

# Shake it off

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Date: 06 May 2018

[0:00] Let's go to Acts 28. Verse 1. And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita.

! And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness, for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold.

And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. When the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. How be it they looked when he should have swollen or fallen down dead, suddenly. But after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

Let me quote someone just to introduce things here tonight. A disturbing message. A disturbing message by Duncan Campbell.

[1:18] This is what our age needs. It's not an easy-moving message. The sort of thing that makes the hearer feel all nice inside. But a message profoundly disturbing.

We have been far too afraid of disturbing people. But the Holy Spirit will have nothing to do with a message or with a minister who is afraid of disturbing.

You might as well expect a surgeon to give place to a quack who claims to be able to do the job with some sweet-tasting drug. As expect the Holy Spirit to agree that the tragic plight of human souls today can be met by soft and easy words.

Calvary was anything but nice to look at. Blood-soaked beams of wood. A bruised and bleeding body. Not nice to look upon.

But then Jesus was not dealing with a nice thing. He was dealing with the sin of the world. And that is what we are caught upon to deal with today.

[2:24] Soft and easy words. Soft peddling will never meet the need. End quote. A disturbing message. Now verse 5 says of Paul.

The context there is they were shipwrecked on the island. The natives came. And it was rainy, cold. Paul gathered a bundle of sticks.

He just did a menial task of helping stoke the fire. The firewood gathered. And a venomous beast, a snake, a viper, hung on his hand.

And they said to themselves, here's a murderer. This is a sign. He's escaped the sea and he's still not going to be allowed to live. Because vengeance will kill him. And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm.

And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. Now I have to confess up front here, this is no expository message.

[3:28] Which I would prefer an expository message. Is that we go through the verses, the text, line by line, word by word and such. It's not some exegesis.

So it's not expository or an exegesis. This is an exaltation. It's an exaltation. To the people of God. To be stirred. To be disturbed.

To be shaken. My message to you is simple. Shake it off. Shake it off. Now I could use many scriptures to illustrate the key simple truth here tonight.

We could go to 2 Kings 13 from verse 18. And the context here is of Elisha and King Joash. And Elisha says to Joash, take the arrows.

And he took them. He was giving a graphic picture lesson here. And he said unto the king of Israel, smite upon the ground.

[4:37] And he smote. Thrice. And stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times.

Then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it. Whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice. Now the point here was, the arrows that he held, he just kind of did it half-heartedly.

Just hit it on the ground three times. Just three. He should have done it five or six. Made a finish of them. The enemies of Israel. The Syrians. If it had only smitten the ground.

A hard five or six times. He was smitten and slayed. The enemies of God. But he just did it. Just three.

Just kind of half-hearts of effort. I'd imagine when Paul shook that viper off his hand. I don't know. If you've ever had a...

[5:36] I mean... Talking about bees. I mean, bees scare me enough. You know, when I had some bees going after me. I've told this story before, but for those that haven't heard, you know, I know I've got some bees in the backyard.

Someone talked me into getting bees. And I've got these bees in this hive. And I thought I'd go and check them. I thought at night time might be a good time to check the bees. But someone's only after us.

That's the worst time to check the bees. Because they're all home. They're all home in the hive. And so I went... And it was dark. And I had this little... I think I had a little torch thing. Some little...

One of those caps that you can put the light on. But I had a bee suit on. So I could hardly control it. And then I went up to the bee hive. And took the lid off to have a bit of a look. And, you know, suddenly it was like this huge roar.

And these bees all just going fanatical. And banging into my kind of helmet thing. This hood thing. This uniform that you put on the bee suit.

[6:40] And boom, boom, boom. And it's like this is pitch black at night. And so I had to... I'm totally off track here. But I had to suddenly try to escape the bees. And it was so dark.

And my vision's not all that good at times. And I had the bee suit mesh in front of me. And the light was not where it should have been. And I couldn't see where I was going. But one thing's for sure. I didn't muck around. I ran like mad. And I didn't know where I was running. Because I got a bit of a big backyard. And I was running into trees and running into bushes. And I didn't know which way it was which.

But one thing's for sure. I wanted to get away from those bees. And this would... Imagine this would be like Paul with his viper on his hand. And he wouldn't just sort of... He would say, get that thing off of my hand.

Get that thing off of me. And they'd say, he shook off the beast into the fire. That's the point. In simple terms. And what was Paul like as a preacher?

[7:41] I think he was someone who got a bit emotional sometimes. And, you know, maybe I get a bit too exuberant here and there. But I think of Paul. He was a pretty emotional character.

In Acts 20, 31. When there were some people saying goodbye to him. You know, he got a bit emotional there. Now, just in my workplace at the moment. We've had some emotional things go on.

There's a long-term staff member who's passed away. And people were just really broken up when it happened. And there's people crying all over the place. There's just someone who's passed away.

And then, of more recent days, we've heard that the manager, the director, is going to be leaving. And that was quite heartbreaking too, because he's a well-loved kind of boss.

And I can imagine as Paul was leaving, this man who was loved, the heartbreak there for the people. And he says in talking to them, in his kind of farewell speech, he says, Therefore watch and remember, this is Acts 20, 31, watch and remember that by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears.

[8:59] He warned everybody night and day with tears. Day after day, night after night. You know, that's what a preacher ought to do. I need to do more of that. To warn everybody night and day with tears.

To get serious about things. Shake it off. That's my message to you tonight. Let me elaborate what I'm talking about.

And I'll touch on some things, the sort of things, as Christians, there's some things we should shake off. Amen? And I know for some, I like to think of my dad at times, that he was a Christian, and he had a smoking habit.

And after a while, it took him a while to shake it off. But one year, he did shake it off. Some things can hang on to you, it takes a while for you to shake it off. Some things, let's be honest, there's things, I've got things I'm still, you know, still trying to loose myself from some things, that get a grip on me.

And I need to get a greater zeal, a greater walk with God. And there's things that hinder, and get in the way of that sometimes.

[10:11] Paul says shake it off. Let me try to make sense of what I'm saying here. I know, again, I preface this by saying, this is not expository or exegetical, it's exaltational.

Because this gets down to the nub of where we're at with God. Determine not to hang on to discouragement.

Discouragement, people can hang on to discouragement. Hurts and heartaches, wounds, bruising, and they're damaged Christians.

Shake it off today. All too easily, we can get dragged down into the mud and mire of the real life that we live, of the real hurts and heartaches of life. Things hang on to us like a snake.

Shake it off into the fire, whatever it is. And you might want to come before God and say, yeah, that's provoking something in me. That's, that's, hit a nerve with me.

[11:16] There's something in my life. Yeah, there's things, come to think of it, there's some things I need to let go of. That I've not shaken off yet. Shake off the shackles of unbelief. Do you believe God?

Some people live as practical unbelievers. What am I saying? Sometimes we, we resort to prayer as the last resort.

Humanly, we can, can't we? Oh, I'll ring the pastor and ask him how to help me. Or, oh, I'll talk to my friend or my counselor or my doctor or, you know, and that, that can be helpful too, but, talk to God.

Resort unto God. Pray. Believe him. Believe his promises. Shake off the shackles of unbelief.

Are we, unbending or blending? Shake off compromise. Don't be bending, to the, ways of the world.

[12:21] You know, as a young Christian, I was a bit of a chameleon Christian. I've got to be honest, there's times when I, I was like a chameleon, just blending in, just changing colour, to see, the people around me.

Rather than be a fair dinkum one. Unbending, not blending. What about drifting? Shake it off. Are you drifting, as a Christian? Do we look, talk, think, act like the world?

Acting like practical unbelievers. As if God's not around, when we're at work, or, in the everyday. Aren't we meant to be different? The secular worldview, and the culture of our world, it affects us, doesn't it?

There's that, gradual, influence, influence, like, like a sponge. We can soak it in, and before we know it, we're just acting the same.

But we should be radically different. Radical. Radical people, in biblical faith and practice. And, we grasp the importance of the word, that it shapes our thinking.

[13:26] So, we stand against doctrinal dangers, when we see them. So, we warn of scriptural, warnings of reproof. And, do we have a heart, to cry out to God?

May we have the same prayer, the same simple prayer, as the, two blind men, in Matthew 20. If you want to follow there. Matthew 20. Matthew 20, from verse 32.

Can we have the same simple prayer? Prayer doesn't have to be complicated. Prayer doesn't have to be, a lot of flowery language, and a lot of, a lot of pretense.

It's got to be real. We're talking to our God, our King, our Friend, our Lord, our Master. And these two blind men, sitting at the side of the road, at Jericho, when Jesus passed by, Jesus noticed them.

Verse 20, chapter 20, 32, of Matthew 20, verse 32. And Jesus stood still, he saw them, he noticed them, and he called them and said, What will ye, that I shall do unto you?

[14:38] Doesn't God tell us the same thing? What do you want me to do for you? What do you want from me? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes, and immediately, their eyes received sight, and they followed him. What a prayer, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

That's a simple prayer, but a needful one, isn't it? That the Lord will open our eyes, because our eyes, oftentimes, they're closed to, that, that which God is trying to show us.

May our eyes be opened to see the pollution problem. And I'm not talking about, the litter down the street, it's the pollution of this world that we live in.

Paul says, Ephesians 5, 11, Don't have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather, reprove them. Don't have fellowship with that which is darkness. It's unfruitful.

[15:46] He says, reprove it. Stand against it. We've got a problem with pollution, in our city. We need to shake that off. That, that lack of vision, and ask God to, open our eyes.

We have, we've got a problem with, a battle that we're in, that we're not aware of. And sadly, there's much fraternisation with the enemy going on. There's a fraternisation.

You know, in times of world war, some people were kind of, just sitting on the fence, playing it both ways, and wanting to, sort of, accommodate the enemy, and, and allow the enemy, some way of thinking.

You know, I used to collect coins, and stamps, and rocks, and things, and, and, I've got some, special, coins, and, and, and some, like, special dollar notes.

And, I don't have them anymore, but, one of the notes I got was, called, invasion money. Invasion money. It's what the Japanese printed, for this land. To use in Australia, when they conquered us.

[17:01] It was called invasion money. And, they actually printed, rings and rings, I'm told, of these, these notes, that were Australian currency, for when the Japanese, took over our nation.

And, look, friends, there's, there's an enemy, wanting to take over our nation. And, in, in, in that, spiritual sense, there's an enemy, of our soul.

And, we can't have fraternisation, of the enemy. Yeah, for some, maybe, they would have just, gone along with it, if the Japanese had taken over.

There would have just been, fraternisation, of the enemy. But, rather, we're called to, earnestly contend for the faith. We're called to do battle. Who is on the Lord's side?

We've lost our fight, and we need to get it back. There's, there's a, a cowardice, we need to shake off. Let's not be cowardly. Let's, stand fast, on the Lord's side.

[18:02] Regain our fight. And, then we'll cry, at this time, that, hey, you know, this kind of battle language, this militancy, that's, we've gone past that now.

This is, peace, peace. And, they want prophets, they'll say, peace, peace, when there is no peace. And, in Isaiah 30, from verse 9, it talks about rebellious people, who will not hear the law, of the Lord.

And, they say, prophesy unto us, right things. Sorry, I'll say that again. Prophesy not, until us, right things. Speak unto us, smooth things. Prophesy to seats.

And, basically saying, we don't want to hear anything negative. Don't give me negative stuff, just give me positive stuff. And, they'll say to the preachers, speak unto us, smooth things.

They say, peace, peace, but this is wartime. And, our nation is in trouble. I'm saying this because, there's a, there's an ignorance, that's blinding people.

[19:07] And, there's a, a lack of awareness, of this battle zone, that we're in. And, our nation is in trouble. There, there's an enemy, that hasn't printed invasion money, to take us over, but, surely and truly, there's many that will just, cave in.

And, have caved in, to this enemy of our soul, that wants to take over, this troubled planet. And, there's some things we need to shake off. Let me get to those now.

We need to shake off sleepiness. And, slackness. We have a work to do. Work today, the night comes, when no man can work. I think, as I've talked about, you know, this man, who's just passed away last week.

There's a, someone else who, a friend of ours, a long term friend, that passed away the week before. Work while it is day. Night comes, when no man can work. We don't know when night's going to come for us.

So, make the most of the day, of today. We have a work to do. Reaching the lost. We're seeing some, responses there. Of souls that are being reached.

[20:18] Souls of men are eternally perishing, all around us. We're called to reach them. To give them the message. In all of our stumbling, fallible, inadequate ways.

But with an adequate, sufficient God. He's going to deliver, his word through, our mouth. And to point them to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Darkness overtakes us. The relentless foe, is having a field day, all around us. You know, I'm hearing of North Korea, opening up, potentially for Christianity, to be making inroads.

I'm sure that Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, are just, they're just, at that line, ready to jump in, as soon as they say go. What about us?

Truth is obscured. We're called to be watchmen, to sound a warning, and many are in deep sleep, and need to be awakened. There's people sleeping. Nothing. Hopefully not, not just yet in the message here, but we need to shake off some things, to shake off sleepiness.

[21:24] What about the love of ease? The prophet Amos says, woe to them that are at ease in Zion. It's, it's easy to love ease. Take it easy. It's the Aussie way, isn't it?

We need to shake off lethargy, and complacency. It's time for courage. We need a holy desperation. To realize, work while it is day. Night comes, when no man can work.

We need a renewed vigor, a renewed zeal. To fan into flame, the gifts that God has given to us.

And to shake off fear. Think of, at Joshua's commissioning, as Joshua stepped into Moses' shoes. In Joshua 1, the Lord says to Joshua, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Be strong and of a good courage. He goes on, only be thou strong, and very courageous. I like that. Not only be strong and courageous, but be strong and very courageous.

[22:29] And there's much more that can be said there. He talks about, that the book of the law shall not, depart out of thy mouth. You shall meditate therein, day and night. Have I not commanded thee, be strong and of a good courage.

Be not afraid. Neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, withersoever thou goest. Shake off that love of ease. It's so easy, isn't it?

To just, to take it easy. You know, I'm on the glory train. I'll just kick back, put my feet on the seat in front of me, and just enjoy the ride. All the way to glory.

But God has called us to, be active. To be active. We need to shake off the love of comfort.

Our Lord does not call us to comforts. He calls us to the cross. He calls you to the cross. He does not call us to softness. He calls us to hardness.

[23:28] You know, this, this is a disturbing message tonight. You know, I'd like, it'd be much easier for me to call you to softness, or to call you to comfort.

But rather, he is calling us to hardness. He is calling us to the cross. 2 Timothy 2.3, Paul says, thou therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

So let's shake off the love of comfort. You know, only for a limited time, I was a quasi-soldier. You know, I was in the Army Reserves, a weekend warrior, for a time.

And, Don the Green and Kaki, and, and, went to the recruit camp, and, you know, in the recruit camp, there wasn't any lying in, lying in bed, having a bit of a sneeze, a little of a lie in.

You know, in the recruit camp, they got you out of bed, bright and early, well, dark and early. That's a, it was a, it was a dark, and a cold, and a dreary, and often raining day.

[24:33] And you had to jump out of bed, and don your running shoes, and running outfit, and go for this great big long jog. And, soldiers are not

made by softness.

They're made by hardness. And, we are soldiers, aren't we? That's what we're called to be. So, we need to shake off that love of comfort, of ease.

We shake off worldliness. It gets a hold of you like a viper, doesn't it? Worldliness. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If anyone love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is of the world. It's not of the Father, but it's of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. But he that doeth the will of God, abideth forever. So, shake off worldliness. Recognise it for what it is. It's a viper on your hand. And don't just, get it off!

[25:39] Amen? Shake it off. Shake off the fear of man. The fear of man, that's stopping you, from serving God, from standing for Christ. Doesn't mean you've got to be some, religious nutcase.

And hopefully we can be, have religious, you know, godly fruits, rather than be nuts. you know, that will be, an out and out Christian.

Don't be afraid of men. And we've got weapons here. We've got the weapon. That is, that we need, the word of God. Let's love it, and take it in.

In John 8, 37, the Lord Jesus tells, Abraham said, like the Pharisees of the day, you seek to kill me, because my word, have no place in you.

The word has to have place in us. That's John 8, 37. And for some, they don't receive the word.

They don't receive the love of the truth. Now again, this is a disturbing message.

[26:45] Just this morning, I posted some things, and I made reference this morning in my message about some falling away that's apparent in the Uniting Church.

And someone took offense at that. Someone on Facebook took offense at my saying that. And this dear person, I bear them no malice, and I'm not intent to be hurtful.

I'm just wanting to be truthful. Simply that. Because I was repeating, I was recounting facts. This is a news article that tells everybody that the senior authorities of the Uniting Church are making the way open, that they'll be celebrating same-sex marriages as a matter of accepted practice.

Now, it's not in place yet, but they're moving that way. It's been recounted at the highest levels of their hierarchy of the Uniting Church.

And, friends, there's time you have to say things that are offensive, but because they are true. They are simply that. They are true. It's the truth. And like Paul says, have I become your enemy because I'm telling you the truth?

[27:58] And, I've read this quote recently that pictures this fact, that really the preacher, whoever's preaching, really, we're the brass, we're the brass section of the church.

We're the trumpeter. And this is what the quote says, the trumpeter has his place in the church of Christ. The trumpeter is the true minister of God, sent to warn the people and save the nation. But we seem to fear such instrumentality. We prefer the lute to the trumpet, you know, little, not the, we like to hear the harp, you know, ding, rather than the ringing blast that calls men to arms or awakens them in the night to tell them there is danger in the wind.

Let us pray that our ministers may be men who are not afraid to be up all night watching unto prayer, ready to sound the alarm on the approach of the foe. Gentile efforts and polite endeavours will never originate this kind of spiritual awakening that our nation needs.

Call out then, warn the people of impending judgment. Open the churches and homes to day and night prayer. Call the people to repentance.

[29:14] It's very true, isn't it? As the prophet Isaiah said, cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet and show thy people, my people, their transgression, etc.

We need to find that refreshed zeal and we need to not be afraid of the trumpet blast that, that, that, it kind of shakes us, doesn't it?

When you hear the trumpet, you know, when you hear the song blow that, yeah, that rousing, loud, disturbing sound.

And that's what we need, the disturbing of God. Revival is, is the work of God's spirit. It's God's breath, it's the breath of heaven.

The, the word spirit, the Holy Spirit, the word spirit speaks of, a breath, of a wind. And, one preacher said this, we cannot organise revival, but we can set our sails to catch the wind from heaven when God chooses to blow upon his people once again.

[30:30] Revive thy church. That should be our prayer, shouldn't it? Shake it off. Shake off the coldness. Don't let that fire in your heart, that, that zeal for Christ, don't let it grow dim.

Keep it well stoked with prayer and, and faith and love. Keep that fire burning. Shake off what will grieve the spirit of God. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit can be grieved.

And Ephesians 4, if you read it in the context, it tells us what things, what actions, will grieve the spirit of God. If you read that in context, let me read that through Ephesians 4 from verse 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption, that all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as Christ, a God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. So the context there is about your speaking, not corrupt, but gracious, not filled with bitterness and anger and hate, but kindness and tenderheartedness, forgiving one another.

[31:59] Don't grieve the spirit of God. Shake off prayerlessness. Ask the Lord to refresh your prayer life, to give yourself to prayer, to pray expectantly, to pray in faith.

Revival comes in answer to prayer. Lay hold of God, travail in prayer. Ask the Lord, Lord, teach me how to pray.

That's a good prayer to pray, isn't it? If you don't know how to pray, say, Lord, teach me. Teach me how to pray. We need a restoration of what we have lost.

If you've got prayerlessness, shake it off. Amen? Shake off laziness. Exert yourself. Exert yourself while it is day.

Harvest time is coming, isn't it? The night is coming. You know, when I see people my own age or even younger passing away, I think, how much time have I got?

[33:16] Exert yourself. Don't be afraid to put perspiration into your Christian walk. Not that you're working for your salvation, but your salvation is working out.

You're working out your salvation. It's working out. It's the evidence. It's plain obvious that you're a Christian because it's shown.

It's clear. And the Holy Spirit will do an inward work and an outward work. He will impart the Holy Ghost power so you can work.

So it's not in your own strength. When you think of these questions, when you think of eternal realities today, we have a responsibility for souls.

Not the church as some kind of, oh, it's the church's responsibility, or it's the pastor's responsibility, or those that seem to be the respected people in the church.

[34:23] church. We have a responsibility for souls. We have a responsibility to warn, to urge, to implore, to compel.

People are sinking into hell, unconcerned for their eternal state. Those loved ones and friends that I know, and my heart grieves for them, because I know their destiny is in doubt.

Our Lord's command is still the same. He says, occupy till I come. Occupy. It's got the sense of occupation. Get engaged.

Get involved. Get occupied. In Matthew 21, 28, he says, son, go work today in my vineyard.

God's command is still current. It's still relevant. And he calls us to diligence in this task.

[35:33] And again, I'm not intending to put you under a yoke of bondage here to make you feel, oh, this condemnation is heaping on me. I'm not doing enough. I'm not doing enough.

Me. Me. I'm urging you that while it is day, let's make the most of what we have.

While we have breath, while we have lips that can move, let's tell somebody. And there's a need for diligence about this.

this is not some light thing. Christianity isn't just some little hobby like stamp collecting. And the church isn't just some little social club that you can't have a cuppa with someone and a yarn. this is the church of God. This is the company of God's safe people in this place, in this time, in this city, in this community.

[36:39] We are called out to be a people, to be energized and effective for the kingdom of God. We've got a mission that transcends time and space.

In some 119, verse 4, it says, Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. Diligence. What's the opposite of diligence?

Slackness. Let's shake off slackness, amen? Shake it off. Don't be slack. I'm telling myself that. I'm not having a go at anyone here.

I'm telling you truth that I need. Me. Shake off weariness. People all around us are slumbering. Galatians 6, verse 9, it says, Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. I get weary.

[37:48] I get weary often. The older I get, the wearier I get. We need to still trust the Lord, to endure us with His power, to enable us when we're feeling weak and ineffective, when I'm feeling so inadequate, as I do right now, that God will be glorified, because He is sufficient.

Our sufficiency is of God. Here's another quote, We're seeking to make the church asleep and silent, to be the church revived and militant, to call God's people back to the old paths, to get people to pray fervently, fast frequently, and work mightily for the Lord and for the lost.

We want to get people to pray before dawn and after dark, for a soul-stirring, heaven-sent, Holy Ghost-inspired revival that will turn the tide in a pleasure-loving, spiritually slumbering age.

God wants His children hot-hearted and not lukewarm or cold. He wants soldiers, not sleepers. He wants life service, not lip service. He wants total commitment, not token commitment.

He wants the church to be an evangelistic centre, not a social rendezvous. He wants Christians on their knees in prayer and then on their toes for the lost. I think that's a good quote.

[39:06] I'd like to see that. Shake off weariness. What about carnality? Shake off carnality. ask the Lord to renew your spiritual life, to mean business with God, to seek Him till you find Him, to empower you for works, divine, spiritual works, to empower you for the great task He's called you to.

God still has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to bow, to the world, the flesh, the devil. May we be in that number, may we earnestly seek to be in that number.

Another preacher talks about the surrendered will. The surrendered will. I've had those times in my life where something has spoken to me, where a preacher has said something and not just he spoke to me, but God spoke to me.

God spoke to me, spoke to my life, to my will. And this preacher puts it like this, that unless there is a total surrender to God at the centre of our being, unless we yield ourselves to God, nothing is likely to come of it.

How many have longed and prayed and agonised that the Holy Spirit might come upon them, but he came not. There was no yielding of self to God. O God, I yield, I give myself utterly to Thee, I place myself unreservedly at Thy disposal, I hold nothing back and I hold back from nothing that Thou biddest.

[41:05] A surrender of the will. Not to a preacher, a church, but to God. To surrender your will to God. Because friends, we must all give account of ourselves to God.

Let me quote one more quote here. Excuse me. here's what this preacher said.

The lives of most Christians are not full, much less overflowing. Most Christians live far beneath the scriptural pattern of victorious living. There are far too many substandard Christians.

The spirit-filled,! Spirit-ruled, spirit-guided life is the norm for every Christian. it's the story, in the word, it's the story of men and women who paid the price of power.

God is looking today for men and women who will dare to do exploits. The power of the Holy Ghost is available.

[42:13] Are we ready to go with God? I'm skipping bits here because there's a lot here. But the challenge here is are we going to be settling for that fruitlessness or will we seek God to be fruitful, to be used of God?

And our ability is of God, our sufficiency is of God. He is able, He is able to save to the uttermost. He is able to make His stand. He is able to make all grace abound.

He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. God is able. And as this quote goes on, God's commands are God's enablings.

When He said, Be ye holy, for I am holy, His command is His enabling. He will help you to shake off what's holding you back. So friends, I'm drawing to a close now.

I pray that I've disturbed you in a good way. To think about what it is, what it is that I need to shake off as a Christian.

[43:29] Some things will just drop off. Some things we've got to lay aside every weight. Don't we? Those things that will encumber us in that gospel race, you might be a long-time Christian, but there's still things that are dragging you down, stopping you running effectively.

I know one of our relatives has got a bit of a preoccupation for running races and triathlons, and she has a personal coach that keeps her on track, keeps her in training.

And we've got a race to run, people have got. We need to coach one another, we need to come alongside one another, and spur one another on. I think back to my young fatherly days, standing by the side of the running track when my kids were in the sports days, and I used to embarrass them no end, saying, come on, you can do it.

And calling their names and saying, yeah, go for it. And I think the Lord Jesus is like that with us, isn't he? As we're running the race, he's alongside the track, he's running alongside, he's at the finishing line all at the same time, and he's telling us, you can run this race, you can make it, you can get there.

To be more effective in your running race, there's things you need to shake off. Ask God to reveal it to you. There's things I've touched on, just to quickly recap, discouragement, shake it off.

[45:09] Amen. Don't hold on to the baggage, the hurts, the wounds have passed. Some people don't fellowship because somebody hurt them so many years ago in some church, and probably everybody's moved on from that church, but they've still got this thing in their head, oh, so-and-so offended me, I'm never going to go to that church again.

What? Grow up. Shake off discouragement. Move on with God. Shake off your drifting. There's no time for smooth words.

We need to be telling it like it is. Shake it off, the love of ease, lethargy, complacency, oh, she'll be right, mate, I'm just on the glory train.

Shake it off, shake off fear that's holding you back. Be bold. Shake off the love of comfort and go to the cross.

Shake off the softness and your love of softness and take that hardness, you're a soldier. Shake off the worldliness and get a bit more of heavenliness.

[46:28] shake off backsliding. Ask God for the breath of God to breathe upon you and set your sail so he can send you where he wants you to be and use you for his glory.

Shake off the coldness. Shake off what will grieve the spirit of God. Not corrupt communication, anger and wrath, but kindness and tenderheartedness.

The spirit of God won't be grieved with that. Shake off your prayerlessness, my prayerlessness. Shake off your laziness, my laziness. Shake off the weariness.

Don't be weary in well-doing. It's not night time yet. One day it will be. Wouldn't it be nice to die with your boots on?

That's what I'd love to do. You see this video sometimes of preachers dying while they're preaching. That would be glory, wouldn't it? Wouldn't that be glory? Hallelujah! Yes!

[47:39] If I had a heart attack on preaching, whoa! What a send-off that would be. And you could all go, hallelujah, he's gone. You know, glory! You know, shake off your weariness, amen?

Let's not be weary in well-doing. What a joy it is to serve the Lord. Brothers and sisters, I pray you've been encouraged tonight. It's got nothing to do with Paul shaking off the viper into the fire, but how would he have shaken it off?

He was shaken it off! All those things I've been talking about tonight, shake it off! Ask God to help you shake it off, amen? And let's be like, not like Joash, you just go, three little little tip-taps on the ground.

Let's smash those arrows and smash them five or six times and break them to bits! Let's do what God wants us to do with our whole heart and gusto for the glory of God.

Not by vain, fleshly, human effort and strength, but by God's enabling. Let us pray. Lord, we love you and praise you.

[48:46] We love you, Lord, and thank you for your grace. That gives us strength, and it gives us such a joy, deep down, deep within, Lord. We pray that each one will know that joy, unspeakable and full of glory.

Lord, that each one will know what it is, the joy of knowing Jesus as Saviour and Lord. And to walk in that joy, that light, that walking in the Spirit.

Lord, help us to be such a people. We won't leave this place feeling like we've had a telling off, but we've had a stirring up in a good way. Lord, help us to be shaking off those things that will hinder, to lay aside the weight that sets us back, Lord, and drags us down.

And help us, Lord, to run that race with a greater gusto, with a greater zeal, with a greater joy, a greater heart for you and for others, the lost around us, that we might be used of you.

For your kingdom's sake, Lord, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.