

The Price of Pleasure

by Shane Idleman

Pursuing pleasure can lead to a loss of distinction between believers and non-believers, causing believers to be ineffective and non-believers to be kept from coming to know Christ.

Duration: 1:05:15

Scripture: Proverbs 21:17, Matthew 6:24, Romans 1:28, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Spiritual Fulfillment", "Worldly Temptation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God and highlights the struggle between worldly pleasures and spiritual fulfillment. It warns against being drawn away from the Lord by the love of worldly pleasures, which can lead to spiritual poverty and broken relationships. The message calls for a lifestyle of serving God wholeheartedly and fleeing from the temptations of the world.

Transcript

I do want to welcome the new people, it's good to see you here. Come up and say hello to me afterwards if I don't know you. And you're going to find that your notes and your bulletin is blank.

Or are blank, I should say. Why are the notes blank? Because I don't want the looky-loos going through them and going ahead and seeing where I'm going with this. During this sermon, I would love to have your undivided attention.

Just forgive me 45 minutes. Because what I'm going to talk about tonight is absolutely crucial. Not that what we don't always talk about is absolutely crucial.

But this topic I've actually alluded to in a lot of different sermons. I've touched on bits and pieces of this. But I've never got around to actually doing in a long time a sermon based on this topic and this topic alone.

And it's important because what this topic does, it'll actually draw believers away from the Lord. Now, I've got your interest, I know. But trust me, I'm going somewhere.

If we're not careful, this topic will draw believers away from the Lord. And guess what it does to unbelievers? It keeps them from never coming to know Christ. And I'm going to pull from Proverbs.

If you have your Bibles, it's Proverbs 21. We were in the first half of this last week. So if you weren't here, go online.

We've got all of our videos online. Video of the sermon, part one. But on part two, I'm stopping right here on Proverbs 21, verse 17.

He who loves pleasure will be a poor man. And he who loves wine and oil will not be rich. Let me say that again.

He who loves pleasure. The key word there is loves, okay? He who loves pleasure will be a poor man. And he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.

And some of you are going, well, I know people that this doesn't apply to. Well, hold on. I'm going to try to fully exhaust this topic in 55 minutes.

And in doing that, I'm going to try to stay right up here because I've got a lot to cover. And I want to put this in order. So as we unpack it, once we're done, it'll begin to make a little bit more sense.

And why is this issue so important? Because I have seen this topic right here pull more people away from God than any other topic bar none in and of itself. This will cause your faith to weaken. This will cause the passion for God that you once had to dwindle right here.

This is our greatest enemy. Make no mistake about it. But before I get to the message, I want to say three things in the introduction.

No decision will impact your life more than who or what you choose to follow. OK? Young adults, especially. This is going to be a great message for young adults.

If you're in your 30s and younger, listen up. Sit up straight. Listen up.

Take notes. Because this could change your life or it's going to make you upset. It's going to be one or the other, OK? You're going to either embrace this message, or you're going to leave here going, man, that guy, I don't know what's up with him.

He's extreme. Extreme Christianity. No, I'm just going biblical here.

So just remember that. The next thing I need to confess to you on this topic is I have not mastered this topic. I do not want to come up here with a holier-than-thou attitude.

It's how could you? Oh my Lord, I don't struggle with this whatsoever. Any believer is going to struggle with this issue. So I'm coming up there as a fellow sojourner, a fellow soldier, a fellow believer saying, listen, this is an area that will take us down.

It will take down a marriage. It will take down your walk with the Lord. So Shane, can't we be a little more positive? Just turn on Christian TV tomorrow and you hear a lot of positive stuff.

I'm trying to balance some of that with some of this. We both, we need encouragement. We also need conviction because encouragement without conviction will not change you.

Conviction without encouragement will make you depressed. So we have to be encouraged, but we have to be convicted. And one of the callings of West Side, this is not in my notes, so I'm hoping it's going to benefit somebody, is I feel is for God to have us bring that conviction back to help settle the balances a little bit because the church is all about encouragement and we're encouraging people in their sin.

Somebody come in and say, blessed be the name of the Lord while they're looking at porn when they get home. Why? Because nobody's convicting them. Nobody's challenging them.

They can cuss at their spouse and get here and say, brother Shane, how you doing? Blessed be the name of the Lord. How'd you just treat your spouse on your way here? Nothing's changing in that relationship. You wonder why the marriage is on the brink of destruction? Because without conviction, the human heart will not change.

So that's the point of this. This is a message from love, not anger, not hatred. It's a message from, we need to hear this.

And the final thing is I'm going to try to avoid two extremes. And I'm sure you've all seen the title there, the price of pleasure, the price of pleasure, the price of pleasure. It has, pleasure has a price.

Now the, you know what the two extremes I want to avoid are? You know how we like to do this. Sometimes if you come here, I like to show the two extremes. Well, on the one extreme is what I call the party lifestyle, Las Vegas Christianity.

Let's just be real and honest. We eat too much. We drink too much.

We spend too much. It's Las Vegas Christianity. We go everywhere the world goes.

We look just like the world. There's no difference. There's no distinction.

You can sit at a blackjack table and bet everything on red and have a cold one in your hand. And the only thing different to say is you hear a blessed, thank God I won. That's the only difference.

It's this Las Vegas mentality of Christianity where there's no distinction. There's no difference. If there's no distinction, there's no difference.

You're not being the light in the salt. Your light and your salt has lost its savor and your light has gone out. There is no such thing as Las Vegas Christianity.

Now, what's the other side? I've been studying my Bible 20 hours this week. There's nothing to laugh about. You should not be laughing in church.

No, you shouldn't. That's what this side, there's no pleasure in anything. You took your kids to Magic Mountain.

It's got magic in the name. What is wrong with you folks? You can't go to Disney and be like, Disneyland, they support gay, whatever, gay pride days. How can you go to Disneyland? You know, I'm gonna make your life just as miserable as mine.

We're gonna sit in our house. We're not gonna do anything. I haven't owned a TV since the 1990s and I just drank a lot of prune juice and I'm upset and my face is not happy.

Pleasure, I don't want any pleasure, nothing. I don't even like that word. Shane, do you know what comes to mind when you say that word? The dead side, the legalistic cemetery dead Pharisee.

And guess what they do? They just go around judging everybody else. But what's the balance? I believe the balance is that God has given us simple pleasures to enjoy, to love the things that He's given us, to

relax, vacation. You know, there's simple pleasures.

Those are good. So I wanna try to find the middle ground, get this side out of here. But I don't wanna get close to this side either.

And you know what's very funny? Las Vegas Christians think I'm a radical, extreme fundamentalist. This group thinks I'm a compromising emergent type. Whoa, look at this guy so loose and fast with the rules.

So I'm like, you can't please either group. One thinks I'm to this, the other I'm to that. Why? Because they're at polar opposites.

They're at extremes. So when we talk about this issue, we need to understand that, let's say vacation is wonderful. I'm planning on going fly fishing in a few months and all these things and some entertainment, healthy entertainment's good, God-given entertainment.

You know, these things are good and healthy, but you've gotta be very careful because you could easily fall into this camp and be drawn away. Or you can fall into this camp and become very rigid and very hard and very legalistic. And you're not pleasing God by following a bunch of rules.

You're pleasing yourself because you think you're so spiritual. So we have to find the balance right in the middle. Enjoy life, enjoy what God has given us, but be very careful because the love of these things is what draws us away.

So with that said, let's begin. Message, the message, the price of pleasure. Proverbs 21, 17.

Who loves pleasure will be a poor man and who loves wine and oil will not be rich. And the question I think that's healthy, you should ask yourself tonight. Let me have in your mind, don't raise your hands, don't answer.

Think about this question and think about it long and hard and even when you leave here, because I try to think about this on a monthly basis. Are you, let's be honest, because God knows, are you affecting the world? Or is the world infecting you? Am I actually affecting the world or am I being infected by the world? Because that's the difference. That's what tilts the scale.

I'm supposed to go and make a difference in the world to affect the world. The world's not supposed to come in and infect me. And what I mean by the world is in the Greek language there, a lot of times you hear the word world.

Well, I'm not talking about the world. I'm not talking about houses and cars and boats and jet skis. I'm talking about the cosmos and that's the world's mindset that is in direct opposition to the will of God.

So love not the world nor the things that are in the world. All that's in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life is not of the father. It's of the world.

So you have this world's mindset which is at war with God. You might say, Shane, I don't believe that. Well, it doesn't matter what you or I believe.

I've learned that a long time ago. We can be as sincere and we can be sincerely wrong. What I believe does not change God's absolute truth.

You believe in absolute truth? Absolutely. With every fiber in my being as sure as that sun is coming up. And that world, the world's mindset, the cosmos is at war with God.

So when he says love not the world, if you start to love the world and it pulls you away, you're no longer affecting the world. You're infected by the world. That's why many people can't give a testimony, couldn't witness for Christ that they receive a thousand dollars.

There's no difference. There's no distinction because they are infected by the world. So that is an important question because as you sit and you ponder, you go, you know what? I'm not really making a difference.

The world has saturated everything. What I listen to, what I watch, who I associate with, how I spend my time, how I spend my money. There's no distinction.

There's no difference. It doesn't say that I'm honoring God in those things. I'm being pulled away by the world.

And that's a good question to have. And I wanna read a few questions or statements actually that I put together actually a few years ago. I preached on this topic at a men's conference and I upset this young adult.

I know that's hard to believe but I do upset people now and then. And this guy didn't like what I had to say and he sent me an email. And I wanted to read some of the questions just so you have an idea.

And this is a Christian young adult. He says, Christians, especially preachers, spend way too much time trying to label what is good or bad, black or white when it comes to this issue of pleasure, entertainment, whatever. It just makes for easy preaching.

The problem is we don't spend enough time discerning between right and wrong, good and error, truth and evil. So nobody knows. We're too busy trying to please everybody and tickle the ear.

I don't wanna challenge you too much. You new people, I want you to come back next week so I'm just gonna tell you that God loves you. God bless you.

Have a wonderful day and you'll probably be rich next week. I mean, that's what, hope they come back. Hope they come back.

I'll tell you right now, if I do not proclaim the truth of God's word, I don't care if anybody comes back because then I'm just, I'm being a sellout. I'm being a puppet for the things of the world. If I'm convicting you, that's a good thing.

Conviction is a good thing. If you're saying, I don't like what that guy's saying, then you need to hear exactly what I'm saying. So if you're getting ready to get up and leave, you better sit down, buckle up and hold on because God is wanting you to hear this because it's not my opinions.

This has nothing to do with my opinions. The next thing this guy asked me, a Christian has to wear certain things, listen to certain things. Now his email didn't have this tone.

I'm kind of giving you how I read it. He has to, you know, we have to wear certain things. We have to listen to certain things.

We have to watch certain things. We need to break this cookie cutter version of Christianity. We should show the attractive side of Christianity and not be so extreme.

So what do you do with that? And here's, well, there's a few more questions, but I didn't want to waste your time with it. Here's my favorite one. Shane, I don't worry about what I watch or what I listen to or any of this stuff as long as my heart is right.

Well, good for you. It doesn't matter what I watch or view as long as my heart is right. He forgets that the heart is a direct reflection of what and how and what we're worshiping and how we spend our time.

Now you might say, well, those are normal questions from a young adult. Folks, those were questions from a youth pastor at one of the churches in this valley. Yeah, wow.

So you tell me, is the church affecting the world or is it infecting them? I'll tell you what, this guy, it's infected him big time. What happened is my message upset him, P.O'd him, if I may. He didn't like what I had to say.

I'm not doing, I'm not changing anything. I'm going to let him have it. Now we can thank him because I have all these questions in one of my books I wrote a few years ago.

I haven't sent him the book yet, but I don't want to upset the, you know, ruin it there. But those are the, and I think a lot of you are probably thinking the same thing. I know I did.

God, we have to, we can't wear certain things. We can't loot new things. I mean, you know, we have to wear loose clothes.

The girls don't want to show too much here and show much there and pulled up here and down here. And what's the big deal? What the big deal is, is you're a follower of Jesus Christ. There should be a difference in a distinction, not similarities.

Now, of course, we're going to wear some of the same clothes, do some of the things, please don't understand. Don't take this somewhere where I'm not trying to bring it. I'm trying to get to the condition of the heart and where the heart is at.

So are we affecting the world or is it infecting us? And let me just say this up front. Pleasure-filled Christians, the ones that just love the things of the world, pleasure-filled world, you know, the vaguest Christians. They eat too much, they drink too much.

But, you know, 1 Timothy says, have a little wine. But yeah, that's a little wine, not two bottles every night. I mean, you know, come on, it's this Las Vegas mentality.

Those who are pleasure-filled Christians, I've noticed are the most angry, the most upset, the most gossipy, the most unhappy. Why? Because they're not supposed to live like that. They're quenching and grieving the Spirit of God.

And they're going to give everybody peace of their mind. So with that said, you have to remember this. The church should not reflect or imitate the world, but lovingly confront it.

We do the most for the world when we are least like the world. I need to say that again, let it sink in. The church should not reflect or imitate the world, but lovingly confront the world.

We do the most for the world when we are least like the world. Because you have to come out from among them, be separate. Paul said, come out from among them, be separate.

He's just quoting Old Testament. The writers of the Old Testament, come out from among them, be separate. Don't go live out in a little hut out in the desert, never see anybody.

I'm talking about we live in the world. We live in the world, we have to. We have to be the salt and the light.

But are you affecting the world or is the world infecting you? And it's okay to not reflect or imitate the world, but lovingly confront it. What does that look like? I'll give you a few good examples. And I'm not really proud of these examples because sometimes I didn't handle them well.

But Morgan, remember we had a neighbor that just loved to just turn on his Harley at 6.30, 7 in the morning. You know, I just revved that sucker up. My house felt like a jet plane was taken off, crossed the street, come in at midnight after schooners, just wanted to let us know he's home.

He's really, you know, really nice of this guy. So anyway, he's working out front a lot on there and having some beers and, you know, I'm taking out the trash. Hey, Shane, how's it going? Good, good.

And walk over and, oh, this is cool bike. You know, even though I don't think it is, I kind of played that. I told a little fib, I guess, huh? He got me.

That was five years ago, so I'm confessing. But anyway, I remember he goes, hey, you want a beer? You know, I'm like, oh, no, I can't. I don't do that anymore.

I just can't touch that stuff. He's, why, what happened? I said, well, it's all in my lifestyle. God's changed me and really, you know, transformed my life by the power.

He's like, wow, you know, he's sitting there thinking, you know, I'm not saying, you shouldn't have a beer, how could you? You know, he's just relating to him. And then when his trash can falls over, go pick it up, mow the lawn sometimes. You know, you're different.

There's a distinction. See, I still stood for my principles and said, hey, listen, here's why I don't engage in that. You know, here's why I don't do that.

But here, you know, and then they see the attractive side of Christianity. The attractive side is Christianity is the distinction. You realize that? The attract, when we look just like the world, you know what words they use? Hypocrite.

There's too much hypocrites in the church. You say one thing and do another. Where's this coming from? Hypocrisy, a mask.

In the Greek language, it was putting on a mask. I'm this one day and this the next. The world sees that distinction and that difference.

It makes them think. That's why there's a difference there. Now, Vegas is usually out of the picture for me.

I mean, can you imagine walking in, seeing me putting 50 down on black, drinking a cold one? You know, why, why? Well, you're a pastor. Yeah, but you're a Christian. I mean, let's think here.

Let's think here. I mean, I want to talk about the G's drinking around the pools and the beer bong. I mean, come on, let's get real.

I used to, I know a little bit about what's out there. I wasn't just born yesterday. And if these things are entertaining us, there's something wrong with the heart.

That stuff should not entertain. It entertains the flesh. But the Spirit says, don't you dare.

You see this difference there? And to be distinct. So the first thing on this price of pleasure, the first thing that it will cost you, it damages your testimony and it renders you and me ineffective. So the price of pursuing pleasure, Shane, can you be a little more specific? Yeah, I'm getting there.

But the price of pursuing pleasure at the cost of pursuing God will cost you your testimony. Perfect example. Could I sit up here and preach like this if I was just filling my mind with all the garbage all week? Could I? Just, just fill in my mind with all the media, all the stuff, all this.

Come on, okay. And speak with the boldness from God's Word. Why? Because as a man thinketh, so is he.

When I step to this pulpit, it's not who I am right now. It's who I've been all week. That's the difference.

That's the difference. That's the distinction. You have to live in the light to be the light.

You want to be the light of the world, the light of your family. You have to live in the light. You can't cover your light.

You cover the light. You're not the light of the world. It's what Jesus said.

You're lukewarm. Be hot or cold, but if you're lukewarm, I will spew you out of my mouth. The literal word is vomit.

Jesus Christ said, I will vomit you out of my mouth if you're lukewarm. Why? Because a lukewarm Christian is not only ineffective, they tarnish the name of Christ. You see the direction, the direction of our nation? If I hear one more Hollywood actor say gun control, I'm going to say, no, you, sir.

You, sir, are at fault. You're producing this garbage. You're leading people astray.

Bitch, you're the problem. You're feeding it and feeding it and feeding it. Look at these movies, Quentin Tarantino.

I'm not going to go and see that. It's so violent, isn't it? Oh, it's no big deal. That doesn't add to shooting.

Really? Really? I've got some Kool-Aid to sell you and some oceanfront property in Arizona. Of course that stuff affects you. This guy, the guy that was shooting kids in elementary school and stuff, you ever read any of those news reports on the destructive video games he was watching and all this stuff? Oh, Shane, you're getting out there.

No, I'm not. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Don't take this for it.

Ask any psychologist worth their salt. They'll tell you as you think, so are you. What you put in, you become.

That's not only biblical doctrine. That's secular doctrine. Get that guy in front of Little House on the Prairie for a week.

I bet you would have had second thoughts. Huh? You know what? I was going to do this at the end. I don't know if Adam will have it queued up or Matt will, but I'll show you now what I was going to hold to the end if you can put the clip up.

This is one of the newest video games. We went from Pac-Man at 10 years old to now your 10 year old can pick up a shotgun and begin killing people like that. Wake up, folks.

It's not gun control. That's the problem. You're fostering it at a young age.

My 10 year old can sit there and do that. Should we talk about Grand Theft Auto? My 10 year old can go hire a prostitute, take back the money, and set her on fire. Whoa, yeah, yeah.

That's why if one more Hollywood actor says something about gun control, I'm going to call up somebody and say, no, you control. Pac-Man to this. Come on.

Think about it. I don't need claps. I need broken hearts weeping.

That's what we need. Shane, you're fired up. Yeah, look at that.

You look at that. You play that all day, six, seven, eight hours a day, and then you act that out somewhere. We go, oh, what's happening? I wonder.

I wonder what's happening. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. You become an abomination like you love.

Hosea, the prophet, said, whatever you love, you become, and it's just a matter of time. You can take it off now, Adam. That doesn't get the point across.

Ah, Shane, what's the big deal? Pac-Man to that. You tell me what's the big deal. You tell me what's the big deal.

I grew up with Leave It to Beaver, and now there's dating shows and reality shows that are a stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy, pure God, and we should be ashamed of ourselves because we're the ones viewing it. Christian nation, the majority of the nation is Christian. That should bring us to tears.

It's pathetic. Or how many of those people are really Christians? The road is very narrow. Jesus said, seek to enter by the narrow gate, for broad is the road of destruction, and many will lead thereof.

I remember when the hero, the hero to the kid, was actually the father. No, the hero was the father, not Edward from Twilight. No, let's get serious.

The mother was the most influential person in that kid's life, not Bella. Kids were quoting scripture, not casting spells. If this doesn't alarm you and convict you, then folks, I'll retire, because this is the direction of a nation being pulled away from the love of the world, the love of pleasure.

It's no big deal. Who's putting all these movies on the top 10 list? Extreme violence, illicit sex, perversion. Why does our culture resemble that? Why? Because we love it, and it pulls us away.

If you want to be the light of the world, you have to live in the light. I'm going to read something here I just actually found yesterday in my own reading, and it's from Psalms 107. This is a psalm written because, well, or showing how the children of Israel were led astray.

You know, the nation of Israel, God's chosen people, how they were led astray. How did this happen? Now, try to put America in the blank here or the church here. What the writer says is, they mingled with the Gentiles.

They mingled with the Gentiles and learned their works. They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons.

What? Yeah. What does your flesh say? Remember? Feed me so I can destroy you. The more you feed the flesh, the more you're giving it strength and power.

But let's break that down. Mingled with, what does that mean? You know, to cause, to mix together, to move around, to engage like at a social event. The problem with mingling is then that person or that group is leading you.

So once I begin to mingle, let my guard down. Great. Yeah, I'll go with you.

I'm being led by this force. And then it says they learned their works. What is learning their works? Well, learning what they do, learning their lifestyle.

So first they mingled with the Gentiles. Then they learned their works. Oh, I can do that.

My lifestyle, everything, same as yours. And then what's it say? Then they serve their gods. That's a progression.

First they mingle. It's no big deal. They're influenced by it.

Then once they're influenced by it, they begin to serve those gods. And then now on this final point, you might say, well, sacrifice our sons and daughters. Come on, Jane, that's ridiculous.

Well, aren't we sacrificing our children on the altar of pleasure many times? All sacrifice is, is you're giving up something for something you think is better. In the Old Testament, how they sacrifice their children, they would put it on the hot arms of Molech and sacrifice their children to demons. Why? Because they wanted to please that God more than they wanted to protect their life, their children's life.

And what happens is the same thing with pleasure. It can pull us away and pull us away. And we're sacrificing things that we shouldn't be sacrificing.

We're putting them on the altar so we can have the fulfillment of something else. And that's what's happening. That's why this is so destructive.

Back to this, this verse, he who loves pleasure will be a poor man. He who loves wine and oil will not be rich. Now you need to know something here.

This is the rule, not the exception. I'm saying that backwards because this proverb is the rule, but there are exceptions because we know very rich people that enjoy pleasure, right? Of course. Well, let's be careful because you can be impoverished spiritually, emotionally, and relationally.

Because they might be rich financially, but they're impoverished. The majority, a lot of times we hear about fatherless homes, but you don't hear a lot of times about the kids under rich CEOs who their dads have no time for them. You don't.

And we're putting them on that sacrifice. And I saw an email this week. I hope I remember it right.

And I know you guys have probably seen it and I'm all around. My sermon is even going in the right order, but I'm trying to remember these things. And it's about that little boy who went and asked his dad how much money he made.

His dad said, you don't need to ask me that. That's none of your business. He said, dad, how much do you make? An hour.

He said, I make \$100 an hour. Why do you ask me that? And his son said, can I borrow \$50? His dad said, I cannot believe you'd ask me that. Get to your room.

That's ridiculous. You're just working me to get some money. Go in your room.

So his son went into his room. His dad's thinking, I hope he didn't break something. I don't know why he needed to borrow that money.

So he went to his son's room and he said, why do you need that money? What did you do? And he sees him sitting on the bed underneath his pillow. He's got all this scrambled up, you know, money. He's counting and counting.

He goes, I have \$50. I need that other 50 because I want to buy an hour of your time tomorrow. Yeah.

Let's bring that home though. That's what's happening. That's what's happening because the pleasures will draw us away.

Does it feel good to be a godly husband? It does to our spirit, but not our flesh. Our flesh is lazy. Our flesh is mean.

Our flesh is nasty. Our flesh wants to chase all these dreams. So I look good.

Don't I look good up here? I don't care what the price is. We're sacrificing our families on the altar of pleasure, period. So just because it reads here, if you love pleasure, you will be poor.

You will be poor if you lose those closest to you. And that's what pleasure does. It draws us away from the things that are so important.

I need to get through this. Let's talk real quickly about, well, that's the other price of pleasure is it damages relationships without a shadow of a doubt. Now, you guys have heard in psychology and different things, the pleasure principle.

I don't know if you've heard that term before, but what that is, is in psychology, it's the principle that guides instinctive behavior directing a person toward gratifying an immediate need. Well, why are you quoting psychology? Because I'm showing you the secular side and now the biblical side. So the secular side is this instinct within us.

It's good. It guides us towards fulfilling all of our needs. What does the Bible say? He who loves pleasure will be a poor man.

You destroy your own soul. So you see the difference there. And I went online, did some statistics.

Americans will give about \$4 billion this year, giving to churches, organizations. Any guess at how much we'll spend on pleasure? \$150 billion on pleasure. The pleasure principle.

It guides us. That's where all of our resources go to. Shane, you're just trying to get money.

No, I'm not. I don't care if you give here or not. The Lord's got our bill.

If it's God's will, it's His bill. Where He guides, He provides. We're not even going to ask for anything.

I'm just telling you, that's how it works. Your heart is where your pocketbook is. And America's pocketbook is going towards pleasure.

25 times greater. Now, you should have a healthy balance there. I believe that we should, you should be able to save 10%, give 10%, and have 10% for things.

Is golf bad? Of course not. You're golfing 18 holes, 18 rounds, three times a week, and your family never sees you. Yeah.

You see the difference there? Is fishing bad? No, not at all. You buy a \$50,000 bass boat, by the time you make all the payments, now it's a hundred grand. You're gone every other weekend because you want to use it, be out with the boys.

And you see how this works? You see the difference? Are you controlling it or is it controlling you? That's the bottom line. Putting these things in perspective. Now, what I want to clarify is, he who loves pleasure.

Let's think about that word for a minute. First John says, do not love the world nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the father is not in him.

See that love there. Whoever loves this life, John 12, whoever loves this life, loses it. And whoever hates his life in this world, will keep it for eternal life.

But see, how am I supposed to hate my life? He's contrasting it there. If you love your life more than God, you will lose it because that's your God. But if you hate your life compared to God and the things of God, you'll gain it.

Because that's a heart going in the right direction. And then Paul said in his ministry, he said, deem us because he loved the world has deserted me. So that love of the world pulled him away.

And what it is here, when pleasures, when pleasures overrule our affections for God, when they crowd him out, when they take a great deal of our time and money and resources, we are loving God, but we are loving this world. In a nutshell, God is in the background, back here and pleasures in the foreground. It's all our life is about pleasure, pleasure, pleasure, pleasure.

God, I'll get to you later. I'll get to you later. Most people don't go, don't go grab the God card until they get in trouble.

Let me just put you right back up there. Let's put you back up on that messy, dirty cross thing. I don't know what you guys are thinking.

I'll come get you when I need you. But I'm going to live like hell. I'm going to love the things of the world.

And we wonder why there's no passion for the things of God. I will tell you on the authority of God's Word, that the reason right now why some of you are passionless for the things of God, you've lost that zeal. You've never had it.

You're just wondering, yeah, I guess I'm a Christian because my parents were. I don't know. I'm trying.

And it's because the love of the world is pulling you a lot farther along than the love of God is. A biblical, a Christian defined by the Bible is an extreme Christian on how society would label us. Yeah, I won't be watching all the latest things or the latest or this or that or this or that because we have, we understand the principle of what I put in here is what I become.

So when it begins to lead us astray, that's where the distinction comes in. And I'll use those two words again, carnality and lukewarm. What that is, those are fleshly lusts that war against God.

The carnal person wants to live without God's restraints. See, there's, I could take surveys across this landscape and say, do you believe in God? Oh, absolutely. As long as He's the God the way they define Him, they believe in God.

Of course, who wouldn't? Of course. Actually, a lot of people think they're God, the inner self and all these things. So we have to remember that, that seeking after these things is not going to be popular with the world.

The God of the Bible requires restraints, not because He doesn't like us, but because He loves us. Those are the guardrails through the canyons of life. They don't stop us from having fun.

They stop us from falling over the edge. So that's the distinction. That's the difference there.

So basically, carnal Christians, lukewarm Christians, love the things of the world more than the things of God. And I've noticed in my ministry that I upset two kinds of people. I upset carnal, lukewarm Christians because they don't like what I'm saying right now.

Who are you to say all this stuff? Hey, I'm just saying, as a fellow believer, even if I do these things, I'm going to be led astray. And the other side that doesn't like me is a modern day Pharisee because I'm calling them to repentance and humility and brokenness and to get off their high horse and stop being humble. Both of these groups don't like to hear this type of message.

Because I tell this group, it's all about your rules. That's great. You didn't do this.

You didn't do that. You didn't do this. That's great.

When is the last time you witnessed anybody or loved anybody or humbled yourself? Rarely. And that's really, that really is the key. And I will tell you right now that this is the most difficult battle you will ever face.

I wish I could give you some positive information. And actually this is positive because Christ has made the way. The Bible says, if you submit to God, resist the devil, he will flee from you.

If we devote our lives to God, there will be a struggle. To me, the struggle just confirms the validity of my commitment. Where the battle rages, Martin Luther said, there the loyalty of the soldier is tested.

Where the battle rages, that's where the loyalty of the soldier is going to be tested. If I were to tell you what's going on in the persecuted church in China or Iran, and if they brought that here, you'd clear out the church for the majority of people. They're not going to die for their faith.

They don't live for Christ here. They're sure not going to die for him later. And that's a wake up call.

See, these aren't meant to be discouraging. It's meant to say, listen, wake up. Listen, God's word has a plethora of examples to talk about.

And what about Samson? Why was he led astray? Pleasures. Why was David led astray? Pleasures. Why was Solomon led astray earlier and later in his years? Why was he led astray? Pleasure led him astray.

Why was the nation of Israel led astray? Pleasures. Paul says the whole New Testament in talking to the church in Corinth, he says, that was written for your example that you might not lust after evil things like they lusted. That was the purpose of the Old Testament.

And now we think somehow we're going to be off the hook when this stuff is now just a click away. The enticement that's there we are living in, yes, a blessed generation, but also a very difficult generation. You've got porn at the click of the mouse.

You've got perversion everywhere. It's right there everywhere. You've got to fight against it.

So I say, well, you're radical. You're extreme. Yeah, you can call me radical and extreme and a holy roller, but don't call me lukewarm.

You can call me all those other terms because that's just biblical Christianity. I'm not talking about weird and putting people down. I'm talking about having a lifestyle that's distinct and separate from the world.

No, I can't look like the world. And neither should you in many aspects. And just if this is challenging, you just be encouraged that God is just drawing you back through messages like this.

Galatians 5, 16. So I say, live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. I'm going to read a few things here.

Just listen to this. Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. If all we're doing is gratifying our sinful desires, we're not living and being filled with the Spirit of God.

That's why there's no passion in your life for the things of God. That's why you have no prayer life. You have no devotion for God.

You don't feel passionate about God at all because you're allowing the fleshly things, the war against the soul to pull you away. This isn't a joke. This is the most important message many of you could hear.

Think about that. Galatians says that if you live by the Spirit, you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. John Owen, the famous Puritan, wrote, be killing sin or sin be killing you.

That's bad English, but it's a good thing. Be killing sin or sin be killing you. J.C. Ryle in his book on holiness, if I recommend any book on holiness, I'll recommend this one.

I usually like books written at least 100 years ago or older. J.C. Ryle in his book on holiness said that we must stand guard as a soldier on enemy ground. The problem is that many love the world and have a hard time separating.

They believe in heaven, but they don't truly long for it. They say that they fear God, but they don't live like it. They indulge in temptation rather than fight it.

They enjoy sin rather than confronted and they compromise rather than conquer. The lukewarm church disdains the heat of conviction. Holiness to them is outdated and old fashioned.

That's why lukewarm people hate what I'm saying. I upset them. They write editorials against me.

They gossip about me to their friends. They don't like me to challenge this lifestyle, this lukewarm. How are you challenging this? I'm just challenging it because Jesus challenges it.

I can be in the same boat, come out from among them, be separate. Do you know who it was? It was often in the Old Testament. You guys know the prophets gave the difficult hard messages, right? Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, all the way down.

They gave the hard messages. Do you know what the children of Israel did to them? They killed them. They got rid of them.

Why? Because the conviction of God's word, they didn't want to hear it anymore. So she'll kill the messenger. So that's why you have to be very careful today.

When anything called itself Christianity, be careful because Paul says the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. They will not endure this anymore. They will look for teachers who will tell them what they wanna hear.

I quote that scripture a lot. I'm gonna quote it for the rest of my life because that's what's happening. That's why the church, you're not seeing the power of the gospel.

I mean, I read the gospel. I'm like, where are those healings? Where is that happening? Where is the lives being radically changed, selling everything, following Christ? Where is that at? It's not there because we have a lukewarm, watered down gospel that doesn't wanna offend anybody. We don't wanna talk about repentance.

We sure don't wanna talk about the cross. I'm not gonna talk about the blood of Christ. I'm not gonna mention hell and I'm not gonna mention sin and I'm not gonna mention judgment.

Well, what's left over? Grace, mercy, and love. And God just wants to hug us all and there's no conviction or turning from sin. He's not a doting grandfather.

He's the Lord Jesus Christ. You remember I've quoted revelation before. John saw heaven open.

He was taken up. He saw heaven open. What descended? I saw heaven open to behold a white horse.

And he who sat on that white horse was called faithful and true and in righteousness he judges the nations. On his head were many crowns and no one knew his name except himself and his name was the word of God. And the angels of heaven followed after him, Jesus Christ, that out of his mouth goes a sword, that he will judge the nations and he himself will rule the nations with the rod of iron and he himself will tread the winepress and fierceness and wrath of almighty God.

And he will have a name written king of kings and Lord of lords. That does not sound like some pacifist, turn the other cheek, don't upset anybody, Jesus, that's the Jesus of the Bible. That's what he's coming to do.

So on one hand, we see the meek, mild, turn the other cheek, Jesus, I got it. That should be our example to err on the side of grace. But grace is not gullibility.

He's coming, the Bible says he's coming with the, why don't they ever quote that in the media? Jesus says, judge not, turn the other cheek. What are all you Christians doing? Well, let's turn to revelation. Out of his mouth goes a sword that he's gonna judge the nations with the rod of iron and tread the fierceness and wrath of almighty God.

Wow, man, what we feed grows and what grows becomes a dominating force within your life. What you feed grows, what you feed grows and what grows becomes a dominating force in your life. What we feed grows.

You have to realize that sin never stands still. Realize this, young adults, listen, listen up. Sin never stands still.

It's never right here, not even my life. I don't have sin right here. Sin is either growing in my life or it is withering depending on whether I feed or starve it.

I haven't found a nice little medium mediocre spot. You stay right there, sin right there, right there. Don't you move all week.

You just stay right there. He's either growing in me or it's withering depending on whether I feed or starve it. That's the difference.

A daily diet of violence and lust and anger and depression and perversion, illicit sex, they're gonna fuel those very things in your life. The first thing I talked to when men come to me, Shane, I'm severely struggling with lust. Tell me about your media diet.

Well, I don't know about that. Well, we gotta start there. You're not gonna be severely struggling with lust if you're Matthew, Mark, Luke and John or instead of watching Lakers cheerleaders.

You're choosing your destinations carefully, not the pool in Vegas with G-strings all around. I can't go there. Oh, that's prudish.

That's where, no, I don't wanna be taken down. He'd love to take me down. Hard enough to go to the beach in Santa Monica.

It's like, holy mackerel. I mean, you just go, where's my car? Where's the destination? Where is this? Think about it. And guys wonder why they're struggling with lust.

Oh, I don't know. It's probably because you're fueling it 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You're feeding the very thing you're called to fight.

When you feed what you're called to fight, guess who's gonna win? The other. Did Paul say fight sexual immorality? Fight it. Be the good soldier.

Flee. Get the heck out of Dodge. Flee it, yeah.

I showed my wife just the other day because we're open, transparent. My websites that I have go to her email. And that'll really stop your porn problem.

Have all your websites you view go to your wife's email. Really quick. And I said, look at this.

It just came in. They just come in. It's all the time.

Free live webcams. I'm 19 and I'm this. Delete.

Delete. You don't sit and think, oh, I wonder if my friends, I wonder if that's misplaced. I wonder if, delete, delete, delete.

That's the best asset you have. Delete, delete. Because you start to entertain it.

A man is led away by his own desires and enticed. And when that enticement is conceived, that's when it brings forth sin. You don't want it to be conceived.

You want to kill the egg in its womb. That type of an abortion is okay. We encourage that type of sin abortion.

Delete, delete, delete, delete. If any of these things are drawing you away, be very careful there because whatever you feed grows and what grows is going to be the dominating force within your life. But then when you fall, fall forward into God's arms of forgiveness and restoration.

How do you do it, Shane? Absolutely not. Work in progress. Nobody's perfect, but there's a difference between a struggle and a lifestyle.

Many of you have a lifestyle of porn. Some of you are struggling with it. Big difference, big difference.

There's repentance taking place and falling hard after God and wanting this to be removed. The other person just enjoys it. It's no big deal.

I don't care. Well, there's a big difference there, sir, between a struggle and a lifestyle. Let me say this and we'll get ready to close shortly.

You should pay close attention to what you watch and listen to. You want to know why? The force controlling it ultimately controls you. Ephesians says that the devil is the prince of this world.

He controls the world's mindset. So let's read that again. If what I'm allowing into my mind, what I view, what I watch, all these things, if the enemy controls that and now I'm allowing it in to be controlled by that, I wonder why I'm experiencing all these things.

Why are Christians putting these movies and TV programs at the top of the list? This Quentin Tarantino movie, *Unchained*, whatever the guy's first name, I don't know what it is. Some of you know. You've probably seen it.

That's nothing but garbage from what I've heard. We wonder why we have a race problem in the church. This movie says this guy's free now he can go kill white people.

I mean, what the heck? And if you have a problem with severe violence, don't watch this movie. Why are we producing it in light of all these shootings? Hello, wake up. An AR-15 isn't going anywhere in the closet and it takes somebody to pick it up and go do something.

Why are they going to do something? Because somehow they're programmed. They definitely don't have the love of Christ in them. They have the enemy of this world and directing them.

Heck, we just played 12 hours on a video game. What's the big deal? Then I go down and watch this movie. Look, isn't that cool? What's the big deal? You keep feet, you wonder.

I'm surprised it's not more chaotic to be quite honest with you. It's God keeping his restraining power on us. But what happens? Romans 1, he gives us up to a debased mind and he begins to withdraw that safety of protection and more hell breaks loose.

And that's what we're seeing. So that's why this is a very important message because of this reason. It will pull you away.

Many are dead to the things of God because they are alive to the things of the world. Let me say that again. Many are dead to the things of God because they are alive to the things of this world.

Matthew Henry said a few hundred years ago, the more we follow that which is good, the faster and the further we shall flee from that which is evil. Did you catch that? The more we follow that which is good, the faster and the further we shall flee from that which is evil. The price of pleasure.

That's what it does. I mean, let's just get practical here. What do you think is going to control young adults? God's worship music or Tupac? Tupac.

I mean, *Passion Pit* or the *Passion of Christ*? I mean, think about it. All these programs, they're programming us. That's why they're called programs.

Shane, you're against the TV and entertainment, it's all the devil. No, I'm not saying that whatsoever. If you got that from the message, you're upset at this message.

Because I think there's good quality programs out there. Good things that you can relax, recuperate, you know, educate our children on. But for the most part, the majority, if you just take your own inventory, go through even your own house, what shouldn't be in there? Because what happens is, pleasure and the love of this world is competing for our time every single day.

That's why I said it's the hardest battle you will ever face. In the morning, *God's Word* or *Howard Stern*. Three hours at night with *O'Reilly*, *Hannity*, *Ann Coulter*, all those things, or three hours with *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*.

You see the difference there? I mean, think about who do you want living next door? Somebody who's watching all this stuff and Manson Files and all this, or somebody who's just returning from a Bible study. I mean, we know. We know.

So think about the price of pleasure. Is it taking you down? Is it taking you away from God's will? As you seek to get married someday, young adults, you've got to come to terms with this issue. Because more than often than not, that pleasure principle will drive you, not wisdom, but that will drive you.

So with that said, let me read this quick story. Some of you guys might've heard this one as well, but it goes like this. Some years ago, there came to Los Angeles a so-called human fly.

It was announced that on a given day, he would climb up the face of one of the largest department store buildings. And long before the appointed time, thousands of eager spectators were gathered to see him perform this impossible feat. So slowly and carefully, he went up, clinging to a window ledge and then a brick and then another and up and up and up and up and up and up he went.

At last, he was nearing the top and he saw, people could see that he was kind of reaching to the right and to the left and he couldn't quite reach what he was going for. He couldn't reach it. So with all his strength, he leaped, let go of this one, leaped up and grabbed what he was aiming for.

And to the horror of the crowd, he fell all the way down. And when they opened his hand, all they saw was an old spider web. So what this man mistook for a brick was actually just froth that just vanished in his hand.

This is a good parable of worldly pleasure. That's exactly how worldly pleasure works. We're climbing, we're looking, doesn't that look good? If I can just get up there, if I can just give it all, if I can just reach it and then we find it destroys.

Look at how many marriages are breaking up now because why can't you get it? Dating relationships falling apart. If I could just get it, if I could just grab it and it falls apart. R.A. Torrey said, the gratification of the flesh and the fullness of the spirit do not go hand in hand.

I know there's a lot to absorb here, that's why I didn't pass out the notes. But to gratify the flesh and to be filled with the spirit of God, they cannot go together. It's one or the other.

So if you're not filled with the spirit of God, you're filled with the things of the world. Shane, are you sure? Yeah, it's one or the other. There's no middle ground.

Let me just stay right here and enjoy life. It's one or the other. And let me tell you that the spirit-filled life is the most enjoyable life that you will ever know.

Why? Because the spirit of God resides in you. There's unspeakable joy. You can get through adversity because you're trusting on him, the only one that will never leave you or forsake you.

You know that you're in God's will, you're pleasing him. Your spirit is saying, Abba, Father, the flesh is dying and that's good. But life is clear and clarity and God's will and direction and discernment.

You know, I don't want that prudish Christian life. I will never trade it in if you paid me \$10 million over and over and over again. Never.

So stop fooling yourself and saying, I don't want to be extreme and weird like Shane. You're not going to be extreme and weird like Shane. You're going to be a man or woman surrendered to God, finally fully surrendered, your life a vessel now that he can use for the work of the Father.

If life's so enjoyable, why is antidepressants at it just skyrocketing? Gotta take this, gotta take this, prescribe this, prescribe this, prescribe this, prescribe this. If life is so wonderful, if these worldly pleasures fill our needs, why? You tell me why this nation is so depressed and so unhappy, why? If it satisfies because of this, you cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve the God of this world and the God of the Bible.

If I could sum it up in one sentence, if I could just come and walked up here, I'd say, you cannot serve the God of this world and the God of the Bible. You cannot serve both. How do you know that, Shane? Jesus said it.

You cannot serve two masters because you'll either love one, I love my world, and hate the other. Hate God, I don't hate God. You're showing how much you love God by your lifestyle.

Now, if you're saying this is convicting, again, good, good, good, good, good, good, good. Thank God I wish I could give this message to every church in the United States tomorrow morning because it would be the same thing because I'm not trying to talk to everybody. I'm trying to talk to you and you and maybe you and you back there and you and you and you and you and maybe you who wanna hear this.

That's who I came after. The rest of you are gonna go and go eat anyways, but I'm talking about those who where this word's gonna go and penetrate their heart, pierce their heart, and change is gonna take place. They're gonna serve the one true and living God.

And it wasn't until I did this issue of entertainment and pleasures, had to bow at the foot of the cross and I had to get rid of a lot of things in my life that then I was finally filled with the Spirit of God because you can't be filled with the world and filled with the Spirit of God. You're either quenching and grieving the Spirit of God or you're killing the flesh. It's one or the other.

It's one or the other. So I'm gonna go ahead and pray and Chelsea can come up and Claudia while I'm praying and we'll just end on that note. Just feel such a heavy burden in this area.

Lord, I do give you this area tonight, Lord, in all of our lives. Lord, let me not, let me just pray for myself right now, Lord, first. Lord, help me be the man that you've called me to be at home.

Lord, with what I allow into my home, I don't wanna be a fostering evil. Lord, in raising my kids with all this destruction, Lord, I wanna raise them in your fear and your admonition. Lord, help me as a father, help our family to honor you and put you first.

But Lord, I also pray for the people out here, Lord, right now that you're convicting them of what they view, what they watch, who they associate with, who they hang out with, where they spend their time, Lord. It's not glorifying you. It's destroying their life.

And I pray that you bring a strong sense of conviction to this area right now. Dear Heavenly Father, have them cry out to you and say, Lord, I might not like what Shane's saying, but I need you. I need you, Father.

I need to turn my life over to you. I need to know the one true and living God. I pray that in Jesus' name, amen.

Let me say briefly, I don't know a lot of you in here, but if you're wondering, well, how do I know what he's saying is right? Or how do I know? Yeah, Christians say this, somebody else says this, somebody else says this, somebody else, how do we know it's right? You call on the name of God and you say, Lord, show me. If you're out there, I give my life to you. Show me, show me that your son's real.

Show me that the cross happened, Lord. I want to believe. I believe actually that there's something out there higher than me, but help my unbelief.

Help me, show me. He will answer that prayer. It's when the hard, arrogant heart says, I don't want God anymore.

I don't want that. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. See, as powerful as God is, you're not a puppet.

And he's not going to make you and send down a bolt of lightning and do this and do this and do this. He says, you bow to me. You bow to me tonight.

I don't bow to you. I don't serve you. You bow to me.

I'm a loving father. Would you come home? Would you embrace me? Would you turn from your sin so I can save you? That's what the message of the gospel is. It's not bad news, it's good news.

It's good news. I would preach four more services tonight if I had the people to listen. Because God's word is saying, wake up, church.

Wake up, church. Not just the world. Wake up, church.

There's so much carnality in the church that we've lost. Why is nobody getting healed and delivered and set free and on fire for God? Because we have a lukewarm Christianity that bears no resemblance to Jesus' sobering call to repentance. It's okay to use the word repentance.

The Bible is throughout the entire Bible. Repent and say, Lord, I've been wrong. I've been wrong.

Would you clean me up and restore me? I've been wrong. That's a good thing. If I'm causing you to be upset and repent, that's a good thing.

Let's go ahead and stand. And Chelsea's gonna do a song called Lead Me to the Cross. And instead of looking at your clock, texting, looking at your phone, look at the screen and look at the words and let the words transform your life.

Look at these words. That's what God's saying during this song. Lead me to the cross.

That's where everything falls at the foot of the cross. All this junk, all this misdirection, everything falls at the foot of the cross. Lord, I pray that we would just take this back to our families, Lord.

Lord, I pray that you convict the men right now. Lord, they would begin making their homes holy sanctuaries, not breeding grounds for Satan. Lord, convict us right now of where we've been leading our families, our own selfish desires, seeking our own gain.

Lord, convict us so that we change and we can once again be filled with your spirit, Lord. Pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/Dz10Y5HiPq8.mp4>

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