

# Watch and Pray Lest You Enter Into Temptation (Video)

by Shane Idleman

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of watching and praying to avoid falling into temptation. It highlights the willingness of the Spirit within us to connect with God, contrasting with the weakness of our flesh. The speaker encourages finding a quiet place, heart, and hour for prayer, stressing the need to prioritize a deeper spiritual life. The message calls for persistence, warfare in prayer, and tapping into the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome challenges.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 26:41, Mark 14:38, Psalm 46:10, Luke 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16, Romans 8:26, Hebrews 4:16, 1 John 5:14

**Topics:** "Prayer", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

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## Transcript

lest you enter into temptation. And we can just put the screen up now for Matthew 26. I only have one screen.

I just wanna meditate on that tonight and really get our hearts grounded to what God is saying to us. Watch and pray, Jesus is saying this. So it's watch and pray.

Many people are watching, but they're not praying. Many people are praying, but they're not watching. So it's watch and pray.

And as a result, you will not enter into temptation. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Notice how Spirit is not capitalized.

You can look at the original text and it was not capitalized. That word is pneuma, pneumatology. In the Greek, it's where you get your pneumatic guns, your air guns, it means the blowing of the air, the pneumatic is how we use the word now.

It's pneuma, or when you study the Holy Spirit, it's a pneumatology, and it's lowercase. So it's saying that there's a part of us, that spiritual side of us that cries Abba, Father, that is willing, that is willing inside of us, but the flesh is weak. So the Spirit wants to do it, but the flesh is weak.

And there is a way to overcome that. Now, I'm not gonna take a lot of credit for this message, because I pulled a lot of it from David McIntyre's book, *The Hidden Life of Prayer*. We shared it in the electronic bulletin, we posted it on Facebook.

David McIntyre, *The Hidden Life of Prayer*. I was weeping after the first chapter, my highlighter was about broke, and I couldn't even get through the first chapter. Written 100 years ago.

Those guys were deep, let me tell you. And I'm borrowing some of the concepts from that, some of the quotes from that. It just put so much life into me, I wanted to give it to you, and give him all the credit that's due.

I believe he was born in the 1850s, the book was written 1913 or so. *The Hidden Life of Prayer*. And why is this topic so important? Because you have, I have three enemies.

You've heard of this before. The flesh, because the flesh craves things that are not godly. And then the world, the world pulls us away from God, that's why the Bible says love not the world, the cosmos, the way the world thinks, don't love that, but love God and His Word.

So we have the world, the flesh, and Satan, the devil. Now, unless I'm mistaken, I don't think he goes around harassing each one of us, but he has minions, fallen angels, and that is their job, and that's what they do. One way, and I was going to kind of springboard off of what Pastor Abram talked about last night, that this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.

There's certain levels, stronger devils take new levels of going deeper. And you can kind of tell it's a demonic attack because it's actually stronger than the flesh. You know, the flesh will want something.

No, but when a demonic attack, there's a harassment. There's a stronghold, there's a harassment, and they come in and they want to just harass you and the struggle is stronger often because if you realize this, it might help a little bit. And I want to be careful on the wording here.

If you look at many theological books, they define the Trinity as three persons of the Godhead. But we know, we don't think of people, persons, but how do you define the Trinity? Three persons of the Godhead. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

One God revealing Himself as three persons of the Godhead. Well, the demonic realm is also personal. So you are dealing with an actual person, not a person you can see, but a being, a spiritual being.

So you're going to war with this demonic influence. That's your battle. That's the fight.

And so this is so important as we watch and pray to fight all three of these areas. And I'll remind you a couple of times tonight, hopefully, that prayer is not just communication to God, it's actually spiritual power. See, as Christians, we have permission from God to cast down arguments and to contend for our families and to pray in the things of God.

We have permission, but often we don't have the power because we don't tap into that power. And the best example I could think of this week was, you've been watching in the news that our L.A. County Sheriff

is very adamant now about getting a lot of concealed carry weapon permits approved. Which, yeah, okay, you can clap, I guess.

So, if you're getting robbed or about to, you can't just show them you're, hey, hey, look it, look. I got a concealed weapon permit, look. They could carry less.

But if you say, oh, and the Glock 9mm. And I've got this too. See, that's the permission and the power.

As a Christian, we have to have both of those. We have permission to go boldly into the throne room of grace. We have the permission, the ability to call down heaven and to fight against that demonic influence, but you gotta bring in the power too.

The power of the Holy Spirit so that even hell trembles. Even the weakest saint on their knees makes the demonic realm tremble because they know they are pulling heaven, and they know there's a shelter and a covering around them that they cannot penetrate. So, believers, tap into your power.

Tap into that power. It's warfare. It's a struggle.

But this word here, watch. Watch. I don't know why he just can't say pray.

Just pray. But that word watch, it means to keep on active alert. See, when you're on alert, you're looking for the opportune times of the enemy.

You know your crack's in the armor and you're careful. You're discerning on what your kids are watching, what you're consuming, where your feet are going, where your mind is going. The discerning of the times.

You're a watchman today. The importance of the watchman throughout the Old Testament was incredible. The prophets talked about the watchman.

God talked about quiet watchmen, like dumb dogs that don't even bark. Cowardly watchmen that fall asleep. The watchman would stand on the wall and sound the alarm when the enemy was coming.

So you have to watch and be vigilant. That's why you'll often hear in Christian literature the morning and the night watch. Especially if you read books 100 years ago.

Let me tell you, you've got to get some older books. These guys didn't have the internet, and they just had time to write and meditate on God and who He was. And I get jealous sometimes.

I read David Brainerd's journals, and he's like spent four days in the wilderness just praying and reading and writing. I bet he didn't have kids. But I take that blessing over the other, so don't get me wrong.

But there's a morning watch and a night watch that early Christians would talk about. The morning watch was the freshness of the day. If you don't start your day with that foundation, you're going to have a troublemaking headway the rest of the day.

Martin Luther said, I'm too busy not to pray. I don't know how it works, but the economy of time, the more I pray, the more I can utilize my time better. And I've had a big day ahead of me, and God just goes before me and turns things around.

Recently, I told my wife, she was getting my daughter her driver's permit, and I said, you better go to the DMV like eight hours early, and call me and I'll come rotate with you in line, and they walk right in. And so

we were planning, I'm planning my day to go relieve her, and God can just boom. When you give Him that freshness, that morning watch is when, last night, got to bed late, I don't know about some of you, I mean, 10 o'clock's late for me, and then just looked at the clock, and it's three o'clock.

And I couldn't go back to sleep. I wanted to get up and watch the home. Watch and come against the powers of darkness trying to take down our church, trying to take down our children, trying to take down many of us.

That morning watch to where you get up and you cry out, Abba, Father, you get in the Word of God, and you're on watch. And that watch carries into the day. So the person who is sleeping in, on the run, going out the door, just in a hurry, it's hard to catch up.

And so, of course, you have the night watch as well, that's why I often say, who do you go to bed with? Not meaning anything sexual, but who do you go to bed with up here? That night watch, putting your mind at rest, and that's a great book I recommended earlier, *The Hidden Life of Prayer*, or Ian Bounds on prayer, or the Word of God. And you just saturate your mind and so you've got the night watch now, and your mind is staying steady on the things of God. And then you get up in the morning again, it's a morning watch, and you're watching, you're discerning.

As you're prayerfully considering everything going on in your life, the watching and the praying go together. I thought it was fairly interesting that the verse that many of us know, but I don't know if we know really the back story to it, and it's in Revelation. I just wrote it down briefly earlier today and I didn't look at the reference.

I know it's in Revelation, maybe chapter 2 or so. And Jesus talks about remember, remember from where you have fallen. The church had left their first love.

They had lost that first love. Their passion was dwindling. Their desire was gone.

They were going through the motions and they were serving Jesus out of obligation. They weren't making church that much. And they weren't seeing the fruit of this relationship.

And I was reminded that losing your first love is really losing your heart of prayer. When that heart of prayer goes, that first love for Jesus goes. I think what's interesting, me and Abram talk about this quite a bit, is the reason we push these events so much is not much for our benefit as much as for yours.

We have so many people telling Shane I'm going through this health issue or this financial crisis or this difficulty or this. Why aren't you here? Do you think just talking about it's going to fix it? There has to be a pressing in. There has to be a priority.

And when you fall in love with Jesus again, it's okay to say that. Don't you want to spend time with Him? You want to go to church. Now, I got up this morning.

I could not wait to get to here. I was ready. I wish it had started at 5 in the morning, but it didn't.

But come lunchtime, why don't I want to go? What's wrong with me? I'm in a bad mood. You know, because emails come in. Things come in.

Problems come in. And you have to be on watch and prepare for those ups and downs and not let the emotional rollercoaster dictate your prayer life. Be on watch in this area.

And then this wording, lest you enter into temptation. So if you're not praying and watching, you can actually enter into temptation. And what is happening here? Well, an exchange takes place.

If I'm not fortifying and strengthening myself spiritually, watch and pray, the exchange takes place and temptation comes in. And the strength of temptation in your life is directly resulted to the strength or the weakness in your prayer life. Strong prayer life.

Strong watch. Strong Holy Spirit-powered life. Temptation hits a block wall.

It doesn't mean you don't struggle, but it's not like caving in. Have you ever just felt that my flesh has got me? I mean, I've lost a wrestling match. Whatever the flesh wants, I obey.

I'm led astray by my flesh. It's because the night watch and the morning watch and the time of watching and prayer has slipped away. We forget that prayer is warfare.

And what we're doing is fighting against temptation. So from the moment you get up, the flesh says, sleep in. Don't go tonight.

You've got a busy day. Don't read God's Word. You can get to it later.

And that pull begins to start. But if you watch and pray, you're able to fight off that temptation. And prayer is warfare.

It's also labor. I don't think people realize the language the Bible uses a lot when it comes to prayer. It's like a woman in labor.

It's labor. It's agonizing. It's wrestling.

And it takes a while to get your heart engaged and your mode is right. And I think it was Robert Murray McShaney, and I've always remembered this, he said something along the lines of before I pray, I have to prepare to pray. In other words, you don't just get up.

There's a preparation. There's a wrestling with the heart. There's a wrestling with priorities.

Does your mind ever go somewhere else? I even leave myself Post-it notes. Do not pick up your phone this morning. Because then I think, well, I wonder what's going on in the news today.

It's 4 in the morning. I wonder what the weather's going to be for later. Oh, I've got to email Abram.

I've got to email media. I've got to email worship. And it's contending for your time.

And there's a pull. So it's agonizing. It's wrestling.

And sometimes you'll end up on your knees and you're just wrestling for your children. You're wrestling. Where the agony comes from is it's the agony of the flesh being put into submission.

And there's warfare there. It's mental wrestling. I'm more exhausted sometimes after Sunday than when I was in construction and worked all day.

Because there's an exhaustion from the time I get here to the praying with people and discerning and using wisdom and praying for the services and speaking for an hour each time and coming out of me. My

heart is coming out and my desire is coming out and there's a laboring and there's an anxiety. Same thing with prayer.

It is warfare. It is warfare. And the enemy wants to stop you in this area.

I'm convinced. What other area is so difficult? Try to pray and fast tomorrow. In the Old Testament, the king of Syria said don't go after the weak or the strong.

Just go after the king of Israel. And the demonic realm says that as well. Don't go after those who aren't focused on Me.

Don't go after those who I kind of already got them going in the wrong direction. Go after those. Go after the mom who's contending for her children.

Go after the dad who's wanting to make a difference. Go after the grandparents who are contending and staying up in the night watches. Go after that and try to stop them on that night watch.

That's why there's agonizing results sometimes or labor pains or wrestling through things. It's that same word where Jesus talked about strive to enter the narrow gate. Agonizo.

It's where we get our word agonized. There's a striving. There's a contending.

There's a wrestling. And some of it is when you're at the altar in your house, it takes time and you're fighting against that demonic element that wants to stop you. The flesh wants to stop you.

And the pull of the world definitely wants to stop you. So you have to develop persistence. Anybody feel like quitting because they're not seeing results? John Livingston lived many, many years ago said Satan strikes either at the root of faith or at the root of diligence.

The word slothful, lazy, those things the Bible condemns. Oh sluggard, go to the end. Because a slothful, lazy lifestyle will not produce a powerful prayer warrior.

It's got to be persistent because really, it's faith. It is faith that causes us to pray and say, Lord, I know You hear me. I don't see the results.

I don't see what I'm praying for. But You've put this in my heart. You've called me to be a watchman on the wall.

You've called me to lead and guide my family. You gave me this desire. And actually, everything's going backwards instead of forward.

It's not getting better, it's getting worse. But I'm gonna sit, I'm gonna persist and persist. And I feel like Daniel sometimes when the angel said, Daniel, I heard you on day one, but it took me 21 days because the prince, the king of Persia, this principality over this area held that angel back from delivering the promise of the prayer.

It's incredible. That persistent, what about Daniel gave up? The uplifted hands of Moses grew weak. Jeremiah agonized for the nation.

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

Jesus, Jesus swept blood leading up to Golgotha. That agonizing prayer in the garden. Oh God, would you take this cup from me? God, it's not my will, but your will be done.

He could, all hell was breaking loose. All types of demonic influence was against him. He knew the road ahead.

He knew the road of Calvary was going to be difficult that they would, his creation would spit on him and they would beat him and he would have to hang there naked, holding himself to pay the penalty of hell, death and the sin of grave. And then from that came out the blood that would pour out of his forehead, dripping out of the corpuscles there. And he just agonized and labored and wrestled.

How are we going to be any different if we want to see God answer those prayers? Persistence, persistence. God told one of the prophets, if you run with the footmen and they weary you, how are you going to contend with the horses? If you can't keep up now, I believe, Jeremiah, how are you going to keep up with the horses? Stop complaining against the enemy. Stop saying, oh, I'm so tired.

Strengthen yourself in the Lord. Get back up and fight again. Get back up and pray again.

Rebuild that prayer altar. Rebuild that place of consecration. Rebuild that desire.

Get that fire back in your children, even if they won't listen. Every time we say we're going to do a family devotional, all hell breaks loose. How many of you like to read or study or know about early believers? You can go to the early church fathers, of course, or later in John Hus, burned at the stake.

That's where you get that term, your goose is cooked. Hus actually meant that, his name meant that in that language they were using. And he said a swan is going to come in a hundred years and the fulfillment of Martin Luther, it's just so much there.

And you look at Whitecliffe and Tyndale and Wesley. I mean, you just go on and Amy Carmichael, Hudson Taylor, guess what? You know them because of their prayer life, not their popularity. They're popular because they were prayer warriors.

You show me any Christian who's done anything significant in history who is not a passionate prayer warrior, who pulled down heaven and stormed the gates of hell. John Wesley said, give me a hundred men. I don't care if they're clergy or laity, as long as they love God and fear sin, we will storm the gates of hell.

Listen, we need to be encouraged. We've been beat up too much by the media, by other carnal believers. Be careful.

Carnal believers are not going to like a deep prayer life. Neither will the Pharisees, you know. Both of them are, well, they won't either.

Both of them will not like your type of prayer. You're going deep into prayer and the carnal Christian is convicted. They don't want to hear that anymore.

Don't convict me by your prayer. Oh, you're too spiritual. You dig in too much.

I want you to be like me. And then the legalistic Christian, the Pharisee is just hard and rigid. All night prayer meetings.

There's people at your altar, Pastor Shane? Well, that's a little emotional. I mean, we haven't seen anybody come to Christ in eight months, but you know, it convicts, that lifestyle convicts. Early believers, they prayed in the wilderness.

They prayed in the dungeon. They prayed in the arena. And they prayed when they were burned at the stake.

We forget that the road less traveled is a difficult road. These prayer warriors came from the wilderness. They were thrown into dungeons.

They were put into the arena and made fun of and they were burned at the stake. I looked up this morning, and I was reciting the prayers of John Hus right before he was burned at the stake. Do you know why they were burned? Because they simply declared the truth of God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit.

They said this is what God's Word says. We're gonna interpret it. We're gonna actually translate it in the common tongue of the people.

And they were persecuted and ran out of town and even killed because they would dare tell people what God's Word said. John Hus said, have mercy on me, oh God. And in You, oh Lord, do I put my trust.

Oh Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me. Pauly Carp said, may I be received among the martyrs in Your presence today as a rich and pleasing sacrifice. William Tyndale said, Lord, open the eyes of the king of England's eyes.

Open them, Lord, before I'm burned here at the stake. And they would cry out. Now we're upset if Amazon doesn't arrive on time and we don't get a good parking lot.

And oh, I don't make as much money as I did last year. The IRS is coming after me again. Here we go.

California's the highest state tax in the world. I can't believe it. Oh my God, can you stand real persecution when the enemy comes in like a flood? Are you prepared to go to war? Because these little problems are nothing compared to the persecution that can come upon us.

Watch and pray. We think we're strong, but we're really weak. You want to see how strong you are? Watch when that job is taken from you.

When the doctor gives you the call and that bad report comes in. All your retirement is not going in the direction you thought. Everything is falling apart.

That's where we find out who we really are. Watch and pray and pray and pray. Again, I pulled these from David McIntyre's book.

This is so important. A quiet place, a quiet heart, a quiet hour. The quiet place is interesting because Jesus, as He was getting older, probably lived with quite a few people, right? Sisters, maybe four, brothers, mom, dad.

And they weren't big houses. And what they would have is a little room where they probably had the firewood, the, we call a pantry today, and unlock that door and go in and shut Himself in that prayer closet. John Wesley's mom was a mother of 20 children.

She said, there are times I just pull my apron over my head. And that was my prayer closet. I want to show you something, a picture of a very, very powerful prayer room.

Doesn't have to be big, doesn't have to be eloquent. That was John Wesley's prayer room. He stained the floor with his tears to reach America, to reach Europe.

Remember, God's not concerned about the place, He's concerned about the heart. And on this issue of a place to find to pray, Jesus said earlier in Matthew, He said, when you pray, enter into the prayer chamber. When you pray, enter into the prayer chamber, and you who pray secretly, your Father will reward you openly.

And so see, it's not, oh, I've got to find this place, I've got to get away, I've got to get, it'd be nice, but there has to be a place where you encounter God, a place where you just unwind and don't take your phone with you unless it's an emergency. And there's this entering into the prayer chamber. And I kind of wonder if Jesus was thinking of the holies of holies when He wrote this.

Because it was called the inner chamber. And there the Shekinah glory would fall. In the presence of God, He would meet with the people.

And on that cross on Calvary, that veil that was ripped on the day of His resurrection, and now we have access to the Father. We can go into the inner chamber and actually, you can grab the ear of God. How amazing is that? That God who holds the universe in His hands, the God who put the planets in certain spots, who allows life on earth with the oxygen, the nitrogen, and the balances, that God will say, here I am, cry out to me, son, daughter.

Let me hear your, doesn't mean I'm going to answer right now, but in that waiting time, you're strengthened, you're built up, and the veil, when it is ripped, the Shekinah glory is there. And let me tell you, as a living witness, sometimes it's hard, sometimes it's painful, sometimes I want to go do things and I'm distracted, but once I get into that inner chamber and the Holy Spirit begins to just drill down in my heart and the veil is open and the Shekinah glory of God falls in and the weeping takes place and the petitioning and the crying and the praying, and you might even pray in another language, I don't know, it's just biblical, but there's something going on inside of you because the Holy Spirit is crying, Abba, Father, and the Shekinah glory of God falls upon your life, and now you start to pray for the things that God, that breaks God's hearts as well, and you start to see those prayers answered because now you're lining up with the will of God, not the next Lamborghini you want. Oh, find that place, find that quiet place.

Isaac went to the fields to meditate and Jacob lingered on the eastern bank. Moses withdrew to the clefts of the rock. Elijah went on lonely Mount Carmel.

When Ab said, come down, let us eat and drink, and he said, Elijah said, no, I must go up to Mount Carmel by myself because I'm about to call down fire and the prophets of Baal are going to be destroyed, these wicked prophets. When you get ready to do something for God, you better get a quiet place, you better get a quiet heart, you better go and then you can go out in the fullness of the Spirit because you spent time with God. That quiet place.

Daniel spent time on the banks of the Hitticale River. Paul spent time in the Arabian Desert. Jesus walked on the cold mountains and breathed the midnight air to find that secret place.

Oh, if I could just get believers to get rid of their busyness and get rid of their schedule just for a season and begin to meet God in these secret places, this quiet place. Oh, heaven would break through. Now I can hear it now.

But pastor, I've got five kids. I'm busy, busy, busy. And I understand there's single moms out there and there's people that are just going, but be encouraged, the Father sees the secret struggle of your hearts.

See, often it's not what we do, it's what is the condition of the heart. When David wanted to build the temple, God said, you're not gonna build it. You're not gonna build it.

But I'm counting it towards you as if you did because I see the integrity of your heart. So the mom that's struggling, the dad that's working, I remember when I had to go back, I mean, I had to work hard seven days a week. My wife will remember this.

We were running out of savings. We just got married. Seven days a week for months.

Missing that time. But God saw the heart. So be encouraged.

A quiet heart. You have the quiet place, a quiet heart. Much of my time in prayer is preparing to pray.

Be still and know that I am God. So you have the quiet place, but you can still have the restless heart. The wild heart needs to be tamed.

The prideful heart needs to be humbled. And the hard heart needs to be crushed. Get the heart quiet.

Get the heart quiet. Meditate on God's Word and just get that heart quiet before God. The priority, getting your mind focused on Jesus Christ, focused on the cross, focused on that relationship you have with God.

Be still and know that I am God. Quiet yourself in the presence of God. It's said that early pilgrims to Jerusalem, after their long journey, would not go eat or rest until they saw the traditional place of the crucifixion.

They got their heart right. And then of course, finally, a quiet hour. A quiet hour.

Busyness and crowds prevent the deeper life. Listen, if you want to go deep with God, if you want a prayer life, it's not perfect. Even now, I'm always, oh, I wish I could pray more.

I've got to press in more. And that's healthy because that keeps you going in the right direction. You're never going to get to where, you know what, I pray enough.

I'm good, are you? I made it. Whew, that was a long journey. There's always that pressing in and that pursuing.

But busyness and crowds, all these things prevent the deeper life. If you're always busy going here or doing this or having community or fellowship or you just always got to be going, going, going, it's going to crowd out that still, small voice of God. You need the quiet hour.

You need that time where you just hear that still, small voice. Isn't it interesting when Elisha ran from Jezebel, and the earth shook. It quaked.

A great storm came and fire. And God says, I wasn't in any of that. I was in the still, small voice.

Very rarely will God ever just speak to me loudly. Nothing audible. It's a still, small voice.

The conviction. The communion with Him. As we open His Word, and that Word brings life.

I want to close on that last point. The Spirit is willing. The Spirit is willing.

So something inside of you as a believer is willing to pursue God. Something inside of you is not. Make that decision tonight to begin to fill the spiritual side of you.

Is not willing. Prothymos. Prothymos is that Greek word.

Willing. Here's the definition, so interesting. Positively inclined.

Enthusiastically willing. Eager. I'm ready to go.

I'm not weighed down by resistance. This is amazing. Our spirit cries out for the living God.

Every breath you take. Every bow you take. Every decision.

There's something inside of you that cries, Abba, Father. It wants to communicate with the living God. And that's why He said, be watchful and pray, lest you enter into temptation.

The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. So what I want to do tonight, as always, we have baptisms. If you'd like to get baptized in communion, it's going to be available.

But I think during closing worship, this needs to be a time where we get enthusiasm again for prayer. The most powerful weapon you have is often the most boring weapon that people want to engage in. I mean, I've seen it over the years.

Hey, we're having a prayer meeting. How many people would show up? Versus, hey, Friday at 6, Dwayne Johnson's going to be here, The Rock, and we're doing signatures for our church. We'd have to park out in the valley there.

There's not a hunger for the things of God. The Spirit is willing. The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

And obviously, as we often say, if you don't know who Jesus is, you won't be able to have that communication with Him. You won't be able to have that communion with Him. There's a broken relationship there.

So no wonder prayer is not heard. No wonder God seems distant. It's because there's no relationship there.

So if that's you tonight, maybe you're listening, the Bible's crystal clear that you have to repent of your sin. Repent and turn to Christ with all of your heart. And then not only is the salvation there, but the line of communication is now open.

Now you can hear clearly from God and be touched by Him.

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