

Proverbs 10- Words & Actions Reveal the Heart

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of training up children in the way they should go, using wisdom and character to guide them, and making life applicable to them.

Duration: 1:09:08

Scripture: Psalm 121:2, Proverbs 10:6-29, Ezekiel 33:11, Matthew 4:17, James 4:7

Topics: "Righteous Living", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of turning away from wickedness and embracing righteousness, highlighting the power of words to build up or destroy, the need to avoid fear and anxiety by focusing on God's sovereignty, and the invitation to repent and turn to God for life. It calls for a foundation in Christ and offers hope for those who are lost or struggling.

Transcript

Lord, would you have your way in this place, dear Heavenly Father, tonight. Lord, I pray that your presence would rain down in this place, Lord. I pray that families would be restored tonight.

Lord, would you bring hope to the brokenhearted. Lord, bring peace to those who came here, Lord, without hope. Lord, but we do pray for your church, Lord, across this landscape.

Would you not bring revival to these churches, Lord? Lord, start in this valley if it needs to start here, Lord, but bring revival. Lord, begin to break your people, humble your people, so we will once again seek your face. Lord, give us a passion and a desire for your Word.

Lord, we also pray for the peace of Jerusalem, Lord. Would you not just watch over that place, Lord, day and night. Your Word says that he who holds Israel does not sleep or slumber.

Lord, we look to the hills and our strength comes from you. Lord, guard your people. Lord, I pray a strong sense of revival, Lord, for this nation.

Lord, for the church. Lord, please revive your people. Without that, without you, there is no hope.

Lord, bring us again great awakenings where we would just walk by houses and we would hear worship on. We would hear people praising your name. We would hear crime being curtailed, Lord.

Lord, we don't want this to fall on deaf ears. Would you bring revival, Lord, to your church? Lord, break your people so that we can humbly worship you and serve you. Lord, we thank you for your Son.

We thank you for Calvary. We thank you for paying a price that none of us could have paid. Thank you for the shed blood of Jesus Christ, Lord.

Show us how we can apply it to our lives tonight and see restoration and hope and peace. Lord, as always, I pray that you give me precision and clarity and direction as we open your word. Lord, let me not go beyond what you've written and have put on my heart.

And I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Every time that happens, I just feel like we just keep worshiping and not coming up here. And I know we will do that at some point. But we are in Proverbs 10.

I've got a lot of announcements that I've circled here so I don't forget after the service. But we are in Proverbs 10. And we are going systematically through the book of Proverbs and looking at what God's Word says on this subject.

But before I begin, I want to briefly talk about something, especially in this study on chapter 10. The writer uses a lot of words and different things. Sometimes we are familiar with, but we sometimes forget the meaning.

And one of those words is wicked. When God talks about the wicked this and the wicked that and the wicked, many times immediately, we say, well, that obviously doesn't apply to me. I mean, that's obviously talking about Satan, some guy with a pitchfork and a big red tail.

And that's wicked. That's demonic, all these things. But wicked, really, if you look, especially in the Hebrew language, it's a four-letter word, *rasa*, R-A-S-A.

And it means that which opposes the will and ways of God. So when we think of the word wicked, it's not necessarily what we might imagine from movies and different things. But the exact definition is evil in its active form.

So wicked is evil in its active form. So when he contrasts the wicked and the righteous, he's saying those who go about doing evil in active form, wicked, those things that oppose God's will, wicked, and the righteous who have a heart for God's word. So that's what the contrast is there.

And you'll see this a lot in Proverbs 10. The other thing is we ended last week, as many of you know, and can remember on folly crying out. The whole point of chapter nine was folly cries out from the streets.

The woman, folly, she cries out. She says, beckon, come in, bring yourself in. Folly is crying out.

But then a few chapters earlier, we learned that wisdom cries out as well. Wisdom cries out to us. And you're going to see that throughout your Christian faith is folly cries out and wisdom cries out.

Wisdom cries out from the streets, turn to me and live. Folly cries out, turn to me and fulfill those desires. I will destroy you.

You don't know that. I'm not going to cry that out. I'm going to say, look at how appealing this looks.

Look at this. And we see right now a national crisis of a man I've respected with Petraeus, who's hitting the news. This general up in America, I think a four-star general.

Wisdom was not crying out. Folly was crying out. And he took that direction.

Wisdom would say, you don't spend a lot of time with somebody you're attracted to. That's wisdom crying out. Folly says, it's no big deal.

Come on, you've got to get this biography written and people need to know. And that seductive folly's crying out and he had two choices there. But it begins early on.

It begins early on with little choices. When you say, no, this isn't going to work. I'm attracted to that person.

This is not going to work. I know what wisdom says. Wisdom says, avoid those things.

And our nation is now using, instead of adultery, affair or this. And it's just in the spotlight right now. And it reminded me of wisdom and folly both crying out.

And they're going to contend for your emotions. Young people, let me tell you tonight, this will be one of the biggest things that you will ever have to face in your life. Even older people, but young people especially.

I remember, if folly is going to cry out to you, it's no big deal. Everybody's doing it. Everybody's watching that.

Everybody's going to those places. Everybody's doing it. And I will tell you right now that anytime that happens, you better be going the other direction.

Because we don't go with the flow of the world. We often go against it. So you might look a little radical, a little extreme.

But wisdom cries out and wisdom wants to pull you back. What happens, especially when we're younger and we're learning these things. I wrote a book a few years back on what works for young adults.

And if you need a copy, they're free of charge. Let us know, we'll get them to you. Because this is where I put in more practical application.

But you'll see that, especially with young adults, is they follow the feelings. It just feels right. So folly jumps on that.

Well, it just feels right. Come on, it can't be that bad. Just trust your feelings.

Never trust your feelings. They're the caboose of the train, not the engine. Feelings should never... When I'm going to make a decision, I don't say, how do I feel about this necessarily? You have to say, what is right? But feelings do come later.

That's why they're the caboose, not the engine. They don't drive you. They don't drive you.

Because what happens when your feelings drive you, you're up one day, down the next. You're in love one day, you hate them next. Feelings up and down, this and that.

I don't feel like liking you today. What about if we did that in marriage? You would not stay married if we go by our feelings. That's why marriage is a covenant, a commitment.

I commit to you. I covenant with you to stay in this. Whether I feel like it or not, those can't take center stage.

Now, let me put a big disclaimer on there as well. I also want feelings such as peace and joy and discernment. And I just don't feel that this is a wise decision right now.

So that's okay. What I'm trying to do here is be careful with the voice you listen to. Because your flesh is always going to be pulling you in a certain direction.

Always. Folly says, come this direction. Fulfill the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eye.

Come, let me guide you. And wisdom is always pulling us back by many times daily, pulling us back to God's word. And luckily, fortunately, we have what's known as the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

You ever hear those inner alarm bells? Ding, ding, hello, hello, hello. Don't go online right now. Don't you dare turn on that computer.

Don't grab that mouse. Don't go talk to that person right now. Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding.

This inner alarm clock, the conviction. That's wisdom crying out. Turn, turn to me and live.

Don't do that. But then we say, I don't care. It's no big deal.

Just this once. I'll start again on Monday. Sound familiar? It's no big deal.

I need an outlet. I've went through a lot. We have all these excuses to avoid obedience to God's word.

I had a laundry list, so I know that we can have a lot of excuses when it comes to why we don't obey God's word. But never, ever ignore that still small voice of the Holy Spirit drawing you and convicting you saying, you know better. Don't go in that direction.

I've warned you. Break that off. Do this.

Just listen to that voice. Because we think sometimes God, and I've talked about the hammer of God sometimes, but it's not like a lightning bolt or the UPS driver drops off a big package from God or it says, stop. It's that inner alarm clock of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom, doing the right, making the right choices.

But what happens today is, many, especially young adults, going back to you guys, because I'm trying to make it applicable, is the world says this. God's word says this. They're in contrast.

They don't line up. Very rarely do they line up because the world is all about the lust of the flesh. He who has the love of the Father in him cannot have the love of the world in him.

Now, of course, we can enjoy the same things, but it's that love that's pulling us towards the world or wisdom pulling us back to God. So that is the brief introduction to this chapter on 10. You're going to see this contrasting between wisdom and folly.

And a lot of it, folly always goes back to what feels right, what the flesh wants, what I think is best based on you fill in the blank. But wisdom is, what does God's word say? That's why it's so important. That's why we beat this drum all the time about getting into the word of God.

Because the culture is like stepping into a cesspool. I know it's pretty graphic, but we walk around in this cesspool called the world and that filth gets on us. And we have to have those daily washings of the Holy Spirit through prayer and God's word and letting God restore and rebuild us because I go out and I fight in this culture, but I need to come back into the prayer closet and really do battle.

So I go back into the culture, back into God's word. It says feeding the spirit because my flesh is already feeding on other things. That's why Paul would say, make no provision for the flesh.

Don't plan ahead on how you're going to fulfill those things. Crucify it, not coddle it. Crucify it.

I know that sounds extreme, but it's just written in the scripture. And what I've seen a lot of times in talking with many people is, we've watered this down so much that it's lost its power. It's lost its effectiveness because we don't want to obey it now.

We want to excuse it. That's old fashioned. That's old school.

That used to apply. It's written from a bunch of myths, but in today's culture, Shane, in today's culture, that's not going to work. Yes, it will work because times change.

Truth does not. Truth does never, never does truth change. The absolute truth of God's word will stand forever.

So we have a decision to make when we open up Proverbs. Do we follow the way of wisdom or do we follow the way of folly? Because both will cry out to you. Both of those will cry out to you.

Cheat in your business dealings. Cut corners here. Don't do this.

Don't report that. Cook the books. Doctor the numbers.

All these... Integrity will guide you back to God's word or folly and the lack of wisdom will destroy you, the Bible says. It paints a clear picture. So what happens is we have nobody to blame but ourselves.

Starting in chapter 10, verse 1, a wise son makes a glad father. A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is the grief of his mother. How many parents know that's so true? My kids are little and it is, wow, grief sometimes when they're having what we call meltdowns.

And I hope they don't have those meltdowns when you guys can see it. I hope that they're all being nice after church. And wow, those idleman kids are sure, yeah, tonight they're doing okay.

You catch us in the wrong time. I'm like, how does this happen? They're tired. They're hungry.

They're this, they're that. And it's a meltdown. About ready to go into Walmart.

You say, no, we're not going to Walmart. We're going home until the meltdown's over. Because I'm not going to be seen in public with this.

I mean, really, we joke, but people snicker. Pastors, kids, he should practice what he preaches. Well, yeah, you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink.

All we can do is train a child, not force it. But I was reading this, a wise son makes a glad father. To me, it begs the question, well, what then makes a wise son? What makes a wise son? And many of you know Proverbs 22.6. If you don't, you need to commit this to memory.

Train up a child in the way that they should go. And when they're older, they will not depart from it. There's different translations on this.

But parents, you need to be strengthened. You need to be comforted. When you train up a child in the way they should go, at some point, God is going to use that and help to call them back.

Because you've planted the seeds. See, many times, we want to see the growth. We want to see the byproduct.

We want to see the harvest. But a lot of times, we're just planting seeds. Sometimes I wonder if we're going backwards.

I mean, some days you look and go, what is happening? But we're training. We're planting seeds into the lives of our kids. Even at an old age, you're still watching.

Remember that poem I quoted during the marriage series that I hope I remember right now? But it goes something like, Dad, the lessons you give me are very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do. For I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but Dad, there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live. See, character has to be caught and taught.

If what we're doing does not line up with what we're saying, our kids can see that. People can see that. Our testimony is shattered.

I've shared this before too, that Josh McDowell, many of you have heard of him, great prolific author, speaker. He said that when he used to travel around throughout the nation, he would ask, and young adults would actually ask him, you know, the top question on all the minds of all these young adults was this, how can we live for Christ when we don't want the Christ that our parents have? I mean, that is shocking. I had to pull over and write that and just think, how can we live, young adults are crying.

How can we live for Christ when we don't want the Christ that our parents have? That right there is a sermon in itself. We could say that, go into worship, and many hearts in this room would need a break. God help us.

Our kids should want the Christ they see in us, not perfection, but they see a forgiving father, a forgiving mother, an understanding person, somebody who's gentle and calm under pressure. Train up a child in the way they should go. And it's interesting, and many of you know in the Greek that we're trained, and the Greek is in the New Testament, and Proverbs is in the Hebrew in the Old Testament, in the Greek in the New Testament, it's that word gymnasio, where we get our word gym.

So train up a child. You exercise them. You show them the ups and downs of life.

And sometimes I tell Morgan, let's let them go through something. They made a mess, clean it up. They did this, they broke, clean.

We have to let them go through life and not be pampered all of the time. Training them and molding them. And then the Hebrew, there's an interesting word, it's hanak.

If I pronounce that right, hanak. I listen online, I could try to get that guy, the Hebrew, hanak, hanak. They put a little spit on it.

But I say I gotta get that down because I can remember that one. But it's like the word gym, but it's more along the lines of dedicate. You dedicate yourself to training up a child.

Your whole life goal when you have little ones is to train them. Most men want to train nobody. They want to pursue their career.

They want a nice title. They want a big check at the end of the month. They want all these things.

Yeah, kids, wife, whatever, trophy wife and kids, at least I have them. No, your whole life needs to be centered around dedication on training up these kids. That's the most important job in the world.

That's why those stay-at-home moms, you should rejoice in that fact. That is the most difficult job on the planet. Morgan leaves the kids every Friday for three hours.

I give her a break. And that, I'll do anything. If I had to do that every single day, I would crack under pressure.

It's challenging. It's difficult. There's ups, there's downs.

And then I have a meltdown. But be encouraged. That is the most important job that you will ever do, period.

Nothing else will last but what you do for Christ. And there's nothing more important than mentoring those children and developing them. I know for some of you, it's past that point.

But for others, it's not. And I believe you can always be speaking into the lives of your children no matter what age they are. And also be encouraged that you will see, and it's hard for me to see it as well.

We're at the park, and older kids beat up my little one sometimes, or they cry. And oh man, I just want to go. But they've got to learn those things.

So as your kids are going through things, although it might break your heart, allow them to experience the forgiveness of God. Because kids that have been broken a lot often will have a deep love for God. Because they know Him as healer, and provider, and restore.

Their parents have built Christ into their life as the sure rock, the sure foundation. Teaching. I don't want nothing to happen to my kids so when they get into life, they get thrown a curveball, and all hell breaks loose.

You're preparing them for life. We are to be preparing them, and shaping them. And I like what the New American Commentary said on this verse.

A better interpretation, I would have to agree, is rendered, train a child in a manner befitting a child. Train up a child in a way they should go when they were old, they will not depart from it. The New American Commentary on this says, train a child in a manner befitting a child.

In other words, one should train a child using vocabulary, concepts, and illustrations that a child can understand. We should begin instructing a child in the elementary principles of right and wrong as soon as possible. And that's one of the reasons we do want to offer something for the kids.

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, the younger kids. So they can be taught the things of God in our homes, number one, and in the church that they can understand. I've got a five-year-old in here learning about soteriology, and pneumatology, and hermeneutics, and homiletics, and propitiation, and the wrath of God.

What? They're not going to have no idea what I'm talking about. Many of you don't know what I said, because I don't really know what I said. I just spurted out a lot of theological terms.

But you see what I mean? We've got to train those children in the way that they understand. Make life applicable to them. Won't be to the pulpit that never makes life applicable to the people.

They leave going, oh, now I have a richer understanding of the Greek and the Hebrew. Now I understand the context. Now I understand the historical data.

Now I understand all this. But what in the world? How does that apply to me today? And on that note, a lot of this stuff is in my notes. I'm hoping we can get through all this.

That's why on Monday, I encourage you to be here. I'm going to talk about the direction of the church, where Westside is heading, how we're putting things together, building. I've got all these things I'm going to bring up.

But one of the things I want to bring up is God has been putting on my heart to start, I believe, hopefully again, I always say, you know, I say, thus sayeth the Lord. I say, here's my plans. I hope He keeps it in that direction.

This is the way I'm going. But sometimes He likes to, I mean, I thought we'd been done with Proverbs by now. I thought He was going to tackle three chapters on a Saturday.

And it doesn't work that way. But I want to do Matthew. I want to go back to the book of Matthew and put the centrality on the life of Christ, on the words and life of Jesus Christ.

In other words, back to the basics in the book of Matthew. It'll touch on everything from the filling of the spirit and church government and church discipline and theology and healing and prayer and deliverance. It's going to be a study through Matthew, systematically, which means you're going through verse by verse, but also bringing a lot of things that are relevant for the culture today and how it's going to minister.

Because I believe when you start to read the words of Christ, I mean, they leap out of pages and can change your life. So that's the direction I want to go. I want to start January 1st because I like to have things right on schedule, but it's looking more like February or March, kind of for a fall or that would be a spring now, spring kickoff for that.

So come Monday, I'll have a lot more information on that and the direction of the church. But number two, verse two, we only read verse one. This is why this takes me a long time.

Verse two, what happens is I read this and it just leaps out. A wise son makes a glad father. Well, what makes a wise son? I mean, how can we start imparting these things into our children? Verse two, treasures of wickedness profit nothing, which is dishonest gain, but righteousness delivers from death.

The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish, but He casts away the desire of the wicked. He who has a slack hand becomes poor. Let's highlight that.

Let's remember that. Let's tell our government that as well. He who has a slack hand becomes poor.

The Bible says if you don't work, we don't eat. A slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich. He who gathers in summer is a wise son and he who sleeps in the harvest is a son who causes shame.

Well, the first thing we can glean from this obviously is dishonest gain profits nothing. What he means by that is earning income dishonestly does not ultimately work out in the end. He's saying here hard work profits.

Hard work profits us. Hard work is good. God created it that way.

And you guys remember a few weeks back, I won't get political on this again, but when I brought up that whole issue of entitlement, first, it's not the government's responsibility, it should be the church. If the church was operating like it should, we should be caring for people. And there are people that need to be cared for.

I mean, some of these programs are not bad in and of itself. The motives are good behind them to help those who truly need help. Good thing, great thing.

What happens though is when you just start throwing it out, throwing out all this money, throwing out all this, just you create a person or a group of people who don't know hard work. They're just getting handouts and they can work, but they're not. Now, again, I want to put a big disclaimer on there.

I don't want people to leave here going, oh, Shane's against this. No, I'm not against. If people need welfare, Section 8, food stamps, programs at the heart are good.

Granted, I think it should be the church overseeing and helping and ministering because they have discernment in those areas. But as a blanket statement, we can't just reward whoever, whenever. That's why the nation is in trillion dollars in debt because we're fostering this, what they call cradle to grave mentality.

What we should be doing is helping those who need help. Absolutely, or we'd be hypocrites. But those who can work, we should be challenging them and helping them to get a job.

I've told this story before back when I was in construction three, four years ago. There was this guy, 19 years old. He could work.

I could tell he could work hard, but he's sitting on the curb watching us work for weeks, smoking, I think, dope around 10 in the morning just coming out watching us. And one time we said, listen, it's 20 bucks an hour. If you want to start, we need another labor.

He goes, dude, I'm not going to work. I can just sit home and kick back. I thought, that's so sad.

He's 19 years old. He should be working and you're getting some self-esteem. You feel better.

God created that. God blesses the heart of the diligent, the hardworking. So we have to remember that in a culture.

It's not actually right or wrong, Republican, Democrat, Independent. It's like, what does God's Word say about these things? If we foster poverty, we're going to have poverty. We should be encouraging hard work while at the same time helping those who genuinely need help.

That's how it should be operating because the Bible is crystal clear on this. If you have a slack hand, if you don't do anything, you will become poor, poor in spirit, poor in heart, poor financially, all these different things. And God often equates poverty to laziness.

Now I'll be careful on this one too because I went like this, like most people. Six figures to living at home with my mom, making nothing. Back up, back down, construction plummets.

But you know, it's just, so we would never say poverty is a mark of laziness and God's judgment. Never. What happens though is we've seen two different swings in the church at large.

Hundreds and hundreds of years ago, it was as poor as you could be. Live in a monastery, live in a hut. Poverty, the more poorer, if I can use that word, poorer you were, the more spiritual you were.

That's what, go back and read church history from about third, fourth century, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth century. Poor, poor. That's spirituality.

But then what's the polar opposite we've seen recently? The man of God should drive a jet and a limousine. No, he shouldn't. No, he should not.

Gold everywhere. Bling, bling everywhere. It's all rich and rich.

God's blessing you, brother. If you're not wealthy, wealthy, wealthy, and you're not seeking wealth, you are not in God's will. There's something wrong with you because God blesses all those who are following Him.

You should have abundant wealth. You should be... No, that's not biblical either. The rain falls on the just and unjust alike.

What is the biblical approach? The biblical approach is to trust God in all your needs. Paul said, I trusted Him when I was a base and when I abound. When I had much and when I had little.

It's in this trusting period that we might go through seasons of life. So once He does maybe elevate you, you've learned the lesson through obedience. And He does work.

I believe He blesses hard work. If somebody's a saver and a good spender and they're giving and they've got a giver's heart and they work hard, God will bless that. That's biblical.

But it doesn't say that anybody, anywhere who's poor is out of God's will because I don't believe that's true either. There's hard times. Hard times fall.

There's consequences. Sometimes He puts us through certain seasons. So if you look at the biblical approach, often poverty equates to laziness.

A lazy man, lazy woman will be impoverished. And it's interesting when you talk about the blessings of God and study on the blessings of God, we just automatically think it's financial. Many times it's protection.

Your children are blessed. Your home is blessed. The vehicles, the situation, spiritual attacks.

You fall under this blessing. As I said before, I don't want a million dollars. I want the Spirit of God to rest upon my life.

That's blessed. Because I don't need a million dollars in the bank account. Now I'm good.

No, now I'm not good. I need a trusting God. That can be gone.

I knew people, their 401k's in 2007 went from, you know, they were retiring, now they're going to be working again. It just happens that quick. So our trust is always in God.

But He says, I will bless hard work. That is something you can take to the bank. Doesn't necessarily mean you're going to have tons of money in the bank, but for vision, I will meet your needs.

I will be there for you. So just always remember that. There's neither wealth doesn't mean spirituality, and poverty doesn't equal spirituality.

It's always a condition of the heart. And there are some people with different giftings. A hardworking person might make a little bit more than somebody who's just, you know, nine to five job content.

They're not going to really be in that position to where there's other opportunities. So there's all different kinds of things that come into play. They're on equal playing fields though in God's eyes, because He can bless both of them.

Again, it's all what you call blessings. Because as you've heard before, there's not a U-Haul following the hearse. I mean, you're not taking anything with you.

And I wish I still had the data that Focus Family did on all the wealthy people who left all this to their children without training them. It destroyed the kids. Eighty percent of the time, it destroyed the kids.

Why? Because the love of money is the root of all evil. Not money itself. The love of it.

The affections. Because you worship it, it becomes an idol. Idolatry.

You love it more than you love God. We pursue it more than we pursue God. That's why I often say, take time and check your calendar and check your checkbook.

And they will tell you many times what you worship. How are you spending your time? How are you spending your money? Myself included. It will tell us what we worship.

Why? Because what we value, we spend our time and our money on. Period. Now there's a healthy balance there.

There's great studies out there and hopefully we can do one, but that's where I'll leave you right there. Verse 6, blessings are on the head of the righteous. See, here we just talked about this.

Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked. The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will rot. Man, that's some serious words there.

The wise in heart will receive commands, but a prating fool will fall. I want to stop there for a minute. The wise in heart will receive commands.

It goes back to a few weeks ago we talked about how do you take constructive criticism? How do you take feedback? You might want to work on this area. You might... Always fighting back. Always arguing.

Always having excuses. That's not a wise heart according to the Bible. A wise heart will receive commands.

Now, of course, that could mean God's commands, absolute truth, many different things, but a prating fool will fall. He who walks with integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will become known. He who winks his eye causes trouble, but a prating fool will fall.

He's really getting that point across. And what I liked about this is verse 9, he who walks with integrity walks securely. And you'll see that quote I put in there.

I'll put it on your bulletin. Integrity is one of several paths. It distinguishes itself from the others because it is the right path and the only one on which you will never get lost.

Integrity. The integrity of the upright will guide them. One of the biggest indicators for me and for others is when you're trying to determine God's will in your life.

Is this God's will? What does integrity say? It will guide you in the right direction. The integrity of the upright. That word integrity, you know when a house has integrity, when a foundation has integrity, it's the strength, it's the foundation.

That foundation of integrity will guide you. So when we come to making a decision, what does integrity say? What does the right thing say? Because that's what guides you many times. Wisdom and integrity.

Back to young adults. I don't know if I should marry this person. What does wisdom say? The integrity of the upright will guide them.

I don't know if I should take this business opportunity, Shane. I could move and I can make a lot more money. Do never, ever, ever make a decision based on money alone.

What? Yeah, I didn't say don't. I said never make it on that alone. Because what happens is we look at, ah, make more money.

Yeah, but what about if your family suffers? Yeah, but Shane, I can make more money. Yeah, 50, 60 hours a week. Now you can't be involved in church.

Now you have no more devotional time. Yeah, but more money. No, no, no, that's never, should never be the focal point, the priority.

Now that can play a role in things, absolutely. We make wise decisions based on how it can affect their life. But I've seen more people than I can count ruin their life or have to move back to California or whatever because they chose to follow the financial path versus what does integrity say.

So the integrity of the upright will guide them. Interesting, in 1 Timothy, leaders, I'm gonna talk about this on Monday as well. Leaders must have a good testimony inside and outside the church.

So when we're looking for leaders, primarily elders at this point, when we're looking for, they've gotta be men of integrity. What does the church say about them? And what does the outside world say about them? Because you know everybody can love you at the church, but you go talk to their business partners. Oh, that guy's a snake.

He's a crook. He's just, what? Bill, who comes to church? Yeah, how is that possible? Oh, it's very possible. Oh, yes.

You know how many people come to church with their church faces on? Who we are on Saturday and Sunday is not always who we're at in the workplace. Sometimes I don't wanna hire somebody with the sign of the fish on their business card or an ectus on the back of their car. I don't wanna know that you're a Christian this or a Christian that or a Christian plumber or a Christian that.

I'm not concerned with that because that could just be a name, but not an action and deed. So when a church looks for leaders, they have to look for inside and outside. Is their character consistent? Why? Because that's a consistent character.

The character, that's not a hypocrite. A hypocrite is one thing at church, then they come to work and they take off that mask, and now they're at work and now they're something else. That's why I often like to ask, back when I was hiring a lot of people in corporate America, try to call references and talk to family.

And the more information you can get, the better. Because we like to hide who we are. People write wonderful resumes and half of that stuff isn't even true.

So we have to watch that. We have to have a good testimony inside and outside the church. Verse 11, I gotta put on the gas to get through this.

The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sin. Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, but a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.

Wise people store up knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish is always near destruction. And what he's saying here is words carry weight. Do you realize that? Words carry weight.

They either build up or they destroy. They either encourage or they discourage. Life and death are in the power of the tongue.

Be careful. James says it's an unruly devil the tongue can be. Because of our words, we have been known to start battles.

Nations have started battles over their tongue. Marriages have dissolved because of the tongue. Let me say that, if we're always discouraging our spouse, I'm preaching to myself again like I always do.

If we're always discouraging and always negative and always this, how do you think that's going to build a healthy marriage? Life and death are in the power of the tongue. When you make some withdrawals from your emotional bank account, you better be putting some deposits back in so the marriage can stay healthy. And parents, what you say to your kids, oh my Lord, that carries weight and weight.

Just two days ago, I broke my heart. I was sitting on the couch and one of my daughters came up and the other one wanted to come up too. I said, no, no, no, no, you stay over on that couch.

This is time just for Daddy and Aubrey. You stay over there. And she just melted.

She just started crying and running in circles. You thought somebody ripped her arm off. But she heard, Daddy doesn't love you.

Daddy doesn't want you over here. You stay over there. This is my special child.

That's what she heard. So man, so it makes you really think, that's a lot of times what we are as adults. You know that many of us, including myself, are the products of the words that our parents spoke into our life.

You'll never amount to anything. You're a failure. I wish you've never been born.

Or did you build them up? Or do you build up other people? We've got to watch this more than ever before because in the multitude of words, we'll learn sin is not lacking. The more you do this, we have the potential to sin. And I also realize the more emails we do, the more text messaging we do, the more words we say, sin is going to be easier.

We're going to sin much easier. Very careful of what we do with our tongue. Also, words reflect the heart.

Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth is going to speak. So we have to remember this. Words aren't just words.

Words are what's coming out of the heart. So people have an issue with anger all the time. If they're just spewing out hateful words, there's an issue of the heart that needs to be repented of and worked on.

Out of the abundance of the heart, your mouth is going to speak. Those who stir up strife have hatred in their heart, but those who love seek to cover. And it's interesting.

This isn't the type of cover where like, oh, I hope they don't find out about that. Let's cover that under this. Let's hide that.

Let's cover that up. That's not good. This is the type of covering that protects.

In other words, I know a lot about a lot of people and a lot of people know a lot about me that we could sink our ship if we wanted to. Did you hear this last week? What happened? Did you hear? Did you hear? Love covers up. When I hear things about the body of Christ or other pastors in this valley, moral failure or churches closing down or this Christian marriage falling apart, I weep and I want to cover it up.

Not hide it, but what's none of my business telling people who did not, I didn't know that. I never heard. Love seeks to cover those things in their hurt.

So we want to protect other people. And a lot of times you'll hear, and the way you can stop this easy when somebody comes, did you hear about, I don't want to hear about such and such. I've got enough.

I'm trying to remove the log from my own eye first. Okay. You've got to stop that stuff right when it starts.

Oh, I got to talk with you. I found out something about somebody. If I don't need to know it, I don't want to know it.

It has nothing to do with our church. These people just want to come down. And I've said this before, and I'll say it again.

A lot of times when people come in to this church and they like this church, you're preaching the truth brother, you're bringing it home. Man, we love, we found our church. We found our church.

And then they just start to rat off all this stuff about all the other churches are this, this, this, and this. And they just put down all these pastors. They put down all these churches.

They put down all these things. Every time, 10 times out of 10, I tell my wife I'll be on their hit list within six months. So far I've been right.

10 out of 10. Because out of the abundance of heart, the mouth speaks. If they come in with that, why do they have that? Because they've been offended.

People didn't meet their needs or their expectations. And you think I'm going to do that? I'm not Christ up here. I'm trying to point people to Him.

My point is when people have a negative critical attitude and they come in or in different situations, I'm just, it's just a matter of time before you're on that hit list. It's just a matter of time. You think it stops with you or stops with me? Oh, I'm going to say nice, pleasant things about this person.

No, if they're a gossip, backbiting slander, everybody's on that list at some point. So you got to be very careful. I'm going way off track here, but I hope this helps.

Words carry weight. And I just want to make that because I can tell people by the words they say. It's not that I have some prophetic gift and I tell my wife they'll be gone in six months I know by the words they're saying whether they'll stand.

Are they building the church up or bringing it down? Are they coming in with words of encouragement or words of discouragement? Are they very legalistic and rigid or are they flexible and loving? I can tell very quick by the words they say and so can you. So be very careful when you partner with people, people you call friend or you want to speak into your life, make sure they are people who are going to build you up, not pull you down. Because what happens, I've noticed, you get enough of those people in your life that are like this, you're going to turn into that pretty quick.

Because they start, oh yeah, I know, and can you hear it about this? And it just becomes this big. God says, I don't like that. Quiet, have love, genuine love in your heart.

This also goes back to 1 Timothy, leaders are not quarrelsome, but gentle. So when we're looking for leaders in a church like this, a new church, we're looking for people who are not quarrelsome. I need leaders who are not quarrelsome, they're not divisive, arguing people, they want to protect.

Now we will become guarding and we will become bold in the right times, but overall our nature needs to be gentle and caring, compassionate, bold servant leaders. And this fits right in with that. In other words, your mouth tells us everything and tells you everything about me.

Sometimes I blow out the abundance of the heart, the mouth is going to speak. Jesus said that. He actually said, it's not what goes into a man that defiles him, Pharisees.

You're worried about cleaning your hands and the dishes and this stuff. You're worried about all this technique and doing all this. Jesus said, I don't care, I'll grab that piece of bread with my hand.

Why? Because it's not what goes into a man that defiles him, it's what comes out of the heart. What comes out of the heart? Evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, backbiting, slandering, bigotry, hatred. All these things simply come out of the heart.

Jesus said that defiles him. How does that defile him? Because it shows the condition of the heart. Defilement, when something is defiled, that means it's not in right standing with God.

It's been defiled. It's been tarnished. It's been polluted by this world.

And he's saying the heart is affected. And you can tell by the words that come out. Grace and mercy and love or are we hard and rigid? And the best place to gauge this, I'll be completely honest with you, is what you and your spouse say at home or you and your best friend.

This is how you gauge it because that's where our true feelings come out. I can't vent here, but when I get home, golly, that person just keeps hammering me on this and it just comes out. I better get going.

Wise people store up knowledge. What does that mean? Wise people store up knowledge. How do you store up knowledge? If you're wise, you've got to keep storing up knowledge.

You've got to keep reading good books, getting through the Bible year after year. Just keep storing up the knowledge because in our carnality in flesh, we want to reject knowledge. And if you try to rest on what you learned 10 years ago, we'll be in trouble.

You've got to constantly be building and constantly be hiding God's Word in your spirit. Constantly be memorizing and storing up that knowledge. Verse 15, the rich man's wealth is his strong city.

Which basically says, the rich man's wealth, which is honest gain, is his strong city. But the destruction of the poor is their poverty. The labor of the righteous leads to life, but the wages of the wicked lead to sin.

I've got stuff there, but I'm going to go to verse 17. He who keeps instruction is in the way of life, but he who refuses correction goes astray. Whoever hides hatred has lying lips.

Whoever hides hatred, what's he saying? Well, those people say, no, I don't have any issues. I don't have any problems. All is well.

And then when you leave, they slander and they tear you down. All's not well. They just lied with their lips because they're hiding hatred in their hearts.

God's Word is very revealing. That's what he's saying right there. Whoever hides their hatred has lying lips.

And whoever spreads slander is a fool. Verse 19, in the multitude of words, sin is not lacking. But he who restrains his lips is wise.

So in other words, when you say a lot, you're going to sin a lot. Modern translation. The more you say, the more you sin.

What? That's a little discouraging. Well, I've got bad news and good news. Women say 25,000 words a day.

Men say 10,000. So who's at risk in this category? I'm just saying. No, we're all guilty.

The more I talk, that was a perfect example. I could have just went to the next verse. I didn't need to say that.

Now you can leave tonight and say, was that a real genuine... For those of you who are new, we're not usually this jovial. Usually it's about repentance and the wrath of God and these things. So next week we'll pick up back where we left off.

You'd just be amazed at the comments I hear all week about the church. You know, they just, oh, that church, they're high on fire and brimstone. You know, exactly.

Just telling that. Okay, I'm going to cut down my multitude of words, because sin is not going to be lacking. Verse 20, the tongue of the righteous is choice silver.

The heart of the wicked is worth little. The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom. God, he is hammering the point.

Absolutely. Because they want you to turn from folly and live. Do we really think a fool is going to be reading this that often? Who's this mainly written to? Have you ever thought about that? I was just reading going, I doubt a fool is going to pick this up and even give it... It's warning us to turn from foolishness and live.

And it's showing us, contrasting what does foolishness look like? What does wisdom look like? It's for us. And a lot of people say, oh, I wish such and such is here. I wish my wife could hear that.

No, no, a lot of times it's for us. James 3.10, from the same mouth come blessings and cursing. My brother, these things ought not to be.

And in which we've just discussed, the less we say the better. In all honesty, the less we say the better. Proverbs goes on to say that we'll learn a fool vents all his feelings.

The Bible says it's foolish to vent all of our feelings. When we just let everybody have it. Just restrain the lips.

There's wisdom there. I can look back, and this is true of many of the godly men and women that have spoken to my life over the years. They didn't say a lot.

But when they said it, you listened. When you'd start gossiping, when I would, and slandering, yeah, I used to do it. And sometimes it's a challenge, isn't it? For all of us.

Oh, God, I caught myself. Lord, why am I doing that? I always remember them. They'd be like this.

It's interesting, Shane. Well, how do you see God's word speaking to you today? See, they didn't fuel that fire. They didn't get on.

They just, I just feel stupid. Like, well, aren't they going to take the bait? No, they're not going to take the bait. Because in the multitude of words, sin is not lacking.

So one of the wisest things you can do sometimes when people just want to gossip, and rant, and rave, and slander, is you just, hmm, it's interesting. Well, let's pray for them. You might want to talk to them in person.

What are you doing next week? Let's, you know, it's just amazing. You're not sinning then. But what happens a lot of times is when we jump into that slander, and I've been caught.

People have called me on it. Not in this church. Years ago, of course.

But I would get involved. I would get involved in the gossip, right? They're saying this. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

And then I get pulled into a meeting because I was gossiping. He started it. But had I just... You should go talk to them.

I wouldn't have been pulled in any meeting. I would have felt embarrassed. So we can open ourselves up.

Everybody's laughing. This is serious stuff. This is Proverbs talking about serious things.

And it is serious. I take it very seriously. But I think, man, sometimes we gotta just laugh at ourselves and understand that God's Word is very serious, but also very relevant.

And that it's okay to laugh at these things if we can work on them. So I'm gonna work on these things. Morgan's a homie too.

So just remember that say very little. Anytime you start getting into that, they pull you into that, now you're in with them. You're at fault.

Now it might get back to both of you are gossiping. When you're in a position of saying little, I look at some of you, some of you do this, and you're very good at it. You know, I know who you are.

You're good at it. You just, yeah, boy, you don't give gossip any traction. You just stop it, stop it.

And a lot of us are improving, and that's good too. The whole point is we're getting better. We're improving.

It's very healthy to notice an area we need to work on and work on it. That's a good thing. There's nothing wrong with that.

We look forward to that. What we don't like is people saying, I'm not a gossip or slanderer. And we know it's there.

Because one has a repentant heart, and they're working towards improving. The other one, there's no hope for somebody who doesn't notice their own gray areas. So that's what he's saying here.

Be very careful. First Timothy again, deacons, leaders should not, deacons or servers, elders or more leaders, but either one of those groups should not be double-tongued slanders. So leaders in the church, you see this high calling for leadership in the church? I mean, we'll go over it Monday night briefly, but they

cannot be slanders or double-tongued, which means you say one thing, you do another.

You build this person up here, now you tear them down tomorrow. The leaders in the church have got to be the solid rock on which Christ can build that church. Verse 22, the blessings of the Lord makes one rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.

To do evil is like sport to a fool, but a man of understanding has wisdom. The fear of the wicked will come upon him. I want you to listen to this point.

I'm probably going to have to end here. The fear of the wicked will come upon him, and the desire of the righteous will be granted. He's saying here, it's a self-fulfilling prophecy.

What the wicked are afraid of will happen. Many times what Christians are afraid of does not happen, because fear comes in. Oh, the worst thing.

Just today I think, or yesterday my wife said, let's just not even think about it. It's probably not even going to happen. We always worry like this and we don't even have to.

But that's so true. Fear. The fear of the wicked will come upon him, but fear when we have fear, we shouldn't because 2 Timothy, for God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of sound mind.

And if I had time, we would break that down. For God has not given us a spirit of fear. And it's interesting because it's lowercase, but in the Greek it's pneuma.

Pneumatology is where we get a word to study the Holy Spirit. So it's almost like the word they're using is pneuma. And it's a spirit, which is interesting, but here it's lowercase.

However, the overlapping principle applies either way. The Holy Spirit given to us is not a spirit of fear, number one. Number two is our own nature as Christians now shouldn't be, we shouldn't be in a position of fearing all the time and being cowards and worrying about what's going on.

God has not even given that to us. So it tells me if I am doing that, I'm on the verge of sinning. Because I'm fearing when God says don't fear.

God holds every situation that you're facing tonight in His hand. Everything, every situation, everything is under the order of His control. The President of the United States works for my boss.

Okay? We're okay. No matter who it is, He works for God. God holds leaders.

He brings one up, He pulls another down. So think about that fear. And I want to talk about this for a minute because it's getting paralyzing to many people.

Recognize fear as opposing God and that inhibits and it prohibits. It will paralyze you. And it's hard to lead when you're paralyzed.

Here's what's happening. We see a nation on the brink of disaster. We see a nation that has rejected God.

We see the ramifications straight ahead. We see that. Okay, let's be clear on that.

Is persecution coming? Absolutely. We need to be equipped. We need to warn.

We need to instruct. But we're not supposed to dwell on that. If I get another email of somebody saying, the world's coming to an end, this and that, you know, we need to hunker down.

You need to stop watching Doomsday, whatever, on TV and start getting into the Word of God. Because here's what happens. You have to monitor your mind.

A lot of times when I talk with people about fear and anxiety, nine times out of ten, they're putting things in their mind that ought not be going into the mind of a Christian. Looking at the news, not once or twice a week, every hour. What's happening in Israel? What's happening in this? This boy's decapitated.

This mom had their baby stolen. Look at what's going on. They're just feeding their mind on this frenzy.

We're not called to do that every single hour. Finally, brethren, whatever things are pure and honest and noble and right, meditate on these things. We're not to be aloof to what's going on in the culture and in the news, but we're also not to be feeding our mind on these negative things every day.

When you go onto the news every day, it's going to bring some fear and anxiety. What's going on in the nation? What's going on in the world? They're coming apart. The Antichrist is feeding and feeding.

We're not given a spirit of fear. We're not supposed to be anxious about anything. So be very careful what you're putting into your mind.

I met with one lady a while back and it was the same thing. The news and all this. And they're like, before you go to bed, are you in the work? No, I like CSI Miami and all these whore shows and tearing apart bodies and murder and victims.

I'm like, before you go to bed? And that might just have something to do with fear. Call me. I don't know.

It sounds pretty scary just listening to you. So think about that. And I often joke about these things, but it's no jokey matter.

Fear paralyzes, but a lot of it has to do with what we're feeding our mind. Before you go to the doctor and have him write a prescription, go to the great doctor and see if there's anything going in your mind that ought not be there. Because the Bible says, when I look to the hills, where does my help come from? It comes from the Lord, Maker of heaven and earth.

He holds Israel in His hands. He holds your situation in His hands. He breathed the breath of life into Adam.

He created the heavens. And yet we're going to worry about what's going on and cower down? Jesus said, do business till I return. Another translation says, occupy until I return.

That's a military term. We're supposed to be bold, confronting the culture, not cowering and hiding and wondering what's going to happen. If you've got the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and two thirds of the angels on your side, you cannot just go home and cry.

Well, I'm just saying, I'm tired of people. I'm tired of all this stuff out there You've got to watch this. You've got to watch this.

The Illuminati, the conspiracy theories, debating that it was our own government that took down the Twin Towers. I don't got time for that. That's a bunch of garbage.

You keep feeding your mind on it. No wonder you're scared and paralyzed and ineffective because you're dwelling on things that ought not be true. And again, I just tore apart that Twilight series in the paper today.

You guys have articles in your things. When we start to call witchcraft and vampires in the occult, enjoyable entertainment church, we are on a collision course to destruction. Those things are not small, little, nice, entertaining things.

Those are the epitome of darkness coming in subtly to deceive the mind. Why are kids now on the news breaking into homes and biting people as if they're vampires? Hello, I don't know. Anybody making a connection here? Why is the occult one of the fastest growing religions in America? I don't know.

Anybody wonder? Why do people want to become witches and cast spells and warlocks? I don't know. Fill me in. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

You become an abomination like the thing you love. Man, it just breaks my heart to see young adults cutting and suicidal. They won't tell you these statistics on suicide with young adults.

That they're having national conferences. How do we address this problem? I'll tell you how to address this problem. Stop feeding their mind a bunch of garbage and start giving them peace and hope in Jesus Christ.

That's how you restore a broken world. You've got to make a stance on this issue of fear right now because it's not going to get easier. It's not.

With all this legislation being passed, pretty soon, probably, you cannot talk about the difficult truths of the Bible. You cannot talk about homosexuality and sin and judgment and hell. Pastor, what are you going to do? It's coming.

But I take strength in God, not in those things. I'm not going to keep fostering on it. Even talking about it bothers me.

Getting a little fearful. I don't want that to happen. I've got kids to raise.

So see, it's all up here. Be careful what you feed your mind. I believe it's Psalms 121.

Where does my help come from? It comes from the Lord, Maker of heaven and earth. If you're dwelling in that, and blessed is the man who walketh in the counsel of God's Word, and you're wording into this, you've got worship music on at home. You think you're going to be as fearful as looking on the news and Israel's being attacked? And Hamas and this and this? No.

Because you've got to foster. You've got to foster peace as well. I'm going to have to hurry.

I won't get through. I also put on here, and this is one of my beefs, those who struggle with fear and anxiety, please, please, please, please, please avoid stimulants. Please, please.

It does not help when you have monster drinks with 600 milligrams of caffeine and ephedra and mahong and guaranate, and you wonder what the heck's going on. And it's so anxious because it's a stimulant. It's a central nervous stimulant.

So if you have a problem with anger, anxiety, and fear, you better just get some herbal tea and just relax because this is just practical application. You want practical application. Start there.

I mean, I see more fights outside of Starbucks anywhere in the world. People are just so agitated. Oh, Lord.

Meditate on who God is. Chelsea, you can come on up. I'm not going to get through this.

But I'm so sorry. You work at Starbucks, don't you? I just put two and two together. I'm apologizing.

In front of the church. Anyway, we agree on this. She's seen the same thing.

People just get so... I don't see anybody get upset if you get a herbal tea wrong. Is that chamomile or Irish mint? Okay, I'll take whatever. But you get an extra latte, non this, this, just wrong.

Oh, just wrong. They're going to snap. And we just keep drinking this stuff and drinking all this stuff and drinking all this stuff.

We're on high octane. We're not getting a lot of sleep. We're irritated.

Everything irritates us. Oh, all right, Greg. I'm so... Well, yeah, relax and get off of that stuff because it's highly addictive.

Unfortunately, I have a background in health and fitness and I could tell you these things are highly addictive. You think alcohol's hard getting off of. Try stopping coffee for a week.

You'll go into withdrawals and fall on the floor and cry and have fits because... All right, let me bring this back home. I was going to conclude with where it says, the fear of the Lord prolongs days, but the years of the wicked will be shortened. And he goes on to say that in verse 29, the way of the Lord is strength for the upright, but destruction will come upon the workers of iniquity.

Hear me and hear me loud. He's saying that destruction will come upon the workers of iniquity. The righteous will never be removed, but the wicked will not inherit the earth.

The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut off. The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable, but the mouth of the wicked knows what is perverse. This is saying right here that there is no foundation for the wicked.

All joking aside, I have to get to this point as Spurgeon used to do. It goes back to the cross and back to Christ after every sermon because you don't truly preach a sermon unless you go back to Christ in the cross. Because without that, we just have a lot of knowledge and we don't realize that we have that redemptive opportunity that Christ gave us.

So it begs the question today, do you have an everlasting foundation? The message is twofold. If you're the prodigal son or the prodigal daughter, he told the prophet Ezekiel, say to them as I live declares the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turns from his way and lives. Turn

back and turn from your evil ways.

Why will you die? Why will you perish? So God calls people back to Him. And He also calls people throughout the entire New Testament for those who have never embraced God, never truly repented. He says, turn to me and live.

Turn to me and live. The early church was built on this proclamation, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Turn to me and live.

God offers us this opportunity. You might say, Shane, these are hard words. These are words of death.

No, they're not. They're actually words of life. Words of death would be there's no hope which the world has.

That's why you're gonna see things get chaotic, violence in the streets. The world has no hope. It is death to them, but is life to those who are hearing the word of God and who received the word of God.

So if you don't know Him tonight, if you've never truly repented of your sin, you want to know Him, see me after the service. See me after the service. I wanna talk with you.

I wanna tell you what genuine repentance looks like. And if you're the prodigal son or the wayward daughter, it's time to come home tonight. Or if you're praying for that person, this is a time to pray for that person and contend for that person.

I have seen God answer more prayers than I have time enough to share simply because people humbled themselves and sought the face of God and prayed. If you don't ask, you won't receive. If you don't knock, that door won't be open to you.

And that's why we wanna give people this opportunity during worship. Bernice, you hit the lights and you guys can all stand. We're just gonna go into a time of worship.

We'll just do a song and then I'll come back up and give some closing announcements. But let me end in prayer. Lord, I just pray so hard for the families, Lord, that are here tonight that are going through anguish, Lord, and fear and anxiety.

Lord, would you relieve that tonight? Lord, just begin to take it as we look to you and look to you alone. Look to the hills. Where does our help come from? It comes from you, the maker of heaven of earth.

Lord, you hold everything in your hand. Lord, give us a perspective of your sovereignty tonight. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

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