

# Save Me From Me

by Shane Idleman

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*Shane Idleman's sermon 'Save Me From Me' emphasizes the importance of recognizing and overcoming personal strongholds through truth, accountability, and reliance on God's power.*

**Duration:** 44:30

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:6, John 8:36, Romans 6:19, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 4:13, 2 Timothy 1:7, Hebrews 12:1, James 4:7, 1 Peter 1:14, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "Freedom in Christ", "Overcoming Strongholds"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the struggle of personal bondage and the importance of seeking freedom through Christ in his sermon 'Save Me From Me.' He highlights that while Jesus sets us free, many still find it challenging to walk in that freedom due to various strongholds and addictions that hinder spiritual growth. Idleman encourages listeners to confront their issues head-on, take ownership of their struggles, and rely on God's strength rather than their own willpower. He reminds the congregation that true freedom requires perseverance, accountability, and a thirst for righteousness, urging them to build their lives on a solid foundation of faith. Ultimately, he reassures that no matter how deep one's struggles may be, there is always hope for redemption and transformation through Christ.

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## Transcript

The title this evening is Save Me From Me. Save Me From Me. And many of you know the scripture where Jesus said who the Son sets free is free indeed.

But isn't it hard to walk into that freedom? Or is it just me? We've been set free, who the Son sets free is free indeed. But it's hard to walk into that freedom. And I believe that God wants to do so much with our lives but we often get caught in bondage.

Hebrews 12.1 says let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out before us. So we're called to remove every weight, everything that hinders us. We're supposed to remove that from our lives.

I believe that God wants to do so much in our lives but we often get caught in bondage. Hebrews 12.1, let us throw off everything that hinders us. See it's not just the sin but everything that hinders us in our walk and not be easily entangled and then we can run this race with perseverance.

And I forgot to do it but I was going to bring a couple ropes tonight and show you what this imagery is. If I were to put some rope around me or some belts, collect some belts and put this rope and I'm entangled in this. How am I going to run this race of endurance? How am I going to do things for God if I've got this entanglement going on? So obviously it's talking about sin but also whatever pulls us away from God.

Whatever we get entangled in and we can't run that race with endurance. But let me give you some encouragement. The greater the pain the more we appreciate our Redeemer.

Those who have been forgiven much love much. No matter if you're at your absolute lowest point there is hope. God can pull you out of that pit.

I'm pretty sure there's not, most of you here tonight are not at that lowest point but I know the people that will hear this later are. And we want to encourage them that God can pull you out because many times people that get caught in bondage or a word for that is a stronghold. Another word is addiction.

Anytime you get caught in that it's very easy to climb, it's very hard to climb out I should say. Because you're stuck in that and you say God can't use me now. I've done too much damage.

But the encouragement is that that is not the case. And a lot of this what I'm going to talk to you about tonight came from or comes from a book I'm working on. The title is Help, I'm Addicted, Controlling the Choices that Control You.

And we think of this word addiction we think sometimes well that doesn't apply to me. Well in the Bible it's really a stronghold or bondage. Something that has a stronghold on your life and it is affecting you spiritually.

I mean think about this for a minute. Laziness causes us to do the bare minimum. Pills, alcohol, you name it, turns us into an emotional wreck and unstable.

You can look at all the things I've talked about before. I'll be talking about January, sugar, caffeine, nicotine, all these things that hurt our health, damage our productivity. So what I see is I see an addiction, a stronghold that has a hold on our life and it controls us.

It controls our choices. It controls how we live out our day. Now some of these things in and of themselves aren't bad.

They're not going to knock you off track. But for those who do have a problem in this area I want to offer a solution. Because I believe that addiction is Satan's tool to kill, steal and to destroy.

Save me from me. Charles Spurgeon warned his congregation and I will warn you this evening. Beware of no man more than of yourself.

We carry our worst enemies within. So here's what we need to do. And I don't know what your stronghold is.

Maybe you don't have one. Praise God. I would love to be you.

But there's always something knocking at that door, isn't it? Eating too much, drinking too much, doing something. Lord this has me in bondage and here's how we know. Lord I know you want to remove this in my life.

I know you've been dealing with me about this. I know this is hurting me spiritually. I just can't seem to.

You fill in the blank. And I think the enemy will use bondage in many different areas. And the reason I bring up and I write on health and different things is I've seen so many people sidetrack their life because they don't take care of their body.

They get caught up in all these things and bondage which leads to diabetes, heart disease, immune disease. All these things and they're entangled. Now they're ensnared.

Now they're too busy going to doctors appointments. They can't do anything for God. They don't feel well.

They can't do anything for God. So the enemy loves to use any type of addiction to get us away from his will for our path. And you of those, or those of you who've struggled, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

It zaps you of productivity. So here's what we have to do. I'm just going to discuss five things with you from a biblical perspective.

Number one, begin. Always begin with the truth. Be honest.

Be open. The truth. Come clean.

Have you heard it said that way? That's why at any type of meeting, recovery meeting, A meeting, whatever type of meeting is, they will start with this. I admit that I am helpless on my own. And it's biblical.

We tell the truth. And you might say, Shane, well this isn't really for me. I don't struggle with big sins.

Well, it's the little sins, the little bondage as well that often can lead to the bigger bondage. Because when one area of our life is overcome, then we start to make compromises in other areas. And we start to fall and we start to slip in other areas.

And this is why some sermons are hard. Because we have to tell people the truth. You have to have an accurate assessment.

The world says the heart is good. But the scriptures say what? The heart is deceitful. The world says you just need to unlock your inner strength.

But scripture says willpower is not enough. The world says don't lay a guilt trip on me. Have you ever heard that? Don't lay a guilt trip on me.

What does the Bible say? Conviction is good. You want a little side note on this topic? Don't lay a guilt trip on me as I'm working on this book. And I have no clue when I'll get on it.

It's been four years in the making. It's not very long. It's just finding the time.

I was studying and researching different things. And alcoholism became known as a disease I think within a hundred years ago. Do you want to know why? Because people were starting to feel too bad about it.

So physicians and psychologists got together and said well let's not call it sin anymore. Let's call it a disease. It sounds better.

It's manageable. And as we know that is absolutely not the case. I cringe when people say that.

I know what they're trying to say that there's chemicals, brain chemistry issues and different things. But you can't say this is a disease. Cancer is a disease.

Diabetes. This is not a disease. And that's interesting.

That's where it came from. The idea of a disease came from this idea of don't lay a guilt trip on me. And also the world says this.

It's not really your fault. It's not really your fault. What does the Bible say? Confess your sins and repent.

The world says therapy is the answer. Scripture says Christ is the answer. So you can see how there is differing views on this.

The world's view on what God's word says. And I can tell you that when Jesus said who the son sets free is free indeed is absolutely true. But there's a fight.

There's a battle. There's something called carrying your cross and following Christ and dying to self. Because we think who the son sets free is free indeed.

Well that's easy. That's like turning on my television and click, click, click. Now I'm free.

Well freedom comes with a price. The freedoms we enjoy in this nation came with a price. Freedom comes with a price.

And excuses always prevent change. Did you know that? Excuses always prevent change. I can stop whenever I want.

I'm not in bondage. Maybe I can have this or that now and then. It's not my fault.

It's no big deal. See these excuses. And the first step with begin with the truth, this falls underneath it.

Admit. Take ownership. Take ownership.

Here's what's so deadly about excuses. You'll see somebody, they are on fire for God. They've conquered that thing that used to take them down.

And as the months go by or even a year or two goes by, they begin to compromise and make excuses. Well now that I've mastered it, maybe I can go back to it. Really? Did you know that? Even most addicts, whether it's pills, alcohol or different things, have went years.

And they'll say, well, gosh it's been a long time. I think I've conquered it now. Oh no, that demon is just waiting for you to open the door.

I've never seen anyone who has a problem with something be able to go back to that problem and manage it. That's how the person got to that condition of having a problem. You can never manage sin.

But please don't misunderstand. I'm well aware that there are brain chemistry changes that occur. We can't just tell someone to get over it and move on without offering them a plan.

But true freedom is found in taking responsibility, removing excuses and asking God for help. I can list for you. I won't of course.

But I know right now in my life, three people, let's just say where it's alcohol or pills or different things, all of them have had sobriety in the past and right now they're at a point of saying, I can have one now and then. One just got served divorce papers a couple weeks ago. Well how's that working for you? See excuses have to be, anytime you want to get rid of anything in your life, it has to go.

The excuses have to go. The pornography is a big epidemic in the church right now. Excuses have to go.

Anger, we justify our sin. I'm just passionate. No, you're angry and arrogant.

Who are you fooling? And people will not come to genuine repentance unless they address it and own it and say, Lord, is it I? Is this an issue that I need to take ownership of? And also when it comes to the issue of looking at the truth, look at the road ahead. When faced with temptation, especially of magnitude, play the whole tape out in your mind. I heard that from a wise old man many years ago.

I don't remember who said it. When faced with temptation, play the whole tape out in your mind. Now if you're too young and you don't know what cassette tape is, play the whole YouTube video out in your mind.

Where is this going to end? See if you play it out in your mind, okay where's this temptation? Where's this choice I'm about to make? Where's it going to end up? Where's it going to take me? Private sin will eventually become public disgrace. A commentary I was reading on the book of Genesis brings this point home. Esau acted on impulse, satisfying his immediate desires without pausing to consider the long-range consequences of what he was about to do.

When seeing something we want, our first impulse is to what? Get it. Take it. That's the flesh.

Impulse. React. Impulse.

React. We might feel such great pressure in one area that nothing else seems to matter and we lose our perspective. Been there? Done that? Bought the t-shirt? Getting through that short, here's the key, that short pressure-filled moment is often the most difficult part of overcoming temptation.

As a believer you need to know that. That short crescendo I've talked about before, you know you can, I'm tempted, I'm tempted, but here comes that temptation at its height. It's at that moment that you either grab onto it or you walk away from it.

That's part of overcoming temptation, is knowing to be able to ride out that storm, trust in Christ, look to Him instead of the temptation. Once you resist the devil, he will flee. It could also be said of temptation, resist it and it will flee.

But it's those valley tops, right, that get us. And right at that moment we grab and that's when the temptation gets hold of us. See, education in this area is vitally important.

If you know your enemy, you can be forewarned. And to be forewarned is what? To be forearmed. If a sheriff knows somebody's breaking in that door, what are they going to do? Come on, come on through, John Wayne.

They're forearmed, they're ready. It's the same thing when we know how the enemy's going to work. So that's the first thing we must do, begin with the truth.

If some type of bondage is in your life and you know it's not helping you, come clean and say, this is not helping me. And I've noticed that God will even go after you in little issues, what we think are little issues. About ready to convict everybody in this room, but that's okay.

I've shared it before and I, darn it, I've got to share it again. But God has always convicted me in this area and will continue to, I'm sure. But when it comes to like, say, having a lot of caffeine or coffee in the morning, it turns me into Jekyll and Hyde.

Right? Loving, quiet worshipper to get out of my way. So see, I want to excuse my mood swings, my bad attitude, my irritability, having a hard day. No, it's because I'm allowing this addiction to take me down.

If I can't get up in the morning without having something, I'm addicted. And that something alters my mood. It makes me a worse husband, not as, I don't think worse in that context, you English professors, but it makes me a husband, a father that's not as good as I could be because that stimulant is causing me to become irritable and angry.

Now, if it has the opposite effect on you, praise God. I'm just sharing how these things affect me. And God deals with me in this area.

Get rid of that. Pastors can't be jerks. Right? Get rid of that.

But see, here's what happens. No, Shane, that's how I am unless I have that. Right? That's called withdrawals.

And we think we need these things. And I'm just being open and honest. I've had to stop making excuses in this area.

Now, other people can enjoy something like that. I'm not being legalistic about this. But you need to ask if these things are affecting you.

That person who thinks they can have two or three beers a night and it doesn't really affect them. Well, I'll tell you what. It can.

It does. It opens the door to other things. So the truth.

Come clean. Tell the truth. Say, God, I have a problem in this area.

One man I've talked to about his alcoholism. He keeps, I can't even have a conversation with him because he keeps blaming his wife. Well, it's because she's this.

And she drives you to the liquor store? And she forces it down your throat? See, that person doesn't want true healing. The person who truly wants to be set free will come clean. I own it.

I own this. Because that's also a sign of repentance. True repentance is taking ownership.

And when you start to make excuses, that's not repentance. That's being sorry about something. We can be sorry that something is happening in our lives, but not truly repentant.

So number two. This one is huge. This is right up there with number one.

You have to attack it head on. And I don't know if any of you ever listened to Skip Heisig. I actually caught it this week and it was like a good confirmation for me.

Because he's actually talking about over, God loves addicts. And he takes it a whole different direction. But he makes a good point on this as well.

Attack it head on. For example, if you need, if a commander in the army needs 200 men to take out that, take that mountain back, he better bring 800. Same thing with us.

We have to attack this head on. Whatever it is, whatever is dealing in your life, don't play patty cake with Satan. Don't minimize anything.

Attack it with overwhelming odds. That's why accountability is so important. Or software on a person's computer.

Or different things. You attack the enemy from all angles. Transparency, accountability, repentance, worship, prayer.

I'm flooding the enemy. I'm not just barely going to squeeze by enemy lines. You attack it with all you have.

It's like the person who says, I only need a little help. I only need a little help. Like we prayed for a man and he's going into one year rehab and I think it's great.

It's a person who needs one year rehab who thinks they only need one week. That's what I'm talking about. It's minimizing.

I don't need to do that much. I don't need to watch it. I don't need to give up my friendships.

Listen, if friendship is pulling you down, that's not called a friendship. That's called an enemy. And we love, sin loves its sin.

Sin loves its darkness. So we have to attack the enemy in all areas. Do you have a scripture for that, Shane? Yes, James 4, 7. Submit yourself to God.

Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Resistance is not easy, but it's essential. If we find ourselves saying, I tried that, it doesn't work.

You been there? I've tried that, Shane, it doesn't work. Well, there are a few different reasons. Number one, we may have tried outward reform rather than inward renewal.

See, when I talk about obeying God's word and doing these things, it's really not all about outward reform. Okay, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to do this.

Okay, I'm going to make these outward choices. It's really about inward renewal. The inward man has changed.

So your desires change. You want to follow God, not out of legalism, but relationship. So see, when my inner self has changed, then it's not about following a whole bunch of rules and trying to make outward

reform.

So so many people say, Shane, I tried that. I white knuckled it. I didn't have anything for three months and I tried it and it didn't work.

I tried the best as I could. Outward reform. Anytime you remove something, you better add something called the Holy Spirit, called a vibrant relationship with God.

Or two, we give up when it gets difficult. We give up when it gets difficult. See, Christians should be these seasoned warriors, farmers.

The Bible calls us soldiers, farmers, the these these these guards, watchmen, this this idea that when things get difficult, we don't bail out. We increase the heat. We're called overcomers.

Did you know that? So regardless of the situation, regardless of the circumstance, you are called to overcome. We're not called to run and defeat. We're called to go forward in victory.

That's why I love that song. Yes, I will. Yes, I will praise him even when I don't feel like it.

Yes, I will go forward even when I don't feel like it. Yes, I will persevere even when I don't feel like it. I might even get up and read the word of God and pray when I don't feel like it.

Oh, yes, I will. And we persevere, we overcome. And so many people give up when it gets difficult because when it gets difficult, that's when we run back to our bondage.

We don't run back to when everything's going good. We run into it when things get difficult. Or number three, we rely on willpower alone and not the power of the Spirit.

And it's interesting because people come up to me a lot and, you know, and they'll say, well, you know, Scripture just says to trust in God and not to, you know, just let Him change you. And that is so true. But you have to balance that on the scale.

I wish I brought my scales out. You balance that on the scale with also other Scriptures that talk about obeying. For example, First Peter 1:14, as obedient children, why do you have to throw obedient in there? As obedient children, that's what he's calling believers, do not conform yourself to the former lusts as is in your ignorance.

So that tells me we can conform ourselves to. What's a former lust? What you used to lust after. What used to pull you towards evil.

Now you're new in Christ, you love the Lord, so why are you going back to the former lust that used to define your old life? Obedient children, don't go back to them. What about First John 3:3? All who have this hope in Him, do you have this hope in Christ? What's it say? Purify themselves just as He is pure. Well how do I purify myself? Well obviously He's not talking about salvation because we're only made right by the blood of Christ.

We're made pure before God because of what Jesus did. But to purify ourselves has this mark of holiness and purity and cleansing ourselves, putting off the old man and putting on the new, being filled with the Spirit of God, working toward holiness and right standing before God because of the life we lead. Romans 6:19 tells us to present our bodies as slaves to righteousness.

That tells me that's going to be a little bit of work. And 2 Peter 3.11, what sort of people ought you to be in holiness and godliness? Now unless you have a pair of scissors and you'd like to cut those out of the Bible, and there are so many other ones that I didn't even list, what about fleeing sexual immorality? Meaning there's action on our part. What about when Paul says don't make any provision for your flesh? Don't plan ahead to satisfy the flesh.

Don't do that. So you have all these verses that talk about fighting the good fight and making choices that build us up spiritually or pull us down. Do you know who Matthew Henry is? He wrote a commentary in the 1600s.

It's so good I have it. It was George Whitefield who used to take it and the Bible with him. That's it.

It's a great commentary from a person 400 years ago. He said the more we follow that which is good, the faster and the further we shall flee from that which is evil. The more we follow that which is good, Christ, the more we'll flee from that which is evil.

J.C. Ryle said holiness will cost a man his sins. He must be willing to give up every habit and every practice which is wrong in God's sight. There must be no separate truths with any special sin which he loves.

You've got to love these old writers. Holy smokes. They just call it as it is.

And today we candy coat everything. Just get Xanax here. Just go prescribe this.

It's how you're born. Just enjoy a couple drinks at night. Don't worry about it.

The battle's the Lord's. And we live in misery and defeat. Obedience brings so much holiness to our lives and the filling of the spirit.

I remember one pastor many years ago, he called me a moralist because of this reason. Meaning you've got to do this, you've got to do this, you've got to do this. And I said, well what do you do with all these scriptures? Well, you have to read them in context.

That's pretty clear that there's a fight. We have, see here's how I look at it. I trust fully in Christ.

I trust in the work of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit commands me to do some things. So if I say okay, Holy Spirit, control my life, fill me, I'm yours.

Okay, it will flee fleshly less than war against the soul. Run from these things. Don't go there.

Don't grab that. Don't meditate on that. Don't drink that.

Don't do that. Don't. So how do you weigh the don'ts with the work of the spirit? It's like the Holy Spirit doesn't need us, but he calls us to submit and surrender our lives in these areas.

And it's a fight. Temptation is pulling you this way, and the draw of the Holy Spirit is pulling you back the other way. It's a fight.

Paul said, I am never free from the conflict that is within me. My choices are never free from this conflict. I don't like it any more than you do, but that's the battle plan, that's the strategy, and that's the war ahead of us.

And I've seen so many Christians when they're not prepared, they falter, and they waver. It reminds me of a fish. You ever see fish get caught on the sand? What's going on? Because they're not prepared.

All they've been told is just trust God. That's it. And they're like, I'm trying, but I'm not winning the battle here.

My flesh is winning. Okay, in addition to trusting God, obey what he says. See, it's not the Eidelman rules.

I wish there was hardly any rules. I wish when I'm full of the Spirit, that's it. I can't sin.

Sin has no hold on me, no pull, no magnet. I'm full of the Spirit. Thank you, God.

You've done your work, and I have no fight to fight. That would be wonderful. But the flesh comes knocking.

Sleep in tomorrow. It's really cold out. I'm going to fast and seek God.

No, Krispy Kreme is calling my name. A venti with four donuts. That already sounds good.

Come on, you know. Who are you fooling here? Oh, and somebody else said this. Do you know who this was? Deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow me.

The cross cost him, and it will cost us. That's why it's called the surrendered life, the exchanged life, is we exchange these things for the work of God in us. Russell Moore, he writes, I think he's with the Southern Baptist Association.

He's in the ethics department. He said the demonic powers not only will give us what we crave, but will assist us in covering it up for a little while. That's precisely the irony.

Often you are fueled on from one temptation to the other because you haven't been caught yet. That gives you an illusion of a cocoon protecting you from justice. These demonic powers, though, don't want you to get caught, not just yet.

Not this early in the march to the slaughterhouse. They don't have a mere 70 or 80 years to live. They are ancient and patient and quite willing to wait until your downfall will bring with it the most catastrophic consequences for you, your family, the kingdom of God, and the image of Christ you carry.

So they'll hope you're covered up, and then they'll expose you mercilessly. Mercilessly, yes. They'll expose you mercilessly.

So they'll hope you're covered up, and then they'll expose you. Isn't that so true? The enemy is waiting for that opportune time. And that's what people do.

I've got a way with it. I've got a way with it. I've got a way with it.

I've got a way with it. And then we start to feel that we're in this cocoon, and we're protected, and nothing is going to happen to me. Do you ever read about these Christian leaders who fall in the news? Pastor after pastor after pastor, or female this, or female that, or evangelist.

What is going on? It just didn't happen that week. It's been going on for a long time. They felt like they were Superman.

Unstoppable. I've got a way with it. Last week, last month, last year.

And they wait until that opportune time. The same thing with us. So after you hit it head-on with all the power of God, what I mean by hitting it head-on is I would become people of prayer, people of fasting, people of worship, people seeking heart after God, and you hit the enemy head-on.

You've got to hit him with a powerful punch from God's Word. And then number three, continue, continue going forward regardless of seeing results. This is good stuff.

Because so many times, what do we do? I don't see anything. The person who's been clean for a while, my spouse still hasn't taken me back, I'm going back to the addiction. Oh no, sir.

Bad mistake. What we're called to do is go ahead regardless of immediate results. God honors perseverance.

We are consecrated and called for a lifetime of service. Lord have your way with me, whatever you please. See if you look at that, we are called for a lifetime of service.

So it doesn't matter what it looks like this week or this month, it's what's the lifetime look like. And often, remember this, it's hard before the reward comes. There is pain before the blessing and there are withdrawals before the freedom.

Anytime you stop trying, stop cold turkey, whatever it is you're doing, eating, consuming, whatever, there is something called withdrawals. And I have a chapter in this book, pray for heaven but plan on hell. Because sometimes God will take those away and release a person.

But sometimes, no matter what you're stopping, the enemy, that demonic whatever influence it's been operating will want to pull us back and the body begins to crave those things and we withdraw and that's often when people go back into that bondage. It's an endless cycle unless we break that cycle. So here's a tip, when that desire comes, change the environment.

Change the environment. I've told many people before, men especially sometimes privately or publicly, I'll tell you if they say, Shane, I'm just struggling with pornography. It's like when I'm sitting at home, I'm on the computer.

Well, guess what? When you feel that coming on, get in your car, drive and put on worship. Oh, I never thought of that. Yet you change the environment.

You think you're going to sit there and fight? Oh, I think if I can fight, fight, fight. No, God says flee. Change the environment.

I'm just so tempted by whatever it is. You fill in the blank. You know what it is.

Well, don't sit there and contemplate it and think about it. If I'm fasting and I'm going to a party where there's a chocolate cake, I might have to not go to that party. I mean, just a silly example but it's an example.

You have to change the environment or I'll get out real quick or I'll go out by the backyard and not be around the pool because you change the environment. We think we can just kind of sit there and have that temptation taunt us for hours and I'll just stand strong. Usually the opposite happens.

It breaks you down because the temptation is not going anywhere. It stays there. Often we have to flee.

Isn't that interesting? Paul didn't say fight it. Stand there and fight it. You flee it.

You've got to get to a point where something comes up on your computer, you go to delete. That's where your mind goes, delete, delete, delete. Somebody sent me pictures.

I don't even recognize this person. I wonder who it is. No, no, no, no, no.

If you don't recognize that person, they'll be sending pictures that you don't know. Or a Facebook message from a friend you haven't heard from in years. Hi, how are you doing? Do you know how many divorces I know of that started because of Facebook in this church? Or friends I know around town? That little click, hi, how have you been? Haven't seen you for years.

It's in. It's in. Just open the door.

What are you going to do? Have your spouse answer. Oh, we share this page. How are you? Because see, not only did you, you brought it to the light, there's transparency.

Now they know, now the other person knows. I think that happened to us about four years ago. Some guy from high school emailed her.

I said, let me answer him. I said, yeah, this is Shane. I'd love to meet with, for your lunch at the park or something, whatever it was.

Oh, never heard from him again. But see, it's that secrecy. Because often the spouse won't do that.

Go, how are you doing? It's been a while. What? That's innocent. I'm just, just, I'm being nice.

No, you're opening the door. You look great in those pictures. Haven't seen you in a while.

Oh, thanks. See, now the flattery's coming. Where the husband's dropping the ball, this person's picking up.

See how sin's working in subtly? The temptation's coming in. You have to, you have to attack it head on and you continue regardless of immediate results. And these last two are going to be quick, but they're very important.

And I'll clarify what this is, but I, I, I call number four this, always be thirsty. Always, always be thirsty. And it might not make sense until I read this scripture.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled. What you thirst for is what you will drink. What you thirst for is what you will drink.

If you're thirsting for your sin all day, what do you think you're going to run to at night? Always be thirsty for, for righteousness. God, I'm thirsty for you. I'm seeking after you.

Yeah, okay, here comes this desire, but God, I'm going to run to you instead. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. And this isn't just, yeah, I think I'll stop and get a water.

This is, this is a picture of somebody been walking in the desert for a few days. How thirsty is that person? How hungry are they after fasting like Jesus did? Blessed is that person who hungers and thirst for righteousness and right standing before God and holiness before God. Blessed is that person.

Do you truly hunger and thirst for holiness and righteousness? Are you playing games with God? Always be thirsty for those things that are right and honest and noble. To overcome an addiction, you need to replace something with it. Whenever you remove something, something has to go in there.

Or you'll be like the person Jesus talked about. When that demon is gone, he goes away for a while, but when he comes back, he's going to find the house all swept and nice and neat and order, but nobody's there. So I'm going to go ahead and bring seven more friends who are more wicked than myself.

And the Bible says the last state of that man is worse than his first state. He would have been better off with that one demonic influence. And I've seen so many people, especially me and Tony just talked about this this week.

When people are fasting, they got to be careful because they can just open themselves up to anything. If they just fast and they're not praying, they're not seeking God. It's just you could open yourself up to anything.

I've known people who have started to fast and these old sins have come back. Like how did that happen? I've been fasting, but you haven't been putting in God. False religions fast too.

New Age, all kinds of religions fast. Connecting to their spiritual center, they say. You have to fill it with something.

Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst again. John 4.14. So I will tell somebody when they're coming off something, when they're getting rid of something, put more God into your life. Whenever that addiction comes knocking, put God into your life.

Whenever you have to run to that, run to God. You replace it. Number six, do things that increase hunger and thirst for the right things.

See this is so elementary. Well that's elementary my dear Watson. This is so do things that increase hunger and thirst for the right things.

Why are we going to fuel our sin? Why are we going to fuel that temptation? We have to hunger and thirst for the right things. And then number five, obviously we need to build on the right foundation. And the reason I say that is many people try secular ways to recover, secular ways to try to stop doing something.

But God says build on this foundation. Second Corinthians, it says God makes us stand firm in Christ. Self control is a wonderful gift from God, but it's not the answer in and of itself.

Second Corinthians 12, God reminds us that his grace is sufficient, his power is made perfect in weakness. God rebuilds the broken, he exalts the humble, he strengthens the weak, but we must turn to his strength and create an environment where faith flourishes. So revisit these points often.

God is faithful to lead those who are willing to follow. And again, this is a call to be an overcomer. Remember who you are.

Overcome the enemy. How did they overcome the enemy? By the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Basically the word of their victory.

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. Overcomers, that's who you are. That's who you are as God.

Did you know recently, a while back I sent in some, and I took a DNA test. I found out I'm a child of God. Same with all of you as believers.

If you know God, you are a child of God. You are called to overcome. You can overcome.

Yes, it's difficult. Sometimes we got to pull ourselves up. We got to wipe the tears off our face.

Stop crying like a baby. Stop having a pity party and take the enemy by the throat and fight the good fight of faith. The weapons of your warfare are not carnal.

You're not just going to be able to stop. You have to pull down heaven. You have to come against the enemy that's coming against you and your family.

There is a fight. Christian fighter. Christian victorious.

Christian living. Christians get up and fight. Again, it's a fight.

Who told us? Who told us that it's passive? And then we can just sit back and not do anything. The enemy hates a fighting Christian. That's why he's going after your prayer closet.

That's why he's going after your prayer time. Isn't that a wonderful song? There is a name who reigns without contention, whose power can't be questioned or contained. With humble fame he rules the earth and heavens.

His glory knows no measure or refrain. Oh, the triumph of his name will never end. Death could not hold him down.

No grave could keep him bound. All sin and sickness bow to the name of Jesus. So in the midst of turmoil, look to him.

In the midst of temptation, look to him. Build on that right foundation. And don't beat yourself up too much.

Because sometimes we think we can follow Christ perfectly. And when that perfection doesn't work itself out, we become very discouraged, very disillusioned. And we fall back into sin.

God never calls us. I'm going to be careful here. I'm going to qualify all this.

But where I can see, God never expects us to walk perfectly. Now, with the power of the Spirit, we're called not to sin. The Bible says, if you sin, not when you sin.

The call is always a higher standard. The call is always to not sin, to come out from among them. But God is not measuring how well you walk by your perfection.

He's watching how well we walk by our direction. Are we walking to him? Are we falling to him? Are we not making excuses and allowing these things to come in and creep into our lives?

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