

When the Church Had Power

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of revival and spiritual power in the church, highlighting the need for humility, dependence on God, and prayer, fasting, and repentance to create an environment for revival.

Duration: 46:52

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:10, Isaiah 58:1-4, Matthew 5:14-16, Acts 1:8, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 6:10-11, 2 Timothy 1:7, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:8-9

Topics: "Revival", "Spiritual Power"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgent need for revival within the church, asserting that the church is the spiritual power on earth and without it, both the church and the nation are lost. He reflects on the historical power of the church, particularly since Pentecost, and encourages believers to seek a deep, personal revival through prayer, fasting, and repentance. Idleman warns against spiritual apathy and pride, urging Christians to return to their first love and to actively contend for their faith and their nation. He believes that genuine revival can lead to a powerful movement of God's Spirit, transforming lives and communities. Ultimately, he calls for a desperate pursuit of God, reminding listeners that they are as revived as they choose to be.

Transcript

If you did not hear last weekend's message, I want to encourage you to do that right after this message because they are twins, and if God has his way, I have a feeling there might be part three next week because my passion right now is for revival for our nation. To me, that's our only hope. Our only hope is in God renewing and reigniting his church because his church is his hands and feet.

His church is the spiritual power here on earth. Without that, we are nothing. Our nation is nothing.

The churches are nothing without the mighty moving of God's spirit. So the title today is when the church had power. When the church had power.

What I mean by that is there was a time in our history, the church is not known for decadence and decay and closing its doors. The church is actually known for spiritual power. Starting on the day of Pentecost 2,000 years ago, which by the way is coming up again May 31st when the Holy Spirit fell upon his church.

And we do find ourselves in interesting times here in our nation. There's so much information out there and you can say amen even though I can't hear you if you think we're getting too much information from

too many different sources. And we all know though that America is ripe for judgment.

And I often get emails, not a lot, but people saying, hey Shane, what are you talking about? Don't you know that the tribulation is coming? Don't you know things are going to get difficult? Don't you know that God's judgment is going to fall? And my question to them is always, always this. How do you know? How do you know that God isn't calling his church for that third great awakening? How do you know that God is not going to spark revival and renewal? Because in the midst of judgment, here's the thing you have to remember. God's judgment falls upon a disobedient people and a rebellious people, but he will discipline his children.

But the judgment of God often does not fall upon his children. For example, Abram, I'm sorry not Abram, but Lot, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. And Abram said, would you spare the city for a certain amount of righteous? And we see that God keeps his remnants safe.

And when you have, I don't know how many, I'm talking about serious Christians now, tens of thousands of Christians calling out to God on behalf of our nation and interceding on behalf of our nation. I have to believe that somehow you can stay, you can stop that judgment hand of God if there is a revival and a renewal of repentance and you just have to look no further than the Assyrian capital of Nineveh. Nineveh was called to prayer and to fasting and to repentance and God withdrew his judgment from that.

So I look at a church as a fighting church, as a church that says, God, we're contending. Would you stay your hand? Would you hold your hand of judgment? Would you bless our children and our grandchildren? So I'm not one to run right towards, right underneath the bed and hide because all the judgment of God is falling. God says, stand and be that light, be that example, do business until I return.

So I see great hope in the midst of adversity. Duncan Campbell, in his book that I highly recommend, *The Price and the Power of Revival*, said this, how is it that while we make such great claims for the power of the gospel, we see so little of the supernatural in operation? I might have to repeat that. How is it that we make such great claims for the power of the gospel that we see so little of the supernatural in operation? Is there any reason why the church today cannot everywhere equal the church at Pentecost? And I will tell you by the authority of God's word, no, there is no reason why the church today cannot resemble the church at Pentecost.

Why? Because it's the same Holy Spirit. It's the same empty vessel. It's the same principles of humility and dependence upon God and brokenness and counting the cost and having a desperation for the things of God.

That's what's missing. Our apathy and our pride is our downfall. And as I said last week, revival.

Revival cannot be worked up. What I mean by that is so many people have revival meetings and this is revival because people are acting a little bit weird and there's people at the altar and these things, you know, whatever. It's just, well, there must be revival.

No, you can't work revival up. It has to come from heaven, but it can be fueled. Here's the key.

Revival can be fueled as men and women seek the heart of God. You can fuel it. You can throw gasoline on the fire.

I just did that last week. Just a little cup and I almost burned my hand. Just a little, just a little.

I just fueled that fire and God is looking for those empty vessels saying, I want to fuel that fire. Just give me a man and a woman on their face before me seeking my heart and I will pour into them. And I want to remind you again this week as I did last week that you are as revived as you want to be.

You are as revived. What I mean by that is you are awakened spiritually as much as you want to be. You are as close to God as you want to be.

So we have to stop blaming God and we have to start looking at our own hearts. Oh God, would you rend the heavens? Would you come down and baptize me in a spirit of anguish and brokenness and humility, God, so I can go out in the power of the spirit? Why can't we pray for the sick? Why can't we pray for those who are demon possessed? Why? It's the same church. It's the same Holy Spirit.

I want to just give you a little taste of what I might give you a fuller taste next week. I want to talk about the atmosphere of revival hopefully next week, God willing. But here's just a small example of power from the book, *The Price and Power of Revival*.

This is from Duncan Campbell. He said, I think again of those people in the Hebrides. And Duncan Campbell was a minister that was called to the islands of New Hebrides off of Scotland.

And he went there and experienced a mighty move of God's spirit. And what I mean by that is bars are closed down, churches are going till 2 in the morning, there's another service the next day, doors are packed, people are waiting in line, God's spirit is falling in homes and taverns, people are walking to church and just feeling the power of God. That's revival.

That's our hope. He said how they longed, how the people of New Hebrides longed for God, how they prayed and how they waited and how they cried, Oh God, rend the heavens and come down. And all that time, be patient, be patient, church.

Westside Christian Fellowship, if you're listening, be patient. Because it doesn't happen overnight. It's not a quick formula.

It's a travailing and a waiting. And all the time God was dealing with them and the process in and through the process of cleansing. What he means by that is there's a process of cleansing where that hard heart has to be broken, where that unrepentant sin has repented of where these things that are holding us back from God, they have to be removed from our lives.

And there's a process of cleansing. And it went on until that moment came when the angels and the archangels looking down over the battlements of glory, looking down at a ready people, they cried out, God, the vessels are clean, the vessels are clean, the miracle can now happen. And I believe with all my heart, it is a deep conviction of my soul that they are ever gazing over the battlements of glory and waiting for a prepared people.

Duncan Campbell goes on to say, it is one thing to shout it. It's one thing to sing it. It's one thing to talk about revival.

But give me a people on their face seeking rightly to be related to God. And when that happens, you will see the spirit of God fall upon a broken and humble people that are receptive and open to the move and the power of the Holy Spirit. I don't know if you've seen some of the news headlines, and I just chuckle.

Some of them read like this, the church is in trouble. The church is in trouble. And I want to tell some of you out there, don't view our waiting as passivity.

Don't view our waiting on God as passivity. Many armies do not rush ahead in battle. They prepare.

They wait patiently. And Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail. I think it was one news commentator.

I don't remember who it was. I think on Fox News. And he said, churches, pastors in California, where are you? Look at what the governor is doing.

And I want to shout through the television. Hold on. Hold on.

We're waiting. We're waiting. There's a power rising up.

When you wait on God, then the spirit of rebellion must leave. And then you go out in the power of the spirit and you can pull down strongholds. You can accomplish mighty things for God because you can do the right thing at the wrong time.

And it becomes the wrong thing. Waiting is strengthening. Do you ever hear that? Do you ever hear athletes say, we're waiting for the big game? Olympic athletes were waiting for the Olympics in four years.

We're waiting for that big event. Well, are they sitting at home eating donuts, watching Netflix? It's in the waiting time. They're strengthening.

They're building. They're preparing. So then when they go out to battle, they are prepared.

Leonard Ravenhill, in his very compelling book, Revival Praying. And don't read that unless you want to be convicted, by the way. He said this, since something is obviously stopping the spirit's inflow into us Christians, the same thing is stopping his outflow.

With the spirit's help, we need to search for this hindrance. And I did a little searching for you. I'll tell you what it is right now.

Two things, the hindrance of pride or the hindrance of spiritual apathy. If you're not experiencing the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, love and joy and peace and contentment and powerful worship and obedience to God's word and just this spiritual life that's on fire for God, you either have the hindrance of spiritual pride or you have the hindrance of spiritual apathy. And I talked about this last week.

I'm not going to go into it, but if you think you might have a problem with spiritual pride, listen to last week's message. The bottom line is you can have the letter of the law, but not the heart of Christ. I've never seen arrogant Pharisees experience revival.

Hearts are so calloused and cold. And then we also have spiritual apathy. The lukewarm church, the lukewarm church and lukewarm Christians disdain, disdain the heat of conviction.

Thus it remains lukewarm. Lukewarm as we know is not hot or cold. It's just nothing.

It's blah. And that spiritual apathy has to be revived. I'm going to read a quick poem by Wilbur Reese.

I've read to our congregation a few times before in regard to spiritual apathy. He said this, I would like to buy just \$3 worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep.

I just want enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want the warmth of the womb, not the new birth.

I want a pound of the eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy just three pounds of God, please. And what's been happening the last few weeks, I believe, I'll just tell you a personal testimony.

When I first heard that I had to preach to an empty room, to no one here basically, to a camera that might be picked up later, to people I can't see, I didn't know if I could even do it. I didn't know what it was going to look like. And that first message, God got a hold of my heart.

And ever since then, I just feel the power of the Spirit, even working in these types of settings. Because you have to remember, God doesn't have to wear a mask. God doesn't have to social distance.

God is not under the control of our governor. God does not have to obey anyone. God sits on the throne and God will determine what He does and when He does it and how He does it.

God has been planting seeds in these messages and in my heart the last few weeks. Why is that? Because He's preparing the soil, I think, of many hearts. And you wouldn't believe the emails we receive from Florida, Texas, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Washington, of people being radically broken and revived by the Spirit of God.

And He's preparing the soils, I believe, of hearts of hundreds, if not thousands of Americans. And we have to remember this, revival is like farming. What do I mean by that? The farmer can't make the seed grow, obviously.

So what can he do? He can create an environment for growth. Remember when I was a little kid, we loved to eat watermelons out on the concrete and there's tons of seeds and guess what? No watermelon ever grew in the concrete. But my dad would wash those seeds off out into the dirt and next year we would have a beautiful line of watermelons all up and down our driveway.

Why? Same seed, different environment, different environment. So although we cannot create revival and make it happen, we can create an environment. See, God, I believe that God, He looks and the Bible talks about that their sins have reached the stench in the nostrils of a righteous, holy God.

But He also says, I smell the sweet smelling aroma of a sacrifice on the altar that is broken and humble before me. Is that the cry of my children crying out for me to move? I will beckon that call. I will answer that call.

I will hear that call. Why? Because my name is at stake. I said, if you seek me, if you cry out, I will answer.

So we're creating an atmosphere, an environment for the Holy Spirit is bound by His word to move. He is bound by His word to move. Pull those promises out of scripture and embrace them.

But we do have to be careful. Don't get me wrong. We can't say things like, and I've heard this before, fasting.

Oh, if you just fast, revival will come. Or we always use our favorite verse for these times. What is it? Well, here you go.

2 Chronicles 7.14 is not the cure-all for everything. I just had a person this week say, you can't use that verse, Jane. I said, why is that? Well, that was for Old Testament Israel.

I know, I know the context of Solomon. I know that he said, when I bring locusts, when I bring famine, when I bring pestilence, if my people who are called by my name do these things, I will heal their land. The land that was given to Israel.

I got it. I got it. But that principle still applies today.

So are you telling me that if people across America, if they humble themselves and they pray and they seek His face, not His hand, no, no, not His hand, His face, and they cry out and they turn from their sin, that God will say, well, that doesn't apply today. That was 2000 years ago. No, Paul actually said that we, the Old Testament was given to us that we might not lust after evil things that they lusted.

So we have to learn from their disobedience, but we also can be encouraged by their obedience. Certain principles, certain truths do not end just because there's a gap between the Old and New Testament. The same Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forevermore.

The principle of humility started in Genesis and it will finish in Revelation if we humble ourselves. See, here's what we have to remember. Here's the point I'm getting at.

I guess I could have got here, what, 20 minutes ago. When the church has power is when it's revived. Revival and spiritual power go together.

What revival is, awakening someone who is dead spiritually. And this can be a Christian. This is not salvation.

Salvation is evangelism. And because of revival, evangelism happens. But I'm not talking about right now salvation, unbelievers coming from darkness to light.

I'm talking about the dead apathy of the church coming to life and God reigniting that hunger. And like you told the church in Ephesus, oh, you're really good at pointing out sin, but you've left your first left. Come back to me.

Or the other churches he rebuked, and he said, oh, you're lukewarm. You don't care about doctrine. You've drifted.

Come back to me. And when the church is revived, it has its power. My biggest concern right now is not the fake news and the governmental oversight and overreach, although it is a concern.

My big concern right now is the apathy of Christians towards spiritual things. Our Walmart carts are full of food and alcohol, but our prayer closets are empty. I could not believe it.

When I went to Costco and I just see so many people depressed. And again, I'm being loving here, but depressed, fearful, overweight. Their carts are full and alcohol in every single cart.

It's like people are hungry for help and they don't know where to turn. And that's why we need the church to be awake. Our Walmart carts are full, but our prayer closets are empty.

Here's why this is so important. When we deal seriously, I should actually tell you this. When you deal seriously with your sins, God will deal seriously with you.

When you deal seriously with your sins, God will deal seriously with you. In other words, when you take God seriously. And at the risk of repeating last week, I just want to say this.

The first step is repentance. Repentance always lights the fire of revival. And what I didn't mention, the New Hebrides Revivals, the First Great Awakening, the Second Great Awakening, the Welsh Revivals of 1904, 1905, or the 1700s.

It's always lighting the fire of revival. God's people would say, oh God, would you come down? Yes, but before that they would often say, oh God, give me clean hands and a pure heart. Lord, I've lifted up my soul to an idol.

I've been deceptive. I've been angry. I've been cheating.

I've been stingy. God, I've been addicted to this. Lust has taken over.

And they would cry out. They would repent of their sin. And God would begin to ignite that revival fire.

And then what happens? Then you bring prayer and fasting along. And that keeps the fire going. That throws fuel into the fire.

And here's my concern as well. The danger of familiar and routine words. Many people hear prayer and fasting.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I got that. I know.

I know. And there's a danger in familiar words. So let me give you two other words, actually phrases, instead of prayer and fasting.

How about communicating with God and starving the flesh? That's what needs to take place. So I want to talk about those two things briefly. Fasting.

Fasting. Basically is this. When I'm full of fleshly appetites, it leaves little room for the spirit.

A little secret for preaching. I'll just tell those pastors out there. You've got to come to the pulpit hungry.

You've got to come to the pulpit hungry. What I mean by natural appetites are suppressed. So spiritual appetites can be increased.

And when you're full of pride, you lack humility. When you're full of covetousness, you lack generosity. When you're full of anger, you lack love.

And when you're full of food, that often outweighs the fullness of the spirit. Listen, I don't like it any more than you do. I love a big dinner.

I love a big steak and potatoes and Mexican food. And I even like Chinese food. I like food.

But if I'm always full and I'm always consuming those fleshly appetites, it will leave little room for God. Fasting is a period of starving the flesh so I can be filled with the spirit of God. All throughout the Bible, in dire situations, fasting with the right heart is always prescribed.

Always prescribed. In dire situations. I wasn't going to mention too much of this, but I feel it might be important.

I think all of us, even right now or later this evening, we should thank God for sustaining us so far. Do you have any idea how worse this could have been? I know it's not over yet, but do you have any idea, any idea what could have happened? Massive rioting, food shortage, death, decay, suicide, martial law. We need to thank Almighty God for only giving us one spanking so far.

His loving hand of mercy. And I wrote this in a book and I want to just tell you about fasting in case many of you don't know this. Some of you who attend Westside know this, but many of you don't.

Moses actually received the word of God when he fasted. King Jehoshaphat experienced victory after he fasted. Esther received protection after she fasted.

Elisha was restored and renewed because of fasting. Daniel experienced the supernatural because of fasting. Ezra received direction and safe passage because of fasting.

Nehemiah was strengthened. Joel offered the cure for judgment by fasting. And Jesus was empowered by fasting.

On and on and on it goes. I can take you to early church fathers. I can take you to revivalists.

There was always a sense of fasting, of starving the flesh to be filled with the Spirit. Now here's what's happening. Truth is being minimized, mocked and removed.

Prayer, we're too busy. America's too busy. Prayer's out of schools.

Prayer's out of our home life. We're all too busy. And fasting, oh you're going to kill yourself if you fast.

You're going to die. You know how many times I've heard that? That's why you don't tell people you're fasting all the time. That's stupid.

See all these truths, these great truths of the Bible are being minimized. Here's one response. Here's the people's response in the book of Joel I just quoted.

It's happening when all hope was gone. The grasshopper, the locust just consumed all their food. Not unlike what's happening in parts of Africa.

And so what was the answer? What did Joel say? People hide. Hide from the wrath that is to come. People run to your house.

Hide from God. Go as far away from here as you can. Is that what Joel said? Of course not.

What did he say? He said set apart a fast. Show God that you are serious. And then he said in addition to that call a sacred assembly.

Call men and women and young adults. Call the elders. Call the leaders.

Call the rich. Call the poor. Because God's power does not look for the rich and the powerful.

He looks for the broken and the humble. He said call all those people from all over the land. He said call them into my house.

My house it is a house of prayer. It is a sanctuary. He said and when you get here, cry out to God Almighty.

Cry out to the Lord that he would stay his hand of judgment. That's all we secure with situations like this. That's the people's call.

But did you know there's a pastor's call? I actually have a proof text for being loud. Isaiah 58, 1 through 4. God told Isaiah, listen be gentle. Just hold the people.

Be gentle. What did he say? He said shout with the voice of a trumpet blast. Shout with the voice.

See I'm in good company with Isaiah. I would love to hear some of these guys preach. Shout with a trumpet voice.

A blast. God said Isaiah shout out loud. Don't be timid.

Tell my people Israel of their sin. Why is that? Because sometimes you have to give a clarion call. Do you know what a clarion call is? A clarion was an instrument they used.

It was long and narrow. And it was a call to warfare. It was a call to battle.

So at some point you have to wake up a dead and lethargic church and say get up arise church and fight. Get to battle. This is a clarion call.

This is a wake up call for the church of God. And it's funny. I guess people like to tell me when they hear negative things about me.

But I often hear oh that guy's in your face. He's too loud. He's too hardcore.

He's too extreme. But what are we supposed to do when the lines of evil have clearly been drawn. Realize that in our country folks.

The lines of evil have clearly been drawn. You have groups like Planned Parenthood that actually want to allow kids to use their parents insurance without the parental consent for sex changes. And for abortions.

There are school districts coming down from high offices of government officials that want to teach perversion to our little boys and our little girls. And at some point you have to say we're drawing the line. That is evil.

That is wicked. And we will call out the unfruitful works of darkness. We will shout with the voice of a trumpet blast.

We will shout aloud. We will don't be timid when you see that evil is trying to prevail. And we have all these passive people not saying anything, not doing anything.

That's not the heart of God. God would wake them up with the breath of his nostrils. He said tell my people of their sins.

Yet they act so pious. They come to the temple every day and seem to delight to learn all about me. They act like a righteous nation that would never abandon the laws of its God.

They ask me to take action on their behalf. Pretending they want to be near to me. Church, we have to get back to prayer and fasting.

To me it really boils down to this. God, I'm so desperate to hear from you. I'm so desperate for you to move.

I'm going to deny this appetite so I can be filled with the appetite for your spirit. There's a book by Gordon Cove entitled Revival Now Through Prayer and Fasting. And he said this.

I'm going to read a couple things. A close survey of scriptures indicate that the deeply spiritual men who obtain things in answer to prayer often came to God on empty stomachs. It is not a good thing to be lightly entered upon.

Talking about fasting. For undoubtedly it will bring you into one of the greatest spiritual battles you have ever fought with Satan. Satan does not want you to do it because he knows that it will lead you onto greater spiritual heights and victories in the Christian life.

Fasting is not to weaken the body but to strengthen the spirit. Fasting means that you got to a place of spiritual desperation. It means that you are now determined at all costs to put God first.

How can we say, God, I'm searching for you with all of my heart, with all of my soul, with all of my strength and not incorporate some type of fasting into our lives? Now I know there's a lot of questions. People, I'm on medication, I'm a diabetic, I'm this, I'm that. I'm just going to encourage you to go to our website, it's actually in the Facebook description and there's a book I wrote, Feasting and Fasting.

It's a free download on our church website and it will help you get your body ready and get through difficult seasons of fasting. He also said this, but many people excuse themselves from fasting by saying that they are not strong enough when all the time they are not really prepared to get desperate with God. How many of you would go on a one week water fast if you received \$10,000 when it was over? So don't tell me we're not serious.

Don't tell me we're too weak. The problem is our priorities are not aligned. And then finally he said when a person wants a thing so much to go without food to obtain that thing, then the fast itself becomes a prayer.

It is an inward, outspoken heart cry. And I can tell you from just experience that that is so true. The fasting itself becomes a prayer.

It's not like well I'm fasting and then I'm going to go over here and pray. When you're fasting there's an emptiness there. There's a denying of the flesh and there'll be a fullness of the spirit and that becomes a prayer and you say oh God I am so weak.

Would you strengthen me in this weakness? Would you build me up? Would you encourage me? And you're not going to die from fasting. Many of you know, I don't want to talk too much about it but this is day number 14 now. I've been doing water fasting.

I've lost 15 pounds but I've gained a lot of spiritual weight. And I do eat now and then for example before this sermon before last Saturday when I need energy to preach because God's not looking at perfection. He's looking at the condition of our heart.

Fasting is spiritual warfare. Fasting is spiritual warfare. Even though you might lose a battle you don't have to lose the entire war.

Get up and keep fighting. Get up and keep fasting. For example I see so many people and Shane I tried it for a day and then I just caved in and had a taco.

Okay get back on track and follow God again. Fasting is like our spiritual walk. Do you walk perfectly the Christian walk? Now I'm not giving you excuses to indulge.

I'm giving you permission to fall forward and get back up. See the problem isn't that we fall it's that we don't get back up. Fasting is warfare.

Yes you might have got me on that meal but I'm coming at you devil. I'm going to starve this flesh in the eyes of his people. You see I remember when the church had power.

Do you remember when the church had power? You read the books. You read the Bible and you say God we need that power. You hear about missionaries.

You hear about the underground church in China and Iran. The Middle East is growing and you'd be amazed at what they're seeing what they're experiencing. I remember when the church sought God in the upper room for days until fire fell.

I remember when we are not in a hurry and extended worship service drove us to our knees. I remember when we pray for people and they were healed. I remember when people were excited about seeking God.

I remember when we took authority over the demonic realm. Remember this listener the weakest saint on their knees makes Satan tremble. Did you know that? Why? Because he can't touch you on your knees.

He can't get you back in that addiction on your knees. You're not going to get angry on your knees. When you're praying the enemy has no right to you.

He might try to distract you but as you're praying and contending God you are on good soil. And we love to sing that song this is how I fight my battles. But at some point you will have to fight.

Oh isn't that easy? This is how I fight my battle. This is wonderful and I love worship. But at some point you got to fight.

It's not all about singing it's about fighting and travailing. Crying out to God in prayer. And then of course prayer.

Fasting and prayer. Why is prayer? Here's what prayer does. Prayer releases God's purpose in your life and in the life of our nation in the life of our churches in the life of our family.

Prayer releases that. When I still my heart when I'm still and waiting on God God's will. Do you know the Bible says commit your works to the Lord and your thoughts will be established.

Then you begin to pray according to God's will. And when you start to pray according to God's will no devil in hell can stop those plans. When you begin to pray with targeted prayer like arrows in the hands of an archer they hit their target and there's nothing the enemy can do because I've spent time with God.

My prayer is on target. Prayer is a great sin killer. It is a fear quencher.

It is a deliverer. It is a holiness promoter. It is a lust eliminator.

It is an obstacle remover. It is a time changer. It is a life sustainer.

It is a demon slayer. Prayer is a wisdom giver. It is a peace promoter.

It is a desperation lifter. It is an anxiety demolisher. It is an anger suppressor.

A weakness remover. A strength booster. And it is a revival stimulator.

It is about prayer moving the hand of God. Anything that is negative is counterbalanced by prayer. Jesus said when you pray when you pray go lock yourself up in the room and cry out to God.

A God who hears you in secret will reward you openly. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. And Paul cries out I believe it was Paul he said oh it would be to God without prayer, without ceasing and seek the heart of God Jesus said ask and you shall receive ask and that stronghold will come down ask and that marriage will be restored ask and that prodigal son and daughter will come home.

It is not a quick asking it is a travailing, it is a fasting it is a getting before God and saying God I have to hear from you you have to save my child or they will be lost you have to move in our nation or we are destroyed oh God we cry out to you. Why do you think Satan is trying to draw you back into sin and addiction? Why do you think Satan is trying to keep you so busy? Why do you think Satan is fueling anger and bitterness in your heart? Why do you think Satan wants to keep you critical and negative? There is one reason and one reason only he wants to rob you of spiritual power. What can Satan do to a believer other than rob them of spiritual power? It is my personal conviction that Satan is not too worried about the person sitting at home doing nothing not praying not talking to anybody about Jesus they are dead spirit he is not too worried about that person.

Why? Because you are robbed of spiritual power in this kingdom. So in closing there has to be a desperation. I wrote a book entitled Desperate for more of God and that is the key that opens the door because what is desperation? A spouse walks out of the door and says I am divorcing you and you are desperate to keep that together you will do anything finances finances I don't know what I am I am desperate I will do anything so why when it comes to God we don't apply that same principle?

Desperation God I will do anything I will fast for a day I will give this career I will give this money Lord I am desperate for you would you show me?

And I am amazed at how many people think God has bad plans for them well Shane if I do that I will probably end up in the streets of Calcutta or I will become a missionary in Africa if I do that then I will probably have to live out in the desert if I do that I know God I know God he is going to make me do this and that no God is going to give you the desires of your heart there is nothing more satisfied there is nothing more joy filled than being in the center of God's will whether that is East LA or Coeur d'Alene

Idaho it doesn't matter if you are doing God's will and God's purpose and I am sure some people might be thinking well Shane that is great your sermon title what is it? when the church had power what is the point of remembering when the church had power why do we have to

remember back when the church had power here is why because it is a return there is a hunger there is a thirst come in and come back remember that first love remember when you loved me with all of your heart and with all of your strength remember when you couldn't get enough of me and the Bible became your new source remember those times remember go back go back Shane go back to where I loved you and I saved you and I called you remember fall on your face and begin to worship me again and allow the power of my Holy Spirit to come in there is a hunger a thirst to be filled revival is a gift of love it is a gift of love God reviving his people listen I have been spiritually dead and I have been spiritually alive and I don't ever want to go back I don't ever want to go back there and the

enemies will hold me back getting close to that edge getting close to that edge but I also want to talk to the person who might not know God this is a salvation calling to you did you know that you are not guaranteed another day you are not guaranteed another message from a pastor you might not be given another shot I've had a young man tell me this I think it's been five years ago something like this I'll give God a shot someday as God is my witness I've never seen that man again don't play that game I'll get serious someday I'll give God a shot someday when I'm ready that day may never come today is the day of salvation call upon the Lord while you may be saved don't allow the enemy to continue to deceive you thinking, thinking that Christianity is for weak people and women and though

Christian religion for you is a crutch you got to use that crutch to walk no it's not the crutch it's the entire hospital it's the ER it's every unit it's everything God is everything he's an all-consuming fire but here's the encouragement where we started with Isaiah I'll leave you with this thought God says actually the whole context of the verse the chapter on fasting is the people are fasting but with the wrong heart don't do that you have to have the right heart to fast I know spiritual people have the right heart don't you love when God says then I love when I read the Bible it says but then or but but God this great call to repentance and then your light will shine out of the darkness and the darkness around you will be as bright as the noon the Lord will guide you continually he

will give you water when you are thirsty he will restore your strength you'll be like a well watered garden that sounds pretty depressing that really stinks when you follow God look at what's going to happen we have been tricked by the enemy you'll be like a well watered garden like an ever flowing spring some of you oh this is encouraging some of you will rebuild the deserted ruins of your city some of you will be known as rebuilders of the wall and restorers of the home another translation says you will restore that breach what was driven away you will bind up the broken you will strengthen the sick and I want to know who is ready to contend for a nation who is ready to mend broken families who is ready to call down heaven to conquer hell because God says some of you when you come back

in the fullness of the spirit you will rebuild the walls that the enemy has taken down you will restore homes that have been crushed you will restore your community because when you get people on fire for God they bring that into the community you will rebuild the walls

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