

The More I Seek, the More I Find

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God with discernment and understanding the value of holiness in our lives.

Duration: 43:29

Scripture: Isaiah 59:2, Hosea 10:12, Matthew 7:7, Galatians 6:7

Topics: "Seeking God", "Prayer Life"

Description

This sermon delves into the importance of seeking God diligently, emphasizing the need to align our actions with our prayers. It explores the concept of reaping what we sow in various aspects of life, highlighting the significance of living in accordance with God's will to receive His blessings. The message underscores the necessity of a genuine relationship with God as our Father to experience answered prayers and the transformative power of seeking Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

We're still in Matthew. We're going to be in here a while and I took a kind of a detour for Christmas. But if you have your Bibles, you can turn to Matthew 7 Matthew chapter 7 verse 6. It's going to be one of the challenging scriptures that people are kind of I don't know if they're not challenged by it, but it's kind of a the meeting is if you look at different commentaries, there's some division there, but let's look at this real quick Matthew chapter 7 verse 6. Do not give what is holy to the dogs nor cast your pearls before swine lest they trample them under their feet and turn and tear you in pieces.

That's a pretty strong warning from Jesus himself and then he goes on to say ask and it will be given to you seek and you will find knock and it will be open to you for everyone who asks receives and he who seeks finds and to him who knocks it will be opened or what man is there among you who if his son asked for bread would give him a stone or if he asked for fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven give good gifts or good things to those who ask him. Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you also or whatever you want men to do to you do also to them for this is the law and the prophets basically Jesus saying this is the law Genesis Exodus Leviticus numbers the prophets of prophetic books of the Bible. This is everything everything stands on this point that were to do to others as we want them to do to us, but let's look at the first part there.

Do not give what is holy to the dogs nor cast pearls before swine lest they trample them under their feet and turn and tear you in pieces. Now, what's interesting here is the main candidates for what is holy when we're talking about what is holy? What's he talking about? What's been proposed? It's a gospel message or it's a sermon on the Mount or it's Israel or it's the Eucharist or different things theologians are divided on what exactly is holy. What is this? And that's and then the main candidates for dogs obviously behind instead of being just dogs the Bible refers to dogs as dogs, but when Jesus is mentioning the word dogs here, it's been I guess probably people have guessed that's either the Gentiles the Romans unbelievers heretics Christians not living up to the profession.

So that's the challenge. What's holy? What's not and what are dogs? What's he talking about? Well, what I usually like to do on a text or scripture where you're not too sure on the meaning. Yeah, he says this they say this this person says this what I usually try to do is talk about what we do know and start from there.

What we do know is holy and I'm going to read from the Erdman's dictionary the Bible. This is powerful. If you want to know what holy is grasp this meaning the root idea of holiness is that of separation or withdraw.

It's a divine quality part of the intrinsic nature of God, but absent from a fallen world. The basic theological problem is that this Holy God desires to have fellowship with sinful human beings in a fallen world since God cannot become less holy in order to fellowship with humans. They must become more holy or sanctified in order to fellowship with him and this holiness can be contaminated.

It can be lessened or it can be increased by contact with various things that the Bible talks about and feeling and thinking or acting in ways that God has forbidden which are sinful. So if I could sum that up holiness basically is God can't come down and you know dethrone himself and become a little bit more sinful so he can fellowship with us. He's a holy righteous God and we are sinful human fallen men.

So in order to have that fellowship that genuine relationship with God in a deeper more impacting way, he calls us out of those things come out from among them be separated and will never be perfect. We know that however there the Bible talks about being holy in many different scriptures Paul says be obedient obedient children do not lust after the Gentiles. So once our lifestyle begins to draw closer to God through holiness, we become more holy and and and be able to relate to him or not.

Do you ever realize or do you ever wonder why some scripture seems to jump out of people why they have such a passion and devotion for God and a lot of other Christians don't. They could care less about church. They could care less about the Bible.

They're they're they're saved but they're not they're not having a walk with God. A lot of that depends on being filled the spirit of God. Are they holy as your lifestyle reflecting a holy righteous God and it's interesting because we're not let me make a clarification or two when it comes to salvation.

There's nothing we can do. We're that's what Jesus did on the cross that atoning work of Christ. Now, we're in right relationship with God.

Now, we're holy but then the Bible talks about another holiness. God's continued calling his people out of the world come out from among them be separate. Don't go live out in the desert and never talked to anybody.

But he says go and be holy what we watch what we view and listen to who we associate with what we feed our mind in the word of God all these things. There's a distinction. There's a difference and to have a passionate relationship with God.

It takes spiritual disciplines. It's interesting. Jesus said when you give when you pray and when you fast these different spiritual disciplines, I'm going to talk a little bit more about that later next week, but there's this idea of holiness is we make certain lifestyle changes.

We turn from from what we know to be wrong. We fight the flesh. We don't give into it.

And as a result, we become more holy or drawn to Christ. Does that make sense? Fill with the Spirit of God. That's why some people are more filled with the Spirit of God and some aren't nine times out of ten and I'd even say ten times out of ten look at their lifestyle.

There's a big difference there. There's a disconnect. There's no difference.

There's no distinction. They look just like the world. So there's no holiness there.

There's no desire for God. So that's what we do know. We know that what is holy is what is good.

What is God given? Now, what are dogs in Scripture? What do we know? They're always hostile. They're always aggressive and they're always angry. Anytime he's talking about dogs in the Bible, you dogs, you dogs, this, this, this, throughout, throughout Scripture.

It's aggressive. It's hostile. It's angry.

So to me, it would seem to be that the Jesus is saying don't give what is holy and good and righteous to those who are angry and aggressive and hostile to the message. However, how does that play out? Because we're supposed to bring the message to a hostile world and to an angry world. So I think the key here is the takeaway that I want to get from this is we're to be wise as serpents, gentle as doves.

Jesus has said before we are to judge because we just talked about judging in the beginning of Matthew 7. Judge not lest you be judged. It's his whole discourse on judging, removing the plank from your eye before you can see the speck in your, your brother's eye. And then he goes right into do not give what is holy.

So in my opinion, there's some aspect of judging there. We have to judge. We have to differentiate between right and wrong.

Should I invest my time? In other words, I thought I was going to help this person, but I ended up getting hurt. How often have we said that? So I think there's a, there's a plea there to be careful. Be careful.

And you look at all of us have neighbors. I'm hoping, you know, you live, there's somebody and there's people on my street that unless God prompts me, I'm probably not going to take what's holy to the dogs, to swines. And that I'm not saying it in a mean way.

I'm just saying what the Bible says, because we're being, you got to be careful there. I just know they're not open for it. I'll pick up their trash.

I'll invite them to dinner. I'll wave. I'll offer to mow their lawn.

But until God prompts me, I'm not going to give all of myself, invest, and try to put this gospel message in front of them. If I have this discernment about, you know, it's not the right time. This isn't going to be pretty.

It's not going to be good. Because some people have the shotgun approach instead of the 30-06. You know what the shotgun approach is? In a shotgun, it has a shell, two and three-quarter, three-inch shell, depending on what type of magnum it is.

But inside that shell is 200 or 250 little BBs. So when you shoot a shotgun, you're hoping, I hope about 50 or 60 of those little guys make their target. But the rest, I don't care where they go.

And sometimes Christians have that approach. We're going to tell everybody about Jesus. We're going to, and I want to be careful here, because even saying that sounds a little bit, well, aren't we supposed to do that? Yeah, we are.

But what do you do with scriptures like these? Be careful that you don't cast your pearls before a swine or they'll trap you down and basically, I don't know exactly what they'll do, but it sounds, tearing you in pieces is not a good thing. So we have to use discernment there. Obviously, they're not going to kill us.

Obviously, they're not going to do this, but sometimes they do. I mean, I've just been looking at pictures in Nigeria and churches are burned down. Christians, their charred bodies are there with a little baby next to them.

This is serious stuff. And we think in America, oh, I'm being persecuted because somebody took our parking spot or we don't have a seat. I mean, we have no idea what real persecution is.

So I think Jesus just saying, be careful. Don't use a shotgun approach and just shoot the gospel to everybody and you're going to upset, you know, nine times out of ten, you're going to, you know, gay people are going to hell and this and this, all this stuff that doesn't, is not productive. But the 30-06 is what is that? You have the scope, right? You line it right up on your target and you pull the trigger and you hit it next, next, next.

That's the difference here. So I believe, again, look to the scriptures yourself, run it through, see what you think. But I think we just need to be careful here.

Answer not a fool according to his folly, Proverbs would say, right? Answer not a fool according to his folly. Do not answer that fool according to his folly or I'll fall into that same trap. But then we read the next verse.

Answer a fool according to his folly. What's going on here? Because see, these aren't absolute blanket statements. You can't say never answer a fool according to his folly because sometimes we need to.

But they're saying be very careful. Do you ever get tricked into those conversations? I get them sometimes on email. I mean, these guys just want to blast me and critique and just nail them, nine times out of ten, I'm thinking I don't need to go there.

I'm not going to sit here and invest time. A lot of this, I think, has to do with time as well. See, time is not like money.

You can't earn it. You can't save it. All you can do is spend it.

So you have to spend wisely. And if I'm going to invest my time into other people at the expense of even my children or my wife or my walk with the Lord, you've got to be careful there because people can drain all of your time and just take it from you. You're giving, you're giving things of God.

You're giving these things that are holy and right. You're giving these and they just keep draining you. They have no intention on listening.

They have no intention on changing, but they're draining all of your time and all of your resources, your energy. And he's just saying be careful here. Use wise judgment.

Don't cast what is good before those who are going to trample it under their feet and just tear you in pieces. And you've seen people like this, right? We refer to them or the world does as doormats. You know, they just let everybody take advantage.

They just let everybody, you know, run, run a mill and tear them to pieces, their whole ice and shambles. It's falling apart. Why? Because they didn't use discernment in that area.

And pearls, of course, are great value. Swines are dirty. And we, you know, you have this imagery there of you're taking what is beautiful and pure and these pearls, this gold is whatever it is, and you're putting it down there for the pigs to run in it and trample it under their feet.

So that's why people are divided. Theologians are divided on what exactly is this? Well, all I know is I don't want what's holy being trampled by the pigs. And in the context of judging in Matthew 7, we're to use righteous judgment and avoid pitfalls whenever we can.

It kind of reminds me of walking circumspectly, as Paul would say, walking carefully because the days are evil. Why walk carefully? Because I can fall in here. I can trip there.

I can get hurt there. So we use discernment. Christians should be very discerning people.

They should not be gullible. I had a family the other probably a month ago. You know, she's out with her kids and stuff and actually didn't have any money.

But she said, hey, I need some. We need some help with our family. We lost this.

And I'm like, oh, I'll tell you what I gave her the postcard. It's Friday. I said tomorrow, be at the church 530 service and we'll take we'll make sure you're taken care of after the service.

We'll get dialed in. I'm on my way out the door. Well, guess who never showed? It's got her phone number.

It's got her email. It's got everything. Never heard from them.

So it's a good little test. If you want to see their sincerity there, you know, a lady yesterday. She's out of gas.

I filled up her gas thing at shale and then give her car said, hey, we'd love to see a church and okay, you know, we can maybe we can give you fill your tank up get you some more gas. I just like to test the sincerity here because not everybody holding a sign is in need. That's the hard part.

I just be honest with you. Sometimes they go get a hotel. They go down and get their Mickey's Big Mouth 40 and then they get drunk and then they start over again by the freeway.

It's a rotating thing. So how can you best help those people? They'll all say God bless they got it down. But my heart breaks and I want to help them.

Hey, here's a five. Here's a 10. Here's a 20.

You know, I want to help them but there's discernment there because I don't feel good about it all the time. There's something I don't know. You look like you can work pretty well.

Let's put you to work. I've given people contractors phone numbers. Hey, they can put you to work Monday.

They never hear from them. So you got to wonder if somebody's that desperate and despair. I mean, if your family's in need, she would have been here.

Probably. I mean, I'm assuming I'm hoping nothing happened. They had our email.

They have a phone number and we would have definitely helped them. But that's just one way. I try to use discernment because you have to in church because everybody we get calls every week for this is going on.

We need this and we need this and we need that and so you've got to use discernment in this area. I think that's what this boils down to be wise as serpents use discernment. Don't throw things wholly to the dogs and let the pigs trample under your pearls.

So you guys can take all that and say I wonder what Jesus was talking about and then you'll be joining the rest of us because nobody's really clear on what this has to do with. The verse the next verse ask and it will be given to you seek and you will find knock and it will be open to you for everyone who asks receives and he who seeks finds and to him who knocks it will be open or what man is there among you who if his son asked for bread will give him a stone or if he asked for a fish will give him a serpent. The obvious answer is nobody right? I mean, okay.

I don't want to fill in the blanks on that one. If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him therefore, whatever you want men to do due to them also for this is the law and the prophets and I find it interesting that this isn't just asking he's not saying ask and it will be given to you. You want something ask ask ask seek and knock this scripture seems to indicate that God has things blessings and open doors available, but we have to ask we have to contend.

It's one thing to ask. It's another thing to seek. I have to find something and knock Lord open this door.

I was reminded of when we decided to plant this church. I prayed Lord if it's your will if it's your will Lord, I'm asking show me let this happen. And I just didn't leave it at that.

I had to do a lot of knocking. I had to try to find buildings. We looked at buildings every week going searching God.

If this is you there's basically your prayer has some footprints on it. What was that famous saying? I'm going to work as if it's all up to me, but I'm going to pray as if it's all up to God and I think that's healthy you get on one side or the other and you won't get a lot accomplished. If it's all about me doing I got to do this.

I got to do this. I got to do this. God will say, okay, mister.

Let me show you who's really in charge. You're not going to accomplish anything. You need to rely on me.

But if all I do is sit at home and kick my feet up on the thing and got Duck Dynasty on and you know, and okay Lord, you're going to do this. Yeah, I know I need to do this but Lord you're going to do this. I'm just going to wait.

I'm not going to do anything. God saying come on seek seek look look look for look for what I want you to do not and it's that persistence because one thing to say something and it's completely it's something completely different to actually go and back up your words with actions. It's it's what we're saying is I'm in pursuit of God the more I seek him the more I find him just like that song said the more I do you realize that the more you seek God the more you will find him and the more you find him the more you want to seek him and that's what I want to tell young adults a lot of times.

Listen, you've got to seek God with all your heart or old adults. We all need to hear it. You need to seek him because the more you find you the more you seek the more you find.

Matt you might remember this if you're back there, but when I think when we start first started coming here a few years ago, we couldn't find a son. Remember that he was gone. And finally turned into panic mode.

I'm getting ready to come up here and start the service and we're out in the lobby and like we don't know where he's at. We have no clue. And so I'm okay getting ready to shut down the church service.

You got everybody looking about 10-15 people looking I'm running out to the back on the grass hop in the wall. See if he's at the school and everybody's in panic mode. We're seeking why what's that parallel? I have to find what is lost.

I have to seek so it should our hunger for God should parallel that and of course we find out he was I think he's sitting up here on the front row or laying down and that was on the piano and he knew it all the time. We're all scrambling out there and it was it was pretty it was pretty chaotic and I told you before I've accidentally misplaced my son at the fair or different things where it's like I can't find him and everything changes everything changes. I'm not hungry anymore.

I don't care when we go you get out of my way. Drop the food. I'm finding him wherever he's at.

I'm finding him and that's what this word we think. Oh, yeah, when you seek God, it's not just come to church and well, okay Shane said some things and I think I'll pray on my way home. There's a there's a passion there that drives everything.

Everything is driven by this passion to find God. So because I want to find God, I'm going to watch what I watch and what I put into my mind. I'm going to be careful of who I associate with who I hang out with what I'm allowing to fill it to to influence my spiritual side.

I'm be very careful. Why because I have to seek him at any cost. Very important.

The takeaway from this my seeking and knocking must align with my prayer life. You're seeking and you're knocking must must line with your prayer life. Now here I can't avoid this topic.

So we have to talk about what about when asking leads to receiving but what about when asking doesn't lead to receiving well James 4 3 when you ask you do not receive. Wait a minute. Jesus just said ask and receive is James and contradiction here.

Well, of course not. We know that all of Scripture is interwoven. When you ask you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

And now what he's doing here is he's contrasting Jesus is contrasting earthly fathers as much as we want what is good for our kids. God knows even better. Let me sing.

Listen, if you know how to give good gifts to your kids, do you don't you think that God in heaven is going to give good gifts to his children to those who ask and I thought I often give gifts for selfish reasons. God doesn't. Happens every Saturday night.

We get home from church. My kids want candy and I cave in fine. Just take it just put it settle down.

Let's settle down. You're all wound up. Take it.

You can have it. You want this? Yes, have this and you want this? Yes, have this and we give into that. Don't we? Why? Because now life's more comfortable for me.

Now I can sit down and relax because I gave them what they wanted but really is that what they needed? No, they don't need candy. They need an organic apple cut up with some with some yeah, organic peanut butter just slice it. That's what they need.

But why don't want to why don't want to do that? Because it's selfish. I got to get up and cut apples and make this and so see a lot of times they ask and I answer but it's not good. God never says ask and I'll answer and it's bad.

God doesn't do things for selfish motives and because so a lot of times when he's at when we're asking and asking and asking we have to say Lord what's going on here? Would you show me would you reveal your will to me? We often want out of challenging situations many times to I've noticed Lord get me out of this and Lord says I'm going to keep you there until you learn why I've put you there or until you can develop trust. See we want the easy way out all the time me too. We want that but God the Jesus saying listen, this is a good God you nobody's going to ask for a stone.

You give him a fish and vice versa. God gives good gifts to those who love him who follow him. Now I want you to hold on a buckle up because we're going to put James 4 in context.

You lust and you do not have so you commit murder. You're envious and cannot obtain so you fight and quarrel you do not have because you do not ask but when you do ask you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives so that you may spend it on your pleasures you adulterous and adulterers. Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of this world makes himself an enemy of God.

That's the context of the scripture. You might say well adulterous. What's he talking about anytime when God talks about adultery in context with him.

He's not talking about the sexual sin of this. He's talking about breaking the commitment and a lot of times we see it the parallels of of intimacy intimacy with marriage and paralleling with God adultery is idolatry. Basically, if you think of adultery to God is idolatry.

We're following something else. We're breaking the commitment with God and really it's interesting. Although the in the the act of adultery that merit that married couples are commit.

It's really not even though that's wrong. It's the commitments been broken in the heart that is just they're just acting out what has already taken place in the heart the commitments gone. I'm giving into these selfish needs.

I'm committing adultery. So same thing when God talks about it in the Bible that that these things are going on my heart. I'm drifting from him.

I'm breaking off this relationship. I'm going to seek the world in and James says listen the world the carnal mindset is at enmity with God is at war with God, but I'm going to run away from God and run to the world and basically commit adultery spiritual adultery because I'm breaking that commitment. So that's what he's saying here.

You are committing adultery. You're there's a friendship with the world and you're hostile toward God and you think that I'm going to answer your prayers. But at this point there is a prayer that God will answer Lord.

I want to get back on track Lord. Help me get back on track. I want that intimate relationship with you again.

The more I seek you the more I find you and the more I find you the more I'll seek you and drawing back. He wants us to answer those prayers. He wants to answer those prayers when asking doesn't lead to receiving.

Let's talk about this for a minute when asking doesn't lead to receiving when we say God, I really want that he says often know that will destroy you. See we don't know that do we my kids ask stuff all the time saying there's no way I'm not going to explain myself. There's just not going to happen.

You're not getting a cell phone at 8 or have Facebook at night. It will destroy you literally spiritually emotionally getting hurt God. I really need that.

Don't we say that I really need that and sometimes his answer is in my time. There's more preparation needed. Sit down.

I really need that. Hold on in my time. See we forget that God's got a timetable.

It's not doesn't align with ours very often. Why because by nature we always want the quickest route the quickest the fastest soon as we can get it impatience rules and rain. So God has to sometimes pull those back and then in his time or we pray God heal me God heal me.

I can't continue and he says my grace is sufficient God. I don't understand. He says trust me trust his faith.

It's impossible to please God without faith and trust. You can't have faith in God and not trust him. And you can't trust him unless you have faith their inner woven.

So think of faith that way faith is trusting Lord. I know I know you're in control. I know you're going to see me through Lord.

Help my unbelief help my lack of faith Lord, but I'm trusting you that pleases God and you can even say Lord. I don't like how this looks. I don't understand it, but I'm going to faithfully follow you come hell or high water.

I'm going to follow you and I trust in you. I trust that you have my back. I trust that you're going to open doors and no man can open and shut doors Lord.

I'm giving you everything. I'm allowing you to guide my life. And of course of many people pray God.

Why did this happen? God, why did this happen? Don't quote Romans 8 28 to me tonight. Why did this happen? Oh brother all things work together for good for those who love God and are according called according to his purposes. Just a bit of advice.

If anybody's going through anything dramatic or traumatic don't quote that scripture. Let God slowly plant that scripture into their heart later on maybe. But I remember I was reading, you know, Greg Laurie when he lost his son or Rick Warren all these things in the news and how many people they had just, you know, sending support.

Oh, you know, don't worry about it. You know, God's got your back and all things work together for good and you can't lose a child and then hear that scripture that takes time for the heart to be to be fixed and mended God. Why did this happen? People say it.

Why did this happen Lord? I why did this happen? I don't understand and they get mad at God and it's okay to get mad at God from time to time and be confused. He says take everything to me. Take your burden.

My burden is light. Give me everything my child. I can't explain everything now.

Just trust me. Because a lot of times we want God to answer this and this and this and this and this answer and I want answers. Why? My kids say why daddy? Why can't we go there? Why can't we do this? Why just we're not going to happen tonight.

Just trust me. Why? I can see the big picture. You can't.

I don't like it any more than you don't like it. But here's the two options. Either you draw closer to God and you trust him or you become very bitter and very angry and that's not a good direction to go.

Think about that's our only two choices when it comes to difficult things. Either trust him or get mad at him and stay upset and allow that bitterness to come in and make I've talked to many Christians whose hearts are as hard as stone and when you unpack it. Unpack the present open it up.

They're mad at God. How could he allow this? But understand that it's okay to have those feelings. We all do that's why you work through them.

And you take him to God Lord. I'm feeling this way, but I don't want to feel this way. Lord help me.

Or people say God, I keep asking and asking and asking. Nothing happens. Sometimes God will say my spirit keeps convicting you why there's no answer.

You need to remove that besetting sin that is constantly at your door. See we can't ignore this point either. Let's just turn the page real quick.

I don't did I just say that I sure did say that. Besetting sin continual sin will hinder a prayer life. Unlike anything I've seen before.

It's like a big rock in the road. This move this out. God move this out.

No, no, no, no, no besetting sin. It's it's God's convicting us of those areas that we know this is hindering my prayers being answered. I mean, I could just sit here and just fill in the blanks for the next half hour till the next service comes in.

But you know, and I know if he's convicting you. I mean, I've been convicted before about people come to mind and shame. Just got to call them ask for forgiveness.

And oh, there's no way God. There's no way you know what they did to me. They need to come ask me and then I'll get into praying that week and like, oh.

Man, there's no way. There's no way that's wrong. I'm not going to call apologize to them.

Hopefully that'll go away soon and then you get and then here it is just eating at you. It's just eating at you. All right, I submit.

But how many prayers and trying to seek God were hindered because of that? I wouldn't even get into how much pornography is captured the minds of many of the men in our culture and they think they're going to come and pray God do this and God and bless my business and bless to this when you're looking at filth at home. Do we really think that we're going to come in and sing Holy Hands right lifting up Holy Hands Lord bless your Holy Name and then go click on it tomorrow. Like we've got this we've got this down.

It's just you know, it's yeah, I know it's bad but it kind of I'm stuck in this habit all these things these attitudes. What about judgmentalism and arrogance and bitterness and gossip and that you and you're and God's convicting you of that week in and week out week in week out stop that stop it. No, no, no, no, no, no.

And we wonder why our prayer life isn't flourishing. So I truly believe that besetting sin and that's why we use the word besetting. I'm careful is all of us sin.

All of us sin. It's funny. I'll tell you a story last Saturday.

I don't know if this would be considered big sin, but anything I think that God tells you to do but I was on my way to church last Saturday. I was in a hurry and I see this guy walking up the street that I've known about for 10 years now. It's like go turn around.

I'm sure much there's I'm in a hurry. That's weird. Come on.

I just kept coming down 60th. Well guess who's in the same spot walking today? So, okay, this is not a coincidence. So I'd you turn on J Avenue K went back and I don't you know, he's hopefully going to come this evening or next Saturday, but just those things where we know that God is convicting God is drawing us.

There's bigger sins. Trust me, but those you know air everything right, you know marital issues where you said something your spouse. Oh, I shouldn't have said that or you handled something wrong and but the problem is many people don't repent of it pride comes in and we're going to treat our spouse that way for the for 2014.

I'm not wrong. She's wrong until she apologizes. This is not going anywhere.

And then we try to get into the word as if the God doesn't hear any of that and we wonder why are paralyzed, you know, void. We wonder why the word of God is dead yet. We're convicted.

The Hound of Heaven is not letting loose. It's like, you know, that little devil on the shoulders. You've seen those.

It's like that. Come on, you know, no, no, no, no, no and pride comes in the way and I'm learning now that it's best to just when you know what to do just do it. Yeah, it hurts a little bit.

But do you want to experience the pain of discipline or the pain of regret? Do you want your prayer life to be hindered from here on out? Or do you want to be flourishing and because you're it's like I talked about last week. If you weren't here go and listen to that message talking about that conduit. We have to clean out that conduit the filth in our hearts and clean that out so we can be more receptive to God.

It's difficult. But Paul refers to this as battle spiritual battle and it's not easy and I'm tired of people making it easy because that lets people down many times. They think that Jesus is a butler who's going to give me whatever I want whenever I want and then when life isn't perfect and I'm not happy then God mad at God.

But if you teach them the totality of Scripture that yeah life can be challenging, but he's your anchor. When your boat drifts, he pulls you back. When your house is feeling shaky, that's the foundation.

You teach them that yeah, that's the normal Christian walk. It's difficult. It's challenging.

So I don't even know if my voice is going to make it for the next service. So here's the takeaway the danger area. We often drift from God when we don't like his answers.

Many people get upset and they get away from God. Why did he take this? Why did he take that person or why didn't he answer this and he's saying listen, it'll all make sense someday. Challenges that should draw us closer, but often they don't.

Isn't that interesting? There's another thing I don't like about this, but challenges in life should draw us closer to God, but often they don't. We get upset. The song said the more I seek him the more I find him.

Therefore, whatever you want men to do, the next portion of that verse we're reading in Matthew. Therefore, whatever you want men to do, do also to them for this is the law and the prophets. Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do to them also.

We know this, right? It's been referred to as the golden rule. What about in Galatians 6? Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked.

Whatever a man sows, he will reap. It's interesting. He doesn't say you might reap.

You know, if things are done just, you know, a certain way. He's saying whatever you sow, you will reap. So when people say karma, I say no Galatians.

It's just karma. No, it's Galatians right here. Galatians 6, 7. Don't be deceived, which tells me that we can be deceived.

If I can do this, I'm not going to suck. If you plant seeds, whatever seeds you plant are eventually going to come up. Spiritually, physically, emotionally.

Do not be deceived. God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, whatever a man or a man reaps, whatever he sows.

And here's what happens. We pray for finances, but we don't give. Right? We pray.

Lord, open my financial door, but we don't give. We don't help those in need. So you see, sometimes we're reaping what we're sowing.

It goes back to this point. Now, I want to be careful here too because those people who ask for money all the time. I mean, I must be a magnet because wherever I go, Trader Joe's, Home Depot, they're always walking through the parking lot wanting money.

And again, definite needs. God could be bringing somebody, you can help them. But a lot of times I wonder this.

Is there maybe something that God's trying to teach you through this hardship? Maybe. I mean, that would be one of the first questions I would ask. So we pray, Lord, help me with my finances, but we don't give.

Pray. We pray for family members to know Jesus, but we argue with them every chance we get. We pray for God's will in a relationship, but we continue in sexual sin.

We pray that God change our spouse, but we ourselves need changing. We're, ouch is right. See, think about reap what you sow isn't just money.

People like to think, oh, I plant a seed, it might come back. And let me tell you this issue on tithing or offering. Be very careful when you give to God expecting a big return.

That's the only reason you're giving. That's a hard issue. Lord, I'm going to give to you because it's a form of worship.

Whatever you, Lord, just hold me in the palm of your hands. Keep me, guide me. I don't care if you give me back, and that's one thing with TV preachers.

So in your hundreds, you're going to get a thousand. Not only is the motive wrong, these guys are charlatans. The whole system's wrong.

That's what reaping and sowing is in all areas of life. We pray that God move in our lives, but we ourselves are not moved by God. Think about that.

A lot of people, okay, you know, a lot of people leave here convicted like, Lord, I want more of you. I want this, you know. But, and they leave it at that.

Ask, knock, seek, get on some worship music, get in the word of God, even when it doesn't feel good, begin to seek him, then you'll find him. And that idea of seeking isn't easy. It's like a little kid hidden back there.

I've got to seek all the chairs to find him. It's not easy. Seeking God is not easy.

It's not meant to be. We pray that God bless our business. This is huge.

We pray that God bless our business, but we treat our employees with contempt and we take advantage. Reap what you sow. Lord, what's wrong with my business? That's why I'm worried sometimes with guys with the sign of the fish on their card and on their car.

You know, when they want to use the Christian symbols to get business, be careful. Not all the time. Some people have great hearts and want to do that, but just use wisdom.

We pray for peace and comfort, but we fill our mind with chaos and confusion. I saw on Facebook, actually, I think it was yesterday, I was going through, and there was a girl I know is going through a lot, struggling with depression and searching God. And of course, her favorite movie is American Horse Story.

Just loves to put on Facebook and all of this, I can't believe. I don't know, there might be a connection there. You're going to fill your mind with that garbage and wonder why is God distant? We pray for peace and comfort, but fill our mind with chaos and confusion.

We pray for the filling of the Spirit, but we fill ourselves with the things of the world. We pray for more of God, but we remove him from our daily lives. You see how prayer can sometimes isn't answered? We pray this, but we're not willing to seek and not to do the things that should be backing our prayer life.

Prayer is not just I say this prayer and then I hope it happens. Prayer is I'm praying this way, I'm hoping for this, I'm contending for this, and now I'm going to live my life in such a way that God can honor that prayer life. We see this all the time.

We're praying for finances and God is convicting a person maybe to go back to school. Well, you can't just pray, you got to go back to school. You've got to pursue what you think God's put on your heart and use wisdom.

You will reap what you sow, this I know. The more you seek, the more you find. Let Hosea speak to us today.

Sow for yourself righteousness, reap steadfast love, break up the fallow ground for it is time to seek the Lord that he may come and rain down righteousness upon you. And I just want to close with this. It's interesting and I always want to do this.

Jesus says, will not your father in heaven give good gifts? So it begs the question is, is he really your father? Do you truly know him? Because we can't say I'm praying, I'm praying to God and my father is

going to give me good gifts if he's not your father. So I always want to give the opportunity to challenge people and say, listen, look at your heart. If you don't know him, if he's not your father, many prayers won't be answered because of that reason right there.

God told in the Old Testament, he said, is not my hand short that I cannot save? Is not my ear heavy that I cannot hear? But your sins, your iniquities have separated you from God. So that he will not hear you. And the only way to bridge that gap is a right relationship with Christ.

He was condemned. My sin was placed on him. And many people say, Shana, help.

I've lost my way. Help, I've lost my way. This all makes sense.

We'll just turn back to him. That's the whole point of the message. The more I seek him, the more I find him.

And if you have never sought him, now's the opportunity. If you've grown distant, guess what? Everything changes by seeking him again. Everything change? Yes, everything.

Refocusing the mind back to him. If you've drifted, if you need prayers answered, just come back to him. Seek me.

It's not a whole bunch of scriptures. You got to do this. You got to do that.

You got to do this. You got to do that. You got to do this.

He says, seek me with all of your heart. That's it. Seek me and you will be found by me.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/eXW09paLRMM.mp4>

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