

What Extinguishes The Presence of the Lord

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking the presence of the Lord in the midst of a worldview crisis. It highlights the need for a genuine biblical worldview, true surrender to God, and the experience of God's compassion and power through the Holy Spirit. The message calls for repentance, humility, and a hunger for God's presence to overcome hindrances like secret sins, pride, anger, and lack of desire.

Scripture: Genesis 3:8, Acts 19:2, 2 Corinthians 12:9, James 4:6, Psalm 42:1

Topics: "Seeking God's Presence", "Overcoming Hindrances to Spiritual Growth"

Description

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Transcript

Presence of the Lord. Let me begin by this statement. The United States is in the midst of a worldview crisis.

George Barna, I don't know if you saw his recent survey. Do you know what George Barna is? The largest polling organization, at least among Christians. And the most recent polling from George Barna is rather alarming.

I was hoping to give you some good news this morning, but only 6% of American adults have a biblical worldview. Shane, check those numbers. I did.

Here's the key. Even though 51% said that they do. So 51% of Americans, Christians, say they do have a biblical worldview.

But only nine, or actually 6% actually do. Like, well, I don't understand. Well, saying you have a biblical worldview is a lot different than actually having a real biblical worldview.

A biblical worldview is what does God say about all these issues through scripture. So a lot of people say, sure, I have a biblical worldview, but when it comes to the hard truths of the Bible, they say, oh, no, no, no, no. I don't believe that.

I think we just love each other and don't judge. And they don't really have a biblical worldview when they ask them certain questions. So it is a perception that they do, but actually they don't when they answer questions according to God's word.

So 94% of Americans do not hold to a biblical worldview of what God's word says about usually controversial issues. What does God's word say about marriage? What does God's word say about gay marriage? What does God's word say about LGBTQ and things like that? What does God's word say even about some political hot buttons, maybe abortion, or what does God's word say about these things? And at the end of the day, when they run it through the filter, only about 6% actually know what God's word says about these issues. So now we kind of understand what's going on a little bit better with we are at a crossroads of crisis.

And here's why this is important. Here is we're actually going through the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation. Not necessarily verse by verse, although I'm stopping on some verses for a while, but then when I get to other chapters, we'll talk about the whole chapter.

Or in some prophetic book, the minor prophets, we'll talk about the whole book of that minor prophet. So things will go quicker then, but now they're going a little slowly because we're picking apart one of the most important parts of God's word, that being Genesis. In the beginning, God created them male and female.

In the beginning, God did certain things, and this is the truth he set in motion. So if you feel that you're behind, guess what, you're not. Just go home and read Genesis 1, 2, 3, and you'll be caught up for next week.

It's that easy. And what we found on YouTube, as I think we'll share it next week in the bulletin, is there's audio you can listen to. So kids can listen to the Bible being dramatized, and they can listen to the first three chapters, and you can get all caught up with us going through the Bible.

And I would encourage you to make that a staple of your weekly study. Do you know how many people have not read through the entire Bible? It's rather alarming in the church. Now I know it's difficult because we open our devotional, it goes here, it goes here, it goes here.

You get in Leviticus, and you're like, oh no, numbers, wow. What is this? And Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, the kings of Chronicles, aren't they saying the same thing? What is this king, and who is this king, and what's Judah and Israel, aren't they the same? And we just get, it's just overwhelming. But we're gonna go through all that.

So start in Genesis one, two, three, get ready for Genesis four next week. And I also wanna encourage mainly for people listening, if possible, even you, find us on Rumble. Do you know what Rumble is? Rumble is like YouTube, but it's a different company.

Because I just was notified that I'm in YouTube jail now. So I can't post anything for a while. Well, I, the sad thing is it helps a lot of people when they, you know, when they need help and they can't find us.

Apparently I posted something about false medical information, so I don't know what to tell you. But that should be alarming. That should wake, no matter what side of the debate you're on about the vaccine mandate or different things, that should be alarming, that these big techs can just shut you down.

Facebook has shadowbound me. We went from, there's like 23,000 people following Facebook. It used to have a quarter million engagements a month.

Now it's like 60,000. And no shares, likes, and things like that, which is, you know, it's okay, because God knows. But it shows how they shadowbound, how they silence, because when you begin to boldly confront what is going on, they don't like that.

Not much different than under Hitler in Germany. It's the same thing that they're doing. So this is a time for Christians to be vocal, but loving, bold, but broken and humble.

Finding that balance. So get Wednesday's message. I just talked about this on courage, the battle for courage.

That was on Wednesday. And make sure to get the CD or listen on YouTube. But that kind of sets the stage, that we are hungry for God's word, we need more of God's word.

And where we left off last week was that God created them male and female. So when it comes to this whole gender identity, and it's huge right now, right? Gender neutral bathrooms, there's, I think he's from Yale or Harvard, this professor, and it's been in the news this week, that God should not be given masculine terms. He should be called they, because it's more binary, it's more inclusive, it's not offensive.

And if we just, what does the Bible say? God created them male and female. And then so what happens though, when those struggling with identity, did you know that that can be a normal thing around 10, 11, 12, when hormones are raging, and you point them in the right direction, you help them sort through those things. And we just have, we don't believe what God's word says.

Now I'll get into that more as we go, but that was, that really sets the course. He created them male and female, and Jesus would say that in the two shall become one flesh. So we have the definition of marriage, we have how many, why is it, is it DMV now, you can pick your gender, and non-binary means you're not sure what you are, and so it's just, for me it's sad.

I don't, I'm not poking fun, it's sad, but you have to be bold enough to say that's not right. That's not right, I don't know what to tell you, but God created them male and female. And if you look at, well what's going on in the hearts? Well first you look at Hollywood, you look at the media, look at what they're watching, what they're listening to, no wonder people are confused.

Lil Nas X is pregnant, the most popular song out there from, I don't remember the name of this group, but it's just, the lyrics are terrible, and you just, all the kids are being fed these things, and we wonder why we're confused, because we have a culture that's confused. And confusion breeds more confusion. And what also we learned last week is that is when sin entered.

He made Adam and Eve, he gave them the choice, they broke that commandment, they took of the fruit. Eve ate first, and then Adam saw, well she didn't die, maybe I can take it, I'm kind of paraphrasing here. And so he took it, and then they did die, spiritually.

And I believe that's when the clock started, the biological clock. We don't know exactly when that, how that happens exactly, there's a lot of speculation, we do know that cells, your cells in your body are created to keep going. They multiply, they divide, they die, they multiply, and they keep, the cell can keep living.

So something happened though in the body where it shut down the biological clock, and death did enter in. And Romans 8, 22 reminds us that all creation groans because of the fall. And that's where we left off, and then we were in Genesis 3, 8, and this word was just gnawing at me for a few days, and this whole title of the message, and I'm just gonna read one verse, and I'm gonna hang my hat there the whole morning.

It's from Genesis 3, 8, and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the reason I stopped there is to me it was very profound.

They have this relationship with God. Somehow, someway, we know that God is spirit, for even the younger kids, if you're not sure, the Bible teaches that God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth. He reveals himself in the redemption work of Jesus Christ, the son, the word of God, the triune nature of God came and was flesh and dwelt among us, and we behold the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and so God reveals himself in the son.

But at this point, was it a manifestation of Christ? Was it the presence of God? People are divided, we're not really sure. We just know that they can walk in fellowship with God in the garden. There was a communion, there was an unbroken relationship there.

And then somehow, not only was the biological clock starting for death, but also it broke that relationship with God. And this is where theologians are divided. I don't wanna, I could take a long rabbit trail, but I won't, we can maybe save it for the meet and greet.

You could ask me this question. But it goes back to man's free will. And we know that God's image in us, it wasn't erased, because we're still creating God's image, but it was effaced.

Norman Geisler, a wonderful theologian, would say his image in us is effaced, not erased. In other words, it's damaged. It's marred, it's broken.

That broken relationship. And that's why some of you, if you feel that broken relationship with God, you need the cross this morning. Because Jesus bridges that gap, he fixes the relationship.

Doesn't mean we live in perfection and utopia. It means that we struggle, we have warfare, we battle. But we know that our relationship with God has been mended and has been fixed because of what Jesus did on the cross.

I just preached the end of the message at the beginning. And it's that big word theologians call propitiation, meaning we absorbed God's, Jesus absorbed God's wrath on the cross. And then we have imputed righteousness, meaning the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed onto us as believers, given to us as believers.

And so he fixed that marred and broken relationship. But somehow there was a presence of God. They hid themselves from the presence of God.

And I'm wondering how many Christians sometimes hide themselves from the presence of God. Now, with all topics that are controversial, I need to clarify. Now, when you talk about the presence of God throughout Old Testament study, and what you do in theology, just a rule of theology when you study the Bible, is there's something called the law of first mention.

You would look and see how a word is first used and how God used it, and that kind of sets the tone for that word throughout scripture. You don't go grab something here and this and say, well, but, and it means something completely different. I mean, God's pretty consistent, and there's rules of theology and hermeneutics and homiletics and things like that.

But just, I'm getting out there. Let me come back here. The key is that God's presence throughout the Bible is either a dwelling, like in the temple, or a, it's a settling.

It's the Shekinah glory. There's a, when the sacrifice was ready and the temple was ready, the cloud would come in, there was a settling that would take place. And so this topic has always fascinated me, the presence of God.

Because he is omnipresent. He's everywhere. He's in a dead church, he's in a living church.

The church down the street, is he there or is he gone somewhere? He's omnipresent, he is everywhere. But there's a huge difference between God being everywhere and God being upon you. The presence of God, the power of God, the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

See, that's the difference maker in my own life and the lives of others. And it's funny, I just thought of this. I was gonna write it down.

I said, no, I don't know if it'll fit. And I just came back as clear as day. Any of you listening to the radio yesterday? I don't know if you were.

Adrian Rogers, probably my favorite preacher, just so you guys know. Adrian Rogers, follow him. He's died many years ago.

Look him up on YouTube. He comes on at five o'clock on our radio station. But he was talking about, and I just pulled over and just wanted to write this down.

How in his day, Arnold Palmer was the greatest golfer. Many of you remember. Okay, I don't know if I remember Arnold Palmer.

Maybe before me. But he would, and he said he was right. He could go out and golf and say, I'm gonna golf just like Arnold Palmer.

And he could go out and say it, but he would be laughed at on the green, like I would. But what about if he could take a pill or something to where actually Arnold Palmer would permeate every fiber of his being? And then he could go out and drive that drive. He could, the birdie, the green.

But what's the difference? Arnold Palmer, now I don't know if the analogy's that great with the Holy Spirit or things like that, and that's what he even said, but the principle is very true. That's the difference. When the Holy Spirit is working through you and in you, now you can do great things for God because it's him doing the work.

It's him hitting off the tee. It's him doing the putting. And that's what many Christians are lacking, that presence of God.

Yes, he's everywhere and he's gonna guide me, he's gonna direct me, but when I surrender my life and I humble myself and I might weep on the altar and I might say, God, break me, God, crush me. I want all of

you or I don't wanna have anything to do with religion. I need your manifest power and presence in my life.

Then there's a boldness, there's an anointing, there's an unction because the Holy Spirit says, that's a vessel I can use, and the presence of God plows upon that person and everything changes. So that's why there's a big debate in Christians. Those who have not received the presence and power of God upon their life are mad at those who have.

And they said, that doesn't happen anymore. We have the Bible now. We don't need all that Holy Spirit stuff.

And so there is something about the presence of God in your life. You know it when you have it and you know it when you don't. Many times I used to go out and speak.

My wife, you remember, she would text me one sentence after the speak engagement was over. She would say, did fire fall? Meaning, did God break me and humble me? Was it hitting hearts and changing lives, the altar full? You could feel the manifest presence of God. The atmosphere, there's something there.

There was something there when His Shekinah glory fell. There was something there when the cloud filled the temple. There was there when Moses said, oh, stay your hand, God.

I'm gonna die if I even look. The presence of God should be desired of all Christians. Like Tozer said, I don't wanna have anything to do with religion if I don't have the power and presence of God.

And then there's times where it feels like bricks are falling out of my mouth. The sermons are dead. I just wanna go home.

And sometimes God trains us, trains preachers for that, to be ready in season, out of season, not always feel something. I got it. And many times when I don't, like that was terrible.

I don't know what happened. So many people, oh, that was so great. I love that point.

That really helped me. I'm like, Lord, that is all you. Because this boy needs to get home because I just don't feel anything right now.

And I don't know, you don't go by feelings. You just go by the words. You persevere regardless.

But I love when the presence of God is in a place. And when I talk about revival a lot and you read about revival, spiritual awakening, if the word revival bothers you, the word spiritual awakening, always God's presence would be felt. Reading, they stayed for four hours worshiping and praying and I couldn't, the people didn't wanna go home.

And when they went home, they were just on their knees and praying and then the next prayer meeting went till midnight. And then when the church services started at five in the morning, we didn't leave till later in the day and the presence of God was real. The tangible atmosphere, they weren't bored.

They were hungry for more of God. It's real. And those who don't like what I'm talking about, what they'll say is, and I've heard it from famous Bible teachers.

Oh, you don't want the presence of God. That's when judgment falls. For the unbeliever, yes.

But not for the believer, big difference. The bad news about God's presence is when you don't know him. I forgot to write down the reference, but I think it's Isaiah 64, don't quote me on it.

Maybe Psalms, but probably Isaiah because he's talking about Egypt. But he said, the idols of Egypt will totter at my presence. The idols will teeter, will totter, will fall down in my presence.

That is bad news because they don't know him. They're challenging him, there's idolatry. But the good news about God's presence is because in the midst of pain, there is relief.

In the midst of suffering, there is sweet surrender. In the midst of fear, there is incredible joy. In the midst of uncertainty, there is God who will never leave nor forsake you.

In the midst of confusion and chaos, there is stability and hope. The presence of God brings life. Church comes alive.

Isn't that, don't you guys ask that question sometimes? Where is the church of the living God? Would they please stand up? Why are we in a hurry all the time? Why aren't we seeing the miraculous and God breaking through and breaking strongholds and deliverance taking place and demonic opposition being rebuked and prayer coming down from heaven and the children weeping at the altar? Where is the church of the living God? We don't see it in America, what do we do? Man, let's get out of here, this guy's convicting me. I don't wanna hear, I don't want more of God, I'm satisfied. The presence of God, I don't think so.

So back to the sermon title, what extinguishes the presence of the Lord? What extinguishes the presence of the Lord? Number one, Romans one talks about sin grows when it's unchallenged and unrestrained and unrepentant of. And that's my big concern for our country. We need to hear the voice crying in the wilderness like never before.

But all we're looking for and listening for is that what tickles my ears. And you're not gonna bring a group of people to repentance without that voice that challenges. And sin must be challenged, it must be restrained, it must be unrepentant, it must be repented from.

R.E. Torrey said the gratification of the flesh, right, for just gratifying the flesh and the fullness of the spirit do not go hand in hand. They can't go together. One or the other will prevail.

Now you might be thinking, well who doesn't have sin? I gotcha. But there's a big difference between those who are repenting and humble and broken and working on it, crucifying the flesh and apologizing, not blaming others. And then there are of those who are continuing in their besetting sin.

They're blaming their circumstances. They're blaming, you don't know how many people I've talked to who addiction is bringing them down. They've got lots of excuses.

You don't know my workload. You don't know my spouse. You don't know what I'm going through.

Well you'll never change. That's called the blame game. Would you man up and take responsibility? I don't know about you, but I'm tired of people blaming other things and other situations and do not change because of blame.

It shifts it away from me. What is behind that is a big, ugly word called pride. And so if you want the presence of God, you have to deal harshly with sin.

You have to crucify it, not coddle it. You have to call it out. You have to repent from it.

Evil rarely looks wrong until it accomplishes its purpose. So I was gonna talk to you about two weeks ago. Evil, sin, often doesn't look wrong until it accomplishes its purpose.

Like when I go fly fishing, I told you, throw that little fly out there. Oh look at that, little mosquito. That looks so good, until he's in the net because of the hook.

Sin fascinates before it assassinates, and that will extinguish the presence of God. But the beautiful thing is about it when you're struggling with sin, if you run to the cross, and like Jesus, like Jesus, or not Jesus, but Paul talked about no temptation has overtaken you, and you bear it and you turn, you go out the door of, you exit the sin instead of embrace it, and there's freedom, there's joy that follows, so it's a fight, it's a struggle. Every day that goes by, we're struggling with sin, aren't we? Jane, even you? Yeah, gluttony, man, if I could, I'd stop by Panda Express and In-N-Out Burger all after this sermon.

Or pride, anger, we're all human, we struggle with these things, but there's a big difference between a struggle and a lifestyle. Those who bring their struggle to the cross and repent, and God cleanses them and sets them free, there's a, when you replace, here's what happens, when you replace sin with repentance, there's a beautiful thing that can occur, the filling of the Holy Spirit. God, I've been quenching and grieving you, I'm repenting, I don't want to continue doing that, and so when you stop to quench, you are full, you are filled with the fire of God again.

When you stop grieving the Holy Spirit now, you're filled with joy from the Holy Spirit. You exchange one for the other. From the sermon notes two weeks ago as well, last thing I'm gonna cover on this, you have to starve the source of sin.

Starve the source of sin to get the presence of God. This sin extinguishes the presence of God, so starve the source. Can you be a little more clear, okay? From the amplified version of the Bible, Matthew 5, 29.

If your right eye makes you stumble and leads you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. That is, remove yourself from the source of temptation. This is not rocket science.

This is pretty clear, removing yourself from the source of that temptation. That's different for everyone, whatever it takes. Basically, we're saying, Lord, how bad, God's saying, how bad do you want it? Do you want it bad enough to remove that from your life? And I've told people before, and I will continue, if their phone is a problem, get a flip phone.

Oh, that's not cool. No, it's not cool. No internet, yep, no internet, yep, yep.

How bad do you want it? Don't come up and cry about it, go home and live it out. But again, peace and joy follow obedience. That's the thing about God's word, is it's hard to obey in that moment of temptation, correct? But when we do obey, joy follows.

But we want the joy to come first, or just me. Lord, I'll fast if I feel really good about it. I'll fast if there's lots, but usually, the joy comes after the discipline, after the obedience.

And then obviously, number two, one, I think up on the notes here, and I'm not gonna talk too much about this, but fear will always, always extinguish the presence of the Lord in your life, or quench and grieve the spirit. I think we can put up the top five or six again. Fear always will quench the work of the spirit in your

life.

And the reason I'm not gonna talk a lot about it is I talked a lot about it Wednesday. So listen to that message, share it, internalize it. But just to give you a nugget of truth from that, the reason fear will extinguish the presence of the Lord in your life, or quench the spirit, is because fear is the opposite of trust and faith.

For example, let's just be real. When I get that from YouTube and Facebook as my first response, no fear, all right, I better just lighten up a little bit. I don't wanna drop all these platforms.

Why, what am I fearing? I'm fearing man, not God. And so if I say, you know what, I am gonna back off. I'm not, boy, I don't, now I'm walking on YouTube eggshells.

I have never once came up here and said, I'm not gonna say that because they might ban me. But it feels that way sometimes. And so if I act on that fear, what's gonna happen? God says, all right, I can't work through you as much as I would like to because you're quenching and grieving what I wanna do.

Or what about some of these peaceful protests? I don't wanna go, my employer might see me out there. Now, that's not a biblical issue. That's more of a conviction on some hearts and not, but fear, I don't wanna say something to my family member who's coming over for Thanksgiving.

In some cases, don't, okay, I understand. Let God open the door. We've got some, if I go into religion and politics, I don't know why it's those two that you just open, you open Pandora's box.

But there is something with this aspect of fear. And you know, maybe God is convicting you of something that we're too afraid to take a stand. And I think that's what's happening now.

And people are fearing, and rightly so, because you wanna use wisdom, how many millions are fearing losing their job? And that's a valid concern. I think God gives us wisdom for a reason. Wisdom says, don't go out and be stupid and just throw it all to God.

Make sure you're in prayer, fasting, obedience to God's word. Lord, direct me, stepping out in faith. I'm not fearing, but I'm trying to use wisdom.

And then let God do His thing. And then the next point, what extinguishes the presence and power of God in your life? A lack of desire. I almost spent the whole sermon on this one.

Lack of desire. Did you know God knows when we don't desire more of Him? He knows when we're complacent, when we're comfortable. A.W. Tozer said, it's hard to get people to come to church when the only entertainment is God.

Now, there's nothing wrong with big things, big churches. I visited two just enormous churches in Texas when I was there. And when I met Jack Graham and had lunch with him, toured his church, the restaurant seats 800, and the bookstore is the size of a bookstore.

And it's just, God can do those things. I'm not one to say, oh, that's not, it could be. If God is growing in ministry and they're feeding people at a reasonable price and feeding homeless, and who knows what God can do.

I also toured Gateway, where Robert Morris is at. And the kids' area looks like Magic Mountain. Now, is there anything wrong with that? Not necessarily.

Kids can go somewhere and enjoy it and you spruce it up. See, it's an issue of the heart. Now, personally, I'd have a hard time spending, you know, stewarding the finances and things like that, many times on things like that.

But my point is this, many times what draws that many people is what draws that many people. Those types of things. And I've had people, it happens a lot.

You know, people would probably come more to church if you had the donuts and the coffee and all that. And I'm like, I know, let's make it really hard. Let's just put water in there.

Let's, but I'm not, but please understand what I'm saying. I'm not putting down churches that have that. If God opens that door, the heart is right, he's blessing, you know, but many people go to church.

Most people, I would say this congregation, I'm not speaking primarily about you and I mean that. Most people go to church based on how contemporary the worship team is. Is there the smoke coming up from the stage? Are they going to entertain me? Is there this to do and that to do and this program and that? And they come entertained.

But very few people come to say, I don't care if there's no carpet. I don't care if the heater's on. I don't care if I can't sit down.

I just need to find God. That's what you'll see in China. That's what you'll see in China.

That's what you'll see in Afghanistan. That's what you'll see in the Middle East. I just, I want to find God.

I need to experience God. I don't care about the trivial things, yeah, whatever that word is. Trivial things and just got excited ahead of myself.

I just want the presence of God or I don't want to have anything to do with religion. And there was a story I've told about a year ago and I'm so glad I didn't go through my old sermon notes and tell you stories that I told back then because most of you are new. We have a whole new church after 150 people moved out of California and people are sick and moved different places and God's brought so many new people.

It's encouraging. But there was a story of this old man that they were interviewing. But before I tell you that story, I want to just focus on this for a minute.

This lack of desire, let me frame it a different way. It's really a lack of appetite. If you have no appetite for the things of God, no appetite for the things of God, you will extinguish the presence of God.

Not gonna try this, but if I said next Sunday, we're just gonna have worship and prayer, that's it. Do you think we'd be this full? I'm just gonna leave it there. But we think, because when there's an appetite for the things of God, when there's an appetite for prayer and worship and just His presence, that doesn't extinguish, it fuels you with more of God.

But if we lack that appetite, there's no desire, then that will extinguish God working in your heart. Can you imagine? God knows our hearts more than, better than we do. If we're, ah, maybe I'll squeeze church in this week.

I don't know. Prayer here, pray there, I don't know. Why am I not experiencing God in a powerful way? You seek Him, you find Him.

You don't seek Him, you won't find Him. You empty yourself, you will be filled. You don't empty yourself, you won't be filled.

And so this old man, they went and they talked to him about a revival he experienced. I believe it was in Scotland, possibly the New Hebrides Revivals in Scotland or off the coast there in Wales. And they asked him, you know, what happened? Why did that, why did that, why did that fire of God go out? Why did it extinguish? And I could talk a lot more about that, but basically he said, he said, the only advice I can give you, and he was, his eyes were like lit up, and he was very passionate.

And he said, when you lay hold of God, never, never, never let go. When you lay hold of God, never let go. And I can even picture the tears, because he remembers, oh, when the power and presence of God, you want church every night, you don't want anything else, but God, I need more of God.

When you lay hold of that, you never want to let go. Oh, this is the water in which I give you. You will never thirst again.

If you believe on me, as the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. John the Baptist said, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire, the unction, the presence, the anointing of God. There should be a hunger and a desire for this.

I will tell you, these types of sermons are not popular, but they are powerful, if you embrace what God wants to do in your heart. And then the fourth point, what you don't know can hinder you. What you don't know, let me explain that for you.

I'm gonna put up Acts 19. They were traveling around, and it says, and finding some disciples, he said to them, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? I want to ask a lot of people this. Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? So they said to him, we have not even heard if there is a Holy Spirit.

And he said to them, into what then were you baptized? So they said, into John's baptism. Now, to be honest with you, I would need about an hour to really unpack this. I have many times before, but I want to look at this word receive.

In the Greek language, it's a word lambano. Lambano, what it means is to take with the hand in order to use it. And what he's asking here, have you taken hold of this wonderful gift that God has given you, that that being the power of the Holy Spirit? And they weren't really sure.

Now, some people say they weren't saved, and that's how they kind of get out of this, but it says, and he found some disciples, so I don't know if it's just maybe lip service, were they really saved? The reason they're confused by this is because these disciples, these believers, after receiving the Holy Spirit, received a mighty filling of the Spirit, the speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit, and they went out and did ministry in the power of the Spirit. So before this, their disciples, they don't know anything about the Holy Spirit. They're just, they're dying on the vine.

God's not using them. There's no ministry going forth. And then when they take hold, they lay hold of this promise of God.

That's when they now are being used of God. And I was at a Bible study 20 years ago. I think my wife, I don't know if we were just married, possibly, and a pastor's son, I was teaching on this, actually not teaching, I wasn't teaching yet, but reading and talking, he said, you know what? I would probably say the same thing as these people did.

I don't, I mean, I know the Holy Spirit, I hear about it, but I don't really know how that impacts my life. And of course, he's in a very bad prodigal state right now. I even know that.

But another translation says this. Did you take God into your mind only, or did you also embrace him with your heart? Did he get inside of you? So what's my point? What you don't know can hinder you. And many people who have a false theology or false understanding of the Holy Spirit don't realize that they can quench and grieve God's Spirit, or they can be filled mightily with God's Spirit.

They don't, I can have more of God? Wait a minute, wait a minute, don't I get all of the Holy Spirit at conversion? Yes, but does he get all of you? You can tweet that one. Yeah, at conversion, the Holy Spirit is a gift. But does he have all of you? I can tell you my life, he didn't.

I'm saved, that was a great church camp at 12 years old. I'm Christian, and you know, and then bad influences, and then I get introduced to ACDC, and Ozzy Osbourne, and Black Sabbath, and alcohol, and that's not a good combination. And so the prodigal son is running from God, and then came back to God, surrendered everything on the living room floor, cried like a baby, and here I am, this weight lifter, never cry, I don't cry much at all.

My dad taught us not to cry, and I can't stop crying. Lord, I give you everything, and the Holy Spirit just came upon me that day. And that's, everything shifted.

But so many people live in that state of, I don't wanna give God everything. I mean, I don't wanna surrender that, I kinda like this sin, I kind of enjoy this, and pride slips in, and what we don't know can hinder us. What you need to know is that full surrender is not optional.

It's the Christian life, it's the victorious Christian life, surrendering everything. Now, do I surrender everything perfectly? No, no one does. But it's acknowledging, Lord, I haven't given this area up to you completely, please help me, please take it.

And as I empty myself, He begins to fill me. And the same with you, you know, many of you are shaking your heads. So here's what we do know.

The more you seek Him, the more you find Him, and the more you find Him, the more you seek Him. There's a hunger, there's a hunger of God. I believe that's partially what Jesus was talking about when He said, if you drink of this water, you will never thirst again.

There's a continual thirsting and a hunger after God. And that's why it's okay to feel like, I never pray enough, I feel that way all the time. Because it's that hunger, it's that desire that keeps me going.

I don't worship God enough, that desire keeps me hungering and thirsting for more of God. I've got to find God, I've got to hear from you, Lord. And it's like a deer panting after that.

We're panting, there's a, he's gonna die, he's gonna pass out, and he just consumes that water. He says, like that deer who's panting for that brook, oh God, my soul pants for you. I am not satisfied until I find you,

God.

Oh, would you meet me where I am? The more I seek you, the more I find you, the more I find you, the more I seek you. Oh God, find me here broken, find me here humbled. Oh God, would you fill me again? Return to me the joy of my salvation.

David would cry out. Finding that salvation, that joy to the salvation again. The more you die to self, the more Christ will be alive in you.

The emptier you are, the more filled you will be. Listen, this always fascinates me. Many of you know the story of Abram going to kill Isaac.

The ram for the sacrifice didn't show up until obedience took place. Until there was something on the altar, then God met him. Man, I could almost cry over that one.

Do you see how profound that is? It wasn't until something is on the altar, he's getting ready to kill his son, God says, oh, now I see your obedience, now I see your faith, now I see your trust, now you put it all on the altar, now there's a ram and a thicket, stay your hand, Abram, grab the provision that I have given you, same goes with us. As Paul would say, present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable which is the perfect will of God and not be conformed to this world. Put your body on the sacrifice, put yourself on the altar.

Shane, what does that look like? I've got some ideas, but you all be convicted. Instead of the 35% of you not coming to the last week of the month, why don't it be 100% of you? Well, I have to work. Well, you take work off to go party, go to Vegas, hit Lake Mead, go to Tahoe.

Why not put God on the calendar? Can you imagine if we were so hungry for God the same way we are hungry for other things? But I wanna encourage you, you will lose some battles, you will have bad moods, and you will make mistakes, but you will want more of God. So your eyes are focused. And then I'm gonna get to the end here shortly.

The other thing that extinguishes the power of God without a shadow of a doubt is anger. When we rage because of pride and we're angry, you quench the spirit of God. And the reason I'm not gonna talk a lot about it next week, or right now is because guess where I'll be next week? Genesis four, when Cain killed Abel because of rage so next Sunday is anger, one letter short of danger.

You have the sermon title. And watch, those who need to hear it the most are gonna do whatever they can to get out of next Sunday's service. So spouses, we're gonna be here and be encouraged.

Most people struggle with anger. Let's not play, you know, let's not play games. Most Christians struggle with anger.

I would say that probably the person I knew the best that didn't struggle much with it was my mom. It always perplexed me. Hold it together, hold together.

And then those times when she did, you knew. Oh, you knew it was important. Son, and she could see the anger, uh-oh, uh-oh.

When mom's angry, you know, it's time to listen. But anger comes up inside of us. Rage, not getting our way.

Why am I so angry? Why am I irritable? And it just comes up and it will quench the spirit of God. Because how can you be angry and treat people nicely? So next week, make sure you're here. It's gonna be such an important message.

I'm already halfway done. God just kept pouring into my heart. And then number six, the final one.

What extinguishes, it's actually five up there. What extinguishes the presence of God? I think probably more than anything is a heart filled with pride. A heart filled with pride.

You don't need more of God. This person says, I'm good, I'm good. I know this person well.

Not a person per se, but this thought process. Many times over the years, I started morning worship four years ago this December. And I'll tell people who I know need to be there.

I won't tell them that, but you know. I know who needs to be there, who doesn't. And I'll tell them, man, you gotta get, oh no, I'm good, I do that at home.

I do that at home. Oh really? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, your wife says you don't.

Here's why morning worship is so hard. You can't come and play church for an hour and a half. You'll be bored to death sitting in that pew if you don't want more of God.

I don't want that, that's boring. Right, because worship, squarely with the face of God. You can't fake worship.

We can fake it here among ourselves, but you can't just come and sit for an hour and a half and fake that. Say, I'm sleeping in. No, it's okay to sleep in.

If you can't make it, most of the time, I got it. My mom would love when I would say things like this, even though she never came to morning worship, ever. She never got convicted when I say things like this.

She'd say, son, you need to keep telling people that. Because she knows she would be there if she could. And I've noticed those who get convicted about what I'm saying are those who are convicted about coming.

And that's just one example of many. When I talk about this, man, you need the power of the Holy Spirit. He goes, oh, no, no, I'm good, I got that.

I got that when I was 12. I'll never forget. There was a man, I knew what he needed to do.

And I just said, you need to get to that altar. And he got mad. Because you're challenging the spirituality.

You see, you can know the Bible, but still lack God's presence. Did you know that? You can know the Bible, but still lack the presence of God. Shane, are there any New Testament examples? Yeah, they're called the Pharisees, the scribes, and the religious leaders.

Sadducees. They could quote the Torah. But they lack the presence of God.

And here's what happened. I mean, as pastors and preaching, you've gotta be careful because as you read God's word, you're built up, right? You know scripture. And knowledge puffs up.

So you begin to look down on people, and you begin to quote scripture. Oh, let me tell you what it really says. Let me tell you, I've been studying the Greek all month.

And I love the hermeneutic approach to my homiletic preparation on the pneumatology of the eschatology of trying to impress, pride, arrogance. They'll not know the power and presence of God in their life. Because we actually don't worship the word, correct? The word points us to the Savior.

We love the word, we look to the word, but we don't worship the word. And you know the scriptures, but you're unloving and arrogant. Listen, this isn't Bible trivia.

This isn't how many times you've read through the Bible, how many scriptures you've memorized, how much you've studied. This is about experiencing the power and presence of God. Now, it's hard to do outside of scripture, so don't get me wrong.

Meditate on scripture, memorize scripture, love the word, pour it through. But at the end of the day, you need to say, like the old hymn writers used to say, that we are broken. God, I come empty to be filled.

I come broken to be mended. Lord, fill me, break me, shape me. And so I'll close with this.

We talked earlier about the relationship with man breaking with Adam and Eve, and that relationship was gone. But some of you need to hear that the greatest act of reconciliation was Jesus Christ dying on that cross. We can worship all we want, we can say amen all we want, but you can leave here not knowing God if you're not careful.

Because being in church doesn't save you. Hearing a sermon doesn't save you. It's embracing faith by faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Let me tell you, as things get difficult, are they not, you look at the news, you wonder, what in the world is going on? I have only one hope. Let me just tell you up front, I publicly declare, I have only one hope, and it's not in the 2022 election. God help us it's not in the 2024 election.

It's not in the protesting, all these things are good, but there is only one hope, one solid rock, one foundation that will never crumble under the weight of what is going on, and that is Jesus Christ. And that's why I love we sang that song, that four song before I came up there, there's power in his name. What a wonderful name, there's power in the name of Jesus Christ.

Let me remind you what nation is above him, what army can defeat him, what country can control him, what kingdom can contain him, what leader can conquer him, what difficulty can perplex him, what plan can stop him, what problem can confuse him, what situation can finish him, what devil can destroy him, what weapon can harm him, what setback can hinder him, what obstacle can delay God, nothing, that's who we worship. And of course, then it begs the question, what sin is so great, what stronghold so deep, what failure so final, that it can't stop God's love for you? You need to embrace that this morning, if you don't know him. We're gonna open up the prayer tent, and we wanna pray with you.

But also, if you're a believer, if you're a believer and you've been just in that rut, and dry, and not experiencing the presence of God, remember, it's not about perfection. I don't want you to go home and say, okay, Shane said, if I experience the presence of God, everything's gonna be good. It's actually the only thing that gets me through when everything is all hell's breaking loose.

The presence of God, that relationship with God, through the valleys and the mountaintop experiences, that's why Paul said, we are hard-pressed, but not crushed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. We are persecuted, but not struck down, and we are something, but not destroyed.

We go through all kinds of things, being hard-pressed, and difficulties, and challenges, but it's the presence of God, that anchor that gets you through. Remember that the body that was broken, the blood that was shed, was for you, and as you begin to remember, you begin to reflect, and you begin to repent. You get your heart right before God again.

You begin to remove things that are a distraction and quenching his spirit, and then you begin to rest in that relationship. And then you're renewed. You're absolutely renewed because of that.

And you don't know, maybe you do, but every week, every week, somebody's upset at me for preaching these kind of messages. Oh, you're so discouraging. I'm only discouraging to those who don't want to repent.

How can you get a single mom crying, saying, thank you so much, I'm so encouraged, yet you get Judgmental Jerry over here upset? What's the difference? The heart, the heart. In the Old Testament, the people would say, give us prophets that tell us smooth things. Do you know what happened to the prophetic voices in the Old Testament? It wasn't pleasant, but they had the presence of God.

They could stand and say, I will speak whatever God tells me to speak. So as a final statement, I don't want any of you to ask, at the end of your life, I wonder what God would have done with my life. You see, I've been at the side of those days away from dying.

Some, it's wonderful, but others are just weeping. What would I have done with my life? Can you imagine what God would have done with my life? And I don't want you to think about that. You don't want to be on your deathbed or as you get older and say, I wonder what would he have done with my life? I went to church, but I mean really gravitating and holding on to the presence and power of God.

I wonder, I wonder if I could have done this. I wonder if my kids would have been different. I wonder if I could have started that ministry.

I wonder if I really would have been a teacher. Or I wonder if I would have preached God's word. I wonder if I would have led worship songs.

I know, I wonder what God would have done with my life. Break that over you this morning. Break that over your life this morning.

Say, God, I am fully surrendering my life. It's interesting. I don't think the Genesis, it's an accident here that he said a few times, the Lord God.

The Lord God. See, you have to have both. You have him as Savior and Lord.

The Lordship of Jesus Christ. He's just not a Savior that you put in a closet for the rest of your life. We bow our knee to the Lord Jesus Christ.

So surrender everything this morning. And say, God, I give you my finances. I give you my addictions.

I give you my marriage, my anger, my blame, my resentment. Lord, everything I lay at the foot of the cross, I need the presence of God in my life. I'm tired of playing church.

And God can do that. I try to stay real balanced theologically, but there is something about the laying on of hands and praying for someone and saying, Lord, we pray for the fire of God in their life. God, would you give them that boldness, that love for your word? Lord, I pray that they would leave here a worshiper.

God, would you break them? Would you humble them? We agree together, and the spirit of God can come where two or three are gathered. There I am in the midst, listening for the words, listening to answer those prayers. Most of us, you want the presence and power of God as a confession.

I need it. I spent time this morning, I was crying to God on the couch saying, God, I need you to infuse this sermon with the power of the Holy Spirit. If not, it's gonna fall on deaf ears from a preacher who can't preach from the anointing of God's spirit.

It'll leave people lifeless and cold if you don't infuse it with your power. All of that is biblical. All of that is biblical.

Don't let those on the conservative side rob you from the power of the Holy Spirit. All of this did not cease when we got the Bible. Give me a break.

I need the power of the Spirit just as more today than they did 2,000 years ago.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9YTTNPNnpkw.mp4>

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