

# Pride Opens Hell's Door

by Shane Idleman

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**Scripture:** Proverbs 16:18, James 4:6, Luke 15:17, Psalm 30:5, Romans 12:2, Psalm 51:10, Ephesians 4:18, Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 57:15

**Topics:** "Pride and Destruction", "Spiritual Renewal and Surrender"

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## Description

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## Transcript

The title this morning is Pride. Pride opens hell's door. Pride opens hell's door from Revelation 15 and 16.

And if you wanna get caught up, you'll need to go back and listen to quite a few services to find out how we got to this point. But Revelation 15, John again is on the island of Patmos, is having this vision that the Lord is giving him. He said, I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign.

So he keeps seeing all these signs. Seven angels with the seven last plagues, last because with them God's wrath is completed. So a good time to stop right here.

Many of you have heard of Revelation. You've read it, correct? You've seen what they call the trumpet judgments. Trumpets blow and all these things happen.

Or when the seals are broken and these things happen. Or here we're gonna see when the, what's the other thing? Trumpet seals and scrolls are, oh no, we already did the scroll. So this could be the next one.

But some people say this is like all three of those are looking at the same thing. He's just explaining it differently. And the enduring word commentary says this, John goes back to describe God's judgment in more detail.

This idea of stating and restating in more detail is common with prophecy and with Hebrew literature in general. And it gives some references. So in other words, and I see this in the prophets sometimes too when you're reading them.

They'll talk about this judgment or something that's happening. And then they'll go on a couple chapters and then they'll go back to that. And we think it's maybe something different.

And it gets challenging because it's not written in chronological order. Now you can get the chronological Bible that helps a little bit. But overall, people are divided on knowing, okay, are there three different types of plagues hit this time and then later on these plagues at this time and later on these plagues at this time, or are they all one culmination of this cataclysmic event where this is happening? And my answer is always, I don't know, but you don't want to be there.

We don't need to go through and find out exactly what is going on, but something dynamic is going on. And of course, I don't want to keep belaboring this point, but it is good with this type of message that there are different views on the book of Revelation. What people will, what they believe, what I'm going to tell you right now, not everyone agrees with.

There's preterism, partial preterism, all millennialism, predispensationalism, pre-wrath, post-wrath, mid-tribulation, pre-tribulation, and it's, you get a little bit of a headache. The reason is because it's not crystal clear. It's crystal clear that Jesus died on a cross, he rose the third day, the inerrancy of scripture, the virgin birth, but when it gets to things like this, it's like, oh, wow, this is interesting to unpack.

And it will, many times you'll see whatever seminary someone went to, that's usually what they're going to teach the beliefs of that seminary, or whatever teachers they follow. They're going to probably believe a certain way. Many of us who were followed and raised in the Calvary Chapel type movement, we're going to have that type of view on eschatology.

Others who follow more of a Reformed theology, say R.C. Sproul, for example, they're going to look at Revelation a lot differently. And so, just allowing that freedom, but I want to say that in order to say this, I'm not saying this is absolutely how things are going to transpire. All we can do is take scripture, and then look at scripture, and then look at cross-referencing and so many different other things, but there are so many important lessons.

And that's what people miss. They want to, you know, swallow a gnat, but they, I'm sorry, no, they strain the gnat, they try to prevent the little gnat. Have you ever got one of those in your mouth? Oh, my goodness.

They'll block the gnat, but they'll swallow a camel. It's what Jesus said too. And we have to remember that a lot of these things are non-essentials to the Christian faith.

They're interesting, but they're not essential. There's nothing to divide over. So, Revelation 15, and I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire, and standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image, and over the number of its name.

So again, like I mentioned last week, there are, appears to be believers during the reign of the one world leader. For those who believe that there is going to be a one world leader, there's gonna be a mark. In my opinion, it looks like everything is going in that direction.

So, I mean, it looks like this is coming to a fulfillment. There's a lot of coincidences, if not. I can get into, there's so much in the news, right? Many of you follow with what they want to do with digital currency and sovereignty, and it just makes, it's gonna make a lot of sense that this will come to fulfillment, I believe.

And so, what they did though, they held harps given them by God, and they sang the song of God's servant Moses and of the Lamb. What did they sing? Great and marvelous are your deeds. So, John is recording this.

Great and marvelous are your deeds. Lord God Almighty, just and true are your ways. King of the nations, who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name.

It's interesting, we see at the beginning of the Bible, this word fear the Lord. And now we see in Revelation, those who will not fear you, O Lord. And the fear of the Lord in Proverbs is the beginning of wisdom.

It's a beginning of knowledge. It's a beginning of understanding. Folks, we've gotta get the fear of God back into our churches, back into our homes, back into our schools.

Not a fearful fear where we're walking around thinking of this fearful vengeance, but there's a reverence. There's a respect there. How many of you recall, I think I mentioned this a year ago or so, do you remember that guy on TV, Jim Baker? And when he ended up in prison, he actually called to have John Bevere come and visit him.

He wrote, John Bevere wrote that book on peace, Bait of Satan. And so, as he's talking to Jim, he's like, what happened? And thinking he's not really a believer or not sure. And he goes, oh no, no, I love Jesus.

How can you do what you did and love Jesus? And he said he was so taken back by what Jim Baker said. He said, I love Jesus, but I did not fear God. See, that's the tipping point.

When they built our nation, the founders, I don't remember who said it, but you're either controlled by the Bible or by the bayonet. Either by the strong arm of man or by the strong arm of God's word. That's what keeps society together.

A fear of the Lord, a reverence. And so, when you see all this stuff out there, it looks like we are in the twilight zone. There's no fear of God in this place.

There's no reverence. And so, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes. And that became part of their song.

Who will not fear you, Lord? All of us should. And bring glory to your name. For you alone are holy.

All the nations will come and worship before you. For you are righteous and your acts have been revealed. Your righteous acts have been revealed.

And that goes on to say, and after this, after this song that they gave him, and I looked and I saw in heaven the temple. That is the tabernacle of the covenant of the law. And it was opened.

Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. Here they come. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests.

Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God. There's different views on this, but we know throughout Scripture that often the wrath of God is often described as being poured out. Like a bowl is being poured out.

Pouring out the wrath of God. And then you go back right to the garden of Gethsemane and what did Jesus say? Oh, Father, take this cup from me. I don't want to go through this.

I don't want to, most would agree, I don't want, I'm going through the most horrific event ever known to mankind and what happened to Him on the cross. I don't want to, it's gonna be hard to absorb your wrath on the cross when it's poured out. We understand that, right? We sing about it, the blood of Jesus, but do we really understand? Do we really understand the power in that blood? That Jesus actually became sin.

A big theological word, you hear me say it sometimes, starts with a P, propitiation, propitiation. Basically, God's wrath had to be poured out. There's just, because absolute truth was set into motion and so His wrath had to be poured out and He, Jesus, absorbed that wrath, propitiation, so now the wrath is satisfied.

I better hold on to this till Easter or Resurrection Day for those who don't like that word. But the wrath, it was poured out on Him, the bold, the judgment of God, for the wrath of God. The wrath of God, and He absorbed that, He took that on, the blood that was shed paid the price.

So that's why when we sing that song that John sang about the blood of Christ, it breaks every curse, it breaks every curse. Oh, Shane, I know it does, but why am I still dealing with drama? Welcome to the world. Just because something is broken doesn't mean that you won't open a door again through a stronghold or an influence or the enemy won't attack again and again.

That's why perseverance is so important. So we see here that these seven bulls represent God's wrath being poured out. So instead of saying here comes lightning bolts, I guess, or here comes major cataclysmic events, earthquakes, it represents the bull, the wrath of God being poured out.

He lives forever and ever. Don't you love when you read that? No other, there's no other gods before Yahweh. There's no other, you can't, all the other tombs, you can go steal these prophets of other religions, they're still in their tomb.

These things come to nothing, but God is the one who lives forever and ever. And the temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God and from His power. Do you know that the Bible talks about that even in the Old Testament, that God's presence was so thick sometimes in the temple that the priest couldn't even minister in there? And on this topic, I wanna stay within the bounds of scripture, but I also want to submit this to you that I think there can be more to experience when it comes to experiencing God.

I think that, Lord, we can pray, God, God, God, we want to fill your power. We want to fill your presence. And most of you, many of you, have never been in a service where the power of God hits that place and you feel the pressure and the weight of God's glory and all you want to do to worship and you hear the tears throughout the congregation and God is breaking, God is renewing, His presence is thick, His power is undisputable.

But when we talk about that now, Shane, you're getting a little too carried away. So church is supposed to be boring and dead? In the house of the living God? Living spiritually. And anytime I see that His presence was profound and was powerful, Shane, that's great for Revelation, that's great for the Old Testament, but what do you have in the New Testament? Well, have you ever read about the upper room? And when the

presence of God filled that upper room? And all these critics, I like to say, would you have been embarrassed to be in the upper room? I bet you would have.

I bet you would have been embarrassed to experience the power of God. Because that's what happens when sinful man encounters the magnificence of God. It wrecks you.

It breaks you. It changes you. Church, you're different, you've been impacted by the glory of God and the sad reality is most churches resemble a cemetery dead to the things of God.

That's why they need spiritual resuscitation and the prophets would cry out, oh God, revive us again. Revive us again, wake us up. Let us feel your power and your presence again like they spoke about in the olden days when you would visit your people and visit us again and cry out to God.

That's all biblical. It's not biblical to be dead in church. It's not biblical to not experience God.

It's not biblical to say we haven't seen a healing ever. We haven't had maybe one baptism of year. We come in and we're the frozen chosen and we hear this and we leave and we gotta get to that buffet.

When were you more hungry for God than food? That's what we've gotta get back to. Praise God. I prayed, Lord, I don't know what to do with this text.

You gotta just show me because this is some hard stuff. Bulls and this and dragons and it's like, God, but inside there's nuggets of truth. The temple, oh God, would you fill our churches again with your power and your presence? Do you know why most, including me, I've struggled with this, why most pastors don't really want that to happen? Because we'll lose a good amount of you.

You won't be back. I guarantee it. The presence of God hit this place and I can't keep preaching.

The worship team is just, and the altar's falling. I'm outta here because the demon in you doesn't like the Spirit of God in the church. That's his truth.

I've lived a long time in the Christian community. I know, I've seen, I've tasted, oh, what's that song? John, help me out here. I've tasted and seen.

I've tasted and seen the goodness of God and once you taste, you'll never go back. Come and drink of the living waters Christ spoke of. I'm just tired of preaching just a dead message to a dead church who doesn't wanna be receptive.

I wanna wake in the church. There's too much on the stake for your children and for your grandchildren. Man, that guy's too loud, that guy's too this.

I've got 10 other churches I can introduce you to but we've come here to find out and seek the power and presence of God. We want the presence of God or we don't wanna have anything to do with religion. I don't know where I was at, help me here.

God's on fire but isn't that what we need? Am I just being honest? Who wants to just come in, go to church and go through the motions? We even have people out in the early morning prayer room that were praying over them and for them and personal prayer and deep repentance and praying for grandchildren and brokenness and people being, there's so much brokenness out there. I just can't fathom a church where the living God is truly elevated, the word of God is truly impact, worship is giving us a taste of heaven here

on earth and we just come in dead and we leave dead. More people benefit from a Taylor Swift concert.

You ever see those videos? I saw one last time, my goodness, this is like spellbinding they say. Oh, I bet it is. The wrong spell.

But everybody's just so excited and so alive to things that are not of God. But when it comes to church, can't get too carried away, can't get too emotional. Why do you call it an altar? That's not an altar.

Why do you have to do that? They don't have, no, you don't have to do anything. You don't have to do anything. But to be truly broken and humble, you better do some things.

You better seek Him with all of your heart and all of your strength. And so the place, the temple, was filled with the smoke from the glory of God. From the glory of God.

You better not manufacture His glory. You better not be fake and phony. A lot of these guys on TV and YouTube, it's just they manipulate and they manipulate people.

But the true glory of God comes upon a broken and humble person and a broken and humble church. I love how they tied in the glory of God and from His power, power. You know there's such thing as spiritual power? And if you want that, check your heart first.

It actually flows from the humble, the meek, the gentle, the lowly. That spiritual, you can actually, I know I'm getting controversial, but I mean, the Bible I read tells me I can maybe pray for somebody if they die. Can't you? I mean, the Bible says pray for them, Lord, would you raise them up again? Now that power resides in a believer.

Will it happen? That's God's will. That's God's sovereignty. But we're so afraid of New Testament, the New Testament church, that we become a dead church.

Do we resemble the New Testament church? Do most churches resemble the New Testament church? Many times they don't. It's out of their comfort zone. From the power of God.

Where does that power come from? As a believer, it's the Holy Spirit in you. So as a believer, you have the Holy Spirit of God. So as you submit, as you, I wish I didn't have to say this, but a lot of people don't know.

As you submit, Lord, whatever you want to do, you might be empowered to do something. That's where spiritual power comes from. Lord, what do you want to do with me today? Do you want me to pray for someone at the store? Do you want me, Lord, I'm available.

What do you want me to do? As you empty yourself, you're filled with the Spirit. And so it's the Holy Spirit working in and through you. That's why you get no credit, no flesh or glory in His presence.

God often does things in spite of us, but that's where true spiritual power comes from. So if you're lacking in that area, there's a kink in the water hose, so to speak. Somebody went out to your water meter out front and shut off the water.

Try taking a shower when that happens. Same thing in the life of a believer. Something is bending that line, is preventing that spiritual power in your life.

Granted, I don't walk on clouds. I don't see lots of miracles, but I sure desire it. There's a desire there to see God move, and often we're quenching and grieving the Spirit within us.

And because of this, no one could even enter the temple until the seven plagues were completed. And there's lots of views on what that means. We don't, I mean, it's just obviously the temple and where God's presence is, and no one can even enter there.

There was this judgment coming, and then it goes right into Revelation 16. The bull's judgments. There's an overview, so I didn't write them all down.

I mean, we didn't read the whole thing with each one, but I wanted to just briefly show you what happens when the first bull is poured out, what happens. Loathsome, sores, foul. Foul sores came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

See, throughout Scripture too, you'll see this. The people taking the mark are initially happy. Ha ha, we get to buy and sell, you don't.

We get to move around, we get to do things, we get to do wealthy, our cryptocurrency isn't being manipulated, and man, we're so happy. They took the mark, they're happy. Ah, see, we made the right decision, but then these things come upon them, these sores, and then the next bull judgment, the sea turns to blood.

Every living creature in the sea died or dies. And then the third bull, the waters turn to blood. The rivers and springs of water became blood.

When you refuse living water, there's only death to drink. Let's just kind of ponder that for a minute. When you refuse the living water of Christ, there's only death to drink.

That's why it says choose, choose life that you may live. Choose the living water, the life-giving water. Isn't it interesting how the Bible often parallels things to water? The living water, if you believe on me, as Scripture said, out of your body, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water.

The water, the priests used the water to cleanse, and their ceremonial services to God. It was just this incredible image of being thirsty. Have you ever been real thirsty? Many of us haven't, but if you have, there's not much above true thirst where, even hunger, if you people went many, many weeks, and it's like animalistic natures take over.

And they have to have this at any cost. And so that's what he parallels there. If you seek me, if you pursue this living water to drink.

I like what Clark said, he's a commentator. They thirsted after blood, and they massacred the saints of God, and now they have blood to drink. And then the fourth bowl.

And this is where I just put my Bible down a lot of times when I read this, this underlying part. It was, guys, and they still don't repent. They are scorched with great heat from the sun, and they blaspheme the name of God, who has power over these plagues.

The God who has power over these plagues, God who has power over everything right now, even when people are going through terrible situations, they're going through horrific events, they can either shake their fist, or they can open their arms. They blaspheme God, and they did not repent and give God glory.

So here's, again, where some teachers teach that after a person gets a mark, they can repent, because of scriptures like this.

And they did not repent, and notice how it doesn't say they could not repent. It appears that they're allowing them, God's allowing them to repent. And I come to realize as well this week, is there's no excuse.

God brings sermons, God brings articles, God brings friends, God brings conviction, God brings movies, God brings sermons, God brings sometimes calamity. Do you know how many disasters, terrible circumstances have brought people back to the Lord? It's just, many of you could give a testimony. I can, hello? Everything's going great, and God says, okay, hotshot, time to humble you.

And I remember, there was a turning point. I could've got real bitter. I could've got real bitter at my mom and her religion.

Where's this God of love? How does He allow this to happen? Why did He cause this? And the irony is, then He keeps, the more He breaks you, even more. So you almost just get worn down. Lord, here am I. Take me, use me.

And this is when a blessing becomes a curse. The actual son that is a blessing became a curse. And that's what happens, especially with unbelievers, what they think is a blessing.

Blessing. What they think is a blessing. What do many people think a blessing, if they're not a believer in Jesus or in God? Freedom, I hear that a lot.

Oh, I have freedom without God. Did you know you're a slave? Either way, you're a slave to God as a believer. It's still, life's still challenging.

But as an unbeliever, you are a slave to sin. Last person who told me, they said, no, I'm not. I said, okay, just stop some of your things.

Just stop. Stop doing that, stop doing that, stop. I can't, right, because you're a slave.

And that's why Paul says, whoever you choose to obey becomes your master. A slave to sin or a slave to God. Whatever you choose to obey becomes that master.

And then what happens with the fifth bull? Darkness and pain, not a good combination. They too blaspheme God because their pain and their sores and they did not repent of their deeds. What's wrong with these people? But don't we see this today? Many people become, and I've talked to people, I've tried to lead them to the cross on their deathbed, especially as they're older.

And they are so mad. What's the words for that? Just, yeah, very bitter. Caustic, is that the right word? Or just a hard callous, just a, and they're just so mad at God, it's sad.

And no matter what you say, they get more angry and more upset. The wishful thinking of some that men would repent if they only knew the power and righteous judgment of God is shattered by the frequent mention in this chapter of the hardness of the human heart. Walvoord, in his commentary, an enduring word commentary says this about the situation.

The darkness of the fifth bull is a preview of hell itself, which is described by Jesus as outer darkness. Those under the judgment of his fifth bull stand as it were on the shores of the lake of fire. You know, when we look to the Bible, we can't just look at the good stuff.

Can you imagine, can you imagine, and I remember when we planted the church, I would get books on, I don't remember the titles, they were on building your audience, building your church, building your brand, and they wanted you to send out demographic studies, you know, emailing. I mean, you can get some good points from that. One of the questions was, what would you like to hear at church? And honest, God is my witness, many people would take these surveys, and they've got some big churches around the United States, and they would frame everything around what, and it's good, you know, hey, we need more help with marriage, we need finances, so it's not, but they would, all their sermon series, everything would be based around these surveys.

But when you do that, you're like, well, they don't wanna talk about this, they don't wanna talk about that, they don't wanna hear this, they don't wanna, and they avoid all the things that God wants them to hear, because it's in His word. And to me, that's very dangerous ground. That's mocking, that's thinking you know better than God's word.

And that's why the key to preaching really is verse by verse, right? Going through the chapters, or going through the overhead of what were the prophetic voices, what were the New Testament, what were the Pauline epistles, what were the, what is God wanting us to learn in these things, in these books of the Bible? And then the sixth bull, you ready for this one? The great Euphrates River dried up. How many of you have been reading about that lately? Or seeing videos? Very interesting. I mean, I had a lot I could share there, but again, I gotta take off the conspiracy theory hat.

Right? And just stick to scripture. So this provided the way of the kings from the east to invade. Some speculate that these armies come to wipe out Israel.

Ultimately, they come to do battle against God and His Messiah. So as you know, I don't, maybe you don't know, but the Euphrates is a huge river, and when that is, if that's removed, you can have the armies come down from above. Who's gonna be, China, Russia, there's a lot of those armies there.

But then of course, people who have a different view would say, well, nowadays, warfare doesn't matter if the Euphrates is dried up or not. You don't, that doesn't stop anyone. Which, that's some good points.

I'll give them credit for that. Actually, the method of warfare has changed a lot. Now, do you know right now, and again, I'm not gonna get into a lot of different things because there are, there's speculation, but a lot of it is very concrete, where we're actually, even though we don't know it, most of us, that we're at war with, say, China.

Because it's an internal war. With TikTok, sexual perversion, all these things that they're infiltrating the minds of the kids, and you can look at the Marxist handbook, you can look at, none of this is secret, but how they're gonna go in and corrupt the children, the judicial system, the minds, and they won't even have to draw a weapon because we crumble from the within. And you can see, there's definite signs of that.

Oh, man, that's a little fearful. Well, why doesn't it wake us up? Why aren't we seeking God like never before? I often ask people, what's it gonna take? What's it gonna take? Have you thought about that? Nuclear bomb takes out Los Angeles, oh, then we're full at 6 a.m. Is that not a true statement, though?

What's it gonna take? Because when it finally hits, that's when it's too late to prepare. We prepare now.

We get built up spiritually now. And how do we know also our intercession won't remove the judgment hand of God to some degree or restrain it? How many incidents do we have in the Bible? Jonah, one of the biggest stories out there, that God was going to bring judgment. But what did they do? They repented at the preaching of Jonah.

And do you know the Assyrian capital of Nineveh that went another 150 years? Because God said, I'm gonna judge you, 40 days. Here comes the judgment. And I think it's a book of Nahum, talks about Assyria's final fall.

How many, the prophets would cry out, oh, if we would just return back to God, how do we know He doesn't have a blessing behind Him that He's going to leave us? He would tell the people, you stiff-necked people, return to Me, and I will return to you. So I don't think we quite understand the significance of intercession. Or you hear that term a lot, remnant.

What does remnant mean? Remnant means the called out ones who are serious about God. God says, I don't need three million, I need 300. And often, I don't like this about what God likes to do, but it makes a lot of sense.

He rarely looks at the numbers. Oh, if we could just get the majority of Christians voting. Oh yeah, then we'd go, boy, and God's saying, yeah, that's really what we need.

If I could just get 30 churches in this valley crying out to Me, making prayer the priority, not an afterthought. As Leonard Ravenhill said, isn't the prayer meeting the Cinderella of the church? She often goes unnoticed. She keeps everything clean.

All everyone else is doing these things, but it's her that keeps the church growing and going. And we need to get back to that, that such important aspect of intercession. How do we know, that's why I'm so glad what John said, because it's true.

You probably don't know this, but I just heard it this week that there are teenagers dealing with nighttime nightmares. So when he said it, I'm like, oh, I wonder if the parents are, like, wow, what is it, coincidence? I don't know, I've never heard him say that ever. So, you know, and I believe, but how much do we miss because we're not pursuing God more? It was years ago in Lancaster, but I used to, you know, and I would talk to parents and my kids are suicidal, and well, can you get to the prayer meeting? No, I gotta work.

Okay, man, you gotta fast this week. I can't really fast, it's hard. Well, yeah, yeah, intercession is hard.

That's why the Bible calls it travail, not sitting on your couch with your feet propped wondering what the next Netflix movie is. It's travail of the soul. It's wrestling with God.

It's pulling down strongholds, and you might come out of that prayer room a little weak and a little burdened, but my God, you met the risen Savior, and he has heard your prayers. He has heard your pleas. Oh, can you imagine if we got the church on fire again for prayer, and we begin to petition God and say, I'm not gonna let go until you bless me.

I'm not gonna let go until I get the witness of the Holy Spirit that my kids will be set free. Do you know the old folks used to pray like that a hundred years ago? I was an all night in prayer. I just read this with Reese Howell, intercessors in the 1940s.

They actually believe that his team and him brought Hitler to attend. And I'm reading, what are they talking about? We begin our prayer, and at four in the morning, we got the witness of the Holy Spirit, and we begin to praise God. They knew that their prayer broke through.

It broke through, and they got the assurance. They got the witness that our prayers have been heard, but it didn't happen in a five-minute devotional. Man, Shane, you're convicting me.

That's my job. That kind of goes along with what? Because without conviction, we don't change. Without conviction, we don't pursue, or we don't make changes in our lives.

This weak type messages that are out there in America they're not stirring anything. They're going through the motions, and it doesn't wake up the church. I mean, when that couple lost their daughter, or boy, or whatever, because they wouldn't call her by the opposite sex, the state came in, where's the, whoa! We need prayer meetings.

You have any clue what Newsom would do if the church wasn't praying more? And the church wasn't interceding. What they're allowing, it's actually, what is demonic, straight from the head of Satan, what is demonic is called good, and what is called good to us is called demonic. Those Christians, ugh, we gotta get the CIA on them.

Those mama bears at school board meetings, they are the cause of all of our problems. I wish more mama bears and papa bears would go to school board meetings and look those people in the face and say, how dare you? How dare you? Yes, it's hard, it takes up some time, but how dare you? You're pushing perversion, and there are a lot of people, the reason they do it is because nobody says anything. Voice has power.

God chose words, that's why it's called his word. And it tilts the scale. Can you imagine if just for a day, TikTok, Instagram, all that was just taken over by the Holy Spirit? And all the kids are just reading, you're more than a conqueror in Christ.

And see, influence matters. They start to be built up and they start to be encouraged. And they start to be, because these words begin to transform our hearts.

Even you seasoned believers, you know that words can affect you as well. And so God, I believe it's one of the highest callings that he has given people, and that's why I take it seriously, is to preach. It's to preach, that word actually means to herald.

To proclaim, and that can sway nations. It can sway communities, it can sway, that's where you'll see, if you even go back, it's 1700s and the first great awakening, it tied with the Revolutionary War and the laws, and William Blackstone's commentaries of the laws of England and the founders and the Constitution, all of that came from the pulpits of America. They shaped things, the public school system.

Why was the public school system started? If you've been coming here, you know. To teach kids evolution. No, Darwin wasn't out yet.

To teach the Bible in the public schools. Now, how dare you bring that Bible to school in that red baseball hat? How dare you? We are so triggered, to me it's baffling. It's so cowardly.

So people wake up, yeah, you're gonna be triggered. You're gonna hear hard things. And that's why they wanna silence these types of messages and calling out these agendas, because they wanna silence the voice of truth.

Silence the voice of truth. Church, keep your mouth shut. Don't talk about certain things.

And they're watching. So the great Euphrates River was dried up, and then the seventh bowl, the earth was shaken violently. The earth was shaken violently, and we're gonna go into that next week.

But the point I wanna leave you with is this, despite all their suffering, and this is suffering beyond what most people have ever experienced. Despite all their suffering, many will not repent. Many will not repent.

Here's what Spurgeon said. This is so important, I wanna take a minute to read this. I've known people say, and I have too, as a pastor, well, if I were afflicted, I might be converted.

If I lay sick, I might be saved. Oh, don't think so. Sickness and sorrow of themselves are no helps to salvation.

Pain and poverty are no evangelist. Disease and despair are not apostles. Look at the lost in hell.

Suffering has effected no good in them. Spurgeon says this like any good Calvinist would, and I would disagree with him a little bit in that I think pain and suffering can prompt that desire to turn to God. He that was filthy here is filthy there.

He that was unjust in his life, in this life, is unjust in the life to come. There's nothing in pain and suffering that by their own natural, that's a key too, natural operation will tend to purify. And it's clear here that as things got so tough, things got so difficult, they got even more hardened towards God.

Be careful, if you're hearing this and you're getting hard towards God, turn from that today. Turn from that today, because just like concrete, when it settles, it's too late. I remember I was young, my dad would teach me about concrete.

Hurry up, son, straighten that up. Get that done. Why, what's the big deal? Because when it is hard, there's nothing we're gonna do.

And what would I do? I'd put my little handprint in there. We'd just fix it. We can't, it's too late.

Hard as stone. I think I shared this a few years ago when the headline came out, but the headline read, Deathbed Conversion, Never. Christopher Hitchens was defiant to his last breath.

Do you remember Christopher Hitchens? One of the most famous atheists in our time? Or Hawkins and those kind of guys that are just so, so upset at God. And you want to say, but there's no God. Why are you upset at no God? And so this is from his son.

On his deathbed, dying in the hospital, I spent my father's final weeks and days at his bedside and I watched him draw his final breath and die, and I can assure you, there was no hint of any sort of conversion. In fact, we barely spoke about religion at all, except for our joint expressions of frustrations at

the God-botherers who made the rounds in the ICU and other units where dying people could be preyed upon by vulturous Christians. What would Christopher Hitchens say to this today? He would plead.

He would plead. He would plead to his son. Son, turn from the wrath that is to come.

Remember, we have that image that Jesus gave of Lazarus and this great gulf is fixed and this rich man is like, oh, let me go back to my family and let me warn them. Let me warn them. But then on the positive side, that was pride.

Now we see humility. Richard Dawkins, another famous atheist, is probably not too happy, but his ex-right-hand man converts to Christianity. Recently, he was on Ray Comfort's podcast, and I was reading these stories.

I'm like, what's the difference? Ah, arrogance, pride. Pride opens hell's door. Pride opens hell's door wide.

And so for an unbeliever, three things I'll end here. For an unbeliever, pride is deadly. Aubrey, I think there's one more screen.

Unbeliever, pride is deadly. Pride opens hell's door. The only reason a person, and that's this whole debate on heaven and hell, a person, God doesn't send anyone there.

They choose in their pride to reject Him. I reject God, and that's the outcome. And because of pride, pride, I'm a self-asserting man.

I'm self, I'm important. It's all about self. But I also wanna warn the carnal Christian.

It's kind of an oxymoron, but I think it does exist. I think I lived there in my 20s. Pride is dangerous.

Carnal, what is a carnal Christian? Paul talks about. Well, there's a country, and you hear that word spirit-filled Christian? How many of you heard that? But spirit-filled Christian is those who are primarily, notice I say primarily, not perfectly, primarily led and directed by the Holy Spirit. They've surrendered, they repent, they don't want a root of bitterness in their heart, they wanna fix problems, they wanna fix issues, they wanna keep a short account of sin with God, and they just repent, and they're just, and out of that, because of that, they no longer quench and grieve the Spirit, and so now they're filled with the fruit, the love, the joy, the peace, the long-suffering, the gentleness, and you know, you're pretty good on some days, but some days, some days, that fruit is not present.

That's not a carnal, that's a spirit-filled believer struggling through life. A carnal Christian is, yeah, I go to church when I can, and I think I, you know, got a Bible out on the table, but I live, I make choices based on my sensuality, on my lusts, the movies I want to see, the friends I wanna hang out with, and yeah, I know God, I repented, you know, when I was little and I, He always has a heart, I have a heart for God, but they're feeding the carnal nature, and so that's why these two groups, it's hard to get along. I mean, the spirit-filled believer wants to get along, but these people don't have anything to do with those groups, why? Because you're shining the light and exposing the pride and hypocrisy, and it's very, pride is very dangerous because you don't know, that carnal state is challenging because they also reflect the fruit of an unbeliever most of the time, so you have to really check, is the carnality because they're an unbeliever and they're just quenching, or they're a believer and they're quenching and grieving the spirit, and it's like that prodigal son eating with the pigs, but pride is dangerous because it can keep people in that carnal state, and I often hear this many times from this group when I talk to them about these types of things, you

know, Shane, I don't have to go to church to be a Christian, no, that's true, that's true, but you'll never operate effectively as a Christian, you'll never grow as a Christian, you'll never get your iron sharpened as a Christian, you'll never draw closer to God when you're disobeying his word, and so watch out for this carnal state, and then I guess I'll call this the third state, the hard-hearted, pride is deadly, it's dangerous, and now it's destructive, what is the hard-hearted? Have you ever met a Christian that's hard-hearted? What is a hard-heart? Hard-heart, let's say as a believer, a hard-heart is judgmental and arrogant and self-righteous, do you always think you're right? You have to have the last word, you're the final authority, you love to argue doctrine, you love to just nail people with the word of God, there's a hard-heart there, and pride will destroy you, it's destructive, so if you have the taste of spiritual death in your mouth this morning, turn to Christ completely, full surrender, or maybe for the first time, for a first time surrender, and ask God, Lord, I want that presence of God in my heart, it's okay to want that desire, how many of you want, Lord, I wanna feel, I wanna feel your power, I wanna feel your presence, and many times when we drift off course, we want that back again, and we want to tell others, you know, that song, I've tasted and I've seen the sweetest of loves, where my heart becomes free and my heart is undone, Holy Spirit, you are welcome in this place, come and revive me, and renew me, and restore me, ignite in me again that flame, that fire, give me that spiritual resuscitation, light me up again, God, give me that desire for you, and more of you, I want to be filled again with your spirits, you have to crave that, you have to desire that, that has to be the all-consuming passion of your heart, some days you feel like hell, but there are some days you feel like heaven, although there is tears at night, joy cometh in the morning, thank God for that as well.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/6I9TNkoSQ68.mp4>

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