

The Power of a Praying Mom

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman emphasizes the transformative power of a praying mother and the critical role of prayer and parenting in spiritual leadership.

Duration: 59:03

Scripture: Genesis 18:23-32, Proverbs 16:18, Isaiah 59:16, Matthew 7:7, Luke 18:1, Romans 8:26-27, Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Hebrews 11:1, James 5:16

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "The Role of Mothers in Faith"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the destructive nature of pride and the necessity of brokenness in the church, urging believers to move beyond routine worship and seek a deeper connection with God through prayer. He highlights the significant role of mothers in intercession, illustrating how their prayers can change the course of history, much like biblical figures such as Sarah and Hannah. Idleman challenges men to take spiritual leadership, especially on Mother's Day, and stresses the importance of prayer and fasting in the face of societal issues. He encourages all believers to persevere in faith, trust in God's sovereignty, and remain committed to prayer, even when faced with discouragement. Ultimately, he calls for a return to genuine prayer and reliance on God as the only hope for the nation.

Transcript

Pride is so destructive. I remember right before the Titanic set out and he announced not even God himself can sink this ship. Be careful.

Pride cometh before a downfall, a haughty spirit, and God just wants to get us, I believe, to a place of brokenness, and that's our only hope right now. That's our only hope right now. Church, as usual, isn't gonna cut it.

I know we like three songs, a couple announcements, quick sermon, one song, let me get to lunch, but that's not having church. That's following a routine. It's good, it serves a purpose, but when are we gonna start digging in deeper and pressing in like never before? Because that's the heart cry God hears.

He doesn't hear mere formality and going through the motions. He hears that broken heart crying out, oh God, would you rend the heavens and come down and visit us? And I wanna challenge men. Mother's Day is one of the busiest Sundays of the year.

Any guess on what is the slowest Sunday of the year? Mother's Day. Now, we laugh, but is that really something to laugh about? Now, confession, 2005, six, seven, eight, nine, right in there, I think I was, hey, for Father's Day, let's just sleep in and stay home. How many times have we done that? So I can relate.

But I wanna challenge the men, be the spiritual leader on that day, get the family here, and we're gonna worship God and we're gonna seek God like never before, just like we always do. I've never seen so many people so excited or so upset that they can no longer kill children. It just blows my mind.

And the comments out there are just absolutely ridiculous. Well, I better get back on track because that could not go well. But isn't that infuriating? Especially Assembly Bill 2223 that they're wanting to pass here in California, the ramifications of that, it's alarming.

And the only hope is prayer and fasting and seeking God and pressing in. I know it's difficult. I know it's difficult.

But the difficult things are what matter. Have you ever got through life and accomplished what you wanted to accomplish easily? A degree or education or financial or self-discipline, an athlete? Ask an athlete how important it is to press in and do the hard things. How much more us engaged in spiritual battle? Just leave that there for a minute.

So the title is, it's interesting, my notes are all over the place this weekend or week. Sometimes people will see me up front during morning worship. I got my phone out and they're wondering, why is he texting people? I'm not, I'm writing notes.

God is just downloading it in my heart to share with you. And I don't wanna forget those. I've noticed D. Martin Lloyd-Jones in his famous book, Preachers in Preaching, I read 20 years ago, it said this, whenever God begins to pour into your heart, grab a notepad quick because you're not gonna remember it later.

And I've tested him on that. And wouldn't you know it? I have no clue. I do that often at night.

I don't have a notepad. I'm like, oh God, that's wonderful. Just help me remember it tomorrow morning.

I don't know why, but it doesn't happen. So I'm trying, I try to note those things when God just begins to deposit into my spirit. Hopefully it's him, it lines up with his word.

So it's good stuff. It'll bless you. But I left off a few weeks ago in Genesis 18 and the sermon, I want to encourage you to watch it.

We've been hearing from people actually in the UK, Australia, different countries all throughout the United States have been really impacted by the message. It was, is anything too hard for you? Is anything too hard for God? Is anything too hard for God? And we need to really stand on that promise now more than ever before. Is anything too hard for God? And I promise you, I would do part two.

And that is what today is. So some of it you might remember from a couple of weeks ago, but I didn't want to just put this in the trash can. I wanted to share with you this important topic.

And of course I changed the title for Mother's Day, the power of the praying mom, the power of the praying mom. And actually one of the things I jotted down was to briefly encourage those who are not moms. Infertility is a big deal.

I know of quite a few people here at this church have been praying to have children and it's hard to come on Mother's Day. And I want to encourage you that God sees your heart. He knows your heart.

You trust in his sovereign plan. You keep pressing in. And we prayed this morning at the early morning prayer.

We open at six in the morning, about 6.30, the music's on. We're just worshiping for an hour and a half and then we go into prayer. And I want to encourage you to be there.

Sometimes stories come to share and I'm like, I got to check myself sometimes, but I think this will be an important one. At the men's event yesterday, a guy stopped me and he goes, you have morning prayer and worship? Man, I got to tell him, I think we might drive to that. And I'm like, well, it starts at 6.30 or so.

And he goes, ah, that means I got to get up at 4.30. I'm like, well, yeah. I mean, how comfortable do we want Christianity? I mean, how comfortable do we want Christianity? If we don't have pews and air conditioning, I'm not coming. Well, you better get off your high horse and understand that Christianity is not always comfortable.

It's going to take time of pressing in and maybe God wakes you up at midnight and maybe you don't get enough sleep. Maybe you'll find strength in that weakness. And that is the majority of people I run into.

I mean, it's almost like for years, it's like, well, you know, it's a little too early for me. And I understand for some people, it's a little too early. You got kids, I got it.

But it's not too early on Good Friday or on Black Friday. Well, can we be honest this morning? I remember the days when I was watching the kids beginning at 4.30 in the morning because they had to get to such and such. And there's lines outside of Best Buy, remember? How much more pursuing God? Well, I don't feel like it.

No, your feelings are not the engine of the train. They're the caboose. They follow, they reward you later.

Many things I have to do when I don't feel like it. The blessing comes often with fasting, especially the spiritual benefits of fasting. Often it's travail, it's difficult.

And you're watering that fruit to come out later. And so those who are infertile, just continue to pray. We prayed for them this morning that God would begin to bless them and begin to give them that gift of life that they've been praying for.

And also we prayed for those who have lost children. One of the hardest things a person can ever experience. And prayed for those, and we lift up the moms today.

And just this week just reminded me of what's going on in our country. I mean, we are calling good evil and evil good. If we have never really crossed that line before over the last decade, few decades, we have crossed that line now.

The prophet Isaiah, woe be to those who call evil good and good evil. Woe be to the universities. Woe be to the school districts.

Woe be to the politicians. Woe be to Hollywood. Your stench has reached my nostrils and my judgment hand is gonna fall upon a nation.

But thank God for the remnant praying church, keeping that, I believe that judgment of God at hand at bay. And now what does that have to do with this message? It has a lot to do with it because moms have changed the course of history. Think about it, from Mary, pretty significant mom.

To Hannah, giving birth to Samuel, one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament. And I don't know how many of you listen to our radio network. We've added a lot of new pastors and a lot of great music.

But Adrian Rogers, probably one of my favorite, if you need to know. I've got his biography. I've got listened to sermons for 20 years now.

Man, he just nailed this point. To moms, this week talking about your most important role is parenting. Parenting, stop letting the Women's Liberation Organization, stop letting all these outside distractions define success.

The greatest success a person can ever have is developing and raising children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. That is the greatest role, the greatest thing that a woman can do. So be encouraged in that.

Moms change the course of history and it's often through prayer and parenting. The two Ps, prayer and parenting. Why is it mainly women at morning worship? Why is it mainly women putting together the prayer meetings? Why can I look back and say, thank God for the prayers of my mom, but not my dad.

I don't even know if he ever prayed for me. The power of the praying mom. You have to be encouraged.

You have to be encouraged because that's where you need to focus. Parenting, parenting and prayer. Now, of course, the disclaimer, women work, women succeed, praise God for it.

I'm not against that. I'm just saying, make sure you have the priority straight. I'd rather see a woman raising her children in the fear of the Lord with her husband than overseeing a Fortune 500 company.

And if you talk to a lot of those people, they are miserable. Always on the road, always striving and the family falls apart. Same with men.

The priorities are misaligned and everything falls apart. Did you know that the health of the family hinges on those two things, parenting and prayer? On both fathers and mothers? It's a hinge on which that door swings. So I am going to be topical this morning, not necessarily going through the verses again.

And that topic, of course, the power of the praying mom. And when we were in Genesis 18, it was this part where Abram was 100, Abraham was 100 and Sarah, I, Sarah, changed the name when we were reading, was 90. And she laughed.

Have you ever laughed at God? That's not possible. That's not gonna happen. They're too far gone.

And we talked about, or I talked about, is anything too hard for God? And then also in that context, God was about ready to judge Sodom and Gomorrah, the wicked cities. And of course, there's a lot of speculation, controversy, because the Bible does say that Sodom and Gomorrah were prideful and arrogant, not taking care of the poor, slothful, lazy. But those same characteristics were reflected of the nation of Israel as well.

That's always been the reflection of a ungodly nation. But because of Sodom and Gomorrah, which the Bible we talked about, there was rampant sexual perversion along with those things. That's what brought the stench of sin to the nostrils of God.

And he proclaimed judgment on those cities. And I've learned, just preach God's word, what it says. You don't have to, oh, that's a little bit too sensitive.

That's a little bit too, I don't wanna offend people. The word of God will offend, get over it. The word of God will offend.

My attitude shouldn't, that's what I pray all the time. Lord, let me not preach in anger or frustration or arrogance. Let me preach in brokenness and humility.

But at the end of the day, what I say will convict the human heart, because God's word is like a sword that devours, it cuts, it discerns the thoughts and the intents of the heart. It is a hammer that breaks and a fire that devours. That is the word of God.

It does not cushion the soul. It challenges the soul. It convicts the heart.

It turns the wayward back to God. It turns the sinner back to his savior. The word of God is powerful.

It's sharper than any double-edged sword. It discerns the thoughts and the intents of the heart. But Abram cried out like we do today.

Would you destroy the righteous with the wicked? That's my prayer today. The Titanic has been hit here in America, but Lord, would you bring some helicopters? Would you bring some rafts? Would you spare us? Are you going to judge the righteous with the wicked? And here's why this topic of judgment is so difficult. It's because it's clearly taught in scripture.

We don't know timing. We don't know conditions. We don't know God's sovereignty, but we also see that God often will stay his hand of judgment.

In other words, let me put a pin in it. Okay, let me put it on the back burner, Nineveh. And then a prophet Nahum, I believe, came 150 years later, and that's when actually God judged Nineveh, the capital of Syria, but he withdrew judgment.

He withdrew judgment. Josiah, because God said Josiah, that wicked Manasseh brought the judgment of God, and then his son, I believe it was Ammon, brought the judgment of God, and then now Josiah is born, and Josiah sends out and cleans the temple of God. Sometimes you gotta clean house.

Sometimes you gotta remove everything that is a hindrance in your life. Sometimes you gotta get serious about God and throw away those things that are wrong and get back to the word of God, and they found the word of God in the temple. They found God's word and they begin to read it, and Josiah tore his clothes, and he cried out to God, and he said, oh God, we have sinned before you.

And God said, because your heart was tender, I heard your cries, because your heart was humble and broken. See, God hears the cries of his people. Hezekiah, I heard your cries.

Judgment will not come until the next generation. I've heard your cries. If my people, not Washington, not Sacramento, don't rely on Biden or Newsom, if my people humble themselves and pray and seek my face

and repent, I will hear from heaven.

That's a sweet-smelling aroma, that they are interceding on behalf of the land. I will hear their prayers and I will begin to heal their lands. And in case you're one of those people that say, well, that was just for Israel.

Well, okay, good for you. I don't believe that's the case. I think America, if we, again, God's people humble themselves and pray and seek his face and turn from their wicked ways, you might experience a breakthrough.

Just saying, that's a wonderful principle. It's an incredible principle. So we see with Abram, Abraham and Sarah, I get their names changed, so in my mind it gets a little difficult, but we see here when Abram said, would you destroy the righteous with the wicked? The power of prayer and intercession.

Could it be that God is looking for some people to build a wall and stand in the gap? Could it be that God wants to get you out of your nice, comfortable bed and get you here on your face before him, even when you don't feel like it? Could it be? And I know it's not just because it's in the morning, because we have them at night. Same excuses. Oh, I'm just busy, it's getting late.

You need to tell your flesh to shut up. Can you say that in church? Shut up, it's okay. You do, you shut up, shut your mouth.

As many of you know, I've been sharing it and I'll share it more as it continues on fasting for everything I'm talking about, for our nation, different things. And my flesh has been wanting to go next door and get those chocolate muffins since 6.30 this morning. We had muffins for the moms every 20 minutes.

You know it's right next door. You just, one muffin's not gonna really hurt. Shut up.

Shut your mouth. I control you, you don't control me. You can influence.

And we have to remember that. The flesh is not going to like seeking God. It's gonna fight you every step of the way.

It takes faith and boldness. Can you imagine Abraham before God? Are you gonna spare, do you have to spare, or can you spare the city? And he's saying, God, basically, no, don't do that. Wouldn't you, won't you spare the city? And so when it comes to the power of a praying mom, not only is there power in intercession, it takes faith and some boldness.

Do you know that God likes boldness? God loves boldness in his word. But Lord, your word says, what's the opposite? Oh no, no, it's okay, whatever. I'm just gonna let things happen to me.

I'm gonna let the politicians do what they want. I'm gonna let the nation go to hell in a ham basket. I'm just gonna do what, I don't know, Lord, it's your sovereignty, whatever your sovereignty is.

There's a boldness, because every person that was filled with the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts was filled with boldness. And the place shook, and they were filled with boldness. And they went out and boldly proclaimed the word.

And Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, boldly preached to them as they stoned him to death. Boldly preached, and these, they're not little rocks. They ain't, and he's, usually they would be down, and it's the

people judging you, the witness, they are stoning you.

They're rocks, and they're hitting your head, and they're stoning you. That's how they would stone them. Still, the boldness to proclaim God's word.

Faith, it takes faith. Anybody get that wind knocked out of their cells now and then? Try leading a church. Golly, you just turn on the news.

Well, is anything we're doing mattering? Matter, Lord? Of course we know it does. Or Lord, I've got these plans. Oh, the plans shift.

I'm praying for this family member. It seems like it's getting worse before it's getting better. And that's the deterrent, is the time things are taking, and it begins to sidetrack us.

But it does take faith. Faith is a mustard seed Jesus would talk about. What is faith? Faith is the evidence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Wait a minute. I don't see it physically. I don't see it physically, but I see it spiritually.

I see all my kids, as God is my witness, all my kids broken and humble before God serving Him. Someday. There's a little rebellion sometimes that needs to be.

God knows how to spank it out, doesn't He? Boy, when He brings out the spiritual paddle, get ready. He loves those He disciplines. He chastises those who are sons and daughters because He knows what is best.

And parents, moms, don't give up. It takes faith. Faith is the evidence of things not seen.

So if I see it, how much easier is it to pray? Oh, look, all the kids are at the altar this morning. Oh, well, I'll pray. Try praying when you don't see it.

Try praying when all hell is breaking loose. Try praying when your finances aren't making sense. Try praying when you're praying for someone and they're going this direction.

But God says, is that someone praying with faith? Because without faith, it's impossible to please me. Look at that person. They trust me despite their situation.

Is that person truly getting bold enough to say, God, I don't see it, but I believe it. That is saving faith. That is faith that God answers the prayers of His children.

Why do I get so worked up? Because I actually believe this stuff. Can you believe it? I actually believe that God is gonna pour out His Spirit among a broken and hungry church. And that's why the enemy wants to sidetrack us with doubt and discouragement.

I don't see it. I don't see it, Lord. And what happens often when we don't see it or things are taking too long? Discouragement.

Believe it or not, this is the time where most people fall back into old patterns of sin. We have a recovery group here. And I used to teach more on addiction.

I wrote a book on addiction. Interviewed, I went to AA meetings, celebrate recovery meetings, and just wanna hear people's hearts and talk with them. And often it was when they got discouraged.

Things aren't going great, so I'll go back to that thing that used to make me feel good for a few hours, and then there's hell to pay. And they would run back because of discouragement. And then you get stuck in that cycle.

Anybody been there? Shame, guilt, frustration, disappointment. And then I can't get out of this, so I'm just gonna stay in this circle and go back to that sin. That's why discouragement is so deadly.

And staying focused on God and persevering is so important. And that's what Abraham did. He kept persevering.

He kept pleading. Abraham kept persevering. He was pleading.

Suppose there were 50 righteous within the city. What did God say? Yes, if there's 50, I will spare the city. Isn't that amazing? And then Abraham, I can relate to him.

Can you? Okay, Lord, what about 45? Yeah, I'll do it for, what about 40? But 35, 30? He gets him down to 10. And the heart of God, I will spare the city? If I can find 10 righteous among the wicked? And there wasn't 10. With Lot, Lot was his relative coming out with just his wife and his daughters.

But it was very profound to me is this is where desperation meets mercy. My desperation collides with God's mercy. My desperation.

And see, that's what people, in a book you can take, they're all free. I wrote on this topic, Desperate for More of God, The Heart Cry of Every Believer. Without desperation, it's gonna be really hard to encounter God.

Because then he just becomes like any other activity. I've got my golf after my church. I've got my NASCAR, then my football, my baseball, and I've got these things that I do.

But when you say, God, all these things are going behind, and I'm desperate for you. That's where desperation meets mercy. Because God will not compete with other voices.

Have you found that out? We're so busy doing all these other things. Is God often, sometimes, but not often, is he the, he's not the loudest voice very often. Hey, hey, Shane, stop, slow down.

Hey, listen to me. He's that still, small voice. That still, small voice of God.

The Holy Spirit begins to draw us, and we listen for that still, small voice, and we quiet ourselves before him. And so we can look here, this is where desperation meets mercy. When a parent, or a mom, or a dad, or even myself, or for our nation, and you know, on one hand, it's weird, but I don't like what's going on, but I'm on the other hand, I'm like, boy, this sure built up my spiritual side.

Yeah, stock market's great, everything's great, Planned Parenthood closed down on their own. Legislation is all, man, God honoring. We got nine Supreme Court justices who love the Lord and wanna see what his word says.

It's quite the opposite. Quite the opposite. And so there's a, there's always desperation.

Desperation meets God's mercy, and that's where prayers are answered. And we all know the famous verse, knock, seek, and ask. But it's interesting, if you look up those words, they are actually different.

Seeking is pursuing God. So if you seek, you pursue God, you knock, it's you're gaining access with that relationship with the Father through prayer and time with him. That's a form of seeking.

And then asking is communication. So we have all of this, Lord, I'm seeking you. And then I'm also, I'm gaining access, I'm knocking, Lord, let me in.

I'm pursuing, there's perseverance. And then I'm asking, Lord, I'm communicating to you what my needs are. And so let me remind you this morning, don't let what you see make you forget what God said.

Oh, you can tweet that one. You can put that on social media. Don't let what you see make you forget what God said.

Oh, who has lived there before? Let me tell you, let me give you some testimonies on that one. What I see is not matching up what I believe God said. God said, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

I will rend the heavens and I will come down. I will begin to rebuild and you will be a repairer of the breach, West Side Christian Fellowship. And sometimes you don't see it, but God said, don't forget what I said.

Has God told you that he will save your child? Keep pressing in. Do you know from the bottom of your heart that God will restore your marriage? Then don't act like a knucklehead. Pursue God like never before.

But Shane, God is quiet. I don't hear a thing. How many teachers are in here? Balcony, some teachers up there.

Okay, teachers, teachers, teachers, okay. Are you loud during the test and talkative or are you quiet? The teacher is quiet during the test. Same with God.

We're going through that test, that furnace of affliction. Listen, I'm pouring out my heart to you in prayer. This is, I've lived this.

Have you ever gotten up and people say, oh, Shane, you must have incredible prayer life in the morning. Ah. Ah.

Not really. There are incredible times, but there's, I've found that I have to prepare my heart to pray often. There's fighting, there's struggling, there's work to be done.

And sometimes I don't feel like it. God, nothing's being answered. It looks like things are going backwards, not forward.

But that's the time when the teacher is quiet during the test. And I have three scriptures I want to share with you. Faith is designed for adversity.

As we're talking about faith and praying in faith, we've got James, Matthew, and Luke. Faith is designed for adversity. So remember that.

Your faith is designed to go through difficult challenges. So James 5, 14 through 16. Is anyone among you sick? Now, what does this have to do with what we're talking about? Well, this is, we're talking about the

power of the praying mom.

These are examples of where people interceded. The mom, in your case, our case, people interceded on behalf of others. And there were so many scriptures that we could have went on for a while.

Is anyone sick among you? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick. Intercession there, the prayer of faith.

And this is where, have you ever heard name it and claim it? Or the faith movement, you know, brother, just name it and claim it. You know, I ran into some people many years ago now, and I was like, I have a headache. And they're like, don't say that.

Don't speak death over your head. Don't say you have a headache. That's not, no, no, no, don't say it.

Don't speak death into that. But I have a headache. And you can get really out there.

Now I know what they're saying, life and death is in the power of the tongue. And you know, you don't wanna, oh, woe is me. And sometimes things come to fruition if we're negative and bitter.

And you know, it can really wear on you. But that's where a lot of the faith movement comes from name it and claim it. Or they teach if you just have enough faith, you will be healed.

If you just have enough faith, you'll be healed. What's wrong with you? And then they blame the person because they don't have enough faith. But see, they only take, they take scripture out of context because when it comes to healing, it can be due to not enough faith.

It can be due to besetting sin. It can be due to a demonic attack. It could be due to God's sovereign plans.

It's not time for that person to be healed. Maybe that person will be healed in heaven. Maybe God's using that to draw them into different Johnny Erickson Tata, for example.

And drawing them into, so there's about five or six or seven different things you have to look at in scripture. And you can't just pull out one thing and say, it's not because you have enough faith. But we do see here that the prayer of faith will raise him up and if he's committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

Now, obviously when they're laying on of hands and they're praying over them and anointing with oil, it's a sign of the Holy Spirit and the application of that. And the person would confess their sin if they know, is this a sickness caused by sin? Uh-oh, we just opened up another can of worms. Sickness can be caused by sin.

The Bible's clear on that as well. Not always, one of four or five different options. But we see here that there is faith rises up.

So moms, even parents, dads, could your prayer of faith, should we start stepping out in faith a little bit more and saying, by God's grace, I'm gonna see my kids at this church this year. I'm gonna see my child at that altar. I'm gonna, Lord, I'm stepping out in faith.

They don't even know it. They're on the highway to hell. They have drifted so far to the left or whatever you wanna call it.

They are lost, but God, I'm stepping out in faith and I'm believing, Lord, that you'll answer this prayer. I mean, it's God's word. It's God's word.

And let me encourage you. I can attest to this verse many times where I've stepped out in faith and God has honored that. But there's a lot of times where I've stepped out in faith and the dream still hasn't come to fruition years later.

And that's where we have to trust God's sovereignty. See, these things aren't like God's a genie in a bottle or a butler. Okay, God, faith, boom, do it, do it, do it.

He's not waiting for requests. In my prayer life, my heart lines up with his will and then he begins to initiate his will. It's not a genie in a bottle.

Here's what I want, here's what I want. Here's my step of faith. But faith often can activate, activate those prayers being answered.

Why is that? Well, what's opposite of faith? Also has a F in it, fear. And we know what God thinks about fear or not trusting in him or grumbling and complaining. And that's one of my really, my concerns with what we're seeing in the United States, so much grumbling and complaining.

And I understand there's a lot to grumble and complain about. You know, people fleeing, you know, our state, for example, and just, and what's going on? What's really, are we moving because of fear instead of embracing faith? Because all I see a lot of times is a lot of fear. And where's such and such gonna take us? Where's this gonna end up? It's opposite of faith.

Maybe that's why many prayers aren't being answered. I know many people praying, Lord, what is your will? But then they're still living in fear. And so when God shows them his will, they're still living in fear so they don't embrace it by faith.

Matthew 8, 8, the centurion answered and said, Lord, I'm not worthy that you should come under my roof, but only speak a word and my servant will be healed. So did the servant pray? Did the servant even know there's prayer going up? No, he interceded. He went before the Lord.

Luke 8, 49 through 50, while he was still speaking, someone came from the ruler of the synagogue's house saying to him, your daughter is dead. Do not trouble the teacher. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him saying, do not be afraid, only believe and she will be made well.

I'm pretty sure she couldn't intervene. And so see that power of intercession? I think we miss that a lot of times. I think there's power in intercession.

I've read an incredible book. It's a life story of Hal Reese, Reese Hal. Thank you, knew I had it one way or the other.

Reese, R-E-E-S-E, first name Reese, last name Hal, H-O-W-E-L-L, would recommend highly that book. Also the complete work on prayer by E.M. Bounds. But they attribute a lot of what happened in World War II to his prayers.

And it's just amazing story of giving up, eating one meal at night and praying. And they record how it motivated other churches and believers, how he interceded when Nazi Germany was coming in. It's just amazing.

Shane, you really believe that stuff? I've got more proof on my side than you do on your side, Debbie Dowder. Because God is looking for a praying church. And as you know, I talked about two weeks ago, God told Ezekiel, the land was polluted.

The land is corrupt. My prophets, my priests, the leaders are corrupt. And he told Ezekiel, I sought for a man from among them who would build a wall, stand in the gap before me and my judgment, but I found no one.

So how long do we ignore these principles throughout Scripture? Well, that doesn't matter today. It doesn't really apply today. Who told you that? Liberal theologians? Be careful what you read and what you listen to.

So I know we're kind of pressed for time, but I wanna share with you keys to answer prayer. Keys to answer prayer. Are you ready to get some prayers answered or at least be able to persevere through them? They have to be, this might turn into a whole sermon, but they have to be driven by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Because if I'm praying in my flesh, what does that result in? Usually unanswered prayers because I'm not praying according to God's will. So Shane, what does that look like? Well, that would take a few minutes, but let's just say the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. He who loves the world does not have the love of the Father in him.

And so if I'm gonna get my prayers answered, I gotta make sure the lust of the flesh isn't coming in. Like, Lord, I'm praying, can I end my fast today? Please be. Who's speaking right there? King Stomach.

Or when I first saw my wife at the gym for the first time. Lord, I'd really, really like to date her. Is she a Christian? I don't know, that can come later.

You wanna be real in church? I didn't come here to play games and be a facade and put on a mask. Praise God it worked out. But see, that's how, see your prayer life? Man, the housing market, if I could just get that house, I know we can barely squeeze it in.

Lord, please. You might get your person a house. But what is controlling our desires? What's the motive? Anybody pray prayer, anybody pray these prayers, go get them, God.

You know people you don't like, Lord, would you humble them? Every time I pray that, God blesses them. So I stopped. Isn't that true? Well, I could open a can of worms in there.

So driven by the power of the Holy Spirit, which means we've gotta be broken, humble, and submitting to what God wants to do. Lord, whatever you want to do, I'll stay in a smaller home, Lord, if it pleases you. I know you'll keep this car running if it pleases you.

Lord, I'll go through this difficult struggle in my marriage right now if it pleases you and you're teaching me something. And all these things lining up with the power of the Holy Spirit. But then there's a lot more to it.

It has to be motivated by compassion or godly concern. The self-righteous, self-centered prayers often aren't heard. Because again, we pray amiss.

That's what the Bible says, we pray amiss. It's like we're praying and it just misses the target. There has to be compassion and godly concern about it.

I've realized most of my prayers, if you look and you think about it, if you do, most of your prayers are not really self-focused. If you're praying according to God's word and the power of the Holy Spirit, they're about others, what you want God to do in the lives of others or what you want him to do in the life of this church. Sometimes it's about healing, praise God for that.

We should pray for healing, I think, and things. But often it's focused on others. And it's also prayer must be supported by reverence for God and obedience to his word.

Prayer must be supported by reverence for God and obedience for his word. I don't know if you saw in the Christian posts and different news outlets, but there's a couple Christian authors that just came out in support of Roe v. Wade. I guarantee a lot of their prayers are not being answered at home.

Because you see a drift happening. You see a drift happening in the church. I'll never forget it.

You can probably find it still, I think if you put Shane Idleman on Fox News, I did an hour long debate in New York with the guy who embraces homosexuality, he's a pastor. And we're talking on that and he goes, I've read over 1200 pages of articles on why it's okay today. I'm like, well, you don't need, you just have the Bible.

And he believes he went from a mega church, I think Carrie Underwood went there. He went from a mega church down to 150, 200 people. I don't even think he's there anymore.

And when I asked him about that, it's because he said, it's because we're the remnant. We're the ones that are standing up for the truth and we're gonna go through tribulation and suffer. Why are those prayers not being answered? Disobedience to God's word.

You're under the judgment of God, not the blessing of God. And so many of our prayers, I still, if I reached out, I wanna get lunch if he's in LA again sometime, but never hear back. But there's gotta be a reverence for God in his word.

Why? Because then your prayers line up. Prayers line up with him. One of the men told me yesterday, I was leaving Thousand Oaks, it was a little too late.

I would've went and talked to this guy. But I guess one of the guys afterwards was talking to another guy and he told the guy, yeah, I pray first through Buddha to get to Jesus. Where's this guy at? Oh, I think he left.

Well, no. Did you set him straight? But how many prayers are never answered? The right God on the right terms with the right heart, the one true and living God. There has to be a reverence and respect and obedience to his word.

Millions are meeting today. The prayers are not being answered because they fail to respect his word and look to the one true and living God. Last night, oh, this is so good.

I forgot to write down. Maybe I did. If you want to wake up hungry for prayer, go to bed consuming prayer.

If you wanna wake up hungry for prayer, go to bed consuming prayer in God's word. And what happened last night, I was reading and I fell asleep just reading E.M. Bounds, the complete work of E.M. Bounds on prayer. I mean, these guys, wow.

I'm like, oh, for the Lord, how can they write so well? So deep and so, why are they so different than other authors? And you begin to realize, well, where's social media? Where's cell phones? 1800s, I'm gonna be on the stagecoach for the next 16 hours. I'm gonna walk out Little House on the Prairie. Look at this prairie, there's nothing.

See, we gotta get back to that time with God. You gotta find your prayer closet and shut the door and meet God in a powerful way. But anyway, he said this, he who is too busy to pray will be too busy to live a holy life.

A holy life is the only preparation for answered prayer. Men cannot talk to God strongly when we have not lived for God strongly. And what he's basically saying is who you are and how you live affects your prayer life.

Show me how you live and I'll show you the effectiveness of your prayer life. They're not separate. A.W. Tozer, he was writing to pastors.

I've quoted this before, but he said, he was writing to pastors, I'll never forget it. Something along these lines, who you are all week is who you are when you step to this pulpit. Your life prepares the sermon.

Your life preaches the sermon. Your prayer life preaches the sermon. Because a lot of guys think they can just put something together, five points in a poem, then watch all kinds of darkness all week, do whatever they want, have fun, get on the jet skis, go to Laughlin, get drunk.

And then I'll just say a quick little prayer and God will be here. Oh, you might be able to speak and motivate people and be charismatic, but the spirit of living God will not fall upon you and upon your words. Because who you are all week is who you are when you step to this pulpit.

And you have to abide in Christ, live in Christ. What is abiding in Christ? He who abides in me, Jesus said. It's that fellow, and I'm just telling you, I'm not perfected.

There's people here who pray much better than me, trust me, and they have a much better prayer life. But the more I'm abiding in Christ, obeying Christ, spending time with him, the deeper and richer my prayer life is. And you have to persevere even through drought and delay.

You have to persevere through drought and delay. I've told you guys before, I'm hoping sometime I can share something I've been praying for since we started the church, for 12 years. That's a long prayer.

And it doesn't seem like things are going forward, they're going reverse. Drought and delay. Some family members we've been praying for.

Seems like all hell's breaking loose, the opposite direction. So you have to persevere through drought and delay because that's where faith is engaged. And then also trust in God's sovereignty.

Trust in God's sovereignty. God knows what's best. And then your attitude, if I'm gonna sound like Zig Ziglar right here, your attitude determines your altitude.

Your attitude, isn't that true? And that's what's interesting about the positive thinking group and all this. Some of that's biblical. I'd rather be a positive thinker than a negative thinker.

Positive thinking, but the power of positive thinking. I mean, if you read a lot of that stuff is grounded in scriptural truth, as long as you point it to God. Because God wants us to what? Next verse, I'm gonna put a, I don't think I sent this because I just added it.

1 Thessalonians 5, 16 through 17. Rejoice always. Paul, can you, how about rejoice sometimes? Rejoice always.

Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Wait a minute, wait a minute.

How am I supposed to pray without ceasing? I've got to go to work. We've got things to do. Well, that word ceasing is interesting.

I just actually looked it up this morning. In the Greek language, it means to interrupt or to pause or to put on hold. So he's not saying you walk around praying and praying.

I can't go to work tomorrow. Actually, I can't go to work anymore. I'm praying.

I'm just praying. I can't pastor anymore. I can't preach anymore.

I'm praying. What he's saying here is don't put your prayer life on hold. Don't pause it.

Don't interrupt it. Keep a life of prayer and thankfulness going to God. Let all your quests be known, be made known to God.

And if you've been there before, isn't it a wonderful spot? You get in your car, you're praying. Okay, Lord, get me there. You're at work, you're praying, Lord, help me deal with this difficult person.

Help me deal with this situation. Help me deal with, anybody have marriage conflicts? Lord, help me deal with this. You're praying without ceasing.

And then number seven here on getting prayers answered. You don't let the good be crowded out. I'm sorry, don't let the great be crowded out by the good.

The great work of prayer is having time for prayer. And many times we let the good things crowd out the great things. What pulls us away from prayer more than anything else is believers? Good things.

Correct? Good things. And my wife will remember this shift. She didn't know I was gonna talk about it, so hopefully it's okay.

It's not a bad thing. I usually don't get rebuked after sermons as long as it's positive, right? So we got married and the first year was challenging. Anybody been there? No, just the holy service, okay.

I mean, I think divorce entered our minds a couple times. I'm just different. And so, but eventually, you know, you humble yourself, I mean, 20 years now, and I think it's stronger than it's ever been.

Praise God for that. And, but I learned early on, as God began to call me to pastor, that I had to live in his word more. I had to have a life of prayer.

I had to, I preached a sermon many years ago. Others may, you cannot. There's things that people, others may, but you cannot.

And so I realized I can't always do things on a Sunday night or Tuesday night. And we had a Thursday night. We had, you know, doing things.

It kept always affecting my prayer life. Getting in bed too late, I gotta get to work. And so my prayer life was stifled on Tuesday and on Thursday and on Saturday.

And it was, and I realized I've gotta make some changes because even the good things are pulling me away from the great thing that God has called me to. Now, everyone's different because we need fellowship. We need a community.

We need all that. But the way I'm wired, what God's called me to do, I have to have certain parameters in order to fulfill that. People make fun of me a lot by going to bed early.

Well, I can tell you, my mornings are incredible with God sometimes. And if I don't do that, I get up running. You ever get up like, oh, look what time it is.

You're out the door. You got your, you grab your Christian crack and you get in your car and you're on your way to work. You'll get that on your way home.

Christian crack, black, you know, it gets me going. So, but I realized I can't have spent time with God unless this happens. People say, why don't you just do it in the evening? By the time seven o'clock rolls around, my brain is mush.

I try, you try studying with five kids at home. And so that's, I had to remove some of the good to pursue the great. And there's other things.

What other is, do you know how much social, you should do a Google search on how much, how many hours people are spending on social media? I just realized the other day, I went on a Twitter feed. It's been a long time. And I'm like going, and that's interesting.

And I mean, Jenna Ellis, you know, Trump's old attorney and all these other people and family research council. And I'm like, did an hour just go by? Is it, what was the point of that? What is it, what was the point? Now, well, at least I know the earth isn't flat anymore. And the election was stolen.

And you know, at least I know I got more information. But productively, see it drew, if it draws you away from the great thing, you've got to remove those things that draw you away from the great thing. And I know we're, the second service is gonna be coming up soon.

So I wanna, but this is so important. Matthew 6, 6, I think we have this, the amplified version. But when you go, when you go to pray, when you go to pray, go into your most private room and close the door and pray to your father who is in secret.

And your father who sees what is done in secret might reward you, will consider it. If he's having a good day, he will. This is a promise that you can take to the bank.

God will reward you. And something I shared two weeks ago that really stood out. You can go to God.

Is there, are you telling me there's a place where I can go and the living God will meet me? And I don't have to call him Elohim or El Shaddai or Yahweh, but I can come in boldly and say, go God, my father, hear the cries of your children. And he says, son, I will rebuild you. I will strengthen you.

I will anoint you for what I've called you to do when all hell is breaking loose. You can continue to build your life on me. I can come and say, Abba, father.

Because Jesus said, call on him as father. Our father out in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this daily bread. And you walk boldly into that. Could there be a place that God will meet with you? If this is true, why wouldn't every Christian on the planet take advantage of this? There is a place, God waits for you.

We are to be shut out with man so we can be shut in with Christ. Listen, formal, formal, lifeless, powerless prayer is killing the church. The disciples didn't say, preach us form.

Oh, heavenly father, great and abounding mercies and high and exalted on your throne. And just this formal prayer, formal, lifeless, powerless prayer is killing the church. Sometimes you don't have to say anything.

God hears the groanings of your heart. When I don't know what to pray for, the spirit knows how to pray and he intercedes on behalf of me with groanings that I cannot utter. There's a dead, Lord, are we about to kill children up to one month old? Are they about to overturn something and people are excited about murdering children? Lord, please help me.

There's a groaning. I don't even have to pray. How do you pray for our nation? And I love when people say, well, Shane, what's your solution? I don't know, the Titanic's been hit.

There's no solution other than God revamping everything and restoring everything. We think like we can give, here's my answer for the immigration problem. Here's my answer.

We've created such a mess that only God Almighty can undo the knots that we have to go. And as I said a couple of weeks ago, it's okay to become dissatisfied and discontent with a dead prayer life. Did you know I am? I'm not content with my prayer life.

Absolutely not. But what does it do? That fuel keeps the fire of desire going. I'm not content.

It's just like when I, I didn't like the way my health was going a certain direction as I'm getting older. It's getting harder to, you know, my joints are hurting, my eyesight's, what is going on? What is going on? There's a little motivation. I'm not, I'm discouraged.

I got some motivation until King's stomach just shut its mouth. And so see that discouragement, that discontent on the prayer life, that leads me to the throne room of grace. That leads me to the altar.

That leads me to get up tomorrow morning and begin to cry out to God. So be encouraged. I'm not up here saying, here's how you need to pray.

I've got it mastered. I struggle with everything I just mentioned. I've got some selfish prayers in there, but even God loves to bless his people.

It's okay to pray for things. So a reminder, is anything too hard for God? No, nothing is too hard for the Lord. And of course I don't know the audience.

So I just wanted to throw this out there on this whole point of intercession. Could it be that people have, some people have been interceding you for many years, interceding on your behalf for many years. You don't know the Lord.

No doubt those watching, maybe those who've come with parents. Do you truly know Jesus Christ? Have you repented of your sin and been born again? There's a new life. Don't live your life with the question mark here.

William Gurnell, a powerful Puritan author. He actually took one verse, the whole armor of God, that verse, and wrote three volumes on it. Very, very, very good read.

But he said, he who will not take God before he dies, the devil will take him as soon as he dies. And that is the reality, is it not? The reality of not knowing God. Do many of you know Timothy McVeigh? You remember that name? He was executed for bombing the federal building in Oklahoma.

And instead of speaking any final words, he handed a handwritten statement with this poem on it. It matters not how straight the gate, wrong, how charged with punishment the scroll. I am the master of my fate.

I am the captain of my soul. I guarantee he is absolutely wrong. And I don't want anyone to leave here or leave listening to this message, to leave you in this state, thinking you are the master of your own destiny.

You're in control. That breath you just breathed, thank God for it. Have you ever thought, what keeps a heart beating billions of times? Do you know we're the only thing on planet Earth that never shuts down? Living things, 24 seven, 365, until the time is over.

What keeps the liver and kidney and heart functioning? God of the universe. So I wanna encourage you this morning. If you don't know him, bow your knee to Jesus Christ because there will come a time when you bow to him now or you bow to him later.

And the difference is very vast. The Bible says, repent and believe that Jesus has been raised from the dead and God will set you free. Repent of your sin.

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