

# Timeless Truths From Rend the Heavens

by Shane Idleman

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience, humility, and prayer and fasting in maintaining a strong relationship with God and overcoming addiction and strongholds.*

**Duration:** 49:18

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 28:23, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 40:31, Matthew 17:21, Romans 8:28, Galatians 5:16, Hebrews 11:6, James 5:15, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Diligence in Faith", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

Shane Idleman shares 'Timeless Truths From Rend the Heavens,' emphasizing the spiritual battles we face and the importance of seeking God diligently. He recounts testimonies of healing, restoration, and the transformative power of prayer and fasting experienced during the revival nights. Idleman highlights the necessity of obedience to God's Word and the dangers of complacency, urging believers to remain fervent in their faith and to actively pursue a relationship with God. He encourages the congregation to bring their struggles to God, reminding them that nothing is too hard for Him and that true healing and restoration come from a humble heart seeking His presence.

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## Transcript

But I felt God wanted me to just share, recap a lot of what was spoken throughout Rend in the Heavens part 2. And I would say most of you have not been here every night, and so you can maybe glean from some of that. And I know it's difficult. Me getting here every night was difficult.

And there's a war that goes on in the flesh. And wow, yeah, that's right, I've got to take care of this. And we start to negotiate with our flesh.

And we lose sometimes. And so it's a battle. So the title quite simply is Timeless Truths from Rend in the Heavens.

So I want to just share with you everything that God opened up this week from the Scriptures. And like Ted said too, just hearing of marriages being restored. Addictions.

Like there's no desire for that addiction anymore. A prodigal son came home. If they're not here, let me make sure, because I don't want to say it.

But there's one person we've been praying for a while, men's ministry, me and Phil and Toph talked to. And boy, oh boy, just a struggle with addiction. Struggle getting to church and just anger.

And he's been here I think every night. And we're praying that baptism takes place tonight. And so, that's amazing.

It's almost like I don't really want to be here, but I don't know why I'm here. You know, I have to be here. And that drawing of the Holy Spirit is so profound and so powerful.

And so I just want to share that with you, because at times the atmosphere here was overwhelming. And I'm talking about Rend the Heavens Part 1 as well. We did that a few months ago.

I'm not sure when we'll do this again. These are times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord. That's why we encourage so many people to come.

And we hear about broken marriages, financial difficulties, health issues, but the people are not here. It's like, guys, this is where healing takes place. This is, you know, we're just pushing.

We're pushing God. We're promoting God, because we've seen that life-changing aspect of God and when He works. And we've seen a full altar.

We saw, especially at the first one, dozens of baptisms and the demonic realm being crushed and countless lives being changed. I baptized a lady last night. She came and she's crying.

And like, I thought, you know, she goes, you baptized me three years ago, but I was drunk. I went to the store up the street, a pint of whiskey or whatever. I'm surprised I didn't smell it.

But, and just wrestling through that. She goes, I've been sober now since then, and I need to get baptized again. And just the joy on her heart, it was incredible.

And the kids in Ignite or the youth, waking up hungry for God. Many are, but some, I mean, that you can't explain that. That is actually a living church.

That's a church that is alive. It doesn't mean it's a perfect church. How many times have I told you? I have flaws.

I don't preach a perfect sermon in a 60 minute time period. And there are people who let me know. You know, I just heard again recently that I was too political.

And I said, well, it's been a year. It's been a year. I haven't treaded those waters.

But there's a time and a season for those types of things. There's a time to concentrate on the leadership of our nation. There's a time to concentrate on giving.

There's a time to talk about the Holy Spirit. But it all draws back to the cross of Jesus Christ. And the old timers used to say, God heard our cries and He showed up.

And that's what we experienced. And I've said this before, and my heart is never to put down Sunday mornings. And I've had people tell me, Shane, you know, it kind of makes us feel bad when you say certain things, but you know, okay, but is it a good-bad? In other words, don't blame your conviction on me.

But there's something different. Rent in the Heaven nights come to Sunday mornings. There's a shift.

It's not as vibrant. It's not as passionate. The reason, I believe, is a lot of times on Sunday morning, including me, church is on a checklist.

But on Monday night, we're hungry. And there's a hunger, there's a desperation that you can tell the difference of. And so, over time though, this fire can fade.

During Rent in the Heavens, one, to me, there was just an incredible move of God. Lots of testimonies. People even talked about breaking addictions and alcohol, for example.

And then when it was over, they fell off the wagon. Back into misery. How does that happen? How does the fire fade? And that's what I'm going to talk about tonight at 6. But for now, I want to just talk a little bit about each night.

Monday night, we talked about the heavens being brass, Deuteronomy. And we're just putting God's Word up there because this is not a book. This is just not good reading.

This is not an article. This is the words of the living God. And they can penetrate your soul at a very deep, just putting that up there.

I could just remain silent, put that up there. You meditate and let the Word of God, let the Spirit of God convict and shape and renew and revive and restore your heart. That is more living than me standing up here today.

The Word of God is living. It infuses into the soul. My words are only what does the Word of God say and the Holy Spirit takes it and changes the heart.

Or encourages. Anybody need encouragement or just me? Boy, oh boy, oh boy, these are some interesting waters we are in. It shall come to pass if you diligently, diligently obey the voice of the Lord.

And I don't know why it stood out so much when I put that together, but it doesn't just say if you obey the voice of the Lord. And which is good, but sometimes that can be a half-hearted approach. Like yeah, okay, I'll obey, but I'm not in this area.

But this word diligently is even when you don't see the results. Even when it doesn't feel good. Even when I don't like the possible outcome.

Submission, spouses, and forgiving. Anybody don't want to forgive someone who's hurt you? Have you ever struggled with that? I have. Forgive.

I'm like no, no, no, no, mm-mm, mm-mm. But when I diligently obey the voice of the Lord, it brings God's favor. His voice is like guardrails through the canyons of life.

So if I could tell young adults this, the main thing I would tell them is God's Word does not prevent you from having fun. It protects you from the works of darkness. Chapter 23, And your heavens which are over your head shall be bronze, and thy heavens that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth which is under you shall be iron.

See, what happened between verse 2 and verse 23? Something happened there. That's why I have ellipses. If you ever see ellipses, those three little periods, that means something is removed and there's a continuous thought.

What happened in there is God gave all these blessings, but then He said, but if you disobey. And here's what a lot of people don't understand. It's not that God curses.

It's He has set truth in motion. And He cannot change from the creation, the foundation. He set truth into motion.

He says here's the truth, line up with it. If you don't, this will happen. So it's not like a lightning bolt is going to strike you or I'm cursing you.

You're removing yourself from that covering and that shelter and that safety and that protection. If disobedience and pride cause the problem, only obedience and humility can fix the problem. Oh, if I could change sermon topics right now, I would teach you about the blessing of humility.

You'd be amazed at what God does with humility and a teachable spirit. I've seen marriages that were impossible to be restored because of brokenness and humility. I've seen prayers answered for prodigal sons and daughters that were impossible until the parent humbled themselves.

And sometimes this is fine, so don't take this out of context, but the majority of the time I encourage parents and I have to do it myself, not to text verses all the time or in your face all the time. You know God's Word says respect your parents. You know, and we're just like a shooting them with the Word of God.

Now, it's great when you're strategic, but it's destructive when it's not strategic and it's done with the wrong heart. Parents have to, I mean, if I could get parents, how many parents are praying for their kids and there's issues in this church? I've told you before, well over 1,000 people call their home church and come and thank God not all at once or it wouldn't work. But the vast majority are praying for their children.

I am. There's nothing more precious. There's nothing more important in our lives.

Why aren't those people so desperate to find them at the altar praying and fasting? Why is there no desperate? They'll quote Scripture and throw Scripture at them, but you know the Bible says, and I remember that famous poem that I often give on Father's Day, the lessons you give me may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do. For I might misunderstand you and the high advice you give. Oh, but there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live.

Can you imagine parents just praying and fasting and not reacting and not pushing? You'll find that they know God just better than you think they do. They're just rebelling. We can all relate.

I'm writing a 2,000 word thing for my high school that I went to here locally, Paraclete High School. I don't know why they want to do a story on what God has done in my life, but one of the questions I talked about last night, one of the questions is, what is my biggest struggle? And I just put it down quickly. I need you to think about it.

The old Shane Idleman. The old Shane Idleman likes to knock at the door. Can the new Shane come out and play? No.

Stop knocking. But it also asks my biggest regret, what would I go back and change? Without even thinking, I said, I would have committed my life, surrendered everything when I gave my heart to Christ at 12, without a shadow of a doubt. But I allowed negative friends and the wrong lifestyle to really pull me away.

But thank God for the broken road that led me straight to the cross. That's why you have to just take Romans 8.28 and just hold on to it. All things.

Because looking back, I'm like, you know what, I hated it, but I don't know if I would have changed much because I might be an arrogant preacher today. You know, I've never fallen. I've been serving the Lord since I was 12.

I went to a seminary and have my master's degree in church history and a PhD right now in theology. Many dead churches are led by dead pastors. They have many degrees on their wall, but they don't know the power of God.

Leonard Ravenhill was famous for saying, you can have 32 degrees and still be frozen. This is the Sermon of Rabbit Trails, let me tell you. Back to disobedience.

John Rice, he was a hardcore Baptist preacher. Born in 1895, he said, there is no way you can please God. No way you can have the sweet communion with Him to get your prayers answered if you are in rebellion against the known will of God.

And that's the prayer that falls on deaf ears and closed hands. Billions are praying today. Very few are getting through to heaven because they don't have that true relationship with Yahweh, the God of the Bible, the one true and living God.

Disobedience can silence the voice of God. But on Monday, you need to go back and listen to it so there's a lot more information there, but I also talked about the heavens being brass for other reasons. It could be God's timing, not yours.

Notice how I say it could be. It is always God's timing. The key is do we line up with that timing? So don't be discouraged.

That's one of the hardest things about preaching is because somebody needs to be just hammered with the Word of God in this area of obedience, and they're in rebellion, and they're mocking God, and you just hammer that with the sermon. But the other person over here needs the encouragement. Jane, I just need encouragement.

I'm trying, my heart is clean. And so you have to find that balance. And so it's not always because of disobedience.

It could be God's timing. I also listen more carefully when I can't hear Him. You ever hear a voice, you're like, what is that? You turn off the radio, you turn off the, what is that? Many times, I truly believe that God wants us to hear that still, small voice, and that unanswered prayer draws us closer to Him.

And there are things sometimes that aren't necessarily sin, but it's a good thing, but it's not a God thing. Anytime we want to start a ministry here or have an idea, I've got three different ideas came to me this last couple weeks from different people. I said, okay, let's pray about it, because that's a good idea.

That's a good thing. But if it's not a God thing, we're going to be exhausted. I've got to preach five sermons in 24 hours.

The only way I knew it was a God thing. Because it's not a good idea. I'm exhausted mentally, emotionally, and physically, and spiritually, but you get renewed when you come here.

And you begin to hear worship. It renews your heart. And so, waiting and prayers not being answered.

The Monday, actually, was when heavens are brass, when something along those lines. It causes us to remove things that might be hindering us. You have to remove things.

Now, be careful. You'll be called arrogant, arrogant. You'll be called better than.

Oh, super spiritual, hyper-faith, Superman Christian, extreme, holy roller. No, I just have to narrow my focus. I have to remove those who are pulling me down and align with those who are lifting me up.

It's biblical. 2 Timothy, from the Amplified Bible. No soldier, which you are.

By the way, if you're a believer, I hate to just give you the bad news, but you are a soldier. You're not a softy. You're a soldier to fight that battle.

The battle, the spiritual battle. No soldier in active service gets entangled in the ordinary business, the affairs of civilian life. He avoids those things so he may please the one who enlisted him to serve.

Can you imagine SEAL Team Six getting ready to be dropped off in Afghanistan? They say, what are you doing, Chris? Hold on, I'm just Facebooking people, and I'm just contacting my friends. No, no, that's not a good idea right now. Where's your armor? Where's your weapon? See, those weren't bad things, but they're going to kill him if he goes into enemy territory unprepared, unarmed, and untrained.

Same thing with the believers. Sometimes you have to remove certain... It's called the separated life. And if you're like me, God had to break this out of me, and He did, but I was a people pleaser.

I actually started, this can be hard for you to believe, I started speaking. I could not public speak. If you saw a video we did, I think a year ago, we did it in honor of my mom, but right before, after she passed away, she wanted this put together, but showed a speaking clip of me in 1995, and I was scared to death.

I was just a big corn-fed, they call it corn-fed, from Oklahoma, and I didn't like to speak, and so when I first started, came back to the Lord, and God put this desire to speak in front of people, it's like, I'd rather go have a conversation than have a root canal. But, and I was actually, I was with 24 Hour Fitness, and I was a motivational speaker. I traveled to Fresno, and I traveled to different parts of California, and I spoke.

I was a motivational speaker. And it's so different, because then you're thinking about, okay, everybody's gotta like this message. They gotta like me.

They would even fill out forms. How did you like our speaker today? Any areas of improvement? Did it reach a felt need? And then I would get these survey results. Now, you cannot do that and be a preacher.

It's like, it's not even, because you have to say, God, here's what it really has, Lord, what have You said? What do You want me to say? In the spirit of humility and brokenness, what do You want me to say? And you put the blinders on. You don't look at the concerns of the people. You don't look at the expressions on

the face.

You don't look at those leaving. You say, thus saith the Lord, then let the hammer of God fall where it may. Let the fire devour.

Let it consume those who are here. Still on Monday, so I gotta get going. Tuesday, in Matthew, the disciples came to Jesus privately.

Why could we not cast this out? And if you were not here, listen to this message Pastor Abram gave it. It really moved my heart as well for this area of the last sentence. However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.

Basically, the disciples could not deliver this person and Jesus actually challenged their belief. He said, you don't have belief. You are unbelieving.

And I've heard some preachers say that Jesus, when He said this kind, He meant this kind of unbelief does not go out except by prayer and fasting. But I looked up kind in the original and it seems to denote some type of spiritual attack. I looked at early church fathers and commentaries and most say that it's clear that there is some demonic opposition that will not leave you until you go into a season of prayer and fasting.

I believe often the reason is because the demonic realm gets a stronghold when it begins to work in the lusts of the flesh. And so once anyone, I mean, we talked about addiction a lot. I wrote about it.

You can get the book for free out in the lobby. Addiction, really it's a stronghold. And if we keep giving in to that, whatever it is, you name it.

I mean, the Bible talks even about food, about gluttony being a sin. And that's something, I mean, I'm good at eating too much, so I can relate. And this addiction or this addiction, and here's why it's so important.

If I give in to this addiction, I build the stronghold even stronger. And so this demonic opposition now has an open door. I've been giving in to the, if I'm giving in to the lust of the flesh, how am I going to be strong in battle? You can't, so fasting begins to remove that fortress.

Prayer and fasting, I should say, obviously you can fast and lose weight and not go anywhere spiritually. That happens all the time. All the religions fast.

There's a big movement right now, fasting. Intermittent fasting. OMAD fasting, one meal a day.

Plant-based fasting. Daniel fasting. No, fasting is to shut the mouth.

Shut the mouth from food. Arthur Wallace said, often pressure has to be maintained before there is a breakthrough in heavenly warfare. Wow, that is so true.

I can't tell you, countless people who I see around town, they haven't seen you at church in months or years. And the comments are different, but the bottom line is it didn't work for me. I tried that for a couple weeks.

I came to the altar. Pressure has to be maintained. There's a word in the Bible called diligence.

When you come here, even when you don't feel like it, I believe that has more heavenly power than when you come when you do feel like it. Absolutely. Many times I come when I don't feel like it.

By the time the service is over, I'm so filled with God's Spirit, it's incredible. Thank God, Lord, you led me there. Thank God I experienced the pain of discipline instead of the pain of regret.

And there's a diligence that must take place. Fasting basically means I'm serious. I am serious.

If you take anything away from that, take this away. Fasting says, God, I am serious. I'm gonna starve King's stomach and put you back on the throne of my life.

Now, of course, people say I have diabetes, I'm on medication. Again, you can get that all in my books for free and just get wisdom there. Of course, you wanna use wisdom and different things.

But most, what we're finding, most health-related illnesses are diet-related. And guess what? If food hurts us, removing that helps us. There's a physical benefit to fasting as well.

And this is what I tell people often is right now there's a lot of sickness going on, correct? Everywhere, I mean, cold flu season, omicron, whatever you wanna call it. There's this, that's a dangerous word. But there's some sickness and it's real.

There's virus, it's real. But if people would take better care of their body and eat better, because you're actually giving your body the fuel to fight off these things. And with poor diet, poor nutrition, obesity, all these things, they begin to, they actually are toxic and harmful on the body.

So here comes a virus, our immune system wants to fight it, but it can't, it's so busy doing all these other things. And it's ironic, too, people will tell me, well, why do you even talk about that? Who cares? Let's just focus on spiritual things. Well, did you know your physical affects your spiritual? Your physical affects your spiritual.

That's why most people aren't serving. That's why they're not here concerned. They're not here consistently because they feel terrible.

They're sick all the time, they're overweight. And again, I'm not poking fun. I can be, that's my struggle.

Of course, I just went online and I looked. According to standards, I'm like 35 pounds overweight. According to, you know, 165 to 195, whatever.

And so, but there's a desire to consume, a desire to consume, so fasting puts that on hold. All right, next day, so we'll stop the conviction alert. But I would, when I go home, if I were you, I'd look at your pantry, look at your refrigerator, and say, is this fueling disease, or is it fighting it? You know, let me just stay there for a minute.

What happens, I don't know if it's God or not, of course, your own thoughts come in, but every time I'm praying for people, not every time, but a lot of times I'm praying for people, for sickness, for the family to get better, for this. I often have this thought, are you taking care of the temple? Because I can pray for your anxiety, but if you just stopped at Starbucks and got a venti, you're going to be pretty anxious. How much of it is self-created? Not all the time, but self-created in this area.

Now I'll move on. Wednesday, oh, I love this message as well. It was so deep in my heart.

Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation, was the message. The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. What happens? An exchange takes place.

Pray and watch, so you don't enter into temptation. And if you neglect these spiritual disciplines, you will enter into temptation. The bottom line is, two opposing things are pulling you.

One, God, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is willing. Lowercase spirit means the spiritual side of us. It's pulling, but temptation is pulling.

So if I'm not praying and fasting, spiritual discipline, seeking God, what direction am I going to be going? And so many Christians think they can stay neutral. You can't. You are a spiritual being.

You're being pulled one direction or the other, depending on whether you fuel, feed, or starve it. Starve the temptation, or do you fuel it? Again, not talking about perfection, but there is a direction, correct? Not perfection, but direction. My direction is this way towards God.

I'm falling forward. I'm heading this way. But sometimes I might take a step back.

I don't know about you, but then you get back and I'm falling forward. I'm pursuing God and here comes a difficulty and I step back, oh man, I'm gonna get back and I find there's this warfare that Paul talks about. That we must walk according to the Spirit so we don't fulfill the lusts of the flesh in Galatians.

And so watch and pray so you don't go back into temptation. David McIntyre's book, I recommend, *The Hidden Life of Prayer*. Order it, order it, order it.

*The Hidden Life of Prayer*, David McIntyre written 100 years ago. He talks about a quiet place, a quiet hour, and a quiet heart. You need all three of those.

When you pray, enter into the prayer chamber, Jesus said. When you pray, enter into the prayer chamber. There needs to be a quiet place, a quiet heart, a quiet hour.

And what I love about the prayer chambers is once you press in, I'm not talking about once you just begin to pray because you know how many things, I gotta do this, I gotta do this. Before I pray, I have to prepare to pray. And so as you get into that mode there, what happens is the veil is ripped open and the Shekinah glory of God is there and you begin to experience the power and presence of God like the old times, the old saints used to say that God heard our prayers today.

I had access to the Father, but it took some travail. It took some labor, it took some work, it took some diligence, and God says, I am a rewarder of those who follow Me half-heartedly. Come on, just trying to make sure you're awake.

I'm a rewarder of those who sometimes seek Me. I'm a rewarder of those who diligently seek Me. It's in the diligence and the pressing in and the pressing through.

David McIntyre, again, quoting from his book, as the electric fluid which is diffused in the atmosphere is concentrated in the lightning flash, so the presence of God becomes vivid and powerful in the prayer chamber. Oh, if we could get the lightning flash in our prayer room again, if we could get lightning flashes on the altar again, people filled with the presence and power of God. Why do we come to church just to play church and we don't experience God? Why go to Jerusalem and not meet the King of glory? Come and experience the presence and power of God.

Isaac went to the field to meditate. Moses withdrew to the clefts of the rock. Elijah went up to Mount Carmel, but King Ahab went down to eat and drink.

See, there's a difference to go up and experience the presence of God. There's work, there's climbing, it's exhausting, but it's healthier, spiritually speaking, well, physically speaking, too. There's spiritual benefit.

Daniel spent time on the banks of the Hittikal River. It's where right now modern-day China, Afghanistan, Syria, India, they all flow in. It comes into the Hittikal River.

Believe it's a Persian Gulf there. It empties into it. He would spend time there.

Paul spent time in the Arabian Desert. Jesus walked on the cold mountains and he breathed the midnight air. There's a quiet place, a quiet hour, and a quiet heart.

That's the secret access to the throne room of grace. Pray as you're driving. Pray it, but there has to be a place where you just get and you still silence those competing voices.

Watch and keep active. Watch and keep active. Be on alert.

I talked about the importance of the watchman. Having a night watch and a day watch. You are watchmen.

I don't have any kids. I'm not married. You're still a watchman.

You're a watchman to a dying and dead nation who needs to hear the clarion call of battle. I don't remember who it was, but one of the old saints hundreds of years ago said, soldier of Christ, you are an enemy country. Keep to the Lord's watch.

Oh, that is so rich. We're in enemy territory. It's like World War II.

The soldiers go in. Now they're behind enemy lines. Now they're in the camp of the Germans.

Keep the Lord's watch because of that. And I also mentioned that losing your first love is losing your heart of prayer. When you lose that heart of prayer, Ian Bound says, when my faith ceases to pray, my faith ceases to live.

Keeping that heart of prayer. That's why Jesus said, remember where you have fallen and return to your first love. Return to that prayer closet.

That intimacy with God. Why are we all so busy to pray? Is that just a coincidence? The enemy will either discourage you or distract you. Those are the two main tactics.

And so be encouraged this morning. It's laborious. It's agonizing.

It's wrestling. The uplifted hands of Moses grew weak. Jeremiah agonized for the nation.

Ezekiel pleaded for redemption. Paul contended for the faith. Peter wept tears of repentance.

Jesus swept blood leading up to the cross. It was travail. What happens is King's stomach says, I'm too busy to pray.

I'm too bored to seek God. I'm too full to fast. I'm too complacent to pursue Him.

I'm speaking in, it's a large church in El Paso, Texas. The end of this month. It's a Spanish church.

And it's their last night of revival and prayer and fasting and I texted the pastor and I sent him a sermon clip and I'm like, are you sure you can keep up? Like, do you want me? He goes, no, no, I'm ready, I'm ready. He's on fire. He wants to translate it.

And so, walking through all that and I noticed something and I wasn't gonna share this till tonight, but God just brought it to my memory and it just brought me to tears this morning. I don't know if you were here Tuesday night when Madeline began to sing Let It Rain, Let It Rain in Spanish. I didn't understand a word, but I heard the heart of the Father.

I didn't understand a word. I don't know. I don't know.

Not even one word. But you could hear a pin drop, the presence and power and anointing of God saturated the place and people were broken and humbled. Let it rain, let it rain.

I didn't understand the language. Padre Nuestro, de concielo, santificado, santo hombre, veneroso rey. What is she saying? But I heard Abba Father.

Cry out, Abba Father. See, a deep calling in deep. There's a deepness, there's an anointing, there's an unction when the Holy Spirit comes and wrecks a place because he's not in the words, he's in the hearts.

One of the old Puritans used to say, soldier of Christ, you are an enemy's country. You need to keep to the Lord's watch. And then Thursday, Pastor Abram talked about the prayer of faith will save the sick.

In the mouth of infants, you shall have perfect praise. It's funny, sometimes, another rabbit show. Afterwards, people often come up and say, oh, I'm so sorry about my baby.

I'm like, we love it. We've had five kids in services and we love that the children are being touched. And when we see children at the altar, children coming to know the Lord.

And then Thursday, our Scripture was James 5. Pastor Abram talked about that. The prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. Something that is known but not talked about a lot is that some areas of sickness are the result of sin. That's Bible.

This verse talks about that. Confess, and even have the elders pray for you. And if this illness is due to sin and the sin is repented of, the healing can take place.

Not in all cases. There's different, I've taught on this before, there's different reasons for it. What about when Paul said, examine yourself before you take communion? Because many of you take communion and your heart is not right, you're sick, and many of you have died.

That's pretty clear. Because I believe God sometimes gets to the point and says, you know what, I'm done with this guy. I've been calling, I've been drawing, I've been convicting, I've been leading, I brought him sermons, but Ananias and Sapphira, I mean, the purity of the early church and God just struck them dead for lying.

Can you imagine having that purity today? How many people would be here this morning? The prayer of faith. Faith pleases God. Trusting God opens tremendous doors.

Just meditate on that verse. Trusting God opens tremendous doors. And faith, faith in God.

Lord, I have faith. I know You're going to do this, but You need to get to the point like the three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace. They said, God will deliver us.

God will deliver us. But even if He doesn't, I like that. I like that.

Because then I don't assume I know God's will. He, our God will deliver us. Boy, and you think, well that's, they're kind of questioning their faith.

What's wrong with these guys? No, they know that God will deliver us. He, can He or will He? You know, that whole struggle. But even, even if He doesn't answer prayers according to my will, I will not bow to you, culture.

I will not bow to you, false idol. I will not bow to you, king of this world. My God will deliver us, but even if He doesn't.

Unconfessed sin is like gangrene. It's cancer. It kills the body spiritually.

And then He said, the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Effectual, to be effectual means to be on target. All these areas are on target.

It takes a lot to get targeted prayer. You have to bring in the humility, the brokenness, the confession of sin, the perseverance, the diligence. And that is fervent prayer.

It reminds me of a shotgun shell. People think it's just a bullet that goes out. It's actually not, it's a casing.

It's a primer, a primer that ignites the powder. A powder that pushes the wad out. A wad that holds the BBs in place.

All of that is targeted towards the target. Every aspect of that. Prayer involves, targeted prayer involves, fervent prayer involves these things.

And then Friday, Hebrews 11. But without faith, it is impossible to please Him. For he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Joshua 23, so take diligent heed to yourself. Love the Lord. Proverbs 21, the plans of the diligent lead to their advantage.

And God would often parallel diligence with being a sluggard, a snail, lazy. And so this is a spiritual discipline, like perseverance. This diligence, to keep doing something and keep going forward.

And do you remember the times when God would move maybe the most profoundly in your life, it took a little effort. It took some diligence. It took some, just persevering to finish the job.

I remember when I was in construction, I was younger with my dad, we would dig test holes. Maybe two foot in diameter. This big bucket had a drill.

It'd go down like 40 feet. You look down like 40 feet down there. Don't fall down there, you're toast.

And one day, the machine had to be somewhere else, the backhoe, the tractor. And my dad walks over with a, so anyway, I should explain. As you're drilling, the dirt's gone, where's the dirt at? Right here.

Big pile, about probably this high of dirt. Like probably a dump truck load. And here comes my dad with a shovel.

Hey son, you stay here and backfill this. Well, what? Where's the tractor? That just pushes it in. And so like four hours later, the dirt, and then the pile gets farther, and then I'm like throwing it in the hole.

But they were so satisfying to finish. Just so satisfied to finish. But when I looked, I'm like, there is no way.

But there's no other option. He's coming to get me in four hours. So these things taught me the diligence and the perseverance, and things seem so overbearing or so difficult.

God will never deliver me from this. I've been caught in this for years. I don't see the light at the end of the tunnel.

This is never going to happen. And God says, no, you remove that discouragement and just keep persevering. Keep pushing the dirt into the hole.

Keep moving forward. He is a rewarder. The Bible is clear.

It's not He might, He's considering it. He will, He is a rewarder. End of story.

If anybody diligently seeks the face of God, they will find Him because God rewards the diligence in the life of the believer. Saturday, is there anything too hard for God? Yesterday was it. Is there anything too hard for God? Deuteronomy.

You can read it. Hero Israel, and he's telling Israel, listen, listen, listen. Get in tune with what God is doing.

Do not become faint. Do not become afraid. Do not tremble because the Lord, your God, will go with you to fight for you against your enemies.

This is an incredible verse, and throughout Scripture, because is God ever worried about your enemies? Is He ever concerned? Oh, that's a big one. There is no doubt in His mind. There is no ounce of trepidation.

No minute part of fear in Him. There's nothing. He goes before us.

What army can stop Him? What enemy can overrule Him? He just goes before you. So there is an enemy, but He goes before you. He fights against your enemies.

But I don't know who's watching. I don't know who's here. It does beg the question, are you sure you're on the right side? Because many people, even at funerals, I make this clear, the Lord is my shepherd.

I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He restores my soul.

And many people say, oh, amen, but do you know the shepherd? Many people don't, especially at memorial services. Same thing when we read this, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, God will fight for me, but are you on His side? Very interesting interview took place recently with Elon Musk. The Babylon Bee is a satire

site, but they actually interviewed him.

And they said, hey, we're wondering if you could do us a quick solid. If you're not too young, you don't know what that means, but basically it means if you could do us a favor. And accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior.

It's just a quick prayer. Musk sat stunned for a few seconds. Then he responded, I agree with the principles that Jesus taught.

There's great wisdom in there and things like turn the other cheek and loving your neighbor. But hey, if Jesus is saving people, I mean, I won't stand in His way. Sure, I'll be saved, why not? And the Babylon Bee host celebrated Musk's response and said, I think he just said yes.

I'm like, I don't think so. He likes the concept of a Savior, but not the confession of Jesus as Lord and Savior of his life. He didn't confess Christ as Lord and Savior and repent of his sin.

I hope he does. I don't know the heart. I'm just looking at these words.

But this is what I encounter. If you listen to Ray Comfort too, I mean, you encounter, oh yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm a good guy. I believe his teachings.

Of course, yes, apparently, hey, if Jesus is saving people, I'm not going to stand in His way. Sure, I'm saved. That's not the plan of salvation.

The plan of salvation is to repent and believe in the Gospel and be saved and to cry out to God Almighty. When asked if he wanted to be baptized, he said, no, I was baptized as a child. And as we know, depending on the age, infant baptism doesn't save you.

Baptism actually doesn't save you. It shows the public that you're publicly declaring Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And if you need to do that, do not continue holding back.

Even if you were baptized as a child, like I was. I had to do it later because I finally recommitted my life. So springboarding off of last night, do not let your heart faint, which is strengthening yourself.

It's interesting. I say, God, don't let my heart faint, but then He tells me don't let your heart faint. Wait a minute.

I'm confused now. But you're not a robot. And He's not a puppet master.

I won't let your heart faint if you don't let your heart faint. In other words, you've got to put trust. You've got to take those thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

Trust in God Almighty. Exercise your faith. And then He secures you.

He holds you. And when you look back, it's really not me holding on to Christ. It's Christ holding on to me.

He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Paul said, who can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus? Height and depth and principalities and powers and things present and things to come. No created being will ever be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah said, behold, I am the Lord thy God. There is nothing I cannot do. Or the exact words are, is there anything too hard for me? And with the same closing I gave last night I give to you this morning, the problem is we often judge God based on what we see.

Not the spiritual realm. What's going on behind the scenes. Hey, I'm guilty of that as a pastor.

I don't see it. I do not see it, Lord. I do not see how this is going to happen.

You ever been there? Don't leave me hanging. Every single person in this room has been there. Romans 8.28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

And I said something last night, if you want to listen to that sermon, I went really fast through these. I was a little worked up. But that happens.

But I want to slow down a minute and let you understand my heart. I said there is life and death. And I'm talking about Romans 8.28. All things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

There is life and death. What I mean is sometimes we're praying for someone not to die. And they die.

But how do we know that that death didn't bring salvation to their family or to their parents or to someone else? How do we know that God didn't take them before there was open embarrassment and shame? We don't know. There is life in death. And also, there is purpose in pain.

God, why? Why? I feel so much pain. Don't worry, I've got purpose. There is destiny in your disappointment.

Actually, the more disappointment I have, sometimes the deeper I go to prayer, and the more you begin to fulfill your destiny out of that disappointment, it pushes you to the prayer closet. There is faith in my failure. There is calamity in my confusion.

There is hope in my hopelessness. And there is worship in my waiting for time. Though, like Job said, though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.

I don't understand, but I will not allow my feelings to falter and allow my faith to falter. The prodigal son, when he was hungry, he still ate with the pigs. But when he was starving, he came home.

When he was desperate, he came home. He's eating with the pigs when he's hungry. But when he's starving, he runs to the Father.

The desperation. Can you imagine the prodigal son? Why did I squander my living? Why did I spend it on harlots and the party life? God, I've made such a mess. And God says, pick yourself back up, son.

Let me put a robe on you. Let me put the ring on you. Let me rebuild your life.

Out of the ashes, you will arise. Is there anything too hard for God? That's what I ended with last night. Bring your dead dreams to the altar.

Bring your broken children to the altar. Even though they're not here, you can pray for them. Bring your failed marriage.

Bring your declining health. Bring your shattered hopes. Bring your broken life.

And come and drink deeply at the fountain of living water. Let's contend for our marriages. Let's cover our children.

And let's plead the blood of Christ.

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