

# The Bible ■ Truth or Tolerance

by Shane Idleman

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**Scripture:** Psalms 1:1, John 1:5, Jeremiah 29:13, James 1:22, 2 Peter 3:9

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## Description

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## Transcript

The message this morning, the title of it is, The Bible, Truth or Tolerance. Truth or Tolerance. And I'm actually starting a series today.

So this is part one of a series on Theology on Fire. What I mean by that is you can have good theology, right? You can teach theology. Theology is the study of God, but it has to be on fire.

It has to be applicable. It's one thing to say, well, that's wonderful, you know, I learned a lot, but how does it apply to me? So this series I'm going through is called Systematic Theology. That's a big word.

It just means going through the study of God's Word, going through the nature of God, the character of God, salvation, the fall, redemption, the Bible, authority, different things. So I'm going to bring theology, but also the fire, the practical application, because really preaching is theology on fire. Church shouldn't be a cemetery, right? It shouldn't be boring.

It shouldn't be dry. It shouldn't be dull. If the Spirit of God is moving and you're looking to God's Word, the Word of the living God, that should be powerful.

There should be something in that that resonates with us and we get excited about it. However, I will tell you up front that I cannot do this subject justice. There are whole books written on what I'm going to talk to you about this morning, entire books.

And what I want to do, though, is flame the fires of interest, of motivation for you to even dig deeper into God's Word. But one of the first aspects of theology is looking at the Bible, because the Bible is the foundation of theology. I think we can agree on that, right? If we don't have the Bible, we don't have theology.

We are wasting a lot of time this morning. Let's go watch NASCAR, right? If true, if it's not authoritative, if it's not God's Word, we are the most miserable of all people. But if it is true, if it is God's Word, then we definitely should take time and we should look at it.

What does it have to say to us? So that's what I'm hoping to unpack this morning. Before I get to that, though, I want to just, a couple of ways that God speaks. Of course, through His Word, through the Bible, I'll get to that.

But the first way God speaks is He decrees and He commands. He decrees and He commands. Let there be light.

Let there be creation. I mean, even the most dignified among us, even the smartest among us, have to realize that it would take quite a bit of chance for all this to happen. The universe, the sun, the moon, the distance, the rotation, the gravitational pull, the oxygen level, the nitrogen level, the elements that have to come together just to form and exist and keep life here.

What about the human body with millions and millions of little bacterias generating and cells generating themselves and reproducing? And you have female and you have male and you have them coming together forming a child. To say that just all randomly happened takes quite a bit of faith. So there's either faith in God or there's faith in random chance.

And I'm not minimizing certain beliefs in that, but you have to really think, okay, is this possible? Is this possible all on its own? So when God decrees and commands, it happens. What He does when He decrees, He sets truth into motion. So truth is set into motion.

So once you have truth in motion, you can't stop that truth. That's why I put truth or tolerance. Truth doesn't tolerate tolerance.

Because you can't have two plus two is four to this group, and two plus two is five to this group. Would that work? Of course not. So when God decrees something, He commands it.

He actually sets truth into motion. So you can't go back, when you're the epitome of truth, you can't go back on what you spoke. God's not a liar.

He can't even lie. So this truth is set in motion. Now we have this truth.

What do we do with it? Well, we like to twist it. At least society doesn't change it. And once truth is set in motion, it's impossible to change.

And when God speaks truth, it is the plumb line, it is the gauge, it is the standard for all truth. Let me look at the next point then. John 1, if we can get that up on the screen.

So God decrees certain things, He commands certain things. We also see that Jesus is the Word of God. Did you know that? Jesus is the Word of God.

In the beginning, it said, was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And He was in the beginning with God.

So all things were made through Him. So everything was made through Jesus Christ. Without Him, nothing was made that was made.

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not comprehend it. Meaning the darkness does not understand it.

The darkness doesn't want to have anything to do with it. So when the light shines in the darkness, the darkness doesn't comprehend it, it doesn't grasp it, it doesn't receive it. So Jesus, it says here, from the beginning, the Word was with God, the Word was God.

So we see the nature of God in Christ Jesus. Fully God, fully man. How does that work? Well, come in a few weeks, we'll get to that point in systematic theology.

But we see that the Bible also says that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Jesus Christ. So you can see the nature of God, the character of God, the qualities of God in Jesus Christ. As you study His nature and His character.

Everything is embodied in Him because the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And then the third point, this is where I'm getting to with the whole sermon on the Bible. God speaks through flawed vessels.

He puts a perfect truth into flawed vessels. Doesn't He? There's one on the stage right now. Flawed vessel.

And God uses people, He uses flawed vessels to promote and to proclaim His truth. I mean, personally, I've always thought, you know, if God wants to tell us something, why wouldn't He write it down? To me, it just makes perfect sense. Isn't that what we do? Have you ever heard of a book? Do you read a book? We have bylaws, why are they written down? We have a constitution, why is it written down? You go to work, do you have an employee manual? Why? Why can't we just, well, wherever it goes, it goes.

Right? You do what you want, I'll do what I want. No, there always has to be a stand. Have you ever seen anybody build a house without a set of plans? Oh, it's all up here.

Hey, concrete guys, dig the trenches over here and form it here. And plumber, rent some, I don't know, do you have some pipes and PVC? Put the bathroom over there somewhere. And then start building walls.

Where? Somewhere, just wherever you want. See, we understand that. We even understand that.

So why wouldn't truth be written down and something to which we could gauge everything else? To me, it makes perfect sense. And God uses flawed vessels. 2 Peter 1.21 says this.

For prophecy, which is God's Word, never came by the will of man. Never. But holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Now, of course, the big argument is, well, yeah, you could just say that. How do we know that this is true? How do we know that it's really holy men of God spoke as they were moved? Well, a few things. First, number one is, that's how we got the Bible.

The holy men of God spoke God's Word. In other words, the closer you draw to God, the more you resemble His character and nature and are filled with His Spirit, the more you will speak His truth. So you have men filled with the Spirit of God, the nature of God, the character of God, and they simply wrote down what God led them to write down.

Now, how would you test that? How would you test that? Well, and you can look in the Bible, and you can look anywhere scientifically, right? I've talked about this before. I don't want to belabor the point. But scientifically, you show me where the Bible is wrong scientifically, historically, archaeologically, and prophetically.

Prophetically, show me where it's wrong. And many of you know I debated an atheist at the college. A friend of mine is actually, he's a PhD, he's an atheist, and we just talked on e-mails, and we dialogue, and I've asked the same question.

Show me one spot in the Bible where it is totally incorrect according to science. Like, oh, they just missed it. You know, it's way off.

It's scientifically. And then historically. So you take the Book of Mormon, for example, and you won't be able to find any of the kings, or kingdoms, or people, or tools, or nothing.

Nothing exists. Why? Because it's a fairy tale. It's a fantasy.

But you can go to Israel. You can see the tombs. You can see the places David walked, the pool of Bethesda.

You can see where Jesus preached. You can see the garden. You can see.

You can see. Historically. Now, it's not a historical book, but it confirms throughout history.

So you have science. You have history. You have archaeological discoveries proving it.

Signet rings, and tombs, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. If I had 30 minutes, we could talk about the Dead Sea Scrolls. Amazing finding.

A shepherd boy found them, and it's the same Book of Isaiah that we read today that was dated back to this time of Christ, and writing the scrolls and different things. So you just can't find inconsistencies with it. You can find things you don't like.

Right? Anybody find things they don't like in the Bible, or is it just me? So we can find things we don't like. And I'm just, as a word of encouragement, I'm not belittling or anything. If you have genuine questions, let me know.

If you say, hey, what about this, or what about this, or I think I can show you wrong scientifically here, let me know. I'd love to sit down and talk. Why? Because the truth invites scrutiny.

This invites it. Come, let's scrutinize. When you want to talk to people that come to your door and do this, they don't want to look at this, do they? And I start scrutinizing their teaching, they get upset.

Why are you getting upset if it's true? If it's true, why are you getting upset? Because air runs from it. Truth says, let's reason together. Let's talk about it.

You can scrutinize this all you want, but air runs from it. People don't want to dialogue. That's why they say, I don't want to talk about the Bible.

Why? I do. If it's wrong and we're in air and it's so pathetic, then show me. So truth always invites scrutiny.

It's something very important to remember. So God used men to write His Word, and it's written 1,500 years. The whole Bible is written over 1,500 years on three different continents by 40 different authors saying the same thing.

Saying the same thing. You can't get two people working on a book to say the same thing. No, we need to go this direction.

No, we need to go this direction. So you look at the consistency, and one thing I didn't even mention is the life-transforming power of the Gospel. When you open the Word of God and it becomes meat to you, meaning daily food, daily nourishment, it's Abba, Father, and the Holy Spirit, you're built up and you're strengthened.

I've read all the dead books. I've read thousands of other books. Nothing gives spiritual life.

Nothing speaks with such authority, such boldness, such clarity, such grace, such truth. Nothing even comes a second close. You know what I'm saying, right? Nothing even comes a close second.

It got backwards. But it speaks with such authority. You can't just make that up.

There's something there. Here's the key. When God speaks... I'm drinking a lot of water today.

When God speaks, all avenues speak with the same voice. It's a unifying voice. So when God speaks, that's what's interesting.

You go to a church down the street. You go to a church in Nebraska. You go to a church in Texas.

And if they're preaching God's Word, it's the same voice. It's all united. When it's of God, it speaks the same voice.

Because God's not divided. So think of that. Next time you're arguing with somebody, the Holy Spirit in you and the Holy Spirit in them is not divided.

The Holy Spirit's not a God of... He's not wanting to argue with you and beat and get frustrated. The Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit of unity and of faith. And that's why all religions can't get along.

Because if you're divided on truth, you're divided on the foundation. And I get invited sometimes to ecumenical movements and Hindu, Buddha, and different things. Hey, can you come? I mean, I love to get lunch with the guys, but I can't go and endorse and act as if we're all on the same page.

Because actually, the funny thing is you look at the teachings of the religions, they hold to different beliefs. They would say mine are incorrect. See, all the different religions have differing views.

They all claim to be right. So how do you know it's right? Well, number one, Christianity is not a religion. Religion is man trying to reach God.

Christianity is God reaching down to man. And I don't view it as a religion, but God has put out there truth to his word. And everybody from Korea to China to America, they are united when they embrace that truth.

So God speaks through flawed vessels. And as we study the Bible, there are seven rules of hermeneutics I want to put up there on the screen. Hermeneutics is the study of the Bible.

It's very important. We study the Bible just like you would study anything else. Number one, the rule of definition.

When you look at a word, you have to say, okay, what does it mean? What does the word mean? Because it can't mean something in the Old Testament and then you change it in the New Testament. So it's the definition of a word. It has to be consistent.

What about the rule of usage? The rule of usage, meaning why was it used? The Old Testament was written primarily to the Jews, to the nation of Israel. Primarily, it was in that context, and it was written to them. So you have to look at the usage of the word and usage of the paragraph and what it's talking about.

Also, the rule of context. Context. We all know what that is, right? Putting something in context.

Come on, we all know a good example of this one. Judge not. Right? Judge not basically means now be quiet and stop telling me I can't do something.

Right? My lifestyle is fine. Judge not. Don't judge me.

Well, the context, you're wrong. Because Jesus said remove the plank from your eye, right? Humble yourself, and then go to your brother and tell him his fault. John said elsewhere to judge with wise judgment.

To judge righteously, Jesus told his disciples. Judge with righteous judgment. To make judgments about society, say this isn't wrong, that's not judging.

Actually, you also have to look at the definition of the word. Judge in this context means to render a judgment in a court of law like a judge would do. See, you can take anything out of context and make it say whatever you want, right? Just about.

So also, there's a rule of historical background. What's the history behind the passage? Who's God speaking to? Here's a good example. Two good examples.

You know, the famous scripture I love to quote. You do too as well. In Jeremiah, the Lord says, I know the plans I have for you.

Plans to give you hope and a future and to be prosperous and be blessed. The context is the nation of Israel is in bondage. They're slaves.

And in 70 years, God's going to deliver them. So God says, I know the future I have for you. I know the plans I have for you.

Don't worry, this will come to pass. Now, 70 years is a long time though. Can you make it seven months? But we take that verse then and we just apply it to everything.

Now, a couple things here. If that verse speaks to a person, they're reading it, it jumps out, and God's using it to minister to their spirit, I'm all for that. I've done that many times.

I'll continue to do it. But some of these aren't just blanket checks, right, that you just give in any situation. For example, maybe God's calling somebody home and they don't have a lot of time left and God's calling them back and their days are numbered and they've done everything and we go quoting this verse to them.

You know, hey, God's got a hope and a future. I see 30 more years and you see, see what it says? It says it, it says it. Well, context, context.

You can grab the promises in the Bible. You claim them, you believe them, you stand on them, but make sure they're in context. Make sure that God is doing that in your heart.

Another one is, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and seek my face, turn from their wicked ways, I will kill their land. And every time I preach on this, without a doubt, somebody emails me, that's in the Old Testament, that doesn't apply to us today. You know, but what they're saying is this.

It was written, Solomon disdedicated the temple and he was telling the people, God said, listen, when the people depart from me, when I bring pestilence, when I bring famine, when I bring hardship, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will heal their land. So that's the context, dealing with the nation of Israel. However, that principle still applies today.

Can you imagine, we coming together and praying and seeking God and humbling ourselves and turning from our wicked ways and there's a revival in our nation, we're doing this, God says, no, no, that's Old Testament. No. No, don't humble yourself.

Don't seek me right now. Don't turn from your wicked ways. Now, the big argument is, does God still deal with nations the same way? America, China, different, you know, Korea.

You know, that's debatable on different things, but I see that you can see, would you rather live in North Korea or America? Iran or America? Why? Because you can see that when God blesses a group of people and from that blessing, there's prosperity and abundance and life. You can see how God can use a certain group of people in that. And if a certain group of people call on my name, there I am.

I will hear them. So, I could get really deep into that, but I won't. But I believe that that type of passage is for us today, but you have to understand the context as well.

What about the rule of logic? Does it make sense? Does it make sense? Right? The Bible doesn't say, Jonah was swallowed by a guppy. Jonah was swallowed by a guppy. Right? Jesus was married and had children.

Wait a minute. I thought, you know, logic. Look at all these discrepancies.

I can't put my mind about this because it doesn't make logical sense. And actually, if you study a lot of religions, a lot of them don't make sense logically. They just, you just can't embrace it because of logic.

Wisdom, in other words. God has given us a mind for a reason. And I tell people that often.

Maybe this will help you. You know, Shane, I need to make a tough decision. I don't know what to do.

I need God to show me. I've learned a lot of times He doesn't show me. Like, oh, look at that bolt of lightning.

Or He writes it on the sky. Do this. Oh, there you go.

That's what I need to do. Finances. Use wisdom.

Is it beneficial? Is it wise? Is it according to Scripture? Are you being a good steward? Well, Lord, should I take this job? I mean, I'm going to make a lot more money. Yeah, but is it going to crush your family life? And your ministry? And your walk with the Lord? Is it going to hurt all that? But the money, Lord? Well, what's wise? What's wisdom? Well, should I do this? Oh, should I hit 70 when it's a 40? You know? God, show me. I'm in a hurry.

What's wise? What's wisdom? Logic. He's given us our minds for a reason. Think.

And that blesses God. When you say, Lord, here's what I say. Lord, I trust you.

I don't trust me. Right? I want to do something. I don't trust.

But He lays out from the beginning His truth that is still true. So you look to those principles for guidance and wisdom. Wisdom is a principle thing.

Therefore, in all you're getting, get understanding. She will exalt you. She will promote you.

Wisdom in Proverbs. See, sometimes we Christians, and myself included, we get on, like, we think we're on a spiritual cloud. And God will just direct us, you know, through who knows what.

You know, open doors or closed doors. Be careful because the enemy can open doors too. Right? Well, it's an open door.

Well, good for you. Is it a God door? I mean, just because a door opens, the enemy can open doors too. Right? The enemy can have Hollywood call you.

Hey, we've got an opening on this program. Oh, my goodness. I could never.

Well, but maybe God's opening a door for me. Maybe I'll be a witness. No, it's a pornographic movie.

You don't need to be a witness there. You need to flee from that kind of stuff. Right? But how do I know? It's wisdom.

Logic. Understanding. The rule of precedent.

The rule of precedent. What I like to call this is the law of first mention. How a word was initially used is how that word needs to be used throughout the Bible.

You don't take a word that is clear and then twist it later, which a lot of cults do. A lot of cults will twist it and they'll change different things. Actually, on this one we're teaching about right now, in the beginning was the word and the word was God.

And the word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Jehovah's Witness take out the word and they say, in the beginning was the word and the word was a God. A God, not the God.

They don't believe that Jesus was who He said He was. He's not the Son of God. Uh-oh, big red flag.

Big red flag. So who's right? What does the Bible say throughout Scripture? So the law of first mention. For example, we hear about the Holy Spirit early on, right? There's a word, I think it's a Greek word actually, pneuma, pneumatology.

It's a study of the Holy Spirit. And do you have pneumatic tools at home? What are those? Are those air tools? You know, air compressor, pneumatic. That's where the word comes.

Holy Spirit, like blow, like a wind. You see the Holy Spirit represented fire and as wind. That's the word pneumatology.

It's a study of the Holy Spirit. So you have that word pneuma. That's what it means.

You can't get to it later in a later book and say, well now it means unclassy. Or it means not to do well. Or you can't just, there's a rule of precedence there.

The law of first mention. How is the word used? Keep it consistent. And then finally the rule of unity.

Everything is united in the word of God. What I talked about earlier. Written over 1,500 years.

40 different authors. What he said in the beginning of Genesis and what it says in Revelation. There's unity throughout.

It's like the more you read the Bible, you see this perfectly woven tapestry. It just perfectly all comes together. From the sacrificial system in Leviticus.

That doesn't make sense to people. To seeing the fulfillment in Christ as the Passover lamb that was slain. Back in the Old Testament, the fulfillment of that.

You see through Abraham and Isaac. You see consistencies with Jacob. And the tribes of Israel down to now in the New Testament.

It's just, you couldn't make this up. Everybody would be going so many different directions. And don't we communicate the same way? If you're talking with somebody, are you using words that they understand? Definition, usage, context.

You ever talk to somebody and try to take things out of context and mess things up? No. If you're trying to communicate information, you would do the same exact thing. And wouldn't God know how to preserve

His word? If God truly spoke, and that's my challenge to anybody.

If it's not His word, just prove it. Just prove it. Show.

Show how it's not. Just try to prove it wrong. Many times we don't want to though, right? Because for many years, I didn't like what it said.

That's the bottom line. Hey, I don't like what this says. And I'm not going to, I don't want to hear what it says.

The mirror, the light was shined in my face. Now let me just explain a couple of things. This might be helpful.

You'll be, you'll be the, this side will be the majority text. This side, it's called the Textus Receptus, the majority text. Where we got our Bible is what I'm talking about.

And if you go online and you put in where we got our Bible, it's an hour message I gave that breaks it down a lot more. But on this side, you've got manuscripts from 5th, 6th century. You know, manuscripts, 5,000, I think, we have Greek manuscripts on the New Testament.

More than any other writing. And they're the majority text. It's called Textus Receptus, the received text.

And that's what they get the Bibles from, such as the King James, the New King James, and the New American Standard. That's where these come from. And then on this side, we have its Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus.

They found earlier manuscripts. So that's the majority. This is the earlier manuscripts are actually dated earlier.

And they were found in the Vatican, hence Codex Vaticanus. And on Mount Sinai, they found these manuscripts as well. And that's where the NIV comes from.

The NIV, I think, maybe the ESV, many of the modern translations come from this school of manuscript. So that's why there's somewhat of a division. However, here's the good news.

None of the variations are, they're all so minute. And they don't disagree on points of truth at all. For example, I believe it's King James, New King James, the majority, the passage where Jesus said, This kind cometh not out except by prayer and fasting.

That prayer and fasting is not in this. But I can tell you that prayer and fasting is throughout the entire Bible. So there are things that don't, there aren't inconsistencies there.

So the inconsistencies are very minor. And to me, it makes sense. God's using flawed vessels to present a perfect truth.

Of course, there might be a misspelling or apostrophe or this. Variations are so slight over thousands and thousands of manuscripts. So this is where the King James, New King James come from, NASB, and these are the older translations, the newer ones.

And then there's something called dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence. You ready? Alright, formal equivalence is this side again, where it's word for word, right? Actually, how they translate the Bible

is they take the Greek manuscript, and like Martin Luther, he translated it into German. He had a Greek manuscript.

He might have been going off of Erasmus, I'm not sure, Latin. But he had a manuscript and he was translating it into the German language for the German people. Word for word.

So that's why these are called word for word study Bibles. Dynamic, I'm sorry, formal equivalence is the big word for it. I don't know why they call it that.

And then this side is called dynamic equivalence, where they do thought for thought. So this is what the author, so they look at the whole sentence, okay, this is what it means to us today. Now, thought for thought, you can get a little bit, you know, the Message Bible, anybody have that? That's thought for thought.

Anybody have New Living Translation, the NLT? That's thought for thought. So you want a study Bible, I believe, that is word for word, a dynamic, a formal equivalence. It's word for word translation.

And then you can read other ones to get some flavor into that. Amplified Bible, anyone have that? Where it throws in some amplified words, that's okay as well. So that's why there's different, two schools of thought.

Different Bibles, different manuscripts. They came from two different manuscripts, and this side really likes theirs the best, and this side really likes theirs the best. And this side says, well, our manuscripts are the oldest.

And this side says, well, our manuscripts are the majority. And I've studied a lot on it early on, and there's not a lot of variations on that. Now, outside of that, though, you'll get King James only.

So they think what I'm using, I'm on my way to hell, I'm leading people to hell because it's part of the New World Order, and I shouldn't be using the new King James. It's a King James only, King James is the only way, the only truth, the only life. Nobody comes to Christ except through the King James only.

And the part of it, I don't try to poke fun or anything, but they need to study. They just need to look. I looked at the NIV for hours compared to the, I'm like, it doesn't miss, I mean, it translates actually the Greek 10 times better, 10 areas better than the King James, and the deity of Christ, the atonement.

So I don't see, so if you study it, and also in 1611, the King James, I think, had to go through 30 or 32 different revisions. There was a copy out there that said, thou shalt commit adultery. So they've changed it.

That's not good at all, is it? That would be a bad one. So they changed the King James quite often, and they've changed it just like translators. Even the translators in the beginning, in the opening of the King James, said we are doing the best that we can with the translation that we can.

We are men, but don't take us as the final authority. But they elevate this and say, that is the only Bible, every word, every jot, every tittle is inspired by God. You can't use any other translation.

I mean, people chew me out monthly on this. It's that, and there's a person by Gail Riplinger that you can actually Google, James White and Gail Riplinger, and he tears her book apart. It's so embarrassing where she's off on so many different areas.

And I often ask people, okay, show me the King James, show me the new King James, where am I off? Just one verse. Not 20, one verse. Well, I can't.

It's throughout. What do you mean it's throughout? I mean, it's one verse. You see, it's this.

And I have pastors, friends, that are King James only, and I'm trying to be gracious, but you have to study. If you're in this camp, if you're caught in this, just look at the differences. Well, this will lead people astray.

How, where, when, and why? Show me. One example is this. In this Bible, even in the new King James, Jesus said, I didn't come to call the sinners, I didn't come to call the righteous, but I came to call the sinners to repentance.

The NIV will say, I didn't come to call the righteous, I came to call sinners. So it doesn't say to repentance. Oh, might as well throw the Bible in the trash.

No, just read three verses before it, and three verses after. It talks about sin. It talks about redemption.

It talks about needing Christ. It talks about sin and repentance. But the manuscript there has that little... So these things aren't... Now, if they took out repentance out of the whole Bible, they'd minimize everything about Christ.

It would be a no-brainer. But these things are so trivial. And we get caught up on things, and not many people, here's the truth, even me, I have a hard time reading King James.

Sometimes, I mean, what are they saying? You know? This word, that word, this statement, it's like we don't know sometimes. So you have translators. Why did it make sense in 1611? Because that's how they spoke.

Right? Anger of man worketh not the righteousness of God. What does that mean? It means anger in your heart does not produce godly fruit, does not produce the things of God. See, you can take the same thing and explain it to people even better.

Now, here's the kicker. If that King James is the only true one, all the missionaries translating the Bible in all these foreign languages are wasting their time. Think about that.

There's thousands of translations. Whitecliffe Bible Society. So that's my heart.

I'm not poking fun. Many of the pastors who embrace this are much smarter than me in theological issues, and I'm not picking fights. All I'm saying is research it.

Just look. If it's so wrong, where are they wrong? Now, I don't agree with the message necessarily or the NLT as far as my study Bible. You can read them just like you'd read a book or read a commentary.

Really, that's what they are. Eugene Peterson, who wrote the message, is commenting. It's a commentary.

So you're not going to go to hell if you read it. Oh, let me see what Psalms says in here. And you have a study Bible, and you look at supplementary things.

But I don't agree with some of the direction he went in his passages or the NLT, New Living Translation, even though I like NLT when I just read it. It's funny. These people, they get so mad, they read junk news,

but you can't read the NLT? See, it just makes no sense.

Why? Because pride comes in in arrogance. It really comes from a prideful, arrogant heart, and they're not broken in this area of humility. Now what about the Apocrypha that's in the Catholic Bible? I think it's smack dab in the middle.

The Apocrypha. The problem is it's not authoritative. Meaning, no New Testament writer references it.

Jesus never spoke about it. It was added later. And even Josephus, who was a historian at the time of Jesus, said it is not of equal credit.

So people, and there wasn't some council, this might help too, there wasn't some council that came together in 300 AD around there and said, hey, let's suppress women. Let's get political power. Let's put all these books together, and this will be the Bible.

All the council did was they just recognized the books that the church had been using for 300 years. They just recognized these are canonical. These are authoritative.

These were actually written by people who walked with Jesus. And of course, the Old Testament, that's a no-brainer. That's been passed down for a couple thousand years.

But the New Testament was under the major scrutiny there. After 30 years of exceptional, thorough research using the laws of legal evidence and involving investigation of every consonant in the entire Old Testament, that's 1.4 million consonants, letters, right? Including manuscript variations, Dr. Robert Wilson concluded this, I can affirm that there is not one page of the Old Testament concerning which we need to have any doubt. And apart from minor copious mistakes, we can be absolutely certain that we have the text of the Old Testament that Christ and the apostles had.

Here's the big thing for me. If Jesus quoted it, I'm on board. Jesus quoted the Old Testament often.

It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Have you not read? It is written, Man shall leave his wife. I'm sorry.

Man shall leave his parents. See? No, don't clap for that one. That's not a good clap.

That's a King James editor mistake, right? Man shall leave his father and mother and be joined together with his wife. Have you not read in the Prophets, you stiff-necked people? Isaiah spoke well of you. Isaiah spoke well of you.

Right? Your lips, your words speak to Me, but your heart is far from Me. They draw nigh unto Me, but their heart is far from Me. Return to Me.

Haven't you read the Prophets? Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I'm standing before You. You're Messiah. Haven't you read about Me in Malachi? Didn't Isaiah bring it down to you? See, he's quoting the Old Testament.

There's power in there. There's truth in there. Jesus quoted it.

Not too many people are going to say that Jesus never existed. Most historians are coming to grips with a man named Christ attesting to many miracles who was crucified was an historical figure. So it goes back

to what C.S. Lewis said.

He's either a liar or he's a lunatic or he's the Lord Jesus Christ. You have to answer that question. You look throughout.

A liar? There's no way. There's no lies in any of his words. You can't even find one lie.

A lunatic? He spoke with such authority that the religious leaders couldn't do anything with him. How can you have the smartest men, biblical scholars, send a group of men to Jesus. They come back empty handed.

They say, where is he at? Why couldn't you confound him? They said no man ever spoke like this man. Oh my goodness. That's not a lunatic.

That's the Lord Jesus Christ. No man ever spoke like this man. Why? Because the Son of the living God was speaking to them.

You're going to quote the word to him? He is the word. We don't know what to say to this guy. Nobody ever spoke with this authority.

There's not even a glimpse of a lie in any of his words. There's not even a glimpse of lunacy. There's nothing, nothing there.

So the only other option. What about he's a good teacher? No, he wasn't a good teacher if that's all he was. He's a very bad teacher if that's all he was.

Because he said I am the Son of God. If your good teacher says I'm going to die and rise again on the third day, that's not a good teacher if it's not true. So he can't be just a good teacher.

It's the Lord Jesus Christ. That's why when you read the New Testament, it says every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord. See the New Testament and the Old Testament, they line up together.

It's like interlocking chambers. The unity, the consistency, the conformity, it all goes together. Now here's the thing about the NIV.

I get this email every other month too. There was a lesbian on the NIV translation committee. Did you know that? Lesbian sympathizer, Virginia Mollenkott, was involved in the NIV translation.

So that's their big push, right? But she sat on the literary, which is the style committee, stylistic committee, but only for a few months. However, she had nothing to do with translation and once her sexual views were known, she was asked to resign. So there goes that argument out the window.

Because they say there was a lesbian on the committee that altered and changed everything. Well, I still read the NIV. It still says homosexuality is wrong from Genesis to Revelation.

And see when we say that, I don't say it with arrogance. I don't say it condoning. We love anybody who struggles with anything.

Guess why? I don't struggle with that, but I struggle with other things. We all struggle. We're fellow sojourners on this journey, so we help point people back to the why.

The truth that God spoke from the beginning, from the foundation. So if truth goes out and it says this is how I created people, male and female, this is my truth. How can He come and reverse that? Then He becomes a liar.

And then everything falls on nothing. So see, God initiates the truth and we just proclaim the truth from the pulpit. Yes, people get upset.

Yes, people get offended, but they have no right to dare try to change the truth. It's impossible. So that's the theology aspect.

Let me just end in the next few minutes here on the fire aspect, the practical application. Jason, you can put the title of the message back up. I want to throw out this question.

Are you more dogmatic about the Bible than broken? Is it more about doctrine than deliverance from pride? See, I need to talk to those people briefly. They love the Bible so much it's all about, right, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Word. They worship the Holy Word.

And they pound people over the head with it. And they beat them up. That's not the heart of God.

Do you use the Bible to prove everyone wrong, or as a mirror to remove the log from your own eye first? See, the Bible is not used properly when it comes from a mean, angry heart. And they're telling people off and they're going out of anger and critical and judgmentalism. But it's the most powerful weapon a person can have if it comes from a broken heart that's filled with God's Spirit.

It will go and it will pierce. That's why it says, the Word of God is living and vibrant. It's sharper than any double-edged sword.

It pierces even to joint and marrow and it is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of man. Think about this. Nothing else gets so many people so upset, right? Does it? I mean, I could get up here and talk about all the things that Buddha says, you'd be falling asleep.

All the things that Hare Krishna. All the things that Joseph Smith. Nothing offends.

But when you get and you start to mention the name of Jesus Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God cutting like a sharp-edged sword, that's when people get offended because it's a spiritual battle. The darkness does not like the light. We just read that, doesn't it? The darkness, I don't want to comprehend it.

I don't want to embrace it. Get that light out of my face. Would that guy shut up so I can go to lunch? The darkness is there's something that resonates within us that we don't like.

And I've been there. I've been there. My hope is to help people, not to hurt.

Here's another practical example. It's not about the translation in most cases. Yes, I love sound doctrine, good theology and good Bibles.

But the problem is that we are not reading it. And very few are applying it. Listen, we don't have a huge problem out there.

Too many people are reading the NLT. Too many people are reading the NIV. Too many people are reading and applying the Bible.

That's not the problem. The problem is in the application. We are hearers of the Word and not doers.

And James said, if you're hearers only and not doers of the Word, you are living in deception. So as much as I want to talk about the Bible and loving the Bible, it has to be the application of the truth. That's what sets us free.

Disobeying God's Word and avoiding it makes us spiritually dull. Have you ever had a dull knife? It can't even cut a lemon or an orange. What is wrong with this thing? See, that's what happens to us spiritually if we don't apply the Word.

Because the Word is sharper than any double-edged sword. It pierces. It divides.

It cuts. And if we're not applying that, we are dull spiritually. We are being led back and forth by our own desires.

Blessings dry up and negativity sets in. When we begin to... My hope is that you get hungry again for God's Word. You get hungry to hear what God has to say.

Because if not, when we start to fall from that, we become dry and negative. I've never seen a person ignoring the Bible and obeying God who's filled with God's Spirit, who's joy-filled and happy. I mean, they're happy one night in Vegas at the Slots, right? But the next morning, they are miserable.

I'm talking about real happiness, real joy, real peace that only comes from obeying God's Word. Here's proof text for that. Psalm 1-1.

You're being good Bereans. A Berean is somebody in the New Testament who said, well, Paul, we don't know if that's true what you're saying. Let's go look at the Old Testament.

Let's go see if what you're really saying is true. So let's look at this. Psalm 1-1.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of the sinner, nor sits in the seat of the scornful, but his delight... His delight is in the law of the Lord and in the law, he meditates day and night. So I'm assuming most of you want to be blessed, right? I don't know what your definition of blessed is, but it's not going home and having a million dollars in your bank account. People kill themselves with a million dollars in their bank account.

Blessed is having the favor of God, the blessings of God, the abundant life that Christ spoke of. I mean, I'd rather have nothing in the filling and the fruit of the Spirit. I don't know about you.

I can get by with nothing, but I can't get by without God. I don't know how people even make it on this earth without God, without Christ. So blessed is that person who does what? Who walks in the counsel of the ungodly.

I'm sorry, King James again. Who doesn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly. So blessed is the man or woman who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.

What does that mean? Are you getting your information from Beyoncé or the Bible? Right? Who's counting? NASCAR or Colossians? Right? You know the hard thing about NASCAR, every time I watch it, I want to go get Doritos, a six pack of beer, and buy a Dodge Charger. And in that order. Usually in that order too.

Right? Don't worry, I've never done that. You know, Doritos. But, where are we getting our counsel from? That's what God says.

Blessed is the man who looks to My Word for My counsel, for My direction, to correctly align them in the right direction. If you're off course, don't worry. God says just get back on the path.

Get back on the right path. Choose your path. The right path that will always point you in the right direction.

The Old Testament says choose the old path. Because the old path, what's the old saying? If it's true, it's not new. And if it's new, it's not true.

It's the old path. It's going back to God's Word. What He has said.

So putting that into our heart. Blessed... Are you walking in the counsel of the ungodly right now? Are you getting marriage advice from your buddies at work? Who don't know anything about God? Or getting advice, women, from the hairstylist? Right? Honey, you should just leave him. Right? Take him for all he's got.

Take him. You go, girl. You take him.

Where are we getting our advice from? But see, we laugh, but it's real. Our kids are learning how to be men from YouTube and Minecraft. And Netflix.

And Disney. Blessed is the man or woman or child who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. You wonder why we're seeing the schools' shootings.

You wonder why we're seeing chaos, confusion. You wonder why. I mean, I remember in my day, I talked about this before a couple years ago, but I was walking down the street.

I'd see adults. I'd move aside. Yes sir, yes ma'am.

Nowadays, the adult has to move out of the street as the kid gives you a finger. Where's it going? In the last days. Right? In the last days, they will be lovers of themselves.

Boastful, arrogant, proud, rude, disobedient, unruly, and uncharted. And they have no course because they're not looking to the Word of God. So blessed is the man or woman who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stands in the path of sinners.

If sin's going right here, God's Word says, I'm out of here. But you just, oh you know what, I'm just going to stand right here. I wonder what's going to happen.

Go stand on the train track for a day and see what happens. Right? Don't stand in the way of sin. How do I know? We know.

We know what the right, we know, but here's what we say, well nothing's happening. I'm not hurt yet. It hasn't harmed anything.

God's patient. God's not approving. Right? God's not approving what you're doing.

He is patient. But you have to get out of the way of sin before it hits you. Nor sit in the seat of the scornful.

So you have this picture of this person who's getting godly counsel, who's not in the way of sin, and they're not hanging around their friends and different people who are scornful and gossiping and negative and backbiting and critical and judgmental. Because that will feed into you. That will feed into you.

If you embrace it and it entertains you, that will begin to feed into you and you'll make bad decisions. That person delights in the law of the Lord and in the law he meditates day and night. So here's a big problem.

Shane, why don't I delight in the Lord? Why don't I delight in these things? Because blessed is the man who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. His delight is in the law of the Lord. You can't delight in two things.

You can't serve two masters. Once you begin to follow God, make these changes, then there's a delight, there's a hunger. Right? There's a hunger for the things of God.

That's how you delight in the law of the Lord. Do you hang out in the Psalms or at Cinemark? Right? Where are we getting counsel from? Now, I'm going to give you an example of what I call excusing convictions. People like to excuse their convictions, right? They're going to go home and they're going to say, Shane told me I can't watch NASCAR and I can't ever go to the movies.

Did I say that? I didn't say one word of that. But we'll twist, we'll twist the conviction so we don't have to make the change. Can you believe I can never go to the Cinemark? I didn't say that.

I said, what's your priority? I can't watch NASCAR. What's your priority? If that's all you want to do and God's an afterthought, then yeah, that's an idolatry problem. So people twist that.

You're preaching from God's Word, they'll take it and they'll just tune it up. See, I don't have to obey. And it happens all the time.

So be careful when you do that. If God's convicting you, submit to that. The final verse, verse four, He shall be like a tree planted by living waters.

So if you do this, if you do these things, you are going to be like a tree planted by living waters who will bear its fruit in season. And everything you do will prosper. Your leaves will not even wither.

But there's a season here, that's what we forget, who will bear its fruit today. Today? Today? We want microwave Christianity. That's one bad thing about microwaves.

Now we think God will do that. Come on, God. You call me and do this? Come on, right now? Today? Today? No, you'll bear fruit in season.

A seed has to begin. It grows. The tree begins to carry the weight of the pressure, of the branches.

The root system goes out. And then it bears its fruit in season. Same thing with you.

You will bear fruit. You will bear fruit if you continue to persevere. Persevere is a biblical principle.

As we persevere in the faith, the fruit is added. See, if you get fruit too soon, then you are very weak. They've done studies on this where kids are left millions from their parents and they get this money and they're 21, 22, 23, 24.

They don't know anything about hard work. It's a disaster because they get things too soon. So if God is maturing you and working on you, there is hope.

Again, there's nothing that speaks with such authority, such power, such grace, and such truth as the Bible. These are the words of the living God. I'm not saying that just to say it.

I'm not saying it and going, oh gosh, I wish I really believed that. I hope people bought this one. I truly believe that these are the words from the living God because they are life-changing.

Not just scientifically, prophetically, all these things, but they are life-changing. What can turn a man from darkness to light? What can renew a whole nation? What can renew a whole people? Nothing. There's no greater witness than a witness.

Most books, whether it's Jehovah Witness or Mormon or whatever it is, they have to do good works because it says to. There's not a true change of heart from darkness to light. This is the only book that will change a man from the inside out.

So God says in His Word, return and be healed, believe and see, trust and be strengthened. Back to the verse Jesus said, and the light shines in the darkness. The light shines in the darkness.

Here's one thing I know. You cannot stop it. Ask Voltaire.

Ask all the people who came before to try to stop God's Word from kings to prophets to political people. They tried to silence it. North Korea tried to silence it.

You cannot stop the light. Go out and try to stop the sun from coming up tomorrow morning. You'll have a better chance at that than stopping God and what He's trying to do.

You cannot stop the light. But Jesus said something very impactful. He said the darkness did not comprehend it.

So I'm leaving you with this thought. You have to stop fighting it. You have to stop holding it off.

You have to welcome it. You have to comprehend it. You have to say, okay, God, if You're out there, I believe and I trust in You.

Or like some people say, God, if You're out there, I want to. I want to believe. I want to know You.

I have many questions. I'm not sure. Would You show me? If You're really out there, would You show me? If that prayer is sincere, I've never seen God not answer that prayer.

He answers a sincere prayer. He wants to answer the prayers of people if they are sincere and genuine. So if you don't know Him this morning, I encourage you, just repent and believe.

Repent and believe the truth is there. The truth will change you. The truth will set you free.

Or if you need to come home, anybody need to come home? Anybody out there a prodigal son? A wayward daughter? They've been drifted from God. They've been far apart. God says, just come home.

Just come home. Blessed is the man who gets back on the right track. Blessed is the woman who gets back on the right track.

Seek Me again, you will find Me. Hope in Me, I will deliver you. Trust in Me, I will set you free.

That's a promise you can always take to the bank.

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