

What Does God Want From Me - Part 2

by Shane Idleman

God wants you to surrender to Him, trust Him, and follow His will, and He will guide you to make wise decisions and live out the gospel in your daily life.

Duration: 47:29

Scripture: Matthew 10:32-33, John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, Hebrews 9:22, James 4:17

Topics: "Surrender To God", "Gospel Centered Life"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of fully surrendering to God and living a gospel-centered life. It challenges individuals to consider if they have been rejecting the message of the cross, living a world-centered life, or if they have fully surrendered to Christ. The message highlights the power of the gospel, the need for hope in a culture filled with hopelessness, and the significance of remembering Christ's sacrifice.

Transcript

What Does God Want From Me Part Two. If you weren't here last week, definitely check out that message. I ended a series on hearing God's voice and then it went right into Matthew 10.

And I would also just encourage you sometimes, you know, it's hard in a gathering like this because I know some people are excited to hear from God. Some people were dragged here. Some people don't know why they're here.

Some people say, well, good people go to church and that's why I'm here. And there's a whole, whole list of different reasons why people are here. But I would just encourage you that look, ask God and just say, Lord, would you speak to me tonight? I need clarity on some things.

I need direction. If you're confused, if you have questions, God says, good, come to me, come to me. And I will answer some of those questions.

But many questions sometimes are not answered on this side of eternity. And I'm okay with that. If I could, if God answered every one of my questions, I understood God completely.

I would be fearful of that kind of God. I want a God that's high and lifted up. Holy is his name.

There are some things too wonderful for me. I can't even grasp his nature. I can't even grasp the work of salvation.

That's a good spot to be. And actually, my son just grabbed my wife tonight and asked, why are we singing the God of Jacob? What does that mean? So we're going to explain that one. And then he's drilling me all day yesterday on, is God inside of us? And how is he everywhere? And why is there Jesus too? And so I said, oh man, wow, that's good.

But boy, they ask some questions. How big is God? Where does he live at exactly? And so that's where you start to break down the Trinity and the triune nature of God. And then I'll talk to him about eschatology and theology and pneumatology and all those things.

No, you just bring it simple, right? You got to do it. So anyway, getting a sidetrack there. Matthew 10.

I'm going to read from the NIV. I know that won't excite too many people, but it's not the nearly inspired version. It's one I'm choosing on this, on this text.

So Matthew 10, verse five, these 12, these 12, Jesus chose 12 people and he sent them out with the following instructions. Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

As you go, proclaim this message. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. It's near.

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts.

No bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or staff for the worker is worthy of his keep. And I could keep reading there, but I want to stop there. I'm going to pick up next week on part three of what does God want from me? And many times as Christians, I think we ask this question, or hopefully you ask, what does God want from me? What, can he use me now at 75 or I'm only 17? What does he want from me at 17? Or the person who's who's older might say, well, God, God's done with me.

You know, he, I mean, I'm, I'm, it's too late now, Shane, I've kind of lived my life. And let me just interrupt real quick and say, that's not true. We need some praying Caleb's that say, God, give me that mountain.

Let me do, let me intercede for the people. Let me intercede for the nation. God can use you at 75, just as much as 17.

But a lot of times what happens, especially as we get older, I'm even seeing this now, as I become more cynical, more negative, more, all the world's falling apart. Look at the, look at just look at the, Oh Lord, what's going on? And I, and you got to be very careful because if you don't, if you don't repent from that negative cynical attitude, it can actually really put you in a hard spot of, of, of just, you know, just, you know, God, but you like him, but you don't love him. You're kind of mad at him.

You're just cynical and negative. So we have to be careful with that. But a couple of things I wanted to glean from Matthew 10 is, and we talked about this last week, but I didn't get through it all.

I want to bring it up again is we cannot look at the odds. Do not look at the odds. Jesus Christ turned the world upside down with 12 men.

And one of them was a devil, right? He betrayed him. He didn't need 200,000. He didn't need 2 million.

He didn't need God plus you equals a majority. So no matter what you're going through, if you're, and I hear this a lot, I sometimes think, Oh Lord, this is too big for you. We won't say it, right? But we're thinking it.

I mean, it's just me. This is worthless. Why even try? Listen, God plus you is a majority.

I'm not getting Joelstein on you. I'm just being serious. I mean, you can encourage you, you know, it's good to encourage sometimes God.

I can see him saying that. But God plus you is a majority. And when you're filled with the spirit of God, even a minority is the majority.

When you're filled with the spirit of God, and sometimes that's why I look at the state of our nation, and when I'm going to speak there, and they've painted a very, you know, there's some of the guy who invited me is high up kind of in Washington, and he knows what's going on. He said, Shane, the American people have no idea just how close we are to not existing as a nation anymore. You look at Ebola, you look at Iraq, you look at Russia, you know, strong harming, and you look at the terrorism, and you look at our economy, and you look at the church rejecting God.

You look at the churches throwing out truth, and you're like, Oh my God. But sometimes God says, Good, now I've got you in a place where now you'll listen to me. Now you'll look to me.

And I believe when I was talking to John Bell about this, he actually made a good point. We're not at the time anymore of walking on the fence, you know, let me play church, let me play the world. You better choose sides pretty quick.

You better choose sides pretty quick, because when you fully surrender to God, you have to grab onto that foundation. Because as things get shaky, shakiness isn't going to cut it. Double-minded isn't going to cut it.

I mean, you've seen on TV what the terrorists are doing to Christian children. I can't even say in this room with kids in here. If you don't think it might come to the shore someday, I don't know.

I hope not. I pray not. But this is not, I'm not trying to scare, I'm trying to awaken.

That's the whole point. We're not scared and go cow, we're supposed to awaken the sleeping giant within, known as the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ. God has called us to make a difference.

And when we look at everything around us and say, but God. Oh yeah, it's falling apart, but God. He holds the world right here.

Yeah, I got it. Yeah, I got it. You see Iraq? Bye-bye.

I mean, He could change everything. He's God. And we have to look at Him and not get so worried and bound up in this.

So look at Him. Many times though, people say, I'm useless, I'm hopeless, I'm unqualified. And I often tell them, good, good.

Now God can use you. Now you're humble and teachable and flexible. Now you say, Lord, without you, nothing's going to happen.

This ministry, this promotion, this job, trying to father, trying to be a wife, trying to be a spouse, trying to get through life. Good. God says, now you need me.

Now I can work. Do you realize that God is just looking for Gideon's army? Can you just, he got rid of thousands, thousands of people, get rid of those and get rid of those. And let me just go in and conquer an entire army of 300 men.

God, that's not going to work. Well, if I'm in, it's going to work. That's God.

That's who we serve. What happens though, is we get thinking the other way, don't we? Negative. And we get pulled away.

And sometimes it's good to come back and remember how big this God is that we serve. And he asked, if my people just humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I would heal a lot of their problems. I would heal their land.

So God plus a minority is the majority. And often it was said this too, before God, God plus dependence on Him equals success. Anytime you depend upon Him and say, Lord, if you don't move in this place, we're not going to succeed.

Lord, if you don't infuse your power in this area, we're not going to succeed. That's one of the prayers we pray for this church. Lord, if you're not in Westside, we're not going to make it.

We might as well just shut the doors when we opened them four years ago. If you're not here, if you're not growing and sustaining and changing lives, we're just vessels that want to be used by the creator. So God, if when God's in it, there is success.

And this is where I didn't get to during the second service. I'm glad I was able to bring this up again. But there's a fine line between presumption and faith.

You know what presumption is? I'm presuming I'm going to do this. I'm just going to do it. And what I call it is the stamp of approval versus waiting for God.

And what that looks like is here's my agenda, God, would you just give your stamp of approval? Here's what I'm going to do. Have you ever done that? Lord, here's what I'm going to do. Come and give your stamp of approval.

Now I can do it. I'm going to go this direction. I'm going to do whatever it is, marriage, relational finances.

Lord, here's my plans. Would you please give me your stamp of approval? Ooh, don't do that. But what do we do? Orders from headquarters.

We wait for this. Oh, here's my orders from headquarters. This is what I'm going to do.

So there's a big difference between God giving my plans a stamp of approval and waiting on Him. And I see a lot of people get caught between presumption and faith. And here's the difference.

Presumption rushes ahead. Faith waits. Presumptuous people are fueled by pride where faith is fueled by humility.

Presumptuous people always assume where faith is knowing that God is leading. And when we're presumptuous, that results in anger, anxiety, and confusion. But faith offers peace in the midst of the storm.

Be still and know that I am God. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. And a lot of people are presuming.

That's where presumption comes from. I presume that God is going to do this. And we don't seek Him.

Oh God of Jacob, seek Him with all your heart. We don't seek Him. We just presume.

Why do we do that often? Well, because and here I wrote down, we assume without seeking God, without waiting on Him, we rush ahead to get what we want. Don't we? We rush ahead to get what we want. And then when we get it, we go, why did I get that? That's not what I wanted.

That's the difference. And on this first point, don't look at the odds. A majority with God is, well, I'm getting a little sidetracked here.

But the first point is, don't look at the odds, right? But once we not look at the odds, sometimes we can become presumptuous and say, well, God's going to bless it no matter what I do. And that's not faith. That's sometimes a lack of wisdom.

So we have to be careful in this area. So the takeaway is this. If you've been presumptuous and reckless, repent and turn back to God.

There's safety in the center of His will. And that's where we left off last week. That was that first point.

I didn't get to more than that. So then that leads us into the second point on Matthew 10. We have a limited time to do God's will.

We have a limited time to do God's will. Jesus said, here's the priority. Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

See, God isn't saying, I don't know what you got. What do you guys want to do? What do you want to do? My wife and do this. We would do this on date night.

Right. What do you want to do? I don't know. What do you want to do? Come on.

What do you want to do this? We got a babysitter. We don't know what we're going to do. Well, what do you want to do? What do you want to do? I don't know.

And we always say, next time, let's plan something. Let's not have this happen again. But what do you want to see? We don't know.

What do you want to do? God isn't like that. God knows exactly what He wants us to do. And there's a limited amount of time to do God's will.

That's why the Bible says, commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established. How many people have ever committed? Have you ever said the prayer like this? Lord, I commit my entire life to you. I give you my finances.

I give you my career. I give you my marriage. If you're married, I give you my single life.

If you're single, Lord, I give you everything. I'm committing my financial decisions, my retirement, Lord, whatever it is, I commit those things to you. Lord, would you guide me? And the Bible says, commit your ways to the Lord and your thoughts will be established.

Because if you don't hand over the reins to your horse, God's not going to control it. He's going to allow you to do whatever you want. Of course, He's working sovereignly and working all things together, and He's still there.

But I believe that many times He wants us to just turn over our lives and say, okay, Lord, let me just serve you how you want me to serve you. Lord, would you guide me? Would you direct me? And that's why we have a limited time to do God's will. If everything is a priority, then nothing is.

We need to tell the government that too, right? Listen, if everything is a priority, then nothing is. Nothing is. So you have to factor in this in your life.

What is a priority? What is God calling you to do? Because we can't have 20 different priorities. What's He saying? You know, you juggle too many plates, you drop them all. So everything cannot be a priority.

God says, do not go in that direction or spend your time with those people or in that situation. You're just spinning your wheels. And I see so many people just spinning your wheels.

Jesus says, go to the lost sheep of Israel. Go to those that I'm sending you. Go to the people I give you a burden for, but you're just spinning your wheels.

That's the definition of insanity, actually, is doing the same thing, expecting a different result. And we get caught up in that, I think, as Christians too. We're not making that a priority of knowing God's will.

So what does God want from us in this area? He says, teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90 verse 12. Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

And that illustration there in the Hebrew language is almost like teaching us to number our days, that we number our days. We get up and we say, okay, I have this many days left. I'm counting these every hour is precious.

Where did the time go? People say all the time, right? Where did the time go? The time flies. Well, teach us to number our days helps a great deal. Imagine a big, like a big dry erase board up on the side of the wall.

And as every day you get up, the days go by and the weeks go by. And then the months and the years go by and a whole year. And you're like, Lord, what happened? Teach us to number our days that we may be able to gain a heart of wisdom.

A heart of wisdom. Do you know wisdom is your friend? Wisdom is your friend. Do you know the difference between knowing something and doing it? That's wisdom.

Knowledge is knowing what to do. Wisdom is doing it. And I just had lunch last week with the pastor who's been in ministry two or three times longer than I have.

And I wrote this down. It was interesting. He said, Shane, if people would just use wisdom, if they would just use wisdom, half their problems would be over.

At first, I said, well, that doesn't make, you know, I mean, it makes sense. But what practically, what's he talking about? I thought I started to think about it all week on just every decisions we make financially, relationally, trying to get the last word in or saying different things. You know, wisdom.

Are we using wisdom in our daily lives with our choices, with our decisions? Everything we can think of hinges on wisdom. The money we just spent or the place we just went or we didn't go. Wisdom.

God gives us this for a reason. Come let us reason together. Look at my word and then use wisdom when you make your choices.

And I often tell couples, you know, if they just met, you know, a couple of weeks, you know, they're two weeks, three weeks into dating. They're like, oh, we love each other. We're going to get married.

No, that's not wise. Hold on. Breaks.

Wisdom looks down the road and it waits on God. It makes choices based on wisdom, not on our own understanding. There's a big difference there because our understanding looks at things temporarily.

Right. OK, how is it affecting me right now? Wisdom looks down the road. So God says, teach us to number our days.

And then the third point from this Matthew 10 is proclaim this message. Jesus said, proclaim this message. Do you know that this is a message 2000 years ago that's getting everybody in trouble now? People in Iraq, why are they getting forced out of their homes? This message, this message.

Why are they trying to pass legislation to get rid of this message? People are dying because of this message. They don't want to hear this message. Nothing has changed from 2000 years.

Jesus said, go and preach this message. So that's the third point from this. The gospel is primary.

The gospel is primary. Life is gospel centered, not worldly centered. Your life must be gospel centered, not worldly centered.

Don't worry, I'm going to get to a little bit of practical application there. Even though it sounds good, what does it look like practically? The power of the gospel, when truly embraced, is like dynamite that ignites a hunger for God so intense that every aspect of life is changed. We become bold, not passive.

Stable, not hysterical, and committed, not wavering. The gospel, gospel centered. And you realize that ministry is not the gospel.

When we minister to people or when you do something, that's not the gospel. That's a byproduct of the gospel. So a lot of ministries, you know, we want to reach out, they want to paint houses, clean up neighborhoods.

That's great, but that's not the gospel. Those are byproducts of the gospel, and sometimes people get focused on the byproducts and they never talk about the gospel. Ministry is not the gospel, it's the byproduct.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God. Seek ye first the kingdom of God. When ministry is our mistress, our relationship with God suffers.

So many times we can get involved in ministry and we think that's the gospel, and that's not the gospel, it's a byproduct. And if gospel, if we're not gospel centered, if the gospel is not the center of our life, that's the foundation that everything is built on. That's why Jesus said when you go, go proclaim this message.

And there's a famous quote, I think it's attributed to Francis Assisi, funny name I know, but you know, I didn't name him. He said something along the lines, if I can remember correctly, I said the first service I didn't write down, if preach the gospel but only use words when necessary. And that's true, and that's a good point, but a lot of people use that to do this.

I'm just going to feed the poor. I'm not going to tell them they're sinners. Come on, I'm just going to live it out.

I'm never going to tell them that. Well, you can't live out the gospel what Jesus says to tell people. Yeah, you have to proclaim that, but they go together.

I have to live it out, and I have to proclaim it. They must match. And I see a lot of, I mean, big churches, you know, you'll ask them, okay, do you ever tell people about sin and their need for a Savior? Well, no, we get to know them for a year or so first.

Okay, well, what would Jesus say to that? He said, go and proclaim the gospel. Now, I'm not talking about going to your name and say, hey, listen, did you, you know, you got to build relationships. I got it.

But at the same time, we've got to proclaim the message. We've got to tell people the hope, because that's the only hope for our culture. That's the only hope for the church.

That's the only hope for our nation, is this message of redemption. So what does God want in this area? First, if you're a believer, misaligned priorities always result in frustration. Misaligned priorities always result in frustration.

So let me first just talk about those who have genuinely repented of their sin and confessed Christ as Lord. The Holy Spirit is residing in them. They're filled with the Spirit of God.

They know that they're believers. They know that they're Christians, but they've drifted away from the gospel of being the foundation. There is a lot of frustration in that, because we're not called to be worldly-centered.

We're called to be gospel-centered. And that's where true peace and fulfillment, contentment comes from. So if you're a believer, God, I believe, wants us to realign our priorities to be more gospel-centered.

Well, what does gospel-centered mean? Well, first, gospel-centered is about everything. The gospel is everything. So if I'm single, it determines the way I date, where I go, who I associate with, how I conduct my life, holiness, purity, all those things.

If I'm dating, right, same thing, gospel-centered. How do we handle that relationship, that dating relationship? Is Christ at the center? And then if I'm married, gospel-centered, right? Is the gospel the center of my marriage? Does it impact how I treat my spouse or vice versa? Gospel-centered. Now, am I employee at work? Gospel-centered.

How do I treat other employees? Am I a person, man or woman of integrity? All these different things. Well, what about if you're an employer? Above the employee and you hire them, is your business practices gospel-centered? You see how this affects everything? When the gospel is at the center, everything else revolves around it, and that's healthy. That's why Jesus said, make this a priority.

Proclaim this message. But if a person is an unbeliever, if they've only been playing church, and they've only, you know, kind of thinking about God, and they've never really truly repented, God is not willing that any people should perish. That's why He sends people out to deliver the gospel message.

The good news that Christ Jesus died, rose again, and all you have to do is confess Him as Christ, as Savior and Lord, and repent of your sin, and believe in the only name that saves. That's good news. I don't know why people get so upset about it.

That's good news, but the darkness doesn't like it. Do you know that this is, I've noticed this over many, many years of preaching different settings. I can talk about everything.

Yeah, that's funny. That's good. He's a pretty good speaker.

Yeah, whatever. But when I talk about this message, when I talk about this part, man, shut his mouth. When is this going to get over? Everything else is fine, but when you talk about this, that Jesus is the only way, the only truth, the only life, nobody can come to God, not through Buddha, not through Allah, not through Muhammad, not through Harry Krishna, not through Joseph Smith, not through Brigham Young, not through Charles Taz Russell, not through all these different things, through Christ Jesus only.

I just offended some people saying that. The message of the gospel is offensive, and it's supposed to be. People say, do you know you offended me by saying that? Yes, I do.

Yes, I do. It's supposed to be offensive because it shows us our need for a Savior. That's the whole point of offensive.

I don't like what he's saying. Uh-oh, do I need what he's saying? That's the point of offensive. So the gospel, remember this, the good news that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, it hurts in order to heal.

It penetrates in order to overcome. It penetrates the heart in order to overcome the darkness. It offends in order to humble, and it breaks the heart in order to convert it.

That's what the gospel does. And sometimes I prefer non-church audiences, believe it or not, because sometimes they're at the edge, even if they're upset, they're at the edge of their seats like, what is this guy talking about? In church, guess what it does right now? The people in this room right now that need to hear what I'm saying, guess what it's doing? What time's dinner? I've heard this before, Jesus on the cross and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. In the church, think about it.

We can say this so much and people say, yeah, yeah, yeah, but yeah, in one ear and out the next. And if you get to somebody who hasn't heard anything like this before, they're like, whoa. I mean, they've heard

about Jesus and this and that, but then when you tell them exactly what the message is, they're like, they either run for cover, or they fall down and worship God.

Falling down on their face, they will worship God. Corinthians says, Paul says, they will come in, they will hear the true message of the gospel being proclaimed, and they will fall down on their face and worship the one true and living God, or they'll try to kill you, one or the other. It's that offensive to people.

So it begs the question then, what is the gospel? I think it's okay to do a reminder of this, isn't it? I mean, a reminder of why we're here. And if you go on our website and you just type in Romans Road in the search, Romans Road, this article will come up if you need to give it to friends or whoever we've provided on our website. But think about this.

What is the gospel? Think about this for a minute. Jesus died for the gospel. He came to preach the gospel.

See, people forget that. They think Jesus was a good teacher. He just can't turn the other cheek.

He loved people. Yeah. But he said, for this reason, I have come.

For this reason, I have been sent to preach the good news about the gospel, that you must turn to God. That's what Jesus came for. Born to die, yes, but he also came to preach the gospel.

And then he told us to take the gospel. And then Paul tells us we are called to defend, to guard, and to live out the gospel. So why don't we put it in the back pocket? I'll get to it someday.

I don't need it that often. We're called to defend it. We're called to guard it.

We're called to proclaim it. That's how important it is. So what exactly is the gospel? Well, in a nutshell, it boils down to this.

Romans 3.23 says this, and I truly believe that there are some in this room that need to, just for tonight, say, you know what? I've probably heard some of these words before, but Lord, speak to me in a new way. Speak to me in a fresh way. I don't want to be in one ear and out the next if you're speaking me tonight.

I might have been playing church half my life. I might have rode in on my parents' coattails because I was born in a Christian family and I own a Bible. I might even went to a Christian school.

And I'm a good person. Doesn't that matter? No. You just offended me again.

Yeah, I'm going to offend you a lot more before the sermon's over. In a love, of course, right? Romans 3.23, for all have sinned. Here's the first offense.

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. People tell me, but Shane, I'm a nice guy. I'm a good person.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. That's wonderful. You're good.

Thank God. Thank God for that. I wish that more people were good people, but that won't cut it.

That will not cut it. For all have sinned. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Romans 3.10 adds, there is none that are righteous. No, not one. There's none that understands.

There's none who seeks after God. None. See, so that puts everything in perspective.

Either a person is a believer or they're an unbeliever and they've either been playing in church or they've been rejecting God. There's nothing they can do to earn salvation. Nothing.

You're not going to stand before God and give God a sales pitch. You're not going to say, but, but, but this, this, this, this, this. Think of an analogy.

If a trial, if a serial murderer, he's murdered 10 people. He gets in front of the judge. You think the judge, do you think they're going to listen? Even if he brings a book of all his good deeds? Look, 1979, I gave back money.

1980, I helped the lady across the street. 1981, I helped this guy build that. What are they going to say? Oh yeah, let me consider all that evidence.

No way. Why? Because there's going to be a sentence for what he did. And this is the part that I guess people, I guess a lot of times pastors cower away from.

They're like, oh gosh, I don't want to tell people this. But see, I want to tell people the truth because then God can work in that proclamation of his truth to say, listen, there's no none. And I'm going to tell my kids this, I love them more than, than anything.

I'm going to say, listen, there are none that do good. No, not one. All have fallen short of the glory of God.

All have. That's why you need God. That's why you need Christ.

And then Romans 6, 23, for the wages of sin is death. This verse is not popular in many churches, nor is it preached from many pulpits. Telling others that the punishment for sin is eternal separation from God is not pleasant.

It's not marketable and it's not palatable, but it is powerful. Think about that. If I said, if I put it and add in the paper, listen, this church next week is going to talk about the wages of sin is death.

I don't think anybody would show up except hardcore people. You go tell them Shane. Nobody would show up.

We're not going to put that on our next pass or next postcard. Wages of sin is death. That's it.

Nobody wants to hear that. Do they? Why? Because it's confirmation. Listen, this guy's confirming.

What the enemy loves to do is eat, drink, and party for tomorrow you die. Just keep, just keep you as long as you can go. He'll just keep you in that state of, and then when you get to the end of your life, if you're, if you're fortunate enough to be able to ponder that some people, the life has gone quickly, but if you're able to ponder that and you look, you get to the end of your life and you say, Oh Lord, the wages of sin is death.

Now I see, now I see because the enemy will keep you deceived in this area, but be encouraged. Romans 6 23 does not end there. It says, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

See the bad news, the good news, but how can you appreciate the good news if you don't hear the bad news? See everybody wants to just, let's just focus on the good news. Churches denominations are just focusing on their good news. They don't want to talk about the bad news, but Jesus did.

He spoke about the bad news. Paul spoke about the bad news and that just makes me appreciate the good news even more. So that's the gospel in a nutshell.

Romans 6 23 says, does not end there, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 5 8 declares, but God demonstrated his own love towards us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. This is amazing.

When they were taking their hit of, doing their line of crystal meth, when they were getting drunk, when they were fornicating, all these things, Christ died for them. He died for them. He died for them while they were yet sinners.

Christ died. That's powerful. That's the message of the gospel.

That's good news. And while in my sin, he had died for me already. He had hung on the cross.

All I had to do was repent of that sin, acknowledge it and turn to God. That's good news. And people think, well Shane, that's just a bunch of made up stuff.

Will you give me a better solution? Why is there a conviction of your heart knowing what I'm saying is right and you're just upset? Why you can talk about any other religion, nobody gets upset. There's something that we've created to worship. We've been created to worship God.

Our heart beats with God. We either accept him or we reject him. This isn't a pie in the sky message.

It just penetrates the heart. That's why people want to remove it. Why do you think all this big legislation is to get the Christ out of everything? Get the Christ out of Christmas.

You're going to be seeing that in a few months. Oh, don't get me started. Well, I don't even have the right word.

It is ludicrous, I guess. He's a rapper though, isn't he? Don't listen to his songs. But you walk in his stores, they're like, we can't say Merry Christmas.

We just say Happy Holidays. Are you serious? Are you serious? You can't say Merry Christmas? Watch, go to Walmart or Kohl's or wherever, try it this Christmas. That's ridiculous.

But you know why it's not ridiculous? It's a spiritual battle. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. See, he is Lord.

It's not he might be, he's fighting, he's Lord. End of story, close the books now, he is Lord. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Christ is Lord.

The demons tremble at his presence. He has overcome sin, death in the grave, end of story. So when you mention that name, they say get his name out of everything.

Get them out of the public schools for the love of God. Let's fill the public schools with softcore porn and books that are so full of horror and death. Let's just saturate their mind.

Let's get Christ out of not only Christmas, let's change the Easter idea to whatever, what's that now? Yeah, whatever it is. Let's get the cross that's over on the Mount Soledad or in the memorial. Let's remove all this stuff about Christ because it's offensive, because it hurts, right? Atheists say, get rid of that cross, get rid of Christ, remove his name out of Christmas because it offends me.

And I want to say, well, removing Christ offends me. When are we going to stop worrying about who's offended and start being on who's right according to the truth of the gospel? Yeah, it's offensive. Absolutely.

A big cross saying we need a Savior is offensive. Good. That's the gospel.

Christ died to save sinners. Jesus came to save and to save that which was lost. Listen, some of you in this room, I'm convinced you've been hearing this message so much and you might even have yourself fooled in believing because you've heard it that you're good with God.

And God never says, just hear it. God says, obey it. So think about that.

There's nothing more important than this. If you've never truly, I'm not going to ask you to come up here. I'm not going to embarrass you.

It doesn't matter to me. It's between you and God. All you have to say is, Lord, I've been wrong.

Lord, I've been playing church. I've been playing the game. I've been, I've been, I don't really know you, but you know that.

Lord, I'm giving my heart to you tonight. I'm repenting. I'm turning back to you tonight.

Or actually, I'm turning to you for the first time tonight. You can do that. It's that easy? Yeah.

God didn't make some hard, difficult thing. He said, I provided the way. Christ hung on the cross.

He overcame sin, death, grave, everything. He's the Lord. He's on.

All you have to do is acknowledge it. No, no, I'm not going to acknowledge it. No, I don't want to.

Why? I mean, if you talk to a lot of atheists or agnostics, and I have, it boils down to like that movie, God is Dead was right. Why are you so mad at God? Because he took my mom from me. Well, if there's no God, that's, that's why people get, they don't like this concept of a, of a God they have to submit to.

They enjoy being God. They don't want to, it boils down to pride. They don't tell me I've been wrong all my life.

Don't you ever see somebody try to come out of a cult? That, the one reason mainly why many people don't come out of the cult is pride. You, there's no way me and my grandpapa have been, been wrong for the last four generations. There's no way we've been hooked in this religion.

You're telling me that's wrong now. Uh-uh. Pride, pride.

We don't want to hear the truth of God's word. So I would encourage you, whether you're upset or not, whether you're right, humble yourself. Whether you're upset at me, don't be upset at God.

Humble yourself and say, Lord, I want to know you. I might not like that guy up there, but I need you. I need you.

Hebrews 9 says without the shedding of blood, there is no removal of sin. So anytime people say, people say, why do you have to die on the cross? Why do you have to, well, you just have to remind them that God says that the life of the flesh is in the blood. And without the shedding of blood, there is no removal of sin.

That's how God chose to, to deal with sin. In the Old Testament, it was the blood of bulls and goats and rams would cover the sins of the people temporarily. It was a foreshadowing.

The Passover lamb was a foreshadowing of Christ as our true Passover. See, to me, all this stuff makes perfect sense. This isn't some like Looney Tunes book you read it that you buy for your kids like, oh, this connects.

Yeah, yeah, just go check our brains at the door. All this makes perfect sense because science is now showing even a hundred years ago, they said, oh, the life of the flesh is in the blood. Yeah, the Bible said that back 4,000 years ago.

The life source of the body is in the blood. And God says it requires, I require the shedding of blood for the remission of sin. So the Old Testament was a foreshadowing of Christ.

The blood of the bulls and the goats had to be put, the high priests would go into the Holy of Holies just once a year to cover the sins of the people. And then when Christ came on the cross and he stood there, was on the cross and he said, it is finished. What do you think that meant? What's finished? My purpose, why I've come.

Now I'm going to die. My blood is shed. It's finished.

It's done. It's over. It's been done.

It's been paid. That was the whole point of the cross and shedding of the blood. So to me, it makes perfect sense.

I'm not God. I don't fully understand all the things, but I, I understand that this is the most encouraging, encouraging message anywhere. See, that's why I don't really get upset about people getting upset at me is because this is the most encouraging message ever anywhere.

I'm not saying, oh, you're out of luck, buddy. Too bad you're toast. There's nothing you can do.

Bye-bye. We're all good. You're not part of our group.

That's irritating. All I'm saying is, listen, Christ invites all into all whosoever, whosoever will come to me. For God so loved the world that whosoever believes shall have eternal life.

Whosoever. And that call goes out. So this is the most encouraging message anywhere.

And the reason many people don't like it is, you know what they say too? I have to change this and I have to change that. I can't get drunk. I can't have sex.

I can't realizing like, oh yeah, like all that's really paying off, huh? Like that's really, you don't even know how you got home in the morning and you feel sick and you're hungover. The devil will show you all these things. Let's just get real.

The devil just shows you the enticement. He doesn't show you the ramifications. He just shows you what the flesh will enjoy.

He doesn't show you the abyss of hell and the depression. He entices by just showing us what the deception of sin. So this is the most encouraging message anywhere.

The culture is hopeless. The culture is hopeless. And I just read an incredible article I want to share with you from World Magazine.

It's titled, Hello Darkness, Teenagers and the Literature of Hopelessness. And here's the books they're reading in high school. The books we read our senior year of high school were dark.

It seemed every book we read told us that life was meaningless and in the end nothing matters. These books all together made life seem hopeless. So we're plugging the school systems with darkness.

We're plugging the school systems with illicit sex. We're plugging the school systems with everything but God and we wonder why everything is chaos. School shootings every week.

Somewhere colleges, campus, where are these coming from? That would never happen when I was growing up. 30 years ago, school shooting, what? I got in trouble for chewing gum. Think about that.

The top three public school problems in the 60s were talking, chewing gum and making noise. Now it's assault, robbery, rape. All these kinds of things are leading the list.

Don't tell me we haven't drifted. We need this message. The culture needs this message of hope.

If everybody in this room would just go offer hope to a few people, you would see radical transformation. Because you have relationships with people who say, listen, there is hope. There is hope in Jesus Christ and turning to Him and repenting of your sin.

That's where hope comes from. They might blow you off right then. It happens to me all the time.

Whatever. And then when life gets difficult or a couple weeks go by and you get the phone, hey, what were you talking about? Tell me more about that. Because everybody puts on a stand at first, right? They put on this, you know, oh no, I'm not going to go there.

Mr. Tough Guy approach is what I call it. But inside they're asking questions. Lord, are you really out there? God, are you really out there? Other religions don't offer assurance either, do they? You know what religion is? It's man reaching up to God.

Where Christianity is God reaching down to man. That's why other religions are hopeless. Because it's man trying to attempt to reach God and that never happens.

And finally, many churches are not being able to offer hope right now. And I call these liberal churches and we're seeing a plethora of these rise up. Liberal churches, they question truth.

They deny the inerrancy of scripture and they question even salvation through faith in Christ alone. They wonder why there's no power in their pulpits. They wonder why lives aren't being changed.

The gospel is being watered down. It's not being proclaimed. They're hopeless.

How can you offer any hope when you doubt this? How? You can't. Because then you should think, why am I even here? How do we even know Jesus existed? How do we know God's not a concept? An idea the man came up with? Like a crutch. That's why you'll see a lot of churches, there's going to be a fine line in the sand pretty soon too.

Truth or truth is relative. You'll see denominations going that way. There's not this kind of gray area anymore.

Either you deny the inerrancy of scripture and in Christ the only way, salvation, heaven, hell, all the difficult truths. It's funny, all the liberal churches don't want to talk about the difficult truths. We'll talk about God's love and his forgiveness and his grace and his mercy and God's some big smiling up in heaven all the time.

But talk about the difficult truths? No way. No way. I'm not going to talk about hell.

I'm not going to talk about judgment. I'm not going to talk about the wrath of God. I'm not going to talk about the holiness of God.

Then I have to change how I live. I'm not going to talk about the cross. I'm not going to talk about the blood.

You're not going to talk about the very thing that Christ died for. That's why there's no power in these types of churches. And then obviously I need to close here shortly, but then ministry followed after that.

Jesus said, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons freely you have received, freely give. So what does God want? Well, here's what I believe God wants. Have you been rejecting the message of the cross? Have you been rejecting the message of the cross? And I didn't read the next few verses, but it goes on to say, Jesus said, this is Jesus Christ.

Jesus, the little lamb, you know, little lamb that's slain before the foundation of the world. Jesus, you know, turn the other cheek, this nice guy. Here's what he said.

I tell you the truth. It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for you. Well, Shane, come on.

Contextually, he's talking to the Pharisees and religious leaders. Yeah, but why is it more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them? Because they didn't get the message of the gospel. Christ wasn't there.

These people were rejecting Christ. Here he is, the Christ, the Messiah, the scriptures foretold. And he says, Sodom and Gomorrah that was judged by God, it's going to be more tolerable for them in the day of judgment than for you because you heard the message and you denied it.

I don't know. That's pretty scary stuff. It's okay to bring out the scary stuff sometimes.

If it's all just flowers and ponies and all these things and kids don't ever, you know, see the true nature of God, there's a good chance they won't turn to him. Or have you been living in a world-centered life? Have you been living a world-centered life? Jesus also said, truly, I tell you, he who knows what to do but does not do it, it is sin to him. I don't believe that was Jesus.

I think it was one of the New Testament writers. Now I think I didn't reference it. But it says, I tell you, he who knows what to do but does not do it, it is sin to him.

So that's the closing. Have you been rejecting the message of the cross? Have you been living a world-centered life and not a gospel-centered life? Listen, this is where the rubber meets the road. This isn't just show up on Saturday, hear me, and then go home.

Have you fully surrendered your life to Christ? Have you fully surrendered? Is he the center of your life? If not, I would encourage you, we're going to go into a time of communion right now. We're going to just go into a time of prayer and worship. But come up and take communion if you've made that commitment to Christ and you're a Christian.

That's what communion is for. It's for those to come and take communion and remember what Christ did on the cross. If I had time, I had time in the first service I read from 1 Corinthians 11, where we come and remember why we do this.

We remember. There's power in remembering. If you remember how far Christ has brought you so far, you'll stop that negative attitude.

You'll stop that critical spirit. You'll stop all that and say, oh God, thank you. I remember what you did for me.

Remembering is powerful.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/SmopnRYuw0g.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/what-does-god-want-from-me-part-2/>

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