

Will Power Is Not Enough

by Shane Idleman

We need God's strength and power to overcome sin and temptation, and obedience to God's word is vital for spiritual growth.

Duration: 48:13

Scripture: Romans 6:19, 1 Peter 1:14, 1 Peter 5:6, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Peter 3:11, 1 John 1:9, 1 John 3:3

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Godly Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need to move beyond relying solely on willpower to overcome struggles like anger, lust, and sin. It highlights the importance of obedience to God's word while also acknowledging the necessity of relying on God's strength and grace. The message stresses the impact of sin on ourselves and those around us, urging repentance, confession, and a heart change through Christ's sacrifice.

Transcript

Willpower is not enough. Do you ever find yourself saying, I'm not going to do that again? What happens? Do that again. It was interesting this week, I was told about a show that chronicles seven and eight-year-olds playing golf at the national level and top seven and eight-year-olds in golf.

It was amazing how good they play. But I noticed that one of the kids just kept getting angry even though she won, throw her golf clubs in the cart and just mad and crying, and her dad was all upset. Finally, at the end of the show, it said on the bottom there that they are now seeing a sports psychologist to work on their anger issues.

I thought, how sad that we have the answer, that there is an answer and that willpower is not enough. Just meeting with somebody to try to just change the way you think, often is not enough. We have to, now let me clarify too, because willpower is discipline, it's obedience, and we have to exercise that.

The Bible's crystal clear, I've got an article in the bulletins you'll read about, that obedience to God's word is vital. But we can't rely on just my willpower to get me through every single day, every single week for the rest of my life. We also have to rely on God's power, on his strength.

And really, it's an interesting concept, because as we obey and we submit to him, his strength becomes more apparent, and that's how we get through things, and that's how we conquer besetting sin. So you can't throw the baby out with the bathwater. We have to exercise our, that's why the Bible talks about the

fruit of the spirit.

One of the fruits is, or one of the fruit of the spirit is self-discipline. And the Bible talks about do not conform to this world. And we've talked about that a lot, I don't need to want to belabor that point, but I want you to get this point across, that just trying hard enough without relying on God's strength will not work.

It might work for a day or two, but long-term, we've got to find the balance there. And where we left off was Matthew chapter 15, verse eight. I'm gonna read some of it, that way you can follow along.

If you do have your Bibles, Matthew 15, chapter 15, verse eight and I'm gonna read a little bit of what we read last week, to kind of set this into context. Jesus talking now says, these people draw near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me and in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. When he had called the multitude to himself, he said to them, hear and understand, not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.

Then his disciples came and said to him, do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying? But he answered, said every plant which my heavenly father has planted will be uprooted. Let them alone, they are blind leaders of the blind and if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into the ditch. Now that's kind of where we left off last week, so that's the context, but a few things I just want to bring out real quickly and this isn't a surprise, especially here, but it's obvious that the truth offends.

It's interesting that these guys, they said, hey, Jesus, you just offended these religious leaders. And he said, it doesn't matter, let them alone. The truth offends and he didn't say, well, okay, let me restructure what I said, let me go and apologize.

And it's interesting, they were offended. He said, yeah, they're offended, the blind are leading the blind. And then it reminds me also that salvation is God's work.

But he answered, every plant which my heavenly father has planted will be uprooted. Salvation is God's work, that God saves, yet we have this paradox where the Bible tells us whosoever repents and believes will be saved, but then God says, Jesus says, but every plant that my father plants will not be uprooted. And we see this tension, and I'm not gonna take time now because I have in the past of God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

We see there's a tension there that God is sovereign, salvation is his job, yet we have to repent and we have to believe in the gospel. And people say, well, how exactly does that work? Well, we're not gonna know it on this side of heaven. We just accept that both are true.

Then Peter answered and said to him, explain this parable to us. So Jesus said, are you still without understanding? Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, and blasphemies.

These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man. So this is interesting, real quick, there's two points of application here as well, I believe. Jesus is saying that these things come out of a man.

This is what defile us, adultery, thoughts of murder, evil thoughts, theft, stealing things, a false witness line, we already know that. But this is a wake-up call, I believe, on one hand to unbelievers, saying if these things are mastering you, if this is what's coming out, if this is what you're full of, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth is gonna speak, you are defiled. You are not in a right relationship with God.

But then we say, wait a minute, don't we struggle with these things? Yeah, we do. But there's a difference, as we've talked about before, between a struggle and being a slave to sin. And when a person is unregenerated, they are unsaved, they are a slave to these things.

It's literally, what is in comes out. But then a believer, now as a believer, they're on fire for God, hopefully, they're believing in Jesus, the Spirit is guiding them, but the flesh is pulling them back to, man, I've got evil thoughts, or angry, or lust, or it's pulling, this influence is pulling, but then the Spirit of God, we're able to pull back and we're saying, Lord, with your grace, I submit to you, I'm obeying what your word says, and it's this fight. Where an unbeliever is just trapped in these things, this is a mark of who they are.

Now they'll maybe act, sometimes, as if they've got it all together, and this is why I don't believe that argument that people say, well, good people go to heaven, or some people are really just good, others aren't. But if we look inside the human heart, there's really not a lot of good there. I mean, if we were to dissect the human heart, I mean, look at your own thoughts over the course of this week, my own thoughts.

Are we always thinking pleasantries, and love, and joy? No, there's something there. So that's why I believe this is a two-point application. Number one, it's a good wake-up call to those who don't truly know God.

If this is coming out of you, if there's thoughts and there's evil, and this is dominating your life, you need to be in right relationship with God. But then I also think it can be encouragement to the Christian who struggles with these things, because the enemy loves to pull us back into this mindset and these types of things. And really, the context is the Pharisees were saying, what I do is better than who I am.

They say, I don't do this, I don't do this, and I don't do this, but Jesus is saying, no, it's about who you are in your heart. That's really what matters. And the word defiled there is interesting.

It means to make filthy, or dirty, or polluted. To defile a river with sewage would be an example. And a man or woman will always be defiled before God if they do not accept what Christ did on the cross.

You see how significant that is? Man is always defiled. It doesn't matter how good a person says they are, or a person they think they are this good, or good people go to heaven, it doesn't matter. People are defiled, because this stuff is coming out.

This is what's in the heart. It's in the DNA of every person. Murders, adulteries, fornications, it's in the heart.

It's in the DNA. When Adam first fell into sin, that has been passed on, and it's in us. So we're defiled unless we embrace God's gracious gift of forgiveness, and that's why the cross is so important.

It removes that defilement. Now we can stand before God righteous because of what Christ did on the cross. That's something to be celebrated, I think.

It's something to be excited about, even though we struggle from time to time knowing that we've been set free. And people ask this question a lot, and I've thought about it before. Paul says that we're no longer slaves to sin.

And then most people think, well, if I'm no longer a slave, why is it still alive in me? If I'm dead to sin, why is it still alive in me? And then Paul goes on to say that whatever we choose to obey becomes our master. So we can actually, once a person, if you notice this in your life, once you begin to succumb to sin, it's not a, I don't know how to put this. It's not something you can kind of pop in and out of.

Once you give yourself over to it, it pulls you back. Ask somebody who's gone back into drinking, or drug use, or porn, or any of these things. Is it, you know, you just pop back out.

No, that addiction takes you back, and it pulls you back, and it pulls you back into slavery. The thing that Christ died for, the thing that we've been set free of, it actually will pull us back in. That's why obedience to God's word is so important.

And sometimes people get upset at this point, and they say, it's all about grace, it's all about grace. Yes, it's all about grace, but because of grace, I have to obey the word of God. And when I obey the word of God, the grace of God covers me.

But if you get out of that shelter, and you begin to disobey, and you begin to fall back into these lifestyles, it will take you down. And it's interesting, too, we've seen many people, I'm sure you've experienced this, too, will give up, and they'll go back into sin. I don't need to name everything here, but you fill in the blank, back into addictions.

They say, God, you just haven't taken this away. You just have not taken this away. You're grace, why haven't you taken this away? And we get mad at God, we say, well, I'm just made this way.

God has not taken this away. But then God says, no, you helped to take this away. And I'm gonna explain that here in a minute.

And then Jesus said, it's interesting, he said, are you also still without understanding? He basically kind of rebukes the disciples. Are you still without understanding? And it reminded me, too, that we must mature in our faith. There's nothing worse than seeing somebody who's been a Christian 20 years resemble somebody who's been in the faith two years.

A lot of this responsibility falls back on us. Paul says, when I was a child, right, I thought as a child, I understood as a child, I spoke as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things. And there becomes a point in all of our walks that we have to mature.

The fruit is up to God, and maturity is up to God, but we also have to, here's that word again, obey, and put away these things and mature in our faith. It's almost like God comes alongside of us and helps us grow in these areas. And I've just seen the detrimental things that happen on both sides.

If it's, I gotta do this, I gotta do this, I gotta follow a lot of rules, I can't do this, I can't eat here, I can't go there, I can't, I can't, you're just in this obedience, this legalism type, it's all about rules, and that doesn't work out, because nobody can do that. But then you have the person, it's all about God's grace, and God's just not changing me, maybe I was born this way. And we just, okay, God, you've gotta do this, you've gotta rely, I'm just relying on you only, and then, but we go and participate in the sin.

They come together. But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, so let's talk about those since Jesus listed those. Number one, evil thoughts.

This is interesting. Evil thoughts, just that word, you're probably like, oh, I don't think those thoughts. Well, be careful there, because most of us do.

I would say that everybody does. In this form, if you look at what that means, evil thoughts, we are either fueling evil thoughts or we are quenching them. Evil thoughts come into all of our minds.

Hatred, bitterness, have you ever become mad at somebody? Unwarranted, jealous, angry? Antagonistic, judgmental? I mean, these are evil thoughts that come into our minds. And this is where we have to take responsibility and bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. And a lot of this, we're going back on things I've already spoke about the last few months, but some of it I wanna bring in because it's important.

Your thoughts either imprison you, according to the word of God, or you imprison your thoughts. When the Bible says take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ tells me that I can say, no, we're not going in that direction. We're not gonna go and we're gonna do that.

Some of you, when you leave here, will be tempted to go online. But do you entertain that thought or do you say, no, we're not doing that, bring this thought captive. Some of you leaving here might wanna stop by the liquor store.

Some of you leaving here might wanna, and these are real thoughts that come in and we have to take those thoughts captive. And we say, no, you're not controlling me, I'm controlling you, I'm taking that thought captive. And it's a daily struggle sometimes.

But if you don't do that and you just give over to it, then your thoughts will begin to control you and take you captive. And I've never realized how powerful our thoughts were until I did a study in putting on the armor of God and our thought life and we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but you look at all these things and our thought life is really, that's where the battle is. That's where it's won and lost, in the thought life.

And if you can take those thoughts captive, that's why Jesus said evil thoughts proceed out of unbelievers for sure. And evil thoughts are going to proceed in unbelievers if they don't take them captive, they will dominate. The second thing he mentions here is murder.

We say, well, thank God I don't do that. Well, really what this is, is explosive anger. It's explosive anger and of course it's murder, taking innocent life, it's murder, but it's also explosive anger.

The anger of man worketh not the righteousness of God. So that explosiveness, some people are passive and they don't have to deal with this, others are, no, you know exactly what I'm talking about. You ever heard the term fly off the handle? What does that mean? Or just raise, or where does that come from? It comes from the sin nature.

And what we like to do is excuse it. Well, she did this, or well, he did this, or I'm under a lot of pressure, or this isn't working out, or I can't pay the bills. And we just hide behind the veneer of excuses.

And I truly believe that's why a lot of people don't change, is because they allow excuses. What's the word excuse mean? To make excuses to continue in that destructive behavior. And that's why James 1.20 says, the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

Let me just share on this point, anger never produces anything, ungodly anger, never produces anything good. It will destroy the marriage, it will destroy your kids, because it's explosive and it hurts. And the devil loves that.

He loves to bring anger in and evil thoughts. You see how these are so important, right? Especially keeping marriages together, keeping the relationship with our kids solid. And then he talks about thefts.

And we think of thieves, which of course that is, but it also can mean dishonest, just schemes. You know people that are, they're scheming. They're just always into something and they're just making schemes and they're dishonest and they're not quite telling you what you need to hear and they'll cushion this when they shouldn't.

They're just dishonest people. Jesus said that's coming out of your heart. And then a false witness, we think of as lying, as a liar.

But you're bearing false witness, you're saying something that's not true. And that's true, but it also can mean somebody who manipulates. The manipulator, or have you heard of the half-truth teller? They're not lying.

They're just not telling the whole truth. It's a half-truth. That's lying in God's eyes.

And God says, I hate a proud look, I hate a lying tongue in Proverbs. I hate feathers swift to run evil, lying and deception. So the good thing about this, and not really a good thing, but what we can take from the scripture is if a person's unsaved, they could say, all those things are coming out of me, I need God.

I am defiled before him, I need God. And that's the point of this. The other point of something like this, for me calling these things out, is for us to say, you know what, God, my heart is not right.

These things are coming out of me. This, Lord, help me. And then what happens? That beautiful word, repentance, takes place.

And purification, we leave here, we're like repenting of these things, we're working on our anger, we're working on our dishonesty and our lying and our manipulating, and the exaggerator falls in here too. God is not pleased with exaggeration. Where we exaggerate, make things up, and it all just falls under the umbrella of lying.

So one of the reasons I believe that when you preach the all of God's word is it'll begin to convict in these areas where we need conviction. Because many of us, unless we hear this, and we hear, because we know it, like yeah, I know I shouldn't do that, but until we read it in God's word and we're challenged by God's word, we won't change. And then what about blasphemies? Blasphemy, arrogant words, saying things that oppose the truth.

That's what blasphemy is. They're saying words that oppose the truth. And sometimes, going back to anger, when we lash out, do we say things as well? And that anger, say things that we wish we could take back, say things that God is not happy with, that's part of this whole idea of blasphemy.

But at the root of it, it's arrogant words. It's saying things that oppose the truth. It's challenging God and challenging His truth.

And that's why when Christians, now you're seeing the media, the big thing is coming out with gay marriage, all that, it's gonna be here to stay. But if you look at a lot of these things these people are saying, it is blasphemy. It is blasphemy.

They are saying things about God that is not true. They're opposing the truth and they're arrogant in their words in saying that. And then we move to the last two, which I think are some of the most destructive nowadays.

Adulteries, adulteries. And I'm amazed at how many people don't understand what this actually involves. Jesus said earlier in Matthew five, but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

And then fornications, all sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman is harmful and immoral. And a lot of people say, well, why, what's the big deal? The reason is anytime you take the way God designed something and you pervert it, that's actually where the word perversion comes from is to take something straight and then make it perverted, make it twist. Anytime you take God's word and you change it, you pervert it, you are on dangerous ground because now it's not gonna work correctly.

Now the blessings of God aren't there. Now all hell's gonna break loose. That's why it's so important.

When God says, this is how I created male and female, this is why I did it. Here's my law, here's my standard. We say, I don't care.

Doesn't matter to me. That's not the God of the Bible. That's not the God of love.

Well, you better get that straight. You better go and read, research scripture and come up with your own conclusions. But God is crystal clear on these areas.

Now it's interesting, the word fornication in the Greek is pornea. It's where the word pornography comes from. So we can't say I was born this way because we were all born to lie.

We were born to cheat. We were born to lust. We were born to deceive.

This doesn't make it right. It makes me sinful in need of a savior. Isn't that interesting? People say, why was born this way? Well, I was born to sin too.

Everybody in this room, everybody on the planet was born to sin. It doesn't make it right. It points me to a savior.

See, you see the necessity of Jesus, it becomes more clear as we look to our desperate need for him. People caught in sin, especially sexual sin, often use scriptures on forgiveness and grace and Matthew 7 at the expense of other scriptures. What I mean by that is you'll see a lot of times, and I've seen it on Facebook.

I've seen, I've known people, they left their spouse and they're seeing somebody else and they just love to quote, post all the, but God loves me, God forgives me, the grace of God. They just love to quote all this stuff. Wait a minute, you're living in a very sinful, destructive lifestyle and you have the audacity to sit and

put those scriptures up there? Blasphemy, blasphemy.

And then they'll quote Matthew 7, judge not, judge not. But that's what sin does. It deceives and then once it deceives us and leads us in, we are living in deception.

Now we'll use all these scriptures as, and we'll use God to support our lifestyle. Now God's grace and forgiveness would make a lot of sense if she had repented or he had repented and they're working on their marriage and they need some, but it's almost like blasphemy in your face. Yeah, I'm doing this, but in your face.

Yeah, I'm continuing this lifestyle, but in your face. Your scripture's in your face and that's blasphemy as well. That's, you're so far out of line, you don't even realize it.

When anytime you use, anytime you use the scriptures to defend a sinful lifestyle, the Bible would consider that blasphemy. They would consider that clearly out of the will of God. If you don't think so, then show me one scripture that would support us staying in a sinful lifestyle and enjoying it and then using scriptures to back that opinion.

And here's the interesting thing. Sexual sin leads to death. I wish I had more time.

It's not really a message on sexual sin, but something like pornography. Here's why it's so deadly. It steals the love from a marriage.

Communication vanishes, joy leaves and passion fades and honesty is nowhere to be found. That's how destructive it is. It'll literally tear the heart out of a marriage.

And if you're single, guess what? Men or women, you don't get married and then instantly become a person of character. If you struggle with it now, and many people say, oh, once I get married, it'll end. No, it doesn't end.

It actually grows legs and runs and you don't just get over this. If you're not a Proverbs 31 woman now, when you get married, you say, oh, I'll make all these changes then. No, actually everything is magnified in marriage.

Remember I often joke, but it's true. I thought I was, after three years of seeking God, you know, I'm the most humble, gracious person. Oh, my wife's gonna love me.

God's taught me so much. And you're single. You can go to sleep when you want.

You can eat when you want. You can not go places. You can just be, you can live really comfortably as a single Christian.

And then when you get married, wake up call beyond anything else you've ever had before. And you realize just how selfish you are. So I wanna, those who are not yet married, and I tell this to young adults a lot and singles, is who you are now is who you'll become when you get married.

The character you have now is the character you'll have on that day you say, I do. And woe be the person that says, I know he has all these flaws, but I'll change them. Or I know she's not a believer now.

She's pretty lustful. She's addicted to porn too. But once we get married, we can, you're actually going against scripture.

The whole point, this is for somebody to help, but when you're single and you're dating, I say this a lot and I hope it sticks in your mind. You need to follow after Christ wholeheartedly and simply see who keeps up. That's how you find somebody.

You don't lower your standard and backtrack because you're in a hurry. You follow after Christ and just see who's keeping up. Because that's the type of person you're gonna want.

That's the type of person who's gonna go through the storms with you. And on this point of dealing with sin, a lot of people say, and I've said this in the past, but I'm trapped, but I'm trapped. I can't break out, I'm trapped.

And I'm gonna make some bold statements here. And when I do this, I'm not minimizing. I'm not minimizing the strong pull of sin.

I'm not minimizing addiction. Anybody who's been there and is in it knows it's hell. It's not easy.

That's why the Bible says it's a battle. It's warfare. But I've noticed that when people often say, but I'm trapped, and so they continue in, I mean, you fill in the blank, from Oxycontin to heroin to alcohol to drugs to porn, whatever it is, they say, I'm trapped, I can't get out of this.

But often, we allow ourselves to be trapped. We allow ourselves to be trapped. Let me give you a few examples.

A person who's addicted to pain meds, they often find a way to get more. Oh, my back hurts again. And they fall back into addicted to pornography.

They don't take hardcore steps to remove it. They love hardcore porn, but they won't take hardcore steps to remove it. This fact alone amazes me.

At men's conferences, I speak to hundreds of men in the past, and here's what you gotta do. Guess how many people wanna do it? One or two. Oh, man, I don't wanna get that serious.

Well, then how bad do you want it? You enjoy your sin. That's why it's got you bound. The Bible says eradicate it.

Remove your eye. Remove your hand. It means, hey, I'm getting rid of this computer.

Or wife, husband, you have the password. All the software, the accountability. It's gonna be like Fort Knox to try to get into an adult website.

I want this so tight. Here's my phone, here's my password. I'm leaving it on the counter.

You can check it whenever you want. If it ever has deleted history, ask. You can take massive steps.

Nobody wants to. Nobody wants to. So they're swimming in this addiction.

They're caught. They don't wanna take the necessary steps. They're not trapped.

They're trapping themselves. And because sin deceives, they go behind the back and they pay for things. And then they hide things and they delete it and say, oh, I'm so trapped.

No, you're not trapped. You're allowing that environment to continue. Now, am I minimizing, again, the strong pull in the battle? No.

But nine times out of 10, we enjoy it. And what did Jesus say when he said, if your eye's causing you to sin, cut it out, or your hand, cut it off? To me, that's what he's, well, here's what he's saying. Whatever, whatever's causing you to sin, remove it.

That would mean going without a laptop for a month. Oh, I couldn't do that? Oh, sure you could if you wanted to. If I would give you \$10,000 on the 30th day of no internet, you would become a no internet user today.

Who wouldn't do that silly challenge? I would. So you can, but you don't want to. That's why I tell guys like, hey, how about you don't even take a laptop? How about you don't even use it without your spouse? Oh, I don't wanna do that.

Exactly, so don't come up here and cry about it. Go home and live it out. I'm tired of people crying.

They don't wanna live it out. They're not trapped. Many times, they're creating that trap and then they go and fool people.

They go in and fool their accountability partner or they go and fool their spouse. They think, oh, I'm off the hook. No, you're not off the hook.

God sees it and I know it because I've seen many, many, many times people do not wanna make the necessary steps. What about this one? This one kills me. People addicted to alcohol, yet they head to an environment where it's gonna be there.

I can list a half dozen people right now who are struggling with this, yet they'll head to Laughlin, they'll go to Las Vegas, they'll go to the nightclub with their friends and just try to have ice water. I mean, really? You're gonna try? But I'm trapped. Well, you know you're creating an environment for sin to flourish.

Wake up. When are we gonna wake up? God has given us the power through Jesus Christ, through obedience, through surrender, through saying no and making no provision for the flesh. Don't plan ahead on how to sin.

So many times we say, I'm just trapped and it's an excuse, here's why. So now the victim mentality comes in. Now this is coming from somebody who has an addictive personality.

So I'm not minimizing this at all. I can get addicted to bubble gum. Keep it in the counter.

Morgan, hide this gum for a while. So I know, but I know God makes provision and I know we can make an excuses. I know the people who want it bad enough will make changes.

Think about that. Of all the men or women, and now it's a big problem in women's lives as well, that I talk to, I say, listen, get stuff on your phone that won't even allow you to enter porn websites. Oh, I don't wanna do that, it's kind of a hassle, six bucks a month.

How about every email, and it goes to accountability, send it to a pastor, send it to your spouse. Oh man, I don't wanna do that, I'm not. So you're just gonna grin and bear it? You're just gonna be a click away from the enemy? I mean, why? Because you don't want change bad enough.

That's why you've been in it for 15 years or 20 years. That's why it's not gonna stop. Because God is not some God up in heaven gonna take these things away and allow us to continue in what we enjoy.

The only reason I'm hitting as hard on this is because it's true, and I want people to change. If people are willing, if they want to fight bad enough, they'll win it. And on this issue too, with addicted to certain things, I tell people, you gotta cut those relationships that are pulling you down.

Oh man, they're such good friends though. Really. You don't know who you slept with last week, you woke up, you don't know how you got home, and they're such good friends.

I mean, what kind of world do we live in? But it goes back to this, we love our sin. Boy Shane, you're being pretty brutal and upfront. Yeah, I have to.

You have to go directly to where people are living in order to affect change. You can't use big theological terms and not get to the heart of where people are at. What about this? I can't control my anger.

I'm trapped, I cannot control this anger, but they never submit to anybody. They never humble themselves. They never apologize.

They never put, one of the reasons we get angry is because things don't go our way. It's called being a big baby. Or is that just me? No, I get angry when my day's not going like I planned.

My spouse is not doing what I thought. And you anger. But it has no place in a, you go try and say, Lord, I'm gonna serve you today.

Whatever you bring, I'm gonna make this one of the best days of my life. I'm gonna rejoice in this. Who can I serve? How can I serve? You go into the day with that attitude, it's very hard to get angry.

Because things come flat tire. Okay, Lord, you've got something planned. Praise God, who am I gonna meet today? Who's gonna, you know? And you just go through life like that.

I haven't mastered this. This is a hard one, of course. I get upset, traffic, I'm in a hurry, so now I leave early or different things.

But think about that. If we can't control anger, how often do we humble ourselves? How often do we submit? And I see it, this is real sad. One of the hardest things for me coaching Little League, these kids are seven and eight, and I feel it so I can relate.

But the parents just beating up their kids. They're angering, throwing their bat. How could you do that? Like what's, are you living vicariously through the life of your child? Is that why you're upset? You wanted your child to be number one, and now you're angry at them, and you're beating them to death mentally with your words? Why is that? Because at the root of anger is pride and selfishness.

Let's just get this out of the way. At the root of anger, somebody's gonna get angry, it's because of pride and selfishness, and we're not getting, why do kids get angry? If I ever brought home donuts, my kids would get angry. My kid would not get angry.

If I ever said, you can watch TV all night tonight, I don't care what you watch, they wouldn't get angry. Why do they get angry? The same reason we do, because we have to do things we don't wanna do, or things are restricted, and anger rises up. Another one, I can't control jealousy, I'm trapped.

And we talked to, my wife's gonna share her testimony next month, and she's struggled with this in the past when we first met, we talked to a lot of girls who struggle with this, and even guys, jealous husbands are, wow. I mean, they'll just beat up their family with their words, and with their actions. But often, people, jealousy is often fueled.

I don't know if you know that, but you fuel jealousy by what you watch, what you listen to, the meat, you fuel it, and you just get jealous, and you get upset, and you don't take those thoughts captive. So we're not, we struggle with these things. People can struggle with everything I just mentioned, but it's much different than giving over to it, and allowing it to become a lifestyle.

So be careful when you say, I'm trapped, I can't stop, it's who I am, because I don't think as a believer of Jesus Christ ever that should identify you. Your sin should never identify you. Hi, my name is Chris, and I'm a this.

No, you're a child of God who's struggling with that. So be careful, maybe it's just me, but I see a lot of people, they don't come out of this 10, 15 years, because they say, I'm trapped, it's useless. I've prayed to God, he won't take this away.

Do you know how many men have prayed to God, Lord, take this lust away, and it does not go anywhere? Why is that? Because that's a prayer he's not gonna answer. God gave you that desire for your spouse. That helps to keep the glue, the marriage together, or a young adult to be attracted to the person you're married, and we're wanting God to remove things.

Now, I believe that he can heal people, he can take away lust and bring it to almost nothing, but many times, there's a struggle, there's a battle, it's warfare, putting on the whole armor of God involves that whole process. I've said this a few months ago, and people chuckle, but it's true, the devil is not dressed in red. Holding a pitchfork, he comes as everything you've always wanted.

He'll come as blonde hair and blue eyes to the woman, he'll come as that man who's so nice to you. He always respects me, he listens to me, I wish my husband, that's how he comes, folks. He comes as a cold six-pack after a hard day.

That's who he is. He's not coming in, here I am, I'm the devil, I'm gonna destroy you. No, he comes in as everything you've always wanted.

And this is one reason why we love excuses, is so we can continue in our sin. And I came across this article, I've just put it on Facebook today, and I felt very compelled to read it. I kinda chopped it up a little bit so it's not very long.

But it's from this daughter, she wrote her dad a letter, anonymous. And she wrote this, dear dad, I found porn on your computer somewhere around the age of 12, just when I was starting to become a young woman. First of all, it seemed very hypocritical to me that you were trying to teach me the value of what I let into my mind in terms of movies and different things, yet here you were entertaining your mind with this junk on a regular basis.

Your talks to me about being careful with what I watch meant virtually nothing. Because of pornography, I was aware that mom was not the only woman you were looking at. I became acutely aware of your wandering eye when we were out and about.

This taught me that all men have a wandering eye and can't be trusted. I learned to distrust and even dislike men for the way they perceived women in this way. As far as modesty goes, you tried to talk to me about how I dress, but your actions told me that I would only be truly beautiful and accepted if I looked like the women on the magazine or in the pornography.

As I grew older, I only had this message reinforced by the culture, that beauty is something that can only be achieved if you look like them. I also learned to trust you less and less, and what you told me didn't line up with what you did. I wondered more and more if I would ever find a man who would accept me and love me for who I was.

When I had friends over, I wondered how you perceived them. Did you see them as my friends, or did you see them as pretty faces in one of your fantasies? No girl should ever have to wonder that about the man who's supposed to be protecting her and other women in her life. If I could tell you one thing, it would be this.

Pornography just didn't affect your life. It affected everyone around you in ways that I don't ever think you can realize. Love your daughter.

Folks, that's his truth. We need to hear that. That should drive us to our knees.

That fact right now should stop the man who's been addicted to pornography the last 10 or 15 years and get on your face before Almighty God tonight, because you will reap what you sow. You're not hiding it. It will come out, and let me just show you how far our culture has drifted.

This is on Facebook. It's got a lot of different views. On the side, I picked it up, but here's what one reader wrote about this article, and this is a guy.

He had things about the Pope, so I'm assuming he's Catholic, but he said this. Wow, that was maybe the most ruthless and vicious attack I've ever seen, and I've witnessed atrocities. I hope God will be more merciful and tactful in his assessment and evaluation of this daughter than she was with her beloved daddy, for as you measure it out, so it will be measured unto you, quoting Matthew 7. Who does this guy think he is? I could not believe what I was hearing, but instantly I realized he's probably addicted to porn.

He's convicted, and he has religion, no relationship with God, and he hated that article because it's what's coming out of his heart. Can you believe somebody would actually warn the daughter and be upset? I mean, this is how far we've drifted. Again, it's not willpower versus God's power.

It's not willpower versus God's power. It's both. And all week, Lord, what does this look like? What does this look like? I wanna give you practical advice and example, and it dawned on me this morning as I was looking out my window.

It's almost like, and I hate to put analogies on things, but it might help us understand obedience and God's grace, discipline and God's mercy, doing what we need to do, but relying on God. It's almost like this. When you turn your car on, you've gotta put it in drive.

Without that, it's not going anywhere. You can have 300 horsepower in your motor, and it's not going anywhere. It's stuck.

So you, Christians, we're called to put the car in drive. Put the car in drive so it can go. I'm not powering that vehicle.

I'm not doing any of that. I'm just putting it in drive. That's my responsibility.

Well, that's the responsibility of the believer is to put the word of God in drive and allow God to power, let God to sustain it. The energy comes from God, but I've gotta put it in drive. I've gotta obey what it says.

It says, make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lust. Lust, it says, don't become obedient servants to sin. It says, put away from these things.

Do not be conformed to these things. And we forget about all these scriptures telling us to put it in drive and then let God take over. So many people try to put it in drive and then get out and push the vehicle.

That's what workspace is. That's what just doing, doing, doing does. It's pushing the vehicle.

Have you ever tried to push your car when it's running out of gas? Especially up a little grade, just a tiny, just 1%. You're not going anywhere. But that's what we do when it's all about willpower.

I just want, tomorrow, Shane, you really convicted me. So tomorrow I'm gonna be a new man. Well, really, how are you gonna be a new man without applying the word of God and humbling yourself? Think about this scripture, 1 Peter 5. Humble yourselves, 1 Peter 5, 6. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God.

And at the proper time, He will exalt you. So see, there's a humbling there. I'm gonna humble myself under the mighty hand of God.

And then in due time, He will exalt me. And then I'm casting all my anxieties on Him because He cares for me. And then it says, be sober-minded, be watchful.

Wait a minute. God said He's gonna prosper me. He's gonna elevate me.

He's gonna, yeah, you humble yourself. God's gonna do that. But now be watchful, be sober-minded because your adversary, the devil, goes about as a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

And then does it say, don't worry, God's gonna keep him away. I wish, and God will. But what does it go on to say? Resist him, resist him, and he will flee.

So the devil's coming. I've gotta resist him, right. But you resist him in God's strength by obeying His word.

When you obey God's word, it turns on that strength. It turns on God's provision, His grace, His safety. So do you see how both of these are married? And we can't get hung up on either extreme.

Here's a couple for you, 1 Peter 1.14. As obedient children, that tells me not as disobedient children, right. As obedient children, not conforming yourself to the former lust as you did in your ignorance. So he's saying, listen, if you wanna be obedient children, stop conforming like a potter has clay.

Stop conforming yourself back to these former lusts. Stop doing that. In the past, you're ignorant, but now you know better.

So that tells me I can come back to this. I can allow God to take over. 1 John 3.3. All who have this hope in Him, purify themselves.

Romans 6.19 tells us to present our bodies as slaves to righteousness. And then Peter asks in 2 Peter 3.11, what sort of people ought you to be in holiness and godliness? The more I studied, the more I got a headache on how many scriptures are about obedience. But we say, oh, God's grace, He forgives me, He loves me, I'm trapped, I'm born this way, and we never change.

Or we just say, I'm gonna try harder. Shane really convicted me Saturday. I'm gonna come Monday, come tomorrow, I'm gonna really make, I'm gonna really just not, well, that without the power of God, it means failure.

It's actually pride to say, I'm gonna do this. But you say, Lord, with your help, I've gotta overcome these things. Do you see why now I put so much emphasis on repentance? Repentance and confession, you have to bring the sin to the light.

Let me encourage you, this is what all people do, so don't think it's just you. When you're confronted with sin, with sinful behavior, don't start making excuses. Well, yeah, I do this because she does this.

He's got problems with this. And hey, no, no, no, no, that's part of self-examination is just taking full responsibility, full responsibility for our actions. And there is hope and there is freedom.

I don't wanna leave you just with this depressing thought. There is hope and there is freedom, but you have to admit the sin, you have to expose it, you have to return and you have to repent. So if it were me and I was caught in some of the things I listed and you've been bound for many years, I would go to your spouse, I would go to your friend, I would go to someone and say, listen, I've been living a lie.

I've got people fooled, I've even got my accountability partner fooled, but I've been paying for things, I've been going behind the radar, I've been making excuses, I'm just coming clean. And you'll feel the burden has been lifted because you're bringing it to the light. Sin can't grow in the light.

It loves the darkness of deceit. It loves that darkness. Admit, return and repent.

And for those, that's for somebody who's a believer, but somebody who doesn't know God and maybe this has been convicting them, what has to happen, and I talk with a lot of people, baseball field or out in public, and they want it so hard to stop being angry. They want so hard to treat their spouse, they want so hard that they can never do it. Why, because their heart has to be changed.

The only way a person can really change is for the heart to be changed. And people say, well, what about, I know people who go to AA and they change. Usually they just change one addiction for another.

Now they're drinking a pot of coffee and a pack of cigarettes all day, but I don't drink alcohol. Well, yeah, you just gave up the addiction one to the other. God really has to change your heart.

You have to have a heart change. How does that happen? Same thing as what I just said, you repent. You acknowledge, you say, Lord, I need you.

I need Christ's sacrifice on the cross. I need to be cleansed. I am defiled.

I am defiled and dirty. I need to be saved and set free. And you'd be amazed at how many people in the church still have never done this.

They haven't done this. They've never repented of their sins. So they're going around feeling dirty, feeling defiled, feeling, they wanna get on meds, they wanna talk to a psychiatrist, and God just says, listen, come to me.

Come to me, you're carrying too much guilt. You're carrying too much shame. Let me take care of it.

And that's what he does.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/97949Fyh_rE.mp4

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