

Do Not Be Dismayed

by Shane Idleman

Do not be dismayed, for the battle is not yours, it's the Lord's, and with God, insurmountable odds are not insurmountable.

Duration: 45:31

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 20:15, Ephesians 6:10

Topics: "Faith in Trials", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the difference between discouragement and dismay, explaining that dismay can feel overwhelming when life throws multiple challenges our way. He encourages listeners, especially parents, to stand firm in their faith and not to be dismayed, reminding them that the battle belongs to the Lord and that they must position themselves for victory. Idleman highlights the importance of prayer, standing strong in spiritual warfare, and relying on God's strength rather than their own. He reassures that even in the face of insurmountable odds, God is with us, and we can find rest in Him. The sermon concludes with a call to truly know God and to embrace His love and strength in our struggles.

Transcript

Do not be dismayed. And some of you might say, well, didn't we talk about encouragement last week? We did. How to be encouraged was a portion of the sermon.

But dismayed is actually more challenging than discouragement. Dismayed is taking discouragement to a whole new level. Because you can be discouraged and still get through life, but dismayed is when everything seems to be falling apart.

When life is throwing you not only a curveball, but a knuckleball and a slider, for those who play baseball. And we're just dismayed. Have you ever been in that spot where you're just kind of going through life? And I wanted to encourage not only the moms today, but also the dads and the young adults, because you will face a valley of discouragement and dismay when you're just simply dismayed.

And many times what we do, instead of taking it to God, we say, if I could just have another spouse. If I could have just had a different job. Some might even say, if I could have had just other kids.

Those people's kids. If I could have just had their children. Oh, no, no, no.

People say, oh, your kids are so well behaved. Oh, please spend the day with us. Sometimes it's not so.

I had to leave early this morning because my little one was just throwing a royal fit because she didn't want to wear what she had to wear. And I told her, I have to go because now my Holy Spirit is zzzz. And just, oh, God.

And some of us are, if I could just have my health back. If I could just get the years back that I lost. And we live sometimes in that state.

And there is dismay in this room. There are battles going on. And I want to speak to that this morning.

J.C. Ryle, and I recommend books often. I'll recommend this book. J.C. Ryle wrote a book on holiness.

It's over 100 years old. And he said, I was just reading through it last night. He said, true Christianity is a fight.

Don't we forget that sometimes? Because we think of the, you know, we think grace and love and we like these things. But it's also a fight. And there's a whole section he spends on this point.

Do not underestimate your enemy. Most people go into battle, and it's one of the worst mistakes even a nation can make, is when they go into battle underestimating their enemy. And what I'm trying to do is, the reason I talk about topics like this, quite frankly, many times they're not being talked about in the church.

We just want people to feel good and only concentrate on the positive things, which obviously this is going to turn out to be very positive. But I also believe in watching. I've been in ministry now 17 years.

I used to speak before planning the church to different Baptists, to Pentecostal, to Reformed, to Charismatic, to men's ministry, men's conferences. And I've noticed something. Those who are forewarned are forearmed.

If you know what you're walking into, you are prepared. But when we paint a picture of Christianity, and one of the worst things we can tell people is just come to Jesus. Everything will be good.

Everything will be better. And now that's true. That's true for sure.

But that's not necessarily true. When we come to know the Lord and get baptized, sometimes all hell breaks loose. Where's this Joelstein life that I hear on TV? Where's my best life now? Where is it? It's not happening.

It's not happening. I was baptized. I came to the Lord.

Now I've got this diagnosis. Now my spouse is leaving. Now I'm getting fired.

This is not what I signed up for. Correct, because you signed up for the wrong army. My goodness, if we just looked up all the Scriptures dealing with warfare.

The battle is not yours. It's the Lord. Be not dismayed.

Put on the full armor of God. As a good soldier, enduring hardship, fight the good fight. Strive to enter the narrow gate.

There are so many terms about fighting. And if we could just encourage, since it is Mother's Day, specifically moms, dads, you can listen. I mean, you're here.

It's okay. But to not be dismayed. To fight the good fight.

And here is an encouraging word. It's not hard to find rest on the battlefield if you know where to sleep. Moms, dads, it's not hard to find rest on the battlefield if you know where to sleep.

That's the key. So I'm going to actually pull from 2 Chronicles 20, 15, and the New King James Version of the Bible. A lot of people email me.

What version do you use? Half of them are sincere and half of them want to convince me to use a different translation. So, New King James Version of the Bible. And if you're interested, if you go into our website, and if you put in the search bar what translation is best, I spent a whole hour talking about where the different translations of the Bible came from.

Antioch School of Manuscripts and then the Alexandrian School of Manuscripts, NIV, New King James. They come from different schools of manuscript but point to the same truth. So you can find that on our website.

But I'm going to paraphrase some of this between verse 16 and 17. But let me just read it. This is so powerful.

This week has been such an encouragement to me. I've had a very challenging week. I coach a bunch of little guys who don't know the Lord.

Let's say that, right? I'm coaching baseball. And different things have come up and situations. But I've just meditated on this.

And again, it's not hard to find rest on the battlefield if you know where to sleep. Here's where you need to sleep. Thus says the Lord to you, Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude.

For the battle is not yours but God's. Memorize that verse. Memorize it.

Do not be dismayed. It tells me I'm going to be dismayed. Right? Do not be dismayed.

The battle is not yours. It's God's. But then here's where it gets tricky.

Tomorrow, go down against them. Now, the context, if I had time, would be to explain that you have the nation of Israel getting ready to go into battle. And this great army has come up against them.

And the king is very worried. What are we going to do? We can't beat this great army. There's nothing we can do.

So God said, Don't worry. The battle is not yours. Tomorrow, go down against them.

You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves and stand still and see the salvation of the Lord who is with you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

Tomorrow, go out against them for the Lord is with you. Wait a minute. I'm not going to fight.

The battle is not mine. You're telling me now to go down against them? Lord, I'm not hearing something here. Well, there's a key to all of this that we're going to unpack.

And this is very strategic in spiritual warfare. Very strategic. Because on one hand, the battle is the Lord's. It's not mine. He's going to fight for me. But you've got to position yourself.

You have to position yourself correctly. Putting on that whole armor of God. So let's pull from here.

The first thing. Insurmountable odds are not insurmountable. Do you know what the word insurmountable means? It comes from the word surmountable.

It means you can overcome something. A mountain has been overcome. Something has been overcome.

And we look sometimes. I don't know about you, but I do. I look at life and, like, this is insurmountable.

This is impossible. But insurmountable odds are not insurmountable with God. When God is in something, things will happen.

Hudson Taylor. Great missionary. Many, many years ago.

Probably, I think it was the 1800s. He said, I have found that there are three stages in every great work of God. Are you wanting God to restore your marriage? Are you wanting God to restore something in your life? Are you wanting God to rebuild something? Think about this.

There are three stages. First, it's impossible. Second, then it's difficult.

Third, then it's done. Isn't that interesting? First, it's impossible. But as you're going through it, then it's difficult.

And then it's done. Because when God sets out to do something, He will complete it. There's nothing He can't accomplish when He sets out to do something.

F.B. Meyer said, We never test the resources of God until we attempt the impossible. Did you catch that? We never test the resources of God until we attempt the impossible. Now, many times though we say, Yeah, but Shane, that's not true.

I tried that. But how did we try that? Did we give up? What happened? Now, I'm not saying that God is a genie in a bottle, right? Three wishes, Shane. Oh, well, thank you.

Here's what I want you to do, do, do. That's not God. What He calls us to do is position ourselves, and He'll fight for us.

It's funny, I heard people say this all the time, and I don't want to put down the statement because there's some truth in it. But when they say, God will never call you to do something you cannot handle. Yes, He will.

It happens quite often. I don't know where that statement came from. But He calls us to do something I can't handle.

Now, what they're really saying, I think, is, God will get you through it. He'll see you through. You can't handle it when He's in it.

But the wording of it sometimes, when it hits my mind, God will never give you something you can't handle. Well, what's my problem then? Because I can't handle this. I can't handle what's going on.

So He will often, but He is the one we look to. So insurmountable odds are not insurmountable. Always remember that.

Number two, the battle is not yours. The battle is not yours. We just read, you will not need to fight in this battle.

But then He says, tomorrow, go down against them. Does that seem like a contradiction? Well, here's the key. Biblically speaking, the fight is not mine, the outcome is not mine, and the victory is not mine.

But I participate. See, here's the key. You position yourself with the battle gear.

You position yourself. We all know from Ephesians 6.14, I'll paraphrase. Stand with truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace.

Paul outlines all these warfare terms. So what we do is we stand. Having done all, stand.

Therefore, with your loins girt about with truth. What does that mean, Shane? It means this. When all hell is breaking loose, you stand.

You don't give up. You don't run for the exit. You stand.

Having done all. Stand there with truth girt about you. When the children are acting chaotic and the prodigal son is going south and the wayward daughter going the other direction, you just stand.

You hold the ground as the enemy is throwing the fiery darts. You stand there and hold the ground. Here comes the gossip.

Here comes the backbiting. Here comes the attack. You just stand.

Actually, that's the only reason this church is here today. We just stood. Every single obstacle known to mankind has come against us in the last seven years.

Trust me. And you just stand. The core team stands.

We are united. We stand. See, that's a position of fighting.

When you hold the line, you stand. Taking the shield of faith, which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. You have this image of the shield of faith.

And as the fiery darts are coming, you know what they are? They are others. They are sometimes your own friends, but guess where else they are? So when those fiery darts are being thrown, you stand with the shield. You stand and you just hold.

Lord, I'm trusting in You. I'm just holding the position. I'm standing.

This isn't the only place He said stand. Moses, when you come up to the water, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. I've got this huge sea in front of me.

It doesn't matter. Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. See, that's your position.

Too many Christians want to go running ahead of God. Let me fight this myself. And then they get defeated.

Or they run for cover. They run for the exit. God just says stand.

Having done all, stand. There's not a week that goes by that somebody doesn't criticize my preaching just so you know. When you have thousands of people watching and viewing, oh my goodness, it goes from, oh, he's just this, he's just that, he's this, he never graduated high school, barely doesn't have a degree, he divorced in 1990, oh my gosh, he needs to repent and apologize to the congregation.

You believe in this. You're not Calvinism, but you're not Armenian. Boom, boom, boom, boom.

I just stand. Just stand. What am I supposed to do? Argue with these people? What do they want me to do? Go home and cry? And quit? You have the same things come against you, don't you, at work? You don't have challenges at work? Please.

I was a Christian for many years working in a secular environment. Talk about difficult. I almost, I don't know how much it was, but there's a thing you can buy that would just, go around your head, it's a zipper.

If I could just zip it the whole day and go home. Stand. That's how you fight.

You stand. Because here's the interesting thing about standing, the longer you stand, the stronger you get. But if we begin cowering down and running for the exit, it becomes easier to run for the exit.

Having done all, stand. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

Praying always. And just a point of truth here. I believe that 90% of most of the problems Christians are facing have to do with what I just read.

Praying always. We get a quick prayer in, don't we? But where's this, well, Shane, how can I pray always? Come on, you know what I'm talking about. The heart is set on prayer.

Even at work, you can go, Lord, help me today. Help me this morning. You're in a state of prayer.

You're in a state of seeking God. All prayer and supplication. That's why praying is so hard.

Let's just be honest. It's right up there with eating broccoli. Right? Not even steamed broccoli.

Have you ever eaten just raw broccoli? You can't even dip it in any hummus. Just raw broccoli. That's what prayer is sometimes.

But how important is broccoli? Of course, if I had time, I could take you through all the nutritional values. But prayer is far more valuable. So those things that are most difficult, most difficult are the most important.

That's why we have a third service. 7.30 a.m. next door. We finally went from 1 to 3 to 15, now 17 this morning.

Praise God. You guys are getting it, right? That's the foundation. That's the foundation of everything, and we know it, don't we? But think about this.

If you're in a state of prayer throughout the day, and you're focusing on God and His Word and meditating, you're built up. You're strengthened. You are standing.

But when we put down that armor, we open ourselves up. And interesting, the armor he's talking about, at least to my knowledge, doesn't have anything for your back. Right? So if we're turning, the whole point of that armor is frontal engagement.

Standing. Holding the line. And if parents, you don't know what to do with your kids, just hold the line.

Just hold the line. Don't go get that Vicodin. Don't go get that Xanax.

Don't go to the liquor store. You hold the line. You hold the line.

Yes, it's difficult. It's a fight. It's a challenge.

Here's a few examples. Practical application. People say, I'm so dismayed my kids are not walking with the Lord.

Maybe it's because I pastor. I hear that a lot. Prayers come in from Facebook, email.

My children have walked away. They once loved the Lord. Can you imagine? And many of you have been through that.

I'm not looking forward to the day. I wish I could say 12 and under. Just stay right here.

I'll build you four houses in the backyard. Just right cozy. Right? But that doesn't happen.

Life happens. But what the Bible says, having done all, stand. You stand and you pray.

You don't preach to your prodigal. They already know the preaching. They already know the preaching.

That's what they're running from. So if you embrace them as a loving father, I love you unconditionally. And let the Holy Spirit work and draw them back.

All you're doing is standing, not preaching. Now there comes a time to give advice to our children. Thank God for that.

But having done all, stand, means you stand there and you pray and you fast and you guard in the spiritual realm. I've never seen a prodigal son or kids come back with parents nagging and preaching at them. I've seen it many times where the parents are just home weeping and praying and they call, Mom, Dad, are you still there? I love you.

I haven't heard from you in a while. You see? Let God's Spirit draw them back. I'm so dismayed.

My marriage is failing. We got a call from Africa this week. Out of state.

I need advice. My wife... My marriage... I'm so dismayed. But again, position yourself.

Like he said here, just stand still. Close your mouth and open your heart. Stop the nagging and get on your knees.

Stop making excuses and start taking responsibility. Put on the whole armor of God. Now sometimes there's nothing we can do.

Here's the problem with marriage. The choices of one affect the other. And there's not a thing you can do about it.

And maybe there are grounds for leaving. And sometimes that involves standing. Lord, I'm standing in Your truth.

I'm just going to wait on You. But I can't be around this anymore. And you're standing.

You're waiting on God. I'm so dismayed. My health is declining.

I'm so dismayed. My health is declining. Well, that's why you just stand.

You stand there and you say, it's temporal. This body of mine is temporal. Or is there something we can do? Can we start taking better care of the body? I'd love to spend some time there, but don't worry, I won't.

But that's part of standing is you begin to take care of this wonderful gift that God has given us. I'm so dismayed. I can't overcome.

I can't overcome this habit. Have you been there? Come on, we need some yeses in the 9am. I know you guys aren't that spiritual.

There are some things. There are some things. I can't overcome this habit.

I'm so dismayed. I'm so frustrated. It's been years.

And I keep falling in this area. Well, a couple things. As you're standing, stop opening the door when it knocks.

Start resisting instead of making excuses. God may not remove the desire. His grace is sufficient.

It's standing. See, sometimes it's hard to stand. Having done all stands, God says, I'll fight for you, but you have to stand.

I'll fight for you, but you have to position yourself. Or I'm so dismayed. This isn't working.

This is not working. And I've noticed that sometimes we lose the battle in order to win the war. Here's where people get discouraged as well.

It's not working. It's not happening, Shane, like you said. Usually that means it's not happening according to the plan I had in mind.

Right? But this isn't working. This isn't working. I'm giving up.

No, you never give up. Our position is standing. And what happens often, defeat reveals the true character of the warrior, of the soldier.

When we lose a battle, what's inside comes out. And I believe many times God will use that challenge or that dismayed event that's taking place to show us what's in us. Again, that's why it says stand still.

Stand still. Standing is fighting. My flesh wants to sit down and cry and give up.

Doesn't it? Or just you? My flesh wants to go, oh, gosh, it's so difficult. I'm not doing this anymore. I'm going back home and I'm eating a bowl of ice cream and watching movies all day long.

You don't do that when you get upset? Eat more? Just me? Run for something. Not for God, of course, but run for the comfort. And the flesh wants to sit down, cry and give up.

The flesh doesn't like standing. Does it? You go more than 30 minutes of standing for worship, people are ready to sit down sometimes. We don't want to stand.

It's hard. And I'm not talking about physical standing. I'm talking about standing spiritually.

And the devil wants us to walk away. So we have all these things coming against us. And then the third beautiful thing we find here is the Lord is with you.

The Lord is with you. This is why this one's challenging. We live in a culture that wants to feel something.

Right? If it feels good, do it. That's great for Nike. Bad for Christianity.

If it feels good, do it. So when the Bible says the Lord is with you, can we all agree on that, most of us? The Lord is with us. But why doesn't it feel like it sometimes? I don't know about you.

Even you, Shane? Oh, yeah. Did you just leave and move away? I'm here by myself. I don't feel Your presence.

I don't feel Your Spirit within me. Love, joy, peace, compassion, long-suffering. Oh, no, no.

Something else is coming out. Anger. Irritability.

Lord, what's going on? Life's not getting easier. Are you ever when you're hit with something, here comes something else? And then here comes something else. And if you can believe it, here comes something else? It's just, I'm done.

But ironically, the Lord is with you. The Lord is there. And I've said this before in regard to preaching, but it also applies to all of us.

God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies the called. What that means is, many times we say, I feel so inadequate.

That's a good spot to be. That's a great spot to be. When you say, God, I feel so inadequate.

I can't do that. God says, oh, now you can. Now I can use you.

If anybody shouldn't be up here, that's me. If anybody shouldn't be up here, trust me, that is me. And when God gives you your children, He called you to raise those children.

He called you. If I had those kids... No, He calls you. Think about that when it comes to kids.

Do you ever get frustrated with your kids? I'm talking to the ones with kids that they can have influence over now. You get frustrated. You're like, if I just had this, and there's so many things we struggle with, but God, your children are a gift.

And you're not qualified. But God gave you those children. Mothers especially.

Thank God for the prayers of moms. Who usually stands more? The mom or the dad, unfortunately. It's the mom who stands and holds everything together.

And God doesn't make mistakes. He has given you those gifts. But we often lose because we look to the wrong source for encouragement.

Here's really why we lose the battle in this area. The Lord is with me, but I'm not looking to the Lord for encouragement. We look to other things.

G.K. Chesterton. I think his first name is Gilbert. That's why I call him G.K. Chesterton.

He said, the true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him. Did you catch that, parents? The true soldier fights not because he hates what's in front of him, but because he loves what's behind him. That's the motivation.

In essence, think about this, parents. You are standing, and you are guarding what's behind you. You are holding the line.

You are who the enemy is going through. You wonder why the marriage problems are coming? He might want what's behind you. You wonder why he's harassing? He might want what's behind you.

Because as the family goes, so goes the nation. The reason our nation is in disarray is because the family is in disarray. A friend of mine actually lives, an acquaintance of mine that I know, when I preached in Washington, D.C., he actually invited me and was part of that.

He lives behind the Supreme Court in a row of apartments, and the new appointee that was just appointed on the Supreme Court lives, I think, down a few. But he said this morning, I saw it on Facebook, that somebody stopped him, I think they were dressed in all pink or something, and said, where is the Mother's Day protest? They are protesting Mother's Day. And this gender neutrality and all these things, you're going to protest Mother's Day? Really? Have we drifted that far? Yes, we have.

Everything that is godly and good is being called evil. And all those things that are perverse and evil are being called good. That's why the family has to come back and stand and hold ground.

That's why he's after the father. That's why he's after the mother. I mean, the statistics are throughout the roof.

The kids, the majority of children in jail, the grown-up adults in jail, those who suffer from suicide, alcoholism, depression, come from fatherless homes. That's just the facts. It's startling.

If you ever look at the facts, why? Because somewhere along the way, when we are called to stand, we didn't stand. Mothers as well, we are called to stand. The true soldier, again, fights not because he hates what's in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.

Just about everything that is important to God is devalued by this world. That's why, I don't know why, but maybe a hundred years ago, I wish I could go back a couple hundred years ago and see, was it this hard for Christians living? I mean, we are inundated with filth and evil. Was it the same struggle? Because just about everything in our culture that is important to God is devalued by the world.

Here's the common distractions. We talk about often, but I want to repeat them. The world, the influence of the world.

How do you view success? Isn't it interesting that the world says, where do you work? Moms, as if raising kids is, oh, that doesn't count, that's not. Go get your PhD. How do you measure success? World, how does the world measure success? It's all based on status, recognition, monetary accomplishments, what you have, titles behind your name.

That's how they rate success. And this is interesting. How they rate success, the results of that success is alarming on how it affects the family.

Yet they keep elevating the wrong things. What about schooling? Education? What does the world say? What about sports? Man, we want all of our kids to be number one in everything, right? So we sign them up for everything and they're busy all the time and then they grow up and we say, what happened? What happened? Because standing, I believe, means being good stewards of our time. Looks, how a person looks.

Go on Facebook. I mean, those of you who have daughters, I bet every single one of them feel flawed somewhere. More than what we usually feel because of our own sinful nature.

The world elevates that. So see, we're looking for all the wrong areas for encouragement. What about others? Dismay.

Nehemiah. Have you ever read the story of Nehemiah? There's two guys in there, Sanballat and Tobias. I wish I could just, I don't know, put them in jail or something.

From the beginning when they are mentioned to the end when they are mentioned, they just irritate me. Oh, Nehemiah, are you going to build that wall again? Rebuild the wall of Jerusalem? Oh, Nehemiah, you can't do that. Even if a fox runs on it, it's going to fall down.

Oh, Nehemiah, the king's going to throw you in prison. Oh, Nehemiah, come down and listen to us. And he says, I'm not going to come down.

I have many great things to do for the Lord. Why should the works cease to come and listen to you discouraging people? There's always a Sanballat and a Tobias in your life that will come in and cause that disarray and that dysfunction. The fiery darts of the enemy we talked about.

And of course, ourselves. That's really the main focus today. You have to learn to strengthen yourself.

You have to learn to strengthen yourself by positioning yourself for battle. Isaiah 40, New King James. Have you not known? Have you not heard? It's almost like Isaiah.

He's writing here. He's saying, have you not known? Have you not heard? Meaning, yes, you have. This is a good reminder.

Have you ever said that to your kids? Have I not told you? Or to somebody else, I told you. Have you not heard? So he's saying to the people, have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, He never faints, nor is He weary. He's not tired.

He's not burned out. He's not dismayed. So no matter how wide that valley is or how deep that cavern is, how far you feel away from God, His grace is right there.

He's willing and ready if we would just embrace that. He's not sleeping. Right now, even right now in this room, if you cry out to Him, He will hear your cries.

He never sleeps. He never slumbers. Have you not known? He's not tired, burned out, and dismayed like we are.

Because we sometimes put this concept of how we feel on God, right? Well, He must be like my dad. No, He's not at all. And I love the Scripture that Jesus talked about in Matthew 11 and 28.

He said, come to Me. All you labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. Cast your cares upon Me. Cast your cares upon Me.

My yoke... A yoke was something that would go around an oxen and they would pull the load behind them. You have this image of this huge yoke and this burden and this heavy burden. Jesus says, My yoke is light.

My burden is heavy. But here's what we do. I'm going to give you a little analogy.

Maybe it will help. Oh my goodness! Do you ever carry one of these around? Huh? 30 pounds of nothing but junk. I actually sometimes use this when I'm jogging to get ready and then to take it off and go, the burden's been lifted.

I feel much better. But this is the image where it's just heavy and we walk around like this. Don't we? With extra, with this burden.

And we're just, I can't get... What is going on? I can't get to the prayer meeting. I don't want to worship. It's pretty hard to worship like this.

I don't even want to go to church. I think that's why the majority of people now go to church once a month. Did you know that? Recent statistics are showing church attendance at once a month or twice a month.

The burden, He says, don't carry this burden. So we look at this and we go, okay, what is in here? What is going on? First, I've got to find the zipper. And here's exactly what the Bible says.

Remove every... What, what, what? Come on, you guys know this one. Remove every... Oh, these weights are hard to get in here. Remove every weight... How'd this get in here? This is all what the Bible says.

Remove every weight and sin that so easily ensnares... There's weights. There's things you're carrying around. You don't need to be carrying around.

You're just carrying around. You don't need to. Jesus said, put it... Oh, that's heavy.

Put it down. What about the sin that so easily ensnares us? I've got sin in here too. Right? I was thinking of getting a 24 ounce of Coors, but that probably wouldn't look good.

Right? Because knowing me, I get pulled over. What is this? I'm on my way to church. I bet you are.

I bet you are. Right? But we carry around. We still have the thing we shouldn't be carrying.

You know what it is, right? God says, release that. I say, I don't want to release it. That's my burden.

And I like this burden. And release the sin that so easily ensnares. So now we're walking around with things we shouldn't be walking around with.

We're burdened. Jesus says, cast these things upon me. Give those to me.

See, it's getting a little bit lighter, but there's still stuff in here. Oh, isn't this good? Isn't this good? No, that's the water of the world. Jesus says, come unto me and drink of the water where you will never thirst again.

So we carry around the things of the world and drink and drink and drink and consume. And Jesus says, get rid of that burden. Get rid of that.

Come to me, the fountain of living water, and I will give you rest. Jesus says, stop trying to find nourishment in things that will never nourish. Put it aside.

Now, I'm not... This is what we call our one little vice. Right? Do you have that one little... God, Lord, not that. You know the sanctification process, right? When you give your heart to the Lord, He starts cleaning out junk.

Man, stuff has got to go. My favorite movie, Tombstone. Now I'm even convicted sometimes.

Or Lonesome Dove. These aren't quite edifying, Lord. I like this music.

George Strait, George Jones, Conway Twitty. Can I put in some Alan Jackson? And it might be good for some people, but I'm telling you, that makes me want to grab a 12-pack of Coors and jump on a train and just sit there and be depressed all day. Now I've got to find a godly woman, a godly wife.

Yes, now I can buy this and buy that. And begin to strip away those things. But then we said, this one little vice.

Right? For some, it's this. For some, it's that. For some, it's 500 milligrams of caffeine.

Starbucks. This is called the rock for a reason. But you put in there what you want.

Right? For some, it's something else. So we have the weight. We have the burden.

We have the one little vice. And it is a sin. But we carry these things.

And it gets heavy. And it gets heavy. And it gets heavier.

Now, what about this one? You might say, well, Shane, that's not heavy at all. What's wrong with that? Yeah, what's wrong with that? Well, let me tell you what's wrong with that. I'm trying to get through my day.

Right? I've got this on. And God's wanting me to carry my little load, seeking him. Like, what is that? Uh-huh.

Okay. All right. Back on track.

Yeah. Yeah. Okay.

That's good. Here we go. Ring, ring.

What? Stop. Oh, what is that on Facebook? Nobody commented or liked my post. No, that's not funny.

That's sad. Well, okay. I'm done this time, God.

I'm putting it on vibrate if I need to. Are you walking? Zzz, zzz, zzz. See, but that's what it represents.

20 times a day. Right? And no wonder we're burdened. We've got all this stimuli that we shouldn't be entering our mind.

These things have to be controlled. Not them controlling you. Watch how much they control you.

You've got to pull over and check it. I mean, I'm scared now to drive. I'll just be honest with you.

I've had people drive past me on the freeway, both like this on their steering wheels. I'm like, what is this? They're just flying by on their phones. How are you going 70 and not looking what's ahead of you? And our children now.

Mom, Dad, get off of those things. See? See, my yoke is easy. My burden is light.

But you have to remove the things that keep causing those distractions. But then the wonderful thing about this is you're still carrying something. You have to carry something, but now it's light.

I could leave this on the whole time I preach. Right? Much better than that stuff in here. But see, I've still got to carry something.

And that's the lie too we come to. We come to think I never have to carry anything. My life should be carefree.

Stress-free. Burden-lifted. I shouldn't carry anything.

But Jesus said my yoke is easy. It's gentle. It's lowly in heart.

You will find rest for your soul. His understanding is unsearchable, Isaiah says. His understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the weak. And to those who have no might, He increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.

So when you say, I don't know, I don't understand, welcome to the club. Many times we have to stand and not knowing how long we're standing for. His understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might, He increases strength. He says even the young and the young men will faint. What He's saying there is nobody can endure.

Even the strength of our youth will fail us. Everyone fails without God, even the young. Everyone does.

But we don't want to end the sermon there, do we? We know how the rest goes. But those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount upon wings of eagles.

They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and not faint. What? Wait upon the Lord.

Waiting is standing. Waiting is praying. Waiting is worshiping.

Having done all, stand. Stand there with your loins girt about with truth, with the breastplate of righteousness, with the helmet of salvation. Having done all, stand.

I will stand here until I see my family set free. I will stand here until my son and my daughter come back to You. I will stand here even if this illness takes me to the grave.

Having done all, stand. Stand. That's encouragement.

That's how you are not dismayed. The problem is though many times we haven't internalized this love of God. We haven't stood.

We've been falling. There's a song we sing. The lyrics say this, He gives us deliverance from our enemies till all our fears are gone.

We're no longer slaves to fear. We are children of God. My prayer this morning when we had morning prayer was that many would realize that we are no longer slaves.

So the question is if I'm no longer a slave, why do I feel like it? Why am I bound in iniquity? Why am I caught in sin? Shane, if I'm no longer a slave to sin, why am I a slave then? Thankfully, Paul explains that whoever you choose to obey becomes your master. Read Romans 6, 7, 8, 9 tonight. It's all about whoever we choose to obey becomes our master.

If I stand still and watch and wait for God, if I stand and give my life to Him, I'm choosing to submit under Him. He's my master. But if I go back and obey the old taskmaster, go back to that old sinful habit, go back to that, then I will be in bondage again.

So see, we're set free. This is an interesting concept. If you can picture, the prison doors are set free.

A person's on death row in county jail. Let's say Twin Towers. I don't know if they do death row, but let's say a place that does.

And they open the prison doors and the person's out. I've been set free. That's what the Bible says.

But then what do we do? I like it in here a little bit. I had three meals. I watched TV.

I didn't have to do much. And we go back in prison. Whatever we choose to obey becomes our master.

That's a spiritual principle. But also, let's not forget this point. This is kind of hard for dads and men because we want to be manly.

We think men don't talk about these things. But a child rests in the arms of his father. And that's what we need to do this morning.

You need to rest in the arms of your father. And of course, I don't want to close out a sermon without giving you that opportunity. If you don't know Him, do you truly know Him? Can you say, He's my Father.

He loves me unconditionally. I have a relationship with Him. Maybe you've drifted away.

I don't know. But if you don't know Him, you'll be amazed at how many people come to church because they're seeking, right? They're seeking. But they don't know Him.

That's why Jesus said, "...but strive to enter the narrow gate, for many will seek and not find it." Wait a minute, they're seeking. That word seek in the Greek language means to contemplate, to consider, to think about, to ponder. So many people think about, hmm, that makes sense.

That makes sense. I need to come again next Sunday. Something's drawing me.

I'm considering, but that's not knowing the Father. That's not knowing God. I know some of you maybe are just here today because your mom dragged you.

She said, come to church with me. That's my Mother's Day present. But you have to realize that there's no greater love than for somebody to lay down their life and give it to another, what Jesus did.

And your mom just wants you to experience that freedom and knowing the Father. And what we do as men, we think a tough guy, right? Tough guy. That's for women.

I don't do that. I don't worship. I'm a man's man.

This is good for you guys, Shane. I'm glad religion did something for you. And we live in deception.

And we know inside we're falling apart. We know inside we're just little children. You can't get rid of that, can you? It's still inside of us.

So I would just encourage you, if you don't truly know God, if you don't have that relationship, the Bible says, just repent of your sin. Repent. It's a beautiful word.

It just means, God, I am a sinner. I am a sinner. Most people would say, I'm pretty good compared to my neighbor Bill.

I'm good. Honestly, I'm good. You should meet this guy.

But see, excuses, excuses. A person who truly wants a relationship with God says, I'm not God. You are.

I'm a sinner. I need you. God, save me.

It's not how eloquent you say it. It's not exactly you follow the four steps of something. It's just the heart saying, Daddy, I need you.

God, I need you. I need to have that relationship with you.

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