

The Incredible Faithfulness of God

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes that while God bestows gifts, true maturity in faith requires obedience and a deep reverence for God amidst the challenges faced by the church.

Duration: 56:04

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Matthew 7:21-23, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, Philippians 1:6, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 10:24-25, James 1:22, 1 Peter 5:10

Topics: "God's Faithfulness", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the incredible faithfulness of God while exploring the book of 1 Corinthians, highlighting that spiritual gifts do not equate to maturity. He encourages the church to extend grace to those who are newly gifted, reminding them that maturity is a process that often takes time. Idleman points out that many believers struggle with their fleshly nature, leading to behaviors that can cause division and confusion within the church. He stresses the importance of obedience to God's word as a key to spiritual growth and maturity, and he calls for a deeper relationship with God, urging believers to examine their lives and ensure they are truly following Christ. Ultimately, he reassures the congregation of God's unwavering commitment and faithfulness in their lives.

Transcript

We are starting this morning a series in the book of 1st Corinthians. So I'm going through the entire book of 1st Corinthians, line upon line, precept upon precept, and we're gonna, it's, just putting it together, I am so encouraged. There is so much in this book for the church.

So the message this morning is this, gifting doesn't always mean maturity. Gifting, just because you're gifted, it doesn't often equal maturity. And a lot of times you'll see somebody maybe new in the faith, and you say, boy, they are gifted by God.

They have this calling of God, maybe they have the gifts of the Holy Spirit activating in their lives, and you see them just not really acting mature. But we have to remember a gift is a free gift, and maturity often comes later. And as I was putting this this message together and focusing on this title, I started to realize that there's so much to say before I get to this point, and I kind of put this point at the back end of the sermon, I hope that's okay, but let me just tell you up front that we need to have a lot more grace in the church, because somebody's gifted.

Boy, look at them, but if they've only been a believer a year, remember you, your first year, or first few years, or even now, there's a struggle that takes place. So just because somebody's gifted and called, there is a maturing process. And the series is entitled Answers for a Confused Church.

The church is confused today, and I actually wrote a book by that title. You can download it free on our website at westsidechristianfellowship.org. Answers for a Confused Church, we're going through the book of 1 Corinthians. And before I forget, I should have announced this, we now have an app available for West Side Christian Fellowship Radio Network.

So you can just click the app on Google Play and find it, or on iTunes. It's WCF Radio Network. Just hit it and you can listen to the radio wherever you're at in the world, absolutely, as long as there's an internet connection.

So this message, gifting doesn't always mean maturity. Here's a synopsis. This whole book, at least the majority of it, teaches this, that saints can sometimes act like sinners.

Did you know that? Christians can sometimes act like sinners. And I'm wondering, did you hear about the church recently with full of idolatry and division and lawsuits and sexual sin and abuse of the gifts and disunity and divorce? Did you hear about that church? It's been in the news? That's most churches. Paul is writing to the church in Corinth this letter.

And believe it or not, we see all these, everything I just mentioned, we see in every church. In this church, yes, we do. Because when you try to find that perfect church and you end up there, it's no longer perfect.

You've heard that before, right? Because we are people struggling through life. There's people here who don't know the Lord. There's people here who are... Man, they remember believing in Jesus, but the world has them trapped.

You see mature believers. You see a whole mix of different believers. Here's why this is a struggle, and here's why these things are an issue.

Spirit-filled believers, even people filled with the Spirit of God and they love God, they're going to struggle with certain things. Jealousy, envy, gossip, suing one another, jockeying for position, and say, Shane, this is terrible. Well, here's why this is happening.

The greatest battle, and you've heard me say this many times, is within. The greatest battle is within. So even a Spirit-filled believer, they're filled with the Spirit of God, and they've been wronged, I'm taking them to court.

Now, there might be a time and place for that. That would take a whole sermon just on that topic. But when we get to it, as we're going, the heart shouldn't be to get them back and go to court.

And there might be times for that. Child custody battles and different things. But see, that rises up in us.

But I know it's not right, but it rises up. So there's this battle. Yes, I'm going to sue them or take them to court, but knowing that I really shouldn't do that.

And then also something else might rise up in us. We're filled with the Spirit of God, and we're loving God, and then somebody decides to promote us. And now we've got a title, and now there's a power struggle.

Like, where did this come from? It's within. So see, the things of the Spirit of God that they want for you and what the flesh wants for you are at odds. So that's why you see these things in the church.

Because the flesh always says... I wish I could climb up on here. Because the flesh always wants to stand on here and have center stage attention. The flesh wants to be on the pedestal.

The flesh wants to say, look at me, look at me, look at me, even as a Spirit-filled believer. You'll fight that. But the Spirit of God says, don't look at me, don't look at me, don't look at me.

Let me humble myself. And if Christ is exalted, and I just want to lay flat on my face and exalt Christ, don't let my name be named, let the name of Christ be named. Because when everything else fails, even people will fail you.

Christ will never fail you. So the goal of preaching is actually to look at Him, look at Him, look at the cross. John the Baptist said, I must decrease while He increases.

But many people, charismatic leaders that we look up to that are famous, you know, I think of Dr. Tony Evans or Jim Cimbala. And I've looked up to Alistair Begg and different people we hear on the radio, you know. But you'd be amazed at how humble they actually are.

So God does give a person a platform sometimes. But as long as they're humble and trying to point people to the cross, you can never avoid being noticed by people, but you can avoid having a haughty attitude and helping people point them to Christ. So that's why this is, 1 Corinthians is so important.

This is a spirit-filled church. But there's a lot of junk. There's a lot of misbehaving.

There's a lot of things going on. So how do we deal with it? Well, here's the other challenge. We don't just have carnal people, I mean, spirit-filled people in the church.

We have carnal. This might be good to explain what this is. When Paul talks about carnal people, why are you carnal? He's talking about those who predominantly are led by their carnal nature.

And people have said, well, there's no carnal nature, there's no this. Well, the Bible is pretty clear that we have this new nature in Christ, but we have this ball and chain we're carrying around on this side of heaven known as our flesh that doesn't want us to serve God. So when people are operating in their carnal flesh, it's much different than a spirit-filled believer.

Because a spirit-filled believer, they might do something and then they'll apologize. They're wanting to work on things. They're wanting to strive.

They're wanting to watch what is godly and not this garbage on TV. They're wanting to do things for God. And they're repenting and they're humbling themselves, even though they might make mistakes.

But the carnal Christian, whoo-hoo, you know that person. Here's what you say, how can they put the sign of the fish on Facebook when they post that on Facebook? They call themselves a Christian. I know at church, they go, how is this possible? But they're led by their carnal nature.

Chatty Cathy, always causing division, always gossiping, always just not fostering unity. Or other people, do you ever see them? They're out partying sometimes or watching things they shouldn't be watching. Why? Because their lifestyle is led by that carnal fleshly nature.

In reality, here's what's usually happening. They have not fully surrendered their life to Christ and said, you are Lord, I'm not. Have every area of my life.

Lord Jesus Christ, take over. And as you empty yourself, you're filled with the Spirit of God. But most of these people are fighting that.

You know, we all know Christians. And we think, hmm, two and two is not equaling four. They're not in church.

Well, Eastern Christmas. Or, I'm bored, I have nothing else to do. But everything else comes before pursuing God that's carnal.

There's a carnal nature. Now, on the flip side to that, there are also what in the church? Unbelievers. So we have people who are not believers in the church as well.

So you have this three distinct group of people. Unbelievers, but they're seeking. And they actually look carnal because they are carnal.

They're led by the flesh. And then you have the carnal Christian who kind of caught in the middle. You know, I've got my get out of hell card, get out of hell free card.

You know, I've embraced Jesus. Now, there are some questions there because I really challenge carnal Christians. Because if there's zero fruit, there might be zero relationship.

If there's no fruit, no passion for the things of God, no desire to live for God, there might not be a genuine relationship. And I can often see this, believe it or not, where the rubber meets the road is either often in prayer, worship, or Bible reading. If a person, and I hear this from Christians, I don't like worship music.

But you like all this other stuff that's dark, demonic, ungodly. Why do you like it? See, if you say, I don't like worship, there's a difference with someone who likes worship and then also puts on something they shouldn't, and they're kind of double-minded, they're carnal. But the person, if they don't like worship, they want to avoid the worship service, they don't want to put worship on, I'm all for preference.

I know there's different preferences, right, in churches. That's a whole other sermon. The old hymns, the new hymns, contemporary, choir, piano, organ, drums, guitar, suit and tie.

Why are they standing? Why aren't they standing? Why are they lifting their hands? Why are they lifting their hands? Why are they this? Why aren't they that? Why, why, why, why, why? But I'm not talking about preference, I'm talking about a heart to worship. And you'll never see a carnal person at the prayer meeting, you'll never see an unbeliever praying, really praying, and you also don't see them in their word, studying the Word of God. So you have to be a fruit inspector.

So what is happening? Well, when there is little fear of God in this church here and in the lives of many Christians, Paul is going to talk about this later, when there is little fear of God, people don't respect God, they don't listen to God, and they don't obey God. You'd be amazed at how many people surveyed in America think that there is a God, but they sure don't fear God. There's no respect, there's no listening to Him, they have a skewed view of God.

In chapter 2, we're going to read that Paul said, I came to you, in other words, I came to the church in much fear and trepidation. Why? Because he feared preaching, he feared speaking something that wasn't

correct, he feared, he had this reverence and awe for God, and he said, I came in fear and trembling, and the power of God manifest in me was not in the excellence of speech. I didn't have a wonderful speech prepared by toastmasters.

I had this broken, humble heart, and I came to you in the power and the anointing and the unction of the Holy Spirit of God. I respected and I feared God. You want to be used by God, fear Him.

In a good way. Could it be that many of the challenges that we are facing today are really just opportunities to be shaped by God? We look at these trans... Everything I just mentioned, most people in the church are challenged with this. The church in Corinth had idolatry.

Well, what is that? How could I be... I don't have little idols in my home. No, but they're affectionately known as the entertainment center, right? Anything we give our heart... Anything that becomes more to us than God Himself. This is my big beef right now with even sports.

When I was growing up, they didn't have sports on Sunday. Now it's every Sunday, and kids are traveling and going here, so this becomes the idol. Idol.

I want my kid to be the next Mike Trout, \$450 million contract over 12 years. The highest paid professional ever. To me, those numbers are ridiculous, but that's a whole other sermon.

I like the guy, but that's too much money. But we all see... Idolatry puts something up on this pedestal. We'll get to God later, and we begin to pursue everything else, but God, that's called idolatry.

Anything that is making your decisions and changing your decisions and putting your focus on something other than God, it's known as idolatry. It's putting an idol in the place of where God should be. Well, how do I know? I'm worried.

Look at your checkbook and your calendar. Where do we spend our time? It's quiet in here. Where do we spend our time? Idolatry.

They had division. Is division in here? Any church. Because division comes from our fleshly nature.

I want this. I think the church should be doing this. Why aren't they doing this? And there's a division.

The enemy loves division. Abuse of the gifts, disunity, divorce, many other things. But all of this really focuses on, and we build our foundation on, do we fear God? Do we hear from God? The voice of God is powerful.

You should set out in your life to say, God, I want to hear your voice. Lord, speak to me. I pulled all of this just from Psalm 29.

I think we even have it up on the screen. I want you to see the voice of the Lord. Look at this, just from Psalm 29.

The voice of the Lord thunders. The voice of the Lord is powerful. The voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars. The voice of the Lord divides the flames of fire. The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness.

The voice of the Lord strips the forest bare. That's the God you serve. That's the God you can go to.

This voice thunders. That gets everyone's attention. The voice of God thunders.

All other voices have to be silent. When you cry out to God and you say, God, you speak to me and no one else, that voice will thunder and it will come down. It will rain down in your life and it will move out demonic voices.

It will move out the voice of the world. It thunders. No other voice can compete against God.

It is powerful. What other voice is powerful like God's? Well, how powerful is it? He spoke the universe into existence. Billions of galaxies.

Every time I try to study the universe, I actually get a headache. It's how big? There's stars we could fit our universe in. I don't want to misspeak here, but it's just incredible.

I just get a headache. This is an awesome God. That voice is so powerful.

It creates life. The voice of the Lord is full of majesty. What is majesty? Honor and glory, everything do His name.

The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars. We might not think this is too relevant, but they knew exactly what they were talking about. The huge cedar trees in Lebanon and different areas.

It's this enormous tree. Not quite as big, but up at the oaks of Sequoia National Park. These huge trees that would just break like a toothpick.

The voice of God, the thunders of God, the flames of fire. He shakes the wilderness like an earthquake getting people's attention. He strips the forest bare.

He'll come in and if you say, God, would you strip my life bare of everything that doesn't please you? Everything that doesn't honor you. Everything that is unholy and unrighteous. God, the voice of God, come in and level my forest of pride.

Watch out. It will happen. I mean, call me crazy, but I believe God's word.

I believe that voice is so powerful. Who but Jesus could say, Lazarus, come forth. After four days.

I've heard of miracles, but nothing of four days. The body's decomposing. It's just very disgusting.

And Jesus spoke life into that. Lazarus, come forth. So the process of maturity.

If you want to mature in your faith, I bet if we took a survey, 99.9% of you would say you do. As do I. The process of maturity always involves obeying. If you're not obeying, you're not maturing.

I need to really get this point across. If you're not obeying the word of God, you are going to stay stagnant. You're not going to mature.

That's why a Christian, I know people, and so do you. You see them five years later. They look and act what? The same.

If not worse. Because I actually don't believe a Christian can stay static. What I mean by that is neutral.

What I mean by that is not moved and kind of just find this middle ground. If we're not serving God and pressing in and maturing, we're actually regressing. There's only two directions for a Christian to go.

I think many people are fools and thinking, I'm happy, I'm content, I'll just stay right here. You're either, something's pulling you. Something's pulling you, either the spirit of God or the world.

That's why it's pressing in and seeking God. When you fall, you fall forward. You get back up.

I've explained to somebody before, hopefully there's enough room here. It's like this, one, two, one. One, two, one.

It's this walk of falling and getting back up and persevering. Why is perseverance mentioned throughout the New Testament as something that a person must have? Those who persevere to the end will be saved. Those who persevere in the fight against the satanic influences will win.

Are you ready for this journey through 1 Corinthians? Yes, I'm sure you are. It all begins here, hearing and doing the word of God. It's funny, I talked to a therapist about this.

I recommend therapy sometimes if it's a godly counselor. Really, I just call it godly counseling. If they can look at the word of God and help a person see the word of God.

They explained to me that so many people come in. I don't know what they call this. Something like cognitive dissidence.

That's not the right word. There's something there where they actually go and they hear something. They go, I feel so much better.

I've been set free. No, they just heard it. Hearing is not doing.

So there's so many people that come into church. Oh, I heard the word of God. It doesn't matter if you're not applying it.

I can talk about humility until I'm blue in the face. And people go, oh yes, yes, that's wonderful. And they'll leave here prideful and arrogant.

Next Sunday, same thing. Let's just install a treadmill. Because we fool ourselves.

How many marriage issues? Husbands and wives sit down. They hear each other, but they don't change. That'll last a few days.

Because the spouse is going, oh, they heard me. That's all. Same thing with God's word.

Hearing is doing. I mean, hearing must be backed by doing. So now we're going to look at 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians. And we'll put it up on the screen for you. So Paul's identifying himself.

1 Corinthians, Paul said, he's talking about himself. Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God. Now this is interesting because the Bible also talks about not many are called.

Not many are chosen. Now some people say that relates to salvation. Other people say it refers to this.

Some people are called. Like Paul was called by God. I don't think he had a choice in the matter.

Jeremiah was filled with the Holy Spirit and formed into a prophet before he was born. God said, Jeremiah, before I even formed you in the womb, before the chromosomes met, and here you go. I formed you.

And I called you. I chose you to be a prophet among my people. John the Baptist.

Anytime you're filled with the Holy Spirit in your mom's womb, you're going to be powerful. So Paul's saying here, I was called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God. And Sosthenes, our brother, to the church of God.

So he's writing here to the church of God which is at Corinth. To those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus. Called to be saints.

This is why it cracks me up. Paul's saying, listen, this is written to the church. You've been sanctified.

Meaning you've been, you're being sanctified. You're being changed. You're being conformed in the image of Christ.

You're being cleansed. You've been called to be saints. But there's so much junk.

There's so much carnality going on. But he's reminding them, you've been called to be saints. You're called of God.

With all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Both theirs and ours. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So he's setting the stage. I think what he's doing is called the sandwich approach. You really make them feel, oh, I just love you.

You're saints. You're called of God. But here comes the sledgehammer.

Bam. And then he builds them back up at the end. So we see here the call, the summons of God is to the saints.

Sosthenes. It could have been a past enemy. There's different commentaries that are divided on this.

But we know he's pointing out this person. But something that's interesting, I stopped for a minute and wanted to just talk to you about it. It said Paul called to be an apostle.

Paul was called to be an apostle. Now, for many years in the early church, these terms didn't have negative meanings. Apostle.

Prophet. Turn on TV, you're like, I'm already tuning these guys out. Apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist.

These are all ministries that the Holy Spirit has given us. But what he gave Paul specifically, he called him to be an apostle. Now, this word usually means sent out.

So if a person is going to stay plugged in, for example, there was an apostolic edge to what we did when we planted the church. Because you're being sent out, you're planting a church. But there's more of a pastor-teacher role because you're staying put.

But Paul was called to be an apostle, so he went out. So that's really what that term is. Going out and planting a church.

Going out and doing the work of God. They are apostolic. They are apostles.

So the term is not bad, but the abuses have been really bad. Watch out for the one who puts that title on their business card. Apostle and prophet Shane Eidelman.

Run. Because those truly called by God are not looking for titles. They don't desire titles.

They operate in the gifting. They don't look for the confirmation of men. But also, it's interesting, a church planter, but also they strengthen the churches.

You can see in Acts 15. So there are people coming to the church, and they strengthen the church. They travel, they plant, and they come in, and they strengthen the church.

But we have to remind people, and this might be a good opportunity for some of you. People need to stop seeking titles. I want my gift on my business card or on my book cover.

I want this position at the church. I'm the boss. And Paul is going to address this.

And people, as soon as they get a little gifting, what do they want to do? Market it. Promote it. Now, this is a hard balance to find because you want to operate in your gift.

You want to bless people. God's called you to do that. There's nothing wrong with that.

But we have to be careful. Where is our heart? We shouldn't want titles given to us. But Paul is, I believe he's bringing it here or saying it here to let people know he was called by God to be an apostle of Jesus Christ.

And then verse 3, grace to you and peace. I think grace to you, this is where John MacArthur draws his radio, the name of his ministry from, this verse if I'm not mistaken. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And I want to talk to you just a minute about peace. Thoughts on peace. Many unbelievers don't have peace because there's a struggle going on.

They're trapped in darkness but they see the light. And there's a struggle and they lack peace. And true peace and contentment only comes when there's a right relationship with Jesus Christ.

That's where true peace comes from. But what I want to bring to you this morning was this. There's also a mishandling of peace when it comes to the life of the believer.

And I felt maybe you just need to be encouraged this morning. It's okay. It's okay during struggles and determining God's will.

You're not going to sit on a cloud of peace all day long. I would say just about every time God has done something in my life or in our family's life, there hasn't been peace all the way through. It's a battle because you're determining God's will.

And you want to be sure that it's God's will. For example, when we purchased the radio stations. There wasn't a lot of peace during that process.

There was seasons of peace. I'm resting in you God. I'm trusting you.

There's so much peace. If you're doing this and then uh-oh. What about if you're not? What about this isn't God? This is silly.

This is stupid. Or planting the church. Or starting something.

Or should you move? Should you sell something? We go so be encouraged. It's not like I made a decision. I just have peace all month long.

I'm just perfectly peaceful. Sometimes there's a struggle. But sometimes you do get the peace.

You say, you know what? I have peace about this. And praise God. But sometimes you're struggling.

Because your flesh is still battling. And I often say. And I'll be up front with you.

I'll tell you. And I say this often. I trust God immensely.

There's no question. I just don't trust me. Or my feelings all the time.

I think we should do that. But what does God want? So in that process. Sometimes there's not a lot of peace.

It's a struggling match. Lord is this really you? I don't know if this is you. And you're struggling.

But I can tell you this. Through that struggle. There will be seasons of peace.

As you're resting. Well you know what God? Because he loves the person who's not rushing ahead. I mean he loves everybody.

He loves when you're not rushing ahead. And just waiting on him. And as you wait.

The peace comes. Watch out if you have to force him to make a quick buying decision. Right? Then there's no peace.

That's why I'm a used car salesman's worst nightmare. Sir, this might not be gone next week. Well then praise God.

I don't want it. You've got to decide today. No I don't.

Peace. Waiting on God. And I believe at the end of the process.

There is tremendous peace. I think before you make a decision. There should be peace.

There might be a little turmoil. And a little. God I don't know.

But I just have peace. I'm trusting you. This looks like it could be your will.

There's nothing. No spiritual laws I'm breaking. It's going to help bless others.

I'm not. You know trying to do something. Or mislabel something.

Or cheat something. And you trust God. In that process there is peace.

It surpasses all understanding. As you're waiting on God. But don't just say.

I have peace about it. And leave it at that. Sometimes you can.

I'll give you a few. You know. Cases where.

If somebody. You know I just have peace about it. Okay.

That's good. But many times. When you lovingly challenge someone.

You say hey I don't know. Have you thought about this. I just have peace about it.

I just have peace about it. Well have you prayed about it. I have peace about it.

Have you thought about it. I have peace about it. Have you sought godly counsel.

I have peace about it. Do your actions line up with scripture. I have peace about it.

Oh. If I had a dollar. For everyone.

Living in sin. Who said they have peace about it. We would be doing pretty well.

You guys aren't married. Why are you living. We have peace about it.

Oh. I've had the scriptures wrong this whole time. Are you sure you should do that.

That's a terrible financial decision. I have peace about it. Yeah but don't you know.

It goes against a lot of. There's no godly counsel that would advise you that. There's no.

See. Be careful because a lot of Christians hide behind that. I have peace about it.

Now on the flip side. I think Christians can say that. Once they've prayed about something.

They're feeling good about something. They're moving forward. Hey I have peace about it.

It's good. But it's that reaction. It's that quick thought.

That quick reaction. And really it's a defense mechanism. Why are you buying it.

You can't even afford that. Why have peace about it. God must be going to provide for me.

No. That's fake assurance. Fake assurance and false humility.

And a lot of things that God doesn't operate in that. And then we skip to verse four. Or not skip but next verse four.

So Paul says I thank my God always concerning you. So even in the midst of challenges. This might be for somebody this morning.

Are you thanking God always. In all situations. No matter what's going on.

You don't have to thank him for the adversity. But thank him through the process. God I thank you that I know you.

Paul went through hell. And beatings and fastings. And almost dying.

And being jailed and imprisoned. And everything he gave thanks to God. And he thanked God for the people of God.

I thought about this. What about if we came into church thanking God for all of us. Instead of.

Pointing out. Things. Why haven't they done this.

Why aren't they doing that. Why, why, why, why, why. Sin sniffer.

Why are they doing. Instead of asking why. Why shouldn't we.

We should be thankful. Pull into the driveway. Oh there are cars here.

Come on. Don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about. But be thankful for them instead.

Because iron does sharpen iron. For the grace of God which was given to you by Jesus Christ. That you were enriched in everything by him.

And in all utterance and all knowledge. Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. This word enriched is incredible.

It says everything in you was enriched. Did you realize that? Once you believed in Jesus. Did not everything.

Become enriched. I've never met a person saying Shane I love God everything. But my marriage isn't.

My marriage went down the tubes when I became a Christian. My thought life went down the tubes. Now there's challenges.

There's demonic attacks. But overall everything should be enriched. Edified.

Things added to you. That's what that word means. Enriched.

Enriched. But. I'm going to go on a tangent for just allow me one minute.

Don't trust food labels that say enriched. Because that means all the good stuff's been taken out naturally. And we've had to enrich it.

With these vitamins and enzymes and all these things. For example. Wheat in its purest good godly form is wonderful.

When they take everything away from it. And make white flour. They have to enrich the white flour with the stuff they just took out.

And it's never as good as what God designed. It's synthetic. So that's just a side note.

Just take it for what it is. I am speaking. We can get on health in July.

We're going to have a health expo and get people. Every six months you need to get back on track. So it's coming.

Date to be announced. I think mid-July. But he's saying here.

You are enriched in everything by him. So first we saw the power of thankfulness. Everything is positively affected by God.

And then our testimony. Even as a testimony of Christ was confirmed in you. Our testimony.

Our testimony or lack thereof speaks volumes. I think it's good for us to ponder this. What is my testimony? In other words.

What do people think of me all week? What do they think of my Facebook posts? What do they think of my attitude? My testimony. And watch out because others are looking. We were down in Santa Clarita a few days ago.

Got a used car. Good deal. But this guy kind of took where I wanted to park.

You know, you're in a hurry. So I got out. But I was nice.

He had an incredible toolbox where he fixed things. It was all in the back of this little car. And he goes, oh yeah.

I fix all their dancing stuff. And he goes, and I watch your videos sometimes. I've been to your church a few times.

Oh, well nice to meet you. Thank you. Thank God.

Thank God. That was a close one. But I wasn't.

But you know how you kind of get like. You just, you know. Something's in your way.

And the flesh. Remember, the spirit wants to do what is right. The flesh comes in and wants to war against that.

And then verse seven. So that you come short in no gift. What he's saying is you have everything you need.

As a believer, did you know you have everything you need in Christ Jesus? Eagerly awaiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who will also confirm you to the end. That you may be blameless in the day of what? Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse nine. God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Now, some people actually skip this first couple verses.

First, you know, 8, 9, 10. And they get right to the meat of 1 Corinthians. But I don't want to do that.

Because I think Paul's setting the stage here. He's reminding them who they are in Christ. He's reminding them they lack nothing in Jesus Christ.

Because I'm thinking many of them are saying well I'm sure lacking. I'm not feeling this. I'm not experiencing this.

And he's going to get into why. And I'm hoping to touch base more on that next week. So he says here, he's reminding them God is faithful.

Does it just me or do you have to be reminded of God's faithfulness often? And go, oh that's right. That's right. I looked up this word faithful this morning.

Faithful, dedicated, committed. That's the God you serve. So God is not letting you down.

No matter what you're going through. No matter what trial. No matter what difficulty.

It doesn't seem like prayers are not being answered. God's not in a way, way far universe like Star Wars. He's right here in ever present help.

He's committed. He's wavering. That's the God you serve.

See the problem's never with God. It's with us. We drift away.

I'll provide the fire. And I'll provide the sacrifice. And God says any time you lay down your life on the altar, you give me everything.

I will reveal the manifest presence of my power and spirit into your heart. And I will lift you up. I'm committed to you.

At one in the morning, at 115, at 130, at 145, at two, where can I go? Where can you flee his presence? The Bible says if you go to hell, behold, if I make my bed in hell, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning to the Pacific, even you are there. You are there what? To uphold me, to pull me back up and put me back up on solid footing.

He's constant. He's unwavering. He's steadfast.

He's dedicated. He will never sleep. He will never slumber.

That's the God you serve. And we have to be reminded of that. My Lord, why are Christians so frumpy and worried and depressed and fearful when they have the Almighty living God at their disposal? Have you thought about that? Cancer.

God says I can speak to those stem cells or I can walk you through it. I've watched a couple people pass away. They've been here by their bed a few days prior.

It's amazing when they're filled with the Spirit of God. I go in there to minister to them. Shane, don't worry.

I'm gonna be with Jesus soon. But isn't that true? I mean if we believe what we believe, we should be, those nearing the end should be some of the happiest. Oh, here it comes.

Here comes that finish line. God, I have finished the race. I have finished strong.

Now just hold me a few more. Get me to that finish line. I'm gonna trust you.

But why are most Christians fearful? I don't want to die. Many times because they're not ready. Listen, I came here to shoot you straight and not play games.

Many people are not ready to meet their Maker. The Old Testament prophets say prepare, oh Israel, to meet your Maker. Prepare.

Prepare. Get your heart right to meet your Maker. So that you come short and no gift.

So you come short and no gift. Are you coming short? We can glean from this. Are you thankful? Are you obeying? And are you trusting God? You will not fall short in any gift.

I'm not gonna talk too much about this because I'm gonna talk about this later. But this word is interesting. Do you know what you scholars out there are gonna know? What is the word gift in the Greek? There's a denomination named after it.

Charisma. Charisma. Charismatic.

And that's just, side note, that's where a lot of denominations come from. Charismatics believe this. Pentecostals believe this.

Pentecostals would believe that the evidence of being filled with the Spirit is speaking in tongues in all cases. Charismatics believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Reformed, if you hear that ever.

Reformed theology believes in the Calvinism and the five points of Tulip. And then you get to Baptist which believes in a believer's baptism. It was actually called the Anabaptist and they were actually persecuted.

Did you know that? And what they believed is they went against Roman Catholicism saying you can't just baptize that little two month old. They have to be baptized as a believer. We believe this.

So what comes from that? Baptist. Believing in the, so I guess we would be a little bit of all those groups. What about Methodist? Presbyterian.

They're all going very dangerous directions. Their founders would roll over in their graves if they could see where they're at today. Methodist.

It comes from the word methodology. The Methodist was founded by John Wesley, friends of George Whitefield. And John Wesley had a method about doing things.

They would study the word of God. There was methodology. So those people who gravitated toward that became the Methodist.

Calvin. Lutherans came from Luther and they followed those teachings. But anyway he's saying here this gift charisma it basically means bestowing a spiritual gift.

So God gifts us. God will gift you to bless others. So let's be controversial for a minute.

I'm going to get controversial later. But for example there's a gift. Paul would talk about gifts out there.

The gifts of prophecy. The gifts of a prophetic word or a word of knowledge. Don't let abuses knock you off course.

Just because people abuse these things and look weird doesn't mean it's not biblical. Actually if you believe that God still does that you have a more solid grounding in Scripture than those people who say they don't exist anymore. Because the Bible talks about it.

The Bible talks about how to conduct it. So if God gives you a prophetic word all that means sometimes is God puts something on your heart like why do I feel like I'm just going to use a word out there Phil, hope there's not a Phil here today. This morning in prayer yesterday in prayer I just need to talk to Phil.

I feel that God wants me to talk to him and it's been on my heart that something's not right. He needs to turn. He needs to turn immediately from what he's doing.

Lord please help me. I don't want this to be me. I want this to be you.

I don't know what this is. It's been a burden for a couple days and you tell him he starts weeping because he's about ready to leave his wife. See that's how it works.

Giftings to edify the church. So don't go off TV these guys acting all weird. What does the Bible say about these things? So the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts to believers.

Those who have a strong calling to pray for people and see people actually healed. God puts it on their heart that they have a strong calling. They can't just turn it on whenever they want.

They walk around like some superstar like Jesus Christ. But God has called them and I know because a lot of these gifts I don't have. I think more people stay sick than when they get healed when I pray for them.

Prophetic words not too much but I'm called to preach. I've been called to be that voice in the wilderness. God has gifted me to do what I'm doing to make his word come alive and call the church back.

So God will what? Anoint that. See here's another misused word. Anointing.

Oh we're selling anointing oil on TV. I'll anoint this handkerchief. It's biblical.

Anointing is powerful because it's when God says I see your heart. I see your cries. I'm actually calling you to do this and the anointing of God comes upon your life.

I was called to do this as a teenager but boy I was not anointed. I was still hooked to Mickey's big mouth if you know what I'm talking about. But anointing comes when the grace of God the humility of God in your life it meets a vessel that is finally ready and called of God.

God says I'm going to anoint you Samson. I'm going to anoint you David. I'm going to anoint you Esther.

So these words we don't run from these words because of charlatans and fake things. Anytime there's an original there's always a counterfeit. Anytime the and I'll tell you this up front anytime the Holy Spirit is moving in a powerful dramatic way there's always going to be a word spoken against it.

Always. You can take that to the bank. If there's not something's wrong.

But anytime the Holy Spirit begins to move so do oddities and people the flesh and the devil wants to counterfeit that. I'm going to be speaking a lot more on this for the first Corinthians. I would encourage you to try to make most of these messages because it's for us.

I believe this letter is for the churches today. So here's the key. Many are given gifts who are not yet mature.

It only took me 45 minutes to get to that point. Many are given gifts who are not yet mature. So if you want to prosper in what God has called you to do if you want to be used by God start being thankful start being humble and broken and start obeying the voice of God.

You know if he's telling you to do something. You know if he's calling you to give up that attitude that habit. And that's why I mention this so often because I have such a passion.

Ask my wife, ask others that I know my heart passion is to watch others help others walk as closely to God as possible. So my heart breaks when I see the living waters just steps away. It's like this.

I've explained it before. Here it is. I'm thirsty.

I just jog in the Mojave Desert for two days. Here it is. Why? My marriage is just take.

Something's wrong. I can't. It's right there.

Their pride and their arrogance will keep them away from that. Jesus said just cry out to me. Just say you need the living water.

Just say you need more of me. Just be emptied and broken before me. And God says I will fill you with my spirit.

Now those who truly surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit will be filled with God will be filled with water and drink abundantly. So is the reality of Christ confirmed in you? Is the reality of Christ and the Holy Spirit working in you? Can you be a fruit inspector? I'm getting to the end here. Jesus our Lord.

The process of maturity always involves obeying. Why do you keep bringing this up Shane? Why? Think about this. Why? Because this is the biggest deficit in most churches including this one.

The failure to obey the word of God. You know what? This might be a good opportunity to I was going to say this about 20 minutes ago. But if you feel called of God it's something I did.

I'm giving you my own advice. If you feel that God is going to call you he's going to use you you want to do something make sure you check with your spouse and your kids. If they say you're not ready yet.

No I don't see that yet. Why? Because they are the closest ones to see what's really going on. Because we can walk in here and fool everybody for an hour and a half.

Ask those closest to you. And it's humbling, it's hurtful but boy is it encouraging in the end. Because that's how iron sharpens iron.

See we love to quote that verse. I have a shirt that says it. I love to quote it but I don't like to feel it.

Iron sharpens iron. I'll tell you right now is it a confession you've heard me say some of these things? To become a better dad I often have to be confronted by the shortcomings often from my kids. Dad why are you always on your phone? You don't care what I'm doing.

You're not listening to me. Or my daughter why don't you pray with me like you pray with others? Bam! Shortcomings. See you got to let that iron sharp and you have to say you know what? You're right I'm sorry.

It's hard. You think I did that at first? I'm working what do you think? You think I just sit at home and I'm working on my phone. I have to get stuff done.

That sends a loud message to kids. What's more important? So when you get hurt don't get defensive. Allow it to break you.

I'm going to close with two points and we're done. The Bible always promotes urgency. So I'm going to talk to a believer real quick and an unbeliever.

The Bible always promotes urgency. Have you ever seen it in the Bible? Today is the day. Turn now.

You'll never see you know what? Consider it for a while and maybe next year. It's always now. Always now.

Always now and I kind of link it to what we're going through with the pregnancy. Because when that baby's ready guess what? Wait till this movie's over. No no no.

It's time. I feel it. No no not right now.

Not at midnight. I've been up all night for the last four. I'm not going to be up all night.

Come on I just need some sleep. No no here it comes. The urgency.

You have to respond to the gospel. Or is God calling you to respond to his voice? Believer or unbeliever? Is he calling you? Is he drawing you? Don't keep running from God. Many of you know I went to a big event this week.

It was called the National Religious Broadcasters Conference in Anaheim. Thousands of people. And I saw a lot of people especially coming down the elevator and coming in.

Huckabee, Mike Huckabee, Greg Laurie was there. The Beckham brothers. Those twin guys.

And Abby Johnson who had that new movie on plan. She was there doing a radio interview. And I walk out of the hotel.

I walk out of this hotel and I see Priscilla Shriver. The War Room. Is that pronounced the last name right? The War Room.

You know the black gal in the War Room. And I'm walking and I told my wife. This is so embarrassing.

I'm walking out and I see her. Hey how's it going? Good. We're like old friends seeing each other.

No, no, no. She just walked right by me. But why? Because I know her.

She doesn't know me. See many people in the church know about God. They know about God.

So on that final day of judgment when they stand before Christ and they say oh that's the light of the world. I know all about you. What does Jesus say? I don't know you.

What a call to people in the church. Not to Hollywood. Not to Washington D.C. Not to San Francisco.

Those in the church stop playing games. Do you truly know the risen savior? Or are you just trusting in religion and not relationship? Will you hear good, well done thou good and faithful servant. Or depart from me.

I don't know you. It's interesting. Why do you, why I mention that? It's so negative.

No it's very positive. Why do you need God's attention? If they're not truly saved. The problem in many churches is they keep luring them back to sleep.

We assume that everybody coming in our doors knows God. And the truth is many know about him. I could stand up here for the next hour and give you story after story after story of deacons.

Deacons. Those serving in churches for years. Pastors.

Who never had a relationship with Jesus Christ. Because you can go through the motions. You hire a Hollywood actress or actor.

He'll be able to go through the motions. So we have to take inventory. Paul says do not know yourself as Christ in you.

Examine yourself. And don't keep running from it. Humble yourself and make that decision today.

So if you truly don't have that relationship just admit it before God and say God I've been playing church. I don't know you and I want to know you. And God will answer that prayer.

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