

The Cure for Chaos - Call a Sacred Assembly

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of calling a Sacred Assembly and fasting as a means to seek God's presence, grow spiritually, and repent from sin.

Duration: 42:26

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, 2 Chronicles 20:3, Isaiah 58:6, Joel 1:14, Matthew 6:16-18, Luke 9:23, Romans 12:1-2, 2 Timothy 1:7, James 4:8, 1 Peter 5:6-7

Topics: "Repentance", "Fasting and Prayer"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgent need for the church to reclaim its voice and boldly proclaim God's truth in a chaotic world. He calls for a Sacred Assembly, urging believers to prepare their hearts through fasting and prayer, as a means to invite God's presence and power into their lives and communities. Idleman highlights the importance of repentance and unity among believers, stressing that true revival begins with individuals turning back to God. He warns against complacency and the dangers of allowing the flesh to dominate, advocating for a return to holiness and a passionate pursuit of God's Spirit. Ultimately, he reminds the congregation that hope and redemption are found in Jesus Christ alone.

Transcript

The silent pulpit is not God's pulpit. You didn't come to hear, you did not come to hear a man, you came to hear a message. And we need to let God speak again boldly through our pulpits and pastors should not be scared to say, Listen, this person stands for this, this person stands for this.

These people want to murder children, these people don't. It's okay to speak truth into the life of people. And we put people in positions of leadership that really matters.

We're done being politically correct, we never really were, but we've got to take a stand and say, Listen, God has given us a republic, God has given us a voice, and we need to put people in positions of office that want to honor His word. And people say, Shane, we can't be political. I'm really not being political, I'm being biblical.

The Bible has something to say, the Bible has something to say about murdering children. It has something to say about gay marriage. It has something to say about teaching our children perversion.

It has something to say about these foundational issues. See, we're not pushing, we are holding the line. They crossed the line many years ago when they began to remove God from the schools and began to

remove prayer from the schools.

Did you know that the schools began in the 1600s to teach kids to read the word of God? Talk about how far we have drifted, don't even get me started on that topic. I'll get back on track or we're going to be in trouble. So the title tonight, as many of you know, is The Cure for Chaos.

Call a Sacred Assembly. The Cure for Chaos. What's going on around us? God gives us a remedy, primarily in the Old Testament, to call a Sacred Assembly.

And you might say, well, Shane, why preach this now if the Sacred Assembly is next weekend? And the answer is really simple. It's because we need to sanctify ourselves beforehand. The bride prepares for the groom.

And many times, a couple times throughout the Old Testament, God would say, Sanctify yourself today, for tomorrow I would do great works among you. And there's something special when we come to church, when we come to a Sacred Assembly, and our hearts are already right. We've been praying.

We've been fasting. We've been seeking the heart of God. And then the Spirit of God will fall upon that atmosphere.

And I believe you can create an atmosphere that is pleasing to God or create an atmosphere where His Spirit withdraws. Think about our homes. We begin to put on ungodly entertainment and things like that.

And God's Spirit is quenched and grieved. Can you feel a difference? And then when you put on worship music, and you begin to pray in your house, can you feel a difference or just me? I can walk into houses and I can feel the heaviness. I can feel the demonic oppression.

And I guarantee that they have been fostering an atmosphere of darkness. Or I can walk in a home and you feel the life there. Because there's something about the atmosphere of holiness.

And so I'm going to look to Joel chapter 1. I'm going to be a little bit throughout Joel chapter 1. I looked at this when the COVID pandemic started. I'm sorry, there might be some Freudian slips in there. But when this started, I looked at Joel.

And we talked about this a little bit, but I think it's important for you to hear because many of you probably didn't hear that message. And God says in chapter 1, through the prophet Joel. And what's interesting about the prophets, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, and the minor prophets, and you have what's called the major prophets, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Daniel, and some of the major prophets.

And what these people would do is they would go to the children of Israel. And what would they do? They would call them back to God. They would call that to repentance.

And so God still uses prophetic voices today. And you can usually tell when a voice is prophetic because they're not popular. I thought of giving a message entitled, Unpopular Prophets.

Or a prophet is not popular. They aren't, are they? Because they go against the grain. It's like taking that sandpaper and they get to the heart of the issue.

And they were never called to be popular. They were called to be powerful and speak God's truth. And God actually told Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was just a young man. And Jeremiah said, I can't go. I'm too young.

And God said, Jeremiah, go to who I send you. Speak what I speak to you. What you pull down and you will root out.

You will build up and you will destroy and you will replant. Let the word of God go forth and convict the heart. And that's what we need today.

We need that conviction again. That draw to holiness and righteousness. And being filled with the spirit of God.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to play church. We didn't come to play church. We came to hear from the living God.

The power of the Holy Spirit. Have you ever experienced that? When God breaks you. When God humbles you.

When He removes your pride. And now you're full of the spirit of God. And there's joy unspeakable.

There's boldness and adversity. There's peace that you just cannot describe. Because the Holy Spirit of God is moving through you.

That's what we need. He said, hear this, you elders. Hear this, you elders, and give an ear.

It means, listen, all you inhabitants of the land. Has anything like this happened in your day? Or even in the days of your fathers? Well, what is happening? Well, guess what? It's pretty similar to now. Pestilence, locusts, swarming locusts.

All kinds of locusts came and they devoured the crops. So the provision was gone. And then fire was scorching the land.

And the people were, there was distress. And there was chaos and confusion. Talk about a parallel.

Today, and so God said, tell your children about it. Let your children tell their children. And their children, another generation.

So God is saying, don't be embarrassed. Let them know what happens when the judgment of God falls upon a nation. That there is a judgment that can happen.

But God's call is not to cry about it. The call is to come back to Him. And I want to encourage you.

Before revival ignites a nation, it first ignites a group of people. Before God brings revival fires, He's going to ignite a group of people. He's going to ignite certain leaders.

And they bring the revival fire of God's fire into the church and into the community. And so He's saying here, pass down God's words to your kids. Let them know about the goodness of God.

But also the judgment of God. I know that's not popular, but it's powerful. Do you know Jesus spoke about judgment? He said, do not fear Him who can kill your body.

But fear Him who can cast both body and soul in hell. Jesus wanted us to warn. Because in that warning, you can wake people up.

And what we're doing instead is we're lulling them back to sleep. Right? Like you put a baby back to sleep. Shh, shh, shh.

Have you ever done that, moms? You know. Shh, shh, shh. You don't jump up and down and wake it up.

You lull it back to sleep. And that's what many churches are doing, pastors are doing. In America, go back to sleep.

Just go back to sleep. Let me lull you back to sleep. But at some point, you've got to wake them up and throw some water on their face or something and get the church awake again and to get up and strengthen themselves in the Lord and begin to get back on the right track.

We cannot dumb down God's word to make it taste better. It's not supposed to taste good. It's supposed to convict.

Now, in case you think I'm just being mean-spirited, I'm not because at the end of the day, it's not about condemnation and judgment. It's about hope and redemption. But how do you appreciate... See, what I've noticed is... Have you ever seen... Maybe you've done this.

Have you weeped during worship? Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. And you've experienced God and you begin to just weep before worship and thank God. And it's often those people who understand what they've been saved from that worship the most.

They understand the bad news so they more appreciate the good news. That's why we're to deliver hard topics and talk about the bad news is to give people the good news. So God paints this grim picture.

Look at what's going on. Then He says there's only one answer. There's only one remedy.

There's only one cure. One cure for chaos. He goes on to say, Awake, awake you drunkards.

Boy, oh boy. Basically awake you who are comfortable. You who are lazy.

You who are asleep. Awake, get up and weep. Consecrate a fast.

Call a sacred assembly. Gather the elders of all the inhabitants of the land and come into my house says the Lord and cry out to God. And there's a desperation.

You see, desperate people do desperate things. I talked about that I think last week or the week before that when you're desperate, you do desperate things. So in a nutshell, he's calling people to repentance and I've used that word a lot and I want to give you a definition.

It's used over a hundred times in the Bible. If something is used over a hundred times in the Bible, it's probably pretty important. And the Strong's Exhaustive Concordance says when one repents, he exerts strength to change and he re-grasps the situation and he takes a different course of action.

In other words, he wakes up, he sees, listen, this is not the right direction. I need to foster the strength to change with the power of the Holy Spirit and I re-grasp the gravity of the situation and I take a different course of action. So the actual definition of repentance is I'm walking this way, I see the danger, I turn, I

repent, and I walk this way.

It's turning from that sin and that's what God is saying here. Consecrate a fast. Call a sacred assembly.

So what's he trying to do here? I believe the whole point is to get the heart right first. And let's talk about this for a minute. This might not be popular for many people but it's going to be very powerful if you grasp it.

He says consecrate a fast. Who's already turned off? What about if it said call a fellowship, a potluck with fried chicken? And in and out is catering and so is Chick-fil-A. And then come into the house of the Lord.

Well, have you ever tried to pray, really pray after Thanksgiving dinner? It's not possible. Because you have two competing appetites. The flesh and the spirit.

And I discovered something amazing many years ago, the power of fasting. And this was a jewel in the church for about 1700 years. You read the early church fathers such as Irenaeus or Polycarp or Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Augustine, and you go into the Reformation period or even before that, people like John Huss who was burned at the stake for simply translating the Bible.

William Tyndale, the Tyndale Bible. These people gave their life often for the Bible that we have. And they would fast.

Martin Luther would fast and John Calvin. And fasting was a great, great spiritual weapon. And sometimes you have to apply extra pressure to the demonic realm.

Sometimes just regular getting through the day isn't going to cut it. Sometimes you have to apply extra pressure. You have to bring in that right hook and hit the enemy a couple times and just keep attacking the enemy.

And somebody named Jesus Christ said, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. And I know some translations don't have that in there. Others do.

I don't want to get into that. But it is a biblical principle that this kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting. And I want to talk to you about this topic for a minute because it's so important.

Consecrate a fast. It means to dedicate something to a higher purpose. And our hunger for food often outweighs our hunger for God.

Correct? Often. So there's nothing wrong with food. God has given us an appetite for a reason.

But it's when that appetite begins to control us and begins to pull us in a certain direction, we begin to allow the fleshly appetites. And if you give in to these appetites, it's easier to sin. Anytime we get in trouble, it's often because of the flesh.

Amen? So by feeding the flesh and constantly feeding the flesh and never starving it, we are actually empowering it and giving it more strength. Now I know many of you cannot relate to this, I'm sure. But let me tell you how my flesh works.

I get up early in the morning and I want Dunkin' Donuts and a big coffee. And then a couple hours later, I want a chicken or an egg McMuffin. And then a few hours later, I want In-N-Out Burger.

And then later, Domino's. And then Baskin-Robbins. See, it's just constant.

The flesh is constant. And many people cave in to that and cave in to that. And the flesh begins to control them.

What fasting does, it rips that strength from the flesh and it begins to allow you to be filled again with the Spirit of God. Because anytime you can tell the flesh no, it begins to lose strength. And I'm not talking about this idea of a monk in a monastery and you're starving yourself and it's this weirdness.

It's actually very biblical. Very biblical. Moses fasted.

He received the Ten Commandments. Elisha fasted and went 40 days on the strength of the food he consumed. David fasted.

Esther fasted and said, if I perish, I perish. I've been called for such a time as this. Call a fast.

Joel says, call a sacred assembly. Begin to starve the flesh. Jesus went out.

It's interesting. He was baptized in the Jordan River and the Bible says the Holy Spirit came upon him. Very clear direction.

The word is epi in the Greek, E-P-I. Upon, overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit came upon him and led him into the wilderness. And he began to fast for 40 days and 40 nights and the devil began to tempt him and Jesus came out.

It says in the power and in the fullness and in the filling of the Holy Spirit. And then he begins to do his ministry. Isn't that interesting? We don't even hear of Jesus doing anything until that endowment of power, until that filling of spirit, until that starving of the flesh and fasting.

Our hunger for God often outweighs our hunger, I'm sorry, our hunger for food often outweighs our hunger for God and what fasting is, it's a disruption to our normal life. It disrupts it and we can see what's really important. You wanna know how strong the flesh is? I challenge any of you, any of you, try to give up coffee all day tomorrow.

Just go 24 hours. You will turn into a monster. Try to just get, I'm not gonna eat sugar, I'm just gonna eat.

Watch what that flesh, it just begins to pull. It begins to dominate everything. Fasting also though represents mourning.

That's why I believe he said call a fast. There's mourning. Fasting would often be a sign of mourning and repentance but don't be discouraged because after the mourning there's great hope.

God says, humble yourself and that's really what fasting is. It's humility, it's humbling ourselves. God, our nation is in this predicament.

Our children are being used and abused. Your word is being ridiculed. You're being mocked.

Jesus is being scorned and I'm going to go on a fast and I'm going to mourn for our nation. I'm gonna pray for our nation when that hunger comes. I'm gonna do a hunger strike against hell and I'm gonna begin to pray and be filled with the spirit of God and the more I tell the flesh no and you yes, I go out in the boldness of the Holy Spirit.

You know what's funny? The critics, the critics of fasting are those who have never missed a meal. You'll die. You'll die if you don't eat in a day or two.

Now granted, there's a lot of practical steps that need to be taken. If God is calling you to that, do that but a lot of times that's why I want to give you my book on fasting free when you leave here because there's practical steps too. Do you know why fasting is so hard? Because 99% of you will be weaning off of withdrawing from caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, processed foods and sugar.

Of course you feel like garbage because we've been on all of these things and that's why fasting is so hard. So you have to get your body ready for these things and I believe God has given us our health for a reason. I believe he is, I realize this is all I got.

When this goes, I'm done. When this goes, I'm done and I began to fast about eight years ago and I wouldn't eat all day and I would come and I could just feel, I felt the spirit of God more heavily because I was denying the flesh throughout the day. That's a biblical principle.

I'm not talking about works-based and pleasing God and I found and I know and you know God doesn't love me more when I fast but I sure love him more because I'm denying these appetites because I want the filling, I want to be closer to God. Now it's okay to eat and of course and God designed us to do that but when it begins to control us and we can't stop, that's why he said What often went with drunkenness in the Old Testament? Gluttony. They ran hand in hand because you give in to one appetite and here's another.

And this image is you're comfortable and you're lazy, you're asleep, you're gluttonous. God says you need to come out of that awake and consecrate a fast. The mightiest weapon we have, did you know the mightiest weapons we have as Christians are humility, prayer and worship.

Did you know that? And all of those are fulfilled in fasting. So I'm going to throw a challenge out there today. My wife came up with a great title called Fasting for Freedom.

Fasting for Freedom. We're going to fast, we're calling a church fast between now and November 3rd. Between now and the election.

Our elected officials are under attack like never before. Darkness is starting to rear its ugly head and just now losing a Supreme Court justice. They're saying there will be burning and riots in the street if our president appoints someone too soon.

There's just this upheaval. You can tell that things are tense and this is the time to fast for freedom. So I know a small minority of people will only listen.

But I'm talking to you, even if it's a meal, even if it's changing your diet completely, even if it's going on water only or juice, whatever God calls. He doesn't gauge, He doesn't measure success by perfection. He wants to see the condition of a heart and say, Lord, I'm willing to give this up for you.

There is a price to pay when seeking God. Fasting pays that price. Basically what I'm saying is, Lord, my hunger for You is greater than my hunger for food.

When I feel that desire coming, Lord, I'm going to take it to prayer and fasting. This is not a weight loss program. This is a spiritual weapon program.

When you're calling down heaven, you're praying for your children, you're praying for your spouse, you're praying for what's going on. God wants to know how bad do you want it? Do you want it bad enough to deny yourself so that the Spirit of the living God can work through you? I love what A.W. Tozer said, I want the presence of God Himself or I don't want to have anything to do with religion. Can you imagine if our kids at 12, 13, 14 or 15 were filled with God's Spirit? Oh, in that day I will pour out my Spirit.

Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream visions or have visions. Your young men will dream dreams or vice versa.

I'm not sure on that one. But he says, I will pour out my Spirit on your men's servants and on your maid's servants and they will prophesy in that day. Why? Because the Spirit of God is being poured upon a broken and humble vessel.

And fasting is one of those mechanisms. It's a great treasure. One of the shocks of my life was 20 years ago when I started to read books.

John Wesley prayed and fasted. He actually wouldn't ordain people to the ministry unless they fasted on Wednesday and Friday. I thought of that, but I don't think I'll be able to get away with it.

If you want to be... I won't go there. But there was a desire for there. David Brainerd, who ministered among the Native Americans, in his journal, tons of fasting and prayer.

Robert Murray McShaney. He died at age 29, but he was one of Scotland's most anointed preachers. When he would walk to the pulpit, people would begin to weep.

They'd say, where is that anointing coming from? Oh, just read his journals. The day spent in prayer and fasting. Because, see, that's when you're loading the gun.

We've got people straight as a gun barrel theologically, but they are empty. You need to put a shell, put a round in that chamber and be filled with the Spirit of God through the power of prayer and fasting. And I want to just share this for a minute, but anytime God calls you to do something spiritually, there are physical benefits as well.

There's enormous physical benefits of fasting. God might speak to you right now, to some of you in this message, just from this part. Fasting has been known.

Fasting's not a cure. What it does, let me just tell you. Let me switch from preacher to teacher for a minute.

Fasting, what your body does throughout the whole day is it takes 50-60% of your energy to convert food. And to convert food, it's called your metabolism, your metabolic rate, the process of converting food into energy. And it's exhausting, and it's doing that all day long.

It's just exhausting and converting energy and converting energy. You add to that all the junk food, all the processed food, all the dead food that does nothing for your body. And we begin to gain weight.

We begin to get disease and issues. And so fasting withdraws the poison and allows the body to begin to cleanse itself. That's why it's so hard at first, because it's called detoxification.

And your body switches from burning glucose now to burning your stored fat tissue. And in that is a lot of toxins. And that's where your energy comes from.

And as people begin to fast, it begins to heal their arthritis. It begins to help their ulcers, their high blood pressure, heart conditions, gallstones, tumors, colitis, and neuromuscular diseases. Overfeeding is killing us.

And fasting, fasting can help with that. I know it's really convicting, but we need to be convicted from time to time. And because of this, I believe there's a mighty filling of the Holy Spirit.

So I believe that's why one of the reasons God says, first, consecrate a fast. Call a fast. Get the flesh into submission.

What happens if we come next Saturday? We've been watching Netflix all week. We probably saw some things on the internet we shouldn't. We'll listen to music that's not edifying.

We've been eating too much. We've been gluttonous. We've been drinking too much.

And we come here next Saturday, and we expect that the spirit of the living God is going to descend upon us and change us from the inside out when we haven't been consecrated and set apart for Him first. Call the sacred assembly, but first, consecrate a fast. And then he says, call the sacred assembly.

So he says, now, once you're set apart, once you're fasting, once you're maybe hungry for food, but more hungry for God, he said, call the sacred assembly and begin to cry out to God. Is that interesting? Cry out to God. There's a passion.

Like I said, desperate people do desperate things. We read about the blind man. I love that story.

He cried out, oh, son of David, have mercy on me. And what did the crowd say? Be quiet, be quiet. And he said, he cried out all the more, oh, son of David, have mercy on me.

I'm a blind man, and I need your redemption. And he began to cry out, and the woman would go after Jesus, fighting through the crowd, moving people out of the way. And if I could just touch the hem of his garment, I would be healed.

Or they lowered the man down through the roof, and they removed the shingles and lowered him down. If we can just touch Christ, or the weeping prostitute that came before Jesus and began to clean his feet with her tears. Oh, desperate people do desperate things when they want to find the heart of God.

They might fast. They might remove ungodly entertainment. They might seek God with all their heart and with all their strength and begin to move things that God is convicting them about.

Because I must find God. Desperate people do desperate things. I'm sure there's people saying, I wanted to hear a teaching tonight.

Well, you needed to hear a preaching tonight. Listen, I'll never forget this. And I kind of hope this person hears me when I tell this story.

But we were in Lancaster five, six years ago. And I tell it often when it fits things like this. It just blew my mind.

The spirit of God was so thick. People were at the altar. People were weeping and crying.

And the worship is just, it's incredible. One service, our first service actually flowed into the next service without any interruption. And I came up there.

I felt the heaviness of God. I felt just the weight. And I said, guys, we just got to keep worshiping.

We just got to keep worshiping. I'm not going to give a message tonight. And a man left upset.

He walked out. He told the usher, I came here to hear a message. I thought that poor man, the very thing he needs is the very thing he's running from.

The very thing he needs is the very thing he's running from. He needs to find himself on the altar broken and humble before God because if worship upsets you, there's something going on with your heart. If you're not a worshiper, there's something wrong in your heart.

Oh, I'm a lover of his presence. I'm a lover of his presence. 25 years ago, I would have laughed at you worshipers until God fills you with the spirit.

That changes everything. Oh God, I'm a lover of your presence. The proud, Bible-thumping, critical heart must become a lover of God's presence.

Examine their hearts. And then after that, it says something interesting. Then come together.

Consecrate a fast. Call a sacred assembly like we're doing now. But I'm glad he didn't forget this.

Then come together. Do you know what he's talking about there? Unity. Unity.

Gather all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God. You know what I've noticed? When all hell is breaking loose right now, not too many people are debating non-essentials. Not too many people are poking fun at this ministry or poking fun at this or you're not a Calvinist or you're not an Armenian or you believe in this.

No, no. Now we're in battle together. We are in battle together and the small little battles, the small little essential things need to fall to the side and we need to come together in unity because often what is behind division is pride.

Let's call it out. Let's call out those people who like to debate and like to put down others and like to highlight non-essentials and they have a critical, arrogant spirit. They are haughty.

Paul says that they are proud and unteachable and eager to dispute. That kind of person will never experience spiritual revival. Hebrews says, pursue peace with all people and holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

And that word see is to see spiritually, to perceive. There's an inward spiritual perception. When you're desperate, trivial things don't matter, does it? Listen, when I'm in battle with you, I'm not real concerned what denomination you're with.

I'm not concerned with what church you're with. I want to know, do you love Jesus? Do you believe in the inerrancy of scripture? Is he your Lord and Savior? Do we agree on the essentials? Great, let's go into battle. That's what God wants.

We got to get back to that point of unity. I mean, I'm not for or against denominations. I'm not sure where God, biblically speaking, I have a hard time with them sometimes because most of the time, do you know where denominations spring up? Because people leave and think, I'm going to do it the right way.

I'm going to be this denomination and we believe this and we're the right denomination. This, this, this denomination believes this and this is the right denomination. You guys, I promise myself I wouldn't say this, so forgive me if it's wrong.

I'm just asking for forgiveness now. But the guy in the corner, the heckler, right? The guy in the corner, he's mad because I don't use the King James only. My Lord, is there anything more important? Yes, the salvation of souls.

Have you ever led anybody to the Lord? Have you ever led anybody to the Lord screaming at them? Of course not. You have to be broken and humble and all this bickering and complaining over it. What translation do you use, brother? And I've had emails that say, you don't wear a suit and tie.

You're not a real preacher. Really? I didn't know that. I'm sorry.

Let me go check my wardrobe next time. The arrogance is amazing. The critical spirit in the church is amazing.

Oh, I don't like those songs. I like these songs. Why are they doing that? Why are they standing? Why aren't they standing? Why are they sitting? Why aren't they sitting? Why are they raising their hands? Why aren't they raising their hands? They're too charismatic.

They're not charismatic enough. Why do they act like that? Why do they get all sappy? Why are they crying? Critical spirits. And we wonder why we're not experiencing revival.

I'm trying. I'll never forget. There was a guy at the church in Lancaster as well.

A lot happened in Lancaster. Praise God for that. But he was at the altar and weeping uncontrollably.

And I could tell people were a little bothered by it. You know the people in church like this. When it's a Laker game.

You know, and they're just people, emotional people bother them. And I went up to pray for him and I just, I started weeping. I don't know why.

And come to find out he found his son who hung himself into the garage. Oh, folks, we got to be careful. We got to be careful to judge others.

You don't know what they went through. You don't know the pain they're carrying. Many times those who are emotional in worship, it's because they've met the risen Savior.

They've experienced God. And I love when guys tell me, Shane, I'm just not emotional. I'm just not emotional.

Well, you express anger very well. Is anger not emotion? You can yell at your kids and throw the cat and kick the dog and punch a hole in the wall. You're very emotional.

Sir, the problem is you have not been humble and broken by almighty God and begin to worship him. And it comes out, oh, God. And that's why I cannot even, that song, Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

If that doesn't penetrate your heart. He says, I was blind, but now I see spiritually blind on my way to hell. If it was not for the grace of God to reach down and grab me, there go I. But by the grace of God, there go I. I was lost, but now I'm found.

And God found me and he saved me. He set me free. You might get a little excited.

You might want to worship. You might not want to be in a hurry. If you're a clock watcher, be careful.

And then I love what God does. He shouts it again. In case I'm not clear, blow the trumpet in Zion and sound the alarm on my holy mountain.

In other words, call a battle call. Call believers to the forefront. Call them to boldness.

Tell them to come out of their complacency. Shane, when I've given you a voice, wake them up. And that's why I said, you didn't come to hear a man.

You came to hear a message. And that message is God trying to wake up the sleeping giant known as the church of Jesus Christ. Can you imagine if the church would wake up and come back to holiness and righteousness and love and unity and being filled with the spirit of God? But you cannot stop the move of God's spirit.

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble before me for the day of the Lord is coming. Now, therefore, says the Lord, turn to me with all your heart, with fasting. There he goes again.

Just when I was looking for it in and out afterwards. With fasting, with weeping, with mourning. So wrench your hearts and not your garments.

I love that picture. Because what they would do in Israel, they would take the shirt and rip it. They would, oh, look how sorrowful I am.

Look how broken I am. Look how humble I am. I'm rending my heart.

And oh, God says, I see your hardness. I see your callous hearts. Don't just rend your heart.

Rend your garments. Wrench your heart. Break your heart.

Let your heart cry out to God. Men who are arrogant, look how you're hurting your family. Oh, God, we need you in our homes.

God, our schools need you. Spirit of the living God, would you begin to minister to us tonight? So I want you to come spiritually prepared on September 26th. And we're going to worship.

I don't know what that sermon looks like. If I'm going to give a quick sermon ad or a sermon or mainly just worship. I don't know.

I'm seeking God in this. I will be fasting. I guess I should have told you that earlier.

I'm going to start fasting. And this is a corporate call to fasting for those who can. If you're not sure how, if you have questions, again, we've got resources for that.

But the bottom line is say, God, I'm going to stop this that I'm addicted to, that I'm drawn to. I'm going to take a season of fasting so I can hear your voice clearly. Worship is warfare.

And that's what we're going to engage in. I love the scriptures that talk about worship. Come, worship the Lord and the beauty of holiness.

I desire all men everywhere. Do you know the Bible says this? I desire all men everywhere to lift up holy hands, to lift up holy hands to God. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is with me.

I will bless his holy name. Come, let us bow down to God and worship. Let us kneel before the Lord, our maker.

I spread out my hands to you. I thirst for you like a parched land. And like the Bible talks about, a deer that pants after living water.

There should be a desire in your heart to draw more to Christ. And if there's no desire there, say, God, I want that desire. I'm repenting of my hardness and of my callousness.

And then here's the blessing. Here's the hope. Return to the Lord your God.

Joel cried out. It says, Joel cried out for he is gracious. He is compassionate.

He is slow to anger. He is abounding in love. He relents from sending calamity.

See, that's the picture I know of God. That's why I don't mind talking about judgment. Because I know the loving father says, son, turn to me.

Daughter, turn to me. Would you come home, prodigal son? Yes, judgment will fall, but I can protect you. I can hold you.

I can secure you. I'm a compassionate, loving father. But people say, Shane, if God's so compassionate, how can he allow this? Because he let something out many years ago called absolute truth.

And when God speaks truth, he cannot change. So when he says, choose life that you may live or choose death that you may live, he can't change that. He said, I love you enough to send my son to die on a cross, to provide the way of redemption.

Just choose life. Choose life and live. I think Eric sang that song.

I love that song. Hope has a name. Does it not? Hope has a name.

Some of the lyrics, I can't recall all of them, but it says, there's a melody that never fails, whether it's mountain high or valley low, my hope rests in Jesus Christ and Christ alone. So I want to encourage you tonight, as always, two groups of people, maybe three groups. If you're a believer, you're on fire for God, just keep going.

God will see you through. God will get you through this. But if you've grown cold and callous and distant from God, you'll go to church now and then.

If it's not going to interfere with other things, your heart's dead to worship. You don't like worship. You don't like going to church.

And I want you to be awakened tonight. I want you to repent and say, God, I need you. I need that again.

Have you ever been caught up in sin and caught up in depravity, how depressing that is? I think that's why depression is skyrocketing, because we're looking to everything else but God. And when we get trapped in sin, we feel like David. He says, Oh, blessed are the bones that you have broken.

Oh, God, return the joy of my salvation unto me, God. I look to you. And after that moment, God began to work in David's heart again, just like the prodigal son, and he would work in his heart again.

So if that's you, I want to encourage you, make that decision tonight to turn back to God. We are going into very difficult times, very trying times. And if God is not your anchor, your boat will blow away, my friends.

There is no other hope. If you're trusting in the government, I have bad news for you. If you're trusting in your 401K and your retirement, if you've got all these plans of how things are going to work out, there is only one sure foundation.

There is only one rock on which to build your life. And Jesus said, I am that rock. I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail.

The church is the anchor. It's the support. And then obviously, finally, if you do not know Jesus Christ, if you don't have what I'm talking about, the Bible is clear.

It simply says, confess that Christ is Lord, that He died for you, that He took your sin, He bore your sin on the cross, and you don't have to live with that weight and that shame and that guilt anymore. Bow your knee to Jesus Christ. Listen, you're going to do it now, or you're going to do it on the other side of eternity, because the Bible says every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord.

Every governor, every United States representative, every president, every national leader will bow their knee to Jesus Christ, and He will be exalted. He will be high and lifted up. He will be on the throne.

He will never be defeated.

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