

When the World Is Against You

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of turning to God and finding strength in Him when facing the pressures of a hostile world.

Duration: 55:00

Scripture: Psalm 3:1

Topics: "Trusting God", "Facing Opposition"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the challenges Christians face when the world seems to be against them, emphasizing the pressure from society, culture, and even fellow believers. He draws from Psalm 3, illustrating how David felt outnumbered and troubled, yet found strength in God, reminding us that being desperate can lead us to a deeper reliance on Him. Idleman encourages believers to cry out to God in their distress, trust in His protection, and remember that true joy comes from a relationship with Him, not from worldly success. He highlights the importance of positioning ourselves to hear God's voice and the necessity of repentance and trust in overcoming life's challenges.

Transcript

The message this evening, when the world is against you, when the world is against you, and I think we need to hear messages like this probably once a month. Do you feel that the world is against you? There are people in this church that I can feel the pressure, the pressure cooking, because they're in the school districts. And they're going to have to start calling a boy by his female name and addressing her as a she, but it's a he.

What do you do? The culture's coming down on us. The workplace environment is changing. The media, the government, society, friends, family, it looks like, do you ever feel that everybody's just coming against you? Or is it just me this evening? You feel it, the more you want to live for Christ, the more you're going to feel the pressure of this world.

When everybody's coming against you, what do you do? What do you do when the church, maybe, you feel is coming against you? Or Christians, or friends, those you used to trust, or the culture, maybe, or society, and you feel the pressure. And if we're not careful, it will cause us to implode. Do you know what exploding is when somebody explodes? But imploding is when the pressure on the outside is greater than the strength on the inside.

That's what imploding is. And so you have to, where's that inside pressure? And just a personal confession this evening to let you know that I feel that pressure quite often. I feel that pressure knowing that what I'm doing might be outlawed at some point.

There's not a lot of happy campers in the United States when you start preaching the totality of God's Word, the truth of God's Word, and you start to remember back when the Reformers would come on the scene and start to bring the church back towards Reformation. At any time throughout history, it's interesting, it's throughout history, those who preach all of God's counsel are often hated by the church. Until they die, then monuments are built to them.

Jesus even said that. Your fathers killed the prophets, yet you build monuments to the prophets. You knew they were prophetic, you knew they were prophets calling the nations back, but your fathers killed them because they challenged their lifestyle.

So it's like being a Christian in this world, at least if you're living it out. You can be a silent Christian. I call that secret service Christians where nobody knows.

I don't know how that works, but I guess some people have done that. But if you're living for God, you will feel the pressure of this world. The world will come against you.

And we find ourselves in Psalm chapter 3. If you have your Bibles, or hopefully you have your journals, if you don't have a journal, let me know. I think I've got three or four we left in our office. We ordered actually 200.

We've got a few left, and we're going through each chapter of Psalm, and you are writing down your prayers to God. You're writing down answer prayers, maybe things you struggle with, any sermon notes that really stick out. Write that down, and we're going to go through the book of Psalm and grow together.

So if you haven't started that, it's okay. We're only in Psalm 3. You might be in trouble if we're in Psalm 115. It might be cutting it close.

But Psalm 3, verse 1, Lord, how they have increased who troubled Me. See, it's one thing that people are troubling you, but have you ever had that increase? Not one coming against you, but two or three. Not just this group of people coming against you, but now this group of people coming against you.

In a church, we can see this. Not only would maybe the government be coming against us someday, but other churches someday, or other Christians someday, or the society in general, and you feel this pressure. So David, we believe, wrote this.

Lord, how they have increased who troubled Me. Many are they who rise up against Me. Many are they who say of Me, there is no help for him in God.

Now *selah*, you'll see that sometimes. *Selah*, they're divided on really what that means. It could be a pause, a point of reflection, or it could be a place to really turn up the volume and go into the next verse.

But for the sake of this study, let's look at it as a pause. So the first area here, being desperate and outnumbered is common if you are a Christian. So just get that in your mind right now.

You will be outnumbered. Isn't that frustrating? Because we like the numbers. In politics, you want the numbers.

In church, you want the numbers. All right, God, raise up 10,000 godly schoolteachers. Or raise up all these government officials that are Christians, and we want the numbers.

But you will always be outnumbered as a Christian in many areas. Of course, there are exceptions. But I'm convinced that the reason why is because God gets all the credit.

He gets all the glory. And the more we stop relying on numbers, we start relying on Him. Anybody concerned about the next election? Now, our trust isn't in that.

I hope you know that. Our trust is never in laws or legislators or leaders, but they do play a role in shaping the direction of our nation. And we get panicked when the numbers don't look good, and we get excited when the numbers look good, or God will do something and just do a miracle, and God can prevail.

So what I have found, at least in my life, when the numbers are against me, that causes me to draw closer to the one who makes me in the majority. So as I feel that pressure from others, that pressure can be good. I mean, do you ever eat a baked potato without cooking it? No.

Why? That pressure. So I feel that pressure, I turn to God. Little pressure, little time with God.

Even looking back in my life, I don't wish that we were designed this way, but when things are going good, prayer time? Do you think we'd be having Wednesday morning prayer meetings, Sunday morning prayer meetings, at church, seeking the heart of God if everything is wonderful? Hopefully, hopefully. But often, that pressure cooker, that resistance drives you to the cross. So being desperate and outnumbered is very common throughout church history.

Paul was outnumbered all the time. Jesus turned the world upside down with an army of what, 2 million? Or 200 million like China boasts? What did he know? 12 men. He turned the world upside down because God's not concerned ever about numbers.

Actually, you'll see him get the numbers down. He'll take the church numbers down. Chuck Smith used to call it blessed subtraction.

And get the church numbers down to where it's a remnant. God will get Gideon's army. Gideon's army was going to fight.

They had thousands and thousands and thousands of men. God said, no, it was too many. They got rid of some.

No, it was too many. They ended up going to battle with 300 men. So God gets the glory and gets all the credit for what He's doing.

But it's interesting, He said here, they were taunting them. They were taunting David saying, there is no help for him, not even with God. And I like what Spurgeon said.

To be deserted of the Father was worse than to be despised by men. Do you ever get to that spot where you're questioning God? God doesn't care. God's not listening.

God's not there for me. And I can handle a lot, but when I feel that God's gone, or when God's not with me, or when God has let me down, that's when the pressure is really put on. That's when a person starts to fear and anxiety and depression and panic attacks start to take over because if I don't have God, I have

nothing.

So that's what these people are taunting Him. There is no help from God. Now, keep in mind though, your enemies will taunt you in this area.

There's no help for you. You're trusting in your God, the God that is not helping you right now. And then he goes on in verse 3, but you, O Lord... Notice how he didn't stay negative very long.

That's a word for some of you. Break out of your negative bubble this evening. No more complaining.

No more griping. All these people complaining about California and Lancaster. If I have another email that tells me that we're in the 50 most deplorable cities in the United States, I'm going to have a heart attack.

I know it. I got it. Go live in Syria, North Korea, anywhere.

We are still blessed here. We should be thankful. Yes, there's concerns, and from those concerns, we take action.

We pray. We get people in positions of leadership and authority, but we should not be walking around grumbling and complaining as Christians. God doesn't like that.

Read the Old Testament. Did you know that came out in the news? That Lancaster is in the top 50 of the whole United States of the most deplorable or something like that. The worst places that people don't want to live.

It would be interesting to see who they interview. But it is difficult, but I think we are blessed still. My whole point was this.

You have to go back. You look at the negative. You look at what's going on.

They've come against me. I'm in deep trouble. Lord, I'm in this spot of depression.

But You, O Lord, but You, O Lord, You are a shield for me. My glory and the one who lifts up my head. And this picture of lifting up your head.

Have you ever lifted up your kid's head that was sad? They're crying. You lift up. Look at me.

And they're tears, and you build them back up. This is the picture in the Hebrew language of lifting up that head and restoring that confidence. Can you imagine looking into the eyes of God saying, I've got this.

Look up. Look into my eyes. I've got this son.

I've got this daughter. And He lifts up your head. And I cried out to the Lord with my voice and He heard me from His holy hill.

Man, that is a powerful Scripture to memorize. When you're negative, but You, Lord, and it reminded me, and I hope I can remind you, you must remind yourself of who God is. It's a constant battle.

In the battle of the mind. Getting negative and grumbling and complaining and fearful, but remember who God is. I mean, if I stay on a news website too long, I'm going to think the world's falling apart.

Right? I'm going to go buy 500 gallons of water. I'm going to get electricity backups. I'm going to build a bomb shelter.

And just, oh no, what's going on? Edison's going to turn off all of our power for a year and just live in this because you're listening to the wrong voice. Understand what's going on. Be aware.

But be careful. But You, oh Lord, You are my shield. And this shield isn't just this shield.

It's an imagery there of all around protection. You are my protection from what's coming above, from beneath, from the sides, family, friends, whatever's coming against me, God, You're my shield, so I trust in You. So I have this image of the enemy throwing fiery darts at us and different things, and He's the shield because we're trusting in Him and who He is.

That's what gets us through. It is He and only He who can lift up your head and lift up your mood and get you back on track. But look at here how He positioned Himself.

I've taught on this before, and I think it's so important. When receiving from God or hearing from God, it's all about positioning. Positioning.

If I had my son here, my daughter, and I said, okay, tell me something. And I went out back, I wouldn't hear a thing, even though they're talking. Same thing with God.

You've got to position yourself to hear the voice of God, to hear from God. And here's what He says here. I cry to the Lord with my voice, and He heard.

See, when the Bible says, He heard my prayer, it means He acted. And it could have been just holding them in that time of difficulty, this confusion. We've raised our kids good all of their life.

Why have they left? God, why are they distant? This doesn't make any sense. But God, I will cry out to the Lord with my voice. Do you know how many people are never changed, never see deliverance, never grow spiritually because they're not desperate enough? Amen, Eva Marie? We just talked about that.

Let me say that again in case you didn't catch it. To the degree you are desperate and cry out to God is the same degree you will change. And I'll tell people this before.

You're not desperate enough. You haven't hit rock bottom. You're still making excuses.

You're still trusting in this or that. When you get desperate, you cry out to God. You don't care who's looking.

There might be tears. You might be blowing your nose. I don't care.

I just need God. God, I need You to answer. And that's the voice.

He says, that's the cry of my child. That's the cry of a broken heart. Now you're done trusting in your own strength.

You're done making excuses. You're done blaming everybody, but looking in the mirror? You cry out. Help.

Remember when your kids would cry out? Was it a partial cry? No. When my kids cry out back, I know something's happened. Or cry in the house.

They cry, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy. When you hear that, you just, well, hold on. I'll be there later.

Funny story, our little baby woke up early a couple days ago. It was like six in the morning. It's kind of dark out.

And Morgan comes in. And I'm like, oh, we're going to pray together. You know, and read the babies up.

This is wonderful. So I'm getting off my computer, working on this sermon, I think. And I turn around in the chair, and she's gone.

She went back to bed. So now I have the baby all morning. So my day just changed.

So I'm playing with the baby for 45 minutes. Take her on a walk. Change her diaper.

Here, it's 8 o'clock. But when you hear that child cry, and you know the cry where it's like, okay, I'm breaking down that door. That kind of cry.

Not the, you know, whimpering, grind yourself to sleep cry. But the cry, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy. I've heard that not too many times.

My kids have got stuck. They fell on their bike or something, and you run to that cry. But now parallel that to a cry that's not that desperate.

Like, Dad, come here. Hold on, what is it? See, that's how many of us approach God. We want Him to answer in a powerful way, but we're not desperate.

We're not desperate. We don't cry out to Him. God, I give you everything.

Bear me. I'm bare before you. My motives.

If you really want to change, you want to grow spiritually, let me challenge you in this. Remove the excuses. They have to die.

Somebody's got to tell you the truth. Well, yeah, but no, no, mm-mm. Now, everything you say, there's a baby, by the way, right there.

I just told a story. Morgan, you've got to listen to that one. I told him, you dropped the baby off at six in the morning, and I thought we were all going to pray together.

Instead, you just left me with the baby. But hearing that cry, and I love you guys enough to tell you the truth, so many excuses that we don't want to change or grow because we're actually excusing our actions, and when we do that, we can't grow because growth involves repenting from our actions. Growth involves this is wrong in me.

I am this way. I need to repent and change. See, excuses block that from change ever happening.

And so this crying out, anytime you see in the Bible, I cry to the Lord, I guarantee it wasn't just a like, okay, Lord, help me this morning if you can. You'd be shocked at probably some of the way these prophets cried

out to God or David cried out to God, like a woman in labor. Oh, God, God, you have to move.

God, you have to move on behalf of me and my family in this situation. Then verse 5, now it's interesting. Because he cried out, because he laid it all bare, he goes from his enemies are after him.

He's about ready to, to me, it looks like he's going to have a massive panic attack. He's in complete desperation. You think you got it bad.

This could be when David, his son, Absalom, actually was rising up against him. Can you imagine your own son? And they didn't just say, Dad, okay, you're going to have to retire, go get a nice cabin on the lake. They would kill him.

David was going to be killed. So his own son and his own family, can you imagine that? Getting bad counsel, rose up against his father. The city, the whole city, majority of the city is coming now against David, this mighty man of God.

And a lot of it goes back to Bathsheba and that sexual sin and that murder. And God said that the sword will not, the sword is always going to be against your house and see how our consequences can affect our family. And Absalom came against his own dad and David still had the integrity, the love for his son.

He told his commander, I believe it was Joab, he said, when you find Absalom, please be merciful to him. Be merciful to him. Please don't hurt him.

And when news came back that they actually killed Absalom, he got stuck in a tree and they put spears through him and David cried out saying, Oh, Absalom, Absalom, my son, my son, you are gone. This is tremendous. So you feel the weight.

So this guy knows what he's talking about. I don't know anybody of you have your kids rise up against you and they say they're going to kill you and they can't legally. And then you see that your own sin, your own deficit, your own consequences in your own life have killed your family.

That's a lot of desperation. But David says this in verse 5, I lay down and I slept. How many of you know it's hard to sleep when you're going through difficulty? I lay down and I slept in God's strength and I trusted God.

I awoke. I awoke. Why? How? The Lord sustained me.

The Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of 10,000 people who have set themselves against me all around. Within a couple sentences, he goes from depression, turmoil, oh, that's right, I need to get my thoughts back on track and trust again in God.

I wish I could just show you how important your thought life is. We minimize that a lot. Where your thoughts go, your feet follow.

When you start to meditate, your mind is so powerful, that's who you are, body, soul, and spirit. It's your thought life, how you think you become. As a man thinketh in his heart, so he becomes, Paul says, be not conformed to this world, but be transformed.

You can transform yourself by the renewing of your mind. And so David just takes, can you imagine if he said, oh, Lord, I think I've deserved this. You're going to let me down.

They're going to kill me. They're going to take me out. I don't know what to do.

I'll just follow my own sword. I'll just follow my own sword and kill himself. But no, he strengthened himself in the Lord.

You know what, you need to do that sometimes. In these dire times, you're going to have to learn how to strengthen yourself in the Lord. What you do, you turn off the media.

You turn off your phones. You get on your face before God or you put on worship and you begin to open the Psalms. You begin to open the Word of God and you strengthen yourself in the Lord.

You remember that he is one who puts 10,000 to flight. You remember that he is the one who conquers kingdoms. He raises entire kings up and he blows nations out of the palms of his hands.

He told the Atlantic and the Pacific here and no further. He created life. He restores.

He rebuilds. He convicts. He renews.

It is God who will set you free. It is God who sees you through. You have to strengthen yourself.

You have to strengthen yourself and encourage yourself in the Lord. Don't wait for your neighbor to come by. Don't wait for your pastor's sermon.

Don't wait for your Bible study group. Those are all great. But you've got to learn how to strengthen yourself in the Lord.

That's how you get through the life successfully. Because if not, we're always relying on other people. Build me up.

Build me up. Strengthen me. It's good.

Don't get me wrong. But many times we've got to learn to strengthen ourselves in the Lord. And what I found and you'll see here that faith and trust is how you sleep in the midst of trouble.

Faith and trust is how you sleep in the midst of trouble. Anyone lost sleep over anything? No. I'm going to save this for the 9 a.m. Sunday service.

Of course. Because what is our mind doing? And when you trust and you have faith in God, you can go to sleep and it is sweet sleep. I remember reading, I love reading the story of Martin Luther.

When he walked into, he was going into what they called Worms. It's where the council met there and they were going to, they had all his works out. And they said, you recant your works.

Martin Luther, he was part of the Reformation. He challenged the Catholic Church. He challenged the papacy.

He told them all the things, praying to the saints and getting money from people and they have to do works. He just challenged the whole system. Well he had to recant all of his works.

They had it laid out there and they don't know for sure, but this is that famous line that he gave when they said recant or you could lose your life. He said, here I stand. I can do no other.

I can't recant these works. But imagine that time going into Worms and going in front of this council of the hierarchy of the church and it's recorded in his biography that he had tremendous peace because he learned to strengthen himself in the Lord and trust in God. I mean, if we really think this through, what can man do to you? Well, he can kill me.

Yeah. You're going to see Jesus a lot quicker. Now we shouldn't have a death wish.

We shouldn't be looking for that because we have work to do here. But ultimately, what can man do to you? He can't do anything, especially beyond God's sovereignty. And then verse 7. So now I like what he goes on to say here.

So Lord, arise. God, arise. Do something.

It's okay to say something. Have you ever caught yourself doing that? Lord, do something. Please, God, do something.

It's okay. I'm giving you permission based on Scripture to say, Lord, arise. And what he's saying there is like sleeping.

Get up. Come on, God. Do you ever do that? Come on, God.

Come on. Let's go. Let's go get them.

Where are you? Come on. Lord, come on. What are you doing? Wait.

Wait. And renew your strength, Shane. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up wings like eagles. They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and not faint.

Save me, O my God, for You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone. You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. And the image there, especially in Old Testament Hebrew, it could be this image of like the beast.

And when you would knock out the teeth of the beast, they were harmless. You could still see this. You know what? I wouldn't be scared of a lion if they didn't have teeth and claws.

I would kick that thing. I would kick a lion. Just gumming me with his mouth? 300-pound lion? But you put those teeth in there.

Game over. So God crushed the teeth of His enemies. And then salvation belongs to the Lord.

Your blessing is upon Your people. So He's saying, God, reveal Yourself. Reveal Yourself.

And you might say, what does that mean, Shane? Well, God, reveal Yourself in Your presence or Your power. When God reveals Himself in the presence, I've read enough books to know this is true. I see it in the Bible.

I'll let you know. I've been praying it for this church. Not everyone will be able to handle this.

But when God's presence really hits a place, and revival, it affects the whole audience. I won't be able to continue preaching. You'll be here weeping throughout the congregation.

The altar will be filled. The worship team will do worship if they can. Because God's presence is so strong.

The manifest presence of God when it hits a building. That's called revival. And it's not weird.

It's biblical. Look at the manifest presence of God. Show us Your glory, God, in the Old Testament.

Moses met God face to face. Anytime God would come, the people would fall down in the holy presence of God. There's something I don't understand.

It's like His presence is magnifying. Have you ever been in a worship service where you can feel just the presence of God? Like you could cut it with a knife and you're crying and you don't know what's going on. And just the magnitude of the presence of God.

So God, answer in Your presence or in Your power. And when God answers in His power, it's powerful. You see the hand of God literally moving or doing a miracle.

That prayer room is powerful. If you can deal with this on Sunday morning, we've heard of court decisions being reversed. All hope is gone.

Now there's tremendous hope. Marriages, prodigal sons, every Sunday so far, people coming back and they just come in, how can I pray for you? I need to know Jesus. They just ask us over there.

Leading people to the Lord. Why? Because the power of God is in a place that worships Him and puts Him first. Or how does God reveal Himself? He reveals Himself in wrath or favor.

God will reveal Himself in wrath. In the days, weeks, months, years ahead, ultimately people will know that there is a God because of His wrath. His wrath will be poured out on mankind.

I don't like that concept personally as a person who loves people, but I understand the nature of God, the character of God, and you understand justice, the justice of God. True justice cannot let a crime go unpunished. Jesus can say, I forgave you.

I took on the burden. Repent and believe on me. I'll take that place, but still the wrath of God still has to fall.

If somebody is a convict of murder, now if you're watching this latest story, this guy they believe is the largest serial killer to ever live. He just confessed an ungodly amount. I think it's over 100 now.

How many? 90. They don't even know about. See, justice has to be served.

Could you imagine if the judge, you know what, you've made the case, we've found some of the bodies, there's 100 people, but you know what, I'm going to let you go. The judge, I'm going to let you go. How would that sit with people? Because, see, justice has to be met.

So the wrath of God, the justice of God has to fall on a disobedient people. Jesus gets in the way and says, in a good way, and says, I am the way, the truth, the life. I will take on that wrath of God.

So when you read that word propitiation in the New Testament, I think three times, that is Jesus absorbing God's justice, his just wrath. And because he absorbed it, we repent, we believe, we take on the imputed righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, and we are set free from the wrath of God. That might change the way you worship if you can fully grasp that.

Can you imagine? That's why you shouldn't make fun of people worshiping sometimes, because they've been set free. They were on the highway to hell. Like the ACDC song, I'm on the highway to hell.

Come on, you guys know it, don't play like you don't know it. I used to listen to that song with a 40 ounce beer right in between my legs going 80 miles an hour. I'm on a high, and I don't know how I made it, but the grace of God, the love of God, the mercy of God said, no devil, you're not taking him.

He might have a praying mom. He might have a praying cousin or something praying for him. He should have took me out a thousand times, but the grace of God held me together.

So when we sing amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I was lost, but now I'm found. I was blind, but now I see, oh God, I must worship you.

I must cry out to you. I must bow my knee to you. Whatever you want, God, I must serve you.

I'm still an imperfect vessel, but I'm looking to a perfect savior. See, it changes the way you worship. You get excited about worship.

You want to get up in the morning and worship. You want to look to his word, and you want to seek God with all your heart because of what he's done for you. Could it be that maybe he hasn't done much for you? So worship is hindered? Because when God really, really changes you, you have to worship? That's like telling a baby don't eat.

I'm hungry, Dad. I need more of you. Now my flesh will tell you just the opposite of that.

Shane's sleeping. Perfect example, I'm just going to be honest. Got up a couple times last night, you hear the baby, and like, oh man, this is tough.

Poor Morgan, too. And I'm going back to sleep. How much more time do I have? It's 4.45. Like, you know what? I committed to the prayer meeting this morning.

It's 6 a.m. I've got to be there at 5.30. I just better just get up. And did I feel like it? Everyone do this. No? Now I'm thinking, who could I text to see if they can do it? Because tired and just, you know, sometimes I don't wake up in a good mood all the time.

You know that? You all wake up in good moods? How do you do that? No, you can't take a Xanax right when you get up. I'm not talking about that. Just waking up in a good mood.

Sometimes, you know, you wake up in a bad mood. And I didn't want to go. And once I got there, I got there early putting on worship, and it was just a wonderful time with the Lord.

So you do have to fight your flesh. And that is a little tag for our 6 a.m. Wednesday mornings. Every Wednesday at 6 a.m. We meet in Quartz Hill, California.

Quartz Hill, California. Right over the hill. I have to say it.

I don't want to tell other people. Where's that at? You guys know where it's at, but most people don't. So arise, O Lord.

Save me, O my God. So like wild beasts, their teeth were broken. Here's what God does.

The part that was going to damage a person was removed. The beasts were still there. The people were still there.

But God removes the part that will hurt you. That's what the Bible talks about. Though I walk through the fire, I will not be burned.

Though I walk through the waters and the floods and they begin to overflow and I'm walking through these waters, I will not go under. I will not drown because you're with me, God. So see, we still have the fire.

We still have the challenges, but we trust in God the whole way. So here's some possible application. A bad person's influence is removed or their motivation is extinguished or their criticism is halted.

That's how sometimes God can help us in the dire times we're living in. Somebody's influence against you, God can halt it, but they're still there. Or their motivation is extinguished.

Do you ever find those people that just want to go after you? Just leave me alone. Like what do we ever do without Facebook and all these media things when people had to talk to you in person? They weren't harassed as much. I guarantee when it's in person, they won't talk to you as much.

Now I won't do this, but my flesh has tempted me many times. When people say negative stuff to me, real critical on Facebook, I'm like, why don't you show up at the church service in public, tough guy? Let's see you say this to my face. Little armchair quarterback on your... You're just a gentleman.

Come, let's talk in person. But see, we can hide behind that and we weren't meant to absorb all this criticism. So God will begin to remove those things.

Maybe sometimes though the heat is increased and the more the heat's increased, the more you have to trust in God and go back to God. How do you truly know Him as God who gets you through everything unless you go through something? We talk about, oh God, Jehovah Nissi, Jehovah Jireh, my provider, Jehovah Sikhanou, all the name for God, but you don't know Him as healer until you've been healed. You don't know Him as deliverer until you've truly been delivered.

You don't know Him as your provider until the floodgates open. So to know God is to experience God often through the challenges. My relationship with God has been built through the challenges.

Man, I have such a good relationship with God because He gives me everything I want. That's actually not a good father. Could you imagine giving your kids everything they want, they'd be dead by now.

Because my only want is ice cream and watch ungodly things, and more sugar, more this, stay up all night, don't do anything, don't learn, just die. Because the flesh would go crazy. And then I'm going to go real quickly into Psalm 4 because it's the same theme.

So they say here, the psalmist says, Hear me when I call, O God. Hear my call, hear my righteousness. No, O God, you are my righteousness.

You have relieved me in my distress. Have mercy on me and hear my prayer. So this is interesting.

He reminds God of his past mercies so He can receive present favor. Have you ever done that? God, remember? Remember when you helped me five years ago? Remember when you got me through that? Guess what? It's going on right now. Same thing.

Remember, God? Can you do that again? How long, O you sons of men? Now he's back at the sons of men. Will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood? In other words, how long are you going to keep trying to shame me? Your put-downs, your insults, your threats. Have you ever been there? And they just keep putting you down.

If your family members are not Christians, and you are, you tell me you're not made fun of. It's, oh, here comes such and such. Now we can't have any fun.

Here comes Holy Roller. Here comes the Bible Thumper. Here comes the Jesus Freak.

Here comes Mr. and Mrs. Religion. Here comes Mr. Tea Toddler. Don't have a beer around them.

And it's always just insulting and insulting and insulting. Come on, I lived it. I've lived it.

Imagine being a pastor. You don't even have to say anything and you upset people. Just the presence.

I can walk into a family function and around the hall, oh great. Go hide that IPA. Get outside with that marijuana.

Shane's here. But the put-downs, the insults, the threats. But remember, Jesus Christ received more than all of us.

He wasn't insulted. That's all He was by the religious leaders. Insulted.

Can you imagine this? All these people saying Hosanna. Hosanna, this is our Savior. Saying crucify Him that same week.

Many of the same people. You go, oh, I love this person. Now crucify Him.

It's the fickety. Men and women are fickle. And then verse 3, But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself who is godly.

The Lord will hear when I call to Him. Be angry and do not sin. Meditate within your heart, on your bed, and be still, so He will hear when I call.

That's a promise you can take with you this evening. Remember that. God will hear you when you call.

But Shane, He's not answering, but He hears you. And He knows what's best. Here's why we get frustrated sometimes.

We think we know what's best. And God, why aren't you answering? And we get frustrated. We get bitter.

But God says, I hear you. What about if this delay is not a deny, it's a delay to get you to press into me. I'm not going to just throw this number out there, but I am going to throw this number out there.

I hope it's not correct, but normal churches, normal churches across America, 50%, I would say, of half the congregation is not surrendering their life to God. They're coming to church, but they're not living for God. They're living for themselves.

They come to church because that's what good people do. And when you challenge them on that, well, yeah, but I'm busy. Isn't it amazing how many people are so busy? I talk to people, you've got to read your

Bible.

Man, I'm so busy. Well, you're not busy for the TV. You're not too busy for media.

We find time for the things we enjoy. And it's interesting too, you can glean this here. Handle conflict by being still and waiting on God.

Because we want to handle conflict the other way, don't you? You get that mean text, you want to send one back. You get that mean insult, you want to send one back. But the biblical course is handle conflict by being still and waiting on God.

It's interesting here, he said, be angry, but do not sin. What does that look like in today's culture? Well, for me, this is very applicable because I get very angry, very angry with what you're seeing in the culture. With transgenders now reading to kindergarten kids in the libraries.

With the abortion, with the definition of marriage, with the pronouns, with actually looking down on law enforcement and rewarding the criminal. So see, God says be angry, Shane. Be angry, righteous indignation.

Be so angry that you start to have more prayer meetings. Be so angry you start to fast. Be so angry you start to preach your heart out.

But don't sin. Don't go off on them. Don't belittle them.

Don't make fun of them. Don't sin. Represent me and who you are.

Be angry. Stand up for the truth. But love people.

Isn't that the hard balance? Monday I had Jehovah's Witnesses come to my house and I invite them in and they want to do a Bible study with me. So we're scheduling one this week and I asked if my kids could be there as well. And we are going to talk about salvation.

I'm not going to get upset. But I'm going to tell them. I'm going to show them where they're wrong.

If you don't know, Jehovah's Witness was founded in the 1800s by Charles Taz Russell. He didn't like the deity of Christ or the concept of hell, so he removed both of them from the New World Translation. So for example, in the Gospel of John, in the beginning was the Word and the Word was God.

Their Bible says in the beginning the Word was a God. So that Jesus is minimized. He's Michael the archangel.

Salvation is belief in Jesus, but also belonging to the Watchtower Society and doing these things you don't really know if you're saved until you die. And there's a lot of other things. So you can lovingly tell people, well, yeah, but they'll probably say he translated the Bible correctly in the 1800s.

I'm like, no, you can go look at the Septuagint. Go look at the early Greek writings of the New Testament. 1,800 years before that, and you'll see that Jesus was always there.

And look in your Bible, it says, and let us make man in our image in Genesis. What is let us? Who's us? Elohim, the plurality of God. There's Father, Son, Holy Spirit, the Trinity.

So they don't believe in the Trinity either. So you sit down, you just listen, and you engage the truth, because I truly care for these people enough. And they walked into it, so, you know.

You knock, well, you knock, if you knock on my door, if you, right? But if you knock on my door, I'm going to answer. And I guarantee they'll try to get out of it. I'll guarantee losing sleep over it, and I'll say, see, the truth is never afraid of scrutiny.

You should want to present the truth if you have it. I'm not losing sleep. I'm not even going to prepare for this until Monday morning.

But I'm going to pray and fast and seek God. See, be angry. I'm angry.

I'm angry at the false gospel, the cult going around my neighborhood where actually people are opening their doors and they're little kids, and they're doing Bible studies in my neighborhood with the false gospel. I'm angry. But I can't sin.

Now, have I done this perfectly before? No. I've got upset at people at my door before. And learning through those things.

Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and put your trust in the Lord. Here's what you need to do. Offer the sacrifices of righteousness.

Now, it's interesting, the Old Testament is going to look at things different than we are. The Old Testament, when they read this, they had to bring an offering of sacrifice to God. We know that Christ is our sacrifice.

We don't have the sacrificial system anymore. So what then is our sacrifice of righteousness? Well, Romans. Good place to start.

Present your bodies, brethren, by the mercies of God, Paul would say. I guarantee you he'd tell you that as well. Brethren, by the mercies of God, present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God.

It means we repent. That's a beautiful word. I don't know why people don't like it.

It's usually those caught in sin who love their sin and don't want to turn from their sin who don't like the word repentance. Mark my word. You tell somebody who's truly broken, truly wants to give up an addiction, truly wants to heal their marriage, they will love and cherish the word repentance and true brokenness of heart.

If they don't want to, they will hate what you're saying to them. You get out of my house. How dare you, holy roller.

How dare you? You're so judgmental. You don't know it's repentance. That's not judgmental.

How dare you judge me? You don't know me. You don't know me. How dare you judge me? Because you don't want to hear the word repentance.

The very thing you need is the very thing you're running from. It's a beautiful word. The Gospel starts with repent.

John the Baptist preaching repentance. Jesus said go and preach repentance at the end of the Gospels. Why is that such a beautiful word? It basically means change the way you see sin and turn back to God.

Turn and turn back to God. How many of us need to hear that often? Turn back to God. You've drifted? Turn back to God.

Repentance is wonderful. Trust in the Lord. Trust in the Lord.

He keeps reminding us. And it gets difficult. You know why it gets difficult? Let me just tell you.

Here's my life. I'm fighting for the things of God. I'm fighting for righteousness.

I'm preaching my heart out. I'm saying God, would you do something in this culture? Would you wake this state of California up? God, I'm fighting. I'm fighting on my knees.

I'm fighting on my feet. I'm fighting in my head. I'm fighting everything I can do.

And then he says, rest in me. And then wait. And then I build up the strength again.

And then he says, fight again. When you go to heaven, I wish I had some props. But you're going to have a crutch.

You're going to have a neck brace. Your back might be out. And this is how you walk to the pearly gates, if there are pearly gates.

You walk broken. You walk beat up. You walk like a warrior who's been through battle, who's been through hell and back because you have.

That's how you fight this battle. This is warfare. This is a battle.

You fight and you fight again and you keep on fighting. I love what Vince Lombardi said of the Green Bay Packers. He said, every man's finest hour, his greatest sense of fulfillment, is when he lies exhausted on the field of battle victorious.

That needs to be the Christian motto. That's our finest hour, is when I lay exhausted on the field of battle victorious. When you do my funeral, don't be sad because I lay done on the field of battle victorious as long as Christ is honored.

We finish strong. We must finish strong. You have put gladness in my heart.

Oh, praise God. Isn't that interesting? He's going through turmoil, anxiety. Everybody's out to get him.

He's trusting in God again. And then he says, you've put gladness in my heart. You have more gladness, more joy than anybody on the planet who is not a believer when you trust in God's sovereignty and trust in him.

I don't know what the rate is, or the statistics, I haven't looked in a while, but the amount of Hollywood actresses and actors on medication, all these comedians, all these people, suicidal. Why? Because money never satisfies. Fame never satisfies.

We're not designed to be an idol, Michael Jordan. God is designed to be our work. We worship Him.

Men were not ever designed to be on a pedestal. So somebody can throw a pigskin, they can shoot a basket, we pay them \$18 million for a season. That's who we look up to.

No. No, we have to look up to God and God alone. So he says, you put more gladness in my heart than anything else.

More in the season than their grain and their wine increase. In other words, people's wine increase and their grain increase. In the Old Testament, that means prosperity.

We would say, they increase in houses, they own 10 houses and rentals, they can retire 10 times over, but I have more gladness than they have because you are my strength. Listen, I don't know who this is for, but the more I pastor, the more I see and the more I talk to people the destruction of money and possessions. So many people think that's their happiness.

That's their joy. And when that crumbles, their life crumbles. I will both lie down in peace and I will sleep in peace.

For you alone, oh God, you make me dwell in safety. So how? How does this happen, Shane? How? Well, he noticed the fear in his life. People were coming against him, it was fearful times.

He repented, he trusted in God again, and he lived for God. That's a good formula. Anyone need to hear that this evening? Repent, repent.

God, this is crept into my life. Crept, crept. You don't think it's, it's out there.

I can't go on Facebook for more than an hour to hear somebody slamming California and Lancaster and Palmdale. Every single hour, slamming, slamming, slamming, slamming. Say, okay, move to Utopia.

You're still gonna be miserable because you carry that negative, critical attitude with you. I'll never forget a good friend of mine back when I was in the gym business. 1996, I think it was.

Couldn't wait to get out of here. There's a sheriff moved to Idaho and was shot and killed in the face when he pulled somebody over in Idaho. Trusting in something else.

I want to save this for tonight, but I let the cat out of the bag on Sunday because I got so excited. But here's a lyric to a song that's recently been released. I'm going to see a victory.

The weapon may be formed, but it will not prosper. Isn't it interesting? Have you thought about that scripture? No weapon formed against you will prosper. It's an Old Testament, but it has practical application for us.

The weapon has been formed. That really sunk in this week. The weapon has been formed.

There is a weapon against you. There's a weapon coming against you, against your marriage, against your testimony. The weapon formed against me will not prosper if I look and I trust in God.

When darkness fails, it won't prevail because the God I serve knows how to triumph. My God never fails. For the battle belongs to you, O Lord.

Every war He wages, He will win. I'm not backing down from any giant because I know how this story ends. And you have to remember that as we close here tonight, even if God doesn't deliver us, even if we

don't see a Christian California or Christian America or everything going our ways, we might have to fight evil until the day we die.

God, even if you don't deliver us from this, it's a privilege and an honor to serve you. Even if you don't, I won't bow to the political correctness in this culture. Even if you don't see me through, I'm going to thank you for every gift you've given me.

I thank you for eternity. And that's how you live your life, grateful and thank you. If you doubt anything that I've said in that, you find one Scripture that supports how God blesses a grumbling, complaining heart.

And I've known over the years dozens and dozens and dozens and dozens of people, there might be one or two, there's exceptions here, that have left here, this area, that were grumbling, complaining, they are still grumblers and complainers. Now it's this or now it's that. See, that attitude goes with you.

You've got to deal with the attitude where you're at. And then if God blesses you, wonderful, wonderful. If he has a place for me in Upper Idaho with a cabin and 45 acres and my own personal lake, I'm not going to say no.

But I have a feeling I've got a war to fight. I've got a battle that I'm in. And there's more joy in the center of God's will.

Think about this. We live in one of the highest per capita in all of Los Angeles County with sex offenders, rape. I've got four daughters.

I've got five kids. How can I go to bed at night trusting in God and sleep and be filled with joy? Yes, something, who knows what the future holds. I'm not saying one way or the other.

All I'm saying is I don't want to live in fear because I failed to trust the one who holds everything in the palm of his hands. That's who we have to start trusting.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31856.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/when-the-world-is-against-you/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net