

Men, Stop the Silly Video Games and Kick the Porn Habit

Like a bird that wanders from the nest, so is a man who wanders from his place" (Prov. 27:8).

Written in 1757, the following lyrics echo with great clarity to a generation that has wandered so far off that we can barely hear God's call to return to Him: "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart, O take and seal it; seal it for Thy courts above."

"Wander" means to depart, stray or retreat from what we know to be right. As a result, guilt and shame can dominate our lives. Proverbs 13:15 reminds us that "the way of the transgressor" is hard. For many, this is an understatement if we are fighting against God ... fighting against what we know to be right.

In the same way that the DMV offers a certificate of non-operation when a vehicle is not working properly, wandering from God makes us ineffective, unproductive, negative, angry, depressed, disgruntled, discouraged, critical, and lifeless. It's clear from Scripture that the wanderer within must be restrained. How do we restrain a nature prone to wander?

1. 1 John 1:9 offers the first glimpse of hope, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Acts 3:19 adds that repentance leads to times of refreshing. Repentance and obedience to God's Word frees us from shame and guilt, and gets us back on track.

2. Honest self-examination of our heart must take place. 1 Samuel 15:23 says, "For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry" God is not saying that He will reject a Christian when they rebel

(or we'd all be in trouble); He is saying that disobedience is the same as magic and divination. At the heart of magic is rebellion; at the heart of false worship is self-exaltation. There is a deeper anointing, a more powerful place of worship, a more prominent place of service that flows from obedience. When we reject the Word of the Lord through disobedience there is a high price to pay.

Pride blinds us spiritually, as illustrated in the life of the famous boxer Muhammad Ali. As the story goes, Ali was asked by a flight attendant to put on his seat belt before the plane took off. He shot back, "Superman don't need no seat belt." To that she replied, "Superman don't need no airplane." Obadiah 1:3 says, "The pride of your heart has deceived you" The Lord detests all the proud of heart. You can be sure of this: They will not go unpunished (cf. Prov. 16:5). But there is encouragement ... keep reading.

Often, it is the father who wanders first because the enemy is relentless and goes after those who are called to lead. "Today, virtually every societal problem, social injustice and behavioral abnormality can be traced back to absent, delinquent, misbehaving, drunk or sexually immoral dads who didn't respect or understand their enormous calling" (Kenny Luck). Kenny continues, "Girls often find themselves mistreated, miscast, misused and undervalued. What they need is guidance, esteem, honor and worth that only a father can give. Same goes for boys. They just have a different set of statistics. Men are appointed by God to make our children secure. God's highest calling for man is to be a husband or father."

Men, stop the silly video games, get off of Facebook, kill your porn habit, tell your ungodly friends to hit the road. You're called to lead, love and die, if necessary, for your family. We are the reason that the nation is deteriorating. We are the reason the family is breaking down. We must stop blaming everything from God to the government and start taking

responsibility.

The Daily Report recently posted this alarming fact: "America's divorce rate is the highest in the civilized world: triple that of Great Britain and France." The article went on to say that "children of divorce are three times as likely as those from intact homes to be expelled from school or to have a baby out of wedlock as a teenager, six times as apt to live in poverty and are far more likely to be incarcerated. However, statistics do not reveal the emotional pain of divorce, which is always particularly devastating for children."

Michael Reagan, the son of Ronald Reagan, wrote of his parents' divorce, "Divorce is where two adults take everything that matters to a child—the child's home, family, security, and sense of being loved and protected—and they smash it [to pieces], leave it in ruins on the floor, then walk out and leave the child to clean up the mess."

You may say, "Shane, this hurts!" Sometimes is healthy to mourn and weep at the mess we've created. The wanderer within must be dealt a swift blow. He needs to be crucified, not coddled.

In the depths of a despairing world, especially for children, we cannot forget about God's grace and love. You may feel that you've done too much damage, but don't lose heart. You will be amazed at what God can do with humility, brokenness, and repentance. You may not be able to change your circumstances immediately, but God can change your heart from a wanderer to a worshiper. And re-position you back into the center of His will. It's not too late ... turn to Him today.

This is a must hear for anybody who's in a backslidden state or for the prodigal. Feel free to share this with those who need help

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside

Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California, just North of Los Angeles. His sermons, articles, books, and radio program can all be found at . Follow him on Facebook at: