

What God's Word Says About Turning Conviction Into Action

Many of us talk as if God is real, but act as if He's not. We are witnessing a generation of people hearing the Word of God but not applying it.

James 1:22 warns, "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

Many of our problems are created by our own deception. We are "hearing" but not "doing." A recent example came via email: *"I'm at a loss. My 'Christian' husband is verbally and physically abusive. Ironically, he thinks that I'm the problem; he sees no need to change. He'll quote Scriptures about submission while yelling and cursing. His anger is also destroying our children. A home once filled with laughter and joy is now filled with fear and depression. We walk on eggshells and cherish the times when he is gone. He also loves his porn more than his family. I can no longer bear it. I never thought of divorce, but now it's a daily struggle."*

We may be convicted, but what will it take to turn that conviction into action? The death of a marriage, a broken relationship, or a prodigal child? Jesus left no room for confusion when He said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Hear the crying of our children; hear the pleading of our spouses; hear the weeping of broken families.

One way to position our hearts to hear God is through worship. Worship is not designed to fill in the gap at church until it's time for the message. Often, it *is* the message. Worship is a lifestyle of laying our heart before God in reflection and meditation—tremendous joy and healing often take place during worship. It is during this time that spiritual surgery

cleans the vessel and opens the blockage so that restoration with God can take place.

A person who does not worship will have a difficult time hearing and discerning God's voice and His truth. Worship positions the heart to receive, the eyes to see and the mind to comprehend the will of God.

"We want God as long as He doesn't change what we like. But any person not open to change is not open to revival ... Revival will come only to a desperate church, not a content church. He is the rewarder of those who 'diligently seek Him,' not the mere casual inquirer ... Most Americans worship their work, work at their play, and play at their worship" (Al Whittinghill).

How many of us truly worship? I'm not talking about listening to music as we go about our day; I'm talking about stopping our day for a significant amount of time and listening to God via prayer, worship and His word. Does God get as much time as Cinemark? Are we spending more time with the Father than Facebook? Is Hollywood saturating our thought life or is the Holy Spirit? We must go the great surgeon, the healer of our soul through worship if we truly want to be transformed.

When we surrender to worship, we open spiritual floodgates and allow God to cleanse. Jesus referred to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as living water; *Let it rain, come to the water, let he who thirsts thirst no more*, and *open the floodgates* are all lyrics from worship songs reflecting our need for this living water.

For example, "I've got a river of life flowing out of me ..." is an old favorite, but if the river of life isn't flowing in through prayer and worship, it won't be flowing out. One of the primary roles of the pulpit is to motivate and encourage worship. Woe be to the pastor who doesn't worship—we're going to feed God's people, yet we ourselves are malnourished? We're going to preach about brokenness and humility, and not humble

ourselves through worship? God help us.

Please don't misunderstand: Although worship is vital, we need all three to thrive spiritually—His Word, prayer and worship.

If we only have the Word of God, we can become cold, callous, and mechanical. We will have the letter of the law but lack the compassion of Christ. Hearts will become dry and dead; pride will dominate: “knowledge produces arrogance” (1 Cor. 8:1).

If all we do is worship, we may have emotional highs, but no foundation. We may inevitably shape God into who we think He is. Worship is theology being sung. We must look to the Word for guidance in this area. We cannot sing about God as if we are on a date with Him; He is a holy and righteous God. Worship is holy ground.

If we do not understand heartfelt prayer, it can become a monologue and a stale list of demands and dead repetition: “But when you pray, do use vain repetitions, as the heathens do. For they think that they will be heard for their much speaking” (Matt. 6:7).

Why do so few spend time worshipping God? In short, it hurts ... and it's hard. During worship, we realize that we need God. Our utter dependence on Him is magnified, and our sin is exposed. But that can be good. As the hymn *Amazing Grace* puts it so well: *Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see. T'was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace, my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.*

Worship heals, restores, renews, breaks, builds and encourages us toward God. Take time now and begin worshipping Him. Call upon His name and He will save you. He will deliver you.
{eoa}

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California, just North of Los Angeles. He recently released his 7th book, *Desperate for More of God*. Shane's sermons, articles, books, and radio program can all be found at . Follow him on Facebook at:

"At this point, the American people and Congress are owed answers."

In a single sentence, that is the message Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley had for Attorney General Loretta Lynch in a letter he sent Monday afternoon. And, by his estimation, there are a lot of questions left unanswered at this point.

"I am writing in regard to the recent news reports that indicate the Federal Bureau of Investigation asked the Department of Justice to open an inquiry into the Clinton Foundation on public corruption grounds, and the Public Integrity Unit declined to do so. Reporting also indicates that three 'field offices' agreed that the DOJ should pursue an inquiry into the Clinton Foundation. Other reports claim that one year prior to the FBI's request, the DOJ had already refused a previous attempt to open a case with respect to the Clinton Foundation.

"Indeed, in January 2016, reports indicated that the FBI investigation in Secretary Clinton's use of a non-government server and personal email for official business had expanded to Clinton Foundation donations and their impact on State Department business. Despite that report, Director Comey refused to answer Chairman Chaffetz of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee as to whether the FBI's recent criminal investigation into Secretary Clinton's email use also extended to the Clinton Foundation."

Grassley points out in his letter that in May, he raised "several questions" of his own about the Clinton Foundation,

and those questions have also gone unanswered. He then offered a bundle of examples of potential Clinton Foundation corruption that have yet to be investigated by the Justice Department.

These include:

- Long-time aide Huma Abedin's connections to the State Department, Clinton Foundation and Teneo Holdings;
- A group of Swedish companies that received a reprieve from Iran sanctions after donating millions to the Clinton Foundation;
- The Clinton Foundation's ties to a number of people involved in the Russian acquisition of Uranium One;
- Numerous businesses that donated to the Clinton Foundation while lobbying the State Department;
- Nearly every country that has donated to the Clinton Foundation saw increases in the number of weapons deals approved by the State Department; and
- A number of foreign donations to the Clinton Foundation were not reported and/or reviewed by the State Department.

"While all of these circumstances are not proof of wrongdoing, they do raise reasonable suspicions and undermine the public's confidence in the integrity of the State Department's operations during Secretary Clinton's tenure," Grassley wrote. "The American people are entitled to reassurance that these matters have received thorough and objective investigation. Yet, it appears that the DOJ has turned a blind eye and refused to investigate.

"According to reports, tens of millions of dollars flowed from parties with business with the federal government to the Clinton Foundation and the Clintons themselves. All of these donations should have been disclosed in full, but those reviewing the disclosures had no chance to ensure total compliance with the memorandum of understanding process

because the Clinton Foundation failed to disclose all donations.

“According to the Office of Government Ethics, federal law requires that executive branch employees be disqualified from matters that have a direct and predictable effect on the employee’s own financial interests or the financial interests of those persons or organizations with which the employee is affiliated, such as a spouse, unless the employee first obtains an individual waiver or a regulatory exemption applies. News reports have brought to light a highly suspect pattern of conduct where money flows from interested parties in transactions to the Clinton Foundation with a resulting favorable decision by Secretary Clinton’s State Department on those very matters. The money, the timeline, the interactions between State Department, Clinton Foundation, and Teneo personnel, the joint employment of some senior officials by those entities, and the resulting decisions made by the State Department paint a very suspicious picture. It is difficult to understand why these circumstances would not warrant any inquiry.”

The senator noted that numerous news reports, citing unnamed law enforcement officials, state that multiple field offices asked the DOJ to open an inquiry into the relationship between the State Department and the Clinton Foundation, but the DOJ declined to do so, citing its own investigation a year earlier that had concluded there was insufficient evidence. So, he asked a series of new questions of Lynch, which he said he expects her to answer:

- On how many occasions has the DOJ declined to open Clinton Foundation inquiries?
- When was each inquiry opened into the Clinton Foundation? Which DOJ component opened the inquiry?
- Were you or Director Comey briefed on each inquiry? If so, when? If not, why not?
- Please list the dates and all DOJ personnel who were

involved in each declination decision. Specifically, were you or Director Comey involved or otherwise briefed on the declinations?

- If any political appointees from the DOJ were involved in the decision-making process, was there any discussion of whether recusal or the appointment of a special counsel was warranted? If so, please provide all related records. If not, why not?
- According to Director Comey, the FBI was able to recover thousands of work-related emails deleted from Secretary Clinton's non-governmental server in the course of the investigation regarding the improper handling of classified information. Did DOJ personnel involved in evaluating whether to open a public corruption case regarding the Clinton Foundation review these recovered emails as part of their evaluation? If not, why not?
- Is any component of the DOJ currently involved in an inquiry into the Clinton Foundation? If so, which component and when was the inquiry initiated?
- For each inquiry into the Clinton Foundation, were agents and employees required to sign non-disclosure agreements? If so, please provide a copy each agreement.

Grassley gave Lynch until Aug. 29 to respond to his questions. He has not indicated whether or not he intends to launch a hearing into the matter; given the House Judiciary Committee's recent activities related to Clinton and her emails, it seems unlikely.