

Fasting: Where Breakthrough Begins

by Shane Idleman

Fasting is a powerful tool for spiritual growth and breakthrough, and it involves applying pressure to the spiritual realm through prayer and fasting.

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Scripture: Matthew 6:16

Topics: "Fasting", "Spiritual Breakthrough"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the transformative power of fasting as a spiritual discipline that leads to breakthroughs in both spiritual and physical health. He shares personal experiences and insights from his book, 'Feasting and Fasting,' highlighting how fasting reveals what controls us and fosters a deeper hunger for God. Idleman argues that fasting not only humbles us but also creates an environment for healing and spiritual growth, urging believers to apply pressure in the spiritual realm through prayer and fasting. He encourages the congregation to consider their health and spiritual well-being, advocating for a lifestyle of discipline and stewardship over one's body as a gift from God.

Transcript

I don't know what your view is on this topic. Many of you know I've been going through this for about a year, pretty consistently. The reason, I believe now, looking back, is putting this book together, that is finally out.

The title is Feasting and Fasting, What Works, What Doesn't, and Why. And before you have to write a book like that, you have to go through it. And I think that's what God was doing in my own life.

We've been hearing from people, believe it or not, from Iran, South Africa, Scotland, from people being changed from the message of fasting and denying self and different things. So I don't think I'm gonna keep having to beat this drum too often. Now that the book's out, now that you have the resources you need, I'm hoping to just touch base maybe once a year in January or summer, just to call the church back to this area.

And I believe fasting, more than any other spiritual discipline, will reveal what controls you. Right, spiritual discipline, worship, okay, that's not too hard. Bible reading, I'm not doing too great, but I got it.

Prayer, yeah, but you get to this spiritual discipline. This is where the rubber meets the road, when you have to tell your flesh that you are going to not eat something, you're not gonna consume something. And a couple different things, as I was pondering this message this week, really the difficult part for me was not being able to get through everything, and what I wanna say.

That's why there are a lot of different sermons in the book. If you get the e-book version, you can click on the sermon, and it'll take you right to that sermon title. And the e-book right now is free.

We're hoping to keep that free, except on Kindle, the lowest they would go is 99 cents, so there's not much we can do about that. But you can download the e-book, you can take copies as you're leaving, and give those to friends and family to try to get them to better understand that our health makes a big difference, and how we take care of this gift that God has given us makes a big difference. Listen, I'm going to different hospitals, visiting people, I just went to the hospital homes today.

One of the hospital homes, I went to City of Hope Saturday and UCLA Medical Center as well, and a lot of the sickness that we're seeing does not have to be what it is to the degree it is. I believe a lot of it can be hindered, a lot of disease can be hindered if we take better care of our bodies. I've seen it, there's some medical studies out there that support that as well.

So let me just talk about a few different things. The title is Fasting Where Breakthrough Begins. Fasting Where Breakthrough Begins.

And many of you know what a breakthrough is, but let me just repeat it for those who don't. It's a sudden, dramatic, and important discovery or development. So fasting from a biblical sense, and one of the challenges again from a biblical sense is not being able to share all the biblical stories from Ezra to Nehemiah to Esther to David to Moses, all the different, Elijah, just keep going, all the different examples of when men and women fasted, God moved.

And it's ironic as well that we love to quote the verse, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, that I will heal their land, I will hear them. Now it's ironic, the ironic part is that fasting meets all of these conditions. Fasting is humiliating, it humbles ourselves.

When we fast, we pray. Fasting and praying involves seeking God and it involves turning from sin. So fasting is at the heart of repentance and humility, not only in the Old Testament, but we see it throughout the New Testament as well.

So what a breakthrough involves is when you stop going through the motions. Do you know that going through the motions rarely produces change, right? It's a no-brainer. This isn't gonna be a lot of new stuff.

It's gonna be a lot of stuff we need to reinforce. To break a bad habit, to get back on track, we have to get out of that daily routine. We're doing the same, do you know the definition of insanity? Doing the same thing, but expecting different results.

So breakthrough involves, okay, I've gotta stop this. I've gotta get on a different track. I need to break this routine in certain areas.

And I'm gonna give you some scriptural support. So first I'm gonna talk about the spiritual breakthroughs, the spiritual benefits, but then it's important to know the physical. And what I like about God's Word is

anytime you do something in the spiritual, it will benefit you in the physical.

Anytime you do something, and I just ran into a guy today. He said he feels so much better. He's not a Christian, I'm whatever.

He said he feels so much better when he meditates, right? Well, that's a biblical principle, as long as you're meditating on the right thing and on the right person that has physical results. When you seek God, when you pray, fear is relieved and your body feels better physically. So the spiritual often affects the physical.

Conversely, the physical often affects the spiritual. Now, not all of the time. Some of the people I visited at the hospitals are actually doing better than ever with God.

They're focused on God. They're loving God. This debilitating disease or whatever it is has got them to a point of full surrender.

There's tremendous joy in the Lord. So that's not a blanket statement. But often how we take care of our physical body will affect us spiritually.

When we're addicted to certain things, when we're not overcoming certain things, when we're falling and failing and we're not doing what God has called us to do, it can affect us spiritually. Because part of being filled with the Spirit involves obedience, a word we don't like to use too much in church. But when we are obedient in this area, I believe that God will honor that.

So let's look at first at the spiritual benefits. A spiritual benefits, and really fast, if I could sum it up, is a physical response to a spiritual problem. It's a physical response.

I'm going to respond physically and it's going to have spiritual ramifications. The physical affects the spiritual. We just talked about that.

Fasting ignites a hunger for God and provides direction. The fuel source of our addiction is starved. And that's really, in our day and age especially, Paul's day, Jesus' day, they didn't deal as much with addictions as they do now, as we do now.

I think we can all agree on that. To go get some honey, you had to go to the honeycomb. You had to climb that tree, you had to go after the bees, and you have to fight for that honey.

Or you had a little store. Now it's in every corner. And it's magnified, it's all these things.

And people say, well, but God gave us these things. No, man altered it, man changed it, and it has ramifications on our physical health. So fasting ignites a hunger for God and provides direction.

So to break a bondage, we must pray, we must seek God's grace, and we often must starve the flesh. This isn't Old Testament, this is biblical in the New Testament as well. To starve the passions of the flesh, to crucify the flesh, you often have to stop feeding the very thing that is fighting you.

It's almost like we're giving fuel to the enemy when we feed and we feed and we feed and we don't starve the flesh. Discipline is part of the Christian faith. We will crave more of what we feed.

Fasting silences the voice of the flesh. Now I'm gonna get into a few scripture references here. But first, this is a huge disclaimer, and I know you've heard me say this before, and I think it needs to be said again because some of you weren't there.

But fasting, the big misconception is it doesn't make God love us more. You know, God's not saying, boy, that Shane, he really fasted, I love him more than my other kids. It has nothing to do with God's love.

Because of the cross, because of what Christ did, we are forgiven, we are loved, God embraces all of his children. But there is a different thing, or a different way of looking at this when it comes to favor. God will put certain favor on children, this children he can trust.

Certain blessings will flow into a life of a believer who is obedient versus one who is not. I think we can agree on that, right? We have our own children, we love them the same. But are you going to give the prodigal son the car? Or the son who's going to college and making a difference and working hard and going to church? Because I love you both, but I can't invest into that lifestyle because it would be, it might ruin you.

You would sell the car and use it to buy something else. So although I love both, my favor, my blessing is going to rest on those who can steward the gift more efficiently. This is all biblical.

So God doesn't love us more, but I do love him more when I fast. You draw closer to God. And I don't know this dynamic, to be completely honest with you, I don't like it.

I wish the, right after a turkey dinner at Thanksgiving, I would be so close to God. After a big dinner, I wish I could sit down with the Bible and a good book, and I wish it was possible. After stopping and getting Krispy Kreme and some chocolate or coffee, I wish, I wish I could just, oh, I just feel so close to God.

But part of that is we're feeding the flesh. Now, food is good and God-given. God gave it to us.

It's to be a blessing. We entertain people. We feast and enjoy one another's company.

Actually, communion is taken in remembering Christ, and it's done with food. So there's nothing wrong with food in itself. It's when we give it its proper place.

So I wanna just throw out a question. Are most of you, I think you would agree with me here, are we awaiting the return of the bridegroom? Are we awaiting Jesus' return? I think no matter where your view is on eschatology, the end times, I think we're all, we can all agree on that we can come together. Well, Jesus said, when he was challenged, he said, why do your disciples not fast? And Jesus said, because the bridegroom is here.

But when the bridegroom leaves, they will fast. And he goes on to say, I believe it's Matthew 6, when you pray, when you give, and when you fast. So personally, I'm a little nervous to take that one out.

I'll pray and I'll give, but I'm, not this third point. This one is where it hurts a little bit. And that's what people do.

Men of God I respect, I look up to in Christian, in theology in different areas. It's almost like the strange arguments, well, it was for the Old Testament, and it can really turn into like a monastery movement, the monks, and I'm like, are you just enjoying your hamburgers? I mean, you're trying to twist what gets clearly evident throughout scripture. Paul fasted.

Jesus fasted. Jesus was led into the wilderness. Now, I don't think that's just an accident there.

I don't think that, hey, by the way, he fasted. He just decided to. There's something about starving the appetites of the flesh to be filled with the Spirit.

And it's ironic, there's no kids in here, right? Oh, there's some kids, okay, well, I'll be careful here. When you starve the flesh, other areas of fleshly desires are starved as well. Other appetites that are not healthy are starved as well, because you're going to the root of all addiction.

You're going to the root of all ungodly, lusty flesh. You're starving it at its source. You're not giving it any fuel anymore.

It's also interesting, looking at this, I looked at this topic a lot writing this book, but you see that Daniel was rewarded for fasting with vegetables, and you see that children of Israel were rebuked because they lusted for meat. So sometimes these certain foods have animalistic impulses that it will cause in us as well when we consume certain things. It does something to the body.

And that's my big beef with caffeine, especially with children and different things. This is a very potent central nervous stimulant that affects all areas of your heart rate, your attention span, your irritability, are you ever anxious, are you angry? You're actually fueling those things by taking these substances. I call it Christian crack.

Okay, I'm going to get out of that one real quick here. Through fasting, our body becomes a servant instead of a master. Because, and again, as someone who's struggled with their weight many years, when I was younger, it was hard for me, and it's still hard, because I want to eat more than my body wants to burn.

That's really what being overweight is. I'm taking in more units of energy than my body's wanting to burn. So that has been an issue.

But when fasting, your body becomes a servant instead of a master, because what we are mastered by begins to control us. Do you ever say, I just can't stop the cappuccino, frappuccino, chocolate, whatever it is. We all have our little, you know what it is, that thing that just draws you in every day, calls your name, Shane, come dip me in peanut butter.

You know, come go by Starbucks and buy this, you know, and it's just drawing. So fasting, and let me just encourage you before I forget, you're not on a spiritual high most of the time when fasting. You're not walking, oh, this feels wonderful, this feels great, you're walking around going, this stinks, this is hard, I don't like this.

And then the mind starts to work against you. Yeah, just start tomorrow. Yeah, one piece of pizza, what's the big deal? And you start to compromise.

So, see, this really isn't, the whole point of fasting is to starve those fleshly appetites that want to master you. And as we all know, if you get sick, if you don't give into that master, it's not a, it's a cruel task master, isn't it? That one serving becomes three. That one donut becomes four.

That one, we just keep giving into these things. So I truly believe that God wants us to be disciplined in this area as well, when possible. Now, nobody does this perfectly, right? We had a birthday party last night for

one of my kids, and yeah, it wasn't perfect.

You know, there's, things are going to happen, so you don't want to beat yourself up. You're not always gonna be on a spiritual high. So here's usually what works with fasting.

It's just my personal opinion. We are so addicted to the chemicals, the sugars, the caffeines, the different things, that when we try to fast, it's impossible, because we're actually having withdrawals. So the first step is to get cleaned up, to get your diet clean, and to get weaned off of these things, because a caffeine withdrawal, or a sugar withdrawal, is very difficult in and of itself.

Mood swings, anxious, irritable. You just want to kill somebody. You want to strangle somebody, and now you're gonna stop having food? So I think it's a very, it's much more challenging for us, unless we get our bodies in the right frame of mind.

So that goal should be, okay, in the next couple weeks, I'm gonna start weaning off things. I'm gonna start getting rid of those things that are counterproductive, that are not healthy. The energy drinks, and the things that we have and consume.

If I had time, I could really depress you, but I'm not going to, because we are at a crossroads. We're seeing a lot of disease in children, obesity levels now. Look at, just go online, psychiatrists, America, they're asking, how do we do, how do we handle this? It's an epidemic that's growing, not decreasing.

And they're looking at the health charges for medical, you know, insurance. They're already having medical and different things. But the rate it's going to the fund this with our sickness, as our sickness keeps, you won't be able to fund it.

You won't be able to have medical insurance, because it wasn't designed for everybody to be sick. All the time, it's there for those who truly need it. And there's just so much happening in the physical.

In Matthew 17, 21, Jesus said that a certain evil spirit does not go out of a person except by prayer and fasting. Matthew 17, 21, you Bible scholars will say, well, that verse isn't in some translations. And it's correct, I've talked about that before on where we got our different translations.

But I will tell you this, as God's word is my witness, that this principle is found throughout Scripture, that fasting applies pressure to the spiritual realm. When Daniel started to fast, 21 days later, he had the breakthrough. And God said, Daniel, from when you set your heart to fast, I started to answer you.

But I was held up by the Prince of Persia, this demonic realm. And I don't know how that works. That is just very interesting, if you take the Bible literally, which we do.

That somehow, some way, Daniel's prayer was held off while he was fasting. There was a spiritual battle taking place. And that we see throughout the Bible that fasting applies pressure to the spiritual realm.

Arthur Wallace said this, often, pressure has to be maintained before there is a breakthrough in heavenly warfare. You as a Christian, you need to know this. Pressure has to be replied.

Gone are the days of microwave Christianity. Gone are the days of the five-minute devotional. Gone are the days of the quick little prayer to work.

You've got to contend, you've got to fight, you've got to battle. It's constant pressure against the demonic realm that is wanting to pressure you. We have to get into that mindset.

If you're desiring a breakthrough, you must apply pressure. What I recommend is you confess it as sin and you hit it head on. You have to apply pressure to the spiritual realm.

Now I'm gonna use an example here. I don't know if I'd use it on Sunday morning, but maybe I will. When I was growing up, I'm gonna date myself here.

Do you remember this guy called, I think it was just out of high school, Iron Mike Tyson? That's how you need to fight the devil. He would just get in the ring and it was like a bulldog, first round knockout, boom, boom, boom. He just said, and when they interviewed him, he said, I fear no man.

I'm going to defeat that. I'm gonna come in like an animal and I'm going to destroy. That's the mindset of warfare.

That's how we have to, I'm gonna apply pressure. I'm gonna keep hitting the devil. I'm gonna pray.

I'm gonna fast. I'm gonna seek God until he is crushed because what he's doing is waiting for you to fail and fall and to give up and say, forget it. I can't do this anymore.

I'm not fighting this fight. Forget it. This is pointless.

So you have to apply pressure in the spiritual realm. Do you just wake up all the time wanting to pray? Try this. Husbands and wives, beginning tomorrow, we're gonna sit down and we're gonna pray for a half hour.

You watch the hell that tries to break loose. You have to apply that. We've done it before and she'll text me, do you feel like praying? I do not feel like praying this morning.

I have no desire. I'm in a bad mood. I shouldn't have checked emails.

I shouldn't have turned on my phone, but we're gonna pray. We need to do it. We need to break through.

We need to apply spiritual pressure to the spiritual realm. So Jesus said, so we learn, when you fast, Matthew 6, 16, Jesus said, when you fast, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting. James 4, 5 reminds us that our spirit has envious yearnings.

Do we yield to these yearnings or do we give in to the pull of the flesh? Do you know what your spirit longs for? The Holy Spirit in you, it's your yearning for the things of God. What are the things of God? Your spirit wants to worship. I want to come to the morning worship.

I want to read my Bible. I guarantee everybody in this room just about is saying, amen, I need to do that. I want to do that.

The Holy Spirit is yearning to do that. Oh, Shane, that sounds great, but I've got this other junk in here that doesn't want to do that. So fasting will starve that other voice.

That's why I don't give limits because a person fasting half a day and just seeking God is just as beneficial as somebody, when we start to put, okay, well, you're real spiritual if you go three days, okay? You're not quite there. You're not as spiritual as me. If you go a week, and we start to label things.

Now, granted, I am a big proponent of the longer the better. Jesus is a good example of fasting, but I believe God will also direct you. I talked about a fasting experience that I did.

It was 22 days, and I couldn't do it all water, but I did, I think, four days water, five days water, and then finished with nine days of water. And it was the most difficult thing I've ever done, but it was the most fulfilling thing I have ever done. Eyesight improved, back problems, joint problems, root canal, all these things, the body starts healing itself and I was driving home, I'll never forget this day.

I'm driving home, I just get over the hill, and I just felt released. I'm like, I feel like having dinner. I feel accomplished.

God's Spirit is the presence, the power. It just came on me, tremendous peace because I didn't know how long I was gonna keep doing it and what God's direction was, so I believe that God will lead you. He will direct you.

I don't wanna alarm anybody, but I do know people, there are people that have fasted for 40 days with water. We just can't even comprehend that, can we? It's just like, it doesn't even, but here's the thing, after three or four days, you're not really as hungry. So I could've kept going 10, 11, 12, 13 had I not just had that peace to keep.

So your body doesn't, because usually you think day one, I'm starving. Day two, I'm really starving. Day three, I am three times starving.

Day four, I am quadruple starving. Day five, I can't even think about it. It doesn't work that way.

Your body, once it says, okay, this joker's not gonna eat. See, I can dress different and talk different on Wednesday nights. This guy's not gonna eat.

Okay, let's just stop bothering him as much. Let's go back now into how God designed us to start feeding off of that stored fuel that we have, and your body goes into ketosis. It starts breaking down ketones from your fat storage as your primary source of fuel, and it's very clean-running fuel.

That's why you sleep well, you feel great. Your mind functions even better on ketones, fat, than glucose, sugar, because the body was designed to do that. You can look in the book.

I reference it. A man in Scotland fasted over a year on water only at the Scotland University. I think he went from 450-some pounds to 185.

He's not starving. He's switching his fuel source. See, that's why people say, why are you starving yourself? Starving myself? I'm not starving myself.

Starving is what they looked like when they liberated the concentration camps in World War II under Hitler. That's what a body looks like when it's starving. That's not healthy, it's not good.

Kids in Third World countries that we see, I've had friends that would go and visit, and they'd come back in tears because they don't have enough food to help these kids that are starving. You start to see the skeletons come through. You start to see the stomach out, and they just look like they're about ready to die.

That's starving. So fasting isn't starving. It's switching your fuel source, and your body loves its sugar and glucose, glycogen, and it loves that, and that's why it switches, or that's why you feel hungry, because your body's craving that.

But once you get through that craving, it starts to burn the fat as fuel. Now granted, muscle is also a readily available fuel source, but your body goes into something called protein-sparing mode. I'm going back and forth between the physical and the spiritual.

So your muscle is protected. Why? God designed it that way, to spare the muscle. So it's important, but to go primarily into body fat reserves as fuel.

See, it's how God designed us. So it's not starving. It's not weird.

It's not Old Testament. It's actually how we work. I believe it's how we were created, and this is one thing I would change from which I used to teach.

I used to teach, eat every two and a half hours, right? Every small, frequent meals, keep some metabolism going and different things. Now there's so much research out there showing that you should actually, you can avoid breakfast, and it's not gonna hurt one thing because you're already fasting, aren't you? That's why it's called break fast, break fast. You're already breaking the fast.

So most experts suggest going longer in the day and allowing, because what happens when the body is not given food, now it can heal itself because digestion, assimilation of food takes a massive amount of energy. 50% of your body's energy is used in breaking down food. There's also called cellular activity.

At the cellular level where your body's actually being damaged by breaking down this food. Why? Because kids are taking in Captain Crunch. Your body goes GMOs, harmful additives, refined sugars, food coloring.

I don't know what this garbage is. What in the world are we gonna do with it? Let's detox the body. Now the liver, the kidney, all these organs are working extra hard to remove this thing that is not healthy for the body.

So that brings extra damage to the body, to the health of the individual. So I'm gonna get on that in a minute, but let me just finish here. But some argue fasting is too extreme.

That's, I think I hear that the most. And I would agree, but aren't we living in extremely difficult times? To me, desperate times call for desperate measures. Listen, is the opiate crisis going to get better? It's skyrocketing.

The alcoholism, food epidemic, obesity levels, all these things are an epidemic. And I don't say any of this trying to make people feel bad. I say it to try to help people.

To help, they'll feel so much better, and they'll have so much more energy. They'll be more active. They can do more of what God's called them to do.

So I personally believe that extreme measures require, well, what did I say? I said that backwards. Oh, we're living in extremely difficult times. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

So yes, we have to make a difference. We have to fight against this. So my goal in this whole thing is to really fuel the desire for fasting.

I'm sure there's a lot of questions right now. That's why we have the book available, Fasting and Feasting. So you can take that.

You can look at it. You can look at all the scriptural references I have in there for fasting. I even break down what diet is best looking at all the biblical text.

Oh, is it the meat eater's diet? The vegan? The vegetarian? The raw food crowd? The paleo? The paleo? The ketogenic diet? What's going on here? Well, how did God design us? You want me to tell you real quick? I knew you'd say that. Well, here's the problem. Here's the problem.

I actually threw down books. Like, this is ridiculous. This guy says this.

This guy says this, right? Dr. Axe, eat a lot of meat and dairy. Joel Fuhrman, very, very well respected in his field, says, no, not a lot of meat and dairy. This guy says, no meat and dairy.

This guy who runs a fasting clinic only eats fruit and hasn't been sick in 25 years. So like, what is going on here? Well, we look at the biblical text. If you just look at the biblical text, we know, I think we can all agree, that we were created to consume life-giving food from plants.

They're actually called phytochemicals. That's what a plant food is. Phytochemicals, antioxidants, all these things.

The food in plants actually helps to restore and renew and regenerate the body and heal it. It's interesting that in Revelation, the tree is given and the leaves for the healing of the nations. So we see that that's how clearly how God designed us.

I could take you to the benefits of mushrooms. Amazing, amazing. What about curcumin and turmeric, those things? One is the root, one is the chemical in the root, the phytochemical in the root.

Both of those have huge healing properties. What about onions, asparagus, blueberries, strawberries? All have different phytochemicals that affect the body differently and can bring healing to the body. And with true stories, I've told you before, but it might fit in right here.

My daughter was not breathing well at night. Like that, at night. She'd wake up, oh, hold on, I can't deal with this too much longer.

Cause I'm worried she's gonna die in her sleep, right? So we take her to a nose, ear, and throat specialist. He's like, oh my Lord, she's way up here on a 10. You gotta get her down to Children's Hospital, get the adenoids removed, the tonsils removed.

She's not gonna be able to, I mean, this is not gonna get any better. Want me to schedule it? You know, MRI, all sevens, okay, hold on, hold on. So we just went back home and I'll just admit to you, we were not being very good on her diet.

You know, friend's house, family's house, different places, and okay, eat this, whatever. We changed her whole diet, everything changed. Everything changed.

Because we're now giving the body what it needs to heal itself, not a bunch of garbage. But see, that's my thing with, I love physicians. I have doctors, I could name Garrison Medical, Dr. Chaudhry, cardiologist, Dr. K at Joshua Medical.

A lot of these guys are friends of mine. I can email them and they'll have my blood work done. I can read my own blood work.

And I love doctors, we need them. We need nurses. But many of them are not trained on how the body works.

So here's a pill to take care of this versus going to the root cause and having the body prevent it. People say, Shane, high blood pressure, this, here's a statin drug, which is \$100 billion a year industry. Versus, hey, hold on, let's take a look at the diet.

Let's look at their cardiovascular activity. Can they lose 25, 30 pounds? Can they start cleaning up their diet? Can we get them off of medication rather than put them on? But so doctors, to their credit, are actually trained to help the person by relieving the symptom. Here, take this, this'll fix it, but it doesn't usually get to the root problem.

Most doctors I know drink way too much coffee, eat the wrong foods, and they don't know a lot about this area because I think they have four hours, Jamie, four hours of training in nutrition for their whole career in schooling. Four hours. And we're treating the body with things that actually, when you give somebody something, that is a toxic thing.

All drugs are toxic. Go on to and look at, I think it's Cipro, the antibiotic Cipro on WebMD. It now has black box warnings because it actually messes with your RNA and your DNA.

And they're like, oh, we shouldn't be having, there's black box warnings. But now doctors just prescribe, hey, take this for a week. Let's see if this helps.

Let's see if this helps. This is dangerous, toxic things that we're giving to people. Now, is there a time and place for it? Of course.

You know, if you've got, hey, I've got staph infection. This is not getting, I need to heavy-duty something to wipe it out. Okay, I'm not saying that.

What I'm talking about is using wisdom in these areas. And actually, I took a long rabbit trail. I forgot where I was.

Oh, what the diet was. You're wanting to wait to get to that. All right, so now, with that as the background, right? Knowing how we were designed, knowing how we were designed, we were designed to eat life-giving food.

So most of the things that we eat, including me for many years, have no life-giving benefits, do they? Come on, guys, Doritos and a Coke? You show me one ingredient, one ingredient in Doritos and Coca-Cola, or you stop by Subway, and you get a sandwich with sodium nitrates, bicarbonates, partially hydrogenated oil, cheese that's not pasteurized. It's tons of toxins. And we eat these things, and we, well, let me get the Sun Chips, because they say natural on them, and we think, oh, and the lemonade, which has 40 grams of sugar, and working with the IGF, the insulin-like growth hormone factor one that they've linked with cancer, and we're just taking all these things in with nothing that's giving us life.

Really, if you think about it, watch, put the broccoli on your kids' plates, that will still be there when dinner's over, won't it? The things that are so healthy are actually the things we don't want. Is that so true in the

Christian walk overall? The things we need the most are the things that are the hardest. So just to answer your question, I believe that our primary food must be living plant life, from anything, you name it, from everything I just named.

Vegetables, fruits, beans are very healthy, in my opinion. Anything ground-originating, here, make it simple for you. Does it come from God or man in a factory? What is it? My wife tries to trick me sometimes, but Shane, it's the organic Doritos.

Organic Doritos. All right. I won't break down the label for you, but that is a better choice than the normal ones, but still not a good choice, right? Just because any time they have to put natural, enriched, vitamin C, calcium-fortified, it means something's been taken out, and that's not really good.

They're trying to promote their product more. So we have to be wise as consumers. Yes, it's difficult.

Yes, it's challenging. People say, but it's too expensive. Well, so is the Starbucks habit.

I mean, where do we, and if you shop around, I found big, huge organic strawberries for 2.99 at Vons, if you hit the right places. Blueberries are big for 2.99. So you can find it if you look. And what I mean by organic, I don't get weird, like new age movement and different things.

All I'm saying is I would like a carrot without pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides sprayed on it. And actually, now they're putting the chemicals into the soil and into the fertilizer, so it's called GMO, genetically modified organisms, and they begin to take the DNA of wheat, the DNA of something else. They begin to splice it together, and the pesticide is actually in the food, so the insect won't even touch it.

So I'd rather have a little hole in my apple from a worm than all the things they're putting on it. So do we do that perfectly? Of course not. But that's why, again, back to fasting, because fasting begins to purify and cleanse the body.

In addition to spiritual benefits, there's physical benefits as well. So let's, okay, I'm gonna answer your question. So the primary, my goal, my thought is the primary food source must be vegetables and fruit and the things that give life.

Now, if you're going to continue to eat meat and dairy, I would recommend very clean meat, lean, organic, grass-fed, or beef is grass-fed. Milk, you know, organic's good, but raw is, you know, I know there's a family here that drinks raw goat's milk, and I've tried it, I love it. And at raw, I get to take on so many rabbit trails.

When you pasteurize, you kill all of the productive enzymes and the good bacteria, all of the good things. Now, granted, with unpasteurized comes the risk of, you know, why they decide to pasteurize, because there are health risks when you don't, when you just drink something raw. If the cow is unclean, the cow's dirty, the cow's contaminated, so there are risks with that, for sure.

But you have to understand, when you just drink milk, it's mainly lactose with the sugar, so you're having a sugary white drink. Many times, if it's been pasteurized, all the things have been killed. So in a nutshell, vegetables, fruits, as much as you can eat, big salads, and if you take meat, put a little bit of meat on it, have a little bit of dairy, maybe tons of vegetables cut up in the morning with some egg whites, egg yolks, you know, from clean eggs.

So I'm not against meat and dairy, per se. I just think we eat way too much, way too much of this thing that really doesn't give life. The only way you're gonna get meat and dairy, life from the meat and dairy, is the animals, hopefully, that are eating the grain or the grass or what they're eating, hopefully, those phytochemicals in the plants are absorbed into the animal, and that's when we eat that meat and we eat that dairy, we're actually taking in whatever the animal took in.

Resins, hormones, antibiotics, whatever the animal's eating, it's stored in their fat and in their muscle tissue, we consume it as well. And also, I find it ironic that before the flood, before the fall, man ate vegetables, that's it. But after the fall, actually after the flood, 1,600 years later, after the fall of man, 1,600 years later, now God says, now I give you everything that moves.

So was it because vegetables and things were scarce? You're just getting out of a ark and here's some land? I mean, I don't really know. All I know is be careful in this area because we like to eat what we shouldn't and we don't eat what we should. So if you can flip that around and start to eat more life-giving food, you basically say, does this give me life? Does this give the body life or does it bring disease? Physical benefits, much of the healing that I've witnessed over the years was a result of renewed stewardship of the body.

Okay, this won't be new to many of you but I think it bears repeating. When I see a body heal itself, yes, through prayer, through different things, we pray, we hope for, but the majority of healing I've seen over the years is the body healing itself. Now, why is that? You might say, well, Shane, you're taking away credit from God.

Actually, I'm giving God the credit because that's how he designed us. He designed the body to fight off infection and disease. It's his design.

So when you create, all fasting does is it creates an atmosphere for healing to take place, doesn't it? So when we fast, it creates an atmosphere for healing to take place. We pray for God to heal rather than ask for his help with self-discipline to change harmful habits. So here's where I wanna tread lightly.

We pray for God to heal, even in our ignorance. We pray for God to heal of cancer, of heart disease, of whatever it is. I pray that and I believe it.

When I visit hospitals, I pray for, I don't say, well, I'm not gonna, you look at that garbage you're eating from the hospital. By the way, we should have reform in the hospitals. They're feeding things.

You know, doctors, the number one drink doctors recommend is Ensure with artificial sweeteners, artificial coloring, different ingredients, sugar, and these things that, that's a whole nother rabbit show. But let me just be careful here. We need to pray for God to heal.

We need to seek his help. We need to, it's all about man doing this, man doing this, but we can create an environment where healing can take place by taking care of the gift that God has given us. The body can heal itself.

So the majority of healing I've seen is when a man or woman starts to better care for this area of health. Disease often begins in fullness and it is starved when fasting. So to get a breakthrough in health, you want to consider fasting.

We need wisdom from the right source, don't we? I'm gonna have Luke put up a, Christine's gonna put up a picture here of a woman holding up a sign. If you don't get that, see me afterwards. But we need wisdom from the right source.

Here's the problem. Many Christians love the wisdom of God's word when it comes to biblical principles, but we fail to look at it for physical things. We love spiritual advice from God's word, but we need it also in the physical, how to take care of our body.

For example, let me, this will shock you. It's been estimated that nearly 75% of US clinical studies in medicine are paid for by private companies who benefit. So all these wonderful ads you see of the girl walking on the beach for a statin drug, paid for by, and then just watch the end.

Can't make our seizures so light-headed this way that when you lay down, you might not be able to get up. You do not drive a vehicle impaired. Internal bleeding could occur.

Lung, kidney cancer have been linked to this. And you'll see the little heading at the bottom. So a lot of these studies are being paid for by the companies that make them.

That's why they call it big pharma, big pharmacy. And pharmacy in the medical industry, pharmacy actually pays for a lot of the medical schooling and different things, so they are linked together. If a doctor, right now, I believe, and a friend of mine runs a big chemotherapy, I don't wanna say the name of it, cancer place in Lancaster.

I sent him the book today, said he'd love to take it out. But if they prescribe what I'm telling you, they could lose their license. If they don't treat a cancer patient with chemotherapy, which is actually mustard gas, it's a derivative of mustard gas, they will be, they could lose their license because they're giving wrong advice, according to the medical industry, because you can't fight big pharma.

You can't fight the medical industry because they've been trained in this way. Now, certain things help people. Certain things will, there are benefits to this.

But we can't give the correct advice. We have to immediately run to the wrong advice. Think about this for a minute.

We tear our body down. We don't move. We don't exercise.

We eat garbage. We eat junk. Then we get something.

Then we go in for radiation, which is actually, it stimulates the RNA and the DNA. It breaks down. Many, much radiation from CT scans, CAT scans, have been linked to cancer.

Just research it. Doctors are coming out. Everybody's saying these things.

And then we go through chemotherapy, much, putting this toxic drug into our body. Then we go back into terrible eating patterns, and the body's never given the opportunity to heal and rebuild itself. Anybody who has ever studied this in any magnitude will tell you exactly what I'm telling you.

It's people who are naive and don't like this, that just, oh, that's not true. That's not true. Chemotherapy helps.

Google the success rate after a five-year period. Over the last 55 years, we've made medical advances in all areas, but over 100,000 people that die per year, there's only a 5% increase helping them in all of our conventional therapies in the last 55 years in the area of cancer. Doctors are coming out.

It's like, guys, this is not working. What's working? We have to feed the body what it needs. And fasting only profits the faster.

Come on, let's be honest. When there's kickbacks involved, when there's big money, I mean, I think the statin drugs was 100 billion. Do you know, can you grasp 100 billion dollars, 150 billion a year? And again, I'm not against all of this at all.

If there might be a time and a place where somebody needs to take radiation, if you've got a tumor growing here, and you're just gonna cut off circulation or cut your heart rate, and you're going to die, you need to radiate it. You need to get rid of that tumor temporarily. What I mean by temporarily is it often doesn't get to the stem cell.

That's a whole nother topic. But look at Nesquik. You know the kids drink, the chocolate drink? On its box, it says it's the official post-game drink of the AYSO.

So apparently, this wonderful chocolate drink is the post-game drink, meaning after the game drink of the AYSO. Let me tell you this. That is the last thing kids need to be taking in after the game.

They need to replenish their electrolytes and their fuel source and their glycos. They need to get good nutrients into their body. Look at our kids.

For the love of God, people, would you look at our kids? Their attention deficits are skyrocketing. Always sick, always medicating. I know children that are on antibiotics every six months and aren't even six years old.

This is gonna set them up for failure. If anything, we have to look at what we're doing. This is not working.

So here's the key. Fasting does not heal the body. It gives the body the optimal environment for healing.

Let's just take cancer, for example, and the role of chemotherapy and radiation. Chemotherapy doesn't always get the stem cells when they go dormant. I'm gonna give you an example.

Let me blow this out for a minute. Ooh, I'm tired. Okay, cancer cell.

Right? Radiation or chemotherapy. The drug comes in and it reduces the stem cell, but it doesn't kill the stem cell often. That's why, have you heard the relapse? Or it came back and then come back and never left.

It never left. It temporarily, and then when it comes back, but fasting and eating the food that God designed does this, if I can, oh, it's too full. What do you know what I'm doing? Trying to pop it with a pin.

Oh, there it goes. But that's the difference is, if fasting and the food that God gave us goes in and actually starves the cancer cells, the stem cells. Stem cell is a cell that doesn't yet know what it's designed to do.

It's laying in a dormant state. So through radiation, I won't get too much into wireless connections and different things, but your body can actually produce cancer stem cells. That's where the problem comes

from.

We need a strong immune system built with all the things I just mentioned. Let me just read a few doctors. Dr. J.H. Tilden, after 55 years of sojourning in the wilderness of medical therapeutics, I am forced to declare that fasting is the only reliable specific therapeutic eliminate known to man.

Dr. Joel Fuhrman, the body's wondrous ability to self-digest and destroy needless tissue such as fat and tumors and blood vessels and plaque and other non-essentials and disease tissue while conserving essential tissues gives the fast the ability to restore youth to the system. See, in God's design, fasting, once it's starved, where's your body going to go for fuel source? It's not going to go to your heart, your liver, your kidney, your precious muscle. It goes for the junk.

Fasting goes after the junk. It starts to burn the tissue, the diseased tissue, the old cells, and it starts to use that as fuel and clean out the system. That's why it doesn't feel good.

That's why fasting hurts. I like Dr. Yuri. I can't pronounce his last name.

I believe it's Nikolayev. He was a psychiatrist at University of Moscow. You can look at their study.

I went to the study of the University of Moscow and looked at his research, looked at his study. He treated schizophrenics with water fast for 25 to 30 days. This was followed by eating healthy foods for 30 days.

About 70% of his patients remained free from symptoms for the duration of the six-year study. Did you just catch that? I don't want this to just fly over. Schizophrenics, bipolar, right? Just mentally, he starved the fuel source.

Many times. It's not just always a mental disease. Some of these things are linked to what we're taking into the body.

He probably got them off of drugs and medication and let the body heal itself. This is all documented. You can read the study.

You can just read the, if you're into it, you can read all about it. Reading and researching this, this is interesting. When he was sick as a boy, guess what his mom did? It was Tylenol, NyQuil, a little bit of scotch.

Nope, water fasting. Oh, it's child abuse. Well, that's it.

That's what his mom did. That's what, and when you, because you start to see that there's, you guys know there's documentaries on Netflix, right? All these different documentaries that show kids that with attention deficit disorder, they can't keep them in control, they can't do anything. Once they got them off of eating the fishy crackers and the chicken nuggets and all the kids' cereals and nothing, see, there's nothing nutritious in any of that.

How is the body going to survive and heal itself when you give it nothing? And once they changed everything in their diet, these kids start to sit down, they could concentrate, they could finish school. This isn't pie-in-the-sky stuff. This isn't, oh, that's just old wives' tale.

No, this is true, and it's true, I believe, because it's how God designed us. Think about it this way. A person has, a man and a woman have got heart disease.

Well, why go to a doctor to get a pill? Well, why not go to the reason that's causing it? What's causing it? Getting off the extra weight, getting off of all the things that are hurting the heart and not helping it. See, we never, well, let's just be honest, it's easier. Right, what's easier? Let me see.

There we go, that wasn't too bad. Go out and walk for an hour, can't drive to McDonald's, gotta change, I'm not doing that. Give me the next, give me their pill tomorrow.

See, that's not even biblical, let's be honest. That's not self-discipline. That's not disciplining ourselves.

A fruit of the Holy Spirit is self-discipline. We should be able to master our body, not allowing our body to master us. Dr. Jason Fung, I recommend his book, in my book, but I make the caveat there that I don't recommend his position on, he's not a believer, but he's got a lot of good information.

What he does, he takes type two diabetes patients and he gets them off all of their medication. Very high success rate. Because you see, type two diabetes is not, it's not a progressive disease.

Type one is because you have no insulin, but type two should not be progressive. So what we do when somebody goes, I think I have borderline diabetes. Okay, well, let me give you some more insulin.

The thing that is causing it. They give them more insulin. Doctor, but I gained 20 pounds.

Well, we better get you on some more medication. Now my eyesight is fading. Now my tingling in my feet.

We might have to have amputation. See, it's progressing, it's progressing. They never get to the root of what's causing it.

So he has his patients do something called intermittent fasting, where they'll drop their caloric intake for the weekend and then bring it back up Monday through Friday or go a whole day or two without eating. And he's seen remarkable results. Why? Because you're stopping the fuel source.

When we take in all this food, we go somewhere and you've got refined oils are most of the products. You know what refined oils are? They're vegetable oils that are heated at a very high temperature. Solvents are added to it, petroleum, different things.

And that smells so bad, they have to use a smell agent, I forget what it's called, to remove the smell. And so now we take in this vegetable oil that's in anything, palm oil, canola oil, safflower oil, sunflower oil, and we take this vegetable oil that's not really good for us, and tons of chemicals, and we take that in to our body. But we avoid avocado because it's fattening.

Listen, I saw this all the time in the gym. I would try to help people. I worked with, I think, I estimate close to 30,000 people coming in and helping them.

It was, oh Shane, I can't eat like that. I gotta avoid fruit because I'm a diabetic. And I'm like, is that a Slurpee cup? Did you just pick up a 42-ounce thing? Oh yeah, but it's sugar-free.

Oh no, aspartame is still a whole other thing. But see, we don't want to make certain changes. One person I know that we wanted to help, wanted to help, listen, they said, I tried juicing.

I tried juicing. I've tried beans, I've tried it, but it hurts my stomach. I have gas.

Yeah, it's a process. You're cleaning, it doesn't feel like you're in heaven. You're cleaning out the body.

Of course it doesn't feel good. Who's gonna go on a three-day juice fast and say, I just felt wonderful? Maybe, bless God if that's you. But most of the time, it does not work that way.

So I could keep reading doctor's recommendations on different things, but let me just give you some ways to get started. How to get started. Change is, well, here's why I think a lot of people fall into the trap.

They try to change everything. Start with the biggest thing now, tomorrow. What's the biggest thing? What's the one thing you need to work on? Because if you start going, well, I'm gonna stop drinking coffee, I'm gonna stop having sugar, I'm gonna stop going to fast food, I'm gonna start working out six days a week and run 14 miles, I'm gonna start this.

Yeah, actually, I'm gonna even fast tomorrow, too. And then nothing, that doesn't work. So you start with the right step in the right direction.

And that leads to bigger steps in the right direction. You also have to win the mental battle. This is key.

This is a lifestyle. It's not a quick fix. I just met with a guy who's considering stomach surgery.

I think he's close to 400 pounds. No, he's 430, I think. And now, he's down like 60 or 70 pounds.

Think about, this is just interesting. He said, and when I was talking to him, he said, I gotta get ready for my surgery so they have me on juice fasting and different things. So I'm down 70 pounds already.

I'm like, just keep going. Just keep going. You're motivated for the surgery.

Just keep that horse in high power. Just keep going. I've tried that.

I go on a 30-day or a 60-day. No, erase all of that. See, the mental garbage, it's a 30.

How's a 30-day something gonna help the rest of your life? I'll do the Daniel plan for 21 days, and then after that, all hell breaks loose. I'll be back to my old habits. Then you'll be back to your old self as well.

See, this has to be a lifestyle. Not where you do perfectly all the time, but you get back up, you fall forward. You make this a lifestyle because the body's the only thing you got here.

This is it. How you treat people, how you do ministry, how you serve God, how you feel. Do you pray better when you feel better, or is it just me? When I wake up after a good night's sleep, and I feel better, do I wanna pray more and read God's word? Absolutely.

Now, again, I'm not discounting those who are struggling. There are people with debilitating disease going through a lot. They're seeking God.

They're closer to God than most of us in this room. But for those of us who can make a change, see, that's the key. Those who can make a change, the call to us is to make that change.

My other piece of advice, all this is in the book. Knock out the heavyweights early in the fight. Who are the heavyweights taking you down? Caffeine? Nicotine? Sugar? If I had time, this would be an interesting study.

Do you know how many teaspoons, and I don't wanna go into this because I might misquote, and in the 1800s, they had six teaspoons of sugar a day. That's actually my goal. I try to go back to 18.

Six teaspoons of sugar the whole day. That's honey, that's what, give me a comparison, that's two donuts or a Pop-Tart. Now, we're at 56.

56 teaspoons a day. And we wonder, what's going on? Because see, the more you fuel it, the more you have to fight it. And I've helped so many people in this area in regard to weight loss.

They'll say, Shane, I just, I can't stop. At night, there's cravings come. I can't, I'm gaining the weight back, I'm worried.

Okay, let's start at what you started with. How's the day going? What did you eat breakfast? See, if you keep fueling it, a half pot of coffee, caffeine, the central nervous stimuli, actually increases blood sugar levels out the roof when you crash, guess what you want? More coffee, more sugar, more caffeine. And then here it comes again, it's late night.

I'm going for it again, where's this coming from? See, you keep feeding the beast you're trying to kill. That's why all these things are fueled by the other one. And it creates in us this desire for things that are not healthy.

So knock out the heavyweights early. Who's the heavyweight? Knock them out, get rid of this thing that is hurting you the most. And also remember, less is more.

This is hard for me to put together the last few years because coming out of the muscle industry, the bodybuilding industry, we didn't think like this, but the less we eat, the better. The less we eat, the better. I'm amazed now at how few calories I need compared to, like for example, just today, I had a ton of grilled, two pounds of grilled vegetables and a huge chocolate plant-based protein shake.

That's it so far today, 700 calories. Oh, and some nuts. So let's say 700, 800 calories, 800 and 800 calories.

And I'll go home and have one more. That could never happen. Years ago, right, you had to keep eating, got to keep strong, got to, because we get into this mentality that more is better.

Actually, less is better. The leaner, lesser is much better for the body. And every time you eat, the body has to break that food down, assimilate it.

It's not easy on the body. So if we're constantly eating, constantly eating toxins, constantly eating the wrong thing, your body's in a constant work state. It never gets time to break.

It never gets a Sabbath. I think the body needs a Sabbath now and then. That's what I promote is giving the body rest.

So I already said this, but I'll say it again. Being green feeds the machine and colorful is powerful. Meat and dairy should be secondary, very minimal.

I'm gonna show you another picture. This is what I had, I gave my daughter on her chore chart. This makes it easy.

Don't worry, that's not beer. That's a zero calorie grapefruit drink. I had her cut up, I had her cut up all the organic vegetables.

See the top shelf? So when people say it takes too long, that takes, that's fast food. I pour the lettuce, those, and everything in a big bowl and the salad's made in six or seven minutes. Yeah, it takes time cutting those up for the week.

And guess what now the kids are grabbing when they're hungry? No, they're going to the pantry getting the donuts. No, see, out of sight, out of mind. When your kids are in your home, you should teach them, you should give them the things.

If it's not there, they might scream a little bit, but then they'll be eating the carrots and the celery and the apple. They'll be putting peanut butter on the salad. See, you have to train kids, not just spiritually.

You should train them how to take care of their body because we're setting them up for failure before life even begins. Go talk to the schools, ask teachers. You see, we don't know what these kids, they're either over, they're struggling in these areas.

They're struggling here, we need to help them. So anyway, that's my secret. You have everything ready.

I pay her \$10 a week, my 12, 13 year old. And she likes to put it all together so it's just really quick, it's ready to go because that's the excuse, right? Fast food, and I track this. This is not fast food.

By the time I think about driving to McDonald's, get in my car, find my car keys, go to the wallet or just say a restaurant, get there, order the food, the food comes here. I've already wasted 30 minutes when this is done in 10, eight. So it's really not fast food if you're prepared, but it's quick because we drive to it.

Really, this will maybe be some other time, but there are a lot of companies that have been under investigation for not fully disclosing what ingredients are in there. Do you ever feel like, why, I just have to have Panda Express? I just have, because see, there's chemicals. They have scientists that actually work for the company to create chemicals that are addictive and like 10 times the taste of sugar and salt.

They'll put things in the things that make us crave them. I mean, you don't crave, I don't crave that stuff like Panda. Holy mackerel, I could go to bed without care.

I could care less, but driving home, right, you hit Panda, you hit the donut. Why, because there's something in the chemicals in the food that our body is addicted to. It's no different from a drug addict craving his addiction.

So you have to make radical changes in this area. And then I'll close with this. Consider intermittent fasting to begin.

All of you can incorporate intermittent fasting. That just means fasting for certain seasons. Try no breakfast and just have water.

Try no breakfast and lunch, just have water. Try, try, I mean, step out, and before you know it, you can start getting a success in this area. But again, I want you to encourage you to do it for spiritual reasons primarily.

Lord, I'm gonna starve my flesh so I can seek you. And then the last point I have to mention is is your spiritual health going in the right direction? Is your spiritual health, because all this doesn't matter if we're dying physically, I mean, if we're dying spiritually. So we have to ask as Christians, this cannot become a obsession, it can't be all about this, all about, it has to be God, we're putting God first, we're seeking him

first, we're taking care, it's actually stewardship.

Do you steward your finances well? Oh, that's not very encouraging. But we want to steward our finances, we want to steward our marriage, right? We want to steward things God has given. Why in the world would we not want to steward our health? I would love to hear a legitimate, biblically-based answer on that, that God does not care about this area.

There's nothing out there other than, and I'll see this a lot, people Facebook it, right? They'll Facebook, oh, and they don't like what I'm talking about. Well, it's usually because they're addicted to everything I'm talking about. See, what's that saying? You throw a rock into a pile of dogs, whatever one yelps, it's the one that got hit.

So often, people don't like to be lovingly challenged. They don't want to be confronted in this area, so I would just encourage you, look to God. Don't take my word for it, ask God if he, because I already know he's working.

I already know most of you in this room are convicted about something and making changes in your life. Who puts that conviction there? Not the media, not Hollywood, not magazines, not, most people don't. It's the conviction, God saying, hey, work on this area, because I know, just in my own life, when the flesh is mastering me and controlling my choices, it hinders the filling of the Holy Spirit.

It hinders that, because two competing wills cannot compete. Let me just share this example, and I'll have the last one. I mean, most of you know this, but it might help some people that will listen to this later, or some here, and I mentioned I joke about it, but one big struggle that's been hard for me is coffee.

It's very, it's hard, and I know it's a chemical, I know it's an essential nervous stimulant. I know that it runs along the same brain wave as heroin and different drugs, because it affects the brain in the same way. It's an essential nervous stimulant, very hard to stop, and God's been convicting me.

It's in my journal from 10 years ago. I know it. I do good, then I fall, I stumble, and you might say, well, Shane, that's silly, why? Here's why, because I'm rude to people.

I'm mean to my children. I get irritated easily. I lash out.

Anger arises in me, especially in traffic. How in the world can we justify that? Think about it, how do we justify that? So it's not like, oh, I can't have coffee like a Mormon. No, it jacks me up.

Ask my wife, you're just a jerk. You just go do your thing today, don't even talk to me, because I'm not dealing, because what? You're amped up, that's what it is. It's essential nervous stimulant.

Your body's in fight or flight. You gotta fight or you gotta flee, and you don't wanna be bothered. You don't wanna be irritated.

Every little thing will set you off. That's not good. So if you think that God doesn't care about that, then I've got some oceanfront property to sell to you in Arizona, because I think that God is concerned about things, and that might not be your thing.

People that can convict, they go, well, I love my cup of coffee. Enjoy it, I don't care. I'm just talking about my personal example of what God is dealing in my own heart, and why? Because it does not make me a nice person.

And you know, you're laughing, because you know it does the same to you. But here's what we say, don't talk to me until I have my cup of coffee, right? Why, because you're, here's what's actually happening. You're withdrawing.

You're withdrawing because you haven't had it in a while. So you want it to reignite the fix. So you're withdrawing, so you have to have, it's no different than somebody saying, give me another hit of this.

Don't talk to me until you bring me that beer. There's no difference. It's the body responding to these chemicals.

You read *The Caffeine Blues*. It's a book out there, written by a doctor. The truth, the harmful truth about caffeine.

You'll see that the number one drug in America causes a lot more damage than you think. I've known people that have had road rage. They've ran people over with their car, they hit them.

They're always hyped up on caffeine, or alcohol, or something, they're all, there's something, there's anger, it's just like they're gonna burst. So if you think that's no big deal, that's fine. But I'm just telling you that what we put in the physical will affect the spiritual, will affect our moods, the feeling of the Holy Spirit.

If I'm taking things that do not produce in me love, joy, peace, gentleness, long-suffering, are you kidding me? Gentleness, are you kidding me? But see, that's what it does. It's fight or flight. It does that to your body.

So I'm just opening up about a personal struggle that I've had over the years, and showing you how it does make a difference, and how people minimize it. And that's actually why I didn't stop for a while, like, are you kidding me, Con? What's the big deal? Come on, God, what's the big deal? Are you kidding me? And so we excuse it. So anyway, I'm not gonna keep going on, because you guys look like you had enough of this.

But it does hurt to get convicted, but just take it to God, and see what he would do with it. I know God will lead you. But make sure your spiritual health is going in the right direction.

And if somebody's watching this later, maybe they're not, they don't go here, they're not a Christian, I would encourage you, none of this matters unless you have your heart right before God. The Bible says, repent and believe in the gospel. You have to repent and believe.

I talk to people all the time who are into abs and calves, and their body, and their looks, and they're going to go to hell. They're dying spiritually. Talk about missing the priorities, the main priority.

So as a final thing, assess your spiritual health. Is it going in the right direction? Look at how God created us and turned to him.

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