

# The Futility of One Nation Above God

by Shane Idleman

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's role in the foundation of America and the dangers of prioritizing national privileges over divine principles.*

**Duration:** 55:05

**Scripture:** Psalm 33:12, Proverbs 1:7, Romans 3:15

**Topics:** "Faith and Nation", "Moral Decay"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the futility of prioritizing a nation above God, particularly in the context of Memorial Day, urging remembrance of the sacrifices made for freedoms that are now being undermined by moral decay. He highlights the historical significance of America being founded on godly principles and warns against the consequences of valuing privileges over principles. Idleman calls for a return to the fear of God and the importance of teaching future generations about faith and morality, asserting that true change must come from a spiritual awakening and a commitment to uphold God's Word in all areas of life.

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## Transcript

The title is The Futility of One Nation Above God. Futile means a useless act or a gesture. It's foolish to be one nation above God.

And that's where we're leaning, and it is a special Memorial Day message, believe it or not. I've been chomping at the bit to preach on this topic for a few years and not really, you know, I didn't want to create a message just to create a message, but God really put on my heart Thursday morning, and especially with Memorial Day coming up, and it just dawned on me, why don't we remember God? We want to remember the veterans that gave their life for our country. And I have a feeling talking to a lot of them that are still alive, not the ones obviously who gave their life, but they didn't serve that we would become one nation above God.

They gave their lives so that we would become one nation under God. God-given freedoms. And the fabric is woven in with our nation.

And I want to read some things that you'll see in the notes. If you got that on Facebook, I think the notes are on there too. Over the last few decades, Americans have seen the destruction of the institution of marriage, the removal of God's Word in all areas of life, the aborting of millions of babies, illicit sex, perversion.

And as I said, ironically, many of the men and women who died for our freedoms did not die for what we have become today. A 5th Division graveyard sign in Iwo Jima, Japan, did I pronounce that right? I think so. States it well, when you go home, tell them for us and say for your tomorrows we gave our today.

And so to me, what a travesty when we fail to honor those who gave their lives for the freedoms we now enjoy. In the words of Mr. O'Brien who served in World War II, it's the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us the freedom of press. It's the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech.

It's the soldier, not the campus organizer, who gives us the freedom to demonstrate. O'Brien continues, it's the soldier who salutes a flag, who serves beneath the flag, and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag. And so why am I talking about this? Because we have something interesting happening in our country.

We are valuing our privileges above our principles. My right, my privilege, my people. And when we start to put that above our principles, we are on very shaky ground.

Dwight Eisenhower said, a people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both. Isn't that ironic? We put our privilege, our right above our principles. If we're not careful, we're going to lose both of those in this fight and in this struggle.

Historically, we know that God judged those nations who continually tolerated sin. Wrong choices had devastating consequences. The futility of one nation above God.

Arnold Toynbee, have you heard that name before? He wrote a study of history. He said this, of the 22 civilizations that have appeared in history. Did you know there's been 22 civilizations that have appeared in all history? You talk about the Babylonian Empire, the Assyrian Empire, the Roman Empire, and of course, our empire in China.

Of the 22 that have appeared in history, 19 of them collapsed when they reached the moral state that America is in today. Now buckle up, hold on, you ready for this? He wrote that in the 1960s. So the foundation, I want to just show you some quotes.

The foundation of one nation under God. The first quote, Abraham Lincoln, but we have forgotten God, and we have vainly imagined in the deceitfulness of our hearts that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Would anybody like to give what I just said over the last 10 minutes? Give this information to young adults so they understand the history of our nation? This 1619 project that is out there that is so far away, that Black Lives Matter trying to rewrite American history and give them the right information.

That's why we have one nation above God. The book is free of charge. You can take it with you, pass it out.

The book is free to download on the website. The church, because we want to give this out and get the right information out there. Because the right information can begin to sway minds in the right direction.

How about the vice president in the 1800s, remember ever and always that your country was founded by the stern old Puritans whose first act on touching the soil of the new world was to offer on bended knees thanksgiving to Almighty God. Daniel Webster, there is no nation on earth powerful enough to accomplish our overthrow. 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 negligence deteriorating from the inside out.

And the reason I talk about these things and I know people disagree with me, that's okay. When they do, I tell them to start their own church and preach what they want to preach. But for now, I mean, sorry, but that's the truth.

What God's put on our heart, what He's called West Side Christian Fellowship to do, we believe that we're supposed to steward this gift that God has given us. It's not all about government, all about politics. You can get into some really ugly water.

You can get all focused. But it's not only all about the gospel. The gospel affects all areas of life.

And so you address all areas of life. And you want God's Word to be honored in all areas of life. And you saw the article when I talked about what in the world is going on with mass shootings.

From Columbine when it started, I think there's been 331. Did you know that? School shootings. Defected 330,000 students since then.

When I was growing up, or you, I mean, never even heard of it. And we had 12 gauges loaded in the back of the truck all the time because you were taught to fear God. You were taught the dignity of life.

And so we have a sin problem. We have a problem to where you remove the fear of God. And like Abraham said, the fear of God is not in this place.

And when you begin to remove that fear of God, you remove the shelter and the protection of God's safety. Now, you don't even have to be a Christian, and non-Christians will still benefit from the blessings that God is pouring on His people. God's Word in courthouses.

Did you know that God's Word was in the schools until I think the 1970s? And prayer was removed. Did you know that? And so if you don't see a correlation, I'm not sure what to say. Because there's a clear correlation.

We can also see in the uptake of violent, violent video games. You say, oh, Shane, don't go there. Well, why not? Did you know a lot of these kids play a game? I don't know if it's outdated now, but Grand Theft Auto.

Where they could actually have sex with a prostitute, set her on fire, and take back the money. That doesn't affect them. Oh, are you sure? That you're either naive or grossly out of touch with God's Word.

Of course it does. If all you're doing is sitting down hours a day and shooting, shooting, shooting, killing, killing, killing, killing, as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Gone are the days of Little House on the Prairie.

And so see, we can see, so why shouldn't we contend for the foundation that is healthy and strong? Now we might obviously not get back to the 1950's, 1960's. I'm not advocating that. But for the love of God, there's got to be some type of passion and desire for the things of God in all areas of life.

So we've got some Scripture. Psalm 33.12. Psalm 33.12. And I put up different versions for those who like to judge us on Bible versions. I pleased everyone.

I'm kind of joking. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. Now every time, I would talk about this over the last few years.

Actually, I haven't spoken on this topic. I used to speak on this topic a lot when God first called me to the ministry before planning the church. People said, well, Shane, that's not really for us anymore.

Like, okay. Can you explain that position? Biblically. How do you explain that position? Now you can, well, this and that.

Now God doesn't judge us on nations because Christ, and now we're to judge individually. Okay, but are you sure that geographical locations that honor God aren't blessed? Are you sure of that? I mean, because I like to just take Scripture for Scripture. Blessed is the group of people whose God is the Lord.

And if you read the Old Testament, you can't get away from the fact that blessed is the group of people who fear the Lord. Genesis 20. Surely the fear of God is not in this place.

Psalms 36. And I love actually the NLT, the New Living Translation, even though it's not a word for word, it's a thought for thought, they call it dynamic equivalence in Bible translation. Sin whispers to the wicked deep within their hearts.

They have no fear of God at all. See, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and understanding, and we're remembering God today. We're remembering His Word and the fear of God.

Romans 3. Their feet are swift to shed blood. Sound familiar? From the abortion industry to mass shootings. Their feet are swift to shedding innocent blood.

And of children of all places, ruin and misery mark their ways. In the way of peace, they do not know. Why is that? He answers, there is no fear of God before their eyes.

Fear God and live. And so I want to talk about a controversial topic here because again, I've been chomping at the bits. I talk about sections of this a lot, but this is really an interesting point.

Was America a Christian nation? Because, don't answer, let me explain it first. Because let's just say if God put this nation together, you can study the pilgrims and the Puritans. I read of Plymouth Plantation by William Bradford.

My family lineage, we can't really prove it with the Mayflower Compact Society, but they say my lineage is traced to Pilgrim White, the first baby born on the Mayflower Compact. My great-great-grandmother said that Methodist circuit riders was part of our family heritage and that God was honored. But see, in the midst of that, you have evil also working.

And so we just gravitate off into the evil, but they don't tell you that the Christians brought the Salem witch trials to an end. They don't tell you that Christians fought against slavery. They don't tell you that Christians and the pilgrims and the Puritans wanted to love and minister to the Native Americans.

And then evil men get in and do evil things, take land, slavery. But we can't throw out the baby with the bathwater. We have to have proper American history to really understand the foundation that God built.

So was America a Christian nation? Here's the answer. A nation can't be a Christian. A nation is a reflection of the character of her people.

So was this nation built on God's Word, on God's principles? Absolutely. You can read the Mayflower Compact to the glory of God and to the advancement of the Christian faith. You can read the journals.

You can read the writings. You can read what the early framers believed. You can read what the founders believed.

And you can see that the foundation was godly. But then from that, we would get a lot of evils. And I just want you to see this.

The President of Congress, Henry Lawrence, said, I abhorred slavery. I was born in a country where slavery had been established by British kings and parliaments as well as by the laws of the country ages before my existence. When some of the southern pro-slavery advocates invoked the Bible in support of slavery, the President of the Continental Congress, are you getting this? Why don't we ever hear this? Here's what he said.

Even the sacred Scriptures have been quoted to justify this iniquitous traffic. It is true that the Egyptians held the Israelites in bondage for 400 years, but gentlemen, let us not forget the consequences that followed. They were delivered by a strong hand and stretched out arm by God, and it ought to be remembered that the almighty power that accomplished their deliverance is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore.

Why don't we hear about that? And if you grab that book, I've got three pages of founding fathers who abhorred the practice. So here's what happened. You have founding fathers that did own slaves.

Thomas Jefferson. You have the pilgrims or Puritans, last I read, didn't bring any slaves over. They didn't agree with it.

And then now they're under British rule, so you have British parliament bringing over the slave trade. Now you've got Christians saying, what is this? What is going on? As a matter of fact, I believe one of the tenets of the Revolutionary War was because they disagreed with the king in so many different areas. And that's what people don't understand is it wasn't a bunch of rebels and renegades and farmers rebelling, it was what they call the rule of the lesser magistrates.

It was less governing officials that fought against Great Britain and for the Revolutionary War. If you look at sermons preached during that time, man, it's unbelievable. These pulpits were fired up.

They would preach politics. Why? Because it mattered. From food distribution to how you treat the unborn to how you treat women to how you treat different ethnicities, it affects all areas of life.

Now we've bought into this idea by revisionists who rewrite American history to try to knock us off course about what God was doing. Newsweek magazine. Newsweek magazine.

This is going to amaze you. 1982, in an article, How the Bible Made America said historians are discovering that the Bible, the Bible, perhaps even more than the Constitution, is our founding document. Newsweek, why don't you print that again? You see an agenda at work here? Here's why the agenda.

The 1619 Project, a Black Lives Matter movement, which a lot of black pastors are coming out against because they don't help black lives. There's an agenda there. And the agenda is, now you can say America is corrupt.

All our institutions are corrupt. Now you can break everything down and rebuild on a foundation that's not good and godly. And they would teach that because of your skin color, you're an oppressor.

And we know that's not true. It's a sin problem, not a skin problem. And so this agenda is very evil at its core.

And a lot of people don't want to talk about it. But maybe they don't know the truth. Early Americans felt that it was impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.

Fisher Ames, the author. The author of the First Amendment. He might have something to say.

Openly declared, should not the Bible regain the place it once held as a school book? Now if he's the author of the First Amendment, he probably, I don't know, maybe said this late 1700s. And people might say, well, didn't they have the Bible in the school? Not as much. Remember, the Bible became available in the schools when actually the public school system was started around the 1620s or so.

And then they would come out with the old Deluder-Satan Act that was very, very prolific. I mean, these people are hardcore. And so they would teach kids the Bible.

And then it came to slowly kind of be removed, not as abruptly as it is now. And he was calling for that to be added back. Did you know, did anybody have a Noah Webster's dictionary? Have you heard of Noah Webster, the dictionary? Boy, we have drifted far, huh? They don't have that in the schools anymore? Noah Webster wrote the dictionary.

And now to be politically correct, all the Scripture references are removed. The 1828 edition, I have it. It's a big, thick one.

It defines word with Scriptures. And see, to me, it's even more alarming because now you see actually how far we have drifted. Wait a minute, are these blessings that we've been receiving and that we're supposed to steward correctly for our children, have we been left this gift? Shane, don't get political.

I'm not. I'm getting biblical. Did you know that God instituted the church, the family, and the government? It's His institution.

So you're telling me He doesn't have anything to say about that topic? I have to thoroughly disagree with you. Because He has a lot to say about that topic. The word politics just means leading a group of people.

And if you want to be technical, I'm political with the church. I'm leading a group of people. That's all that means.

So why are we disengaged from this? Because it matters. Because there are some big issues. Now, granted, I understand getting caught up in it and not getting to, you know, people.

Anytime the church tries to correct itself or do something, sometimes we can get too far to the right. You heard that term far right, right? And it's too political to this, to this. And yeah, you've lost balance.

You know, it's not good. You're kind of unhealthy. Now you're mean.

Now you're arrogant. Now you're screaming at people. Now it's like if you could just pass policies and get the right people in the office, but why aren't you having prayer meetings? Why aren't you fasting and

calling out to God? You've got off balance.

But then the other side, silent sallies. That doesn't affect us. Politics is such a bad word.

And I've noticed these churches who don't talk about that also aren't bold on the essential truths of the Gospel. They're not going to see it. For example, John MacArthur, when he fought politically about COVID, he's also very bold about the Gospel truths.

Rob McCoy or Jack Kibbs or whoever, when they're bold about political truths, they're also bold about biblical truths. But this side that doesn't want to get political, they're very soft, even on biblical issues. So what's going on? It's a heart that is not bold.

Can I say it? Cowardliness. Straight up, that's what cowardliness is. Now, you don't have to be political.

John Piper's clear that he's not. Other people are clear. But there has to be a boldness for the Gospel.

The boldness for the truth. The boldness for hard things. Because the Holy Spirit wants us to say hard things.

Let me tell you, the boldness of the Spirit. When we read in the book of Acts, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They became very quiet, meek, and gentle.

And they didn't do anything. They didn't upset anyone. The Bible's clear.

And they were filled with boldness. Boldness to confront the culture. Boldness to confront the wicked leaders.

The next quote, the first and primary duty of government is to protect innocent human life. Thomas Jefferson, a slaveholder though. Nobody has the freedom to choose to do what's morally wrong.

Abraham Lincoln, non-slaveholder owner. And fought for the abolition of slavery. And that book, I think it's an accurate quote, that book, Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Very, very graphic book. And when he met the author, he said, so you're the little old lady that started this war, this civil war. And she's bringing those highlights out.

And that was a lot of good and evil. And people used Scriptures out of context. What about Patrick Henry? He was an American orator and statesman and a leading patriot of the American Revolution.

He's often credited with saying, the reason I say he's often credited with saying is because we can't source the quote out, but it cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians. Not on religion, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Next quote, 24 of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence received what today would be considered a seminary education.

Did you know that? Did you know Princeton, Yale, Harvard were started as... Yeah, you see where this is going. Boy, oh boy, when I started, I would just read, and I wouldn't read people's thoughts, I would just read what they call the original intent of the founding fathers. Read their words.

Read their last will and testament. I remember when I came across John Jay. He was a Supreme Court Justice.

And in his diary, he talked about his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And they would make decisions based on God's Word. Now the Supreme Court, which concerns me, is they're looking at international law and not constitutional law.

The thing they're supposed to defend and guard. And that's why the constitution debate is so huge because you get rid of that, you just sank the ship. Anything is open to interpretation.

The Supreme Court in the early 1800s ruled that the public schools should teach the Bible. No Webster went so far as to say the education is useless without the Bible. Now I can hear it now.

Shane, Shane, okay, just get to the Word. I am. It's the Word that built our nation.

It's the Word that secured our God-given freedoms. It's the Word that evangelizes the world. And it's the Word of God that fights against evil.

We've got to remember, because God would often say, remember, remember back. Remember, look how far you've drifted and go to repentance. Remember what I did for you and be thankful.

Remember how far, and begin to be repairers of the breach instead of just giving up and throwing up our hands. Why does this matter? Why does... I think I even have that screen up there. Why does what I'm talking about matter? Well, because we've been given a gift to steward.

No nation on earth has ever accomplished what we accomplished. And it wasn't by our own ingenuity. Also, because the hammer of judgment may fall if we don't wake up.

Also, because apathy is not biblical. Apathy is not biblical. Now, there's different callings and different passions and people... But you're going to be shocked at this.

You ready for this one? Well, it's kind of funny. But I'm sure this is going to happen because I'm going to go to some meetings in San Diego the next month or two. I know they have a good heart, but Shane, you need to get a lot more political.

People have asked me to run for governor. Run for mayor of Lansing. Like, you've got to be kidding me! Talk about being on the... I mean, that's not my calling.

You should run for office. You need to be more political. You need to be saying this about candidates.

You need to be backing these measures. You need to do all this. But that's not my wheelhouse.

The Gospel is my wheelhouse. But now that's going to flow from my wheelhouse when it comes time to make a difference. Look at the people we have running for sheriff in L.A. County.

We have Christians. A friend of mine texted, Eli Vera. He goes to Jack Hibbs' church.

They're running for this high office and it doesn't matter? I don't know. Are you sure? Because I think it does. This is a big deal.

Especially when you have people like our district attorney who are making certain decisions punishing the victim more than the criminal. And I don't think that's the answer. People have asked me too, are we leading to a next civil war? I hope not, because something's got to break.

That's not our heart. That's not our desire. Also, why does this matter? Because if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? Why does this matter? Because our families are worth it.

You want your little kids growing up, or if they don't say he is a she and she is a he, they could go to jail? Are you kidding me? Wake up, America. We need to bring the fear of God back in our place. Oh, we don't want to be like Hezekiah.

Well, at least there's no judgment in my day. See ya. What a coward.

Shane, you're pretty fired up. I am. I'm just telling you.

Because those who have no voice need a voice. Those who have no voice need a voice. And you'd be amazed at how much Scripture talks about being a helper to the fatherless and the widow.

The voice for those who have no voice. By the way, the next time you run into an atheist, ask them how many atheist organizations have started a hospital compared to how many Christian organizations. There's always a love to want to help those who need help and have no voice.

And how do we do it? Often through a political system. And also, why does this matter? I like the last one. Because Christ told me to do business until He returns.

I believe we have a biblical mandate. We have a biblical mandate from God Almighty to expose the unfruitful works of darkness. And maybe in the 1920s, 30s, you know, where you're talking about things like paving public roads or should we open a new library, but now we're talking about life and death.

We're talking about abortion and redefining marriage and giving kids puberty blockers without asking parents. And you're going to be seeing there's more cases that come out where actually if a parent doesn't allow their kid to do that, Department of Child Services gets involved and now it's child abuse because you're denying your child something that they want. We've lost our mind.

There should be a holy, righteous indignation about it. If there's not, I don't know what to tell you. I honestly don't know what to tell you.

I remember, I think it was Mike Huckabee took his young daughter, she was 12 years old, and took her to the Holocaust museums. And she saw the shoes piled up, the death chambers, and she was dead silent, speechless. And he's going, oh, is she too young for this? Is she too young to be faced with such depravity? And she didn't talk the whole way home.

Maybe an hour and a half drive, I don't remember exactly. And finally, finally, when they get home, she looks at her dad with tears in her eyes and said, Daddy, why didn't somebody do something? Do you know the churches would sing louder when the trains went by to the gas chambers in Germany? Why didn't somebody do something? And I'll be honest with you, I don't have the answer. I don't know exactly what we're supposed to do, but I know the One who does.

I know the One who does know what we're supposed to do. As we're seeking Him with all of our heart and all of our strength, He will direct us. I remember I cried in L.A. I've told this story before, I don't know, it was 2005, 2006 when I first saw videos and heard about partial birth abortion.

And I said, God, if You just give me a voice, whatever You need me to do. I'm digging ditches. Nobody even has heard of this.

The church wasn't even here. And now you've got some big loudmouth shouting this on the rooftops, writing articles throughout the United States, getting this message out there. God took that one cry, said, Lord, however You want to use me.

And that's why I get excited because I know He's called me to do this. There's a ripple effect. One of our state senators that represents us in Washington, D.C. emailed me and thanked me for the 9 a.m. service.

And said, we've got to get this message out there. We've got to get the pulpits aflame with righteousness. And so just one person, one person to make that commitment, Lord, what do You want me to do? And be prepared.

It could be nothing. You could just be an intercessor. You could just pray.

He might have you go in and make a difference in your service. In your school districts. I would love for a hundred people to show up at a board meeting and say, that's not right.

You need to be fired. This is perverted education and you're responsible. Can you imagine? Oh, we don't want to do that.

I do. That's why I don't, because I don't go with the right attitude. But do you see the garbage they let your little kids read? It's soft porn.

Sexual positions at age 12. Hold on. Are you kidding me? But see, we want to bury our face in the sand.

It's not going to affect... Oh, it could affect us. It could affect us. It is affecting us at a very deep level.

So one of the things we must do is keep the roots alive. Keep the roots alive. I think I have a screen up there as well.

And a nation like a tree is easily destroyed when the roots die. Keep those roots alive. Deuteronomy 6. Take to heart these words that I give you today.

Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you're at home or away, when you lie down or when you get up. Write them down and tie them around your wrist and wear them on the headbands as a reminder.

Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. There's a reminder of God's Word and keeping those roots alive, those spiritual roots, and remembering what God has done and being thankful for that. Keep those roots alive.

If we don't teach our children to follow Christ, the world will teach them not to. Hearts without God and homes without discipline produce destruction. I didn't talk also about looking at this topic of how many mass shootings these kids don't have fathers.

Fatherless homes. Fathers not involved. Hearts without God.

Homes without discipline produces destruction. The strength of the nation will depend on the stability of the family. Have you ever thought about that? Why is there so much attack on the family? They call it the old family version, and we want the new family version.

Why is that? Because the strength of the nation will depend on the stability of the family. Think about this. A lot of the decay, a lot of the moral decline is because of fatherless homes.

That's where it started. Getting rid of the fatherly influence, getting him too busy, jockeying for a position, redefining our definition of success, and get the father out and then mess up the sexual inclinations of children and really go after it and just destroy the family, the fabric of a moral society. And keeping those roots alive.

And then also, I want to talk to you about an important topic that we're going through now. We might go through more. Pain.

Pain primes the pump of revival. Pain primes the pump of revival. Now, you might not know what priming the pump is, but many guys know.

It's you can't have a pump with air in it, because it could just explode. It could overheat. You've got to get some water or fluid going in that pump first.

Get the air out. The pump has to be primed. Now it can be used.

Any men, you remember getting a little long water hose cut off and putting it in a gas tank? Get rid of all the air and put it into a gas container. Spit out a little diesel fuel or gas. I don't recommend that.

You know, I'm just glad I'm still alive today, because I don't know how many times my dad maybe, Shane, we need five gallons of diesel. Go put your mouth on the water hose. Suck it out.

And then you start the process. You're spitting out gasoline. It goes in there.

And then what I would use for suntan lotion when I was 19 is hydraulic oil from our heavy equipment. It worked great. It was like Coppertone.

So, man, but pain, pain primes the pump or revival. Why do I bring this up? Because don't let your pain go to waste. Don't let the pain of what's going on right now turn into bitterness and resentment.

Let the pain prime the pump. Let me tell you, the deepest, most heartfelt relationship you'll ever have with God is often because of the pain. The pain has led me to the Savior.

And now I cling to the cross of Christ. And now I hold on to Christ. Thank you, pain taker, friend.

Thank you for getting me through the difficult seasons. And you hold on. That relationship to God is sweet because though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil because the good shepherd has taken me through that valley.

Thank God for pain. Thank God for what he brings us through. He loves those.

He will discipline you. Be careful. I mean, I try not to be negative.

My kids listen to the sermons. I want to be positive. I'm hopeful.

Most people know I'm pretty optimistic, but man... I don't know how many got the recent email or thing from L.A. County Water Works working in the water district and knowing about how the water's stored. When they tell you to cut down to watering your grass two times a week during these hours, no watering

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, there's some serious... Why? Why? Because they don't know. We don't have enough drought.

And then I think of, wait a minute, wait a minute, God told Solomon, when I bring drought, when I bring famine, anybody want to take a guess at the world's supply of wheat where it came from? A place called Ukraine? Thousands of shipping containers are being shipped somewhere locally, I can't say, that were down at Long Beach. Back orders on these. Is this all just going to hopefully fix itself? I hope so.

Is the government's agenda with COVID gone? I mean, I have some oceanfront property in Arizona if you'd like to purchase that as well. When I bring pestilence, when I bring famine, when I bring drought, if Hollywood humbles itself, if Washington, D.C., if Sacramento and Newsom humble themselves, how many know it doesn't say that? If... Falcon, you're not getting out of this one. If my people humble themselves.

When I bring famine, pestilence, and drought, you don't think that can happen? Aquifers, that was the name I was thinking about, that were the water stored. And when I was working with the water district and I was running heavy equipment, and I would look at numbers too, and by 2024, if we keep growing, and that's why L.A. County stopped some housing permits and different things because there's not enough water to supply these things. And so you have to start trusting in God.

When I bring these things, so let pain prime the pump of revival. Gospel.com or gospel.net. I might have put this up there. If not, listen to this.

A financial panic hit the United States in 1857. Banks failed. Railroads were bankrupt.

Factories closed. Unemployment increased. Many Christians realized the need for prayer in such dire situations.

And prayer meetings began to spread around the country. I bet they did. In lower Manhattan, section of New York, a Dutch Reformed church hired Jeremiah Lamford.

In September 1857, he rented a hall on Fulton Street in New York and advertised a prayer meeting. Six men assembled for that first prayer meeting on September 23rd. Two days later, the Bank of Philadelphia fell.

In October, the men began praying together daily. In October 10th, the stock market crashed. The financial panic triggered a religious awakening and people flocked to the prayer meetings.

Within six months, 10,000 people were gathered daily for prayer in New York City alone. You can read his story. It's incredible.

I remember reading it. It was 12 o'clock and there's nobody even here. A few people trickle in.

And then eventually, God brings the pain. I don't like that. I wish He would just... Can it be like we're at Disneyland every day? But sometimes that pain is what propels us to the prayer meetings and to times of worship.

And so that's why I never want people to feel beat up even though they do sometimes. I know that. When I encourage early morning prayer and worship, because I understand that's going to prime the pump.

If we avoid that and just come to services, I don't think that's as relevant spiritually. Don't miss 9-11. I got it.

But to really prime the pump, it's that early morning prayer meeting. Like Leonard Ravenhill said, the prayer meeting is usually the Cinderella of the church. She's placed in a dark room on an off night.

A few people attend, but she's the one that keeps the house clean. We've got to bring Cinderella to the ball and put prayer and worship back on the calendar. That's priming the pump.

Psalm 120. Psalm 120. I think we have a few Scriptures.

In my trouble, I cried to the Lord. And what? He answered me. Psalm 119, I cried with all my heart and God answered me.

Oh Lord, I will observe your statutes. And then another point before I get to the closing here, we have to get and realize that we must exchange our rights for what is right. Now, I'm not telling people to give up our rights.

I think we have God-given rights. That's why the First Amendment is freedom of speech, to talk about things. And when they gave the Second Amendment, the right to bear arms, it was to protect evil from coming in.

And that's why the whole gun debate is really confusing to me because if you take that away from good people, the bad people are still going to have access. That's why it's called criminal activity. And again, I'm just telling you the truth.

We all know this. And what happens when they say, ah, now good people can't have the bad. Now good people can't be armed.

Do you think crime's going to go down? My Lord. In a good way. Why? And so see, this is about protection.

It's not about agendas and political parties. But people have this idea that if we can just get rid... Well, Cain had a rock. He killed Abel with a rock.

Timothy McVeigh, a bomb. You see, it's a sinful, evil heart. And that's what we have to remember.

On this note, I didn't even think about this, but have you ever heard separation of church and state? That's why they don't want the church involved. Separation of church and state. You can't do that.

That's actually not even in the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson wrote a letter to the Baptists in Connecticut because they were worried that it was going to become a national denomination. National Anglican.

And they were concerned. Or national Episcopalian. And he said, no, no, no, don't worry.

There will be a wall of separation between the church and the state. So the state is not going to mandate a religion. So it wasn't to get God out.

It was to give more freedom to worship God. And you hear, Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion nor prohibit the free exercise thereof. So you have the establishment clause.

Congress shall not establish a national religion. How does that mean get God out of everything? They're just saying Congress will not get involved. Nor can we prohibit the free exercise thereof.

So when we acknowledge God in the schools, in the courts, everywhere, that's not establishing, oh, you have to do this. We're acknowledging that God has built this nation. God wants to sustain His nation.

And I think there's nothing wrong with a proud American as long as pride, the wrong kind, is not in your heart. I think it's funny you say, Lord, we are proud of what You have done. What You have built.

Lord, this is Your gift. Yeah, there's a lot of evil. There's a lot of wickedness.

But Lord, thank You for this gift. We are proud of what You have done. Proud in what God has done.

But you're going to be termed, all these terms that are coming out, you know, fundamentalist, far-right, all these terms, and even on this issue, nationalism. Have you heard that a lot? You know, nationalism. Yeah, the concept, and whoever explains it is not good.

And putting that before Christ. But if you're proud of what God has done and you want to make a difference, that's not a bad thing. So they're twisting all these things.

Oh, he's a fundamentalist. You know where that word came from? 1905, R.A. Torrey wrote a series of books, The Fundamentals of the Christian Faith. And so yeah, we believe in the virgin birth, the inerrancy of Scripture, the fundamentals.

But now, fundamentalists, you must blow up an abortion clinic. Wait, wait, wait, where'd that come from? So see, they're redefining all these terms to make you and me the bad guy. Oh, you're just racist if we don't agree with certain things.

You're just this. So you have to really get to the heart of the definition. It's funny, I'll throw it out there again.

I've done it for 10, 12 years. Anybody that call me racist or this, I say it's \$300, let's take a lie detector test and let's find out who the racist is. Nobody's ever taken me up on it.

Because there's reverse racism as well. And they'll just throw names at you to stop you. You're not for women.

You're a racist. And they try to silence you with lies. Now in the midst of that, is America racist? Yeah, there's a lot of racists in all ethnicities.

Did you know that? Hispanics struggle with racism. Did you know that? Blacks struggle with racism. Whites struggle with racism.

Asians? Why? Because it's a sin issue. And I believe it gets blown out of proportion and it begins to be polarizing and then now America's divided instead of united. Why not? Why don't we talk about the good things? It's only the bad things.

I remember about three years ago, we had a sheriff that was coming here. He stopped, pulled off his patrol car on the 101 freeway, revived an African-American girl on a drug overdose. Revived her.

Brought her back to life. I contacted my news outlets I had. Nobody wanted to run with it.

Why not? Doesn't fit our narrative. You know that most news organizations are owned by just a few select people that are hell-bent on destroying America. George Soros.

These are true, real things, people. This is the real world we live in. There are false narratives and false things, and they like to manipulate through that.

And we have to be discerning and using wisdom. So exchange rights for what is right. Personal rights were intended to operate freely, but only within the framework of moral and social responsibility.

We don't have the right to do whatever we want if it hurts someone else. Do you know that pornography now is protected under freedom of press? How would that? See, that hurts other people. We don't have the right to do what hurts other people.

And I know it's a passion of mine, and I know there's a lot of people in this room who've had an abortion when I speak, and God's grace and mercy will see us through. And I know every time I concede to my girlfriend's request to abort, probably 28 years ago, and I still drive by the clinic now and then off the 405, off by El Presidente restaurant, I'll never forget. You know, at 6 with you, it's hard.

And there's encouragement, and God will see you through. And I know people don't want to deal with that they've made this major decision, so I've got a lot of compassion for that. But we've got to really look at this according to God's Word.

I know Focus on the Family has approached some Planned Parenthoods and said you get \$600 for an abortion, we'll give you \$1,200 to find placement in a foster care. Because you know what it's really about. You know that, right? And if you think, where my mind goes, this group is so wicked that they will pay to murder a child.

And then they got caught with harvesting their tissue and their organs. Did you know they would sell their brain and sell their heart to science? I mean, if that doesn't blow you away and wake you up and make you really think about how you vote. How you vote.

I don't know what to tell you. We will always have the freedom to choose, but no one has the right to do what is wrong. No one.

And then finally, what we need to do is awaken the silent pulpits. Awaken the silent pulpits. I'm going to read a quote from Benson Lossing.

I guess his name might upset some people. But that's okay. In those days, talking about early American history, what did he say? Politics were preached in the pulpits and men were led to action on the side of freedom by faithful pastors.

Even from Spurgeon. Many of you like Spurgeon. You know he was political on the slave trade, on drunkenness, and different things, and policies, and what laws should be placed, who should be in positions of leadership.

But here's the key. Change can't be forced up. It must be preyed down.

So as much as I pound the pulpit or get people fired up, what's the point if the choir is fired up? The real change is going to come from the prayer closet. Ian Bowne said, the sermon cannot rise in life-giving forces above the man. Dead men give out sermons and dead sermons kill.

Everything depends on the spiritual character of the preacher. That's why the pulpits need to be aflame with righteousness again. 72% of all churches now don't look to the Bible as their final source of authority.

And then I'll close with the encouragement, the power of pressing in. The power of pressing in. Fight on your knees and make God your all-consuming passion.

I've said this many times in the last few years, but without a massive spiritual awakening, the violence and issues in our country will only increase. We must learn from King Josiah. What did he do? King Josiah, he read God's Word.

He said, we're out of God's Word. We're out of God's will. And he called this time of praying and fasting and he was broken before God.

And God answered. He said, because your heart was tender. Oh, if we could get some tender hearts back again.

Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself. I heard your cry and I answered your prayer. I've stayed my hand of judgment for now.

So the cure for sin and violence has never changed. It's humility, love, repentance, and fearing God. Would be to God that America would tremble again at His presence and fear Him.

So I'm going to close. It's a very powerful poem written by the Chief Justice of Alabama many years ago. I'm glad they're not here with us to see the mess we're in.

How we've given up our righteousness for a life of indulgent sin. For when abortion isn't murder and sodomy is deemed a right, then evil is now called good and darkness is now called light. But with man as his own master, we fail to count the cost.

Our precious freedoms vanish and our liberty is lost. Children are told they can't pray in school and they teach them evolution. When will they see that the fear of God is the only true solution? Our schools have become battlegrounds while all across the land, Christians shrug their shoulders afraid to take a stand.

And from the grave, their voices cry, the victory has already been won. Just glorify the Father as did His only Son. And when your work on earth is done and you've traveled where they've trod, you'll leave the land we left to you, one nation under God.

And so it does beg the question, do you truly know Christ? Do you truly have that relationship with Him? Or are you going through the motions? It's what good people do. Let that change this morning. You have to have that vibrant relationship with God if you don't know Him.

Repentance has to take place. I repent of my sin and I turn my life completely over to Jesus and watch what He will do. And then maybe a group of you, maybe the struck of nerve, maybe there isn't the fullness of the Spirit in your life.

Maybe there isn't boldness. And I don't know what that boldness looks like. You don't have to do what I do.

And I don't do what you do. Maybe you need boldness in your home. Boldness with your family.

Boldness with your neighbor. Boldness in the school district. Do you know how many teachers I've prayed for over the years who are scared to say anything? At school, they'll lose their job.

And I feel for them. I mean, I'm not in their position. But we need that boldness and start to put God first.

What does God's Word say? And that's how I believe we can at least salvage the foundation or start to rebuild that foundation.

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