

Prayer Undoing the Devil's Plan

by Shane Idleman

Prayer is a powerful tool in spiritual warfare that can undo the devil's plans and change the course of history.

Duration: 57:08

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Matthew 6:7

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the critical role of prayer in spiritual warfare, asserting that soft sermons and powerless prayers are insufficient in today's dire times. He calls for a return to fervent prayer, highlighting its power to undo the devil's plans and change the course of history, as seen in America's past. Idleman urges the congregation to engage in prayer as a priority, not just a routine, and to recognize it as a means of spiritual battle against demonic forces. He shares historical examples of prayer's impact, encouraging believers to rise up in righteous indignation and intercede for their families and nation. Ultimately, he reminds the church that true power lies in prayer, which can bring about revival and transformation.

Transcript

That in these dire times, soft sermons aren't gonna cut it. Dead worship is not gonna cut it. Powerless prayers are not gonna cut it.

The way we've been doing church for a long time is not gonna cut it in these dire times. We're going into spiritual warfare. We are battling demonic forces like we've never known before.

The problem is we've opened the door and now it's time to close the door. And it's, I don't know what the future holds but I do know who holds the future. Amen.

So we are going to seek him this morning. I don't wanna go long. It's up to me, we keep worshiping but God's put this message on my heart and I wanna talk to you briefly about prayer.

Undoing the devil's plans. Prayer undoing the devil's plans because that's what it's doing, right? It's undoing the devil's plans. That's what prayer does.

It undoes the devil's plans. He's got plans against you, against your family because the thief does not come except to kill, to steal and to destroy. And it's the prayers of God's people that pull down heaven.

And we're in the true Christian series right now. Many of you know that. We're talking about what does a true Christian look like? Now obviously anybody can pray but Jesus said don't pray like the Gentiles with their meaningless words.

Basically they're going through the motion. Just going through the motion and praying to be heard. There's not a heart engagement.

And there's a book out there, *The History of Prayer in America*. It said this, prayer stands as one of the most critical and indisputable factors to have influenced the course of American history. It's interesting, if you look back and you look at the history of our nation, nothing has changed our course or gotten us back on course more than the power of prayer.

You look at the pilgrims coming over in the 1620s. You look at what was instituted. Did you know they used to have national days of proclamation of prayer and fasting? National days, calling the whole nation to prayer and fasting.

The court systems, they would actually pray before meeting in Senate and Congress. Can you believe that? The president would call it national days of prayer and proclamation. And when all else fails, they would say, have you prayed? Instead of, today we say, when all else fails, throw more money at it.

Pass legislation, that will fix it. Listen, we are spiraling out of control and we need to begin to really engage God through prayer. Prayer would change the course of history.

A man by the name of Jeremiah Lambert decided to start a little prayer meeting in New York and not very many people showed up. The next day, more showed up. Next day, more showed up.

And by the time it was running at full speed, there were prayer meetings across the entire East Coast there. Thousands of prayer meetings, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and God brought revival. And never forget this, it looked bleak back then.

If you read the accounts of it, the saloons and the prostitution and the drunkenness, and it looked like America was going down the tubes. What would they say today? I don't know. And God would bring revival.

He would bring, what is that? It's awakening his people. God quickening and awakening his people to awake them up out of their spiritual slumber. And that's why I love the worship this morning because it challenges us to do that.

You know, the church, if you go back 2,000 years ago, I guarantee you the early church didn't just sit there and sing a few songs and were bored. They were travailing, they were praying, they were contending, why? Because they understood that this is spiritual warfare. This is the house of the living God.

This is where we do battle. This is where we contend for our faith. This is where we contend for our nation and our families.

And we pull down heaven, and we come against the spiritual works of darkness. That's the power of prayer. Nothing moves the hand of God more than prayer.

I love worship and I love preaching, but nothing moves the hand of God more than prayer. Jesus said, my house will be called a house of worship. No, that's not, this side, my house will be called a house of

preaching.

Come on, Bible students. Jesus said, my house will be called a house of, my house is a house of prayer, quoting the Old Testament prophet, actually, that Christ, that God's house is a house of prayer because that's where you communicate with God. That's where you contend.

That's where the rubber meets the road. Oh, if we had a seminar and we said, hey, come at lunchtime, it's how to get wealthy. And within one year, we're going to have free food.

We would pack it out. But when you say come early for early morning prayer, oh, that's when the call to the flesh is challenged. That's where the rubber meets the road.

That's when you tell God, no matter what it costs, I will be there. I need to seek you with all of my heart and with all of my strength. Folks, that's our only hope.

That's why I was very encouraged this morning, over 70 people at 6 a.m. for the 6 a.m. worship service. And that's where you know God is moving. God is moving.

I would encourage you to be there. And I want to remind you again, as I have in the past, that God's call is not to Washington, right? If Hollywood could just get saved, if Sacramento, if our governor, yes, keep praying for these people. But if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven.

See, there's a condition there. And that condition is the praying of God's people and pulling down heaven. From pilgrims to presidents, prayer is the only thing that has brought us back from the edge of despair.

And in case you need another reminder, we are on that precipice right now, the edge of despair. I'm sure you know what is around the corner. And if the wrong people decide to lead us and we're on that edge of despair, and that's the time that God wants us to dig in deeper, not release the grip.

That's why we have everyday prayer meetings here at 6 a.m. Every day, even on Thanksgiving, that's why, because we believe that God answers the prayers of his people. If you look at all the promises in the Bible, and I've tried to do this, but there's so many in there, but the promises that follow prayer. If my people pray, if you ask, if you receive, and just even studying that wonderful life of Josiah this week, I was looking again, you remember I preached on the life of Josiah.

He came to know the Lord at a young age. He followed the Lord at a very young age. And what stood out to me more than anything is God told Josiah, he said, because of your heart wanting to seek me, I'm not gonna judge the land just yet, but because of the sins of Manasseh, they were so wicked, so evil, so vile.

See, there becomes a time and a place where a nation has become so wicked and so corrupt that the judgment hand of God must fall upon that nation. And it's the only thing that stops that is the interceding of God's people. But I would have thought that Josiah would have said, well, like Hezekiah said, well, at least it won't be in my days.

What did he do? There was a righteous indignation that welled up in him. He read, they found the law of God, the book of the Bible, the Torah, the law, and they found it, began to read it in his hearing, and he actually tore his clothes. It was a sign of righteous indignation.

It's okay to get upset at what's going on, isn't it? I get so upset because we should not be excited about filth and perversion coming in and changing our children and influencing our children and glorifying perversion, all kinds of things. There should be a holy, righteous indignation. God, zeal for your house has burned me up.

Zeal for your truth has burned me up. And through that, from that comes the powerful prayer life. Martin Luther said, when I am angry, I can preach well, but I can pray better.

There's something that God gives us that desire, that burden, and my point with Josiah was this, that he began, even when God said, I will stay in my hand of judgment, he began to still get rid of all the perverted things in the house of God, burned down all the idols, went down and pulled down the sacred places where they would offer to Baal and Molech, and he would begin to clean house. Even God said, no, I promise deliverance. Josiah, not in your time, but he said, zeal for your house has eaten me up.

And he would break down, the Bible says, he would remove the booths of the perverted persons. And there was a righteous indignation for the things of God. We've got to get back to that.

You're not gonna find it with your face buried in Facebook. It only comes from time with God. I know some of you probably this morning are going, why are these people so excited? Because many of us were here at 6 a.m. And the saturation of God's atmosphere is powerful.

And it doesn't just end, it lingers. And there's a desire to want to worship. There's a desire to want to have more of God.

And it comes through worship and prayer. Pulling down heaven. Satan trembles, it's been said, when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.

So I don't care where you're at. I don't care how much failure you've brought into this room saying, sorry, Shane, I can never measure up. I've blown it.

I wish I could have been a better parent. I've lost it here. I should have been, I need to get back on track.

Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint on their knees, why? Because you are undoing the plans of Satan. Why shouldn't we be, why are we always on the defense and defending? Why never on the offense of pushing into his kingdom of darkness? That's how you stop Satan's plans. Because the thief goes about to kill, to steal, and to destroy.

Isn't that interesting? The Bible is clear that he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. So the devil is going about seeking whom he may devour, and the Lord is looking for those who are loyal to him and want to find a place of solitude and pray and build that relationship. One or the other will be pushed out.

The more we follow the things that are dark and demonic in the world, the more we'll push out the spirit of God. But the more we follow and contend and go after the things of God, the more we'll push out the world. That's why I believe he said you cannot serve two masters.

You cannot serve two masters. You'll love the one or hate the other, or be loyal to one or despise the other. You cannot serve two masters.

That theme is throughout scripture. It's what we're seeing in the natural has been affected in the spiritual. Do you think everything going on in our nation is all just natural? There's a, there's a, why are all these people believing the same thing? Because it's the same spirit.

It's a satanic spirit working to bring in perversion into our country and legislation that does not honor God. It's satanic at its core. The thermometer of a church is its prayer meeting.

And I would even add the thermostat. What does the thermostat do? It controls. You show me a church with a healthy prayer meeting and I'll show you a healthy church.

And I don't know if it's ironic or just coincidence, but a lot of the churches that aren't, haven't opened in months, just over the hill. Many churches are not opening. I don't know of any of them that have closed that have had a powerful prayer meeting.

It goes together. Cowardliness and lack of prayer. When you pray, you become bold.

Now I'm not saying we're doing everything right. Far from it. I might look back at this and say, uh-oh.

I don't know, Lord. I thought you're in it because we don't know the plans of God. All we know is we can be faithful in the season he has given us.

And we know that the church needs to be the church. We cannot live in fear. We can be bold, but empathetic.

We can empathize with people, but also be very bold in what we believe. So I'm gonna put a few verses on the screen. Zechariah 4, 6. These verses just leaped out and I wanna share them with you.

This is the word of the Lord that came to Zerubbabel. Now Zerubbabel was an interesting guy. He was called of God to go and rebuild the temple in Jerusalem that had crumbled and been destroyed.

And of course he's weary, he's worried, and a lot's going on with that, right? You have a call of God. So scripture say this, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord. So it's not by your own strength.

It's not by your own power. So sometimes we try to manipulate, we try to do things on our own, but God says, it's by my spirit. And what I realized is, so many times we read this and we think, okay, God's spirit's gonna come down and do something amazing, which he can, but often, often, get this, it's the spirit of God working in and through you.

Not by your own personal might, not by your own personal strength, but by my spirit working in you. He wasn't gonna come down and fix the temple on his own. The spirit of God was gonna go into Zerubbabel and fix the temple of God.

So when God calls us to a certain thing, it's by his power. And then I love Isaiah 59, 19. When the enemy comes in like a flood, is the last part that we all know, but we forget to read the first part.

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the West. The reason they say the West is like the right hand of God, it was a position of power and strength. Coming from the West is obviously, in the Bible, is often a mark of authority and strength.

And he said, in his own glory from the rising of the sun, and reminds us, when the enemy comes in like the flood, the spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him. Now, it's interesting, the word standard there, in the Hebrew, only appears one time. And it's like the blowing of a mighty wind, as when God parted the Red Sea.

So it says God will, basically, almost God will drive them back by a mighty wind. And it's interesting to me that the Holy Spirit is pneuma. That's why we study pneumatology.

It's pneumatic tools, the air, the power. Jesus said, the wind blows where it wants. And we see here, then, that the spirit of the living God will raise up a standard in him, and in you, and in me, to make the difference.

So when the enemy comes in like a flood, we don't retreat and say, go ahead, spirit, take care of it. We are the reach of the gap that's been broken. We are that standard that is to be raised up.

We are the repairer of the breach, through the spirit of God working in us, through prayer. So the first thing I wanna talk about with this area of prayer, I wanna talk first, I might even get into more things next week, or the following week, I'm not sure. The first thing is building.

We're trying to undo the devil's plans. The first thing that prayer does is it builds. Prayer will build this into your life.

It builds faith, it builds perseverance, it builds fortitude, and it builds you up. Strength under pressure. So the way to undo Satan's plans is to begin building this back into your prayer life.

And let me tell you something I learned many years ago. Do not gauge your prayers by the results you're seeing. Because often as you're praying, you don't see the results.

And God never says, look at the results. He says, be faithful. Be faithful, I will bring the results.

Be faithful in what you do. And the burden will leave you when God is done, or he'll show you what to do from that point forward. Do you ever have a burden for someone or something? Intercessory prayer, a burden for, for in my case, it's for our nation.

Some of you, it's homeless. Some of you, it's the sex trafficking. Some of you, it's for the abortion industry, or the homeless that we see in our, there's a burden there.

And the reason you have that burden is because God calls you to intercede. But I don't see any results, right? The seeds are being planted. The water is being poured.

The soil is being tilled. And at some point you'll begin to see the fruit blossom that you've been planting. That's why there's a burden of intercession.

God will give you that burden. And also it has to become a priority. It has to become a, is prayer a priority in your life right now? That's not very convincing.

How many of you want it to be? Oh, wow, there we go. That was the right question. Now, I know it's difficult because so many things compete for our attention.

And Andrew Bonar said, oh brother, oh brother, pray. In spite of Satan, pray. Spend hours in prayer rather than neglect friends and not pray.

Rather fast and lose breakfast and dinner and even lose sleep than not to pray. And we must not talk about prayer. We must pray.

The Lord is near. He comes softly while the virgins sleep. And that is so true.

There has to be something in you that wakes up. And that's my desire for any church, even this church is wake up and realize that the battle is right before you. Wake up and realize that the enemy is pushing against the front lines.

Wake up and realize that God called you to intercede. Yes, it's cold in the morning. Yes, it's early or in the evening, whenever it is, but God has called us to be those points of intercession.

How do we know that we might not make a difference? God's call is to the intercessor. And I was considering taking this part out, but I think it needs to stay. It's important to build in the morning.

Build in the morning. And God bless those people who say, I'm not a morning person. I know it.

It's been said that prayer should be the key of the day and the lock at night. God often speaks to us in silence and listening involves waiting, waiting on God. Waiting is not wasted time.

Because it's hard for Christians to wait, isn't it? Or most of us to wait. I'm not seeing anything right now. I'm not going to keep doing this because it's a waste of time.

But in God's economy, waiting time is not wasted time. Waiting time is when you're building up the strength, the fortitude, the perseverance to go into battle. And I've learned that the more I wait, the stronger I become because I'm not going out in fear and frustration and reacting in anger.

I'm waiting upon the Lord. So here's a few more scriptures. Psalm 5.3, my voice show you here.

When? Oh Lord, in the morning, I will direct it to you and I will look up. And why is the morning emphasized so much in the Bible? It's because the morning is the freshness of the day. It's the beginning of the day.

It's the foundation of the day. And many of you know, when you forget to read in the morning or pray in the morning, does that not affect the rest of the day? Why? Because you're reigniting that passion for prayer, that passion for God. You're conforming your thoughts to the things of God and renewing your mind.

My voice you show here in the morning, he says to God, oh Lord, in the morning, I will direct it to you. I will look up. So there's a sense that God is the priority.

God is the focus. God is the theme of the day. And God, I will continue to exalt you and look at you early in the morning.

And then from that morning foundation, that's how I build the rest of my day. But who says I'm too busy to pray? If you say that, then you're too busy. And I've talked to so many people over the years.

Shane, it's so hard to get that early morning time in. What time do you go to bed? Ah, midnight. Well, you could start there.

I don't know. Yeah, but I like to watch this and this and this and this. Priorities.

And you're going to go through withdrawals. You'll look for the remote control, the TV in your pocket or your, it's like, but God, it's that flesh. It's a calling that the spirit to pray.

See, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. And that's when the spirit begins to take over through perseverance and fortitude. You know how many times I come in the morning, I don't feel like it? If I had a dollar for every time I didn't feel like it, see, we can't let our feelings control our spirituality.

Many of us, our feelings are controlling our relationship with God or putting that distance between us and God, how I feel. But what's the priority in many of our lives? I must have my black Christian crack, caffeinated Starbucks for those paying attention. There's things that competing for a time in the morning.

Right, I have to look, if you have to look at the news before you go to prayer, you will be discouraged and disheartened because like Jake said, you don't look at the news, you focus your eyes on Christ and where he's taking you and the redemption of the cross and what he's called you to do. Although all hell might be breaking loose, you will not fall, you will not fail if your house is built on the solid rock. Jesus said, he who hears my words and does them, I will liken him to a man who built his house upon the rock and when the winds came and the storm came, it's coming, it's coming, you do not avoid the storm just because you're a Christian, but he says the Christian stands there built and strengthened on the rock and when it comes against him, he will not fall because the foundation is Jesus Christ.

Praise God. Amen. And then Psalm 119, I rise before the dawning of the morning and I cry for help, I hope in your word.

Somebody else in the New Testament did that. Let's see, who was that again? He would get up before the morning, he would go to a garden. Oh, there we go, see? This is what just cracks me up sometimes.

Jesus did it, but we think we don't have to. Jesus went out and spent time with the Father early in the morning, he fasted that 40 days. He did things that we look at and we're like, yeah, but that was Jesus.

No, but that's you, you need it. I rise before the dawning of the morning and I cry for help, I hope in your word. What you go to bed with at night is who you wake up with in the morning.

Not just physically, but spiritually. If you go to bed with the wrong things, watching the wrong things, and then you get up and you wonder, where's my hunger for God? I'll tell you, it started long ago, about 10 hours ago, or eight hours ago. Because what we feed on becomes the dominating force in our lives.

As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. Oh God, I rise before the dawning of the morning. Lord, let me just stop for a minute.

God, give us a deeper desire for prayer. Lord, we can't do it physically, we can't try harder, we need the moving of your spirit, God. We need to hear from you.

God, wake us up, that's my prayer, Lord, wake us up. No alarm clock, you are the alarm clock. Holy Spirit, wake us up and urge us to get to church to pray.

Or go into our living rooms and find time with you. Pray over our families, pray over our children. Thank you, Lord.

What happens, I just had this vision all week of just a vision of imagining how much different our families would be if parents got up and they began to just pray over their children. Walk by their rooms. You don't have to, you know, just walk by their rooms and pray over that little baby.

Pray over that prodigal son. And just say, devil, you don't have my child. Spirit of the living God, would you fill them today? God, get them off of drugs, get them, I'm contending, I'm fasting.

God, I'm calling you into this battle and you begin to pray over your family. Can you imagine what could happen? I will tell you, at first, all hell will break loose because you're waging spiritual warfare. Who told us this was going to be easy? Who told us fighting spiritually was going to be easy? I mean, there's books out there on the bestseller list, your best life now, we could say your easiest life now, your abundant life now, the fun life now.

And see, I like all those things. I wish the Bible said, when you come to know Jesus Christ, your mansion in heaven will be given to you now. Really, on that note, there's not mansions he's talking about, it's dwelling places that Jesus is building dwelling places for us.

It's that hope of eternity and that's a rabbit trail. So let me come back here. Mark, oh, I love this one too, Mark 1.35. Now in the morning, having risen a long time before daylight, Jesus went out and departed into a solitary place and there he was.

I gave a message a few years ago, I still hear from people about it, on the need to find a solitary place, the need to get away from the commotion and the motion and the emotion, the way to just get somewhere to get, I don't care if it's in a closet somewhere, the prayer closet, or take a drive in your car, there's gotta be a place where you get away and you say, God, I just wanna hear from you, I wanna silence my cell phone, I want to just focus on you and God, would you speak to me? The need for, Jesus found us, why would he find a solitary place? Because of all the commotion of the day. So that's the first thing you have to realize with undoing Satan's plan, is you have to build a life of prayer, building a prayer into your life and it becoming the priority. And then the second part is the battling aspect, the battling aspect.

And more than anything, because we think prayer is asking and receiving, which it is, but what do we often think? It's often associated with getting, right? Or just me, don't leave me hanging. Oh Lord, give me, I want, I need, I desire, could you please? But at the heart of prayer, it's spiritual warfare. It's warfare, it's combat, it's conflict, and that's why anybody, when you go to start a prayer meeting, it's gonna get difficult.

You wanna start a prayer study in your home, it's going to get difficult, or study, any kind of study, any time you're wanting to do things from God, that type of spiritual warfare is heightened. And that's why maybe you heard some of this morning and some of the morning worship, if you're here at 6 a.m., prayer is travail. We've got this idea in Christianity, especially in America, and I follow under this sometimes, is conservative Christianity, you've heard that term, right? We don't get too emotional, we don't get too carried away, we're conservative, but that has no biblical roots in historical biblical Christianity.

Now, I'm not for weirdness or circus, but when God is moving, you might get excited. When God is breaking every chain of bondage, when he is giving you hope and direction and peace, when he is giving the prodigal son and the wayward daughter another opportunity, they might get a little excited, they might raise their hands, they might clap for joy, because the spirit of the living God is beginning to lift them up and encourage them, and when the parent begins to see hope, I see hope in the prayer closet, that my son or my daughter might come home and I will contend for my family. You might get a little excited, you

might begin to get stirring and convicting, and if not, I wanna ask you, is your prayer life dead? Are you dead to the things of God? Because there's emotional engagement.

Shame, people might get upset. Yes, are you where people leave this church every single week, but I'm not here for attendance purposes, I'm here to speak the truth of the living God, and the more I preach and the more they leave, the more the church grows. That doesn't seem right, what's going on here? Why, because when you honor God and when the church becomes a praying church, and when the church begins to weep over the sins of our nation, and when it begins to weep over the blood of innocent children, and it begins to contend for righteousness, and there's a holy indignation that rises up, and when they try to redefine marriage and how God created it, and teach little kindergartners about changing their sex, you should be so upset that you prayed down the fires of heaven.

That's righteous indignation. The Bible says, and the stench is rised up to the nostrils of a righteous, pure, and holy God. Should that not that same stench drive us to our knees? Where's the burden of the Lord? The prophets used to say, the burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord is upon me.

I feel the weight of his glory, I feel the weight of his holiness, and I must cry out, his word is in my heart like a burning fire, it's shut up in my bones. I cannot hold it back because the spirit of the living God will never be silent. Well, let me tell you how I really feel.

I mean, am I not telling the truth? The church, the church, the church should be the voice of truth. Why do you think they wanna silent the church? Silence the conviction. I told you last week, why does all these Hollywood celebrities wanna move if the president is reelected? Why, you make millions of dollars, you can say whatever you want, you can put down whatever you want, you can push perversion, why do you wanna leave? Because of conviction, conviction.

How are we supposed to act when you see the most decadent culture that's ever been on the planet, as in the days of Noah? We are here, and then there's a religious undertone that gets me every time. These people act religious. Isn't it interesting, that whole list they gave, in the last days, they will be lovers of themselves.

Boastful, haughty, arrogant, and then at the end, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. That's why you can say, how can these people be Christians, a form of godliness? We are children of Abraham. And John the Baptist said, God is able to raise up children of Abraham from these very stones.

Even now, even now, the ax is laid at the root of the tree, bear fruit worthy of your repentance. Let me see your fruit, and then Jesus comes out, saying, you cannot serve two masters. How long will you waver between two opinions? And then Paul says, walk in the spirit, and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

And then Galatians talks about, are you going to finish in the flesh what began in the spirit? Oh, foolish Galatians, who have bewitched you? Who have tricked you? Are you going to finish a powerful move of God's spirit in your life by now obeying the things of the flesh? It's a consistent theme throughout scripture. You cannot serve two masters. Either God be God, or he is not.

And if he is God, we follow him. We bow our knee to him. We pledge allegiance to him.

Every eye will confess, and every knee will bow that Christ is Lord. Prayer is travail, prayer is travail. Prayer in the Bible is often linked to labor pains of a pregnant woman.

Now, don't do it just to do it. I'm not saying, you know, have you ever been in those rooms? Women, you have, but men, there's a baby being born. It's not husband, can I have a cup of water? There's, I've got to get this thing out of me.

There is travail, there is pressure. Why? Because when Zion travails, sons and daughters are born. When the church of the living God, the true church, the one of those coming back next week, when those people begin to pray and seek the heart of God, that's when God says, there's my remnant people.

When they travail, sons and daughters are born. Spiritually speaking, God begins to move. Second Corinthians 10, for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

So Paul's saying, though you live like this, right? We live like this, our war is not with this. That's why I often say your gun safes are full, but your prayer closets are empty. Shane, they're running out of ammo.

I can't order AR-15s. Are you in the prayer closet? That's your hope. That's your hope.

And then those people are convicted. Say, are you against guns? No, I just said your hope's in the prayer closet. That means you're convicted.

I'm not stupid. I know what conviction looks like. Basically our anger and our bitterness and our rebellion aren't going to change anything.

We can't, getting so bitter and angry, that's not gonna change anything. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, meaning they're not fleshly of nature. You can't go and hit somebody.

The only way you hit, you know how you hit the devil? Oh, I love that little image. I just saw it this week. It just popped in my head.

It says something like, oh, the devil, when he saw my head bowed down, he knew he had beat me. I was defeated until he heard the word, amen. And he even knew it as a prayer, praying down heaven and changing the course.

Do you know history is, God has changed the course of history through praying people. It's amazing what happens when God's people pray for the weapons of our warfare. Look at, he's talking about prayer, not as a gentle mist on the ocean or a soft petal of a flower.

The weapons of warfare, the strongest term he could have used, the strongest term we can use. These weapons of your warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty in God. So what's the only thing we can do that is mighty in God? Pray, pray.

For the pulling down of strongholds, something that has got its stronghold in our nation. And we'll realize that there's something that has a stronghold. Right now, it's on the lives of many people.

It's pornography or addiction. That we've opened the door to some satanic activity or darkness. A lot of the kids now, you see these little magic cards at Walmart and stuff and be a magician and cast spells.

It's all demonic. You begin to open those doors with Ouija boards, the occult, vampires, witchcraft. That's not good stuff.

You can't just play around in that. They call it dabbling. And that's dabbling with demons.

And you begin to open a stronghold in your life. That's why the Bible says, don't give the enemy a foothold. Do you know what a foothold is? Right, you know when your kids go to slam the door and you stop that? You put it, there's a foot.

Oh, it doesn't happen here? This is my house only? Side note, I can tell when they're mad. I go, go to your room. If I hear that door slam, you're in big trouble.

It closes quietly, right? But you put your foot, there's a foothold. So a stronghold is there's an area in your life that you cannot overcome. There's a stronghold.

There's a stronghold in our nation. There's a stronghold in our belief in our state. You're, what about casting down arguments? So every, there's an argument that says God is not God.

Man is God. Relativism, man is doing whatever is right in his own eyes and his own thinking. So you have all these false systems.

So it says right here, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds, casting down arguments. So every thing that comes into our mind, every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ, basically a lot of what's being taught in our universities that are anti-God, anti-good, anti-morality, anti-holiness, we cast down all those things. I love voting, I love protesting, I love whatever you wanna do, but the best thing you can do is not the protest, it's a prayer closet.

A high thing is an opinion that opposes God. A high, elevated, prideful, arrogant person denying the existence of God. There's a false truth and this high thing will be pulled down, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

Here's what you do. You bring your thoughts into the obedience of Christ. Internalize that.

And the only place I can really bring my thoughts into the obedience of Christ is in the prayer closet. How are you going to cast down arguments? These things are in your home. High things are trying to be exalted in your home, things that are not of God.

Casting down arguments. This word here, I wish I had time to actually unpack this on a sermon. Maybe we can in the future.

But this is things that are opposing God. Do any of you have teenagers that think they know it all? No, oh, just a few? Right, they're 13 but they're really 25. Mom, dad don't know anything and all that good stuff.

This is a casting down those false arguments. And the battle is real. Right now what we're seeing.

Now there is a disputed text. Some manuscripts don't have it, some do. I've talked about this before.

You can go on and look at that on how we got our Bible translations. But I believe that it's there for a reason. I believe it's biblical.

And it's definitely practical and biblical. Matthew 17, 21. I don't know if we have it up there because I just threw it in a little bit late.

I don't think we do. Jesus said, how be it this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. Or other translations would say this type of demon, this type of demonic.

And have you ever had any demonic battles that you are just losing? It's not gonna cut it with just a quick little prayer on your way to work. Those are good, don't stop them. But sometimes you need to call in and say, I'm not coming in today, I'm taking my day off.

Not for vacation but to seek the hand and the heart of God. This kind cometh not out except by prayer, pulling down heaven and fasting, starving the flesh. Sometimes it's okay to tell King Stomach, be quiet.

Because the flesh is pulling. Deny the flesh and pursue God in the prayer closet. Trust me, God will answer.

We're going into war with no weapon. Many are going into a fight with a cardboard knife. And we're trying to demolish things with a little pink hammer.

See, I brought that before. If you guys remember, I had a little tiny pink hammer. Like my daughter's hammer.

And then I compared it to a 25 pound sledgehammer I have. And brought that out. And that's, my dad, he would often say, Shane, put that little hammer away.

Go grab the big thing. Go grab the big sledgehammer. Or if you wanna get real serious, go get the air compressor and a jackhammer and let's get rid of this concrete.

Why? Because bigger things, you need to bring bigger power in. Sometimes that cometh not out except by prayer and fasting where you set aside the day and you say, God, I love my child so much. I'm not going to eat today.

I'm gonna pull down heaven. Yes, it's going to hurt. Yes, my flesh is going to scream.

But it's time for me to tell my flesh what to do instead of my flesh telling me what to do. A powerful prayer life is always shaped on the battlefield. Is it not? Those of you parents, you know.

All of us are going through something. So God is no respecter of persons, but what he is a respecter of is principles. God says, I do not look at a person.

Oh, that's Shane. I like Shane. He looks at principles.

If my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face, if you call out, I will answer. If you seek me, the more you find me. And guess what? The more you find him, the more you want to seek him.

And the more you love him, the more you want to seek him. The more you seek him, the more you love him. And there's these conditional, God says, I am not a respecter of persons, but I am a respecter of principles.

Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God today. In due time, he will exalt you. Men, have you humbled yourself and said, I need to be back in prayer.

I need to lead my family spiritually. Don't get me started. The condition of the nation is a condition of the family.

Take responsibility and look in the mirror. That's what's happening. The deterioration of the family affects the nation.

Shane, that's going to hurt feelings. Oh, I hope it does. I hope it makes people so mad they go home and God doesn't let them loose until they repent.

I would read Reese Howell, Intercessor. It's a good book to read. They actually credit him as one of the men helping to change the course of World War II.

And this guy would like have one meal at night for a year. Or he would fast or he would intercede and he would see miraculous things happening, healing, people being delivered, the course of the specific things he was praying for. It's in the journals, you can read them.

God would show him and he would move and he would intercede. He said, the Lord always shows you all the difficulties when he's going to do anything through you because those difficulties will drive you to your knees. Oh, one of my favorites, I love his biography, John Knox.

John Knox, I love John Knox. I think 400 years ago, about the time of Martin Luther, when Martin Luther nailed the 95 thesis on the church doors in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517, calling the church to repentance and pointing out all these glaring theological errors. It was Lutheran Germany and John Knox was in Scotland.

John Knox was in Scotland. And it is said and reported that Mary, Queen of the Scots, said, I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the armies of Europe. And his prayers shook Scotland, causing a revival among God's people.

But see, these people are people of prayer. I can go down the list, Hal Rees or John Knox or Martin Luther or John Calvin. When they prayed, there was reformation.

When George Whitefield prayed, America fell to her knees. When D.L. Moody prayed, it shook the continent. When Amy Carmichael prayed, the mission field was reborn.

When God's people prayed, God moves. When John Wesley prayed, there was revival. And it goes on down the list.

When God's people pray, he will hear the prayers of a people. Why, because there's a crying out. It's not a selfish prayer.

It's a God, unless you move, we are lost. I love also John Knox. It was said of John Knox that he prayed this.

God, give me Scotland for the cause of Christ. Or I shall die. Who's saying God, give me America for the cause of Christ.

Or I shall die. What that means is it's my all-consuming passion. It's my all-consuming desire to see lost souls come home.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound. That saved a wretch like me. I was lost, but now I'm found.

I was blind, but now I see. And that plea goes out, and it draws the nation back to God. Folks, if we want to see revival, we've got to get back to preaching the hard truths of holiness and righteousness, and the cross of Christ, and the blood that saves.

Oh, what can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. When real men and women pray, spirit-filled men and women pray, God answers. You've changed the course of your family.

I'll never forget, and I've shared it a few years ago now, when Jim Cimbala is open about this, or Cimbala, however you want to pronounce it, in New York there. Me and my wife had the privilege of visiting a couple of years ago, meeting him, and it was just incredible. And he talked about a time where his daughter, Christy, was on the streets of New York.

He's this major pastor. She's out doing crystal meth, heroin, and they called a prayer meeting. It wasn't just for her, it's just a prayer meeting.

And those people know how to pray. Let me tell you, whoo, you have all nationalities in that place, and they are just crying out to God, and I'm wondering how many people would be embarrassed to be in here? Not me. You think we're loud? And again, it's not the volume.

It's not the emotions. Those are simply an outworking of what God is doing in the hearts. Anyway, long story short, a lady came up and said, we need to pray for Christy.

And he said, okay, if you guys want to. And they began to pull down heaven. Can you imagine 2,000 people praying for your daughter for a significant period of time? And his wife didn't go that night.

When he got home, he told his wife, if there is a God in heaven, our daughter will be home. And guess who was home? A week or so. She comes home crying, sobbing.

She had a dream that she was on the edge of hell, just about ready to fall over, and God brought her back. So don't tell me God can't change circumstances. Don't tell me God can't give your spouse, your children a dream or a vision or wake them up.

I wish he would just do it. I got it, me too. But sometimes it involves pressing in.

William Tyndale, have you heard of that name before? Tyndale Publishing House? Did you know he was actually tied and burned at the stake? Yet right before he died, he cried out, Lord, open the king of England's eyes. Lord, open the king of England's eyes. And 70 years later, 90% of his work was translated into what you read today, the 1611 version of the King James Bible.

It's amazing. The verse pray without ceasing, it's a lifestyle of prayer. I did some, about an hour, I looked at that word ceasing, and it's interesting.

Pray without ceasing, because it's not nonstop. It's don't give up, don't fade away, don't shut down. Now it changes a little bit, right? Don't fade away, don't shut down, don't stop.

Pray without ceasing all day long. Don't give up, saints. When you look at the polls, when you look at the media, when you look at Hollywood, when you look at Washington, you say, my God, everyone is against us.

But remember, you plus God is a majority. Yes, everyone is against those who live for righteousness. And God gets those down.

God gets us down to a Gideon army. They had tens of thousands of people. God got them down to 300 in Gideon's army.

He said, now you'll know that I get the glory and I get the credit. And God gets us down to where he is our only hope. Don't give up, don't fade away, and church don't shut down.

That's the ceasing. Don't give up, don't fade away, don't shut down. So do all these things without ceasing.

In other words, don't give up, look up. Don't get discouraged, be encouraged. Because often, the greater the difficulty, the greater the blessing.

I've told many people before that wanna get involved in ministry, don't let your brokenness stop you. Actually, the greater the brokenness, the greater the anointing. The more you've been broken by the power of God and by the spirit of God, the more you've been humbled and say, God, I can't do anything unless you move through me.

God says, now I can use you. Now I can exalt you because you won't exalt yourself. Now you'll point them to the cross like John the Baptist.

I must decrease, but I must point people to the cross. It's through that humility that God will begin to move in your own life as well. Where does the perfume come from, women, that you put on? The flower was crushed.

Where does the olive oil come from? It was crushed in the crushing, in the bruising, in the brokenness. Out of the ashes, I will arise and give God the glory because he took nothing and made it something. I will give you all the glory, all the credit, Lord, because you pulled me up out of the miry clay.

You set my feet on solid ground and you began to rebuild me and restore me. I think it was A.W. Tozer who said it takes broken men to break men. Best preachers you'll ever hear, the best worship leaders you'll ever hear are broken.

A reminder to you that the book of Psalms, do you like the book of Psalms? Spend a lot of time in the book during these coming difficult seasons. What I realize is many of those are prayers. That's why I love David's prayers.

He said, my God, early will I seek you. My God, early will I seek you. Lord, you preserve my life.

You are my refuge. You are my strong tower. You are my ever-present help in time of need.

Lord, you are my rock. You are my salvation. You are my everything.

You train my hands for war and my fingers for battle. Lord, I look to you and you alone. What can man do to me when this living God is on your side? Have you ever thought about that? What can man do to me if God is on your side? And that's my concern with many Christians.

I give videos every day. Shane, look at Bill Gates. Look at the one world government.

Look at these vaccines. What's going on? I don't know, but I know that God who knows the beginning from the end. God says, if you trust in me, if you look to me, I will put you on a sure foundation.

Shane, you might die of COVID. I might. I might die of a gunshot to the head from some person who doesn't like my preaching.

I might be jailed, especially for preaching this message in California if the wrong person is elected. I'm well aware of that, but who can fear man when God is on your side? Jesus said it too. Did not Jesus say it? Don't fear man who can kill your body, but fear God who can cast both body and soul in hell.

And when you walk out, nothing. I am immortal if I'm walking in the will of God. I can get on an airplane, say if I'm supposed to reach this destination, all of you are secure because you are immortal in the will of God.

Doesn't mean you'll never die. It means you'll die when he wants you to die. But so many are living in fear.

Yes, I see what's going on. I'm well versed in the deep state. I've been briefed on what's really going on in our government, CIA, Department of Justice.

I mean, there's just, it's just massive amounts of fraud and crime because you have evil and good kingdoms are colliding. I know where the direction of the vaccine could go and how it could mess with RNA and DNA and derival nucleic acid and how it affect the strands of the DNA and what that could mean and the things. Yeah, but at the end of the day, I'm not saying we shouldn't be knowledgeable, but at the end of the day, what are we trusting in? What are we trusting in, man or God? And the more you're watching the things you shouldn't be watching, the less you'll be filled with God's spirit.

Or people, many people here, especially listening live or listening later, where you're at a really low spot. David was a low spot. He committed adultery.

And he killed the woman's husband or had him killed. And the baby from that relationship died. And he was ignoring it for a while.

You know what I felt? You can't ignore the conviction of God. God doesn't go, well, I guess I'll give up. It's been long enough.

They got me. It just sticks with you. It sticks with you.

It sticks with you. And finally, Nathan the prophet came to David. He painted the story of a neighbor who would take this one little lamb.

This is, think of Mary's little lamb. Takes that, take that little lamb and kills that little lamb, even though he had a thousand lambs. He stole from this poor man.

And David said, that man ought to be killed. And Nathan said, you're the man. You're the man, David.

And you can say whatever you want about David, but he was a man after God's own heart because he didn't defend himself. You can read his prayer. He said, oh God, create in me a clean heart.

Create in me a clean heart. Renew your spirit within me. But I want to remind you too that one of the greatest prayers of all time.

Do you want to know what it is? One of the greatest prayers of all time. I believe it's actually the greatest prayer of all time. Got your attention now? I want to encourage you to pray it.

Those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Can you tell me one greater prayer? No, think about it. God says, those who call upon the Lord, call upon the Lord, pray.

Those who pray, those who call upon the Lord, not might. We don't know who to trust in society today, do you? This new source says this new source, this person, this person, this is this person. Everyone gets out of their deals.

You got to sign contracts that are 30 pages long and there's still a way to get out of there if you have a good attorney. We don't know, nobody knows anything today. But there's one prayer you can take to the bank.

Those who call upon the Lord shall renew. And I'm sure, oh, that's a good one too. That's for Christians.

But you have to admit that you need God. That's our biggest problem in America today. We are so prideful, so arrogant.

They want to be the captain of their own ship, the master of their own destiny. There is no need for God. There is no God.

I'm in full control. And as we know, the fool has said in his heart, there is no God. So don't make that mistake today.

As I close in prayer, I just want to encourage you. Romans says to confess that you are a sinner, that the wages of sin is death, that you are under the condemnation of God right now without Jesus Christ. All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

If you believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved. If you humble yourself and cry out to God, you will be saved. It's not the eloquence of your prayer.

It's not you saying the perfect words. It's God looking at your heart and your heart humbling itself. If you call out to God and said, I need to be saved, he will save you.

He will set you free.

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