

The Lamp of the Body

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman emphasizes the critical roles of prayer and fasting in nurturing a humble and spiritually healthy heart in his sermon 'The Lamp of the Body'.

Duration: 47:32

Scripture: Psalm 119:11, Proverbs 23:7, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 4:16, Philippians 4:8

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the battle between serving God and serving worldly desires, highlighting the importance of renewing the mind to align with God's will. It addresses the struggle of serving two masters, the consequences of drifting away from God, and the power of repentance to turn back to Him. The message underscores the significance of focusing on heavenly treasures, the impact of fasting to break worldly entanglements, and the need for humility to soften hardened hearts.

Transcript

Matthew 6, verse 16, right? The lamp of the body is the eye. And as you know, if you missed last week's sermon, it got me in some trouble, so go online and listen to it. We've got a lot of, there's, I think, just, it just got out, you know, to a lot of different people, and I talked about the Spirit's power, the role of the Spirit, versus, you know, the gifts of the Spirit not being available today.

Are they available or are they not? You know, what's going on with this whole thing? And it's kind of in answer to John MacArthur's conference, strange fire conference, that we kind of gave another side of that. So if you get time, go look at last week's message. And even before that, we had two messages on prayer that we were actually hearing still from people on email and Facebook that are really being touched by what God is doing in those messages.

And I'm just thankful, I'm just the vessel. Don't look to me, I appreciate the applause, but it goes to Him. I'm just a stuttering, stammering, from the farms of Oklahoma, barely graduated high school person who wants to work, you know, do God's work.

So He takes us and He does it. It's all His work, it's all His glory, it's all His credit. But He's using these messages to transform people and we are thankful for that.

But a few things I didn't mention on prayer that I had in my notes and I wanted to make it clear is, there's no formula for praying. Like, well, shame does this, and you gotta get up at 4.30 in the morning. Well, whatever works for you, but you gotta be doing it.

You have to make time. A lot of times, too, as you're studying the Bible, you can stop and pray. If scriptures don't leap out at you, ask God to have some leap out at you, because they will.

A lot of times I'm studying, I have to put that down and say, Lord, I'm so convicted, thank you. And you just pray. Your time of devotional and prayer should not be on a stop clock.

Okay, I've got this, you know, five minutes, 10 minutes, 15, I gotta hurry, I gotta hurry. You gotta sit and you gotta wait upon the Lord. Many times it takes time as you're, as He's breaking your heart and changing you and getting all the stuff out of you, and bitterness, everything's coming out in you.

And because you can be honest with God. He knows. We can't play games like we can here.

Everybody's smiling, how's it going? He knows what's going, really going on. Now, I would also encourage you on that note to try to make the Monday night series, the marriage series, the last video last weekend was powerful. Made me go home and say, okay, Morgan, where are we at with our marriage on a scale of 10? You know, it makes you think and you communicate and you talk and it's good stuff.

And I would just, I mean, to only have a handful of people on something that's so important with marriages falling apart, I would just encourage you to be at that. We're also having a Monday night study for those who don't want to be in the married group. It's more on emotions and how do we handle anger and fear? All these things that deal with emotions from Chip Ingram, another great teacher, we've got some good resources.

So try to make that. And also I want to point out that prayer, I've noticed, is the heartbeat of spiritual life. Boom, boom, boom.

Prayer is that. And if you're only having five beats a minute, you're almost dead. Right? And if they see on the register, boom, boom.

I mean, this person, hurry, go get stacked. We need to resuscitate. So if you're dying spiritually, look at your prayer life.

Because that is the connection to God. That is bringing me back to the Father, that connection to God. That prayer life should be beep, beep, beep, 60, 70.

You know, I'm just using analogy here, but that determines everything. It's your spiritual condition. You tell me, you show me your prayer life, I'll show you your heart.

You show me your prayer life, I'll show you how you're doing spiritually. They have to go hand in hand. You don't see somebody devouring the Word of God, filled with the Spirit of God, doing the things of God, seeking God, and no prayer life.

Now, we can be busy in ministry. Don't get me wrong. There's a lot of people busy in ministry.

They're actually so busy, they have no time for God. How ironic is that? We can be so busy that we have no time for God. And that's why I would just encourage you, get into foster, and it becomes a spiritual

discipline that eventually becomes part of your life.

It's not that it's, I mean, it's tough sometimes. It does take discipline. But once you pass that, you wonder why, how did I even live without this? How did I ever go without a prayer life? I have no idea.

So just consider that. But let's get into Matthew 6. Obviously, we've been in Matthew a while. Verse 16, moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites.

And this is Jesus, of course, speaking. Moreover, when you fast, it's a thing we don't like to do today also, do not be like the hypocrites with the sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you that they have their reward.

But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in secret place and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Now, there's two things I really pulled from this. Obviously, he's talking about a condition of the heart, right, we're trying to impress people.

Oh, look at me, I'm so spiritual. It's like, man, you guys, I'm so tired. I spent the whole day in prayer and fasting.

Oh, woe is me. Wow, isn't he so spiritual. Wow, I could never measure up.

That guy is, and that's what they're doing, just walking around super spiritual. But I didn't wanna get out of this without talking about the important aspect of fasting. It's a very important spiritual discipline that we don't hear much about today.

And I won't elaborate too much on this because I gave a message last year or earlier this year called Fasting Breaks Enslavement. And the website, the link to the video is right there in your bulletins. Fasting Breaks Enslavement.

One of the best things to break an addiction or break an anger problem or break something is the fast. When you say, well, Shane, how does that work? What it does is you starve the flesh to feed the spirit. You say, you have no power over me.

I'm not eating all day. I'm drinking water. Yeah, when it gets tough, I'm going to God and I'm relying on Him.

I'm seeking Him on those challenging times. And that fasting, it fights the flesh. The flesh has to bow.

The flesh has to submit to what you're doing. And as we fast and we draw closer to God, you'd see Jesus spent 40 days fasting, led into the wilderness fasting. Why? Fighting the flesh.

And that's what fasting does. We don't realize it, but we only have so much. And James McDonald taught on this also on fasting if you heard his message, it's been aired a few times now, but he made a good point that we only have so much hunger.

And as we satisfy that hunger on things that aren't of God, we're full. That's why we don't desire God as much because we're full. We're full of the things of the world.

We've been feeding on the things of the world. You know, just eating all the time. And fasting breaks that.

And that's why I talk about fasting from entertainment even or TV or Facebook. It's okay to turn off for a day or two and then you'll feel, oh, I gotta go look and I gotta go check and just fast from these things. But in this context, obviously it's food.

And the benefit, the spiritual benefit is amazing because the flesh loves certain things and forms habits around this love affair. Do you realize this? Our flesh loves certain things and it forms a love affair around these habits. I love, put it, if you fill in the blank.

Chocolate? Wow, yeah. You know, you just fill in the blank. And what fasting does is you fight the flesh, you put it under dominion, under control.

Like Paul would say, I discipline myself and bring my body up under control. We're not in control if all we're doing is, oh, I feel like this, I'm eating too much or I feel like this, I drank too much or I feel like, and we're being led around almost like a slave by the flesh. It's just pulling us by our addictions, by our feelings, by our appetites.

It just pulls us wherever we wanna go. I've gotta stop by Panda Express on the way home or I've gotta stop by In-N-Out Burger on the way home. I gotta get up in the early in the morning, gotta have my 16 ounce of high strung out coffee and get my donut and then I've gotta be pulled here and then for those who like alcohol or pills, it just pulls us, it controls us.

If you think about it, our appetites control where we eat, when we eat, who we, and it controls everything. So fasting says stop, stop flesh. I'm in control and I'm gonna seek God and it's not easy.

I've shared this with some of you. I'm not saying this for a spiritual reason but Saturdays, I like to fast. Well, some of you know that.

So I haven't eaten all day and when I come here, I'm obviously hungry after the service but throughout the day, around 11 and around two, man, around four before, I'm like, but if I just fast and say, okay, Lord, I'm seeking you, I'm giving this to you, within a few minutes, it's gone and then I feel like I've just drawn closer to Christ because it drew me back to him. Now, of course, I'm not saying food's bad and Panda Express, I'm hoping you see through all that, right? What I'm talking about is we constantly allow our appetites to control us. I gotta have it and we get it.

So what fasting does, and even for me, I just feel better, I feel lighter, I don't feel, you know, it's just wanting to seek God in those times and wanting the church to just be blessed by the service and by the fellowship, my thinking seems clear and that's just what I try to do. I haven't mastered it all the time because there's functions and different things but what fasting also does is we are a prisoner of our own appetites. Fasting breaks that entanglement.

We're in control, it puts the body back into submission to us and it basically, in a nutshell, it fights the flesh and it feeds the spirit. I know that sounds a little weird because I'm thinking, well, how would just, well, what it does is you're telling the flesh, no, it's okay, we can go a month without eating before we would die probably, most of us. So it's okay for a day or two or whatever, juiced up, whatever it is, and I've, just my personal thing, I jotted down some things.

Spiritual awareness is much higher. When I get into the word of God after fasting, it's like, and I wanna be careful here, but things just illuminate or it becomes alive, it jumps out a little bit, it's a little crisper, a little sharper, you know, you're in tune more versus, that was a big dinner, I'm getting a little tired. Let me turn

to, what was that in the beginning was, you know, it just puts you more intense and focused with the word of God and I've noticed a deeper walk with God because any time you fight the flesh and feed the spirit and seek God in those moments of weakness, your relationship with the Lord grows at a deeper level, of course.

Answered prayer, you know, we've, of course there's a disputed text in the Bible about, you know, this type only does not come out by prayer and fasting, you know, some older manuscripts have it, some don't. But the bottom line is, that's truth. Some things, they're strongholds.

The enemy's got a stronghold, some little five minute prayer on the way to work is not gonna work. And I often see so many parents whose kids are in turmoil. They are in absolute turmoil, where the prodigal son, the wayward daughter, they're fighting depression, they're in so much turmoil, they don't have any time to pray, let alone fast.

If your child is going through that, there's something of that magnitude, that's when you turn off everything, your schedule ends, you get in the prayer closet, you unhook the television, you say, I'm not eating until that child comes home. I'm gonna pray and I'm gonna contend and I'm gonna seek God, I'm fighting the flesh because I want so much for this to happen. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, our battle is a spiritual battle.

So how do you do battle in the spiritual realm? You fight the flesh and you feed the spirit. So this can conquer a lot of things and it can also answer, God answers prayer when the fasting saints are seeking Him. Actually, when I've read a lot on revivals and revivals happening, they usually happen after extended times of prayer and fasting.

It's almost like God says, how bad do you want it? You want it that bad, I'll honor that. Now at the same time, I'm not minimizing a quick prayer on the run, I'm not minimizing not fasting and saying, oh, you're not gonna know God, but I'm saying there is a deeper walk and anytime God says that we should do something, it's beneficial. I won't even, if I had the next 40 minutes, if I just went over all the health benefits of fasting, the health benefits to the body, detoxing, giving the kidneys, the liver, all these things a break, well, because God's word never goes contrary to something else.

It's not a surprise that fasting is healthy because it's good for you. It's not a surprise that eating God-given foods is healthy and it's good for you. It's not a surprise.

God puts all this in order. So there's some major physical benefits, of course, too, but we don't want to do it for that reason. Now, of course, the whole text here is on a heart issue.

Appearing to be spiritual, that's what these guys were doing. Does that still happen today? Appearing to be spiritual. Beware of those who brag about spirituality.

They're always impressed by how close they are to God. Oh, brother Shane, I've just been so much time with God and so close to Him and we're on one-on-one. Just be careful of hyper-spirituality because usually those who are the closest to God aren't bragging about it.

They just are. So we have to be, I mean, all of us fall in this trap. Don't we want to know I gave commissions or I prayed all day or, you know, we want to know, hey, look, I'm spiritual, hello.

But what happens is it becomes a heart issue and we're doing it for all the wrong reasons and God says, okay, you got your reward. That's your reward. I was gonna reward you, but that's your reward.

And He's calling us to look at our hearts. And it's interesting on this point, the desperate need for humility. And I was thinking this week, the Bible talks often from Genesis to Revelation on the hardness of the heart.

You hard-hearted people. I think that's gonna be a tough one too. Jesus was calling them out on their hardness, their stiff neck, their rigid.

They're always, your heart is hard as stone. Heart is like iron. It was always the hardness of the heart.

You know what that looks like? I brought an analogy because I know you guys like to use analogies, right? The closest thing I could find was this. This stone, I think I got on my way to, I don't know where I got it. Hardest can be.

I think one of my kids actually fell on it on the ground once. It didn't give away at all. This is what Jesus is talking about.

Many of us are walking around with this. Don't you touch me. The things of God, everything.

Everything, your heart is stone. So Jesus is saying, get rid of that. Get rid of that hardness.

You're driving everybody away. You're not receptive. And that's what it looks like.

A heart is a heart of stone. What can go into that? So what happens is, here's the analogy part. Our spouse comes up against the heart of stone, right? Our spouse comes up.

Sorry, Ronnie, I'm gonna help clean. Other people come up. Our kids, nothing's work.

It's a heart of stone. Everything that comes up against you breaks. No wonder your marriage is falling apart.

No wonder relationships are falling apart. You need another analogy? Here's what happens. The word of God even comes up against you.

Everything that's coming up against you, it's everything. Nothing's working. Why? What's wrong with that? The hardness of the heart.

That's why God's word can't get through. That's why the marriage is falling apart. That's why everything is going haywire in your life.

That hard heart. Now, contrasting when somebody's filled with the Spirit of God, what's normally the analogy for that? Water, overflowing, filled with the Spirit of God. So what happens then? When something like glass hits that, whoops, I can tie that in somehow.

Anyway, it's not broken. What hits, it absorbs. It's in the Spirit.

It's a Spirit-filled life. So what used to break against the hard rock is now absorbed by the Spirit-filled life. So now the spouse feels loved and appreciated, not broken.

Now your kids feel loved and appreciated, not broken. Why? Because they hit the Spirit-filled life. That's what humility does, the desperate need for humility.

This is humility. So when something comes up against you, it's absorbed and it's cherished and it's held. It's not broken on the hard stone.

When God's word comes into you, it is received and welcomed because you're filled with the Spirit of God. Humility, gentleness, love, joy, peace, contentment. What's the opposite of that? Hard, rigid, arrogant.

Pharisees, judgmental. You see the difference? That's the hard heart. It breaks everything.

So many times, a lot of times in counseling, we've gotta go after that. I've gotta get my hammer out after that. I've gotta get a big sledgehammer out after that and break the heart.

That's why I talk about the hammer of God coming and crushing the hard heart and breaking that heart so it breaks. Because it takes broken men to break men. From the pulpit, it also takes broken men to guide your families in the fear of the Lord and cherishing your spouse and your kids instead of breaking them every time they come up against you.

And men call it toughness. God calls it a hard heart. Men say, I was just raised that way.

God calls it a hard heart. Excuses must bow at the foot of the cross when it comes to this area. And that's what Jesus is talking about.

Here is this hard heart. He probably wouldn't have did this, so I'll knock this over. I want us to get the vacuum and help, Ronnie.

I'm sure we'll get a few other guys too, so. Point taken, right? Hard hearts. I like what Isaac Watts said, who used to write hymnals.

I'm sure you've heard of them. Probably 400 or 500 years ago, many hymnals, he actually wrote the hymns that are in hymnals. True Christianity, where it reigns in the heart.

True Christianity, where it reigns in the heart will make itself appear in the purity of life. So true Christianity, where it reigns in your heart will make itself appear in humility and gentleness and meekness. That's where it appears.

Now let's skip to verse 19. Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. Here's that famous verse.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And that's why I often say, show me your calendar and show me your checkbook, I'll show you where your treasure is. Isn't that true? All of our charges here and charges there and time here and time, it shows us where our heart is.

You look at your calendar, well, how do I spend my time and how do I spend my money? It tells us where our treasure is and what or who we worship. It's really that simple. So take inventory of that when you get home if you want.

Now, what's he saying here? Because obviously we know that planning and saving are biblical, right? He's not saying throw caution to the wind, don't worry about anything, just don't store up your treasure. The problem is stockpiling earthly wealth at the cost of heavenly wealth. And may I speak honestly and transparently, right now it's especially young men, if you're making decent money, good money, be careful, be careful.

Because by default, we will be led to chase those things and build up treasures and build up treasures at the cost of our spiritual life. I've seen it nine times out of 10. And it's not until their life starts falling apart that it comes back.

So it's good to start that off at a young age. Stockpiling earthly wealth at the cost of heavenly wealth. Well, what does that look like? Well, for many men, working and working and working, right? Got to make working and that becomes their God.

Workaholic, we get that term from that. But then everything else is falling apart. Family, the relationship with God.

I mean, many CEOs and Fortune 500 companies, these guys are not close to God. Of course, there's some and there's God that has people everywhere. But the majority of people who are pursuing the things of this world are not pursuing the things of God.

Now, I believe that God can bless us and open doors financially, but our treasure, our focus has got to be in the right direction. If your focus is on building and buying, acquiring and investing, hoarding and having, that's where your heart is. See, it's all about where's our focus.

Does it mean we're not supposed to work and make an income? Of course not. But where's our focus? And here's how you can tell. Your decisions, your lifestyle, everything revolves around where your focus is.

When I was in my 20s, corporate executive, 24-hour fitness, you know, big money, my engine partner with this big, you know, making a lot of money for kids our age. Where was all my focus? Into all that. It kept pulling me back.

It was all about that. Where you can still work, you pay the bills, but your focus is on God. So He gets all the glory, all the credit.

My lifestyle now is going in this direction. Where with that, my lifestyle was going in that direction. How can I build a big business? And how can I amass a great fortune? How can I, you know, retire at 40 was my goal, and all these things.

And so everything revolved around that. My choices, the people I associated with, how I spent my money, how I spent my time. Everything revolved around what Jesus says, you cannot serve two masters.

You cannot serve two masters. You'll either love the one and hate the other, or be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and mammon.

And mammon being a word for these worldly pursuits. So that's what he's talking about here. Where something is invested reveals the commitment of the heart.

You can look at somebody's investment. Are they investing in people? Are they investing in money? It shows the condition of the heart. And as I've said before, money is a wonderful, wonderful, wonderful servant, but a terrible master.

You see the difference there? It's God created. It's supposed to be a vessel by which we serve God and others. I can't go live out in the desert in a sleeping bag and tell my family, oh, we're following the Lord.

That's not providing for them. So I've got a responsibility, as do you. But this thing of money, it always becomes, it always becomes a snare if we're not careful.

And that's why we say by default. What by default means, if you don't do anything, by default, the pursuit of wealth will pull you away. So you've got to fight against that, seek God, obey his word, and allow that filling of the spirit to guide you in these areas.

And I was reminded of a story as I was preparing this sermon. Some of you have probably heard it. It's about an old farmer.

We'll just call him Leroy and Fay. Him and the farmer and their wife. The cow that they had, they'd been watching, finally gave birth.

And they gave birth to twins, two calves. And he said, unbelievable. Fay, come look at this.

We'll give one of the calves to the Lord when he's grown, and we can get full price, and we'll keep the proceeds from the other one. This is wonderful. We'll give one cow to the Lord, and we'll keep the proceeds from the other.

That is great. And she's like, wonderful, great. Which one's the Lord's? He's like, well, I don't, I mean, it doesn't matter now.

Let's just raise these up. Let's just raise these up, and God's gonna open an incredible door. Well, about three months later, Leroy walks into the house.

He's sad, he's upset. And Fay's like, what's wrong? And he said, the Lord's calf died. If you don't get it, ask me afterwards.

But it's always the Lord's calf that dies, right? If you didn't get it, what it means is, they didn't know what calf was going to be the Lord's, so obviously, the one that just died is the one that we were gonna give to the Lord. Or darn it all, anyway. Isn't it always the Lord's calf that dies? Always.

I mean, we're just, I mean, sometimes I just sit at home, me and my wife, we laugh. We think we're so spiritual, we're gonna bring all these clothes down to Grace Resources and give it to these people. We just wanna make room for our closet.

We're not touching the brand new stuff. Let's just be honest. So by default, see what I mean? So we have to say, you know what? I'm gonna give them my new jacket, my new pants, my new, let's put this in the car, that's what we like, you know, I'm gonna hopefully do this year, is put stuff in my car and give it to them when I see them.

You know, that need a good jacket. Because that's really giving to the Lord. That other stuff's not.

That's getting a tax receipt for a write-off so I can have my closet clean. And we think we're so spiritual. And every time I do that, I just laugh at myself.

So we go out of our way, and what we try to do at Christmas is have our kids, you know, give away a good gift to somebody in need. Because it's gotta hurt a little bit. That's the whole point.

It's gotta hurt a little bit. So that's what he's talking about here. Laying up your treasure, lay it up in heaven.

And what that basically means, as we all know, is where's our energy and our focus and our money, our resources? Are we doing things for the kingdom of God? And basically what happens, especially in America, we live above our means, right? Oh, I see it all the time. Kid out of high school, good job making 3,000 a month. Guess what his bills are? 3,000 a month.

Can't give to the church. Gets a good job, Lockheed, Rockwell, Boeing. 6,000 a month.

Guess what his bills are? Gets a real good job. \$10,000 a month, making great money. Guess what his bills are? Why is that? God's blessing, if we would just come, live below our means.

Live below our means. And it's hard, it's really hard, is it not? Because by default, your body will not do that. And it was hard for me and my wife.

God almost had to force us when we bought a home recently. We were qualified for a certain amount, but he got us something a lot lower than what we were qualified for. But the payments, unbelievable.

But I was like fighting it the whole way. Man, we could just max, if we, oh, come on. And then no, no, no, no.

Lead of the spirit, not the flesh. By default, if you do nothing, your flesh will lead you. That's why you've gotta fight it and store up your treasures in heaven.

And we also thought about, now you can spend more time with the kids. You know, we can take them snowboarding or fishing or whatever it is, a little bit more instead of being strapped all the time. That's a problem in America.

We're so strapped. We've got all these toys and all these things. We've gotta constantly keep making this money.

When you tell pastors in Africa that make \$300 a month, or do work for \$50 a week, lay people, construction workers, a week, folks, and we come to America, it's almost like our blessing has become a curse because it's hard for the rich man to enter heaven. Why, Jesus? Because riches can draw us away if we're not careful. Now, at this point, you might say, well, what's the point? It's very easy, very easy.

Downscale and then be able to give to God. The only way that money's gonna lose its power is to give it away. It doesn't lose its power hoarding on or investing.

Give it away to lose its power. Not everything. That's why, you know, tithe isn't necessarily a New Testament concept.

It's more giving from a cheerful heart, but it's a good number because it hurts a little bit. Does it not? So we're making 6,000, giving 600. That's two car payments.

Yeah, it hurts a little bit, but we're so blessed in this country, we don't even realize it. And then God, by giving to him, he can open up incredible doors. I mean, that we never even thought possible because we're honoring him and he knows I can trust that man or I can trust that woman.

So one of the best ways to do is just give it away. Not all of it. Not the majority of it.

Just give it away. Give it away. And that's how it loses its power because the power is in this, right? Get away from me.

I'm keeping every cent. It has power over you. I mean, I've got friends that look at their 401k and their stock and their gold every single week.

Oh, look at this. Oh, darn it. Look at, oh.

It's like they live their whole life like this. You know, it's just, oh. Oh, man.

They're the good week, bad week, good. How could you live like that? It doesn't make any sense. So God is trying to protect us from these things.

Then he goes right into it. Another scripture that we've heard a lot. The lamp of the body is the eye.

If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore that light in you is darkness, how great is that darkness? Now, I've preached on this before.

Many people have the lamp of the body. You know, you think what you look at. Now, of course, there's a lot of relevance there, but why is it tucked in right here? You go right in from where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Because remember when Jesus was talking, he didn't say, okay, hold it, stop. This will be verse 22. Let's go take a lunch break.

This is a fluid conversation. So you just read it straight through. Now, what I believe is happening, the eye represents, if you look, especially in the Hebrew literature, or Jewish, you know, ancient Jewish literature, the eye represents focus, direction, and movement.

That's what the eye, they used to think that the eye would actually take in the sun and transmit it out in different things. But the eye represents focus, direction, and movement. Does it not? Where my eye goes, that's where I go.

I'm working with my four-year-old right now on doing this too much. Bam, always hitting something. I mean, she got a big hit, you know, thing here.

She ran to the door. Look, I turn, look where you're going. Okay, daddy, I will.

Bam, something else. No, don't look at me. Look at where you're going.

Why? Why? Because right here, the eye is the lamp unto the body. The eye represents focus, direction, and movement. If your eye is on the right things, the light, it will affect everything else.

Conversely, if your eye is on the wrong things, darkness, because does it not start here and transmits out? The eye, the darkness. If your focus, direction, and movement is towards stockpiling treasure here, here's what I, I don't wanna paraphrase. If your focus, direction, and movement is towards stockpiling treasure here, and if the things of God are being choked out by worldly pursuits, you will not have the inner illumination of the Spirit.

You will be walking in darkness, stumbling, not even knowing what you're walking over. You ever go out into a cluttered garage with the light off, completely off? That's what we do. When our life is not illuminated by the Holy Spirit through God's word, through obedience, let me grab that word, through obedience to God's word, that turns the light on.

Now I have illumination, now I can see. But that's what people do, they walk through life, stumbling, they don't even know what they stumble over. That's being in darkness.

And John talks about that. 319, this is the verdict. Christ is handing down a verdict.

This is the verdict. Light has come into the world, but men love darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone, everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.

And we have to remember, evil is not just, you know, an American horror story. You know, you see the little, I saw the little trailer for that film, American Horror Story. It's like, this girl's up in the air and these things all stuck in her.

Somebody posted on Facebook, my new favorite movie. I'm thinking, that's not my new favorite movie. And I have a feeling you don't go to church anywhere, do you? Think about that.

I mean, so that's, but we think, oh yeah, that's evil, Shane. No, evil, evil, look it up and you can Google it, evil in the Greek language is those things that oppose the wills and ways of God. So if something is opposing God, it's evil.

When we're storing up treasure and got our focus on the things of this world, rejecting God, we are being evil. We're going in a bad direction. It's evil, it's against God.

But sometimes I think, sometimes we throw out the words, oh, I'm not wicked, I'm not evil. And you know, but all they mean is challenging God, going away from God. The Bible describes the intoxicating power of sin as deceptive and misleading, walking in darkness, stumbling, unable to see what we stumble over.

This explains why so many caught in sin, here we go, so many people caught in sin, they don't wanna repent of it, they're caught in it. They always describe a sense of confusion and a disconnect from God, which results in anger, fear, depression, anxiety, and hostility. Why? Because they are walking in darkness.

They're walking in darkness, they're upset. Wouldn't you not be, man, when that light is out in the garage, I'm upset, I'm walking, I'm upset, I can't see things, my life is confusing, there's too much anxiety, too much confusion, God seems distant. Well, often, it could be because we're caught in a certain sinful lifestyle, and pride is at the forefront.

Being prideful like these Pharisees and religious leaders, that's why I love to preach on repentance. It's one of my favorite words here at Westside, is it not? What does repentance do? It walks over and it turns on the light switch. Do you realize that? Repentance turns on the light switch.

It illuminates everything, as soon as we say, Lord, I'm sorry, I repent, Lord, get me back on track. Illumination, the feeling of the Spirit, everything, you're bridging that gap with God and you're fixing that. That's the beautiful word of repentance.

It turns the light back on and everything brings clarity. Verse 24, no one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Now, interestingly, historically, there were co-owners of slaves. There were two masters. Some slaves could have two masters, evening, morning, different things.

So what Jesus is doing, Jesus is contrasting this. Even if you think it's possible to serve both God and the God of this world, you can't. You can't serve two masters.

So at some point, we have to come to our realization is, what I'm saying tonight, many people might be convicted or they watch this on video. If you are serving two masters, you have to come to a point where you kill the one and begin to follow God with all your heart. You cannot serve both of them.

And you can't kill God, but what you do is you can quench and grieve the Spirit of God. And then when this master takes over, all hell breaks loose. And most Christians, including myself, and looking at my past too, are miserable when they're trying to serve.

But this master, I love this. I love this, but I know I need to be doing this. How often do you hear that? I know I need to be doing this.

I know I should be. I need to get back into church. I need to start reading my Bible again.

I need to start praying again. We put all these agains in there. I need to get back into the Word of God.

But I sure like these friends. I sure like to get drunk once a week. Oh, I can make it hit home if you want me to.

But I sure like all these ungodly programs on television that just feed my flesh. But I love this master. Shane, can I go to heaven and go to church once in a while? And then can I serve him on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday? But on Saturday, and maybe even Sunday, can I serve this master? Can I do some things spiritual here? But no, but Shane, but this one's calling me back.

He's calling my name. He knows my name. He's enticing me.

Yeah, you wanna know why? Because we are led away by our own desires, James says. There's some desires in here that are not good. And when that desire comes forth and it's conceived, it births for sin.

And it goes, takes me back to this master. But then I say, no, I've gotta go to this master. I need this master today.

I need, no, but then on Monday, but next week I'll start. And we go back and forth serving two masters for the rest of our life. And Jesus said, you cannot serve two masters.

God would call that spiritual idolatry, idolatry and adultery. His people would serve two masters. And he would constantly call them back.

That was one of the prophet Elijah's roles. He stood on Mount Carmel and he said, how long will you waver between two opinions? Another translation would say, how long will you falter between two opinions? If God is God, serve him. But if Baal be God, serve him.

Make up your mind. Stop going back and forth because you're not serving God. You're actually serving this master more.

Because this master doesn't care if you have affairs. He doesn't care if you dabble in religion. He's got your soul and he wants to take you down.

This master is a terrible master. It's a master of darkness and depression and pulling us back to that. When this master's a loving father calling his children back, not an angry God.

He's calling us back to him. Would you come back to this master? Would you come back to me? People, come back to me. Now, of course, there are consequences for serving this master.

How many of us have consequences from serving this master? So we have to make it a point to go back to the loving God calling us. And the contrast really is competing feelings, affections, time, energy, and resources. That's what happens.

It's competing, right? Well, I want to give resources and energy here, but then I want to give resource, and we just go, we're just going back and forth like a ping pong ball. And it hurts to get hit by the paddle. Going back and forth, back and forth.

That is, I'll be honest with you, that's a major problem with the church in America. This Laodicean church, this lukewarm church. Be hot or cold, but because you're lukewarm, Jesus said, I've got to spew you out of my mouth.

Serve me with all of your, Jesus knows we can't do it perfectly. We all stumble and fall and fail, but it's what master do we look to? What master do when we fall? I'm looking to this master. I'm having a hard day.

I'm looking to this master. I'm being pulled to this one. I don't like this one.

Can I come back to you? And we're constantly focusing on Christ and our relationship with Him. So let me say this in closing. This will be your greatest battle, but also your greatest time of victory.

This two masters, this battle that goes on in your mind. I want to read a few scriptures. Romans 12, do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Philippians 4, 8, finally brethren, whatever things are pure and noble and honest and just and pure, meditate on these things. Where, Paul? In the mind. 2 Corinthians, so that we do not lose heart.

Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. How is our inner self renewed day by day? Right here. My outer is dying.

My inner is being renewed right here. Psalms 119, I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. And here's the key.

The drift away from God always begins in the mind. Did you catch that? See, I also went to the school of hard knocks. I haven't been a pastor all my life and just didn't graduate seminary and have no idea how the real world works.

I know how the real world works and I know that there are some in this room right now who are on a drift away from God. It starts right here. This is where when you see somebody away from God eventually, it's because right here, the drift, they started.

They start, and you know who you are right now. How do I know? Because conviction is setting in. Oh, I thought he said he was closing.

I was hoping this was over. I am, this is a closing point. The drift starts right here.

Where are we go? Negativity, depression, wrong relationships, feeding our mind with ungodly things all day long. No time for the word of God. I've talked to young adults all the time.

They don't have time for the word of God, but they've got tons of time for ungodly things that are just pulling them in the wrong direction. The drift away from God starts right here. But what's the encouraging part of this? The pull back to God begins there as well.

So the drift begins here. Where does the pull back begin? This master's calling me back right here. Right here, he's calling me back.

So the mind, as we renew our mind, be not conformed to this world, Paul would say, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that God is a good and gracious God. Satan, you wanna take me down. You wanna take me to the pits of hell.

You wanna ruin my marriage. Oh sure, it looks good right now, but sin has a price to pay. All the stuff that's pulling me away, it's wrong.

The drift back, the drift away starts here, but also the pull back to God starts here. So you can renew your mind, renew your thinking, and get back into the word of God and let it transform your life and say not anymore, I repent to that thinking. I repent to those wrong relationships.

I repent to that bitterness and jealousy and demonic type of things that I've been doing. Lord, would you get me back on track? Renew my thinking, renew my thinking, renew my thinking. The Bible's filled with renewing our mind.

Scriptures throughout the entire text pulling us back to Him. And basically, as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. If you wanna just get right down to the nuts and bolts of this.

Jesus would say, as you think, so are you. That's why Fentelic Men's at Men's Conference, if all you're doing is filling your mind with garbage all week long, and you wonder why you lost your passion for your spouse, well, you might wanna start there. If you're filling your mind with ungodly relationships, friends that

pull you in the wrong direction, we all know who they are, let's not be silly here and go, oh, I don't know if they do or they don't.

What direction are they leading you? Are they pushing you towards Christ or towards that master? Because anybody who's calling me and pushing me back to this master, I gotta go. See ya, I'm losing your number from my cell phone. He means more to me.

Maybe I'll come and minister to you someday, but right now, you're pulling me away from my master. I gotta go, I've gotta see ya later. How bad do you want it? Something's pulling us.

Relationships, wrong thinking. Where God's Word has to anchor you and pull you back. Some of you, you could be renewed in your thinking right now if you just turn off a lot of that junk and get into the Word of God.

Live in this 20, 30, 45 minutes a day. Start renewing your thinking. Watch depression run for cover.

Watch anxiety get out of the way. Watch, why? Because I'm renewing my Word. Everything has to bow at the foot of God's Word.

I truly believe that. I've seen so many things happen by just renewing the mind. Men, men in jail, men, big men, I'm scared of, used to beat their wife and that's why they're in jail.

Now they come out and they're broken, humble men. What did it? Salvation, the Word of God, penetrating their heart, a broken sinner, repenting and now allowing the Word of God to change their mind. You have to be filled with the Spirit of God by renewing your mind on these things.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/3yMGU05vcU.mp4>

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