

Do Not Forsake My Law

by Shane Idleman

The church must be the conscience of the nation, speaking truth and calling people to repentance, and seeking godly leadership to reflect God's character and values.

Duration: 1:11:34

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 33:12, Proverbs 4:10-13, Jeremiah 18:7-8, Romans 5:20

Topics: "Repentance", "National Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, turning back to God, and seeking His wisdom. It highlights the consequences of shedding innocent blood, promoting idolatry, and defying God's sanctuary. The message calls for a national revival, urging leaders to govern in the fear of God and individuals to repent and seek God's guidance. The hope lies in genuine repentance and turning back to God, as seen in the example of Manasseh in 2 Chronicles 33.

Transcript

Thank You for Calvary. We thank You for sending Your Son. Lord, would You please visit this service tonight.

Lord, just bring hope to those who need it. Lord, bring repentance to those who need it. Lord, bring joy and peace and comfort to those who need it.

Lord, I pray that even healing would take place tonight, not only physically, Lord, but spiritually. Lord, we know that a remnant can just call upon Your name and there's power in the name of Christ. Lord, we plead the blood tonight.

Lord, I pray for clarity. I pray for direction. Lord, I pray for precision in Your Word.

I pray that You would lead me into those areas that You want us to cover tonight. Lord, but more than anything else, we pray that You are glorified, that Your Son is magnified in this place tonight. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, I've got a lot to say and not a lot of time to say it. I don't know else to say it, but we're in Proverbs 4. If you have your Bibles, we're in Proverbs 4. This is going to be a little bit different tonight.

We're not doing really expositional through Proverbs 4. What we're doing is topical based on the text from Proverbs 4. And Monday night, we'll be going through more expositionally and how this relates to each of our lives. But I want to read something that's on your bulletin. And let me just preface this entire message by saying that sometimes in the course of a church, we've got to address heavy issues and that tonight is one of those nights.

It's no secret to most people in this room that our nation is on a collision course to disaster. There's no other way to say it. We're calling good evil and evil good.

We have forsaken God in many ways. And sometimes the church has to sound the alarm. That's what we've been called to do in many regards.

You see, the pulpit used to, and I've said this before, used to be the conscience of the nation. It used to direct and to encourage and to reprimand and to rebuke and to exhort. But now many times the churches have been silenced.

And I'm going to get to that in a little bit on pulpit freedom and what we're doing here. But first, let me read this quote. We have forgotten God and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our own hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own, wrote Abraham Lincoln many years ago.

And there's so much here that I'm not going to actually be able to get to the practical application of this. That's why we gave out copies of One Nation Above God. As you're perusing through that this week, you can get a lot more practical application.

And for those of you who are new, you must understand something too. We are not, you know, what I would consider a political church. I mean, politics is not the focus.

The cross of Christ is the focus. But that permeates all areas of life. It does.

There's no way around it. So we can't avoid these things that are too controversial, too just, they're hot buttons, the world would say. Just church, keep your nose out of our business.

But the problem is we can't. The Word of God compels us to share in all areas of life, marriage, families, men leading at home, political arena. And on that note, politics, as I shared before, just means governing or directing a group of people.

Do we think that God's Word has anything to say on governing or directing a group of people? Yes. That's, and I'm not, again, not getting political. What I'm trying to do is get biblical and pull from Proverbs 4. And I'm going to give recent examples and past examples on Proverbs 4 and how this relates.

The first, I just pulled up the news the other day, and this is absolutely incredible. Let's give a state of the union really quick, if I may. Normally, state of the unions are, here's the state of our union, blah, blah, blah, a lot of, you know, clips, or a lot of bullet points there, a lot of talking points, and we're doing great here and we're doing great there.

How you give a real state of the union address really is the state of the union based on God's Word. Where are we at in relation to biblical principles and the truth of God's Word? And just last week, over the weekend, September 29th, I made sure I checked note of this, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a

controversial ban on counseling and therapy for youth that is not affirming to same-sex attraction. You know what that means? You cannot counsel, I cannot counsel young adults and say that same-sex attraction is wrong.

Folks, that is enormous. Absolutely. As we're watching X Factor and sipping our latte and not worrying about what's happening, trust me, the other side is gaining ground and they're coming in and they're working in these ungodly initiatives.

It's against the law to tell a young adult that same-sex attraction is wrong? God help us. That's just September 24th, 29th. Recently, 13 New York City public schools began dispensing the morning after pill.

Without requiring parental notification or consent. Basically here, you're going to have sex. We know you are.

It's okay. Here's this pill. Abort your child.

Promoting this in the schools. I mean, I could sit here for the next hour and the news is absolutely alarming. You talk about a nation shifting.

What about Delaware Governor Jack Markell, September 12th? Just signed into law, Senate Bill 234, making Delaware the first state to outlaw corporal discipline of children by their parents. Hold on. Now, any parent who knowingly causes their child pain can face up to a year in prison in Delaware.

Welcome to America, folks. You want me to keep reading? If that child is three years and under, you are now a felon. God help us.

This is what's happening. So the minute somebody tells me that leadership does not matter, that legislation does not matter, they better wake up, folks. They are legislating everything that goes against God's standard.

Well, it's no big deal. The church needs a little persecution. It needs to wake us up.

Okay, I got it. I buy into that argument a little bit. But the laws of a nation are the very foundation on which it is built.

I mean, I could keep reading and reading and reading. There is no nation on earth powerful enough to accomplish our overthrow. Our destruction, wrote Daniel Webster in the late 1700s, 1800s, early 1800s, our destruction, should it come at all, will be from another quarter, from the inattention of the people to the concerns of their government, from their carelessness and their neglect.

You see, what happens is, like Rome, a nation is destroyed from the inside out. So what in the world is the pulpit supposed to be doing, folks? I could make half of you in this room grab for that Kleenex box if I explained a partial birth abortion right now. It's no big deal.

Saline abortions, they inject saline solution to the wound as a child is fighting for its life and dying. They tell the mother, don't worry, it's just a contraction. Evacuation abortions, dilation and evacuation, pulling limbs.

Folks, this can get pretty ugly. And I'm sick and tired of the passive, lukewarm, coward church doing nothing and saying nothing because it offends people. It's a hot button.

Yeah, it's a hot button, absolutely. But if the truth doesn't come from here, where does it come from? We don't mind other hot buttons. Jesus is the only way, the only truth, the only life.

That's pretty narrow. We don't mind that hot button. Oh, it's a hot button.

But these other ones, we don't want to touch with the 10-foot pole. And I heard one emergent church pastor a few years ago say something that has forever been entrenched in my mind. He said, we need to get over abortion.

It is so 1980s. I hope I can get through this one today because this is just... If I were to be honest, there's cowards in our pulpits, in our nation. That's what's happening.

If it wasn't for the power of the Holy Spirit today, I would be one of those cowards. But God's Word compels me as you bow and submit your life and surrender it to the Word of God. It compels you to preach the truth.

I'm going to come up here and preach about being nice to your neighbor and painting neighborhoods as limbs are being pulled from uteruses, vacuumed out because we don't want it. Let's support that. Let's fund that.

It's ridiculous. If more and more churches were preaching, not that we've got it right. I'm just saying, just sound an alarm.

Say, people, this is the direction we're heading. God's Word has some serious warnings on shedding innocent blood, in case you haven't read the Old Testament lately. These are warnings to a nation on the brink of disaster.

Now you understand 2 Chronicles much better. 36, I've quoted before. God sent messengers to His people because He loved them.

He had compassion on them and on His dwelling place. But they mocked His messengers, despised His Word, and scoffed at His prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against His own people, until there was no remedy. That's truth.

That's Bible. See, the real crime isn't necessarily what's happening. The real crime is this message is being mocked.

It's being ridiculed. It's being despised, and the culture says, I don't care. We're going to keep doing it.

The problem is you're confusing God's patience with His approval. Thomas Jefferson, who probably wasn't even Christian, I could care less if he was or wasn't at this point, he said, indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just and that His justice cannot sleep forever. Sometimes we need a wake-up call.

Sometimes the weight you're feeling right now, guess what I've been feeling all week? There's nothing wrong with that weight because weight causes a weight lifter to put on muscle and be strengthened. Weight causes a steamroller to crush the pavement. Weight can be good if that weight begins to what? Weigh us down until we're on our knees petitioning and praying.

If my people who are called by my name will just humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from these wicked ways, I'll hear from heaven. That's how important this is. And I've told you before, I didn't plant a church where everybody, where we can invite our friends.

I planted a church that's going to glorify God. Because when they come in, when they come in, Paul says in Corinthians that they will come in and see that God is among you. They will fall on their face and worship God.

We need to stop being so seeker-sensitive and politically correct, and I just want to be a motivational speaker up here. We need to go back to proclaiming the truth of God's word and the power of the spirit and hitting on these difficult topics. Because if you avoid the difficult topics, out of sight, out of mind, nothing is done, nobody's challenged.

Number one, the pulpit used to be the moral compass of our nation, and of the people. Do you realize that the priests and the prophet in the Old Testament, they were the moral compass of the nation. Then what happened is the churches of America, the churches of Europe, the church, the pulpit used to proclaim truth and instruct the people on how to live to be the conscience of the nation.

You know what I've said before about Martin Luther King Jr., right? He said the church must be reminded that it's not the master of the state, but it's not the servant of the state. The church is the conscience of the state. That's what he said.

The church isn't the master or the servant. We're the conscience of the nation. It's things that are too controversial.

Yeah, that's the things we need to be addressing head on. That's why they're controversial. Because as a nation begins to reject God, the only way you can hope and bring hope for that is to confront the air, confront the direction that they're heading.

That's what the whole role back in the Old Testament was. The prophet was to bring the church back to him. Now the argument goes something like this.

Let me tell you where this whole thing is with the church. I'm going to have a long introduction, then I'll get to Proverbs 4. But the argument goes something like this. God doesn't deal with nations anymore.

Many of you guys know Josh McDowell. You've heard of him. I talked to his son Sean McDowell a few years ago, and he told me this.

He said, ah, you're off on this. God doesn't deal with nations anymore. That's Old Testament stuff.

Okay, we can agree on certain things. But what do you do, or disagree, I should say, what do you do with Proverbs 29.2? When the godly are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked are in power, they groan.

Just, can we, do you have any white out? I mean, is that, well, really, let's be honest. And you think wicked, this isn't some warlock holding a sign saying 666. Wicked is anything that opposes the wills and ways of God.

Look up your Hebrew, look up your Greek, look up your Aramaic. Wicked is those things that oppose God. So when legislation, when policy, when leaders oppose God, the Bible calls them wicked leaders.

When those are in power, the people groan. Proverbs 14.34, righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. We are becoming a reproach.

You know we are a laughingstock of the world now? Are we getting in that direction? We have become a reproach. What about 2 Samuel? He who rules over men must be just. God wants righteous leadership.

So what do you do with all these? Do you just throw them out? The place we've aired is in Romans 13. The church just says, well, look there. I don't have time to go through it, but see that we're supposed to submit to the government authorities.

That's right, but put it in context. Paul is saying do not repay evil. The purpose of who will repay evil for evil is the government, the institution.

They are ordained by God, not the evil of the government, the authority of the government. So he goes on to say, if you do evil, be afraid because they do not bear the sword in vain. They are there to protect those who do good.

That's the whole role of the government, to administrate, to protect, and to defend. You see the distinction there, the difference? So to say that that body, that group that is under God's shelter and protection shouldn't govern according to His word makes no sense to me. But that's the trap that the church is in.

You hear both sides. Well, God doesn't deal with nations anymore. In some regards, I see that because now the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ is not a nation.

We are everywhere. There's Uganda and the Middle East. We're everywhere.

The church is there, so I understand that. However, the principle still applies, that God looks at how our nation is leading its people. Do we honor Him or are we rejecting Him? So it begs the question, does God desire godly leadership? That's what this all boils down to.

Does God desire godly leadership? Well, a couple things I wrote down. The gospel permeates all areas of life. Do you realize that? The gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ permeates everything.

I run into people all the time that say, I don't want to talk about Paul. He mentioned that the whole government's corrupt, the whole this. They're people.

Our government doesn't depend as much on our laws as it does the character of the people instituting those laws. The character issue. So the gospel changes all areas of life.

It should permeate into that culture as well. I don't find any verses saying that God no longer values godly leadership. I don't see any of those in Scripture whatsoever.

Next I put down, America was blessed greatly by God. Right? One would assume that if seeking God brought blessings, just call me silly, seeking Him brought blessings, rejecting Him might bring the opposite. I'm just throwing that out there.

Just think about that. You say, well, what do you mean blessed by God? We hear that a lot. God bless America, blah, blah, blah.

Well, God, you know, America needs to start blessing God. I understand that. But when you look at how a nation was formed, see the pilgrims and the Puritans came over, 1620s, 1630s.

They came over for religious freedom. They came over to worship God freely. The Mayflower Compact.

To the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith. Then as they instituted forms of government, states had their own governments with honoring God. Did you know you couldn't even run for office unless you profess a faith in God, the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? You couldn't even run for office.

They brought the Bibles over and the whole reason the public school system was founded was to teach the kids the Bible. William Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England. All the legal professors, all the attorneys use William Blackstone's commentaries on the laws of England.

You know what they're based on? Scripture. Old Testament Scripture. Eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, rape, adultery.

Everything was pulled from the Bible. The founders quoted the Bible four times more than any other source. Anything.

Now, sure, there are a few people in there that weren't. I'm not saying that every founder was a Christian. I'm not saying that every citizen was a Christian.

What I am saying clearly is the foundation was built on Christian principles. Look at the Delaware Constitution. Look at the Constitution of Maine.

Look at all these things. Look at their writings. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

He said, Who unto him who is the author and giver of all good, I render sincere and humble thanks for his unmerited blessings and for his redemption through his beloved Son. The Supreme Court said that? Yeah, they did. Noah Webster used to define words in his dictionary using the Bible.

John Locke's commentary on the formation of a nation referenced, I think it's two treaties on civil government, referenced the Bible 1,500 times. They had prayer meetings. They petitioned God.

You can call it deism. You can call it this. You can call it whatever you want, but they were men seeking God.

That's what the nation was built on. And, of course, people throw in all the things, the atrocity of slavery. Well, I've got footnotes in that book of how many founders abhorred that practice and tried to stop it.

Ever heard of a guy named William Wilberforce out of England? Many founders were against that. So don't start throwing the baby out with the bathwater. God blessed America.

There's nothing wrong in saying that. The reason is now we should put the blessings back to him. Thank you, Lord, for the blessings.

Thank you that we live in the most blessed nation on the planet. Why is that? Because they honored God. Even a Frenchman came to America in the early 1800s.

He said, I have to study. Where is America getting all this greatness from? So it records. He didn't necessarily say this.

We can't find it in his writings, but it's often attributed to him. He said that I look for America's greatness on her vast world commerce and in her gold mines. It was not there.

I look for it in her harbors and in her shores, and it was not there. I look for America's greatness in her boundless prairies and her fertile fields, and it was not there. He says it was not until I went to the churches of America and I heard the pulpits aflame with righteousness that I understood the secret to her success.

Now the famous part of the quote, America is good because she is great. If she ever ceases to be great, she'll cease to be good. He went all over and he concludes with, the pulpits were aflame with righteousness.

They confronted the issues. They called sin, sin. They called people to repentance.

They spoke about the fear of God, the love of God, the joy of God, the mercy of God, the judgment of God. They called the nation to places of repentance. They would speak out against issues where the nation was running off course.

So you just go look at the original writings, not revisionist, not what secular interpretations say of it, not what CNN's news says about it. Go look at the original writings. I have the diaries of the founders.

I have their wills and testaments. I have their words as they're putting the constitution together. The God permeates throughout it all, biblical principles.

It's everywhere. Everywhere. Was it perfect? Absolutely not, but I believe that God used that and blessed that.

Now if you compare it to the direction we're in now, that's what I mean about a nation off course calling good evil and evil good. And I believe that God still calls us back. Now you know what Deuteronomy was talking about.

Now it shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord, your God, to observe carefully all his commandments which I command you today that the Lord, your God, will set you high above all the other nations of the earth and all these blessings shall come upon you. And he lists all the blessings. Ironically, many of those who framed this nation will quote this verse.

I mean, that's what they were thinking. They were going to bless God and have God bless us. See, this is the result of what God did.

Paul said that the Old Testament was given to us as an example that we might not lust after evil things. So the Old Testament can be looked upon as an example. Let me read this quote.

Some of you have heard from Arnold Toynbee. He wrote a study of history. Of the 22 civilizations that have appeared in history, 19 of them collapsed when they reached the moral state that America is in today.

You want to let that sink in for a minute? Of the 22 civilizations that have appeared in history, all of history, 19 of them collapsed when they reached the moral state that America is in today. Now the shocker, written in the early 1960s. Pornography is a free speech? Really? God help us.

We have drifted so far. If that's not enough, this will do it for you. Historian Edward Gibbon recalls the conditions of Rome before her fall.

The rapid increase in divorce and the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home. More taxation and the spending of public funds on food and entertainment. The mad craze for pleasure and sport.

Sport becoming every year more and more exciting and brutal. We just love cage fighting. You just beat them up to pulp and it's just the mad craze for pleasure and entertainment is getting worse and worse.

The building up of the military when the real enemy is within. And the decadence of the people and themselves. Number five, the decay of religious faith.

Faith fading into mere form. He could have just pointed out the United States of America right there. See these are wake up calls.

That's all this is. If we could get this message out and say wake up. Wake up.

God does not send a lightning bolt. He doesn't send a letter in everybody's mailbox. He sends the word of God and the pulpits with the power of the Holy Spirit preach the word so that people turn back to Him.

We use this as practical examples as a wake up call. So in a nutshell, I'd rather err on the side of honoring God. That's the answer to my question.

Does God desire godly leadership? Absolutely. And I would rather err on the side of honoring God than falling away from His truth. Leadership clearly matters.

So now, before I get into Proverbs 4, what happened? What happened? You might say, well, Shane, how in the world did all this happen? Well, that's one of the reasons Pulpit Freedom Sunday was launched many years ago and I wasn't even pastoring. I said, I can't wait to do that someday. But many pastors, it started I think with 50 and then 500 then 1,000 now it's over 1,500 to 2,000 churches are actually challenging the IRS.

We're sending these sermons to the IRS. You're saying, you want to remove our 501c3 status? Go for it. We'd love to take that to court because you have just infringed on freedom of speech.

So what they want to do is try to get what happened in 1954 repealed. It's called the Johnson Amendment. Lyndon B. Johnson did not like non-profits attacking him.

So they pass an addendum or amendment that said non-profits now cannot endorse political parties and they can't talk about political issues. Isn't that nice and sweet? Silence the church. 1954.

Nobody wants to lose their 501c3 status or can't talk about that. Dare we not? We can't. It's a law now.

So what they're trying to do is come on. Let's come on, IRS challenges. The IRS has never brought one case to court.

Only one church has ever lost their status over this. But they want to take this legal action and say listen. Let's talk about the First Amendment.

You are silencing the First Amendment. Freedom of speech. If a church can't say here we go and say Obama this, Romney this, here's what they believe.

One says he's a Christian, clearly not. One's not a Christian because he's in a cult. We can't say this stuff? You came to the wrong place.

Because it's just truth. I don't care if it's Romney, or Ron Paul, or Obama. We govern according to principles.

Not a particular party. I don't care if you're a Democrat or a fourth generation Republican. We vote according to principles.

Unchanging biblical principles. Now I'm getting worried because what we're seeing out there is a modern day civil war. It's getting worse and worse and worse and worse.

The dividing line is going greater and greater. So all we do is we look at principles. Abortion, gay marriage, embryonic stem cell research, teaching kindergartners, sex education.

God help us. I don't care if you claim to be a Christian or not. You do not deserve to be leading in our nation.

We vote on biblical principles. And we should. It's a God given right.

You think for a minute if Paul was here, even Jesus, and we're like hey, we're in a nation blessed of God. We can actually choose our leaders. Wow.

You think they'd say, I don't worry about it. Don't get involved. It's no big deal.

Really? Because those who say the church shouldn't get involved have a terrible exegetical approach to New Testament theology. Just because Paul was under Nero in Rome, it doesn't apply to America because we've been blessed of God. We can go put people in positions of leadership.

It's a gift from God. We say I don't care. Half the people don't even vote and half aren't even registered.

It doesn't matter. It's no big deal. Now do I make this a big issue every week? No.

I'm here because of that. And that's what I preach and that's my focus. But sometimes we take a little side track because of what the cross did.

Because of the cross, the gospel permeates all areas of life. So as little children, 44 million are being murdered in the womb, and we should say silence. No big deal.

It's so 1980's. God help us. What happened? I'll tell you what happened.

We've become so politically correct and worried about 501c3 status that we don't want to say anything. Now what's the next biggie? Separation of church and state. Doesn't appear anywhere in the Constitution.

What? Does not appear anywhere in the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to the Baptist of Danbury, Connecticut in 1802 saying don't worry Baptist. Don't worry.

The government will never impose on your religious freedoms. Read his letter. He said don't worry.

That'll never happen. There'll always be a wall of separation of church and state. So for 150 years, no big deal, then Barry Lennon and his cohorts get a hold of something decades ago and now they want to say see, church is separation of church and state.

Read Jefferson in his context number one. Number two is understand the First Amendment. Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion.

The Establishment Clause. Congress can't establish anything. The states could.

Did you know that? You could be a Baptist state. You could be a congregation. You could be an Anglican state.

The federal government had no jurisdiction. Nothing. Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion.

The Establishment Clause. They cannot establish anything. Now here we go.

Nor can they prohibit the free exercise thereof. The Free Exercise Clause. Why don't they read that? That's exactly what they're doing.

Throw the Bible out of the schools but let Buddha come in there and teach them. Let the guru and the yoga master come in and teach. What are you doing? Congress should shut their mouth.

They have no jurisdiction. They have no say so. If you want to put a cross on a cemetery, if you want to have a Christmas tree, if you want to have a nativity scene, now this whole thing counts.

Say Christmas. Why? Because there's Christ in that name. There's power in the name of Christ.

It's exactly right. What's happening is there's power in the name of Christ. They want to remove God from everything because out of sight, out of mind.

I don't want that conviction in my life. Barry Lynn sends out a letter. 60,000 churches.

You better not talk about these issues because separation of church and state. Number one, it's not even in the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson just agreed with the Baptists that there should be a wall of separation between the church and state.

The church and state are separate in their duties and functions, but they're interwoven. They should be in their core beliefs and in their principles. So in one regard, I believe in separation of church and state.

I should not be governing the state and vice versa. They have separate duties and separate functions. But what they've done, separation of church and state, government cannot allow anything Christianity.

Our military, you must ordain gay people You must not pray in Jesus' name. Whoa, whoa, hold on. That seems way against the First Amendment.

What's happening here? I'll tell you what's happening here. The light is shining in the darkness and the darkness says, I don't want it anymore. And the darkness is winning.

Let's remove all these things. So now the churches are scared. The pulpits are silent.

Think about this. For 150 years, they could say whatever they want. And then some 40, 50 years ago, the First Amendment is coupled with the 14th Amendment.

Now the churches are silent. There's a big separation of church and state. You can't bring Bibles into our schools.

It sounds like you're getting involved, Congress, versus staying out of it. So those are the big issues. That's why the church is not very involved in these things.

One of the other reasons I put down here is reacting to political extremism. We've all seen the abuses of churches becoming very political. And I don't think that's the number one role of the church whatsoever.

The number one role of the church is the spiritual condition of the people, not political. So we should not become a political influence having candidates and endorsing, endorsing. Let's make sure Section 8's in right.

Let's get the Rose Page. It's not a political movement. We are a spiritual influence.

But there comes a time in the day when the pulpits of America need to start proclaiming the truth and tell the nation, you are on a collision course to disaster. Look at these laws. These are pathetic.

We're not talking about paving the road. We're not talking about overspending in certain areas. We're talking about creating life simply to destroy it.

And as Christians, we need to, let me just throw that out there, we need to come to the realization that some people aren't going to vote for your guy or my guy. And we need to start having much better attitudes than the junk I'm seeing on Facebook and the put-downs and the shirts and the bumper stickers. And what happens to is a lot of people, the reason why, one thing why Christians are divided on this issue, number one, I have my personal opinion that many, not all, many people who say they're Christians are not.

That's just biblical, that's just sound doctrine. Many, many, many, many, many, many, many draw an eye to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Narrow is the road that leads to eternal life.

If you truly know Christ, you will follow His commandments. The reason that there's also divide is what we consider priorities. Is going green and social injustice and poverty priorities? Or is abortion, gay marriage, the sanctity of life priority? One group makes this the priority, one group makes this the priority, so you have a divide.

But I will present to you today that not all things can be a priority or nothing is a priority. So you have to say, what are the priorities according to God's word? And what we should do is study church history. The church has been involved a lot.

Tertullian of Carthage, 160 AD, wrote in our case, murder being once and for all forbidden. We may not destroy even the fetus in the womb or the didache or the diocte or however you want to pronounce it. Early

church writing said, and the second commandment of the teaching is this, you shall not commit murder.

You shall not practice magic. You shall not practice witchcraft. You shall not murder a child by abortion nor killing that which is born.

Early church history, what do you do with John Calvin in Geneva? What do you do with Martin Luther coming after the church and the state? Does anybody know that Charles Spurgeon preached many sermons against slavery and they outlawed his sermons here? John Wesley? Politics were preached from our pulpits because you're preaching God's word and how it applies to our life. That's all it is saying. Here's how God's word applies to our life.

When we can put little baby pieces in a trash can at a medical facility, I have a problem with that and so should you. If you don't, your heart is seared. Your conscience is seared.

It's a woman's right to choose. Not to murder a child. Not to murder a child.

It's easy for you to say you're a man. That's true. But I'm also a father.

God help us. I don't think I can do it. I don't think I can do it or I won't finish my sermon.

I told my wife today that I don't think I've ever spoke on this but I would have a son or daughter. It'll be okay because God is grace. That was my closing point.

Not midway through but it felt it felt good to me because they would be 20. So please don't tell me it doesn't affect people. If it affects a father, I'm much more the mother.

20 years ago, I'd have a son or daughter. But thank God our greatest weaknesses are going to be our greatest strengths of ministry. This is why I can come up here and proclaim the truth of God's word.

Because I've had His grace cover me. There's weeks that go by, no problem. There's days like this morning that I'm a basket case.

That's why these issues are so important because they touch people's lives and we don't even know. I'm tired. I'm tired of the secular media saying it's no big deal.

They get over it. It doesn't affect the mom. It doesn't affect the dad.

The number one role of the church is the spiritual condition of the people. People, people, people, people. 20 years.

Can't even get through a sermon. Luckily I think it was three or four or five weeks old. But I need to stop on that because this is not going to get it.

Proverbs 4. My point is that our sin has consequences and these things do affect people. So don't believe the lie that it doesn't. Now with that said, there are those in this room I know who have had abortions and God's grace will cover you.

Let me tell you by personal experience, it will cover you. It will give you so much joy and peace but you need to turn to Him. You need to give Him and give Him.

Just say, Lord, I give it to you. It was a mistake. I give everything to you.

And He can rebuild your life. Because Paul killed the church. Paul killed Christians.

All of us sin in many areas. And that's why I can preach so boldly about these issues because I felt them deeply. And I felt God's grace of the cross.

And I know what that means. I can stand up here and say, I know what the grace of God means because without that... How do you breathe without Christ? How do people do it today without Christ? How do you even breathe? Do you know your worship changes? We've got so much shoulders up worship in here. We have head knowledge.

We're singing about God but we don't know God. We're singing about Him but not to Him. We come to church.

Bunch of head knowledge. Yeah, doxology is correct. Theology is correct.

But that's why some people are broken in worshiping because they meant the healer. They've meant the restore. They meant the redeemer.

And they've experienced God. Truly experienced God. When you truly experience God, your life is radically changed.

The problem is many people in the pew have not truly experienced God. They have a lukewarm, old school fashion Christianity that bears no resemblance to biblical Christianity. I'm just being straight up with you.

If worship doesn't break you now and then, there's a problem with your heart. I'm not talking about acting. I mean, I'm the last guy to see me up here putting arms.

But when I think of my child, when I think of the hell I've been through, when I think of God's grace that saved me, you're lucky I'm not up here on this pulpit every single Saturday weeping like a child because of what He's done and what He's done in my life. And His grace covers it in restoration. Makes a difference.

Let me read Proverbs 4 because I promise you we get through every verse in the Proverbs. I want these words to sink in. Proverbs 4. Now, interesting note.

Solomon, we believe, is writing most of the Proverbs. Is he not shaping a king? As a king, your lineage is going to be a future king someday. It's just ironic.

He's shaping future leaders. Hear, my children, the instruction of a father. Give attention to no understanding.

For I give you good doctrine. Do not forsake my law. When I was my father's son, tender, and the only one on the side of my mother, He also taught me and said to me, Let your heart retain My words.

Keep My commands and live. He's saying it right here. Keep My commands and live.

Get wisdom. Get understanding. Do not forget.

Do not turn away from the words of My mouth. Do not forsake her. She will preserve you.

She will guide you. She will direct you. Love wisdom and she will keep you.

Wisdom is the principal thing. Therefore, get wisdom and all your understanding. She will promote you.

She will exalt you. She will place on your head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory. She will deliver you.

Hear, My son, and receive My sayings, and the years of your life will be many. I have taught you in the way of wisdom. I have led you in the right path.

When you walk, your steps will not be hindered. And when you run, you will not stumble. Take firm hold of instruction.

Do not let go, for she is your life. That first half there, he's saying wisdom is your life. She will promote you.

She will guard you. Church, America, this nation, turn back to godly wisdom. That is the only hope for our nation.

I thought Christ is, yeah, Christ is our only hope for the nation, but it takes wisdom to apply that to our lives. Wisdom. Then he goes on to say a warning to avoid the path of the wicked.

Verse 14, Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Too late there, but let's keep reading. Avoid it.

Do not travel on it. Turn away from it. Pass on it.

For they do not sleep unless they have done evil, and their sleep is taken away unless they make someone fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is like the shining sun that shines ever brighter into the perfect day.

The way of the wicked is like darkness. Listen to me. If life is unclear, if life is confusing, if life seems dark, you need to turn to God and get out of that life of destruction, that life of darkness, because they do not know what makes them stumble.

My son, give attention to my words. Incline your ear to my saying. Do not let them depart from your eyes.

Keep them in the midst of your heart, for they are life to those who find them and health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it springs the issues of life. Put away from you the deceitful mouth.

Put away from you the perverse lips, and let your eyes look straight ahead and your eyelids look right before you. Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established. Do not turn to the right or to the left.

Remove your foot from evil. Now, we gave America as a present example. I want to give a past example in the Old Testament, and that's what you'll see in your notes there.

Manasseh. And you have to understand something. For many years, Israel was governed by God through Moses, then Joshua, then the promised land, then he gave them judges.

And it's a very frustrating book for me to read because God delivers them, then they rebel. God delivers them, then they rebel. God delivers them, then they rebel.

God sends a deliverer, then they rebel. He hears their cries, He sends a deliverer, then they rebel. It's like, wake up, people.

So after the judges run their course, they say, give us a king like all the other nations of the world. God says, all right, you want it, you got it. Saul comes to the throne.

Then from Saul, we have David. From David, we have Solomon. And then from there, the kingdom of Israel breaks up into northern and southern kingdoms.

And for a lack of a better term, all hell breaks loose as these nations reject God. And that's where Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel comes in. He's in captivity.

These people called to call these nations back to God. That's still applicable today. And it's funny how these prophetic authors, they were statesmen.

They were reformers, they were authors, and they were preachers. Every single prophet you'll see in the Old Testament would fall under that category. They were statesmen.

They cared about their country. I'm not talking about patriotism. I'm talking about a country that should be thankful for what God has done.

Nehemiah, when he saw that the entire Jerusalem was in ruins, he said, why should I not be sad when the place of my father's tombs lies in waste? Why can we not say that today? Why should I not be sad? The very Bible that was tied in our schools was thrown out. We can't say Christmas for the love of God. I just talked to somebody the other day.

You'd be saying Christmas pretty soon. Oh no, we're going to be saying happy holidays. Really? Really.

So in this Judah, northern and southern kingdoms, you'd see kings come up. You'd see a few good kings, a few bad kings. But we get to a king called Hezekiah.

Fairly good king. He gave birth to one of the most worst kings that Israel has ever known, Manasseh. And then Amnon, and then Josiah comes in and fixes things temporarily.

But I want to read something about Manasseh. This is written by Pat Moujet. I pulled it off his website.

Manasseh's feet burned from the stones and the hot sand sifting through his sandals, and the ropes tore into his wrists as he struggled to maintain his balance against the compulsion of the barb that pierced his nose. Like so many conqueror kings before him, Manasseh offered no resistance as his Assyrian captors marched him through the gates of the capital to the cheers of the admiring crowd. Judah's king was a big prize among their human cargo.

Being in the judicial custody of his enemies, banished from Manasseh's thoughts all but the bleak prospect of being publicly humiliated and killed, he realized then that he might never behold his own capital city again. The vivid memories of butchering thousands of his own citizens and filling Jerusalem's streets with blood haunted him. Manasseh felt the stares of his surviving subjects as the Assyrian soldiers once again jerked the barb and placed him completely at their mercy.

Yet what devoured his peace more than all this was how far his own soul had wandered from God. Of all the Hebrew kings who had reigned, few were so offensive to God as Manasseh, king of Judah. What

happened? Proverbs 4, the way of the wicked is like darkness.

They do not know what makes them stumble. The interesting thing is be very careful what you'll pray for. Many of you know the story of Hezekiah.

Before Manasseh was even born, God sent the prophet Isaiah to him and said, get your house in order, you're gonna die. And he pleaded, he pleaded, he repented, he prayed, everything God pleased and the prophet came back and said, okay, you've got 15 years, you're not gonna die. Three years later, Manasseh was born.

And he brought more destruction on Israel than any other king before him. Jeremiah records, because of Manasseh, you'll be taken by the sword, you'll be taken by a wild beast, pestilence will come upon you, you'll eat your own children. It was horrific because of ungodly leadership shaped the direction of the nation.

And as the leadership goes, so goes the nation. As the nation goes, all we like sheep are led astray, right? We follow that. Many people follow that.

So there comes a time when God judges a land or nation based on the leadership of the people. Now, let me put a clause in there that I'm somewhat, even though this is a hard message, I'm very hopeful in the remnant of what God is doing in our nation. I see young pastors preaching the truth.

I see people fighting for right. I see God moving in many ways. I'm praying for a national revival.

I see these things, I pray for these things, I hope for these things. So on one hand, we should be very encouraged because God is motivating us. But on the other hand, we should be very alarmed.

Do you see how that works? Because that's what forces, if my people are called by my name, will finally humble themselves and break, I will heal their land. Now, let me read it from the Bible. Buckle up.

Hold on. Sit down. 2 Kings 21, Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king, and he reigned 55 years in Jerusalem.

And he did evil in the sight of the Lord according to the abominations of the nations whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed. He raised up altars for bell worship.

He made wooden images. And as Ahab king of Israel had done, he even worshipped all the hosts of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the Lord of which the Lord has said, In Jerusalem I will put my name.

And he built altars for all the hosts of heaven in two of the courts. Also, he made his son pass through the fire, children's sacrifice to the God of Molech. You don't even want to know what that involved.

Also, he made his son pass through the fire, practiced susang, used witchcraft, consulted spirits and mediums. Be very careful on the direction of this media and how it's influencing our culture. This mad craze for vampires and witchcraft, it should be alarming.

Shane, that's a little bit of leap there. I know that. I'm just throwing it in though.

Our nation, we love the darkness. We should not love the darkness. We should abhor the darkness.

If you find these things entertaining, there's something wrong with your heart. That darkness never entertains the light. Never.

And this is what exactly... Our culture is going so dark and we love these witches and perversions and warlocks and vampires and spells and even Disney. Everything is just coming... All this evil. We don't even see it.

And in one fell swoop, Manasseh broke the Davidic covenant, the God made with David. He broke the Mosaic covenant, the God made with Moses. And he brought idols into the very house of the living God.

And that's when the death bell tolled and Manasseh was led to destruction. Let me continue to read. Verse 7, He even set up a carved image of Asherah that he made in the house of which the Lord had said to David and to Solomon, This is My house of which I have chosen.

Verse 8, And I will not make the feet of Israel wander any more from the land which I gave their fathers, only if they are careful to do according to all that I have commanded them and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them. But they paid no attention and Manasseh seduced. Leadership matters.

Manasseh seduced the children of God to do more evil than any other nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel. That is absolutely amazing. This guy did more abominations than even the nations did that didn't know God.

Leadership matters because of Manasseh. Jeremiah said because of Manasseh God is going to judge your land. Be very careful.

Don't take this topic lightly. Brings us back to Proverbs 4. Do not forsake My law. Do not forsake it.

Keep My commandments and live. And then verse 10, Then the Lord spoke by His servants, the prophets, saying, Because of Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations, therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I am bringing such calamity upon Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle, and I will stretch out over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab. That just means you think they got worked over? You ain't seen nothing yet.

The same destruction that befell the house of Ahab in Samaria is going to befall you. I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish. Before the president of Iran said it, God said it.

I'm going to wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish. Wiping it and turning it upside down. You might say, Shane, I don't know any of this in the Bible.

Yeah, it's in the Bible. I would encourage all of you to read the entire Bible for the love of God. You'll see that these messages are difficult.

They're biblical. Just start in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Go to Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, calling a rebellious people back to God.

The problem is we've been taught that Jesus said, turn the other cheek, don't get upset, love your enemies, feed the poor, take care of those around you. All the stuff, Shane, you're way out there, buddy.

You're not on track.

No, you're not on track because you don't read the Old Testament. You only pick out verses you like in the New Testament. I told you last week, I ask people, they get upset at these messages.

Have you ever read the entire Bible by chance? She's asking. No, I haven't. Well, you better start there because these are biblical texts, a biblical call to repentance, holiness, and righteousness is God's command to the church and to his people.

The problem is we're not hearing it enough. There was no word in the land. There was a famine in the land.

One of the prophets said, not a famine of meat and of drink, but a famine of hearing from the word of God. One of the prophets said, put away from me all your stuff. Would you get the drums out of here? Would you get the piano but let justice run down like a river and righteousness like a mighty stream? Go back to God.

Turn back to God, O Israel. My people who have called by my name, turn back to me and I will turn back to you. That's a promise that we can take to the bank.

The Lord said, I will forsake the remnant of my inheritance and I will deliver them into the hand of their enemies and they shall become victims of plunder to all of their enemies because they have done evil in my sight and have provoked me to anger since their fathers came out of Egypt even to this day. I'm going to wind up here because this sermon was an hour and 25 minutes, so I cut a lot off of it. But I'm winding down.

There's two things we need to pull from this text. Why was the judgment of God falling upon Manasseh? What's the big deal? The big deal is we can find God said because you shed so much innocent blood. What? What? Yeah, this is the guy they think, tradition holds it, that he sawed Isaiah in half.

He put his own son on the arms of Molech's arms that were piercing red and sacrificed his son. He killed all the weak people. He killed the prophets.

He didn't want them telling him that he was wrong. So God says, because you shed so much innocent blood, the judgment hand of God is falling upon your nation. And you don't think that parallels us today? What? God says the life of the flesh is in the blood.

I take life and I give it. In Genesis, when he said he breathed the life into Adam, he became a living soul. The Hebrew says a living nephesh.

He became a living soul, that life. And then God says, I take and I give. You will not shed innocent blood because the life of the flesh is in the blood.

I'm in charge of that. Do not dare touch it. Now the authorities are to be a terror to those who do evil.

Augustine wrote on this, on the just war theory. Christians hate war. It's the last thing we want.

But we understand to restrain evil that evil has got to go checked, not unchecked. That's why there is governments. Do you realize that if Obama got rid of all of our nuclear arsenal, you think Abba Dedejohn is going to love us? He calls us the little Satan.

After I wipe Israel off the face of the earth, I'm coming for you, America. And as we go to bed, no big deal, eating our lot, drinking our lattes, watching all this entertainment, loving Potter, loving Twilight, never in God's word, selfish, arrogant Americans. We think that God won't give us up to our enemies? I pray, I pray, I pray not.

Do you realize that the 12th Iman that they're waiting for is the Antichrist that we look to as well in the Bible? The same characteristics. Interesting. Be careful.

That's all I'm saying. This should spur us to repentance. I don't go home crying and sorry, oh my God, the world's coming apart.

I say, Lord, we love you, we serve you, and we will follow you. And I know like Elisha, when I'm at home and I want to say, there's nobody else following you, he says, there's 7,000 that you do not know about that have not bowed their knee to Bell nor have they kissed his image. He says, I have more.

And all you follow, follow me as a remnant, follow me as a people. That's why I have a lot of faith and I understand why God doesn't judge America maybe like Israel because there is a praying remnant. There are people in this nation petitioning, fasting, and praying.

But you have to remember something. Although we will avoid, especially in Revelation, God's judgment. You have to understand God's judgment.

Sodom. Good morning. He judged it, rain down hell, stone, fire, revelation.

The bowls are unleashed. The wrath of God is unleashed. There's something known as not God's judgment, but his removal.

What he does is, I'm removing the safety in this covering of protection. You want it, you got it. Romans 1, they suppress the truth and ungodliness and unrighteousness.

I gave them up to their own thinking, their own evil ways. And when he moves his hand of protection, that's when enemies can come in. The pestilence, the blessings of God fade away.

That's, I don't know why more people are alarmed at what's going on. Our financial security in this nation hangs by a thread. China calls in their notes.

We're the United States of China. The oil gets too expensive. You have no fuel, no fuel to run the military.

Fill in the blanks. The housing market that you think is recovering because there's a re-election, there's so many filings for foreclosures and they don't know what to do. They're selling houses by the boatloads to investors.

\$100, \$200, \$300, \$400 a time. Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac are going against all their guidelines. See, I'm following the news.

You don't have to have entertainment all the time. You can just follow what's going on. They're selling all this.

They're getting all this stuff. They say, oh, the market's uncovering. No, they're not.

You're cutting out inventory because it's such a big wave. You don't know what to do with it. So these should be all wake-up signs.

The shedding of the innocent blood. Life is in the blood. The next reason he was judging, I'll be out of your way.

He promotes idolatry and defies God's holy sanctuary. Do you realize that's happening today? There's no statue of Astroth here, the goddess, but there's many churches where the Bible is never proclaimed. Truth is never proclaimed.

Jesus isn't sought. Repentance isn't sought. They just come in here and tickle the ears and build an audience.

I've told you before, if Joel Osteen read this sermon, he'd lose 90% of his audience. He's a motivational speaker, not a pastor. A pastor of one of the largest churches in America must talk about hell, repentance, judgment, along with the love of God and thinking positive thoughts.

Listen, I have no beef to grind, but that's the condition of the church. The condition of the church is rated by what you see. Let's go nationally.

These guys say, I'm not going to talk about Christ. Well, talk about Jesus is a nice guy turning their cheek. I'm not going to talk about the cross.

He told, I'm not going to talk about the blood. I'm not going to talk about sin. I'm not going to talk about hell.

I'm not going to talk about repentance. I'm going to avoid all those things, and he wished not that the spirit of the Lord has departed from him. When you avoid the very foundational truths of God's word, you put up an idol in your church because idolatry is worshiping something that's not God, and we begin to worship ourselves.

So when the churches do not proclaim, we have many areas we need to work on here. Trust me, I'm not saying we haven't dialed in anything. We're just trying.

That's what I'm trying to do is honor God. But if you took a vast survey of the churches, they are not preaching the truth of God's word to get the church in America back. One word is what this nation needs to hear right now.

One word is what the church needs to hear right now, and if you're feeling uncomfortable, you need to hear this word right now. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That was the one word of the prophets.

Jonah goes into the capital of Assyria, Nineveh. Repent, for the judgment of God is falling on you. Jeremiah called these leaders to repentance.

Isaiah called them to repentance. That is our only hope, repenting from sin and turning back to God. So don't think for one minute that leadership matters.

I'm not going to sit up here and break down Obama's policies, though I could. I'm not going to sit up here and tell you about Mormonism and being a cult, though I could. But you've got to vote on principles, not parties.

We need to put somebody in office who fears God. There are voter guides out in the lobby. They're actually not ours, they're the churches that uses this facility.

And you can see, look for yourself. What are the principles? Who are we putting in office? These are the principles. That's just truth.

If you don't like it because your guy doesn't write well, get mad at your guy, not at me. You just compare. That's all I can do.

That's all I can do. Now the hope. 2 Chronicles 33.12 Now when Manasseh was in affliction, he implored the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before God and prayed to him and received his entreaty.

God heard his supplication and he brought back Manasseh to Jerusalem. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God. Manasseh's repentance was full and deep.

That's why he says, remove your foot from evil. Jeremiah 18.7 If that nation against whom I've spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it. Do we do the whiteout on this one too? I mean, I don't know.

It doesn't make any sense. Of course, we all know Romans. We're sin abounds.

Grace did much more abound. And I don't want to get caught up on... Chelsea, you can go ahead and come up. I don't want to get caught up on this.

This really isn't a political issue, even though it filters into politics. What it is, it's about a church and a people honoring God and looking to him. Lord, I might be mistaken in some of these areas.

I might be this. I'm searching for you as an imperfect human being, as a sinner, wanting to glorify Christ, wanting to glorify God. And the laws of a nation, the laws of a leader reflect the direction of a nation.

I just read you three very alarming things. Do you think it's going to stop there? Do you think some days, radical, extreme, jihad is going to wake up? No, we're done for now. No.

That's why our only hope is Christ. Our only hope is God. Our only hope is getting back to the Word.

Not as legal as pointing this out and throwing it at everybody, but as broken sinners worshiping God. And then he moves through us in that way. Lord, I pray right now, Lord, for this church.

Lord, just show us what areas that we need to just repent of tonight. Lord, I also pray for men that they would start leading their families in the fear and admonition of you, Lord. We change the nation by one heart at a time, by one family at a time.

But Lord, we do want to cry out tonight and pray, Lord, for our leaders, Lord. We pray for our president right now that you would change his heart. Lord, just put his heart right into your hands, Lord.

We know that you're in control. We know that you're sovereign. We pray for the upcoming election, Lord.

We know that these things will have massive implications on important issues, Lord. I pray that you would bring national revival. Lord, could you just work through a few humble, submitted people, Lord, that want to see you move? Lord, we want revival, no matter what that looks like.

We want homes broken. We want school districts changed. Lord, we want people in office to be statesmen, not politicians.

Lord, I pray that you bring revival to Capitol Hill. Lord, let us pray for these leaders, Lord. Would you break them? Would you humble them so that they govern in the fear of God and not the fear of man? Lord, have them look to you instead of opinion polls, Lord.

But we know that you are the only one that can change the condition of our nation. Lord, but we also take time to thank you. Lord, thank you so much for the blessings we enjoy.

Lord, we do take it for granted. We thank you for everything that you've blessed us with, Lord. You've put this together.

You've orchestrated it. Lord, we give you all the credit, all the honor, Lord, for what you've done. We pray that this nation would once again be in your hand.

We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

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