

# Desperate for More of God

by Shane Idleman

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the resurrection and the divinity of Christ in order to experience a transformed life and the power of God.*

**Duration:** 59:47

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 1:18, Matthew 11:28, John 11:25, Acts 3:19, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 4:22-24, James 4:8

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Surrender To God"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the need for true transformation and surrender to God, highlighting the importance of repentance, breaking prideful hearts, and embracing the resurrection life that Christ offers. It challenges individuals to let go of sin, seek redemption, and fully surrender to God's will, acknowledging the power of the cross and the need for genuine change in their lives.

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## Transcript

This message of Easter. This message of Christ risen again. How can it not affect us on a very deep level? I mean, more people are excited about Kobe than Christ.

And he didn't die for our sins. And I come sometimes and I see people just not engaged or not impacted by the message of the Gospel, by the message of the resurrection, the power of the resurrection. And as a pastor, you come to Easter and you think, what am I going to say? I mean, we could stay here for 6 or 7 or 8 weeks and talk about the power of Christ, the power of the Gospel.

And what exactly am I going to say? Am I going to talk about the historical Jesus? Am I going to spend some time in the Gospels? Am I going to go here and do this? What is the message in a nutshell? And that was really the struggle coming into this. And what I want to do is I want to talk about, you'll see there, resurrection life is the title of this message. And when I talk about resurrection life, there's more to this than what meets the eye for most people.

And your greatest challenge this morning is going to be a few different things. For some of you, it's going to be skepticism and doubt. And you think, well, I don't know about this Jesus guy or I don't know about Christianity.

I don't really understand that. So your greatest struggle right now before it even started is going to be doubt and skepticism and wondering and not really sure. Can I know? Can I know beyond a shadow of a

doubt? And for other people, and I would submit to you that it's a problem with the majority of the church today.

And it's that half-heartedness. We're not desperate for more of God. We're not.

There's a superficialness there about the message of the cross and the message of the Gospel. So what I wanted to do this morning is talk about resurrected life. What exactly does that mean? Because if there was a Savior sent to save us, and we acknowledge Him on this day, you would think there would be more of an appreciation, of a celebration for what actually happened.

And I think what's happening is it really has not penetrated our heart. And that's why people are more excited about Kobe than Christ. Or about this than that.

And that's a disheartening thing, but it's a reality. So I want to speak to those two groups of people. And what I'm going to do is I'm going to hit a few different arguments.

I'm going to move this over a little bit because that PowerPoint light is right in my face. It's what happens when you don't have service here too often. I'm probably going to say tonight quite a few times, because I'm used to Saturday nights.

I almost said it during the prayer. And with this type of response, maybe we should do this more often on Sundays. Right? Now with that said, we'll need a lot of volunteers.

So we're going to be signing you up on your way out as well. But in all seriousness, to me this is a very important message. And I want to talk about, you know, most people, if we took a survey, would know why we're here today.

And it's almost like, yeah, yeah, an empty tomb. Jesus rose again. I got it, I got it, I got it.

And that's not really the message of the Bible. There's a dramatic experience that radically changes a person's life. And when we talk about the resurrection, I talk to atheists, I talk to different people, agnostics, and everything seems to hinge on this one point, and you hear this a lot, that He was just a good teacher.

He was just a good teacher. Right? That's all He was. But if you take away the divinity of Christ, and say He's just a good teacher, He was a terrible teacher.

If you take away the divinity aspect, that He was God, fully God, yet fully man, if you take that away and say He was just a good teacher, He was a terrible teacher. There was not a lot of truth in that if you remove His divinity. Well, think about this.

If I came in here and I said, listen, I'm going to be killed pretty soon, and I'm going to rise from the dead, and also, my kingdom is not of this world. And as a matter of fact, if you want to know God, you've got to go through me. I am the only way, the only truth, the only life.

How many people would we have at next week's service? Zero. Because I'm a lunatic. Right? I joked last night, my wife and my mom would be there, but nobody else would be there.

And they would be praying for Him. Oh Lord, help change that boy. So think about it.

And C.S. Lewis presented that argument many years ago. Christ is either lunatic, He's a liar, or He's the Lord Jesus Christ. You can't have just a good teacher.

If you remove the divinity, He was a terrible teacher. He was a lunatic. He was out of His mind.

He was crazy. You can't just say, oh, He was a good teacher. No, He wasn't.

If you eat of my flesh and drink of my blood, you will never die. Why? What? He came on the scene saying, I am the Son of God. End of story.

Before Abraham was, I am. He came boldly saying, I am God. So the struggle you have this morning, the struggle that a lot of people have is I cannot comprehend this.

And let me kind of ease you a little bit right there. I can't either. I can't comprehend the hypostatic union of Christ, fully man, yet fully God.

But the Bible is crystal clear on this issue. And instead of neglecting the entire truth because we don't believe a portion of it, we should embrace the entire truth. We should embrace that truth because the Bible teaches it throughout Scripture.

I can show you Christ in the Old Testament. The New Testament is just a fulfillment of what happened. So you have to think about that.

Let me challenge you. He is not a good teacher. The next time somebody tells you He was a good teacher, no, He was not.

If that's all He was, He was a terrible teacher. Now if you mix His divinity and the fact that He was fully man, then He was an absolute wonderful teacher. He was the best that ever walked this planet because He ultimately was born to die.

I mean, let's be honest, that's why Christ had to come. And the church today in America, this isn't in my notes, it wasn't from last night, I'm just trying to be led here on what God would want to say to you guys. The church in America needs a modern day wake up call.

They are avoiding everything that has the power in it. We don't want to talk about sin. We don't want to talk about judgment.

We don't want to talk about the blood of Christ. We don't want to talk about the cross. We don't want to talk about repentance.

We don't want to talk about judgment. We don't want to talk about all those things that are the very foundation of the Gospel. Now if you attend Westside, you've heard me say that before, but it begs the question, if that's the foundation of the Gospel and we're not preaching it, then that's why we're not seeing a lot of lives radically changed.

Because somebody can go to church and you can tell them what they want to hear. Go. Cheerleader.

God loves you. And He forgives you. And that's true.

Absolutely. I say often if it wasn't for the grace of God, I wouldn't be up here. As the song says, amazing grace.

It's grace that's brought me here thus far. And it's going to be grace that takes me home. But how can you fully understand the good news without the bad news as the backdrop? See, the whole problem with the culture is not guns, it's sin.

It's not the government, it's sin. It's sin. Our sin nature.

That was the whole point of the cross. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. I'm going to have to send my perfect sacrifice to cover the sins of the world.

Jesus was born to die. He came into His ministry born to die. I've come to die.

That's basically what He's saying. So He's not a good teacher. He was teaching, but the whole purpose was to be put on a cross and die for the sins of the world.

A spotless, blameless Lamb. The Lamb of the world. You've heard that term used before.

And many people don't understand it, but it's Old Testament imagery. The Passover Lamb. Without the shedding of the blood, there is no remission of sin.

Why? Because the life of the flesh is in the blood and it's required upon the altar to make atonement for the souls of men. So that's why that had to happen. So we have to remove the good teacher aspect.

The next thing about this is, and actually I want to stay on this good teacher point for just a minute. I pulled this from John MacArthur's book. This is why we must realize that he is not a good teacher.

Obviously, if he was just a good teacher, nobody would have followed him. This guy's a lunatic. We're not following him.

Why did he follow him? Here's why. His authority was apparent. His wisdom was superhuman.

His purity was undeniable. His power fascinated them. His provision astounded them.

His healing took away their sickness. His dominance of demons shocked them. His judgment was awesome and His love overwhelmed them.

And the resurrection actually transformed their lives. So I'm going to bring up a question right now that I was going to bring up 20 minutes from now. But I feel the need to do it.

If the resurrection so dramatically and traumatically changed their lives, I mean, they were fishermen, tax collectors. Now they're following God. Now they're dying for their belief.

If the message of the Gospel, the resurrection so transformed their life, why doesn't it change the lives of many of you? Think about that. Most people don't know this resurrection life that the Bible talks about. When I quote Jesus' words, if you believe on me as the Scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water.

If we took a survey, most people would say, I don't know what he's talking about. I have no idea. That's weird.

No, it's not weird. When you've been filled with the Spirit of God and these rivers of living water flow out of you, love, joy, peace, contentment, you've got to speak boldly. You've got to lead people to the cross.

You'll understand exactly what he means. I do. I was dead in my trespasses, then this resurrected life, now it's a transformed life.

Can you truly relate to Jeremiah when he said his word is in my heart like a burning fire? It's shut up in my bones. I can't even hold it back. Most people say, I have no idea what he's talking about.

I come to church as if I'm doing God a favor. I read my Bible sometimes and I might put on Joelstein. But other than that, we don't know anything about... I've got to stop teasing that guy, I guess.

But listen, to be honest with you, we don't know anything about, most don't know anything about this resurrected life. Let's be honest, because honesty is the first step towards change. I talk to a lot of people, marriage difficulties, addictions, alcohol, you fill in the blanks.

The first thing, let's get honest about it. Oh, no, no, the excuses come out. The excuses come out.

Oh, this or that or that or this. No, no, no. Honesty is the first step towards God radically changing your life.

And that first step is saying, Lord, I need this. I need You. If I'm wrong, Lord, please take over.

Take over my life. I want to be radically transformed by the Gospel. So he was not just a good teacher.

He was either a lunatic, a liar, or the Lord Jesus Christ. Those are our options. The next point I talked about last night, and I will this morning, is many will say, well, he didn't exist.

This Jesus person didn't exist. That is just pure baloney. That is absolutely incorrect, because we know more about Jesus than any other person in all of ancient history.

Secular historians, Jewish historians, such as Josephus, all recorded history acknowledge that there was a Christ. Josephus, a Jewish historian even said, yes, there was a Jesus attested to do many miracles, did many wonders. They crucified Him.

And He was said to rise again. He was a correct figure. He absolutely lived in history.

So once you remove He's not a good teacher and He did live, the next thing is, but He did not rise from the dead. Is this really not the stumbling point for many people? And to me, I think, well, if God created the universe, surely, surely, this is not beyond His scope of work. And if you think, oh, He rose from the dead, we just throw that out there.

If you understand that the deep theology behind it, that He was a sacrificial Lamb for the sins of the world, on the cross, bearing the wrath of God, propitiation, the wrath of God was poured upon that cross. All of history culminates on this one point in time when the wrath of God fell upon that place causing Jesus to say, Eli, Eli, lama zabatchini, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Jesus had to bear the sin of the world. Then not only to bear the sin of the world, being buried, He had to raise from the dead saying not only did I cover your sin, I conquered sin, death, and the grave.

I am He who rose again. So the resurrection isn't just some afterthought. Let's stick that in there.

That's the full picture. Because even the animals in the Old Testament, they were killed. And they never rose again.

Their blood was covered. It covered the people's sins temporarily. It was a foreshadowing of Christ and He would come.

So think about that. The resurrection isn't just some afterthought. Let's deal with this.

That's the power of God to proclaim His truth. You're going to kill me. I'm going to rise again, and I'm going to prove it.

And because of that, Satan, I'm actually king of kings and Lord of lords. You're not. I just overcame death, hell, and the grave.

You tried to stop me. You can't. People have resurrection life.

You have to understand something. God and the devil are not equal. God and the devil are not equal.

And I hear that a lot. Sometimes we walk around, especially what's going on with our nation and this guy in North Korea wants to take out Los Angeles, wants to take out, well, who's sovereign? And we walk around so scared. We forget that God is sovereign.

The enemy is not a co-equal. It's not good and evil equal. It's God, the sovereign God, and the devil's just a butler.

He has to submit to whatever God wants to do. They're not equal. So understanding that, the cross, the empty tomb, there's already victory.

All we do as Christians is you walk into the victory that's already been given to you. You're not, well, that's important because you're not fighting. I'm not fighting from a position of I've got to win this battle.

The battle's been won. So we walk in a position of victory. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they're powerful through God for the pulling down of strongholds.

That means that there's a spiritual realm out there. It doesn't mean, oh, that's crazy. No, it's not.

It's not. There's a spiritual realm out there. If God created the heavens and the earth, we go, oh, I don't think there's a spiritual realm.

Absolutely, that's where the fight is. Now, don't misunderstand me. Life is a battleground.

It's not a playground. But it's almost like your army's already won. God is in control.

God won. You work and operate from a position of victory. So the enemy's gonna use, oh, you'll never amount to anything.

Look at your past. I don't care what your past is today. It doesn't matter.

The cross of Christ covers all of that. So you have to understand that the empty tomb isn't just an afterthought, and let's just make it a part of our celebration. It goes with the cross.

The cross took on the wrath of God. The empty tomb proves that now the victory's been won. They are married, never to be divorced.

And you have to remember that. So, yes, He existed. Yes, He rose from the dead.

You might say, well, Shane, that's just your point. It's the point of the Bible. Yeah, all Christians say that.

Well, think about this. This is also recorded history. All of Jesus' disciples, except John, were killed.

Hung upside down. Cut in two. Sawn, struck down.

Boiled in hot water. And they died for a lie? Think about that. If they hid the body, I mean, as soon as you start to nail the, oh, hold on, hold on, guys.

I was just joking. It's over there underneath that cave in the canyon. They're not gonna be pulled apart limb from limb.

Watch their wisest children being killed for a lie. So we have to say the resurrection is absolutely substantiated. All of those guys, read Foxe's Book of Martyrs.

They were killed because of their faith. And John wasn't killed. He was boiled in oil.

And it didn't kill him, so they exiled him to the island of Patmos, and that's where the Book of Revelation comes from. So if these guys truly did not experience that, none of this would happen. They would've went back to fishing and tax collecting.

So something jarred them so much, that they became transformed and died for what they believed. The next thing I wanna talk about, many will say, well, it's just not true. It's just not true, I don't care what you say.

That is pure, unadulterated, well, I don't know what it is, but it's just wrong. Because of course it's true. What the person is normally saying, once you get them to this point, you've just proved all of their arguments are gone.

Well, it just doesn't exist then. That's an easy way to say, I'm God, I don't want there to be a God. I'm not gonna submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Could I have been wrong all of my life? Of course not. No, it just didn't happen. What we do is we put it out of our mind.

And that's why it just, actually, it cracks me up to watch some of these top atheists debating, Hawkins and Dawkins and all these guys. I mean, they're just so full of foolishness that it's apparent, it's apparent that they're just not wanting there to be a God. And what does the Bible tell us? The fool has said in his heart that there is no God.

And I remember they were pressing one of these guys hard and like, where did the creation come from? How did we get here? And he finally just said, well, I don't really know. I think we were planted here on crystals by aliens. I mean, that's the top minds, atheist minds in our country or in Europe saying these things.

And then he just, one of these guys just made a statement a few weeks ago and I had to write it down and talk to you guys about this. He said that science is finally starting to prove the non-existence of God. Really? Science has finally started.

Did you know that science said that smoking is okay? Decades ago? Just recently, I told the group last night, we just had a baby two and a half weeks ago now. And as soon as the baby was born, my last three kids, they hurry up and put the baby on this little table and check and is everything okay? And 15 minutes go by and no mommy can't see the baby right now, we gotta make sure. And what is it, is it okay? Yeah, it's fine, don't worry.

And they're doing all this stuff and all these tests did it breathe okay and is she okay and the weight and everything. Now what do they do? The baby's born, they clean up a little bit and give it right to the mom. Oh, we'll do the test later.

So I said, well, what happened? The last three kids, he goes, well, we're finding now that it's better to do it this way. Oh, isn't that wonderful. Then my other three kids, you did it wrong.

Yeah, I guess we did, hmm. Well, what is right here, science or, think about it, we're trusting in man-made, basically science is, I think this happened, we have some facts, well, let's just assume this now. Even the umbilical cord, they used to put alcohol on it.

Now I said, don't put alcohol on it. Well, we used to and now we don't have to. And then other people say, oh yeah, you need to, it's dying flesh, you gotta put, who do we trust here, science? You see how it vacillates and it changes? I just picked these up offline, I wanted to read these to you the Bible said two or 3,000 years ago that the earth is a spear.

What did science say? The earth is a disc, flat. The Bible said that the stars are innumerable. What did science say? There's only 1,100.

The Bible said that the earth floats in space. What did science say? This is my favorite one, that it's set on the back of a large animal. I mean, do you wanna laugh or cry? We're trusting in science? Science doesn't disprove or prove God, God, through science, will reveal his nature because his invisible attributes are clearly seen, but we can't say that, oh, science proves there's no God.

Science has been dead wrong and it'll be dead wrong again. Look what else here. Light moves.

What did science say? Light is fixed. Now, of course, they've changed their, all their views now line up with the Bible. I don't know, call that, you know, well, you know what to call it.

Blood is the source of life, Leviticus. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission sin. The life of the flesh is in the blood.

What did science say way back then? Get the blood out, blood draining. Do you remember that practice? Or leeches, to pull the blood out of a person because that's the bad part. We gotta get this, well, the life is in the blood.

Ocean floors, according to the Bible, have deep valleys and mountains. Science said, no, the ocean floor is flat. When dealing with disease, the Bible says, wash hands over running water.

What did science say? Don't even wash your hands. That's why they would go from surgery to surgery to surgery with bloody hands and spreading all these disease and plagues. And somebody finally read the Bible.

Said, listen, we've gotta, so everything is consistent. You cannot trust science, and I hear that so much. Well, science or facts or this.

It takes more faith to believe that there is no God than it does to believe that there is a God. I'm sorry. You look around and it screams Creator.

There's creation. But the last point is really where I wanna hang my hat. On this whole message this morning, and this is the one undisputable fact that the greatest witness for the resurrection is a transformed life.

No matter what you can say, the power of the Gospel to take a man destined to hell, living a life of whatever, and turn that person around, and now they're a complete different person. They are transformed. How do you explain that? I wanna read a quote here from Rousseau.

He was a French skeptic hundreds of years ago. And he wasn't a Christian. He said, I must confess to you that the majority of the Scriptures astonish me.

The holiness of the evangelists speak to my heart as it has such striking characteristics of truth that if it had been the invention of men, the inventors would be the greatest. They would be greater than the greatest heroes. And this skeptic was not willing to replace preference with truth.

So he ultimately rejected the Bible. But he saw that this power of a transformed life, and I said something last night, nobody came up and challenged me, but you're welcome to come up and challenge me after the service on this one. It's gonna ruffle some feathers, but if you hear me through, I think it's gonna make sense, okay? So give me a couple minutes to get this whole picture out.

Christianity, I don't really look at it as a religion. I look at it as the way. That's what they used to call it in the Bible.

Paul would say the way. The way, this is the way that God has chosen to save man. No other religion on the planet will change a person's heart.

What? Come on. You ready? Shane, are you sure? I know certain people, they've been changed. You fill in the blank.

I'm not gonna go down and list all the false religions right now. I'm not gonna do that. Well, this person I know, they became a such and such, and now they're a good husband or a good father.

Well, this person I know, they're a good person. This religion, that's a good, good people. No, no other religion will change your heart.

So what are you talking about? I just told you, Shane, I laid it out. I've seen people change. No, you've seen them reformed.

You've never seen them transformed. Think about that. I've seen many men stop drinking because their wife's gonna leave.

Somebody knocks on their door, they become part of this certain religion. Now they're changed. No, no, no, no, no, no.

They're reformed. They're scared of the consequences, so of course they're gonna change. And other religions say you have to be good.

That's the only way you're going to heaven. Of course you're gonna see some reformation, some changing there. But no heart is transformed in any other religion.

Anywhere. You'll never see the heart, a man dead in sin and trespasses, turns and change and transforms. Now he's full of the Spirit of God.

You'll see some reformation. People are scared, so they make some changes. I've gotta make changes in my life.

Have you ever heard that? I've gotta make some changes. I've gotta reform my ways. So that's possible, but your heart can still be cold, rigid, and not in the right relationship with God.

So the power of a transformed life. And that's really what I wanted. The focus of this whole message was right on this point.

This resurrection life. If it so dramatically changed these people throughout the New Testament, changed their lives so much that they actually died for it, why doesn't it change ours? I mean, that's why we're here this morning, because of the resurrection life, the power in the empty tomb. And we all know what happened on that fateful night, right? All in one night, Jesus was betrayed by Judas.

His forsakers forsook him, and Peter denied him. All within a short period of time. The Bible says, led as a lamb is to the slaughter, and he opened not his mouth.

That fateful night, they brought the King of kings, the Lord of lords, this lamb slain before the foundation of the world for the atonement of the sins of the people. They brought him before Pilate as if they're in control. Pontius Pilate, many of you know, you've heard the story.

He says, I washed my hands of this innocent man's blood. Even he recognized the innocence there. And Pilate said, then his blood be on you.

And the people said, let his blood be on us and on our children. And that verse makes me squirm every time I read it. The audacity of these people.

And he would sit there. He said, I've come to do this. Do not take this away.

I was born to die. I'm going to be sentenced. I'm going to rise again.

And Pilate would challenge him, don't you know? Don't you know that I can set you free? I, Pilate, I can set you free or I can execute you. Answer me now. You know what Jesus said to him? You'd have no power over me at all unless it was given to you from above.

That's power. He told Pilate, you're just a butler. You're just a maidservant.

You're just doing what God has ordained from the foundation of the earth. You're just fulfilling the will of God to put me on the cross. You'd have no power over me unless it was given to you from above.

And of course, we know the crucifixion, the horrific thing that happened that night, and if we had time to go through what that does to the body, what Christ endured, it's absolutely amazing. And that's why

sometimes we have to sit and remember whether it's Easter, Christmas, Communion, whatever it is, remember the cross. Remember what happened there.

Because you have to go back and remember. Remember, why are we here? What happened on that fateful night? And as many people know, what Easter is all about is the celebration of the empty tomb, and it picks up where John left off in chapter 20. It says, early in the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

And we have to remember, it wasn't removed for Jesus to get out. It was removed for the witnesses to get in. So how does this whole thing that the body was stolen, how does that fly? And that's the big thing, especially in Israel among Jews today, oh, the body was stolen, it's stolen.

But you have Roman guards guarding this tomb. I gave the illustration last night, it would be like capturing Bin Laden alive, and they have him guarded by the Navy Seals. The body's not just going to disappear.

And when these soldiers fell back in fear because of what they saw, nothing they could do to overpower God. So the tomb was open. So Peter and the other disciples started for the tomb.

Both were running. But the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked at the strips of linen lying there, but he did not go in.

Then Peter came along behind him, went straight into the tomb, and he saw the linen lying there, as well as the cloth. And the cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. Finally, the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went inside, and he saw and he believed.

And many people, we miss this right here, but these men and women were discouraged. Their discouragement of defeat and discouragement went into tremendous joy. They were going back to their old job.

They were done. I'm discouraged. I'm defeated.

And now they see an empty tomb. What he said is true. Now they believed.

And it begs the question I asked earlier. If that experience forever changed your life, their life, why doesn't it change yours? Why do many people come in and leave no different when they arrived? Let's be honest. Let's cut to the chase.

I know, I've lived that life. We come in, worship's boring. God seems distant.

The Bible's boring. I hope this guy hurries up. I know he's been known for long sermons.

I hope this doesn't matter tonight. I mean, think about that. Where's this resurrection life that Christ died for and the disciples fell? And that's why I said this is your hardest challenge.

Half-heartedness and partial obedience to God. Lukewarm living, carnality. Something in you has to die.

Something in you, something in me has to die. Basically, I have to say, not my will, Lord, but Your will be done. Something has to die.

And I want to talk to, and sometimes you'll hear people say, well, there's two types of people. Well, there's those who are saved, those who are not saved. And I actually believe that's true, but I want to add a third

group in there.

I think there are those who are saved, those who are not saved, but there are those who know nothing about the power of God. They have no victory in their Christian walk. The Bible's boring.

Worship is dead. They don't want to go to church. Something is missing in their life.

They're desperate for more. I want that, Shane, what you're talking about. I want that, but I just can't seem to grasp it.

Well, you can today. That's why we're here. I want to read a poem I read about a year ago.

It's by Wilbert Reese. It says, I would like to buy three dollars worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine.

I don't want enough of Him to make me love someone of the opposite color or pick beets with a migrant worker. I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth.

I want a pound of the eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy just three pounds of God, please. And that's really where the state of the church is today.

Many people don't want this resurrection life, and it goes back to what Jesus said. I am the resurrection and the life. Now, I want to talk about that word life for just a minute.

Life represents running water. Running water is living, and life is associated with light and gladness, fullness, order, and active and being. So He says, I am the resurrection and the life.

Your life should be overflowing with living water, with passion, with desire. Living water, everything you touch nourishes. But in many cases, everything we touch dies.

There's darkness, there's depression, there's chaos. It's dead, it's not living. So where's the disconnection here, folks? Where's the disconnection? The problem is not on God's end.

Ever, ever on God's end. He's calling us to Him, saying, listen, I want you to have this resurrected life. That's what life is.

It's full, it's abundant, it's flowing. And you must be desperate for more. And I want to make this, just a couple points before I end this.

You cannot know abundant life until something dies. You will never know the abundant life that Christ spoke of until something dies within you. What did Jesus say? Truly, truly, I say to you.

When He does that, that means listen. Listen. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone.

But if it dies, it bears much fruit. You see, there's always a dying process that has to happen. When a person is saved, they die to sin.

They come from old to the new. They come from darkness to light. They come from right from wrong.

Something dies in them. And what they do is they say, Lord, I need you. I'm a sinner, saved by grace.

I confess you as Christ and Lord tonight. Something is dying in me that I don't like. So that has to die in order for life to come.

Who else had to die? In order for life to come. This isn't rocket science. This is biblical theology.

And as I said before, it's not until olives are crushed, right? Until the oil comes out. It's not until you be crushed and broken until the anointing of God begins to fill you mindly and you see a transformation. You see this living water.

And I know this is a hard message, but God has sent me to give hard messages because that's the only way the church is going to break and repent and be convicted. What conviction does, it goes and rips the conscience out of a man or a woman. It unsettles them.

It stirs the pot. It says, this isn't comfortable. I don't like to hear this.

And God says, that's exactly what you need to hear. You will not know abundant life until something dies. And sometimes a Christian life reminds me of what I see at home where my kids go, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine.

And God says, no, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine. Give me everything. Give me your life.

Give me your marriage. Give me your finances. Give me everything.

I am the abundant life that Christ spoke of. I am the only way, the only truth. No man can come to the Father except through Him.

You say, Shane, that's pretty narrow. Yeah, that's pretty narrow. Jesus said narrow is the way.

Not me. Well, you're just a fundamentalist. Well, there are some fundamental things that we have to agree on.

You see how these terms, don't be scared of these terms. You're gonna be labeled narrow-minded, bigoted, arrogant, condescending. You're gonna be labeled everything because the message of the gospel is so offensive that it's like this light in my eyes.

It's like coming in and somebody's trying to, I love my sin, I love my darkness. Get that light out of here. I don't wanna see it.

I don't wanna hear it. That's why you're gonna hear a lot of pulpits, pulpits that should be beacons of light pointing people to the cross. You're gonna start hearing a lot of, well, this, and we don't talk about sin and judgment, repentance, and we don't talk about all these things.

And you've got big names out there that you all see sometimes. You read Rob Bell and Brian McLaren. All these guys are very dangerous because they're removing the very thing that Christ died for.

If there's no hell, sin, death in the grave, why did he come? If we're all just gonna make it into heaven, what's the point of this? Jesus spoke more about the fears of hell than on the glories of heaven. But what we wanna do is we wanna build a big church and a big audience and say, look at this. God says, no, look at me.

That's what the pulpit is for. And you might say, you might say, boy, that guy's pretty mad. I'm not mad.

Ask my wife. I'm not mad. You're confusing being mad with being sad.

I'm sad at the condition of the family. I'm sad at the condition of the church. And may I be quite honest with you, I'm sad at the condition, the direction that our nation is going.

We have to stop confusing God's patience with His approval. Oh, God's gonna judge America, folks. God is already judging America.

Instead of arrogantly saying, those missiles would never hit here, you should go back in the Old Testament and find out how God would judge His nation that rejected Him. His enemies would come in and destroy that people. We don't like to talk about it.

I sure don't like to talk about four little kids. But the truth is that God said, I sent my messengers to warn them because I had compassion on my people and on my dwelling place. But they mocked my word, they despised my messengers, and they scoffed at my prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against His own people until there was no remedy.

See, if all we do is hide behind the love of God and the grace of God and the mercy of God and never talk about the judgment hand of God that must fall on a rebellious people, the reason He sends difficult messages like this is because He loves us. I've never seen an arrogant man repent and turn to Christ if all he is is coddled in his sin and comfort. Oh, it's because of this and because of that.

No change ever takes place. Either the love of God will compel somebody to repentance or the hammer of God will crush them to repentance. Those are our two options.

So you have to say, something in you must die in order for something to live. And I truly believe there are stages in Christianity, and stages probably isn't the right word, but there are people, and I'm not saying it's your fault and pointing fingers, we're all susceptible to this, but we can become so full of ourselves that there's no room for God. He becomes a servant.

Bless my plans. Do this for me. When He says, no, I'm the Lord Jesus Christ, if He's not Lord of all, He's not Lord at all.

He can't just be Savior and we put Lord on the back burner. John MacArthur caught a lot of heat for this 30 years ago when he talked about Lordship salvation. Hold on now, you can talk to me afterwards.

Don't throw that out just yet. He talked about Lordship salvation, right? So we have the Lord Jesus Christ and we have Savior. Many people are saying, you've gotta divorce, you can't tell people they've gotta submit and surrender and obey.

They can just know Christ as Savior, but not know Him as Lord. Well, I don't know what Bible you're reading, because it's surely not this Bible. He is Lord of all.

When you submit to the cross and surrender, you are bowing your knee to the Lord Jesus Christ. He saved me. He's not just a Savior you put in the back pocket and pull Him out sometime when you need Him.

He has all of me. So something must die, something must die. That's a problem with our nation, that's a problem with the church.

That is probably one of the problems with West Side Christian Fellowship, is there's too many people who haven't quite got there yet, they haven't died to self. And that's why I preach these difficult messages, because He puts in my heart, He breaks my heart, and then I just come and break yours. That's how it works.

My morning this morning was spent worshipping since 4.30 this morning. Lord, I can't do this without you. I need to get out of the way and have you glorify.

Lord, if you don't move, I'm gonna get up there and stammer and stutter and forget where I'm at. You've gotta fill this broken vessel, and it's not until the vessel's empty that the Holy Spirit can bring His power. Elijah told the woman, go get as many vessels as you can, bring back the empty vessels, and the oil kept flowing.

The oil kept flowing, flowing, flowing, but the oil ceased. And what happened? There's no more empty vessels. That's all we are, is empty vessels.

We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency may be of the power of God and not us. Paul said, we are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed, perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, and struck down, but not destroyed. Why, because I'm just the vessel.

If the church falters, I'm just the vessel. If the sound isn't working like it was this morning, I'm just the vessel, Lord, it's your church. I'm not trying to glorify myself.

He humbles me enough to keep me in check. When I get home, my wife says, go change your diapers. I don't care how great your sermon was.

I'm tired, I need to eat. You take that baby for two hours. Oh, home will humble you.

You cannot, if you take anything, you might say, oh, that guy didn't even open the Bible. I don't need to open the Bible because it's in my heart. We're gonna be opening the Bible all year in the book of Matthew, verse by verse by verse, expository preaching, I love it, I love it, but sometimes the hammer of God needs to come out and say, thus saith the Lord, you need to return to me, oh, backsliding people.

Sometimes it has to be said. Something has to die. That's number one problem.

The number two problem, and this wasn't in my notes from last night, I just put in this morning, so I hope it helps. You cannot know life if you consume death. That's one of the themes of my ministry, of tearing down this modern day entertainment, too.

You cannot know spiritual life if you consume death. All we're putting into our mind is death and destruction. That's all we watch, vampires, you call it, witchcraft, illicit sex, this, this, this.

We wonder why we have no spiritual death. It's because you're filling your mind with things that directly oppose the will of God. You need to live in this.

Oh, it's boring, it's old-fashioned. No, it's not. Somebody just said the other day, we don't even need the Old Testament.

We don't even need the Old Testament. If I look, Genesis tells me that God created the heavens and the earth. Exodus tells me that I should not bow down before any other gods.

Leviticus says that without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sin. Numbers tells me that I cannot curse what God has blessed. Deuteronomy says that God will put a nation high above all the other nations that submit to him.

Joshua tells me that as for me in my house, we will serve the Lord. Judges tells me that Samson, Samson comes in many different forms and facets to take a man down. Esther tells me, or Ruth rather, tells me that my king's been redeemer.

It's a foreshadowing of that. What does Kings tell me? That though I walk through the valley of shadow of death. Nope, that's Psalms.

King tells me that I cannot falter between two opinions. If God is God, follow me. You can find Christ throughout the entire Old Testament as well.

Chronicles says, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will heal their land. Ezra was a great encouragement because it says, God can use a man to change a nation. Nehemiah says, why should I not be sad when the place of my father's tombs lies in waste? Esther says, I may have been chosen for a time as this, and if I perish, I perish.

Job says, my redeemer lives, yet though he slay me, I will trust him. Psalms, oh, the Psalms, where can we start? Spurgeon said that Psalms is medicine to the soul. It is medicine to the soul.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds him with His hand. Where can I go? Go to flee your presence. Nowhere, if I ascend into heaven, you are there.

If I make my bed in hell, even you are there. If I take the wings of the morning, even you are there. You are there to hold me and sustain me.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil because the Lord upholds me. What Bible are you reading? How can you get along without it? And you can go through the old prophets. Isaiah saying, those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

That's a message right there for half this room. Those who wait upon the Lord, not jockey for position, not push, not get angry. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

Jeremiah tells me, thank God for Jeremiah 23, that his word is in my heart like a burning fire. Thank you, that's a good thing. That his word is like a fire that devours, a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces.

But he says, you have perverted the words of the living God by not proclaiming the truth of God's word. That's how important this text is. Ezekiel says, I sought for a man from among them who would build a wall, stand in the gap before me, but I found no one.

You see how powerful this is? It's God calling his people. And you can go down to Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, the whole consistency there. The theme is repent, turn to me, repent, people, get in right relationship with me.

I'm calling people back. I created heaven and earth. People sinned, I had to have judgment.

I pulled out Noah as a remnant. Through Noah, I brought Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the 12 tribes of Israel. Through one of them is going to come the Messiah.

The Messiah is going to live. He's going to die a sinless life. He's gonna live a sinless life and die a perfect death on the cross.

That's how I'm gonna redeem people. So you have to go back to the beautiful word of repentance. That's your only hope right now.

If you don't like what I'm saying, that is because you need to hear what I'm saying. Anytime you don't like what I'm saying, it's because you need to hear it. God is calling us back.

And he gets to the entire Old Testament, ends at Malachi. Ends at Malachi, what does he say? I am the Lord thy God, I change not. Malachi, tell my people, I am the Lord thy God, I change not.

And then he drops a bomb in there that is a verse for many people in the church today. I hate divorce. What? Where does that come from? He goes, I hate the deterioration of the family.

As the family goes, so goes the nation. What you're seeing today is the spiritual condition of the family. Before you chew out the president and his policies, you better go look at the family.

Because men, may I be honest with you? Can I just talk to men for a minute? We are the abomination that's a stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy, pure God. For the love of God, would you get off the video games, get off Facebook, kill that porn habit, and tell your ungodly friends to hit the road jack. Don't ever come back.

That's the reason we're in the condition. This is a wake up call to men as well. Start leading your family in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

You're not called to be a passive observer or an angry tyrant. You're called to lead, love, and die for your family if necessary. And I'm getting quite upset with all these emails and all these things because of men are not leading at home.

They want me to come up here and preach a sermon that they do not want to listen to. It starts at home. Oh, that's tough to hear.

You're right, that's tough to hear. And it's time we start hearing the tough messages again. And last week, I brought you into my world for one minute, and I want to do it again.

I want to read to you an email that I got recently. And I think more disheartening than this email is the can of worms that this email has opened up. I've been hearing from people every week saying, that's my home too.

That's my home too. Let me read what this mom and housewife writes who attends our church, folks. I won't watch my kids be physically abused anymore.

I hope I can get through this. I won't listen to my girls be called vile vulgar names. I won't have things smashed or broken in the house.

I won't get into the vehicle and listen to him rage at people. No more spending time together by me scrapbooking and him looking at pornography just a few feet away. I'd love to talk to this guy.

Not in a counseling room, in a boxing arena. I refuse to stay at home and not attend church because I feel guilty for leaving him alone. I will not worship quietly or secretly again.

I've never believed in divorce, so I just keep trying to be more better. I can no longer bear it. I am not dying inside, I have died.

Folks, what do you do with that? You say that message is too hard. No, it's not. That's exactly what we need to begin doing.

Men need to start having coaches that challenge them, not little grandfathers that coddle them. This isn't a Christian home. And then I start fearing people, that sounds a lot like my home environment.

What, where's the disconnect here? What am I missing? The resurrected life that transforms the life. Well, there's two solutions. Either somebody has not truly been transformed, and we've got a whole bunch of people who think they're Christians but aren't, or there's so much lukewarmness and carnality in their lives that they see no change because they're quenching and they're grieving the Spirit of God within them.

And the point I'm gonna close with is obviously back at John 11. Do you want to experience life? Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life. And in this context, this is when Lazarus died.

Many of you know the story of Lazarus, he died. And Jesus came four days later, and they said, oh, if you would have only been here four days ago, and Jesus said, don't worry, don't worry, he'll rise again. And she said, oh, I know, I know, later on, later on, later on, he will, in the resurrection.

What did Jesus say? I am the resurrection and the life. He said, I am the answer to all of your problems. You don't need more counseling, you don't need more therapy, you don't need to read more books.

You need the great healer, the great redeemer. Look what the Bible says, he's everything. The bride of morning star, the brazen serpent that was lifted up, our Sabbath rest, our high tower, our prince of peace, our Lord of lords, the alpha, the omega, which is the beginning, the end, the all-sufficient Savior, Christ is Lord.

The grip of reality has to come with the brokenness and embracing of this message for it to truly take heart. See, the power of the message of the gospel is not necessarily in the message itself. It's in the message going to the heart and changing the heart so it breaks and cries out to God.

And what Peter said in Acts 3.19, they're all coming to him, he said, you put the Son of God on the cross. You brought him to open shame. You put the Son of God on the cross.

And they all said, Peter, what must we do to be saved? He said, repent and be converted. He said, do you know we put Christ on the cross? Is there anything we don't like to talk about? We put him on the cross. That's the reason.

And I can just hear it now during Peter's sermon as he's preaching, the guy says, not me, not me. I'm the man who took the sledgehammer and drove the nails into his hands. Not me, Peter.

Peter said, yes, repent, repent. But not me, I'm the one that took the crown of thorns and pressed it on his head. And I saw the blood begin to drip down.

I couldn't get redemption, Peter. Yes, I could. Yes, I could.

Even the Roman soldier who hated Jesus after Jesus said, Eli, Eli, lama zabatchini, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? They said, he's calling for Elisha. No, he's not calling for Elisha, he's calling for God. And then the Bible says, he gave up his ghost.

And what happened, the whole veil that covered the Holy of Holies that only the priest could go to, only one time of year to get access to the Father, only he could go, that veil that was inches thick was rent from the top to the bottom saying God says, it's done, it's over, it's finished. I've given you the access. You don't need a priest.

You don't need a Pope. You don't need Mary. You need Christ.

It was rent from the top to the bottom. The ground shook. Stones were split.

Even the dead were raised from the dead. The centurion soldier was quaking. He said, surely this is the Son of God.

Surely this is the Son of God. And we sit here in our smug, nice thing saying I might consider it someday as if we're doing God a favor. We don't get to judgment seat and kind of talk our way into it.

You bow at the foot of the cross or you die in eternity separated. There's no other options, folks. That's why I get so passionate because God has radically changed my life and he can change yours too.

But it's not going to happen unless something dies in you. You need prayer for salvation. You need prayer to fully surrender your life.

You need prayer to be the men or women that God's called you to be. I'm gonna ask you to come forward for this very purpose, not to be set apart, but all of us should be up here. If the truth be told, all of us should be up here.

I'd be the first one saying, Lord, I need you. I need you on this side of the cross as much as I did on that side of the cross. Lord, take away this anger and this fear.

Lord, I want to be a better husband. I want to be a father. I want to hold my children, not get upset at them.

Lord, I need you. I can't preach unless you fill me with your spirit of God. I can't get up there and trick the people and posture and jockey.

I don't know, all I know is you and I'm just gonna proclaim your truth because you redeemed me, you bought me, you changed my life. If I could take you, I'd grab you and say, you've got to take hold of this resurrection life. Something in you has to die.

Unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it will not bear fruit. Unless a prideful human heart does not break, the power of God's redemption cannot come through. So we can all go ahead and stand.

We're gonna end with a couple songs of worship. Everybody can stand. And I think we're gonna do a song right now.

One of my favorite, A Thousand Times I've Failed. As a word of encouragement, can you say you failed this week? Some of you are struggling with same-sex attraction. Some of you about ready to cheat on your spouse.

Some of you are so angry at God. He's just saying, let it go tonight, this morning. Let it go at the foot of the cross.

Let it go. Let it go. There's no other way.

As soon as you let it go, that's where the abundant life comes from. I like what D.O. Moody said. There's no peace until you see the finished work of Jesus Christ between you and your sins.

Until this stops being a little icon that we start putting, that we put on our computer and starts being a reality in your heart, you will never know the abundant life that Christ spoke of. So with that said, I'm gonna ask even the prayer team, everybody, if you want, if you need prayer, just begin coming down. They're gonna be down here in this prayer area.

I'll be up here in the corner. I don't care what this looks like. We're not trying to orchestrate some perfectly planned event.

I didn't even look at the clock. I don't care. I just want people broken and humble, seeking God and coming forward for prayer.

So begin making your way up here if you need prayer or they're gonna dim the lights a little bit. And we'll just go into a time of worship and I'll come back and conclude after a few songs. But don't worry about what the person's next to you is thinking.

Don't worry, oh gosh, it's finally, it's time. It's time. You think I got it all worked up for no reason? God put this in my heart for a reason.

For some of you need to hear this message. You need to take that step and come forward. Begin doing that now as he sings and we'll conclude in a bit.

Dear Heavenly Father, Lord, I thank You for this service. Lord, thank You for opening up this opportunity. And I pray, dear Heavenly Father, You just have men and women cry out to You all day today, Lord, seek You in a mighty way.

And then we would hear from, we would hear that revival is springing out from this church into the community, Lord. We want that to be a reality. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/sKOQYyIC8CU.mp4>

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