

What Is a Faithful Servant?

by Shane Idleman

A faithful servant is someone who treats others with kindness and respect, is faithful over little things first, and does not engage in hypocritical behavior.

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Scripture: Hosea 4:1, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 24:42, Matthew 24:44, Matthew 25:10, Matthew 25:12, Romans 10:9, Philippians 2:12, James 2:17, 1 John 2:4

Topics: "Faithful Servanthood", "Personal Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being prepared and faithful for the return of Jesus, highlighting the distinction between the wise and foolish servants. It delves into the significance of true repentance, genuine faith, and the experiential knowledge of God. The message stresses the need for believers to be ready, obedient, and to have a personal relationship with Jesus as both Savior and Lord.

Transcript

Matthew 24 42 watch, therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming, but know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. So that's the context we've been talking about, that the Son of Man, Jesus, is coming at an hour that we do not expect.

Now, there's two groups here that he's talking about, the faithful servant and the unfaithful servant. And I always remind people that even if they are denying God, they don't think there's a God, they are still his servant. They are still God's servant, and they don't like when you bring that up, because they are still under his sovereign control.

If he wants them to turn right and run into somebody, they will turn right and turn into somebody. God, all of us on this planet are his servants. So when we look at these parables, we understand that some are wise and some are foolish.

And let me encourage you to be on the side of the wise steward. And what that looks like, let me explain what that looks like. Now we can read where we're at.

Matthew 24 45 through 51. Who then is a faithful and wise servant? Who his master made ruler over his household to give them food and do season. Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will

find so doing.

Surely I say to you that he will make him ruler over all of his goods. So stop here for a minute. What Jesus is saying is a wise steward stewards what God has given them.

So God gives this person his household, and the wise steward stewards it according to the heart and the heart of God. He's a wise steward and because of that, he gets more and he gets more and he gets more. And this is that wonderful biblical principle.

We all know faithful in the little things and God will make you rule over much. And he tests us in those small things. Those challenges that you think are a challenge and you're not being very patient right now.

And I can't believe I'm in this spot. Don't give up. Look up.

Because God will use those little things and those things that seem menial to prepare you for greater things and larger ministries and not that larger ministries are necessarily God ordained. God calls us sometimes to the very small things and the minimal. And I think God hides his people among the paltry things.

Oswald Chamber said that no monuments erected. No monuments are erected. Not because they're not important, but because they're in places where they cannot be seen.

Now, I was thinking about this. I think I mentioned this a few years ago, but as I was reading over this, I thought of 16 years ago. I was actually patrolling the parking lot here and cleaning those toilets and ushering and being in the back.

And I loved it because that's what God, but I had no idea that his plan was, you know, to finally have me come up and speak or lead the church. But starting in these things, but that's where the character is developed. How do you develop humility if you're never tested? Are you just going to wake up and be a humble person? Until they said, can you go clean those restrooms? And the kid threw up in the room B-22, and we have to take out the trash.

And it's humbling. And that's how God humbles us. So don't, if you're in the day of small beginnings, don't give up.

If you're in that, Lord, how is this happening? I can't believe this is happening. What's going on? Well, there's always a purpose when God is involved. Then we'll keep reading.

But if that evil servant says in his heart, my master is delaying his coming and begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and an hour that he is not aware of and will cut him in two and appoint him as portion with the hypocrites. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now, I want to just throw this in here because I think it's important.

I've heard Bible teachers over the years talking about this parable and the one with the wise virgins and the foolish virgins and the talents. Some invested their talents wisely. The other didn't.

Hopefully, we'll get to that. Looking at these groups as both of them being believers, but one is not wise and the other is foolish, but they're both believers. But I can't find that in this text.

When Jesus talks about weeping and gnashing of teeth and being served his portion with the hypocrites, that tells me he's talking about believers and unbelievers and the faithful and wise steward. And you can tell if a steward is wise and truly following God by how they treat people. This is the first point I want to pull from this.

A faithful servant treats others like God would. So a faithful servant is going to treat others like God would. So you can tell somebody's heart by how they treat others.

They'll treat the privileged and the rich and the ones with influence very nicely. But those who are just a bother, they'll just push to the side. And that's one reason I would encourage you to get involved in our hospital homes where we go and we visit and we minister to those people who cannot offer anything in return, other than you being filled with the Spirit when you leave there because you minister to others.

Also, the second point, which I already explained, is faithful over little things first. God will make you ruler over much later. And then the third point, sometimes we don't understand, just gloss over Scripture, but it says to eat and drink with the drunkards.

Eating and drinking in this here is a lifestyle. In my opinion, what he's talking about is this wicked servant, this unfaithful servant, is going to be mean to people, treat them harshly, and also he's going to be drinking and partying with this group. And this parallels today.

You know the people, next week it's Sonoma County for wine testing, and then it's Vegas for this, and then it's San Diego for this, and then it's all the Irish pubs in Hermosa Beach for this, and then they're planning their next. It's just lifestyle. Now, is there anything wrong with Hermosa Beach? No.

Sonoma County? No. But you know what I'm talking about. They're planning their next party.

They're planning what to do. It's always about drinking and eating in this party lifestyle that is distant from God. That's what this person does.

The unfaithful servant is mean to people, and then they party with the drunkards and the gluttons, and their whole life is a life of party. And you see it on Facebook, as do I. Everybody wants you to know when they're at this place, and this river, and this party, and this gathering, and this. Their whole life.

Nothing about God, except for a sign of the fish. So you know, oh, there must be a Christian. But if you look at their whole lifestyle, I mean, Facebook speaks volumes.

I mean, I don't know if it's a blessing or a curse. Because it shows where really our heart is at. Now, treating others.

I want to just cross-reference something. Matthew 25, verse 44. Then they also answered him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to you? Then Jesus will answer them, saying, Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.

And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. So I skipped ahead in Matthew into chapter 25 to cross-reference this point where Jesus is saying that you gave water to me, you visited me in prison, and you came to me when I was sick. But those who didn't visit him in prison, didn't see him when he was sick, didn't give him a cup of water, are cast out into eternal punishment.

So they said, well, when did we see you, Jesus, in need? We didn't see you ever in need. And he said, in that you did it to the least of these, you did it to me. So if you can ever find somebody, the least of these, again, not trying to tie the hospital homes into the sermon, but it fits perfectly.

If you can go there and visit those sick, if you can go to those who are in prison, or those who are shut up in their homes, and you go and you help those, the least of these, you're doing it, actually, to Christ. That's what he parallels here. You're doing it to whatever, how you treat them is a true reflection of your heart.

So be very careful in this area. And the only reason I think this is important is because many people come to church throughout the United States. I don't know what the numbers are.

It's pretty high. But how many of those are truly a faithful servant? And how many of those are an unfaithful servant? And the fruit is the test. The acid test is the fruit.

Now, we all have challenges in this area. I don't want to discourage you that you're not going to feel like visiting the hospital homes every single day and just filled with joy and wanting to help certain people. But you have to fight the tendency of the flesh to take you down the wrong road.

That's the battle between the flesh and the spirit. The spirit says, let's go. The flesh says, no, too tired.

My feet hurt. My back's sore. I've got a lot to do today.

And the flesh will start to make those excuses. So a faithful servant will treat others the way God wants them to be treated. A faithful servant truly loves his master.

Jesus said earlier, Why do you call me Lord, Lord, and yet you do not do the things that I command? Another mark of a faithful servant is they do what Jesus told them to do. It's funny that people call him Lord, but they don't do what he wants them to do. And that's why Jesus said, Why do you call me Lord? And Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord, this and that.

You don't do the things that I command you to do. Because see, it's interesting. Jesus has a dual position in our life.

He saves us. So he's my Savior. But then because he's my Savior, he's my Lord, and I'll follow what he does and what he says.

And if we throw another title in there, how about judge? He's my Savior. He's my Lord. And he will someday judge me.

And you've heard me quote A.W. Tozer on this quite often, that I love him because he's my Savior. But I fear him because he is my judge. And that's a healthy respect.

And I don't know if it's me or just the books I read sometimes, but I just wonder where that awe and respect has went in the church. I mean, we used to walk in the church and you would head bowed low in just the reverence for God. Now it's almost like we're chewing gum and throwing our stuff everywhere and it's like we're at home.

Just plop our feet up on the couch. And I'm not trying to belittle those who do that or tank tops and hats. I'm not talking about that necessarily.

I'm talking about a condition of the heart. Having that reverence for God. Coming into church, saying this is the house of God.

We're going to praise God. We're going to worship God. And the presence of God, the manifest presence of God can be tangible from time to time.

And that's why I think a lot of people have never experienced that. They've never experienced that tangible presence of God. And I can't quite put my finger on it, but you know when it's there and you know when it's not.

The difference is a cemetery or a live and vibrant worship service. And a faithful servant will see him as Savior, as Lord, and as Judge. And they'll live their life accordingly.

A faithful servant is not a hypocrite. Now looking at this example we just read, one had outer reform, but not inward change. That was the difference.

They were both servants. And they were both over the household. And you couldn't tell the difference until the master left.

You ever see that at home? When you're at home and you leave? Here's a little trick I learned. I tell my kids I'm going to be back in about five or ten minutes and I'll just go around the back door. And you see when the dad's gone, what'll happen? And the same thing here.

Both were servants. Both were over his household. When the master left, the wise servant, the faithful servant really, the faithful servant governed and he led those people.

And he watched that home as if God was there. But the evil servant, the wicked servant, his hypocrisy came out. And hypocrisy will eventually come out.

I don't care how you color it, it will come out. Hypocrisy comes out in many forms. I'll give you a perfect example.

Let me check, make sure he's not here. It's not bad. He wouldn't mind if I said this.

But I was at the baseball field and actually my team's playing tonight. I've got to miss the game. I was at the field and this person kind of came to the side and, you know, I need to get back to church, one of your service times.

And, you know, kind of like make sure nobody's looking, you know, and I told him. And then as he came over by our dugout, he was a third base coach and the coaches were there and all the parents. And I said, okay, I'll see you Sunday, right? And he's like, you know, like he didn't even hear me.

Like, don't say that around people. But it shows you where the heart is because I wanted to shout from the rooftops. I want to preach to the crowd.

I want to invite everybody to church. But why? No, don't tell them because hypocrisy. It'll come out.

And as I... Oh, man. This, where the direction of our nation is going is so alarming that if this doesn't cause us to get on our knees and pray, nothing else will. You'll see in the news, I think it was yesterday in Texas, a man walked into the changing room in Ross.

Into the women's changing room in Ross. A man. And the manager said, there's nothing wrong with it because he's identifying himself as a woman today.

Levi's hasn't shaven in a few days. He's a man in the woman's changing area. And the manager's protecting him.

So I told my wife, next time you go to Ross or Target, guess who's coming with you? And if they try that, your husband might be arrested. Like, hey, I'm loving and I'm gracious, but you're not going in there with my daughter. Oh, no, I have to.

No, you're not. Call the police because where do you draw that line? See, so as society keeps pushing in, and I don't know how many of you are aware of how much our Supreme Court justices play a role on the legality and where the nation is going in regards to laws and hate speech. And if you get the wrong people in there, you're going to see a culture shift like anything, like what we're seeing now, it'll be on a much larger scale.

And then the hypocrisy will come out there too because people will deny, Jesus, I'm not really into that stuff. My mom kind of raised me in that, but I'm not really one of those guys. So the hypocrisy is going to come out there because only true believers are going to stand before a court of law or somebody and say, I can't deny him.

I can't deny my Lord and Savior. And as I read books, you can read Fox's Book of Martyrs and you read early Christians were killed, they would actually preach. They would preach as the fires were being lit by their feet.

That's not a hypocrite. A hypocrite is untimely, wrong person, I will worship Allah, I will worship Buddha, I will worship Hare Krishna, I will deny there's a God, whatever you want me to be, I'll pray to Mary, I'll pray to St. Peter, just get me out, you got the wrong guy. I'm not going to die for this.

So see how hypocrisy will eventually come out. It'll eventually come out. And I talk to Christians a lot too, like you do, and the whole conversation is everything but God.

Everything. Now, you know, I talk about God every single minute, you know, there's things, but you can tell where their heart's at. And the hypocrisy will eventually come out.

So that's a very clear example here. A faithful servant is not a hypocrite. And hypocrisy is always linked with unbelief and foolishness and an unprofitable servant is a hypocrite.

Now I've clarified this many times before, but I feel the need to clarify it again. Someone struggling in their walk is not a hypocrite. Okay, so maybe some of you need to hear that.

If you're falling in a certain area and just besetting sin is tackling you and you're like, God, I want to please you, but I can't beat this, and would you help me? Your heart's in a good spot because you're wanting, I'm not validating the sin, I'm saying to get out of that destructive lifestyle, but a hypocrite really puts on a mask, like an actor. You know really Brad Pitt doesn't act that way at home, right? And these actors don't really, they're acting, they're playing a role. That's what a hypocrite is.

Is he still popular? I don't know. I don't know who to use nowadays. But The Rock, Dwayne Johnson, right? Yeah.

He's, well he's talking about his faith too, so I won't even touch that. But people are struggling, struggling in their sin, and that's not a hypocrite. And he might be struggling in something, so I don't know, it's probably steroids in my opinion, but that's the struggle, and so be careful, because people say, I'm not going to church, there's too many hypocrites there.

Well there's a few, but most of us are struggling. People are struggling in their walk, because it's a daily walk. Sometimes I wish that I'd have just a month of just spirit filled.

You know, just a month, I'm just filled with the spirit, but the flesh wants, every morning, it starts right when I wake up. The flesh, go back to sleep. No, I have to go study.

No, go back to sleep. You can do that later. And you have the struggle.

And then you get up, and man, Vente coffee and a donut sure sounds good. That's not healthy. You need to, you know, green tea and oat bran, and the spirit, and the flesh is spirit.

And then it's, you need to go walk and exercise. No, it doesn't feel good. And the flesh is in the spirit.

And then you need to go spend time with your wife and your kids, and go pray with, why is it so hard to pray with our family? I mean, the flesh just, no, don't go do that. Family devotionals, everything is such a challenge. And the flesh is, every time, the flesh is fighting me the whole day.

It just wants to say, leave me alone. Would you just leave me alone, give me a break. But that's the difference, there's a struggle.

That just validates that your commitment is sincere. So don't ever get discouraged because there's a struggle. The struggle validates your faith.

It shows that, okay, I'm alive in Christ, and the flesh hates it. So hypocrisy is different. Hypocrisy is just fooling people.

They're just fooling people. They look the same, they dress the same, they go to church, but the heart's not the same. So actually, I might talk about this for just a minute.

I'm gonna quote J.C. Ryle, Bill Sunday, and J.I. Packard. They talk about genuine repentance, the difference between a hypocrite and somebody who's genuinely walking with the Lord. J.C. Ryle said this, true repentance is no light matter.

It's a thorough change of heart about sin, a change showing itself in godly sorrow and humiliation, in heartfelt confession before the throne of grace, in a complete breaking off from our sinful habits, and a hatred of sin. Billy Sunday, who preached about 100 years ago, he was actually before Billy Graham, I don't know how far before Billy Graham, but he was one of the famous evangelists. He said, unless you have made a complete surrender and are doing God's will, it will avail you nothing.

That's repentance. And J.I. Packard said, repentance is not moaning and remorse, but turning and change. So repentance is not moaning and remorse, but it's turning and change.

How do I know this? Because everybody's remorseful. Everybody is moaning and complaining. When they get caught, when the police pull you over, and you're moaning and you're remorseful, are you genuinely repentant? Well, let's see how you live tomorrow.

That'll be the true test. Because somebody who's genuinely repentant will want to reconcile those that they've injured, those that they've hurt. So that's another difference between the wise and faithful servant.

Now let's look at Matthew 25-26. We're going to cross-reference this as well. But His Lord answered and said to him, You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gathered where I have not scattered.

So you ought to have deposited my money with bankers, and at my coming, I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore, take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance.

But from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. So again, here's that principle I just talked about. If somebody has a lot of things, and they're stewarding God's... I think God gives us little things first to see how we'll steward it.

He'll let you... You're over \$1,000. Let's use an example. \$1,000 in this ministry.

Will you do well? No, you'll be over \$10,000 in a bigger ministry, or a job, or a career. He starts with the small things. And he's saying, if you are faithful, if the wise steward who has a lot of things, he's actually going to get more.

And the unfaithful steward, everything he has is going to be taken away from him because of his unfaithfulness. And the next sentence says something that we don't want to hear, but we need to hear. And cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. When was the last time you heard that on TV? Any time soon? Maybe. Chuck Swindoll, or Charles Stanley, or some of the guys who've been on there a while, and they're solid.

But we don't want to talk about this unprofitable servant is going to be thrown into eternal damnation, where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth. And this weeping and gnashing of teeth thing, it's not new. It's actually, theologians call it the law of first mention.

So if you go back and you look at when something was first mentioned, I believe it was Matthew 8. We talked about that probably a year ago when we were back in Matthew 8. This idea of the sons will be cast out. The sons, the children of God will be cast out. And all these Gentiles will come into the kingdom of God.

And the Jews will say, let us in. And God will say, no, I don't know you. And they'll be cast out to eternal punishment where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth.

That's what this context is. He's telling them, you don't know me. And the whole context of Matthew 8 is that Centurion was coming to Jesus.

And he was saying, my servant is dying. Come with me. And Jesus, actually Jesus was going to go with him.

And he said, you don't need to go. Just speak the word. Just speak it.

And my servant will be healed. And Jesus says, I have not seen great faith like this in all of Israel. But even the sons, meaning the children of Israel, will be cast out.

And people like this will be led into the kingdom of God because they have faith. They have genuine faith. So weeping and gnashing of teeth.

You can pretty much picture what that is, right? I can't imagine getting somewhere and you realize this is eternity. This has eternal consequences. This is eternity.

People go into outer darkness because they reject God and His will. One breath, one heartbeat is what separates some people from eternal damnation. Eternity away from God.

One heartbeat. That's it. One heartbeat.

One breath away. I like what Jonathan Edwards wrote in his famous sermon from 1741, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God. He said, Unbelievers are always exposed to sudden and unexpected destruction.

As he that walks in slippery places is at every moment liable to fall, he can't foresee one moment whether he shall stand or fall. And when he does fall, he falls at once without warning. And that's the imagery here.

This one moment, one breath. And then I'm gonna skip now to chapter 25 again. Verse one.

The parable of the wise and foolish virgins. Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise and five were foolish.

So here we have this wise and foolish parallel again. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

But while the bridegroom was delayed, remember what we talked about at the beginning of the message, that Jesus is coming in an hour when they are not prepared. So when the bridegroom is delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard, Behold, the bridegroom is coming.

Go out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, trimmed their lamps, and the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered saying, No, lest there should not be enough for us and you.

But go rather to those who sell and buy for yourself. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went with him to the wedding. And the door was shut.

And afterwards, the other virgins came saying, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Assuredly, I say to you, I don't know you. Watch therefore, for you neither know the day nor the hour where the Son of Man is coming.

I think Jesus is really trying to get this point across, don't you? Since we started in Matthew 24, ending on 25, be ready, be prepared. And he's telling the foolish virgins, I don't know you. That doesn't sound like a believer to me.

That doesn't sound like two separate groups of believers. That sounds like somebody who doesn't know the Lord. And I should throw this in there too.

A wise servant is one who, when he hears Jesus' saying, he does it. And Jesus said, I will liken him to a man who built his house on the rock, who heard my word and did it. Now, look at here.

The foolish virgins had a form of godliness. They looked the same, right? They had the appearance of being the bride. They were part of the group.

They dressed the part. They looked the part. But they were not ready.

They were not ready. Same thing can happen here. I won't do it, don't worry.

But what about if I start in the back of this room? Back seat in the back corner. Now I've got everybody looking now. And just, are you ready? Yes, I'm ready.

And we went down the list. And they said, yeah, I'm ready. How are you ready? Well, I'm here, aren't I? I go to church.

I'm a good person. No, you're not ready. Based on that alone.

You're not ready. The next person, okay, I repent. I believe in Jesus.

You're ready. Next person. Are you ready? Yes, I've been a Baptist all my life.

No, that doesn't necessarily matter. Are you ready to meet Jesus? I think so. I mean, so if you, same thing applies in church.

This is a wonderful parallel with what's going on in the church as well. That many people are not ready. They're not prepared.

Look at verse eight and nine again. And the foolish said to the wise, give us some of your oil for our lamps are going out. Give us some of your oil.

Here's what the foolish wanted. They wanted the oil from the wise. So they had enough oil.

And guess what would have happened? Nobody would have been ready for the bridegroom. So the wise virgin said no. And this reminded me of something.

The foolish are always trying to tempt the wise. The foolish servants are always going to be trying to tempt you. They say things like this.

Come on, live a little. You've been cooped up all week. You live a boring life.

Come on, get out. Experience life. Come on, they're tempting.

The foolish servants will tempt you to try to get you away from God with tempting thought. Their temptation doesn't say, they don't say let's go do this and you're going to crash your car and you're going to regret everything. They tempt you with the pleasantries, but not the consequences.

So be careful of the evil and wicked servants because they will draw you away from God and then again verse 11 and 12. Afterward, the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, As surely I say to you, I do not know you.

Now I've talked about this before, so I won't belabor the point, but can you imagine standing before Jesus thinking he knows you and he says, I don't know you. I don't know you, but Jesus, I know you. You lived 2,000 years ago.

You died on a cross. For me, right? I think you did it for me. I go to church.

You have a religion after you. Don't you know me? And he'll say, I don't know you. I don't know you.

It's interesting that word know, it's oida in the Greek. O-I-D-A and it means to know something experientially and relationally. That's what know.

It's not just knowledge. It's not knowledge. That's where a lot of people are not clear.

Just because you know about Jesus does not matter. I'm guessing here that everybody in hell knows about Jesus now. Just speculating.

Everybody knows about him. But this is a know. They know him relationally and experientially.

Because if you have a relation with him, you will experience him. And that's another concern I have. I'm not talking about a church that looks like a circus environment, but I am talking about Christians and churches that experience God.

Because when you experience God, everything changes. Everything changes. I've said before, you're not in a hurry to leave.

Worship is dynamic. It's heart penetrating. Why can't we experience God? Look how the people experience the Dodgers.

I mean, whoever they played recently and they lost and everybody's upset and emotions are charged and literally games. Parents are, wow. I say, guys, it's just a little league.

They're not going to the pros. Just calm down here. Calm down.

And so much emotion experience, but why don't we have that for God? Because many people are dead to the things of God. It costs you something to have a powerful experience with God. It costs you denying the flesh.

I don't know. Somebody in the Bible said, deny yourself, pick up your cross, and follow me. What that is, it's dying to the world.

You're dying to the things of the world, the carnal nature. You're picking up your cross. Following Christ means doing what he says to do.

And as a result of that, I now have a relationship with him. I oida. I know him experientially and relationally.

And I've gave the example before. If I were to meet, some of you remember this too. If I were to meet Billy Graham, I know a lot about Billy Graham.

Read three of his books. Autobiography. I know when he gave his heart to the Lord and his crusades.

Oh, I know all about you. And what will he say to me? Young man, I don't know you. I don't know you.

Wait a minute. How do you? I know you, yeah, but I don't know you. You see how that works? And there's so many people that hear about Jesus.

They'll come, they'll go, oh, Jesus, yeah. He lived 2,000 years ago. That's why we come to church.

The pastor says he died for me, so I guess he died for me. That doesn't matter. None of that matters if you don't embrace the gracious gift of God via repentance and faith and believe.

It's when I say it, it's not me saying it, it's you receiving it. Here's how it works. We had a lady come to know the Lord in Leona Valley Sunday and it happens quite often.

People finally say, I don't have what you're talking about. I know about Jesus, but I don't have what you're talking about. So to receive it, what the person does is they repent.

They believe, Jesus, you are the son of God. Jesus, you save those who call on your name. You are God and you are Lord and I give my life to you and as a result, I'm going to start obeying you.

That person is saved. The person who says, I know about him, but I'm gonna live just like the world and I don't care anything about God or the things of God, is probably an unfaithful servant. And you know, I'll just, I wasn't sure if I was gonna bring this up or not, but one of the hardest parts, I don't know if it's hard, I've gotten used to it now, but in case you don't know, not everybody likes these kind of messages, right? Okay, you guys know that.

So the emails we get or people I'll run into and oh, that guy's hardcore. He tells you, you know, like he says hard things and people, they don't come sometimes, they're offended, they don't like it, but when I go to bed at night, I have to do business with God and I have to look and this is what his word says. His word says, this is what happens to a foolish person.

His word says that you can know God intellectually, but not with your heart. You can know about him, but not being right. The word is clear.

So what kind of preacher am I if I fail to mention all of these key truths? I mean, a doctor will lose his license for malpractice. Why shouldn't a pastor lose their license for mal-spiritual practice? Killing people because they're not sharing the truth. What's the difference? I don't understand.

Now, of course I do because they're not ready to receive it. The person ready to receive it is crying and they're ready to receive it. The person who's not ready to receive it is, I hope this guy hurries up.

I'm never coming back here again. Or I like, I get the emails, oh, my aunt or my mom sent me my video, sent me your video thinking it would change me. You are the most arrogant person I've ever heard.

You think you have all the truth. I'm like, okay, well, obviously you needed to hear what I was saying and now you're upset. You're convicted.

Why? Because I told him the truth. And that's what you're also seeing in the political arena is what, where we're going is the more truth you speak, the more you'll be silenced. Because they don't want that truth.

Because the truth will set people free. I'm fully convinced of this. If I could get pastors on TV, pastors with, and there are, James McDonald, David Jeremiah, John MacArthur, there's a lot of wonderful pastors, but the vast majority that are reaching the next, the younger generation, the culture, they're avoiding these

difficult things.

They're avoiding these difficult truths. They're not talking about heaven and hell or heaven. Weeping and gnashing of teeth.

We're going to edit that right out. Why? Jesus said it. And if Jesus said it, I must proclaim it.

We have to point people to the right source of truth. And I hear sometimes people say, you know, whether it's an AA meeting or Al-Anon or recovery groups or whatever, you name it. You've heard this before.

They identify, they'll say, well, my higher power or God is, I understand him. As if. No, you have to bow your knee to the one true and living God.

Recognize Jesus Christ is Lord, the son of God, the one true and living God. He's not a higher power. He's not the man upstairs.

We have to identify who he is. But people say all the time, recovery, well, Shane, I don't know the God you know, and God is, God, I'm sober. Say, yeah, you're sober, but you're not saved.

And here's why. Why? Because biblical principles, biblical principles are so powerful that if even unbelievers follow them, they will prosper in certain degrees. For example, the 12 steps in AA.

Anybody know the secret behind that? Probably 1940s or 50s, I think, the two guys who came up with it. It was all Christian based because they had an experience with God. God changed them.

First step, admit that you are helpless and you need God. It goes down. Make inventory of yourself.

It goes all the way down. And do right to others. Repent.

Be transparent. I'm like, oh, well, every single one of those is a biblical principle. And everything was built on who God was.

And, of course, in the 60s, 70s, 80s, let's get more secular. Let's get more, let's get some of those, you know, higher power God as you understand him. Let's do all that now instead.

And then that's why groups like Celebrate Recovery in different areas brought more of a biblically based model in there. But biblical principles are so powerful that you can get sober but not saved unless you look to the one true and living God. And I'll close with just a few things.

Hosea said, he was a prophet. He said, there is no knowledge of God in the land. It's a famous text.

Charles Spurgeon spoke about it many times. Many preachers have. There's no knowledge of God in the land.

And what's interesting is he's writing to the children of God. It'd be like me saying, there's no knowledge of God in this room. Are you kidding me, Shane? I mean, these are the children of Israel.

They were delivered through the promised land. Moses took them through. Now Hosea is speaking to wayward people.

Why is he saying this? Because there's no faithfulness, there's no relationship, and there's no obedience. Of course there's knowledge of God in the land. They knew who God was, they just didn't obey him.

They no longer followed him. They were no longer faithful. So he said, there's no knowledge of God in the land because true knowledge of God produces a faithful servant.

So I'll just end with a few questions. Do you know him relationally? Do you know him experientially? Do you know him passionately? And do you know him as both Savior and Lord? Because a faithful servant has made him both Lord and Savior. He's not a divided Savior.

And sometimes I get in debates with people. It's called Lordship Salvation. I don't have time to talk about it.

But they think you can have Jesus as Savior and not yet make him your Lord. And I haven't quite figured that one out yet. Really what they're saying is they want heaven but they want to live like hell.

Told you I'm going to call it straight. So I just encourage you. Do you know him experientially? What do you mean experientially? Have you experienced God? Have you experienced Him? Have you had that filling of the Spirit and that joy and that peace? Because those of you who have, you're either going amen and I want it again and you've lost your first love and you're returning.

But some are saying I have no clue. They have a dead formalism. It might be because you've never ever surrendered your heart and your life to God.

Instead I want to be that wise steward.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32096.mp3>

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/u8Od_28d8Xc.mp4

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