

5 Indicators of a Hard Heart (Clip)

by Shane Idleman

A hard heart is characterized by a lack of repentance, a desire for control, and a lack of conscience or remorse, and requires confrontation and redemption through Jesus Christ.

Duration: 8:21

Scripture: Proverbs 6:16

Topics: "Hard Heartedness", "Spiritual Redemption"

Description

This sermon delves into the characteristics of an evil and wicked heart, emphasizing the need for repentance and genuine transformation. It highlights how evil hearts create confusion, manipulate with smooth speech, crave control, lack empathy, and have no conscience or remorse. The message stresses the importance of confronting such behavior with love and truth, not enabling destructive patterns but pointing towards redemption through Christ.

Transcript

But when Jesus said their hearts are wicked and evil, what does that mean? And of course, I got this article this week from Leslie Vernick and it's actually from a counseling website that does Christian counseling. And she said, here's five indicators of an evil and wicked heart. Number one, well, before I do this, let me say this, a believer can struggle with an evil heart.

The characteristics of an evil heart, a believer can. So if this convicts, there's one good one word for you. It's called repentance.

Repent of that evil heart that's trying to come in there. If these characteristics fit you to a T, it might have been that you've never repented of your sin. It might have been that you've never come to know Christ.

Listen, please listen to me closely. There's almost not a month that goes by that I don't hear somebody that's been a Christian all of their life that realizes they have never been a Christian. They've been going through the motions.

They have characteristics of a hard heart, they've never turned from that. So here's five indicators. Number one, evil hearts are experts at creating confusion and contention.

Evil hearts want to create confusion and contention. They twist the facts, they mislead, they lie, they avoid taking responsibility, they deny reality, and they make up stories, and they withhold information. Well, I can

think of some people I can tag that on right now.

That's a characteristic of a hard heart. They want to create confusion and contention. Why? Because the heart's hard.

The heart's not right. So when the heart's not right, it's ugly. The second thing, evil hearts are experts at fooling others with their smooth speech and flattering words.

But if you look at the fruit of their lives, you will find no real evidence of godly growth or change. It's all smoke and mirrors. Number three, evil hearts crave and demand control.

Their highest authority is their, nope, not this, their own self-reference. So somebody with a hard heart, they crave and they demand control, and their highest authority is themselves. You ever met that person? They just love to quote themselves.

They know so much. It's all about them, them, them, them, them. They control every situation.

They use scripture to their own advantage but ignore and reject passages that might require self-correction and repentance. Man, I don't know who this person is, but she is nailing it. This is typical.

A person with a hard heart, they love to use scripture to their own advantage. But when that same scripture is used for self-correction and analysis, oh, no, no, no. Jesus did not say that.

You're taking that out of context, you hypocrite. Hard heart. Evil hearts play on the sympathies of good-willed people, often trumping the grace card.

They demand mercy but give none to you. They demand warmth and forgiveness and intimacy from those they have harmed with no empathy for the pain they have caused. No real intention of making amends or working hard to rebuild broken trust.

You know why this is so important? If somebody has these characteristics, they are not saved. Shane, come on. You don't know their heart.

Yeah, I do. It's not God. Now I'm not saying people don't struggle with these.

Am I demanding and like to control certain things? Yeah. I mean, can we be contentious? Yeah. It's part of a type A personality.

It's a blessing and a curse. I like to argue my way out of everything. So we can struggle with these things, but if these are who you are, and this message goes out radio, everything.

That's why I'm saying this. If you're hearing this right now and these characteristics are who you are, you are not right with the Lord Jesus Christ. You've got a hard heart that's never been redeemed.

This is absolutely true. Nobody can be defined as this type of person and be in love with the Lord. They can struggle with certain aspects, but if they are manipulating and creating confusion and contentious and they twist the facts, they mislead, they lie.

If they demand control and their highest authority is themselves and they're prideful and arrogant and use the Scriptures to their own advantage and they play to the sympathies of others and they use and abuse the grace card, absolutely, they are a false convert. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

You will know them by their fruit.

That's how serious this is. This person is on their way to hell, folks. I don't know about you, but that doesn't make me happy.

That does not make me happy. But why else would I read that? Why else would I read these things? Let me read number five. Evil hearts have no conscience, no remorse.

They do not struggle against sin or evil. They delight in it, all the while masquerading as someone of noble character. There's your word, hypocrite, back to the beginning.

That's a hypocrite. They have no conscience, no remorse. They don't struggle against sin.

They like evil, but they masquerade around as people of good character, but really they're hypocrites. And here's why I brought all that up. I love this counselor as far as counseling because this is exactly what I say.

If you are working with someone who exhibits these characteristics, it's best to just back off and love them? No. It's important that you confront them head on. You must name evil for what it is.

The longer you try to reason with them or show them mercy towards them, the more you as a Christian counselor will become a pawn in his or her game. No truer words have ever been spoken. This type of person needs to be lovingly confronted, not coddled.

If I met this kind of person, I wouldn't say, you know what, James or Bill or Chris or whatever. I'm not thinking of anybody here. I think of a lot of people who don't go here.

But, hey, these characteristics are true of you, but I just, you know, man, God's grace and forgiveness, I love you. Don't worry about any of that stuff. Just keep on.

Anyway, I can help or pray for you. And next week, hey, it's the same thing. And two months later, hey, you know, I know.

No, at some point you've got to say, this is evil. This is wrong. You are warped.

You are twisted. You are rejecting God. And you need to repent.

And they might storm out, but guess what? The hound of heaven, known as the Holy Spirit, will not let them go. Why? Because you confronted them with the truth. That's all God's Word says.

Confront them lovingly. Yes, offer grace and mercy and forgiveness. Please don't take that away that Shane's not saying that.

But this type of person has had so much grace and mercy and forgiveness that now the person, the people offering all that have enabled them. Do you know what an enabler is? An enabler is someone who allows somebody to continue in a destructive lifestyle by not helping them and by not challenging them. So this hard-hearted person doesn't need more grace and forgiveness and love because they're on their way to hell.

They need to be challenged and say, you have a wrong, evil heart, and so have I. But let me tell you about the one who set me free. That's redemption. That's what they need to hear.

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