

Warning: This Article Will Offend Many Christians

by Shane Idleman

The church must humble itself, repent, and seek God's face in order to experience restoration and revival.

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:17, Joel 1:14, Joel 2:12, 2 Timothy 3:1

Topics: "Repentance", "Revival"

Description

Shane Idleman delivers a powerful sermon on the urgent need for revival in the church and the nation, emphasizing the importance of repentance, truth, and a genuine relationship with God. He highlights the current state of moral decay, self-centeredness, brutality, and perversion that plagues society, calling for a return to God's truth and righteousness. Idleman draws parallels between the state of America today and the book of Joel in the Old Testament, urging for fasting, weeping, and mourning as a means to seek God's mercy, grace, and revival.

Transcript

It's no surprise that the church, and our nation, desperately need to hear "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" to awaken, convict, and restore. It was not so long ago that we were concerned about "the fall of America." America cannot fall because she has already fallen. We are now picking up the pieces of a broken nation. America's moral heartbeat ceases when we cut off the source of life. We need resuscitation, renewal, and revival.

I'm convinced that the majority of the churches in America are seeking to please the masses rather than convict. Repentance is rarely sought and sin is often excused. We want to build a church rather than break a heart. This leaves people confused and deceived because we teach and live a form of Christianity void of repentance...void of truth. This article will offend those going against truth.

"If the church today had as many agonizers as she has advisers, we would have a revival within a year" (Leonard Ravenhill). Ravenhill continues, "We need to close every church in the land for one Sunday and cease listening to a man so we can hear the groan of the Spirit which we in our lush pews have forgotten."

You may ask, "What's the big deal, we're doing fine." But 2 Timothy 3:1-5 says otherwise, "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous,

without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- having a form of godliness but denying its power...".

In light of this, consider the following:

A Form of Godliness: The Christian Post recently featured an article that I wrote entitled, "Did Jesus Say Anything About Homosexuality?" (It can be viewed here: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/did-jesus-say-anything-about-homosexuality-120501/>). The negative responses from supposed Christian readers simply reveal the spiritual condition of the church. One disgruntled man wrote, "Those of us who don't go to his church or believe in his 'god' aren't troubled by his opinions, and we certainly won't be governed by his bigotry."

Brutality: We read and hear of this continually in the news. As a recent example, police found seven dead babies in a Utah County home. Woman, 39, allegedly gave birth, then killed the infants and put their bodies in a garage.

Lovers of self...of perversion: Our sex-saturated culture will continue to pervert with the ultimate goal of destroying. Ariel Castro, who was exposed in 2013 for kidnapping three women and holding them for ten years, admitted that a deep addiction to pornography fed his perversion. He eventually committed suicide in prison. His idol promised pleasure but brought death and destruction. Most men view more perversion in a week than our grandparents did in a lifetime, and many young adults now dream of being porn stars. Are we so naive to think that this pleases God?

Disobedient, abusive, treacherous: Again, the news is replete with abuse and treachery. A 13-year-old girl and her 15 yr. old boyfriend were recently charged in Florida with attempted murder after slitting her mother's throat. The teenagers planned to kill both the girl's mother and father so that they could continue dating. And a Minnesota teenager was recently charged with 10 attempted murder and explosives counts in a plot to shoot his family to death and then kill himself and "as many students as he could" by blowing up a school.

Blasphemers: The Satanic Temple in New York recently submitted plans for a monument they want placed at the Oklahoma Capitol next to the Ten Commandments. The sculpture will feature a 7-foot-tall goat-headed creature as Satan, which will be flanked by two adoring children smiling as they look up to the creature that will be large enough so that tourists can sit in its lap.

God help us. "Judgment will start in the house of God." God's house must break; God's house must repent. He revives us to revive others.

The book of Joel in the Old Testament parallels America today. They were prosperous but apathetic; they had religion but not a relationship; "they had a form of godliness..." The only difference is that prosperity has not yet been taken from us in many cases. But peace has been consumed from our land; fear is gripping the hearts and minds of many; morality has been ripped from our hands; truth has been raped and taken advantage of, and God continues to be blasphemed. Don't confuse His patience with His approval.

As in Joel's day, our land has been ravished. Satanic influences, strong and without number, have laid waste to our hearts and minds. Families are being devoured, lives destroyed...truth has fallen in the streets. But God offers the solution: Joel 1:14 says, "Consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly; gather the

elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of your God, and cry out to the Lord."

Joel 2:12-14 adds, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him."

Prayer opens the hand of God. The Word secures the truth in our minds. Worship brings heaven down to our hearts. Obedience opens the door to God's blessings. But fasting and mourning starve the flesh and moves the hand of God in ways that other spiritual disciplines do not.

Fasting is often tied to humility...to "afflict the soul". Sorrow must match the situation. We need to feel the pain that we have caused and mourn over sin.

Blessings come from brokenness, restoration from repentance, and revival through mourning. Woe be to the church who is in a hurry to burn through a sermon, scurry through worship, and head to the nearest restaurant. It doesn't matter what we think, or do not think, God is very clear: "If My people humble themselves [afflict, mourn, sorrow over the condition of their land], pray, seek My face, and turn from wickedness then I will heal their land." This begins with me and with you.

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