

Urgent - Powerful Points Calling America Back to God

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman calls for America to return to God through repentance and the urgent preaching of the Gospel amidst cultural challenges.

Duration: 43:55

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Jeremiah 20:9, Matthew 5:13-16, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 9:16, Galatians 6:9, Ephesians 6:10-18, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 1:12

Topics: "Repentance", "Revival"

Description

Shane Idleman passionately calls America back to God, emphasizing the urgent need for repentance and the church's role in preaching the truth of the Gospel without compromise. He warns against the dangers of a culture that has drifted from God, urging believers to stand firm in their faith and to be bold in sharing the message of Christ, even in the face of opposition. Idleman highlights the importance of self-discipline in the Christian life, encouraging believers to run the race of faith with purpose and to remain steadfast in their calling, regardless of societal pressures. He draws parallels between the struggles of modern believers and the challenges faced by biblical figures like Jeremiah and Paul, reminding the church of its mission to be salt and light in a dark world. Ultimately, he calls for a revival rooted in genuine repentance and a return to biblical truths.

Transcript

I've been asked for 18 years now, like, what do you charge to come and speak? Well, I usually tell them, if I can, I say, I would pay you to come and speak, depending on the audience. And like I told the first service, I don't have it, but if I had \$100,000, I would pray for Joelstein to give me 30 minutes on that programming. Let me preach the gospel of repentance to our nation.

Let millions of Americans here turn to God. See, that's what we need. Unless the church wakes up and preaches the precious truth of repentance, you're not going to see revival.

You're not going to see revival. Now, the Nielsen ratings would plummet. Do you know what those are? Right? The click, it's how many people are watching.

Like, who is this guy? I'm turning him off, off, off, off, off, off. Once they hear, you know, it went from happy, positive messages to repent, America. But what I've always told people for many years now is I don't charge anything to preach the gospel or to preach.

Now, if there's something in somebody's budget and you're flying out of town and they want to put you up in a hotel and different things, you know, that makes sense. But you can't go with this understanding, oh, I'm going to make \$1,000 off Jesus. It just doesn't work that way.

So that's what I do, a lot of speakers do, but some speakers, that's how they make their living. If their hearts are right, we have no problem blessing them. You know, we've had some speakers in the past here that are well-known, and they don't charge much at all, but that's their living.

So we're happy, we're glad to invest in them because they would come regardless. But that's what Paul is saying here, do not charge for the gospel. Verse 16, woe is me, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

So he's saying, you don't have to charge, I don't have to be paid to preach the gospel. Because, you know, there's people in the church that that's why they're in ministry. If you get in the ministry to make money, you are in the wrong place.

Because not only is that very difficult, number two is that's not the right heart. You should be able to say, I would do anything for Christ regardless if there's a cost, regardless if there's a price, regardless if I earn anything. So that's what Paul is saying, you don't have to pay me anything.

Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel. And woe to me is an internal call that not a lot of you understand. But as a preacher, woe to me means I have to preach the gospel.

I cannot do anything else. If I do something else, I am miserable. If I try to do this job, I am miserable.

Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. Paul is pouring out his heart like Jeremiah. Your word is shut up in my bones.

I'm holding it back, but I cannot. I have to preach the gospel. And that's one good indication to know somebody is truly called to be a pastor or a proclaimer of the truth is they have to do it.

Their heartbeat is there. And that's, I just told Randy, between both services, I said that is the only thing that has kept me going many times. Is to say, God, you called us here.

You did this. You put this church together. You called me to preach.

So regardless of the direction of our state, regardless of the United States direction, regardless of complainers and backbiting and bickering outside the church, regardless of the attacks we receive, you want to receive attacks? You stand up and you preach that Christ crucified, the need for a redeemed life, the need for a Savior, that He is the only way, the only truth, the only life. Nobody comes to the Father except through Him. You are on a collision course to hell unless you turn to Christ and avoid the wrath that is to come.

Try that someday. You watch what type of feedback you are going to get. Go to Washington and say that.

Congress, I have a message. Sacramento, I would like... Hey, Pastor Shane is coming from Southern California to speak to the Congress up here in Sacramento. What would you say? Oh, I'd be in fasting.

Fasting before that. But you have to say, men, women, we have drifted from God. Oh, you're ridiculed.

You're old-fashioned. Who do you think you are? That was a thousand years ago. The Bible is outdated.

No, the same truth is relevant today. Men and women, you need to fall on your face before God and repent of our sin. Repent of our drifting from God.

Repent from mocking Him and calling things that are good evil and calling evil good is an abomination in the sight of God. I would be thrown in prison or removed by security. Woe is me if I don't preach the gospel, the truth of God's Word.

And that's what it's getting to. You are going to see. You go to China, you'll see the real believers because they're hidden at four in the morning worshiping God knowing they can go to prison.

You'll sort out the wheat from the chaff really quick, the sheep from the goats really quick that you know who the true church is. And that's what Paul is saying here. Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.

I love that song we sang, I'm just a nobody trying to tell everybody about somebody. And young pastors, I would get emails a lot now from people, I don't know, should I go full-time in the ministry? Am I called a pastor? How do I know? How did you know? And I tell them, I tell this to my kids too, if you can do anything else, Charles Spurgeon said this, if you can do anything else, do it. Well, Shane, that's not very encouraging.

No, but that's the way you discern if you're truly called. Because those who are truly called cannot do anything else. They'll try to go get a secular job, and the magnet of God's gospel is pulling them back.

They'll try to run from it. Jonah! I'm not going to Nineveh. Jonah! Have you seen the Ninevites? The capital of Assyria? They would build skulls from their enemies? I'm not going there.

And God calls him back. Jeremiah. Jeremiah was so frustrated.

I can relate to him when I think of our nation. He was so frustrated. He said, God, I'm not going to preach Your Word again.

They throw me in a dungeon. They want to kill me. I'm not going to preach Your Word again.

And Jeremiah, as he sat at home, and as it just built up, he said, but Your Word was in my heart. Your Word is in my heart like a burning fire. It's shut up in my bones.

It's weary of holding it back. In other words, he's going to explode with the truth of God's hope and the need for repentance. Where did that start? He said, Jeremiah, before you were even born in your mother's womb, I formed you.

I called you to be a prophet into the nation. I will put words in your mouth. You will speak what I tell you to speak.

You will pluck out and pull down and root out. You will call these people back to you. Your Word will be like a fire, and they will be the wheat, they will be the chaff.

My Word will go forth and consume that sin. And that's burning in his heart. He said, I can't not do that.

I have to do that. It's a very important part of being called. And when people say that, you don't get in the ministry to help people.

It's a good idea. You don't get in the ministry like, oh, this sounds like a good little job. You just kind of relax and help people.

Did you know it's one of the top stressful jobs in America, top five, I think, is it pastoring? With the President of the United States. Stressful. Why? Because you carry the burdens of the people.

You carry the stress of never satisfying everyone. Do you know that? I don't know if, at least once a month, I see people walk up out of worship and never return. They'll leave when I preach, never to return.

I get the criticism on Facebook, on Instagram, on Twitter, on PodMeme, all over. Boom, boom, boom. Questioning motives, questioning your heart, attacking family, attacking the church, making fun.

Very stressful. But it goes back, Lord, you called me to do this. So my eyes are set on the Gospel.

The eyes are set on what He's called me to do. Actually, on one hand, though, the more negative stuff like this, the more it means, okay, I must be in line with the Old Testament prophets, because that's exactly what happened to them. That's exactly what happened to them.

I've deleted, I've banned more people from Facebook than you probably have friends. And then they'll email the church. You shouldn't do that.

It's my personal page. I can do whatever I want. You go get your own personal page.

But they're just mean, and they're ruthless. One guy, just after the Q&A, he goes, he goes, I feel so sorry for Morgan. He started to be married to such a jerk like that who's so unintelligible.

I'm like, who is this clown? But the flesh wants to... Well, let me look at his Facebook post, and how can I be mean to him? No, as a pastor, I can't respond. Just let him go. But don't feel bad.

I mean, it comes with the territory. Like law enforcement officers, you know. And here I met with a friend of mine.

He was on the SWAT team for nine years. It comes with it. And actually, you should expect it.

If there's nobody leaving service, nobody getting upset, you're not upsetting the demonic realm, you're not receiving threats or different things, the world loves you. If the world loves you, you don't have the love of the Father in you. Jesus said the world's actually going to hate you.

And I hate to keep using this guy as an example, but mentioning like, say, Joel Osteen, I'll run into tons of unbelievers. They say, I hate what you preach, but I really like that guy on TV. Why are you putting him down? No, I'm just shooting you straight.

If you want to see America change, you need to get back to Bible preaching, soul searching, heart wrenching, anointed, Holy Spirit filled sermons to change the soul of a nation. That's how you're going to change it. Revival.

God reviving His people. I can take you back to the 1700s in Welsh, the First Great Awakenings, all the revivals, all the awakenings that have ever happened because men and women have been praying and

fasting and preaching the difficult truths of the Bible as well as the glorious ones. Thank God for God's grace.

Isn't that funny? All the people that want to avoid sin love God's grace, but I love God's grace more when I understand the flip side. You might like heaven a little bit more if you understand hell. His grace has brought me here thus far to be grace that leads me home.

I appreciate God's grace more than most, I think, because I know where I should be. Although the weapon's been formed, it will not come against me because God's grace and His protection, His shelter, and you should know this, this isn't really who I am by nature. By nature, Shane Eidelman couldn't speak in public.

I'd go get a root canal instead of doing this. My speech impediments, wanting everybody to be pleased. I hope everybody likes me.

People pleasing, probably because I didn't get a lot of information from my father. Always trying to please. Daddy looked.

So that's the real fleshly. But when the Spirit of God came upon me, almost like Saul, I turned you into another man. David, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you're actually a different... Shane Eidelman died.

And God's Spirit can do the same with all of you. When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you're going to have that boldness at work. When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you're going to be a better father, better mother, better leader, better husband.

Doesn't mean you won't struggle. Sometimes I think the struggle intensifies when you start to do that. The little demon that was messing with you and now goes and recruits the general.

And says, go get this guy. Shut him up. Trying to knock you down to the next level from where you came from.

Woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel. When I preach the Gospel, I may present the Gospel of Christ without charge that I may not abuse my authority in the Gospel. So he's saying be sensitive to the influence of others.

Because you don't say, I'll come there if you pay me. In a ministry we have to be careful. This might not pertain to some of you, but we have to be careful in churches too as well.

They take two offerings every Sunday. Alright, let's take our morning offering. Let's take our after service offering.

Alright, before we leave, I know there's ten people in here. There's ten people in here. You have a hundred dollars, you don't know what to do with it.

And God is going to return that a thousand fold. There's not a cattle on enough hill he doesn't have for you. You're the head, not the tail.

Blessings are about to unfold when you give that money. That was pretty good. I can do that.

Should I try that? That makes me sick though. That was acting. But as a church, it's always, that's why we don't do that.

We have a box. If people want to give, they give. And you'd be amazed at how much God has brought in.

Just simply not making that the priority. And you should know that if you're a visitor, if you're new, we don't want people's money. This whole thing with money in the church has nothing to do with the church will make it.

Because God, He can do whatever He wants. It's a test of a person's heart. Your wallet is a test of your heart.

That's His bottom line. It's idolatry. So when God talks about giving, He wants us to release the idolatry of money.

It has nothing to do with the church needs it. God's going to fail. Oh, we're going to close next Sunday.

It has everything to do with the condition of a person's heart. And that's why a church should teach on it. And I teach on it when I get to it.

But we're not going to go out of our way to try, you know, come on, come on. And if you have to do that every week, you might not be in God's will. If you have to ask for funds every single week, you might want to go to the fund giver and ask, what's wrong? He might say, stop that for a season.

Let me bless you. Let me honor you. Because we can look back and say, how are we doing so well financially, paying off this building, having savings, being able to help people, benevolence, all munitions, how? That's the only way.

That is the, I can tell you by the authority of my own personal testimony, the only way we are doing so well, is because what God has done. If it was up to anybody's source, that was about five different rabbit trails from what I did the first service. So I needed to tell the first service to listen to the second, and second to listen to the first.

You know, one of our biggest challenges is what service do we use for the website? Did you know that? Because I talk to the people here at both services, and they're like, I don't know, they're so different. Well, which one do we use? And because God speaks to people differently, I believe. When I prepare a sermon, I don't stick by a manuscript.

I have the skeleton, and then God puts on the clothes. And He'll take my whole thought process somewhere. I'll think of a situation that might speak to them individually.

And it's always on the rabbit trails that people come and say, that part so blessed me. I'm like, it's not even in my notes. I had no plans on saying that.

And that's why being open to what God wants to do. So what's the practical application for this, Shane? Well, it's your main motivation, money, recognition, success, whether you're in ministry or not. What is your main motivation? And I'll dig at the heart of people who want to be involved in ministry.

Let's say they want to start a ministry. They want to be on a worship team, a prayer team. They want to do something for the church.

What's your motivation? Motivation. Is it recognition? Look, I've arrived, Mom. I'm head of a ministry.

What's the motivation? Because see, that's the only thing that's going to see you through. When you start your Bible study and 25 show up, are you going to still keep it going when there's only three? See, the motivation. Faithfulness.

That's what God looks at. So the next point here, number two, relating to the culture. So Paul continues in verse 19.

So the whole point of this sermon was three high-priority topics. Number one, the first topic Paul talked about was uncovering his true motives and talking about motives. And then now the second topic, he's going to kind of switch gears.

He's going to talk about relating to the culture. Did you know you're supposed to relate to the culture? In this sense, you're supposed to affect it with an A, affect. The problem is it infects you or most Christians.

So we're called to go into the culture and make a difference. Instead, the culture infects us and we look just like the world. So Paul's saying go into the world but don't look like the world.

He says to a Jew I became a Jew, to a Greek I became a Greek, to those under the law I became under the law, to those not having a law I didn't have a law, to those who are weak I became weak, I became all things to all men that I might win them to Christ. I just said it, now we don't have to read it. That's what he's talking about here.

I think we'll get to that in a minute. So when it comes to the culture, we go in and we make a difference. But if you feel that that culture or your environment, I should say, the environment you're in, is it pulling you away from God? Because if it's pulling you away from God, you might need to make a change there.

We should go into the workplace and affect that workplace. Oh yes, there's struggles, trust me. I remember the secular workplace.

Thank God I'm out of that. I mean, it was like I was walking into Satan's den every day. Just guys not filled with the Spirit of God, but I was able to minister to about half of them there when I was in the workplace.

And then into the culture. More Christians in Hollywood, please. Please.

More good movies. Dare I say it? More Christians in politics. There we go! My Lord.

I don't know why this is such a hot topic. Every time I talk about this, people get upset. So we should be the salt and light everywhere, but not one of the most important spots? Are you kidding me? Everything you're upset about that's going on has to do with politics.

The freedom to speech, the freedom to worship, the freedom not to kill innocent children, the freedom not to refine marriage. Now they're taking away restraints from law enforcement officers. Did you know they just raised the amount where somebody steals something from a store, it's no longer a felony? I've got guys running into Vons by my house, filling up their hands, running out.

I asked the manager, he goes, we can't do anything. It's only a misdemeanor. The cops aren't going to come? It's no longer.

It's no longer. You're not breaking law if you resist to help a police officer anymore. They just got rid of that law.

Wake up, people. Wake up. Politics matters.

Politics matters. It just means governing or leading a group of people. You don't think God's Word has anything to say about that? It has a lot to say about that.

Most of the books of the Bible were written to political leaders about political issues. So you better get off your high horse if it's just about the Gospel. It's about everything.

Salt and light everywhere. You can clap for that one. That's a good one.

And the one that really bugs me is now the use of... Ray, you can even correct me afterwards if I'm wrong, but the use of deadly force now has been minimized to where now an officer almost has to prove the use of that or they're going to be charged for murder. So a lot of them just... I'm getting out of the force. I can't do this anymore.

And see, we're encouraging violence and helping the criminal and hurting those who are protected to serve. Now, is there a bad apple in the bunch? Yep. But you don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I've got a baby and I've thrown out bathwater and you don't do both. You pull the plug and hold the baby. So you address certain issues, but the way we have lost our mind, we have lost our moral compass in our nation, in our state.

I understand if this video gets to the wrong person, I'm in trouble. I don't care. Especially if the kids were a little older.

Morgan might care, so I better back away. No. Because you want to raise your family and be around, but the way things are going, woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel.

And you know that was passed now too in California where it's illegal. Well, it's not illegal. It's discouraged and it will become illegal where I can't encourage people to turn from their sexual preference.

If they're homosexual, I can't say that that is wrong to turn from it. I just did it the first service in the prayer room. Encourage the person in this area.

But see, that goes back to my whole point. We shouldn't say anything political. Everything I just said has to do with having the wrong people in office.

You don't think that God wants godly leaders and positions of authority to govern and direct a nation? You better start and look at the Old Testament. The mosaic form of government. Moses over the people.

It was a theocracy commanded by God to put godly legislation in places of leadership to affect the people. So we've gotten into this big lie that the church should just be quiet and might not say anything political. Now, I don't think we should be political and I'm championing the Republican or Democrat party or I'm for this candidate or this candidate.

It's about what does God's Word say about important issues. Now, what's next? Verse 19, For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all that I might win them all. Here's a key word here.

I have made myself a servant to all. Anybody having a struggle with that one? Oh, every hand in this room should go up. I'm going to wait until every hand in this room... No.

Being a servant to all. That's how you win people to Christ. You want to remove stress from your life? Be a servant to all.

The majority of the stress we deal with comes from keeping up with the Joneses. Keeping our agenda on track. What I want, my needs, my fulfillment, my desires, my, my, my, my, my schedule.

And stress is a result of my schedule being affected. Things not going like I thought. Where servant of all is... Look at how much... The least amount of stress a person ever received.

It looks like Jesus in his life. He was just until the last couple of days of his life that excruciating pain of knowing to go to the cross. But just the ministry, serving others, I don't see him stressed out.

Show me one verse. Other than towards the end of his ministry. What Shane and John, it says he was just anxious, he didn't know what to do, he didn't know what God's will was.

No. Calm, cool, level-headed, went to a deserted place. He was tired, he was weary, but he meant a servant of all.

Do you know the Dream Center in Los Angeles? Have you heard of it? Matthew Barnett is the son of Tommy Barnett who started it. Matthew started a church in Los Angeles. It became an absolute failure.

There was one service where nobody showed up. And he was about ready to quit. And he went out and took a walk, I think it was Echo Park, at midnight.

It's a church... I mean, it's a park in Los Angeles at midnight. And it's not a good spot to be, but God showed him a lot that was going on there. The homelessness, just the misery, the drug addictions and alcoholism.

And God told him this, I don't ever want you to talk about or even think about success again. Meaning numbers. Think about being a blessing.

Success is obedience to your calling. What has God called you to do? I'm not seeing the fruit of my... Has God called you to do it? Stick with it. I don't see any fruit either when I first plant the seeds.

There's a time that it goes by. Success is obedience to your calling. I have called you to bless these people, love them, heal them, help them, serve them.

Then there was a pause, and I absorbed that thought. Then came this closing argument. God says, I love these people.

If you reach the people that nobody wants, I'll send you the people that everybody wants. And from that day, he started to get back on track and now they have the Dream Center and a very well-known person. I'm not saying that happens for everyone.

The whole point here is the key is faithfulness. Faithfulness. I remember some of you, just for the sake of reminding us of this, when we first started the church, we had about 200 people show up the first night.

And then within six months, we're down to 50 people. What in the world is going on? This is not a good direction. I come from the business world.

That's not a good direction. And I went home that night. I don't remember if I told Morgan exactly that night, but I told God, I said, well, whether it's 50 or 500 or 5,000, I'm preaching what you called me to do.

You called us to do this, to be faithful in the little things. And that was a turning point in my life because I didn't worry about numbers. Because most people rate if something's growing, it's healthy.

If it's not, it's not healthy. And there's a lot of truth to that. Because if there's a dead church down to 30 people and it's dead, you need to wake that up.

God needs to wake that up. So growth can be an indication of health. But you've got the largest church in our nation is not doing good spiritually.

And it's the largest in numbers. So there's something to that as well. Verse 20, this is what I already read to you, that Paul became all things to all men, to Jew, to the Greek.

He basically adhered to the customs to influence them. So you can relate to someone, but you don't have to relate to their lifestyle. You don't have to enjoy their lifestyle.

I can go to dinner with a friend of mine who doesn't know the Lord and not have to get drunk with him at Claim Jumper or wherever you guys go. I've been there a couple of times. I don't want somebody to think, oh, my wife talked to him when we went to dinner.

But you don't have to fall into sin with them. You can relate to the culture, but come out from among them and be different. So let's go to this.

What's the practical application? Be solid in the essentials. Hold your ground. Be solid in the essentials, but full of love and grace.

And then the final point here, it's not going to be popular, but it's very powerful. Are you ready for this? Drum roll. Paul is going to talk about the power of self-discipline.

I would submit to you this morning that is probably one of the biggest things we need today. There you go, Brent. In a nutshell, what is that? Self-discipline is disciplining self.

If you don't discipline self, self begins to take you in a direction you don't want to go. And Paul has something to say about this. Do you not know, verse 24, do you not know that those who run in a race all run? But one receives the prize.

So run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now to me this is very interesting, because he's saying, don't you know that those who run in a race, they all run, but only one receives a prize.

So instead of the Christian being lazy, in the back, don't worry, just go with the flow. He's saying, you run the race to finish and finish well. You run to win that prize.

How much more should the athlete, or how much more should the Christian who's running for God and wants to finish strong, how much more should they finish strong and discipline themselves than the person

who's going after a crown that perishes? I remember about 25 years ago, they interviewed an athlete. They asked him, are you going to keep taking steroids even if you died in four years, if it meant winning the gold medal? He said, absolutely. Absolutely.

How many of the people that we know, we look up to these actors, or these athletes, it all perishes. Think about this for a minute. Your favorite basketball player.

Your favorite musician. Your favorite Hollywood actor. Oh, I love these people.

How many are on the road to hell? On the broad road to destruction. And they're running the race to get that crown that perishes. How much more of the Christian then? How much more? See, I believe Paul says they placed a high value on winning.

They want to win. They finish well. That should be the life of the Christian, not to fall back and become lazy, but to pick that point again and to fight and to finish that race no matter what comes against me.

I'm going to finish the race. What's the race? What race is that? If you're a Christian, finish well. If you're a husband, finish well.

Remain true to your wife. Remain true to your kids. If you're a mother, remain true to God.

Follow Him with all your heart. Get back up and fight again. Don't fall back.

Don't go away from the race. The Bible puts Christians in three camps. You're going to love this.

An athlete, a farmer, and a soldier. Did you know that? Oh, Shane, I don't like to work out. Guess what? You're an athlete.

I don't like to fight. I'm passive. No, you're a warrior.

I don't like to work hard. You're a farmer. Think about that.

It's not taught that often that you are a warrior in God's kingdom. You are going to battle. The soldier.

Shane, how do you know that? Well, put on the feather of God and soft pillows. Put on the blanket of God and grab your comfy pillow and go lay down and watch Netflix. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand the wiles, the trickery, the deceit, the lies of the enemy.

You hold that sword of the Spirit and you quote the Word of God and you say, not in my house, not in my family. Though the weapon formed against me, there is a weapon formed against me. Did you know that? The enemy.

There is a weapon formed against you. There is a weapon formed against you. But it will not prosper if you put on the whole armor of God and you put up the shield of faith.

I trust God no matter what. I've got the belt of truth. It keeps everything up.

I forgot mine this morning. And I can tell. But it's a belt of truth.

Truth. There's a truth. Did you know that? If you listen to millennials on Facebook or YouTube, or the younger generation, well, what's true to you might not be true to me.

And truth changes. And it's fluent. We can be gender fluent.

I guess now you can be a girl and then you want to be a boy. But now you want to be a girl again. It's called being gender fluent.

And you have to recognize it. Even police officers now on their tickets have to have different genders. And if you call them by the wrong name, even teachers, if you call them by the wrong name, you could be in trouble.

We've lost our mind. You are in a battle. Shane, why are you poking fun? I'm not poking fun at all.

I'm saying there's a truth that God has initiated. And we are drifting from that truth. Times change.

Truth does not. Truth is the thing that keeps everything together. Truth is the belt.

It holds that armor together. You have to go into battle with the truth, with the shield of righteousness and righteousness in Christ and holy living. There's a fight.

You are in a battle. You are in a race. But many people are not temperate in all things.

Moderate. Moderation. Self-disciplined.

Well, I don't see where it says self-discipline there, Shane. Oh, we just need to keep reading. Here we go.

Now they do it for a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Paul said, therefore, I run like this. I love this part.

I run not with uncertainty. If you want certainty in life, follow Christ with all your heart. That's why many Christians are confused.

One foot in the world. One foot in church. I'm so confused.

I'm a double-minded man and stable in all my ways. I almost want to do the floss right there, but I don't know how. It doesn't work.

I just want to show you the lighter side of me, okay? But he's saying here, the most solid Christians I know are those filled with the Spirit of God. They might struggle with doubt and things, but there's no uncertainty. They are certain.

I am as certain that the sun is coming up tomorrow as I am that Christ is returning and He will win the war and He will come back from heaven. When I read John in Revelation, he said that the Son of Man is coming back. He sits on a white horse and out of His mouth goes a sword that He will strike the nations.

He will rule the nations with a rod of iron. He will rule them. He will tread the winepress and the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God.

I take that over all news media outlets combined to that being the truth. There is certainty. There is a judgment coming.

There is a Christ who is Lord and Savior. There is a heaven. There is a hell.

There is a right. There is a wrong. And you preach it with certainty.

Thus I fight, not as one who beats the air. I don't fight as somebody just beating the air. You know, you're fighting nobody, but what does He say? Listen, but I discipline my body and I bring it into subjection.

I bring it into control. Why? If I don't, when I preach to others, I will become disqualified. There's a big truth there that you've got to live what you preach.

That when you talk to others about the victorious Christian life, you better have some victory. When you talk to them about the Spirit-filled life, you better be filled with the Spirit of God. When you talk about them how Christ has overcome, you better have overcome something.

And that discipline, saying no to this, this is going to hurt me. No to this, it's going to take me away from God. And I discipline my body.

The literal translation is I beat my body black and blue. I tell my flesh, you shut your mouth. I'm not going to eat that.

I'm going to fast. I'm going to keep fasting until you silence that voice of the stomach. I'm going to beat my body and bring it into subjection.

Now I'm not talking about getting weird and being like a monk and just sitting out in the desert. That's not what I'm talking about. But you have to discipline your body.

What happens if you don't discipline your body? No, I'm not kidding. I'm not talking about physical things. Just in general.

I thought about this. If I just let my flesh do whatever it wants to do, whew, that's ugly. Could you imagine? Just let your flesh do whatever it wants to do.

How many of you be stopping by the marijuana store on the way home? Or the liquor store? Or Ben and Jerry's? Or sexual immorality? Or prostitution? Just let the flesh do whatever it wants to do. But see, that's what it's already trying to do. That's why self-discipline, disciplining self.

As a believer, you have the power to say no. And here's the wonderful thing about that. There is wonderful fruit that comes from that.

Because we think, oh, saying no, that stinks. Like kids, look at self-discipline. They don't understand that they're being trained for battle.

You're teaching kids self-discipline now that's going to be very useful later. The people who are the most self-disciplined are the most successful in life. Self-discipline, disciplining yourself to when you must control self.

You must do the hard things. So here's a practical application. What areas are lacking in self-discipline today in your life? And Paul says, I discipline my body.

I bring it into subjection. And I know like most of you, I've been there. Sometimes the self gets the best of us.

And God says, come back and begin to discipline self again. Discipline that thing that is taking you away from Me. That could be the media for someone.

Anybody spend too much time on the media? Nobody in this whole room. That is very encouraging. YouTube.

Facebook. The media. And I think that's why so many people are paranoid and fearful because they're watching too much of the news.

This is the clapping side over here. You always have to remember when you look at that, Russia is not above God. North Korea is not above God.

Nobody is above God. God holds the nations in the palm of His hand. But Shane, they might launch a nuke and it hits California.

Well, I'm gone then. But they're not ready to meet Jesus. That's why they're fearful.

Many are fearful because I haven't been living my life for Christ. I can't live for Him if I don't want to die for Him. I want to close with the lyrics from a song.

It said, The weapon may be formed, but it will not prosper. When the darkness falls, it will not prevail, because the God I serve knows only how to triumph. My God will never fail.

Do you realize how powerful that is? God will never fail. Whatever war has Jesus ever waged where He is lost? Name one more in the Bible where Jesus was conquered and defeated. Oh, Shane, the cross.

Oh, no. Keep reading. Three days later, all hell literally broke loose.

The demonic realm trembled. The earth shook. The tomb was opened.

The temple, this huge, higher than our building, this huge veil that was thick was ripped down from the top to the bottom. It says, Now my people can come to me directly because of what Christ did on the cross. So that wasn't failure.

That was triumph. So God will never be defeated. God is always with you if you turn to Him.

And I love that story about Daniel. In the book of Daniel, those three Hebrew boys that were thrown into the fire. Many of you know that story.

It's very interesting. It's something we're going to have to face today. So before you check out and think about lunch, think about this.

Think about this for a minute. We are living in dire times. They said, You have to bow to the king.

They said, We're not going to bow to the king. They said, Okay, we're going to execute you. And they said, We will not bow to you because our God will deliver us.

We will not bow to you. Our God will deliver us. You have to have that type of faith.

But here's what else you have to have. This side. You know what else they said? But even if He doesn't, we will not bow to you.

Isn't that... It's hard to find that balance. Because we can be on the... Oh, my God will deliver me. My God will set me free.

My God will take this cancer away. And Jesus is saying, What about if He doesn't? He's still God. God, You will raise my child up.

You will heal them from being sick. I know they have leukemia. I know.

I know, but God... Your book says... But what about if He doesn't? See, that's a healthy position. I will not bow to you, politically correct culture. My God will deliver me, but even if He doesn't, I will not bow.

You have to get to that mindset. You can't be on one side and just fear factor. Oh, they're going to take it.

They're going to kill me. They're going to do this. And you can't be this acting as if God's going to keep us from all type of harm.

If you think that, I just grabbed Fox's book of martyrs. Do you know that 11 of the 12 disciples died gruesome deaths? Isaiah who spoke like, I'm speaking to the people, calling them to repentance, it was said that King Manasseh saw him in two. Hung upside down.

Beheaded. It's a militant type of faith that loves God and loves people enough to stick to the truth. But it was very interesting because the king threw them in and going to destroy them and nothing happened.

And the king freaked out. He said, what is that? There's another man in the fire. There's another man in the fire.

And his likeness is the son of God. How he knew what the likeness of the son of God would be, who knows. But he said, there's another man in the fire.

But see, that's a wonderful principle. Even in the fire, even in the fire, God says, I will be with you. When the water overcomes you, I will be with you.

When the storms come against you, I will be with you. When the whole culture, when the whole culture is against you, I will be with you. Even if nobody seems to be listening, even if everything seems to be going to hell in a handbasket.

Hold on, son. Hold on, daughter. Because I am with you.

I am there to hold you with my right hand. No king shall conquer me. No devil shall overcome me.

I am the Lord thy God and you serve me with all your heart, with all your strength and I will see you through. That might mean early grave or that might mean victory. But either way, oh king, oh culture, oh United States of America, I will not bow down to the false gods.

I will not serve the wrong gods. I am serving. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord our God.

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