

What Is a 'Good' Man?

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman's sermon explores the true definition of a good man through the lens of scripture, emphasizing the importance of direction, encouragement, and a relationship with God.

Duration: 52:19

Scripture: Psalm 37:23

Topics: "Identity in Christ", "The Nature of a Good Man"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the true definition of a 'good man' in his Father's Day sermon, drawing from Psalm 37 to illustrate that while good men may stumble, they are upheld by the Lord. He encourages everyone, regardless of gender or age, to recognize their worth as created in God's image, while also acknowledging the importance of humility and the need for direction in their lives. Shane highlights the struggle of maintaining faith amidst life's challenges and the necessity of prayer and community support. He warns against the extremes of self-deprecation and self-righteousness, urging listeners to seek a balanced understanding of their identity in Christ. Ultimately, he calls for a return to the simplicity of the gospel, where true goodness is found in repentance and faith in Jesus.

Transcript

What is a good man? Yes, it's for Father's Day, so if you're a female, don't start to go to sleep, or tune out, or look at your phone. Okay, this is applicable to all of us, young, old, male, female. And the scripture that really I meditated on this week is Psalm 37.

Many of you know this, verse 23-24, The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delights in his way. Though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds him with his hand. And that goes out to all of you.

And some people say, why does it say that, though he fall? It's like assuming people are going to fall, and you're encouraging them to fall. No, you're not, you're encouraging them to get back up. The steps of a good man, God ordains it, God calls us, and though we fall.

Have you ever failed? Well, I better see every single head in this room shaking this morning. Right, we've all failed. And what happens is we get discouraged, and we don't go to the prayer.

I'm convinced that's why there's not a lot of people at the prayer meetings, or different things, because we're discouraged. Who wants to pray when you're discouraged? Who wants to pray when you fell in this area again, and this area again, and everything that video talked about, and we're just, we feel like a failure, but the Bible says God will uphold you with his hand. Now, there are two extremes.

When I say, what is a good man? Well, one extreme is, we are nothing but dung. We are worms, we are just this... Have you heard those people sometimes, it's just like, we're nothing, and we're... And I see what they're saying, but they're missing a vital point that we are created in the image of God. So we have value, we have worth, we're not just dung, and worms, and nothing.

God gave us value. But then the other side is, I'm good. God loves me because I'm better than you.

Don't you know he loves me more because I'm a pastor? Are you aware of that? See, that does not fly. That, I can guarantee you right now, that is not true. But we can get this concept of, I'm a good person.

And it's funny, you know, a lot of unbelievers that you just... You know they're not good, they think they are good. Like, I'm a good person. I do good things, I'm inherently good.

And we can kind of have this concept, but the balance is in the middle. Realizing we're nothing without God. Realizing that we are, but just breath here for a short time.

But we are created in his image, so we have value. And I'm learning that the Christian walk is not just a perfect walk. You're getting hit with right hooks, and left hooks, and stumbling, and fumbling.

But you get back up and you cross the finish line, sometimes with a limp. Sometimes with one eye that is blind, one ear you can't hear. And you cross the finish line broken, but not defeated.

And there's things that happen. And so you need to be encouraged this morning. Because though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down.

And I just... It was a hard day for me yesterday. I actually took a trip to the Tijuana border. And visited somebody in the correctional institute.

On RGD, I believe it's called. Donovan Institute down there. And you can look out and see Tijuana.

And I went to visit the convicts, and the felons, and different things. And he said, your shirt is too blue. You look like one of the guards, you got to go back to your truck and change.

So I go back and I come here. And then he says, oh you're past? You got a visiting passage for Corcoran up past Bakersfield. So that doesn't work here.

You're going to have to wait until all the visitors are done. And I'm like, oh man. So I'm sitting there and waiting.

And I finally got in there. And it's a big room, 60-70 convicts. And some of them are serving long-term things.

And their wives are there. And just being broken to see the families. And not being home on Father's Day.

And they need to be encouraged. That's a very discouraging atmosphere. It's a very discouraging atmosphere.

And we need that encouragement. And I quote John MacArthur often on this statement. He said, it's not about perfection.

It's about direction. See, if we don't make that connection, you'll try to be perfect. And I'm all for raising the standard of integrity and transparency.

I'm all for that. But it's not about being perfect. Because then it becomes rules.

And I'm measuring myself up against this. It's about direction. Not perfection.

The direction of your heart. So this morning, if you've fallen, if you need to get back on track, it's about direction. The direction that you're going.

That's why I often say, fall forward. Fall forward into God's arms. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

Here's the struggle. It's either the enemy or our mind. They plant thoughts.

And we go back and forth on whether we should act on them. That's what the struggle is, isn't it? We're going good and then here comes a thought. It's like, oh, do I act upon that thought? Whether it's anger, jealousy, or whatever.

You fill in the blank. And it's this daily struggle that we have going on. And that actually just validates your commitment to Christ.

That there is a struggle. It is valid. The enemy does not want you to succeed.

Another problem on this topic of what is a good man is Hollywood says, Hollywood's definition of a real man and the Bible's definition are Alaska and the bottom of the globe. Right? It's polar. That's what polar opposites mean.

It's completely different. So we're feeding our mind with what a man should look like instead of what the Bible definition is. And I remember I was speaking a lot at men's conferences.

And that's what God primarily called me to before this. And it was, I don't know if some of you remember that show, Pauly and Mikey and East Coast and South Coast and West Coast choppers. And you have this image and now it's got to jack up your truck 12 inches and big tires and drink beer and hit people and cuss and all these things.

And here's a man. No, that's not a man. That's a little boy screaming for attention.

That's all that is. And so we have this definition. Right? I need to measure up to that.

I need to look like that. I need to live like that. And that's why you'll see the world often looks like that.

Don't they? I mean, whatever is popular in entertainment is popular in their own life. And somebody told me, I can't remember the exact quote, but that entertainment influences us more than we realize. Because we look to that and that becomes our standard.

American Idol, now everybody wants to be a superstar. Right? Or baseball, glamour, everybody wants to be in sports. So be careful where your definition comes from.

And Axe is going to walk us through that in just a minute. But I believe you can be a good man today regardless of what has happened, regardless of where you're at. You can turn from darkness to light, from confusion to clarity, from being foolish to being wise, and from being bound to sin to being set free.

A man is often measured by who he is, not who he was. And we have to be careful. We need that wake-up call.

That's what I talked at the men's breakfast about, or the men's barbecue, is that waking up. The video. We have to wake up.

It was interesting, that person I was visiting, many of you won't even know this, but he actually preached for me five or six years ago. On fire for God, wonderful things, just loved the Lord, and then the first compromise came in. And he admitted, yeah, they didn't listen to godly counsel.

I don't think you should be dating that person. It's not a good direction. Out goes purity, in comes other things.

And that's back to drinking. Then it's into heroin. And then it's stealing to pay for the addiction, and then you're back in jail for eight years.

That's how it works, the subtleties. So, I'm a little leery of avoiding these hard topics. Because it's not, we sometimes think as men, that when I'm doing something wrong, or I'm going to do, that God will have this loud thunder from heaven.

No! Don't do that! Okay, okay. Whew, that was a close call. It's often that still small voice.

And the voice of the enemy is often louder. Not stronger. But it's louder.

And that flesh calling, but the still small voice of the Holy Spirit saying, don't make that choice. Don't lead down that road. Don't take that door.

Don't make that decision a part of your life. And that's what happens. So a good man realizes that there is an enemy.

And often what happens is we say, this is too hard. Have you ever said that? This Christian life is too hard. This is too hard.

This walk is too hard. But, see, we give up on God and our family, but we don't give up on our career. Very few people say, my career is too hard.

Even though they think it is, they'll stick with it, right? Because it's the almighty dollar. Buy all the toys, all these things. And we'll stick with that, but not with God.

It's too hard. Not with my family. And we give up because it's getting too hard.

But let me just serve notice on you right now. Life is hard. You were created to be a warrior.

You were created to go in front of and guard your family. You were called to fight. You're not called to be a passive observer.

I'm sorry to break the news to you. But that's just the way it is. And thank God for it, because that is how God designed us.

Is to be that guard and that shepherd. Now, when I talk about this topic, don't worry, I'm getting to Acts in just a minute. This should have been two sermons, but I'm going to have to condense it to one.

When I talk about this, everything we're talking about, obeying God and this path that we're on, there's something you need to know. It's called antinomianism. Some of you theologians will know what that is.

In the Greek, anti, against, and nomis, or something I believe is the law. So antinomianism is against the law. So it's a group of Christians who say we're no longer under the law.

Shane, all that stuff you're talking about, obedience, is moralism, and it's not right. So that's where they're at here. And so we can get caught up, it's all about grace, and that's true.

We're saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and we trust in God's grace. But this is a dangerous side, because the Bible doesn't say, don't obey. Don't worry about those things.

The law is null and void now. Those commandments? Thou shalt not, nope. Oh good, now I can do all these.

So that's the side of it. And this group is the group that gets mad at me the most. Well, I'll tell you the other group does too.

But this group, I've been called a moralist. You're a moralist. Oh, by saying there's a standard God has for us and we should strive for it? Yeah, we're under grace now, brother, and not all that law stuff.

Well, he who loves me obeys my commandments. Huh? So here's what they're trying to say. The law is a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ.

They were saved by following the law. They had to do these things. So we're no longer under the condemnation of the law, because Christ has set us free.

So I'm free, not under the law. However, I obey the law because it's pleasing to God and it sets me on the right course. But now the other side, law, law, law, law, law, right? And it becomes moralism, and now it becomes rules.

Don't taste, don't touch, don't go here, don't go do that. We have a whole list. My kids, two of them are here right now.

They'll tell you there's a whole list of things, right? Don't do this, don't go outside when we're not home in the front yard. Don't, don't, don't, don't, don't, don't, don't. But if we have the Christian walk like that, it becomes rules and very prideful, because I don't go to the cinema, and you do.

Ha-ha, one up for me. I observe the Sabbath, and you don't. Ha-ha, two up for me.

We don't have TV. Three up, gotcha. Right? And you just keep these rules and rules and rules and rules and rules.

Now, everything I just said is very good. Be very selective with what you watch. Take a day off.

I still believe when the Sabbath is very relevant in that we need a day of rest. We need to just uncharge. We need that day of rest.

I actually just talked to a friend of mine. He's a PhD, and he's doing gene splicing with wheat and all these things. He said, it's not GMO.

So I said, okay, I might not be able to be your friend if it was. But if you don't know what that is, it's genetically modified organisms, how they're making food, even genetically modified salmon. It's just amazing.

I'm not going to go down that rabbit trail today. Don't worry. But he said, Shane, if farmers would just let their land rest every seven years.

Oh, I think that's in the Bible somewhere. He said all that nutrient rich, and he explained it about tilling up and you're bringing up the soil. If they would just do that.

So it's the same thing, right? They don't have to do it. But if they would just do that same thing. Okay, I have to take a Sabbath.

No, you should want to. You should want to unplug and rest. So these things, if you look at it as a relationship, that's the path to stay on.

Not on this side or not on this side. There are rules, but it's part of the path to get to God and understand Him and fellowship with Him in a far better way. You all know how that works, right? Have you ever been caught in something, caught in sin, and you know it and you're just miserable? How fun is church? Come on.

It's not, right? Actually, we don't even show up. I'm just not going to go. Because we get bogged down in failure or trying to measure up.

And in both of these, there's pride. There's pride in both of these sides. That's why when the Bible says, the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life, now you know exactly what that means.

If you have to just do the letter, you have to do this, and not explain that it's a relationship, that God wants that relationship with you, but it becomes rules, it will knock you off course. I better just get right to Acts. A good man.

Acts 14.23. So when they had appointed elders in every church, well, let me, I should stop there for a minute. As a non-denominational church, we believe in what is called a plurality of elders and the church governing body in the bylaws. So the church is governed, not by Pastor Shane and then everybody else is down here.

It's a plurality of elders that govern the church. I'm the lead pastor, the lead visionary, and these things, and what direction the church is, but it's a plurality of elders that come together and lead the church. There's also something called a congregational rule, where the congregation actually votes and they dictate everything, and that can really put handcuffs on the leadership.

And there's pros and cons to every type, but this is why many churches embrace where there's elders appointed to lead the church in the direction it's supposed to go. So when they had appointed elders in every church, and they, I'm gonna have to read again, and they prayed and fasted. My goodness, it's

everywhere.

Don't get mad at me. It's in your Bible. Ever since we started Acts 1, we can't get away from that word.

They prayed and they fasted. They commended to the Lord in whom they had believed. So they commended this group of men to the Lord that believed in God.

They were Christians. Of course, that's a first standard. But just a quick note here, fasting shows the magnitude, magnitude of what they were called to do.

Acts 20, that we'll get to later, says pay careful attention to yourself and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to care for the church of God. So anytime something is of magnitude, they would fast. Ezra was going to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, but he was taking all the gold through the desert.

Tons of thieves and different things. He fasted for protection. Nehemiah fasted for direction.

Esther, Mordecai, and all the stories that we read, and Haman, Wiccan Haman was gonna wipe out all the Jews. Esther fasted. And that's where we get that famous verse, if I perish, I perish.

For you don't know if you've been called for such a time as this. She fasted. Then Elisha fasted.

David fasted. So we see this magnitude. When something of magnitude is going to take place or when you're needing direction or God, you need to answer.

Fasting was the answer. So this was the first thing of a good man. Do you truly know the Savior? Do you truly know the Lord? And I'm actually meeting with people next week and the week after that, meeting people with this, I'm gonna ask them this question.

Now they claim to be Christians, but there's just zero fruit. There's nothing. So I wanna ask them, do you truly know Him? Because many people can go through the motions, right? It's easy, come and sit in church and listen, but I don't truly know Him.

And I'll just be up front with you, talking for, I think it's been 15, 16 years now, when I would go to men's conferences, and I would often start here. You'd be amazed. The number's higher than you think.

I would ask, I'd be praying, okay, well, do you know Christ? Well, I'm working on it. Well, I'm trying. I want to.

You wouldn't know that. I mean, they're at church, they're at a men's event, and so there's something in the church where we automatically assume that everybody is a believer. Everybody knows Jesus.

And I know, one of my concerns for kids being raised in the church is they come up in the church, right? I'll get baptized, and I'm growing in the church, and I'm singing songs, and I'm going to the studies, and I'm a Christian. No, you're not. Unless you've repented and believed in Jesus.

I tell my kids, Mommy and Daddy won't be next to you when you stand before Jesus. Do you know Him? And many people don't. And I just really want to get this point home.

I mean, there's tests you can take. It's not just do you know the Bible. It's not just do you know the Bible.

Cults know the Bible. The Pharisees on the broad road to destruction knew the Bible. And that's often why I'll make comments about worship or prayer or things like that.

Not to upset, but to show you those who truly love the Lord aren't bored during worship. They're not just sitting there, when's this over? I don't want to go to a prayer meeting. Why? The heart's not right.

There's something wrong in the heart if it's not wanting to worship. Not wanting to pray. Because with the Spirit in you, it's like the Holy Spirit put two magnets together.

It's like, I want to pray. I want to worship. And the flesh says, no you don't.

No you don't. No you don't. Yeah, I want to.

I want to. So you have this internal struggle. If there's no struggle, you have to wonder, do I truly know Him? That was the first point here on being a good man.

Qualifications of a good man. Is anybody interested in those? Qualifications of an elder. I'm going to tie this into the message.

Elders are just normal men who have been walking the Christian walk for a season. That's why Paul says, don't lay hands on any man suddenly. You don't lay hands on any man suddenly.

And here's another controversial point. It's okay. I get emails on this often.

People like to lecture. But looking at the Bible, we believe that God has called men to the position of elder, pastor, bishop, overseer. That word in the Greek has to do with the male leadership.

Here's where people get mixed up though. It's not about male domination. It's about male servanthood.

Dying for the church. Dying for the... I've never met one lady who doesn't want to follow a man who's willing to die for her and lead the family. But we've got this idea of it's like pushing and suppressing.

No, we believe women serve in every single capacity you want. Be a pastor if it was in the Bible. Personally, I could care less.

However, I see how God has designed us. That's why we are complementary and not egalitarian. Complementary means we complement our different roles.

Every time we talk about this, we might lose a family or two. That's okay. Every time we talk about the Holy Spirit, we lose three or four.

So these controversial topics. But it's just biblical. If you can show a verse that says here's the qualification for women being elders, I'd love to see it.

So see, it's not a heart of pushing down and suppressing. Serve in every single capacity. But when it comes in this area of leading because it's servant leadership.

You're dying for people. You're taking feedback. You're dying spiritually sometimes.

But you're taking feedback. You're submitting to the council of your family and elders. And you're leading how God has designed it.

So that's not, in our opinion, a bad thing. It has nothing to do with male domination. That's a world view.

And that's not a biblical view at all. So what do we do with that? Elders are normal men who've been walking the walk. Titus 1.5. Titus 1.5. Appoint elders in every city.

The reason I'm also bringing this up is I'll get questions often. To be an elder, do you fill an application? Or do you, what do you do? How does that process work? And those are good questions. So I want to, what we normally do is we actually don't fill an application.

We don't, we just see who God has called. Who's God called? Are they already walking in these character traits? Are they at the prayer meetings? Are they at the worship services? Or are they never here? They're too busy? I mean, you watch the person. You watch the character.

And then are they called? The people will tell you if they're called. You just, you watch and see what God has done. But there are qualifications.

Appoint elders in every city as I directed you. So you appoint the elders in the city to oversee the churches. If any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife having children who believe not accused of dissipation, I knew that was going to be a hard one, and or rebellion.

Now let's stop there for a minute because here's a mistake many of you will make. I'll read this and you'll say, I could never measure up. Well, guess what? I'm with you.

Shane, you don't, all these perfectly? You don't, no, no. There's sometimes a house looks like a circus. There's sometimes, you know, but it's not about perfection but direction.

Now I'm not excusing character flaws because if there are character flaws, some person is not qualified. But there's a difference between a struggle and a lifestyle. Somebody struggling in certain areas, and I'll go through this to give you an idea, who has a man who is above reproach.

Now if you don't want to be an elder, guess what? It doesn't matter. Or a deacon. These are qualifications for a deacon.

Deacons are serving. Elders are spiritual oversight. Every man in this room, these are qualifications that you should be going for.

In other words, how God designed us. The goal of every man in this room. So the first thing, above reproach.

Well, what does that mean? He needs to have a good reputation outside the church as well as inside the church. Because if you go outside the church and the people at work say, oh man, he's a character. That guy, he's always trying to will and deal.

We'll just leave it there, right? You just don't have a good... That's why I told my wife, the hardest thing for me to do is coach baseball. Literally baseball. And I think next year I'm just going to sit in the audience.

I don't have parents getting upset. I don't have kids cussing. I don't have people not listening.

And I've got to try to walk this perfect reproach. The league. Oh yeah, he's a good coach.

And that's why they ask me every year. Would you coach? Yeah, so people are going to walk all over me. I can't cuss like they can.

I can't throw things and throw fits like they can. So you have this image. And I've got to be the last one to clean the field.

This and not complaining. And there's a lot of politics in the league. Not sure if you're aware of that.

People on the board get their kids to beat. All this stuff. So it's above reproach.

And you have to be outside the community. Now, there are probably people you'll run into that don't have perfect things to say about me. Or other people.

There's somebody out there, right? Who had a falling out somehow. I remember this. We're probably friends now, I'm assuming.

And I just wish I could. Lord, give me. But some of you know this.

But when we first planned the church, I also stayed in real estate. Kept my real estate license. Paid the bills so I could plant the church.

That was the goal God would bring in. And that was a very hard thing to be in. Because big money, big things, and all these things.

But a guy I knew, I was short selling his home. And three or four days before it was going to close, he said, I'm going to take all those wrought iron electric gates off and take them with me. I'm like, no, you can't do that.

You can't leave with no gates. It's as is. And he got all upset at me.

You're not standing up for me. No, we can't do that. We can't do that.

So if you ask him, he probably will have a different impression of me. But we went back and forth. I told him the new buyer could sue us for breach of contract.

You can't go take \$3,000 gates, the nice electric wrought iron gates, and just take those. And so those kind of things, it's hard to walk in the world and things. But overall, they should have a good reputation.

They should be above reproach. I mean, they might not like your belief, but they can't say you lack character. You know what I mean? They'll know you're a Christian, you're strong, but there's not a, boy, he's a cusser at work.

And I can tell he skims them off the top. He's involved in marketing schemes and those types of things. Be careful.

If a man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, sexual purity, a one-woman man. There's polygamy back then, marrying different women. And this is a one-woman man.

There's purity there. The relationship, the marriage is healthy. And now some actually take this to where they would say, if you've ever been divorced, you cannot be a pastor and elder.

I think the Assemblies of Gods and different organizations would say that. But most commentators, and even just reading it, for most would say, okay, it's a husband of one wife. Now, granted, if somebody's recently divorced or he left her, doesn't have biblical grounds, it's recent, you have to look at those things, and that could disqualify the person.

So it's not something we just glance over, but many people would not be pastors today from their past, if you're going to gauge them off what they did 20 years ago in this area. But you have to be a person, a man, sexual purity, a one-woman man. He's not, you know what a player is, right? A flirt, a player, kind of, you know, ladies' man.

He's not one of those guys. You go to the church barbecue and he's kind of hitting on some people and it's just, that's not going to work. That's not going to work.

And it's funny. Me and my wife laugh sometimes because people say, man, Shane's pretty arrogant. He's not approachable.

I'm like, yeah, I don't have relationships with females that are in the danger area, you know, not, hey, be their friend and get to know. No, nice to meet you. Here's my wife.

Let her counsel you. I mean, that's not arrogant. That's just a one-woman man.

That's how you do it. Now, don't clap. Don't clap.

Because you know what's in here, right? The flesh is still in here. He's still living in there. Come on, Shane, be a flirt.

No, no, no, no, no. So that's what a one-woman man is. He's focused on rejoicing with the wife of his youth.

And that's what it boils down to. Dissipation, dissipation. You might go, what is that? It is, the best word for it is lazy.

Have you ever met the guys that are just at home all day on video games? I didn't know video games were a problem until recently. Somebody said, I'm like, video games? You sit on video games all day? I hate video games. I mean, I can't even go one minute on Pac-Man.

OK, that's boring. But for somebody else, somebody else is lazy in this area. So we all struggle.

But video gaming and at home and not working, a partier, they're just giving in. It's basically this rebellious to the things of God. This man is just kind of rebellious to the things of God.

He is disqualified. And then it talks about his home life. Well, it depends on your translation, but the one I just read says this.

Having children who believe not accused of dissipation or rebellion. Well, actually dissipation was supposed to be for the kids, but that'll apply for the man, too. So the kids at home, they would look at a man's home life and say, OK, is he ruling or shepherding or leading that family effectively? Or is the home chaotic? Now, there are differences in views on this area.

Personally, I don't think it always has to do with the character of the kids, but how the father responds to that child. In other words, if there's a child that's being rebellious, and the father just says, oh, well, that's the way it will be, and I'm not going to say anything like, Eli, he did not restrain his sons in the Old Testament. Because if the rebellion itself would disqualify the elder, then God would be disqualified because his children rebelled.

Now, I say that cautiously because there should not be a sense of rebellion and the kids are just getting away with whatever. There should be a restraining force, a parenting force. But I've noticed, the longer I'm involved in ministry, I see wonderful kids, and the parents aren't really that good.

Let's just put it there, they're not where they need to be, and the kids are beautiful. Angels, oh, they listen so well. And then you have other ones, the kids are a little rebellious, they've got that Type A personality.

You got any of those Type As? The Type Bs are easy. But the Type As and the parents are wonderful parents. They've got all the books on parenting, and they're parent, they do devotionals, but the children still has this rebellion spirit in them.

So it's what you do with that rebellious spirit. How do you shepherd your home? In other words, under my roof and in my house, this is not going to happen. You're restraining.

Or you say, well, okay, I mean, just whatever. You're kind of the father that just goes with the flow, and they can watch what they want. They can do whatever they want.

No, as long as they live with you under your roof, under your shepherding, then you are to guide them and make the hard decisions. I ask my kids, I tell them, we're not watching that. We're not watching that.

Oh, yeah, but we're not watching that. End of story. Turn that junk off.

I'm not turning Netflix back on. I turned it off a year ago, and I'm not turning that thing back on. Unless you put parental controls or something, or can you just watch whatever? I mean, I'm going through like 50 Shades of Grey, you can just click that? Really? Are we aware of this, folks? Are we aware of the things that are so close to just being touched in our homes? I just read a statistic that was alarming.

Something like 40% of children now are underneath the obesity mark, and they said childhood obesity is at an epidemic. I'm like, wait a minute. What's going on? Now, I don't want to get too convicting, but who controls the pantry is very important in your kitchen.

When you have little ones at home, they don't need the Captain Crunch and all the Oreo cookies and all the stuff they want and all the fruit juices and healthy ones, right? But not soda pop and junk and all this stuff. It's going to happen on its own anyway, right? It happens anyway. My kids come home from VBS here, and they've got a bag full of candy.

I'm like, how did that happen? At Westside? My goodness. So we regulate. They go to a party.

They get it. I mean, they get it all the time as it is. But if you want to stop that type of obesity problem or unhealthiness in children, monitor what you put into your home.

It's under our watch at a certain age. We have to take full responsibility when they're under our watch. That might upset, but that's the truth.

Now, they hit 15, 16, they're driving, they stop by Dweener's Snitzel, there's not much you can do there. Right? Go work at Dweener's Snitzel. Have him work there.

He'll never eat there again. Trust me. I'm going to go off on a whole different subject.

Another qualification is what does he do in his family? Is he a restraining force or is he a passive observer? Now, on this note, I've made this statement many times before that a wife can't qualify a man for being an elder, but we believe that she can disqualify him. So in other words, her character does not determine his character and if he's qualified, but if she is, the Bible would say, double-tongued or gossip or slander or backbiter or a little busybody. And she's all these things.

It would disqualify the man from being an elder in leadership because it comes as a package. You look at the package that will be ministering to others. So you can't have half the body healthy and the other half not.

So we look at both. Now, not perfection. Anytime we ask people, we've got a lot of deacons here now, 15.

We're looking for more elders in the future, obviously, more deacons. And people think, oh, I don't know, I could never measure up to all these. Well, be encouraged.

You'll never hit all these perfectly because when things are going good, now your kid's rebellious. Now you get the kid in order and now you're having financial issues. But see, it's being open and transparent.

It's sharing your struggles. And then he goes on to say, for the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious. Oh, that's a word we don't hear very much.

Pugnacious, it's not a dog. And he is not fond of sordid gain. You've got to love the New American Standard Bible.

And actually, that's one of the most literal translations. Of taking the Greek or the Hebrew, it's the most literal translation, even more so than the King James in regard to being literal. So let's talk about this briefly.

He's not self-willed. See, in all these things, we struggle with this, don't we? Most men will struggle with being self-willed. Here's what self-willed is.

Does what he wants in spite of the wishes of others. So this person can't be self-willed. However, my will wants to be self-willed sometimes.

Right? So that's what I'm saying. It's not about perfection. I can feel it.

No, Shane, don't be self-willed. Just respect. And you're fighting that.

But this person is a mark. The mark of his character is he's not self-willed. He's not hot-tempered.

You know what hot-tempered is? Yeah, some of you had dads that were hot-tempered. You know, they're just flying off the hook every single day. Something is hot-tempered.

They're upset all the time. And that person cannot lead because he'll hurt too many people. He'll hurt too many people.

Now, can the elder struggle with anger? Yeah. It's a good thing if it's focused in the right direction. Jesus got angry.

He actually made a whip and drove the people out of the house of God because they were using the house of God to manipulate and make extra money. He was angry. Get angry over that.

Get angry over abortion. Get angry over a 10-story Buddha statue that they want to build in Lancaster. That makes me angry.

Well, it's no big deal. Well, good for you. I think it is a big deal.

Ten stories tall? That's what the city is voting on. They're talking about it. So just keep all those things in prayer.

Because without anger, there's no movement. If I'm not angry about something, we wouldn't do much. So that anger can be a good thing, but it's not a self-willed, hot-tempered man.

Not addicted to destructive substances. Not in bondage. That's what he's saying here.

Not addicted to wine. He's not addicted to something. Now, people would say, Well, I've got a struggle there.

All right, Shane, help me. But you see, you're bringing it to the light. You're bringing it to the light.

If an elder, somebody had knee surgery, and they said, Hey, I can't get off this Vicodin. Can you help me? Oh, no, you've got to step down from being an elder. You can never lead again.

I'm bringing it to the team. I'm letting you know I need to struggle. Can you help me? Yes, let's pray.

And you help them through it, versus just immediately disqualifying. Of course, some things are different, right? I mean, big issues and different things. You have to look at case by case.

But the man, the elder, should not be addicted to destructive substances. And then pugnacious. Pugnacious.

You know what that means? Quick to argue. Quick to argue. And they're always right about everything.

You know that person? They can't be an elder. My goodness. You would blow out half the people.

Because you're quick to argue. You're quick to argue. You're quick to debate.

You love it, actually. People feed off that, right? I hate it. But people feed off, just bring me something I can argue with you about.

They're always wanting to argue. And I see them pastors sometimes who go to pastors' conference and worship and everything, and then they want to debate about Calvinism. Or they want to debate about the rapture.

Or they want to debate about this. And they want to argue every single point. And it's a spirit.

It's a critical spirit. It's not good. It can't be in somebody who is leading the church.

Sordid gain is dishonest and greedy. Backdoor deals, shady real estate transactions, pyramid schemes, all those things, right? It's sordid gain. They're gaining their money the wrong way.

Just be careful on all those marketing things out there. And sometimes things are manipulative and lying on these numbers to get this. And, you know, a tax person says, how many miles did you drive? Oh, I don't know.

Oh, that's quiet on this one. Right? Now, be a man of integrity. I better not touch that one.

Just think it through. Just think it through. Verse 8, but hospitable.

Loving what is good. Sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching so that he will be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. So I'm going to go quick here.

I'll tie this all in. All these things basically are a person, a man filled with the Spirit of God. They'll have these qualities.

Hospitable. Are you welcoming to others? See, some people just are not people persons. Can I say that? People persons? They're just not, right? They're not welcoming.

They're not hospitable. They're just not a people person. They would probably be good serving in a different capacity because you have to be a people person if you're shepherding people.

Do they love what is good? Do they truly love what is good? Are they fair and balanced? Fox News had the good saying, right? But it's true in this too. Are they fair and balanced? Self-controlled? Now finally, the one here, are they a student of the word? Are they a student of the word? I would like every single elder to at least be reading through the Bible. And you better have gone through at least once or twice.

There has to be a student of the word. You have to be. That's actually one of the qualifications of an elder that separates from being a deacon is they are over the spiritual health of the church, not just serving.

So you have the deacon serving, you have the elders over the spiritual inside of the church. So they're a student of the word. Holding fast to faith, and this is the closing part.

Holding fast to faith. What happens when it says they're holding fast to faith? If I'm holding something, right? If I'm holding this, that tells me somebody's trying to grab it. Somebody's trying to grab the faith away from me.

So they hold their faith tightly as the enemy comes in and tries to grab. So where is he going to try to grab, Shane? Everything we just talked about. Everything we just talked about.

All of us are susceptible in some of those areas. Everything I just talked about, that's where he's going to go. And you have to hold tight to that faith.

Hold fast as the enemy comes in. That's why the Bible says, having done all, stand. Stand there.

Just stand. Job said, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. There's just standing and holding of the faith.

Now, to leave you on that, I want to leave you on that note only, but what is a good man? We have to end on this note. How are we made good? Because some of us might just think good as being good and doing

good deeds. But men must return to the simplicity of the gospel.

So number one, if you're not a follower of Jesus Christ, if you've not repented of your sin and believed in him, you can't be a good man. That's probably one of the biggest lies, I believe, in our nation for sure, is people say, I'm a good person. I'll ask them, yeah, I'm a good person.

And anytime you say that, that's the wrong answer. Because that means they're relying on their good works to get into heaven and not on what Jesus Christ did on the cross. See, the simplicity of the gospel, you know how simple it is? It's this simple.

Two boards and three nails. You'll get it when you get home. Two boards, three nails.

The simplicity of the gospel. 2 Corinthians, but I fear, Paul says, I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted by the simplicity that is in Christ. See, go back to the simplicity, the pure, simple gospel.

This isn't trigonometry. Go, I'd be in trouble. It's 1 plus 1 equals 2. The simplicity of the gospel.

You need a Savior. You need a Redeemer. You need to be set free.

That's the simplicity of the gospel. Return to that. That's a good man.

See, a good man will repent and believe in Christ and become a good man in front of God because of what Christ did. Also, though, we can return to the simplicity of the gospel, return to the purity of heart, and let God fill us afresh again. So let's finish where we started.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delights in His way. Though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds him with His hand. You will not be cast down.

God holds you. And what we do now is we conclude the service of the worship team. Hold off for just a minute, but I want the men to think about leading in prayer in this area.

We're going to have prayer next door. You can pray with your families. But men of prayer, Matthew 7 has really spoke to me this week.

Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened.

I've been really convicted lately about specific prayers. Specific. Not general.

Oh, God bless me. What does that mean? Be specific. And men, you're called to be the leader in your home, to lead by example.

You get specific. You take the feedback of the family, submit to the needs of the family, and you pray for these specific needs. We have a whole list on 3x5.

We go through them every day. We're getting specific too. We're getting specific on these things.

And seeing God answer, it's amazing. Ask. Ask what this means.

Share your heart. So this time of prayer, don't just go like this through worship. Pray.

Pray, Lord. Maybe you haven't prayed in a while. Maybe you don't know what to pray.

It's okay. When you don't know what to pray, sometimes you can say that. Lord, I don't know what to pray. Speak to my heart. Speak to my situation. Lord, show me.

So you're asking, you're sharing your heart, and seeking. That is looking for, expecting God to move. See, I love when people come here with a spirit of expectation.

That's when I say, what are you speaking on, Shane? I'm not going to tell you. I only tell my wife. Just come.

It's a spirit of expectancy. My, I'm tongue-tied this morning. I'm tired from yesterday.

And we come with that. That's how men should be. Seeking God.

Lord, I'm coming because I'm looking for you to answer. And then knock. Here's what we do.

Oh, he's not answering. Back to the old ways. And that's never biblical, because it's a knocking.

It's a continual knocking. Lord, I'm knocking. I'm petitioning.

Jesus said, Revelation, I stand at the door and knock. And that's not really for believers. I mean, unbelievers.

He's talking to believers, to churches. I stand there at the door. Because if you look at the context, the church was getting caught up in their works and in what they've done and different things and falling into moral depravity.

And he's saying, I'm standing here at the door, knocking. If you will open it, I will come in and I will dine with him. I will have fellowship with him.

I will renew him. I will restore him. So men, let me encourage you, stop feeling defeated.

Stop feeling let down. Stop feeling, I could never measure up. Guess what? I read this and I want to quit too.

Sometimes. It's hard, but it's a fight. It's a struggle.

It's a battle. Yes, you will not be like other men. Other men can.

You cannot. You will be different. There's a distinction and there's a difference of a man called by God.

There is a distinction. You can't run from it. You might as well stop.

Because we live in that duplicity, don't we? We want some people at work to think, I won't mention church unless they do. I won't put anything Christian in my workplace at all. I won't even mention God unless they do.

Because we want to fit in. But that's not, a godly man does not fit in with the world. They actually come and contradict it.

They contradict the lifestyle. They contradict how they talk. They contradict everything.

That's a good man. A godly man who will fight for his family, who will fight for his church, who will fight for his spirituality. Why are we here? Why, it's Father's Day and Shane's going to be loud I'm sure and worship will be good and that's not why we're here.

We have to remember what Jesus did on the cross. Two boards and three nails. It's that simple.

And we take that blood. I don't know about you, you take the juice so you remember that blood. Jesus, I remember this was spilled for me.

This bread was given, this body was broken for me. God and I partake of that and I remember the cross. And it will change your life.

It will change your life and how you view things. So it's going to be at your leisure. I'm not going to come back up.

You go ahead and come to the front and you take it back to your family, to your spouse and pray with them. But don't take communion if you're not a believer. Communion is for those who recognize what Jesus did for them.

But the beautiful thing about this is you can become a believer today if you repent and believe in the gospel. Then you can take communion. So with that said, go ahead and stand.

And as you're standing, you can come down the steps here and this whole group up in the sanctuary, you guys can make your way to the prayer room. And we're going to pray for you. I'm hoping to share some things, healings and different things I want to share with you on the bulletin.

But you know me, I want to confirm things too. I want to see the doctor's blood work. God is doing some amazing things.

During worship, a young girl turned to her teacher and said, I want to be saved. I want to know Jesus. I want to get baptized.

During worship, how does that happen? The work of God's Spirit. The people are praying and different things. And the guy, I guess I could tell you, we're getting the blood checked again, but we prayed for HIV and the doctor said, it's not even in your bloodstream anymore.

It's gone. Another couple, I'm here at the first service, they went in, they're going to have their artery surgery and the doctor said, your arteries look like a 20-year-old. You don't need that surgery.

Now either you think all these people are lying or it's God moving. I tend to believe that God's still the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. I believe that He heals.

Not everybody. I don't understand the sovereignty of God. But we are a praying church.

We're praying for salvations. We're praying for healings. We're not weird, oh, healings, you know, like guys on stage showing their jackets and everybody's knocked down and everybody's healed, right? We just believe that healings follow the proclamation of God's Word.

As you're preaching God's Word, as you're worshiping, why can't He take the depression and the post-traumatic stress syndrome, why can't He take those away? Why can't He take away the anxiety?

Lord, I leave here feeling different. You've cleansed me of that addiction. You've set me free.

Lord, You've healed me. That's what He does. He's not a God that just listens to worship and that's it.

He wants to work in the midst of His people. He wants to heal. He wants to set free.

If I remember correctly, Jesus said, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me to set the captives free, to restore sight to the blind, to bring those back home that have drifted from God, to bring healing and restoration. That's why we're here. So I would encourage you, don't be in a hurry.

I'm hungry too. I'm really hungry. But I'm more hungry for God.

I'm more hungry for God.

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