dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.

This is what's interesting. We have our own desires, fleshly desires. James would say, you don't get your prayers answered because you're asking amiss.

You're asking about spending them on your own pleasures. And so you have this consistent theme throughout the Bible that if you trust in the Lord and do good and you delight yourself in him, he will give you the desires of your heart. So actually, I believe, I've seen it, I'm sure you have too, he will plant certain desires in your heart.

The desire to plant a church, for example. The desire to purchase the radio stations. I had this thought as I was delighting in God, he would plant thoughts into our heart.

Why don't you do this for the homeless? Why don't you do the coat drive that we're having out in the lobby? Everyone can leave a jacket and leave something for the homeless. And he begins to put thoughts in you as you're delighting in the Lord. But if you're delighting in Facebook and social media, you will be given thoughts that are opposing that often.

You see how that's so interesting how the mind works? They call it neuroplasticity. Those who study how the mind works, that it actually can be shaped. Did you know you can, they used to think it was genetically programmed, you can't change, you can't change anybody.

Have you heard that before? They'll never change. But you can actually change your mind, change your thinking. Will your desires change? Your wants change? Your goals change? Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

So the more I'm in God's word, the more I'm trusting him, I'm praying about, I don't even know if I should tell you this, but I guess I will, it's too late. I've already opened the can of worms. But I'm praying, Lord, I just, I wanna go on a media fast.

I don't wanna know what either side of the news is saying. I wanna know what you're saying. I wanna turn it off for a few days or a week.

Because ultimately, all of us are going, like, where's it going? Where's this going? What's happening? What's happening with the vote count? Georgia, Wisconsin, bah, bah, bah, bah, bah. When ultimately I say, Lord, I'm turning that off and I'm gonna seek you. Talk about reprogramming your mind.

I guarantee fear would be alleviated. Worry, stress. Now we need to stay in touch with certain things, I know.

Because anytime I take people, time off, people are emailing the church, where's Shana, what's going on? I haven't heard from them in three days. Like, oh, you know, it's just constant, you know, because you wanna keep people informed. You wanna be informed.

But I'm praying about that, Lord. What would that look like? To just unplug for, even if it's a few days, maybe some of you, even if it's a day, and begin to seek God. Because we all go to our phones, we look at the news stories, we look at the videos that are coming out, often, many of us, and we're being conformed

to that thought process.

Now, I don't know what the balance is, because I also don't think we should go live in a hut out in the desert, and never know what year it is, and what's going on. That'd be nice, but, you know, you gotta live. You gotta make decisions.

You gotta make financial decisions. But there should be a season. I believe that's why fasting isn't just from food.

It can be removing anything that is distracting you from your walk with God. And you can even tell how much of a grip it has on you, by how hard it is to let go. So you conspiracy theory people like watching YouTube a lot, just try taking a break for two days.

You're gonna have withdrawals, like a heroin addict. Like, oh, God, there's something. And why? Because of that.

We crave those things that our body wants more of. And don't laugh at that person. You just try going a whole day without coffee, and see how you do.

We're all addicted to something. So the context of that is trusting God and doing His will. God gave me this all yesterday morning.

I got up at three this morning and put some more notes down. And I believe this. You cannot hear correctly the voice of God unless you talk about communicating with Him.

See, prayer doesn't always change God's mind, even though I believe it does change His plans sometimes. Because He's planned certain things in the Bible. But I relented.

It actually uses an interesting word, I repented. It says God repented in the King James. But what He really means is I changed the plans I had because of the prayers of my people, or because of the intercession.

I was going to destroy Nineveh, the capital of Assyrian, but because of Jonah interceding, I changed. I was going to destroy this group of people until Moses interceded. When Jeremiah interceded, when Ezekiel stood in the gap.

And so that's why, I don't want to just brush through this. Next week is going to be vitally important. If you need, do you need to revitalize your prayer life? Do you need to be inspired in the area of prayer? Then you need to come next week because I'm going to focus on, now that we've heard what God's word involves as far as getting in His word and being led by the right voice, we're going to talk about prayer because the fervent effectual prayers of a righteous man, a righteous woman availeth much.

The New Testament is clear there. Folks, if you want to see our nation change, if you want to see your kids come home or know the Lord, the effectual, that means the effectual with an E, effective, powerful, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And that means we're going to war.

This is not the type of prayer, you just pray as you're driving to work. Those are great, keep doing them. But this is travail.

This is pulling down heaven. I wrote this during the morning worship this morning. Prayer is seeking God.

And the more I seek you, the more I find you. And the more I find you, the more I seek you. It's travailing, it's communicating, it's petitioning, it's fighting, it's contending, it's warring, it's battling where you're pulling down heaven.

This is how I fight my battles, not by preaching, but by praying down heaven and saying, God, we lay hold of you. We're trailing when Zion travail, sons and daughters are born. And if we could get the church back to the prayer meetings, if we could get the church back to the heartbeat of prayer and crying out to God, I believe we would see him move in a powerful way.

God says through John, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done to you. Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst. If you come together and you pray, I will hear and I wonder how many prayers are not answered because we don't ask and ask again and ask for the movement of God in our lives.

Why, Shannon, I prayed that a year ago. I prayed that six months ago, my kids aren't changing. No, that's when you need to press in more.

That's when you need to press in more. If Jesus gave the example of that widow who kept going to the judge, when are you gonna do this? And the judge said, I will answer her because of her persistence. And Jesus said, how much more? How much more does God wanna answer the prayers of his people? And I truly feel, I believe God wants revival more than we do.

I believe he wants to answer our prayers. I don't understand the dynamics. I don't know why he just doesn't do it, but I know me, if my prayers are answered like this, I won't be pressing in and it's in the pressing in where I grow.

It's in the pressing in where my strength is built up. It's in the pressing in where my relation with God is fortified and strengthened.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/CxqSpa4faKl.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/my-sheep-hear-my-voice-video/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net