

# The Power of Christ

by Shane Idleman

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of actively seeking God through spiritual disciplines to combat demonic influence and enhance our relationship with Him.*

**Duration:** 44:28

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10, Acts 1:8, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 5:18, James 4:7-8, 1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Holy Living"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being filled with the Spirit of God, highlighting the need for repentance, worship, and obedience to God's Word. It addresses the reality of spiritual warfare, the power of Christ over demonic influences, and the significance of living a life of holiness and commitment to God. The speaker encourages a deep surrender to God, acknowledging personal shortcomings and seeking a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit for transformation and victory in life.

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## Transcript

If you have your Bibles, I left off at Matthew chapter 9, but I told my wife last Saturday when I got home from church, I said, God, I really need to clarify this point. I feel bad that I kind of made fun of this concept of let go and let God. You ever hear that? And I said, it's not in the Bible.

Pulling that weight and let go and let God, it's not in the Bible. But I want to clarify because it's a good thing if you're talking about casting all your cares upon Him. I'm not holding on to all these things.

I'm letting go and I'm letting God. It's a wonderful thing. But I was talking about spiritual disciplines.

When the Bible says, draw near to me, and I'll draw near to you. Seek me with all of your heart. When it comes to spiritual disciplines, you can't let go and let God.

There's partnership in that. As you're drawing closer to Him, He's drawing to you. And I found that the more you seek Him, the more you find Him.

The more you find Him, the more you want to seek Him. It's a wonderful worship song as well. The more I seek Him, the more I find Him.

And your relationship, my relationship to God, is directly related to our commitment to Him. Great commitment, great relationship. Poor commitment, poor relationship.

Those people who study God's Word, who put on worship, who spend time with Him, who make their day, prioritize their day around Him, are filled with the Spirit of God. Those who don't, aren't. And they often say, Shane, I want that passion you're talking about.

How do I get it? Seek Him with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength, with all your soul, with everything. Not perfectly, because I haven't mastered that, neither have you. We're sinners trying to seek a perfect Father.

But that's what I love about God. He says, seek me, you'll find me. I'm not going to be hiding in the corner.

I'm not going to be hiding under the couch. I'm not going to take a vacation in heaven. Seek me, you'll find me.

Draw near to me, and I'll draw near to you. But what do we not want to do? The very thing we need to do. And that's why I'm a big fan of worship and prayer and getting in God's Word.

I'm going to beat that subject up, those three subjects, up until the day I'm up here in a coffin in the memorial service. Preach, preach, preach, of course, but look to the Word, look to worship. And it was interesting, I don't see him in here, so I'm hoping it's okay I can say this.

But I talked to a gentleman who works mainly in the mental health industry, or an industry, I shouldn't say, but the mental health area, and he's working with those challenged in prisons and different things, and his job is actually over mental health, if you can believe that. And I'm glad I had a chance to talk with him. I asked him, how much of these things would you say are spiritually related? He said, most of them, most of them.

Chemical imbalances now and then, but most of the things that you see where people are dealing with mental issues are spiritual at their core. So you do with that what you want. I'm not saying everything is, and I'm not saying nothing is, but it was interesting, they said many of those things are spiritual.

Why? Because when we get the mind focused on God, everything tends to follow. Doesn't mean there's not going to be challenges, doesn't mean there are legitimate concerns and legitimate things that we need to do, but I would first look at the spiritual health before anything else. And the reason I talk about this a lot is because I see it all the time.

I counsel a lot of people sometimes on fear and anxiety and depression, and these things, and I say, well, tell me about your devotional life. It's non-existent. Well, why aren't we starting there? I don't want to do that.

Well, hold on. God isn't a menu, a choice on a menu, in a buffet line. See, sometimes, well, I'll try that if I really need to.

No, he's everything. Everything must start there, physical, mental, emotional. Everything starts with him.

Go to him. Seek him. So I want to clarify that let go and let God is actually a good thing if you're casting your burdens upon him.

If you're, you know, I've been holding on to this financial thing, I've been holding on to this situation, just let it go and let God. Good thing, okay? I wanted to clarify that. But I was talking about spiritual disciplines.

And if you're seeking God, it's not good to let go and let God and sit on the house, prop up your feet, put on, you know, a movie and start clicking through the channels. Okay, God, let me, you know, you draw near to me. No, it's going to take some action on our part, especially with the junk that's on TV.

I went to a Jet Hawks game last night with my son and I just saw in their schedule that they're having a night for LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender night at the Jet Hawks stadium. And these things, you know, it's just we need to look to God. We need to look to God with the direction of our nation.

And I want to give a Memorial Day message, but I'm going to, I think, save that for October with elections and different things and see if God puts it on my heart. But anyway, with that said, Matthew chapter 9, four o'clock service gets the abridged version. I'll go fast.

How about if I talk fast like this, like an auctioneer? Matthew chapter 9, verse 32. As they went out, behold, they brought to Jesus a man. He was mute, he was demon-possessed.

And when the demon was cast out, the mute spoke. And I just, I chewed on that verse for a few hours over this week thinking, was that direct, that demonic possession, was it related to his physical ailment? Well, according to Scripture, as soon as that demon was cast out by Jesus, the man spoke. And remember the woman who was bent over, I think it was 17 years, when Jesus said, woman, thou art loose from your infirmities.

And then she stood, I mean, there's so many, the demonic realm, I don't think we understand can affect us emotionally, spiritually, physically. It goes after all areas of the body, soul, and spirit. Now, of course, I wouldn't say that everything's tied to that.

I don't embrace that. I don't think there's a demon of gluttony, and a demon of this, and a demon of that. You've got a demon of criticism, you've got to cast out.

We don't really believe in that. Well, what do we believe? Well, two things. I wish I had the time to talk about that, but I talked about, I think in April, about the enemy, our enemy within, and how he operates in demonic possession versus pestering.

The Bible really doesn't use the word. If you look at the original language in the Greek and different things, the word possessed, it's more of has a demon, or afflicted by a demon. So we know that they don't control believers.

They can't possess a believer and control a believer, but they can pester. Trust me, they can pester. What else can they do? They can influence.

They can oppress us. But then it goes on to say, and the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never seen like this in all of Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.

So here is Jesus putting a man in his right mind, curing him, and the Pharisees are, Ah, ah, ah, he must be doing this by the power of the devil. Yep, let's rule him out that way. But more on this in a minute.

I want to talk a little bit about the demonic, even though I gave a few messages back. You can go back to April on our website and find those. But we can, as the demonic realm pesters, influences, and oppresses

us, we can either open ourselves up for the influence, or we can close our hearts off to the influence.

And that's what we talked about a few months back on worship, and the power of God's word, and looking to Christ, and closing ourselves up. Also, right here, the mind gate is where it all enters. Before it gets to the heart gate, it gets to the mind gate.

Before it gets to these, hands, feet, doing it, it starts here. And that's why you see on TV and all these movies and the media, we have to be very careful. Young adults, I tell this to a lot, Facebook, all these things, because you can open yourself up to the influence.

They actually open themselves up to. And I listen to, I talk to kids a lot, and they're listening to music that would make Motley Crue and Ozzy Osbourne blush. I mean, it's like, guys, you think this has no impact on you whatsoever? No, that's just cool, I like the beat, really.

Really. Be very careful, because as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. What you put in, is what you're going to get out.

And if you're putting darkness in, and depression in, and illicit sex in, and perversion, and fear, and you're feeding all this stuff, you're actually creating an environment for the demonic realm to go crazy. And they can pester, they can oppress, they can bring things in, because you're fueling the fire. It's like saying, come on, come and get me, enemy.

I'm wide open. I'll try to read the Bible next week, just come on and get me. And we open ourselves up to the demonic influence, as believers.

I believe we can be influenced greatly by what we allow into our mind and heart. Why does the Bible talk volumes about guarding your heart? It's a wellspring of life. Protect your mind.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Finally, brethren, whatever things are pure, and noble, and good, and upright, meditate on these things. Come against the enemy.

Flee. Put up a safeguard. Why? Because it's all right here.

The enemy's coming in. And that's why with raising young adults, or raising teenagers, and you've got to understand as parents, what you allow into your home will influence one way or the other. Either towards godliness, or towards darkness.

And we have to be careful in this area. And they can also be tied, the demonic influences can be tied to physical manifestations, emotional, psychological, and spiritual problems. Everything can be tied to that.

And at this point, a lot of people go, Oh, man. Well, how do I know this? Well, how do I know this? Well, how do I know? How do I know? How do I determine if something's demonic or not? And actually, I've read books. I've listened to tapes.

I've pulled out all the verses. And the Bible isn't really clear on here's how it happens here. It's really clear, though, on obeying God's word.

Guarding our heart. Guarding our mind. And it's very clear on seeking God.

So as I'm seeking God, in other words, if I thought something was demonic in nature, I would seek him. If I thought something was just physical, I would seek him. I'd seek him for all my problems.

That might sound foolish. It might sound extreme. It might seem old-fashioned.

But that's what I do. Lord, would you show me? Are there things in my life that I've opened myself up to, Lord? What are you trying to do here? Is this the demonic? Or is this something that I've just got to work through? And I shared this a while back, but it pertains to this as well. It's when we first planted this church, and our family got hit by all kinds of sickness.

And, man, from strep throat to pneumonia to, I mean, we haven't been that sick, the whole family together, as we were in about 60 days. It was unbelievable. He actually, I was going to quit.

And I shared that before. I was just, oh, man, I'm done with this. And as I was fought through that, and I said, Lord, I can't.

You've called me to do this. But as I was praying, as I was seeking, I knew that was a test. And I knew that was, there's no way everybody gets that sick.

That many times. All different types of things. Trying to, you know, bringing that influence.

And I was thinking of Job and that demonic, okay, you can have my servant. Just don't do this, this, and this. And so that testing.

But now I can look back on that day and say, oh, Lord, you've called me to do this. Come hell or high water. My resurrected king has rendered you defeated, as we sang, right? I look to Christ now, even more so.

And I think he takes us through things sometimes. You go through the storms because unless you see the 40-foot waves, you don't appreciate the rescuer. Isn't that interesting? Sometimes you go out to the beach, you watch on the news, people are out there drowning, and the lifeguard gets there.

The lifeguard brings them in. They want to sell them, give them their second kidney. They want to name a child after them.

They want to give them money for the rest of their life. Thank you for saving me. But they had to go through that to experience the same thing with Christ.

Many times we want to bell out on the storms instead of look to him as the anchor. Look to him. Seek him.

So in this area of demonic, we don't have to worry because our resurrected king has rendered him defeated. He's a defeated foe. He doesn't have power over us.

He has power, much of what we allow, but also what God allows. So if God's allowing something, I'm going to seek the guy who's got the hand on it, who's got the sovereign control. Because you have not because you ask not.

What about the disputed text where they said this kind does not go out, this demonic does not go out except by? Oh, the two things people don't like to do. Prayer and fasting. I got a friend of mine last week who hasn't, he's been a Christian I think 35 years, has never fasted.

Finally got him to try it for one day. He's amazed at the results. Prayer and fasting.

Why? Fasting, you're fighting the flesh. You're telling the flesh, shut up. I'm seeking God today.

You better go sit in the closet. Be quiet. And then you're praying and you're leaning on God and you're allowing him to illuminate your spirit and seeking him with all your heart.

Because it's hard to seek God and feed the flesh. That's why you, you know, after a big dinner or a big brawl, I'm too tired to read. I'll do it later.

That's why you get him first and you look to him first. And it's interesting, I mean, and I love the Old Testament too, but you don't see much demonic activity. I mean, I should have looked at this before I said anything, but I can't recall much other than a lady calling up Samuel from the dead and different things.

But when Jesus comes on the scene, the demonic is everywhere. In a temple, on the other side of the lake, on the street, they're everywhere. Why? Why is there so much demonic? Because Jesus exposes them.

When the Son of God is walking down the street, get away from us. Son of God, the most high, we know who you are. You have power over me.

And they didn't like it, so everywhere he went, everywhere he went, it exposed the light and the darkness, the right from the wrong. I like what John MacArthur said, the fact of the matter is that we do not tremble in front of the demons, the demons tremble in front of us. And this is an interesting topic, I'll be honest with you, because I'm not really into, you know, you see a lot of weird stuff.

Somebody sent me a YouTube video, I wanted to play it so bad, of a guy getting a demon cast out, this guy praying for him and all this, and then his cell phone rings. Yeah, hold on, I'm under the anointing right now. Like just stop, of course it's put together phony or something, but I'm thinking, I don't want to gravitate towards that, but on the other side, I don't want to act like this.

Yeah, the devil, I don't know who that is. We're just going to not talk about him, we're not going to worry about him, we're not going to mention any of those things. Don't talk casting out demons.

Shane, you're getting weird now, you're getting a little hyper charismatic, you're getting Pentecostal. Or I'm reading Matthew. I'm just reading the Bible.

If Jesus himself said, I'm going to send you out to cast out these things, the power of darkness. But we don't see them manifest a lot in America or in the churches, we really don't. In the mission field, oh wow, in Haiti, I know some firemen who went to Haiti recently, which doctor I think is on the verge of coming to Christ and all these things, and they said the American church has no idea, no clue to what actually happens in the mission field, especially when there's certain areas over such demonic oppression and voodoo and witch doctors.

It's night and day. The churches, for one, they're not sitting on comfortable chairs, they're standing in the dirt and they're worshiping God in the rain for hours. The preacher has no microphone, just an old Bible that's falling apart.

And he can preach for an hour and a half and they don't care. You'll have people scream out, demonic. People come in and get delivered.

Just fall down in the presence of God, and just screaming out and yelling at the preacher. You won't see any of that. So you have to say, either that's all fake, or it doesn't happen that much here.

Thank God, I guess, right? And I also believe that there's a spiritual covering. I don't think there's a demon of this, demon of that. But I think America's been blessed by God.

I think there's an anointing that God has given our nation and given the churches that we don't see a lot of that right now. But it's becoming darker and darker and darker and darker, and we're seeing a lot more of those things. Because you have to realize, real ministry walks into the enemy's camp.

Real ministry walks into the enemy's camp. And when Jesus walked on the scene, the demon wasn't an equal battle. He was over them.

That's why one time when some gentleman tried to cast out some demons in the Bible, I think it was some Pharisees or leaders of the day, the demonic person tore them apart. They were running out of the room. And they told the man, they said, Paul we know, and Jesus we know, but you we do not know.

Because they were trying to exercise spiritual authority out of the reserves of what they didn't have. If they're not a believer in Jesus Christ, just being a believer, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you have the Holy Spirit residing in you. That right there is the power over the demonic realm.

But usually we tell him to go sit in the closet. Jesus, go sit in the closet. I'll come and get you later sometime when I need you.

Versus living that Christ-filled life. And I pulled this from a reputable source. As you know, many of you know John MacArthur.

I want to see what his thoughts were on this. And he's about this demonic oppression, possession, whatever you want to call it. He said, this is a rare thing.

And actually in your bulletin I have the link that you can read his whole article. I think it's from a sermon excerpt that he gave on this. It's in your bulletin.

Also if you go online, for those listening to the radio or media later, it's under our complete sermon notes. You should be able to click that link and take your right to it. But John MacArthur said, this is a rare thing.

I've preached the gospel for a long time and only about three times in my whole life have I ever heard demons speak when being confronted. One of them was a few weeks ago, right down the front, when a demon-possessed person came running down the aisle after I was preaching the gospel, exalting Christ's power of the kingdom of darkness. And he came at me and he said, why are you attacking me? Why are you trying to hurt me? And all he was doing was preaching.

And that jumped out at me because that's what I feel a lot of times when people don't want to come here. I hear the same thing. The messages are too heavy, too hard.

You're coming after me. No, that's not it. Be very careful.

That could be a demonic influence. Not in a believer's life, but an unbeliever's life who's wanting to keep them away from church. I don't want the Bible.

Get that Bible out of here. I don't want to read it. I don't want to look at it.

Because why? Why are you trying to hurt me? Why are you attacking me? Why? And really, the light is trying to attack the darkness, right? The light is trying to shatter that darkness in their lives. And they talked about another incident. He walked in and there was chaos in the office.

This is a different incident. It was over in the building by the Family Center. And I walked in and placed... This is John MacArthur speaking.

And I walked in and the place was in disarray. And it was obvious she was terrorizing things. She had overturned the desk.

And poor Jerry, who was a boxer in the Navy, was having a hard time defending himself against this girl. And this is characteristic of New Testament accounts where there are certain levels of strength beyond the normal. And I'll never forget the greeting when I walked in the door.

When I walked in the door, she said in a hoarse voice, Not him. Not him. Not him.

Get him out. Get him out. Get him out.

Isn't that interesting? See, the power of Christ changes the situation. Whether it's him or me or you or whoever it is. It's actually not us.

You realize that? It's not us. It's what's in us. Greater is he that's in me than he that's in the world.

So as a believer, you have that New Testament authority, I believe. And this is one of the areas where me and John MacArthur would probably disagree because he went on to say that we don't have that same type of apostolic authority to do that. And I believe that we do.

We are able to tell the demonic realm, Uh-uh. Not here. Out.

Why? Because it's not me. If it's me, you'll say, I know Paul and I know Jesus, but I'm going to destroy you. But if it's the Holy Spirit residing in the believer, that's power.

The same power that rose Christ from the dead resides in a believer. Why don't you start gravitating towards it? Why don't you start grabbing it and operating in the fullness of the Spirit? Because we're worried about weird stuff. That's why most people don't want to touch this topic.

Well, I don't know what you call it, but when there's a demonic realm there and it's coming against you, you better have the power within. This has only happened to me one time, and I shared it, I think, at the sermon in April. It was when I was speaking at GraceFest.

Before GraceFest, on Friday night, there was a prayer fest. A few hundred people from different churches, we were praying. And this lady came to the event, and she told the people, I'm possessed by demons.

They bite me at night. They rape her and all this stuff. I'm like, wow, she needs some serious prayer.

So they're sitting over there, talking with her and different things. And of course she's quiet through the whole thing until I get up there. Something happened there.

So within five minutes, and I look over and there she's just, I mean, they've got five or six prayer team members over there praying with her. She fell down on the grass, and I just stopped and I prayed for her, and then I just went on preaching. But that's what, it's something they don't like.

The demonic realm doesn't like that, but she knew she needed help. See, there's something I need, like the man, when Jesus stepped out on the scene at the Gadarenes, he fell down to worship Christ. I need you, but I don't know how to get rid of this legion of demons.

Jesus says, don't worry about it, leave it up to me. And out they had to leave that man right then. There's power in the name of Christ.

So when we pray, when we petition, when we seek God, there's power in that name. And sometimes I just want to shake people and say, listen, this is not a lukewarm social club that we just come and then we go eat and we fellowship. This is a mighty, powerful worship service where the God of heaven meets us in our worship, in our prayer time.

And he says, I will destroy the unfruitful works of darkness, but you've got to expose them. You've got to look to me and me alone. Use that reserve of power called the Holy Spirit.

It's biblical. It's biblical. So when somebody, and I've prayed with people in the demon possession, or they say this, you know, it's kind of like interesting, but it's nothing to be frightful about.

There's nothing to be scared about because it's greater, it's in you. As a matter of fact, there's something to be scared about when we cower and we run the other way. Well, God, I know you want me to do business, but I'm just going to leave and leave here.

And people tell me that there are witches hexing the church and enchantments and pagan worship service trying to destroy because they see the articles in the paper. They don't like what I'm saying. I haven't lost any sleep over it.

Zero. I don't really like the idea. I mean, it's not something I would choose, but they have no power over me.

Just them doing that, it kind of makes me think, okay, well, we're on the right track because the power of darkness doesn't like that. God says, listen, don't touch my anointed, my church, my believers, or my anointed people of God. You cannot curse what God has blessed, but you've got to stay in that blessed place, right? You've got to stay in that covering.

So those are some of his examples. And what MacArthur did, which is actually the right thing to do, is he started with salvation. The girl wasn't even saved.

So he brought her to the gospel and said, would you confess Christ and repent tonight? And she did, and she was free. So anytime you're confronting the demonic realm, you've got to start there. You have to start with salvation.

I'm going to drop a little nugget in here. When I do counseling sometimes, I don't have as much time as I'd like to do for so many people that, you know, we need help and assistance. I don't immediately assume, okay, this is going to sound funny probably, but I don't immediately assume that a person's a believer.

I mean, I've been raised in church, and they'll tell me, they'll go, and I'll ask them, well, tell me about your conversion experience. Well, I've been raised in church all of my life. My parents are Christians.

We grew up in a Baptist home. Good. But tell me about your conversion experience.

Well, I mean, shit, I'm a good guy. I'm a Christian, and, you know, I've been in church a long time, and tell me about your conversion experience. Why can't they? Because there isn't one.

And I'm actually shocked at the number of people who attend churches. They're serving in ministry. They're on the deacon board.

They're in children's ministry. They're helping sometimes with worship, and they're not a believer in Jesus Christ. They've never repented and given Him their life and repented of their sin.

So you've got to start with salvation. I'd rather offend the person and err on the side of offending asking about their salvation than not. I've got another guy I've talked to before on cheating on his wife and different things, and he's a Christian and different things, but why does he keep falling into this pattern? Tell me about your conversion experience.

Well, same thing. So I'm wondering, well, how many of these people have never been genuinely converted? They've been playing church all their life. No wonder they're losing the battle.

They don't got the arsenal. Salvation. The only way the lightness can overcome the darkness is through salvation.

Exchanging my wretched heart, dark heart, for the light of the gospel. That's the only way. So you must start with salvation.

And also on this demonic realm, I'm spending a little bit more time, but maybe there's a reason here. You have to incorporate spiritual disciplines. That's why I talk about this often.

Worship, word, and prayer. Worship, word, and prayer. And no doubt people are saying, when are you going to stop talking about this? When you start doing it.

We got a deal? When everybody comes to most services, starts doing this, I'll ignore this topic for a while. Worship, the word, and prayer. It's so powerful.

Every month we're having worship nights, an hour and a half long, just worship. And I'm amazed at the people who just can't make it. They're not worshipers.

They don't want to worship. They'll be in the word, but they don't want to worship. It's a combination of spiritual disciplines, the word, worship, and prayer.

And obedience. Here's how you fight the demonic realm. You get into the word of God.

You worship him in your prayer. Pray, even when you don't feel like it. As a matter of fact, I often don't feel like it.

It's not until 10, 15 minutes in there, telling my flesh, you're submitting to me, I'm not submitting to you, that the breakthrough begins to come. And the word of God opens up, and the worship sounds like it didn't sound 10 minutes ago. Because now it's breaking my heart.

Now I want to come out of this a better father. Now I want to devour his word. Now I want to turn off the junk, the media that people send me, and take a Facebook fast, and all this stuff.

Why? Because now the flesh is under submission, and the word of God is prevailing. There's a struggle. There's a fight.

Won't be the man who thinks he can just open his Bible, and put it on a CD, and be good. Especially if you grab a big cup of coffee, and you're on 500 milligrams of caffeine. You're going, I got to do this, I got to do this.

It's Sunday. It's my day off. I got to get everything done.

Sunday is ketchup day. I got to do everything. I'm too ashamed.

I got to be here somewhere at 8 in the morning. I got to be here. And the whole day, we're just too busy.

And the enemy just loves it. Let me just keep them so busy, so busy, so busy, so they never have time to seek God. That's how it works.

So you want to fight the demonic realm, spiritual disciplines, and then obedience to God's word. This is another thing that amazes me. Amazes me.

That people do not want to obey the word of God. And we have to remember that God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows, he will reap.

James MacDonald just taught on this this week. I loved his sermon. I would have just played it the whole half hour.

But he talked about this. God's not a respecter of persons. He doesn't like shame better than everybody else.

Whatever you sow, you reap. Whatever you sow, if you sow to the flesh, you will reap corruption. If you sow to the spirit, you'll reap the things of the spirit.

The ironic thing is, we want to plant the corn seed and eat the corn tomorrow. But there's a seed time, and harvesters takes time. You've got to water that word and allow it to penetrate the heart.

Obedying the word of God. I just talked to a guy. I'm not going to give a lot of details because some of you might know him.

In my area, I know him. He's not making a good decision right now. He's an older gentleman in ministry.

Let's just leave it at that. But I sat there and talked to him this week with another pastor. I'm not understanding.

You know you're going against Scripture. And you know you're going against godly counsel. No godly counselor that I know would ever recommend the direction you're going.

You're going against both those and you're still going to do it. Yeah, but I feel that God's leading me and God's telling me, well, if I'm in it, I'll succeed. If I'm not, I'll fail.

What? Out of his mouth. I know I'm going against Scripture. I know I'm going against godly counsel.

But I still sense that, really? There's a word for that. It's called spiritual pride. Two words.

For you English majors out there. Spiritual pride is what that is. The surest way to know that you're going in the right direction is to obey the word of God.

Because the little voices right here, oh, yeah, I think God's leading me to do this. Away from God's word? Never. Never.

As a matter of fact, I put more, and I'm big on being led by the Holy Spirit, but I put more emphasis on what does this say versus what does this say. Because mixed into here is my own ulterior motives. Mixed in here is what's comfortable.

Mixed in here is how something's going to make me look. You know, all those things, but here is just a pure, unadulterated, undiluted truth. So what he should have said is, according to scripture, according to godly counsel, and according to what's right, I should take this direction.

And it's not going to end up pretty. But obedience to the word of God is essential, and then obviously holiness, the way we live. The way you live, I cannot stress that enough.

The way you live, what you watch, what you view, who you associate with, everything. How you live your life, is it a life of holiness that honors God, or is it a life that is open up to demonic influences? Demonic influences do not want us worshipping God. Is that news to anybody? Demonic influences do not want us worshipping God.

They are hell-bent on drawing us away from Him. I'm going to say something right now that will upset a few people. It's okay, I'm good at that by now.

In the day and the age we live, what's going on in our culture, the attack of the enemy, the attack of the family, I mean, you name it, everything is on the rise. Sporadic church attendance is not going to cut it. If I were you, I would go to less barbecues, less get-togethers, less baby showers, less times at the beach, and I would get into the word of God like never before.

And I would get into the church of God. Even if you can't make it here, you all know the good churches out there, right? Grace Chapel, there's Calvary Chapel, there's Central Christian, you know, I know. I'm saying you've got to be somewhere.

If you can't get here, you've got to get somewhere. You've got to live in the word of God. When I was little, it was every Sunday.

And then it became twice a month. Now it's once a month. And we wonder why we're getting hit by all these attacks, why we're not standing strong.

This isn't just like something you come and take a hit that lasts you all week. This is just the motivating factor that gets you going in the right direction. So the demonic influences do not want us worshipping.

Why do most of the fights happen on church day? Why do we always have something to do on church day? Oh, I gotta do this, I gotta do this. Should we go? I don't know. How do I know? Because I used to do it.

I used to do it. I was a fellow church hopper. I don't feel like going this morning.

I'm not up to it. Yeah, exactly right. That's why you need to be here.

Sporadic church attendance. The enemy loves that. He doesn't want you worshiping God with fellowship and other believers.

On one hand, though, it's kind of a good thing because all of us know in leadership that if everybody who calls us to church comes, we do not have enough seats, period. Period. But because of sporadic, and I would just, and I often hear this because of baby showers or birthdays or weddings, and I'm not minimizing those if your daughter's getting married or, of course.

But these little trivial things that I know, I know keep us away from church. Do you not want to know? Because I used them all the time. If my daughter was just sniffing, little, oh, no, can't go.

She's sick. Can't go. She's sick.

Come on. And now, of course, I can't get out of it no matter how I try. So I would just encourage you, sporadic church attendance.

The enemy loves that. And I'm not just saying it to beat up. I'm just saying, honestly, honestly, when you push through and you say, I'm going to church, come hell or high water, I'm going to worship God, and you start to make that a focal point of your life, all other disciplines begin to fall into place.

Because really, it's about discipline and commitment is what it boils down to. Commitment. You know how I know it's commitment? Why am I here every single Saturday, but most other people aren't? What's the one word? Commitment.

I know it's an unfair advantage, I have to. I know, but I'm showing you how commitment, I have to versus no commitment. And that's why sometimes, so if you put some commitment on there saying, Lord, I want to worship you, I want to be in your word, and you don't know what's going on here.

Well, you think we have Josh doing that every Saturday? You think we have powerful, you know, we think we have, you know, you miss a message here. You know, things, God moves. And I love that.

I love to come to church with the spirit of expectation. It's wonderful. Now, at this time, I think the children's ministry helpers will need to leave because they have to leave at 5.15. So I want to give you guys the option to doing that.

I'm through two pages of five pages. But, I'm open to whatever God wants to do. Throughout history, God's people turned from serving Him to worshiping gods associated with lust and sexual perversion, entertainment, money, grief, power, and so on.

Are we so naive to think that we cannot fall prey to this as well? The Bible says that they became an abomination like the thing they loved. The power of Christ is an ongoing necessity. There's actually three parts of this sermon.

I'm still on part one. The power of Christ. So when people leave at 5.15, don't think they're mad because of the children's ministry helpers.

Okay? I can tell people are mad when they leave. They got a fast step and they're walking. They're looking at me and they're like, I can't believe you.

And I throw the doors open. They let the ushers go. They're not very happy.

But under the power of Christ, the power of Christ is an ongoing necessity. I'd love to quote D.L. Moody on this one. We are leaky vessels.

Do you know that? You're a leaky vessel. Can I name every name in here? You are a leaky vessel. Shane Eidelman is a leaky vessel.

So I have to sit under the fountain of life every day. I'm leaky. I have to sit under the fountain of life every single day.

The power of Christ. That's what I wanted to really talk about. Part one, the power of Christ.

I'll just encourage you to stay for the second service. There's so much more to talk about. I don't know why I should take you in or take you out, but let me say this.

We need to avoid the Pharisee syndrome. These Pharisees, they saw Jesus doing all these works. And what did they say? Oh, that's just the devil.

That's just the devil. And many people. What causes the Pharisee syndrome? Four things.

These Pharisees did not get acknowledged. Jesus didn't confirm them, confirm their control. He challenged their tradition and He exposed them and their motives in their heart.

That's what creates a Pharisee. They don't like what Jesus is doing. So whatever it takes, avoid the Pharisee syndrome.

The great cry of the conservative church, hear me church and hear me loud, hear me clear. The great cry of the conservative church is I don't feel or experience God like that, therefore these things are not valid. That's what the great cry of the conservative church in America is today.

That stuff you're saying about the spirit-filled life, Shane, all that you're saying about powerful worship and this, I don't feel that. I don't experience the power of the spirit in my life, therefore it must not exist. No, sir, therefore you must line up your spirit with the word of God, with the heart of God.

Because the spirit-filled life is a life of powerful love, inexpressible joy, indescribable peace, irresistible passion, and heartfelt emotion. That is a spirit-filled life, on fire for God, if I could put it bluntly. A person on fire for God.

And it begs the question tonight, are you? Are you truly filled with the spirit? Listen, I'm not one of those guys who can get weird and we're gonna do all these things. I'm just saying if you're not filled with the spirit of God, it just starts with repentance if you're not saved, of course. But if you are, and God's distant, you don't know anything about the spirit-filled life, you haven't won a person to Christ in 10 years, you don't talk about the gospel, you don't feel that passion, you don't wanna worship, the Bible's dry.

Does it sound familiar? I lived it for many years. I lived it for many years. I would just encourage you to allow God to change and come in that hard heart and say, Lord, I wanna be filled with your spirit.

I know it's not weird. I know it's not awkward. I know it's not something to be fearful of.

Lord, I want more of you. That's not a bad thing. That's a good thing.

So during worship tonight, I'll have the worship team come back up. I won't even get to part two or three. Maybe I'll do part two and three next week.

But it all leads to this. We talked about we opened with the power of Christ, right? The power of Christ in the demonic realm. And I know a lot of people are going through things tonight.

You just don't wanna admit it, right? We put on our happy face. Job loss, fear, depression, anxiety, loss of this, loss of that, you name it. You name it.

I know it's in this room. And the only way you can get through life victoriously and powerfully and with joy and with peace, not perfection, life still is difficult, but it's being filled with the spirit of God. So stop running from the very thing you need to be filled with the spirit of God.

That's not a bad thing. Well, how does that look? It looks like this. As we empty ourselves, as we empty ourselves, we're filled with the spirit.

As we empty ourselves of pride, everything that we thought was religious tradition, all these things, we just empty ourselves. I'm not saying put truth at the back door. Truth comes through the front door, and actually truth encourages the spirit-filled life.

What I did, 1999, is I just spent a lot of time in worship with God, and I cried out. I said, Lord, I've been a terrible husband. Lord, I've been an angry husband.

I've been a mean business owner, Lord. I've been a hard manager. Lord, I've been a jerk.

I've been arrogant. I've been prideful. Lord, I need you to take my life tonight.

I need you to rebuild everything from the ground up. Lord, I need you to rebuild my heart. I need you to rebuild my emotions.

I need you to rebuild, Lord, even my marriage. Lord, I give you everything. Lord, my finances are now yours, Lord.

Lord, my heart's yours. Lord, would you come in and vacate this hole in my heart? And if you're only ashamed, you're getting emotional. No, I'm getting truthful.

It's okay to be emotional. God created it. God created emotion.

The emotion that some of you are feeling right now, that's a good thing, because it'll propel us to the cross. So sometimes we think the spirit-filled life, that's what it is. It's saying, Lord, I've been wrong in all these areas.

Lord, I've been judgmental. I've been arrogant. I've been mean to my kids.

I've been nasty. I've been deceiving. I've been lying.

I've been cheating. I've been looking at pornography. I've been hooked on this.

I've been hooked on that. I'm not fully surrendering my life in these areas. Lord, I've been running.

I've been hiding. All these things come out in the fully surrendered life. That's why I promote it so often.

That's where success is at. That's where Victoria's Christian living is at, in the spirit-filled life. But guess what? I can't do it for you.

I can't go and pray for you. Wouldn't you please? Come on, please. It has to be your own heart.

Your own heart crying out and saying, Lord, I need you in all these areas. And as you empty yourself, you feel the Spirit of God building and shaping and redirecting. Some of you guys have been in church longer than me, and you need to be filled afresh.

You need to be filled again with the Spirit of God. That's why Jesus said, all these works you've done, but you've left your first love. And then He says, come home.

Just come home. Just come home. What are we afraid of? Afraid of God? The person who created us? The person who sustains us? The person who holds my breath in His hands and owns all my ways? I'm afraid of Him? I'm not going to let some people on TV acting weird determine my spiritual health.

God forbid. Those guys need a rebuke. God doesn't.

So on this issue of spirit-filled life, this whole sermon's gone a whole different direction for some reason. I don't know why. But He's free to do it.

It's His church. He can do whatever He wants. But I know if I could get spirit-filled believers in this room worshipping God, you could not get us out of here.

Because as much as people are in a hurry to go to the cinemark and watch your favorite movie, you should be in a hurry to worship God. But we forget that our resurrected Savior has rendered death defeated. The enemy has no sting.

He has no power. He can just pester you. It's the spirit-filled life that will overcome that.

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