

# A Word to the Critical Heart

by Shane Idleman

---

*Shane Idleman addresses the dangers of a critical heart, emphasizing the importance of love and humility in the delivery of God's truth.*

**Duration:** 12:09

**Scripture:** Matthew 23:27, 1 Corinthians 11:3

**Topics:** "Critical Spirit", "Humility In Faith"

---

## Description

This sermon addresses the issue of critical hearts within the church, emphasizing the dangers of being led by the flesh rather than the spirit, which often leads to a critical and judgmental attitude. It highlights the importance of infusing God's truth with love and humility to truly impact hearts and avoid becoming obnoxious in our convictions. The message warns against being proud, unteachable, and eager to dispute, as these are characteristics of a critical spirit that lacks God's presence.

---

## Transcript

Now, real quick, I've been meaning to do this. I want to give a quick word to the critical, because a lot of people on this issue of the law are very critical. And the message last week was for the carnal.

This tonight is a lot of this is for the critical. Because what happens is criticism comes naturally. We're led by the flesh, not by the spirit.

So we like to critique. We like to be critical about everything. I'll get emails from Australia saying, thank God, brother, keep preaching.

I'll get another one that says, why aren't your women wearing all head coverings? 1 Corinthians 11. I'll get one that says, man, finally, church is preaching to brother. I'll get another one that says, I can't watch your videos anymore because you have Christmas trees in the background of Christmas.

Serious stuff. I came to your church. I was so disappointed.

You had out services on Saturday. I thought you were a Seventh-day Adventist. You preach so boldly, yet you're so misled.

We can just keep going down the list. Where does this critical heart come from? You're led by the flesh, not by the spirit. That's a critical heart.

And I know because I've had one, and I struggle with it. Most of you do, too, probably. If you take your Bible seriously and you love the law of God, you want to sometimes hit people with it.

Sometimes I want to say, this works as a good hammer. Don't you know what the word of God says? Stop sleeping around. Stop sleeping together.

Get married. You just want to hit them. Hit them with the word of God.

That's what we want to do with our children. You just want to hit them. You miss the heart of God.

Usually, people finally break and come to God when you allow the spirit of God to penetrate the heart, yes, with His truth, but also undergird it with love, or the possessor of this conviction becomes obnoxious. So that's why I have to give a word to the critical. These points will upset the person who's critical.

You know those saying, when you throw a rock in a pile of dogs, the one that marks is the one I hit. And I hit a lot of people sometimes, but it's not a mean heart. It's not an arrogant, like, I'm right, and everybody else is wrong.

I'm just saying, guys, you've got to, those people that, I mean, I've had friends that are Hebrew scholars. They speak the language, but they're so humble and gracious. There's power in that.

And then I've met other people that just, man, just slam you. When we first started, I told this, I think, a few years ago, people say, well, you're not a real church. You never went to seminary.

Well, I know a lot of seminary students that just wanted a PhD on the next book they were going to write. They don't know anything about the heart of God than the person who's never studied. They just barely get through their classes.

They're there for the wrong reasons. Is seminary good? Sure, if you can go. You can combine seminary and a humble, broken heart, and the power of God, it's a big combination.

Also, though, fortunately, my mom's instilled in me a very self-disciplined attitude. So I read a lot of their books. I would read the same things.

I would go to the, I would see all these same things, but because I didn't have a degree from a, you name it, whether it's Dallas Theological Seminary, the Master's Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, even though I read their books, I read their professors, I know what they believe, it's not a real church. You see all these legalistic, critical people out there that are just hammering away, hammering away. Do you wanna have head coverings? Great, don't put that law on everybody else.

Do you wanna keep the Sabbath? Great, don't look down on me because I don't. My wife wears makeup. She's been called certain names from emails too.

Well, she looks like this, I'm just, I mean, boy, you know, I'm like, where are these people coming from? Man, you go on internet, you open up a whole can of worms. You know why? Because nobody has to be honest. And I often say, here's my number, call me, we'll talk about it.

Nine times out of 10, they never call. Why? Because they can hide behind a little email and critique the critical spirit. That's where it comes from.

And they love the praises of men. They take pride in their criticism. They do not weep before they whip.

That was a famous saying of Leonard Ravenhill. You have to weep before you whip. That's what Jesus said.

He wept over Jerusalem before he went in and whipped and drove out the people. There has to be this humility first. And they don't do this.

They love the praises of men in their camp. They even love the title of this message, the law. You go get them, Shane.

You go get them, Shane. They love it. Their hearts are critical and arrogant.

They're not teachable. They wanna pull down everybody. They'll pull down everybody that doesn't believe just like them.

They've got a small box that you must fit in. As soon as you come outside that box, now they're super spiritual. And they'll condemn you and they'll put you down.

And a critical attitude narrows your focus to an unhealthy level. Grace and love are nowhere to be found. They shoot everybody that doesn't agree with them on the non-essentials.

They hide behind the excuse. Well, I'm a watchman. I'm a defender of the faith.

I'm just following God's word. But you're arrogant. So it makes everything you're doing null and void.

Paul said, if I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, but I have not love, I have not anything. If I have great faith and I can move this mountain, I give everything to the poor, I even have my body to be burned. Paul says, you have nothing if you have love.

I mean, you can preach as well as Billy Graham and have four PhDs, but if you don't have love, you have nothing. Nothing. Nothing.

We have to wake up to that fact. There's too much arrogance in the church. People critical.

Well, they don't do this and they don't do this and they don't do that. Just be thanking God and have a broken attitude instead of constantly putting down people because that road never ends. It gets hard.

You should be more critical and more critical and more critical until you become a critical person. Just ask your spouse. Are you known to be a joyful, loving person, gracious, or are you very critical, negative about everything? That needs to end.

I'm preaching to myself too. Pastors can become very critical. We watch the news, what's going on, everything's, you know, we become very critical.

Now, here's the ouch verse. Critical people are proud, they're unteachable, and they're eager to dispute. I've caught guys online before.

They want me to do radio shows and all this stuff and they're calling Chuck Smith a false prophet and John MacArthur a false prophet and all these things and Mark Driscoll's a false prophet. Like, let's talk about this. Where are you getting all your information from? Oh, no, I don't want to talk to you.

Why? They're proud, they're unteachable, and they want to dispute. Those are characteristics of a critical person. God's spirit's not in them.

Here's the wake-up call. The Pharisees had the letter of the law. The Pharisees had it down, but they were on their way to hell.

Do you realize that? The Pharisees, the Sadducees, the religious leaders of Jesus' day were not saved. They were on the broad road of destruction. They were going to be in hell.

They were God's spokesmen. Why? Because they had the letter of the law, but not the spirit of the law. And what does Paul tell us? The letter of the law kills.

It's the spirit that gives life. I just come up here and I just give the letter of the law. Many times, that's just death.

It's just, oh, well. But when you infuse it with the power of the spirit, that's where the life comes from. That's where the life-changing power of God's word comes from.

It's the letter of the law and the spirit of law meeting. You know how I know that? Tomorrow, many different groups are gonna read this Bible, from Jehovah Witness to Mormon to Roman Catholics that aren't saved, some are. All, they're gonna read this.

Where's the power in it? It's dead. Dead orthodox. Dead dogma.

Dead, God said, where's the life? It's dead. It's like they're at a funeral. Why? Because you cannot have the letter of the law minus the spirit of God infusing it with the power.

That's why Paul says, the letter killeth, but the spirit gives life. We kill people with our words when we don't say it with the spirit to back it. How many lives have we killed with our words or our own kids saying, you shouldn't do that.

God's word says, how do you know? I can't believe you. What an arrogant little jerk. Look at what God's word says.

I can't believe, as if that's gonna cause him to repent. Versus, son, I'm so sorry. I've made mistakes too.

How can I help? What do you need? And then you just bring it in lovingly. Why? Because the letter with the spirit is how you change hearts. And what else is happening, I've talked about before, is when the church stops proclaiming half of this, let's take out all the difficult pages.

All the difficult truths. Let's take out the wrath of God and the hell. Shane, I can't believe you said hell.

You're gonna get some people coming back next week. And you start taking out everything, half of it. Well, guess what happens? Dead again.

It's the letter without the spirit. Because the Holy Spirit says, you preach all of the truth of God's word. You preach the totality.

You preach the pleasant things and you preach the difficult things. You preach the grace of God and you preach the condemnation of God. You preach the love of God and you preach the wrath of God.

You preach everything. Why? Because he did. He did.

Christ did. God did throughout the Bible. The totality of scripture.

And what does Titus 3 say? Warn a divisive person once and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them. You may be sure that such people are warped and sinful and they are self-condemned.

What is self-condemned? Context is contentions about the law. Before this, he's saying, do not dispute over genealogies or contentions about the law, for they are unprofitable and useless. And then he goes on to this.

Rebuke a divisive person. Isn't that amazing? Divisive Christians who are divisive, I'm called to rebuke them in love. So are you when we're bringing divisiveness in here.

So in essence, this message is a wake-up call if a person's still listening. God is not pleased with an arrogant, judgmental attitude. He hates pride as much as a false spokesman.

See, a lot of these guys want to point out all the false spokesmen, but they don't realize that they themselves are a false spokesman if they're not saying with the love and grace and humility of God. That does just as much damage. Just as much damage.

Conviction that is not undergirded by love makes a possessor of that conviction obnoxious.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/5sP3Lf37UGw.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/a-word-to-the-critical-heart/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**