

America's Achilles' Heel: Powerless Sermons and Prayerless Churches

In these dire times, many are looking to the church to offer hope, but true hope and peace only come through conviction of sin and deep repentance. This is how we will truly change our nation. We can't make bad people good; only God can do that.

The term "Achilles' heel" refers to an area of weakness and vulnerability. The American church today has an Achilles' heel—a lack of prayer and powerful preaching. Both are vitally important to spiritual health. Sadly, many Christian leaders focus on image rather than intimacy with Christ, being woke instead of waking up from their spiritual slumber, not wanting to offend the world instead of not wanting to offend God.

Pastors, it's time to stop tiptoeing through the tulips of political correctness and repair the Achilles' heel of cowardice. A. W. Tozer said, "When we become so tolerant that we lead people into mental fog and spiritual darkness, we are not acting like Christians, we are acting like cowards."

God honors a stance for truth and boldness with a mighty empowerment of His Spirit. I'd rather have the power of God upon my preaching than the accolades of men.

Seek Him More Than Cinemark

Unfortunately, although we are blessed to have biblically sound leaders in many churches, we see far too many powerless sermons in prayerless churches. Most churches have a few opening songs, followed by a quick sermon, followed by a closing song. "Get them in and out" may work for a car wash but not for those who genuinely want to encounter God.

We have no problem spending hours watching a movie, but in church, many appear bored to death ... spiritual death. Shouldn't we seek God more than Cinemark? When He is our all-consuming passion, we don't run to the exit; we run to the altar.

Pastors or Prodigals?

When asked why they don't speak about sin in their sermons, many pastors admit, "I don't want to say anything negative." This is why their sermons are powerless. They are painstakingly careful not to offend the secular while crushing the sacred. They avoid words and phrases like "absolutes" and "doctrinally sound" and exchange them with smooth words designed to appease the unconverted, who say, "Don't tell us what is right. Tell us nice things. Tell us lies" (see Isa. 30:10). These leaders are either false prophets or have become prodigal pastors because they've chosen the world over the Word of God.

God's Definition of Success

Over the years, there's been a slow shift away from intimacy, prayer and worship. Today's leaders are considered successful if they are busy, big and busting at the seams, but in God's eyes, the leader who waits on Him is successful: "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). Waiting on God can result in an influential and successful ministry, but that's not the focus—He is.

We are also guilty of measuring success by social media standards via "views," "likes" and "followers." As a result, the realities of judgment, the desperate need for repentance and the shed blood of Christ are starkly missing in most sermons. Those topics aren't very "user-friendly." The very thing we need is the very thing we are avoiding. Charles Spurgeon reminds us, "If you have no wish to bring others to

heaven, you are not going there yourself.”

Powerful sermons and praying churches usher in spiritual awakenings and “bring both incredible conviction of sin and marvelous release from the bondage of corruption” (Richard Owen Roberts). God’s Word is elevated; truth is proclaimed; and many are set free. This is why I recently wrote that revival is our only hope.

Let Cinderella Come to the Ball

Leonard Ravenhill noted that the Cinderella of the church today is the prayer meeting. The prayer meeting is relegated to a dark corner somewhere in the church on an off night so that there is little expectation that anyone will pay her any attention. She goes about unnoticed, unloved and uncelebrated, yet she is the one who keeps the house clean.

It’s time for Cinderella to go to the ball—to get dressed for our King and seek His face for grace and mercy, to intercede on behalf of our nation. We must respond with humility and repent of our sins.

Repairing the Achilles’ Heel

When you lose intimacy with God, you lose your bearing. Return to Him, and He will return to you (Zech. 1:3). The strength of the church is in its purity and spiritual power, not in its numbers. God doesn’t need a majority—He is the majority. Prayer can no longer be a footnote at the end of a sermon; instead, prayer and spiritual power must guide the church in these critical times.

Although the weakness of many pastors and congregations today is causing the American church to stumble spiritually, a return to powerful sermons and praying people can help the church repair its Achilles’ heel and stand strong again.

Special Note: I recently became so broken over what we are

leaving the next generation that I began a lengthy water fast, not knowing that it would be one of the hardest things I've ever done. I'm planning to post my experience in May 2021. You can hear about the outcome by subscribing to my YouTube channel [here](#).

The desperate need for another awakening has been on my heart for some time, thus prompting me to release a series of articles on my website. And please watch the sermon, "When the Weak Are Destroyed by the Powerful" [here](#). {eo}

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Southern California. More can be found at [shaneidleman.com](#), and free downloads of his books are available at [shaneidleman.com](#). Visit him on Facebook and subscribe to his podcast.

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