

What You Intended for Evil

by Shane Idleman

The sermon explores the nature and purpose of evil while calling for a proactive and faith-driven response from the church.

Duration: 49:42

Scripture: Genesis 50:20, Psalm 51:5, Romans 3:23, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 4:17, Ephesians 2:3, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, Hebrews 5:8, 1 John 5:19

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Confronting Evil"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the need for Christians to confront evil in society, urging them to awaken from apathy and actively engage in spiritual warfare through prayer, worship, and the application of God's Word. He highlights the dangers of a culture that promotes anti-God agendas and the importance of standing firm in faith, even amidst suffering and challenges. Idleman draws parallels between the nature of evil and the story of Joseph, illustrating how what is intended for evil can ultimately serve a greater purpose in God's plan. He calls for a kingdom-minded approach, encouraging believers to reject complacency and actively fight against the forces of darkness.

Transcript

The message this morning is what you intended for evil. What you intended for evil. And I'm this close to changing the title.

Because I had one of the sisters next door, we prayed this morning. As she was praying, she said, Devil, how dare you? And I'm thinking, I like that. How dare you? I mean, how dare you come into our church? Well, think about it.

How dare you come into our church? How dare you come into our families? How dare you come into our state, our government officials, our schools, and you begin to push an agenda that is anti-God? How dare you? What gives you the right, the authority to come and do this? And I would say the same thing to assemblymen and assemblywomen. How dare you? How dare you challenge the authority of God's word? Yes, we want to love people. We want to encourage them.

And many of you probably don't know what I'm talking about, but there's assembly bills in Sacramento that actually went through that will criminalize anyone that says that homosexuality is wrong or transgenderism is wrong. If you get paid for that therapy, or if you're a counselor, or if you're selling a Bible or a book that

says these behaviors are wrong, you will face lawsuit, possibly jail time. And again, not making this up.

I mean, just saying it. Are you kidding me? And it's actually going to be passed on Thursday by the Senate in California, in Sacramento. And that's what Christians need to pray.

We need to just pray that God's word would go out, that people would have a change of heart, because we can still love people and have compassion for people. And the big thing is, the big push is, well, these young adults, these people are committing suicide. They're depressed because the church is saying this.

Well, that might have been a good excuse 30 years ago, but now the schools, the government, Hollywood, and the media are all pushing it. It's the church, the silent voice of truth, that is just saying, hey, you might want to reconsider your direction. The reason you're confused and depressed and suicidal is because you are rejecting the conviction of the Holy Spirit to repent and to be right with God.

So that's the hope. So they're saying, don't give people the hope. You're upsetting them.

So it's just a lot going on right now. I'm hoping people are aware, because if the sleeping church doesn't awake, there is little hope. If the sleeping church doesn't awake from our apathetic approach to seeking God, there is little hope.

And again, preaching to myself here. I'm not condemning. I'm not judging.

I'm not trying to be upset at anyone. I'm just saying there's a time and a place where we can't just hear sermons. We eventually have to apply them.

And that's really where the power is. It's in the application. So for now I'll stick with What You Intended for Evil, but I like How Dare You as a subtitle.

What You Intended for Evil. You know we're in a series on theology. Theology is a study of God, but it's theology on fire.

So how can you know about God, but have practical application? Because you know that the Bible without the Holy Spirit is dead. Without the Spirit infusing life. So we're talking about theology over the next few weeks, maybe the next few months.

And today we ended up on, it's called, it comes from the Greek word poneros, and it's ponerology. Ponerology, don't worry, you don't have to remember that word. It means the studying of evil.

So you have theology, the study of God, pneumatology, the study of the Holy Spirit, soteriology, the study of salvation, and on and on it goes. It's one aspect of theology because this area of evil is very complexing for many. They don't quite understand it.

So all I'm going to do is talk about the nature of evil and the purpose of evil. Two points, that's it, just a two point sermon. But long points.

But I'm going to try to shore them up for you. So let's talk about this for a minute. The nature of evil.

Why do bad things happen to good people? Right, that's what many people say. And actually, I just came across this story this week that kind of illustrates this point. It's from a preaching magazine.

It says, Drugs almost killed the young father of the ten-year-old girl, but he escaped from the lifestyle and by the time his daughter was in high school he was completely free, or so he thought. He recognized the signs and tried to stop her, but when his daughter was a sophomore filled with beautiful potential, an overdose took her life. He felt the torturous grief of losing a child, the helpless frustration of watching the habit that led to her death, and heavy pain of regret for the example he set for her.

He had been freed from the drugs, but she had been enslaved. Why didn't he die instead of her? Why was he forgiven and given life when hers was taken? And we can give many examples, can't we? Of evil prospering. How can the wicked prosper? How can we understand evil? Well, the staple answer, the answer, biblically speaking, is because, and many of you know it, we live in a fallen world.

We live where sin often rules and reigns, where the prince of darkness is having his way. We're not free of the consequences of choices. Now, if the staple answer is correct, seek no other answer.

People start to, well, what about this, what about this? All we know is that we live in a fallen world, and we can just look at the Bible to try to get a better understanding of what's going on. But ironically, here's the irony of atheism. They often use evil to disprove God.

How could a loving God fill in the blank? The irony of that is, how can you have God without truth and error, without good and bad, without evil and good? Because to say there's evil, well, then that means there's good. And then who sets the standard for good? What is your moral gauge, your moral compass? You have to have, who sets that moral standard? God does. So now you have something to compare it against, which is evil.

Because if you just say, well, there's no God, and that's evil, how is that evil? Based on what? Based on what gauge? Based on what set of truth? Well, it's just not nice to beat people up or kill them. Okay, I got it, but what is nice? Well, it's opposite of mean. Don't you know that? Yeah, but who defines these? If there's no God, there's no moral boundaries, there's no absolute truth, we have no definitions of anything.

Are we actually living, or is this 3D dimensional? The Matrix, right? Am I really preaching? I am. Let me see. Oh, that hurt.

But that's what we do when we try to use evil. People will say, see, there can't be a God. But now that is a good question.

How can a loving God allow certain things? And I hope I remember this correctly. I said a few weeks ago, but the only person who was ever really good actually gave up his life voluntarily. That's the only person who was really good.

Why do bad things happen to good people? That only happened once, and he did it voluntarily. That being Jesus on the cross. And I don't like evil.

I don't like the nature of evil. I don't like the consequences. But we cannot excuse it, and then excuse God, and say there's no God, or become mad at God.

See, that's the other danger. You know how many people become mad at God? How could God allow this? He took my child. He took my mom.

He took my, and if you saw God's Not Dead, that movie, that was a perfect portrayal, I think it was God's Not Dead, or one or two, where at the end he got really upset, and God took his mother. There's something, there's always often an anger that's at the root of denying God, or being mad at him. So let's talk about evil for a minute so you better understand it.

The nature of evil. Now there's been a big debate going on for 2,000 years, so I don't think we're gonna settle it tonight, this morning. Here is the debate.

This word, actually two words, original sin. Original sin. Oh good, we have it up there.

I'm gonna get to that in just a minute, but we can leave that up there. Here's where the debate comes in. Original sin means the condition that we all share because of Adam and Eve's fall in Genesis 3. I think we can all agree on that, right? Now there's something between original, you can be the original sin side.

Okay, is that good? Think of St. Augustine. That's you guys. And then this side is the other belief that doesn't believe in original sin, they believe in the propensity to sin.

So you can be Pelagian. Can you remember that name? It's gonna make sense in a minute. You might say, what's the difference? Here's the difference.

A child is born, they have the propensity to sin, the ability to sin, but they're not yet sinners because they haven't acted out yet on that sinful nature. So they have the propensity, but they're not yet sinners. Now original sin says, that little cute two-month-old, hate to break the bad news to you.

I mean, can you imagine? Honey, she turns one tomorrow and she's never sinned yet. So that's the difference. And it was called Pelagianism, and it's still alive today, Pelagian versus Augustine.

And you saw something similar in the Reformation age with Luther debating somebody by the name of Erasmus. And Luther debates it in his book, The Bondage of the Will. But here's the important thing.

And I don't know if you take it out fully where each side would go, but either we're born sinful already, it's in us, or we're not yet sinful until we act out on it. So this side would say, that only seems fair because how can somebody be born, I have no chance. I have nothing to say about this, nothing to do, I've inherited that.

Now, I know people on both sides. There are actually people who come to this church on both sides. So I don't, you know, I'm not gonna argue with people because we all agree that people are sinners.

Now, the problem, though, that I, again, personally, that I would have with this side is that means, maybe they're one week old, one month old, six months old, at some point in that child's life or that person's life, there's a point where they don't need the cross. Right? They're not yet sinners. So they don't need Christ's imputed righteousness.

So they don't need the cross until they sin, now they need it. So that's one of the problems I have. Another is looking at scripture.

But we see that, that man has fallen. Something happened. Now, don't, we know that something happened, right? Because men and women, and when we were created, did you know you were created to just keep living? And we don't know, even, I like to study epigenetics and different medical things.

And it's interesting because cells can replicate, your cells. But I think they get to a point where it's 20 times or so where your cells no longer replicate. And now disease comes in and it begins to kill the body, mess with the DNA, the genes, so something entered.

See, something entered. But I'm not quite there yet to say sin is in our DNA because sin is a spiritual matter. Something happens spiritually that affects the physical.

But something clearly happened from Adam and Eve that was passed down into man. So that's why people say sin, disease, or sin is hereditary, or the curse of Adam because something, I mean, I think we can all agree something happened, right? I mean, we're all dying, we're all decaying, there's that sin nature. And it's interesting, without a toxic environment, without the sin nature, man could live, I think as he was designed, could live forever.

And that's how God initially designed us. And that's why you'll go into, when you go to heaven, that eternal state goes back to that original state. And it's interesting, back to this topic, this is a rabbit trail for a minute, epigenetics, it's actually the study of your genes.

And it's not how your genes mutate and change the sequencing in the DNA, it's actually how your genes are affected by the environment or by your lifestyle or by the food intake that we take. And you can affect your genes. Now there's a big difference.

Many of you know in DNA, that your DNA, your coding, do you know you have like 3 point whatever, 2 billion coded letters in the cells of your DNA? And those sequencing send certain messages. Don't worry, I'm not getting boring here, I'm gonna get back on track. So your genes are just long strands of that.

And your genes can be altered or influenced. Like people say, cancer runs in my family, heart disease, whatever you could say. So you see something happen in our genetic disposition in the fall of man.

And it's interesting how our environment, how worshiping God and being joy filled can change certain dynamics where being angry and unforgiving and bitter can change certain dynamics in our genes where sickness is allowed to come in, toxicity of the soul. You see these things, they run parallel, the spiritual and the physical often run together. And with that said, many of you know I'm working on the book Feasting and Fasting, What Works, What Doesn't and Why.

It's actually done now. So I'm gonna upload it as a free e-book next week or two. So be looking on the bulletin and that will give you a lot more information on this topic of I believe God has given us a wonderful gift and that we should take care of that gift He has given us.

But the reason this fits into the sermon is because it ties right in with evil and our DNA and how things eventually transpired. But let's not look at plagianism or original sin. Let's look at plagian versus Paul.

What did Paul say? And we can go back to, oh yeah, there we have it up there. 1 Corinthians For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. Romans 5.12 Therefore just as through one man sin entered into the world.

So through Adam's sin, sin entered into the world. And death through sin, so that death spread to all men because all sinned. And then you keep reading in verse 18.

So through one act of righteousness, Jesus Christ, there resulted justification for all men. Ephesians 2.3 Among them, we too, we formerly lived in the lust of our flesh, indulging in the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature. What's it say? We are by nature children of love? I don't like that.

Well, I don't either, but it says it. We were children of wrath. So it's in our nature.

It's in our makeup. It's who we are. We are by nature children of wrath that something was being passed down.

And then a couple more scriptures I don't think I put up there, but Psalm 51 says, Behold, David says, Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin my mother conceived me. So there's not really a hint of I was brought forth in purity and righteousness and holiness, but then I detoured later. There's this I was brought forth.

It was already in my Y chromosome from mom, dad, and the other chromosome, and they came together. Boom, it was already there. I was already brought forth in iniquity.

Romans 3.23, For all have sinned and what? Fallen short of the glory of God. So it's not all have a propensity to sin. It says all have sinned.

So that's my, not struggle or dilemma, but my thought is why it would be more on this side where it's original. It's inherited. It's not, well, something we do later.

It's in us. So in short, we lost original righteousness and God's image became effaced and damaged. So in Adam's sin, we lost original righteousness and God's image became effaced and damaged.

So the question on the nature of evil, who are you trusting in to restore this? So there's a brokenness. Our relationship with God has been broken. We know it.

We can feel it. And that's why, personally, I think why they're trying to push all these laws. Because if you can silence truth and more people say it's right, then you feel better about your sin.

Doesn't misery like company? So if we get the whole America to embrace sin, now we'll feel better. Now it'll be right. No, it'll still be wrong.

But it does beg the question this morning, who are you trusting in to restore this? I know a group this size, balcony to you, do you truly know Him? Has Jesus Christ truly, can you truly say He's paid the price for me? I've repented and I believe, thank God I'm saved. Because if a person says, Shane, I'm not sure. I think so.

That's what they told me in Bible school when I was little. I mean, doesn't that just inherit it with my parents? I'm saved? No. You have to ask that question this morning.

Do I have, what we talked about weeks ago, imputed righteousness? Do I have, has Christ's righteousness been put on me? Because when you, let me put myself in here so it doesn't hurt any feelings. If I were to stand in front of God without Christ's righteousness, I would evaporate. The sinfulness, God can't even dwell with that which is unholy and impure.

He can't even set His eyes on things that are evil. The Bible even says when you commit sin, it says, I can hear you, my arm's not short to save you, but your sins, your iniquities have separated me from you so

that I can't even hear your prayers. So if I were to die and stand before God, I don't even want to experience that because I don't have the righteousness of Christ on, if you're an unbeliever.

So that's why this is so important. We can't stop, we can't keep trusting in, well, my parents, well, I own a Bible. Has there become a point in your life where you repented and believed in Christ and you know that you know you've been saved? So let's talk about then briefly the purpose of evil.

That was the nature of evil, the purpose of evil. Now this is going to be hard, I'll tell you up front, because we often don't see the purpose of evil. Sometimes we do, but often we get a little ticked off, don't we? We get a little upset, that's not fair, and we get mad and we get angry.

But I want to throw this out there this morning. We need to be, on this topic of evil, we need to be kingdom-minded versus comfort-minded. This is what happens a lot of times.

The reason we don't like evil is because it knocks us out of our comfort zone. Those darn guys in California, now I have to come in and pray and fast and really seek God. It gets me out of my comfort zone because by default, most Christians would not do a lot for God because our human nature, the sin nature, would take us away from God.

So often evil things that are happening, there's a kingdom-minded purpose that's not comfort-minded. And that's why we get upset. How could God allow? Allow what? Something that's painful.

Something that gets me out of my comfort zone. Because when we're comfortable, we're not mad. Right? Is anybody mad at God when they're comfortable and everything's going good? It's when the challenges come up.

So here's what we do know. There is a conflict that is hard and difficult. Amen? There is a conflict that is hard and difficult.

God can use evil. And people have a choice. Many things do not make sense.

So that's what we know. There's a conflict. It's hard.

It's difficult. God can use evil. People often have a choice.

And many things don't make sense. I just read a story this week. The headline was this.

Missionary tortured by ISIS led Forty to Christ. And if the truth be told, wouldn't we say, well, let the Forty perish. I'll stay here in America.

I don't want to go through that. And it's okay not to want to go through that. Because if we want to go through that, we'd probably just be annihilated somehow.

Because we would just be so desiring to die. I just can't wait to kill myself and be with Jesus. I'll go fight ISIS right now with just a fist.

And so there's something in our human nature, back to the nature thing, that doesn't want to die, doesn't want to do hard things. But then the Spirit of God often wants us to do difficult things. But this is amazing.

Missionary tortured by ISIS led Forty to Christ. Do you think this person, during the torturing, during that process, was not very happy? What are they going to think when they're in heaven? Are they going to

regret it? Of course not. Of course not.

Because there's a purpose behind the pain. Often those who deny God because of evil are looking for an excuse. So that's what they'll say.

See, how could God allow that? And really what they're saying is, I don't want there to be a God. Right? I don't want there to be a God. Then I can do what I want, to who I want, when I want, how I want.

Because there's no God holding me accountable. So this gives me a wonderful excuse for there not to be a God because of evil. We have to be careful in this area as well.

Could suffering also be conforming us and preparing us? And again, this was difficult this week because we don't want to look at it this way, myself included. But sometimes could suffering be conforming us to the image of Christ? Hello? How else are you conformed to the image of Christ? Right? No one just wakes up and like, I'm making tons of money. Everything's going great.

Everything's fine. And I'm going to conform to the image of Christ. I'm so humble.

I'm so broken. And we just do it on our own. We often don't do it on our own.

We have to go through the refiner's fire, the wine press, right, to push out. What do you think the olive would say about the olive oil? About how the olive oil was retrieved from the olive. Have you ever thought about that? If olives could talk, that's how they used to do it.

Right? You see them in Italy. They're doing great, so for wine. How would those feel? The perfume you put on, where do you think that came from? Flowers.

Just crushing those things. And that's one thing about Christianity that is difficult but true. It's through the furnace of affliction.

It's through suffering that we're drawn closer to Christ. Paul said, Oh, that I may know Him. That I may know Him in these wonderful times of just sitting by the beach.

No, that I may know Him in the fellowship of His suffering. And suffering begins to... You start thinking not so highly of yourself. Right? Lord, do I have to work on humility? Yeah.

Do I have to be gentler and nicer and work on this? Mm-hmm. Now you're getting it. I'm suffering in my marriage.

It might be because you're a mean spouse. Can you say that on Sunday morning? Okay. But see, so if you look at suffering many times as conforming us to the image of Christ, it will help you get through it.

I remember in my life some of the most challenging things I've ever been through actually prepared me for what I'm doing right now. Had it not been for that suffering, I wouldn't be up here. Now there's suffering that I've seen young kids, you know, and you have too, or people they're suffering of cancer and different things.

I remember a pastor I used to listen to who lost his daughter, I think at seven or nine years old with leukemia up in Carpinteria. Just watching the memorial service, that whole thing was just sad. It didn't make sense.

So there are things like that. I'm not downplaying that at all. But I also know that the enemy, what he intends for evil, God can make for good and he can change that.

2 Corinthians. This is Paul writing. Think of it this way.

Paul's saying, For our light affliction, our light suffering is but for a moment. It is working for us a far more and exceeding weight of eternal glory. For we look not at the things which are seen, but the things that are unseen.

For the things that are seen are temporal, temporary. The things that are unseen are eternal. So once we become kingdom minded, it doesn't mean you have to enjoy your suffering always and say, oh, here comes another suffering.

But you get through it because you're looking at what God has in mind. Kingdom minded. Hebrews 5.8 says this, that Christ learned obedience by the things which he, come on Bible students, suffered.

Christ learned obedience by the things he suffered. And I like what the New American Standard Study Bible says. Because we need to clarify this.

Though he was the eternal son of God, it was necessary for him as the incarnate son to learn obedience. Not that he was ever disobedient, but that he was called on to obey to an extent he had never before experienced. The temptations he faced were real and the battle for victory was difficult.

But where Adam failed, Jesus resisted and prevailed. That's the difference. That's why later in Hebrews, I think it's later, unless it's before, the writer will say that we actually have a high priest, which means we have an intercessor that can go before us to God.

And it says of that high priest, of Jesus Christ, he was tempted. He was tested in all points like we are, yet he was without sin. Can you imagine that? Just being bombarded by temptation and all you do is stand there.

Like Paul said, having done all, stand there with their loins girt about with truth, with the breastplate of righteousness. Having the helmet of salvation just standing there. That's your posture in battle.

Don't run and retreat and cry and complain. And that's what drives me crazy. Everybody's complaining about the direction of our nation, but very few people want to do anything about it.

Right? We don't want to do much about it. And again, I'm not talking about signing petitions, getting political, doing all these things. I'm talking about men and women fasting, worshiping, broken before their Lord and Savior so they can get up.

Now they're filled with the Spirit of God. That's how you go to battle with anything. Anybody having trouble at work? In your family? Little ones are obeying just perfectly? No rebellious teenagers? Right? That's how you go to battle.

It's not who's the loudest in the home. It's who's the most broken and humble. And I have not mastered this.

Please pray for all of us. Right? Because people sometimes say, Oh, Pastor Shane, he just walks on water. He's just perfect.

No, not at all. I'm the broken mouthpiece. I have my crutches up here saying, guys, here's what God's Word says.

This is what we need to do. Wayne Grudem, and I would recommend his very big book, Systematic Theology. 1,200 pages, exactly.

It is very clear that Scripture nowhere shows God as directly doing anything evil, but rather as bringing about evil deeds through the willing actions of moral creatures. Moreover, Scripture never blames God for evil or shows God as taking pleasure in evil. And Scripture never excuses human beings for the wrong they do.

Here's a very clear example found in the story of Joseph. Scripture clearly says that Joseph's brothers were wrongly jealous of him. Correct? They hated him.

Correct? They wanted to kill him. Can you relate? There's people out there that want to do this to believers. And they did wrong when they cast him into a pit.

And they sold him into slavery. Yet later, Joseph could say the title of the sermon, what you intended for evil, what you intended for evil, God meant it for good by bringing about that many people should be kept alive as they are today. Here's the reality check I got this week.

It's going to be hard to hear. Life isn't always about moi. Or you.

Right? Because don't we live in that bubble? Life is all about me. Comfort. Convenience.

I mean, we go through life and it's about me. We want to make sure the day is planned around me. We want to make sure we go to the right restaurant because of me.

We want to make sure we get to bed on time because of me. We don't want to get up early and come to the worship morning because of me. Right? A little conviction here.

I'm trying. But I realize that when you look at things it's not really about me. Could a lot of what I went through and a lot of different things be about helping others? About our children? The next generation? So God cares for us.

I believe in the blessings of God. I believe He cares for His children. But sometimes we have to step outside of that and say, Lord, not my will be done but Yours.

Because I guarantee Joseph was not a happy camper all the time. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly what he experienced. But I'm thinking, your brothers sell you into slavery.

You can do that back then. And now you're working for a guy named Potiphar and his wife likes you. And you say, I'm not going there.

You hold on to your integrity. The wife doesn't like that you're saying no to her. So she makes up something, gets you in trouble and now you go back into jail.

And he wasn't there a couple weeks or a couple months. I think it was a few years. And he told one guy a dream.

He said, when you get out of here please tell them about me. Did the guy do that? Nope. So he stayed in prison.

Can you imagine? I would be, Lord, what in the world was that dream I had many years ago that my brothers would bow down to me? And if it was legit, why in the world did I open my mouth? Don't ever tell people you have a dream like that. I dreamt last night, you are all going to serve me someday and bow down to me. So Joseph, we have this image of Joseph but then God says, hold on, now my plan is coming to fruition.

Now I'm going to raise Joseph up from the dungeon to the palace. I'm going to give him a voice. I'm going to give him knowledge and wisdom.

He's going to be the ruler second under Pharaoh that distributes all my grain. And here comes the famine that is going to wipe out literally, I don't know how many, I don't want to say a number, tens of thousands of people including Joseph's family. So God raised him up for such a time as this.

So it wasn't about Joseph and his convenience in the prison. See, we want out of the prison but we'll miss the promise. We want out of the difficulty but we'll miss what God is doing.

I mean, many people, how many people have prayed? They've even prayed in tears. God, would you please? God, would you please? And then a couple of years go by and you're like, oh Lord, thank God you didn't answer that prayer. Thank you Lord, you are a good God because that would have been disastrous.

What was I thinking? Because it's all about me. So when you think of suffering, and always keeping my kingdom minded, not about our own comfort. Now comfort can be good, right? Vacation, days off, there's nothing wrong with that.

But we have to remember it's not about us most of the time. 1 John 5, we know that we are children of God and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 1 Thessalonians 5.22 Reject, reject every kind of evil.

See, the more I studied this this week, the more I realized this is one reason why Christians can't just be quiet. No matter what issue. I mean, we just can't be quiet about evil what we see in the church.

Evil that we see in our own personal lives. Evil that we see in our families. Because we're to reject evil.

Because we have this image on one side that Christians are just mind their own business. Right? Peaceable, gentle, loving, all good qualities. Please strive for them.

But if it's just, golly gosh, you know, what's that guy, Mayberry? Why don't they make TV programs like that anymore? You know? Opie and just that. But at some point a Christian has a call to reject evil. At some point we have to expose the unfruitful works of darkness.

How do you expose the unfruitful works of darkness if you're passive? And don't challenge anything? And don't say anything? Now granted, type A personalities like myself have to step on the brake more than put on the gas. Right? But all you type Bs, Cs and Ds, you need to step on the gas pedal sometimes. I need to get to that part in theology about the power of the Holy Spirit.

That's what we need to get to at some point. Because that power, that voice, you have to say something. Now there's a time to be quiet.

There's a time to be still and wait on God. That's what you have to know. You have to be able to gauge that voice of the Holy Spirit.

One thing that's really helped me is to respond, never react. You know what that difference is, right? React. You get that email, you want to email right back.

That's react. I'm about ready to drive right up to Sacramento, but it's not going to be pleasant. Right? You have to respond in love and waiting on God.

And when God opens that door, He gives you that voice, that's when you speak boldly and clearly. The Bible says reject every form of evil. Expose the unfruitful works of darkness.

Make no provision for the flesh. Don't plan ahead to sin. Don't entertain evil.

Actually, blessed is the man or woman who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful. Who are you sitting next to? Not here, but in life. See, there's a fight.

There's a fight with evil. I guess that's the application I'm trying to get to. We have to reject it.

We have to expose it. We have to fight. And we have to conquer.

We have to persevere. You know, I know some of you have heard of Winston Churchill. He's famous for a speech where he came in front of, I think it was a school district, Dave, you probably know, and there was a school, and his speech was very short.

Never, never, never, never give up. There's more to it, but that was the point. He saw now that the tide had changed in World War II, and he knew it was because they never gave up.

Never give up. The part they often don't quote is this. He said, Never, never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of your enemy.

That's what the enemy's trying to do. The more he presses, the more he wants you to cave. That's why I said earlier, how dare you? How dare you try to intimidate us with fear? How dare you? How dare you? So the application, I think for us this morning, we're going to go into worship just a little bit, is that's our weapons.

That's our warfare. That's how we do battle. That's how you apply this, is you expose it, you repent, you reject it, and you fight evil.

How many examples could we go through? How do you fight evil in your home? Do you have children or grandchildren? It goes something like this. We're not watching that junk in this house. Oh, you're going to throw a fit? We're not watching nothing now for two days.

We're not going to allow that in our home. We're not going to talk that way. How do we reject evil in our church? Somebody brings in destructive teaching.

They come in backbiting, gossiping, trying to cause problems. We'll pull you aside. We'll say, not on my watch.

How dare you come into the house of God and try to disrupt unity? How dare you? That's how you confront evil. So when things are being passed, the legislation, you say, how dare you? You confront at your workplace, lovingly, right? I know, but we can't allow that to take place. That's how you confront.

It's about how you act and how you live. Maybe there's a poem I remember many years ago. It was a Father's Day poem.

It said, Dad, the lessons you give me may be very wise and true, but I'd rather get my lesson by observing what you do, for I may misunderstand you and the high advice you give, but there's no misunderstanding how you act and how you live. I know this bursts bubbles in the lives of many people because you are called to be a warrior. You are called to confront evil.

I believe that's one of the callings God has put on my life, is to rally the troops, to motivate the frozen chosen, to awake the sleeping church. Right? Because you can't just sit on ice cubes. And again, I'm not preaching.

I'm there. I'm there. I'd rather be at home right now, just... Right? Early morning worship, you've got to be kidding me.

Right? That's what the flesh says. But that's when you say, how dare you. How dare... I've got to make sure I'm dressed good.

I've got my hair done right. I've got some makeup on my way. I'm driving.

I've got to be presentable. God doesn't care. God doesn't care how we look.

I mean, come with something on, of course. God doesn't care. He doesn't care, but we're so worried.

It's about me, me, me, me, me. Okay. This is not going to go good.

I'm going to end with a story. I have copies of One Nation Above God that I talked about last week. You can get it on your way out.

They're free. We've got about 500 more copies coming in from the printer. And people are requesting it all over.

And here's a story from it. I've told it before, but I think it really fits with this sermon as well. Many years ago, I think it was 2005, I was in Los Angeles, big pastors gathering, lots of like senators and high-profile public figures.

And one man came in, and he told a story. He said he took his daughter to a Holocaust museum. She was about 12 years old.

And as they're walking around this, he realized that this might not have been a good decision. How do you see those pictures? Have you seen the piles this high of shoes? The dead bodies? And he's like, oh my Lord, what have I done? Why did I take her to this? And she didn't say anything the whole ride home. And he's worried.

And he finally said, finally when we pulled in the driveway, she looked at me and she said, Daddy, why didn't someone do something? Did you catch that? Why didn't someone do something? Now here's my

concern. That same question is going to be asked of us. What's our answer? Oh, darling, man, I was busy.

Well, you're off two days a week. Yeah, but I'm busy, you know. Well, you had plenty of time for golf and Facebook and sports.

What do you mean you're too busy? Well, yeah, we're busy, man. It's busy. Busy with the wrong things.

My biggest encouragement is you better make God the priority in your day. Everything is centered around that relationship. Well, that's boring.

Then you have the wrong spirit guiding you. If you're bored of God, you're quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit. You need that passion again.

You need that flame of fire. And I'll be honest with you. This, at the 6:30 a.m. morning worship, compared to this worship at 9 a.m., there's nothing even farther.

It's almost like a cemetery compared to people on their face before God, on fire, hungry for more of Him. And I only say that to lovingly encourage because I'm the same way the first 15, 20 minutes of worship. But once you press in, 30 minutes, once the flesh is finally submitted, see, that's the key.

That's the key. Your flesh is dragging you away. The flesh is pulling you away.

Oh, this is boring. But once that flesh submits and you begin to truly worship, you can almost feel the Holy Spirit. Okay, I'm no longer grieved.

I'm no longer quenched. Now you're starting to feel me again. Now you're starting to feel the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then tears start to come. And you start to pray for your nation. You start to pray for your family.

You start to pray for family members. You start to pray for your own spiritual health. You might even repent.

And the heart is getting right. The things God's doing in your heart. And before you know it, one hour, two hours, you're on your face before God.

Now you're filled with God's Spirit. Now you can go out and do what He's called you to do. Woe be to the church that just comes in, hears a few songs.

That was a good sermon, but I'm really convicted. I don't think I'm going next week. And then nothing changes.

Right, you know that's the current trend now. Come every once a month. Or twice a month.

It's amazing. It's amazing. It's like God is back here when we need Him.

And that's not going to fly. That's why I said the Christian of the future makes God the priority. God has to be the priority.

How are we going to engage this enemy without being fully surrendered to God? So that's my challenge this morning on this whole topic of evil. If you truly want to confront it, if you truly want to confront it,

something needs to take place within our hearts to fight it. We can't just fight it on our own.

I saw a story, a little thing on Facebook, it was so true, that a bird, like an eagle, doesn't fight a snake on the ground. You know what he does? He grabs that snake. Oh, he just changed a whole fighting arena, didn't he? He's got the snake by the head.

He goes up about 300 yards. Oh, bye-bye. That snake hits the dirt.

Now it's lunch. See, he's not going to fight him on the ground. A rattlesnake on the ground? But let me grab your head, take you up 300 yards and drop you.

That's what you have to do in the spiritual warfare. You have to change the environment. I know we're not going to make any difference at all in this culture, in our state, in our nation.

We're not going to make any difference if the Spirit of God is not behind it and moving. So that's what we have to do. We align ourselves up with the heart of God.

We change the battle. How dare you? Enemy, how dare you do these things? And here's what we do. Here's our battle plan.

Oh, gosh, can you believe it? Reminds me of Scrooge. Oh, gosh, the government. Oh, look at this.

Oh, they're going to take our guns. Just critical about everything. Critical about, oh, now it's my insurance.

Now my taxes are too high. Oh, now medical coverage. Just walk around like Scrooge.

That's not going to do anything because God calls us to be joy-filled, not fear-filled. So that Scrooge mentality has to change back to a broken, humble servant seeking the heart of Christ because actually God has a lot to say about grumblers and complainers. Just go read the Old Testament.

And that's all I see from a majority of people. How do I know? Because I can be one. Grumbling and complaining.

And God's been speaking to me hardcore about this. Why don't you guys do something? Like what? Like get on your face before me. And sometimes, oh, this is too big for God.

That's what we think. What's he going to do now? You have no clue what he can do in a split second. That's our warfare.

Our warfare is praying and fasting and worshiping and reading his word and living the Christian life. Through that, God moves. And I told somebody earlier, I wasn't trying to be mean or anything, but I said, we can get three million, I didn't know the number I said, but we can get 10 million signatures protesting something.

And that's 10 million signatures. Big deal. What does God want us to do? What does God want us to be? Because ultimately, at the end of the day, it's about leading people to Christ.

That's the goal. That's the goal. And that's my concern is if you silence, go ask any persecuted Christian in China or Lebanon or Syria, ask them this question.

Would you love, would you like to have more freedom to present the gospel to all these people? You won't find anybody that says no. They chide us because we, they're more free to share, they're just as free to share as we are, but we who live in a free country don't share as much as they who live in a persecuted country share. We take our freedoms, I think it was Eisenhower who said a nation that values its principles, I'm sorry, a nation that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.

So you have to be principle-centered. What does God want? What's his word say? So that's my encouragement. If you want to fight evil, wherever it's at, you've got to be on your face before God.

This is how I go to war. This is how I battle. And I say that, and I'm not joking, AR-15s aren't going to cut it this time.

Right, everybody's got their gun safes full. I get emails saying you've got to go buy some ammo, it's going out of sale, you've got to hurry, you've got to hurry, you've got to hurry. Well, here's my ammo.

Because if you start to put, the Bible talks often about people putting their trust in horses and chariots and the armies of Egypt, and God brings all of those to nothing, our complete trust has to be in Him.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31960.mp3>

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