

Convicting a Contentious Spirit

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the roles of men and women in the church, including headship and submission, and applying biblical principles to modern culture with wisdom and discernment.

Duration: 1:05:21

Scripture: Proverbs 16:18, Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 12:10, 1 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Corinthians 11:17, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:2-3, Colossians 3:12-14, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5-6

Topics: "Contentious Spirit", "Biblical Roles in the Church"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the issue of contentious spirits within the church, emphasizing the need for conviction and humility in leadership and congregational life. He highlights the importance of understanding biblical roles for men and women, advocating for a complementarian view that respects God's design. Idleman warns against the dangers of a contentious heart, which can provoke arguments and create division, urging believers to approach others with compassion rather than judgment. He calls for a return to humility and brokenness before God, stressing that true worship and effective ministry stem from a heart aligned with God's will. Ultimately, he encourages the church to confront sin with love and truth, fostering a spirit of unity and growth.

Transcript

The title is Convicting, Convicting a Contentious Spirit. Did you know that's my job? From the pulpit? It's to convict a contentious spirit. It's also to convict a lukewarm person.

It's also to build up, it's also to encourage. And conviction, I'm sorry, contention, is even found in the church. Are you aware of that? Or is the church without grumbling and complaining and backbiting and bickering and contentiousness? If you know of a church that is, let me know.

I would love to visit it, because a healthy, vibrant, growing church will have demonic influence, it'll have the world trying to penetrate the flesh. A healthy, growing church, just like healthy, growing children need rules, need boundaries, no different. But I want to just encourage you to pick up the CD from Wednesday if you can, I'm hearing from people all over the United States on the message, Travail Before You Prevail.

There is a travail that happens before you prevail in prayer, and the tagline was Victory in the Prayer Closet gives you victory on the battlefield. If you want to see more victory in your life, more victory in your prayer life, if you want just encouragement to press forward, check out Wednesday's message. So with

that said, chapter 11, we are in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, and I'll be getting at some point here shortly into chapters 12, 13, and 14.

If you know what those are, that will be interesting for some people. It is on the gifts and the operation of the Holy Spirit. But this morning, chapter 11, Paul says intimidate me, again he's talking to the church, just as I also intimidate Christ.

Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I deliver them to you. But I want you to know, here's the point he's getting at here, that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. Now, the challenge for me this week was I could preach a whole sermon just on that.

But we've talked about that before, we've discussed it before, I've written articles on this topic before. But I do want to say one thing here. What Paul's saying is something was off in the church.

He's reminding them, hey, remember, something was off in the church. What he was clarifying, I believe, is the role of men and women in the church, ultimately in the family. And we teach here something called complementarianism, that the roles that God designed actually complement each other.

For example, what is better on a human body? Would you rather have the head or the heart? Which one's better? No, neither. I mean, you have to have both. You don't have the heart, there's no head, you're dead.

You don't have the head, you're also dead. So God uses these things to complement one another. So the way he's actually created us, I've given this example before, but if there's a loud noise outside at midnight, who's going outside? Morgan, get out there, see what's going on.

And we even see this in our children's ministry next door. It's funny just how the presence of a man coming into a disruptive kid's room will change that atmosphere really quick. We tell one of the, grab one of the big ushers, six foot five ushers, hey, just go stand in that kid's room over there.

They're out of control. But see, we've allowed the culture to lie to us and tell us lies. You have to be very careful who you listen to today.

If you listen to the wrong information, you'll have a very skewed view of what God's word actually says. So we teach that the roles complement each other. The other side of that, the other side of the coin that other churches teach, even in this valley, is something called egalitarian, meaning equal in all roles, all functions, all duties.

So they would say that a woman could be a pastor and that I would sit underneath their pastoring and I would learn and gleam from that woman as the senior pastor, as an elder, as a deacon. Egalitarian, all things are equal. But what we see is all things are complemented.

How has God designed us? And if you want more information for those watching or hearing this later, even you, on my website, shaneidleman.com, you can simply put in women pastors, what does the Bible say? What does the Bible say? And I'll just give you three highlights real quick. No qualification, there are no qualifications in all of the New Testament for women being senior pastors, leaders, and elders in the church, usurping the authority over the man. Now does that happen? Yes.

There are, I know, women pastors and they lead people to the Lord. But the exception doesn't negate the rule. The exception doesn't mean, you know, people say, well, look at this lady's a pastor in your area and she had a revival and two people came to know the Lord, Shane, what do you say about that? Well, praise God.

That doesn't mean it's in order. It doesn't mean that that's the biblical precepts of what are taught in scripture. But I also know, and I've heard, it's been about a decade now, I've heard the testimony of women on the mission field and how they would pick up the ball when nobody else would and they would plant a church and they would lead that church, they would teach because there was no men to step up and revival was breaking out, people were getting healed and this woman is teaching and leading the church.

Because, see, God will use those situations if nobody steps up. Now, could there have been maybe a man there that God raised up? Of course. And we do see God moving in different areas.

What about Deborah? What about Priscilla and Aquila? Well, let me just direct you to the article. So that's the main thing in the Bible. We see qualifications for men as elders and pastors in the church.

He's to be this, this, this, this, this. I mean, if you want to get technical, it even gives qualifications for the deacons. So we don't, qualifications, there's no qualifications for that.

Now that does not instantly, nor should anyone think that makes me a male chauvinist or it's male domination, because I view it as dying, servant leadership, dying to self, leading the family, leading the church. You don't step on people, you go before them and you lead and you take the first gunshot. You take the first bullet.

You take, metaphorically speaking, I'm hoping, right? You take that and you're leading in that area. That's how God designed us. Most women want to follow a man who's leading.

So what's happening in our homes is the men aren't leading. So the women step up and they begin to lead their home because, so just because it's out of order doesn't mean God won't bless it. For example, if a man is not leading, let's say he's even an unbeliever and there's a strong believing spouse and she's praying over her children, she's teaching her kids the word of God, there'll be a blessing, a covering over that house.

So on one hand, we don't want to take it to the extreme where women cannot be involved in this and can't be involved in that. Don't let them come on the stage. Don't let them pray.

Don't let them say, don't, shh, shh, shh, shh, shh. That's where we get in trouble. We should allow women to exercise their gifts and men to exercise their gifts in every single capacity that God has given us.

And as many of you know, I did a short clip on my thoughts about John MacArthur and the Beth Moore controversy. You can look that up as of today. I think there's about 50,000 views in four days and that did not bring a lot of positive feedback on either side.

One side says, I'm too lenient. They shouldn't be doing this, this, this. Should they just teach nursery? I mean, just limiting and oppressing.

But then on the other side, they thought I was too stringent. Like Shane, see this is what's wrong with the churches, man. You're holding people back.

No, we're promoting everyone we can promote within the boundaries of scripture. I mean, talk to my wife, talk to my mom. They think that would just be weird or out of order.

If we switch, Morgan, can you come up and teach and I'll sit there? We should try that sometime. But see, in saying that, I'm not demeaning. I'm not poking fun.

I'm just highlighting how God created men and women to complement each other. And you see in the home, you see in the church, that God's order of things, it's his order. What would it look like with two heads? You can't function that way.

So we don't hold anyone back. We promote, we allow women to operate in every single gift possible, every single area of service. Thank God for women.

Who do you think's the majority at the prayer room? Who do you think I text to pray with? Who do you think I have prayer meetings with? Who do you think is here mostly at 6 a.m.? Or who do you think is doing the most primarily at the church in spiritual matters? Guess what? Men are MIA, missing in action. We need the women in this church in all areas. We just don't see them as usurping.

Paul actually says it, that a man should not usurp, or a woman should not usurp, which is take away the spiritual headship and responsibility of the man. The man is held responsible. The man is called to lead.

And if you lead in humility and love, those want to follow you. That's just how we see Scripture designed it, or actually portrays it. That went over like a keg in an AA meeting.

But I know most of you are understanding this. It's a hard topic. I mean, because we want to, if the Bible outlined it, here's your qualifications for a womanly pastor, we're right there.

But we see no qualifications, we see no, we see creation too. How God created, because people say, Shane, that was the culture of Paul's day. He goes actually back to Adam.

It's how, in creation, how God created us. Should I lift out the big 40-pound water bottles out of the car or have Morgan do it? What's the difference? Go pull out the trash. Go do the hard stuff.

I'll just sit here and watch Netflix. See, they've created us different for different functions. Nothing is better than or more superior.

And actually, when the Bible talks about the weaker vessel, it means a value. Fragile. Treat it as an expensive vase.

Or vase, if you're in France. And you have this idea. Now granted, the Old Testament is brutal.

Before Jesus began to elevate women, before the Christianity was, it began to change the hearts of men, of people, it was brutal how people were treated. So verse 13, judge among yourselves. Okay, you ready to shift gears? But remember the context still.

What's still the context? Man and women complementing each other. They're different roles. You know what, I should say this.

It keeps coming up and I just keep kind of surfacing it. We have to remember that, and I don't know if you know this, but a lot of women do get mad at me about everything I just said the last 15 minutes ago. Even in this community, in our area, I've been called all kinds of names.

But it's usually often I've noticed, and I want to be careful here, that a lot of them have that spirit of rebellion. You can call it a Jezebel spirit, you can call it whatever you want to call it. There's this arrogance.

I'm not having some man tell me what to do. And there's a rebellious about it. There's not a love and a humility.

There's this arrogance about it. And then I go back to Genesis. Your desire will be to master over your husband.

So see, that's what the woman struggles with. What does the man struggle with? Withdrawing from that godly leadership. So the man actually has to put on the gas and fulfill their role.

While the woman has to step on the brakes and back off a little bit. And that's why you see the vehicles. The lives kind of like this.

And again, that's just a personal reflection. That does not reflect all people who disagree. From what I've noticed, there's this spirit of rebellion.

Jezebel spirit, if you want to call it that. I'd have to teach on what that is, if you ever get time. But there's something where it's an offense and they're hurt from it.

So it's not coming from a, because you say, well, what scriptures do you use to look at your qualifications? Well, we just follow the same one as the men. Well, so you're to be the wife of one wife? And so we just don't see biblical support. So judge among yourselves.

Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Now, what I did, I'll just be up front with you. I did not feel comfortable. I prayed about it for three days, spending a whole hour teaching on head coverings.

Is that okay? It's exhausting just reading the commentaries. But this is what this is about. This is an important topic in some areas.

South Africa, a lot of those churches, the Mennonite, the Quaker, a lot of churches or people even in our day, they read passages and you'll see the head covering. There's a covering there. And then he goes on to say, he goes on to talk about long hair, shaved heads, head coverings.

So that's really what that, if you go to 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, you go through all those verses, it's just Paul having a discord with the people about head coverings. So what I think we should do is ask this question. What is the main point that Paul is trying to make? So what is the one point about this topic on head coverings? Because it's interesting, some people watch the live feed, they'll rebuke us for not, too many people having head coverings.

Or they'll go, why aren't they covering? And then people are asking, what do we do with this chapter? What do we do with this chapter? And I would just tell you up front that a vast majority of the church looks at it differently than other groups of people. And I'm gonna just go through a few things here that might

help. So what is the main point though? Is the main point to cover the head? Is that what he's saying? Cover your head? Or the point is actually this, the principle is the headship or the role of man, what we just discussed.

How that message was conveyed through the covering of the woman's head. So in Paul's day, which we can all agree on, we can actually see that now if you look at Muslim countries. And personally, when I read head covering, looking at the Greek, looking at examples from the Old Testament, say Rebecca, different things, a head covering actually was a cover, a veil, like what you see in the Middle East.

We still see that where Paul was writing. We see it close to that area that a woman would actually cover herself. So what in the world was that about? Well, again, in Paul's culture, Shane, I thought you said it wasn't about culture.

Well, sometimes it is about culture. You have to look at the context of the scripture. You have to look at not only the immediate context, the applicable context, the historical context of scripture.

So the point I'm getting at is this. Paul is saying a woman should cover her head in this setting, writing to Corinth. Why? Because it showed that submission, if you want to use a bad word out there today, which really isn't a bad word if you look at it from a biblical perspective, in covering her head, she is showing support for sitting underneath her husband's authority or her husband's spiritual authority.

So he's saying if your head's not covered, it would be parallel to today like the woman disrespecting her husband in public. You ever hear the woman who gossip about their husbands or maybe don't address appropriately? Kanye West is facing that right now. If you look at some of the things, if you don't know who that is, that's okay.

Some of you do. But there's how she's dressed, how she acts, different things can either show favoritism towards the couple, but she is really looking to God's word as her direction. She's submitted to the headship, to the man, and that's what the head covering represented.

It represented that submission to her husband. And there's lots of commentaries that talk about how a prostitute would have her head uncovered and just be available. So that's how we read it.

Many people read it. I mean, every single Bible teacher I've ever listened to, pretty much, probably 95%, would say the same thing, that it represents that. Now, how do we know it's the culture? Well, there's a couple scriptures that if you look at the Bible, for example, Paul said, and this is written in the Bible, we should do this.

He said, Okay, well, when was the last time you went to Vons and asked the butcher, hey, where did you get this chicken? Where'd you, it'd be impossible to find out. So that whole sentence is not applicable to us today. Have you ever thought about that? Do not eat meat sacrificed to idols.

Do not do that. Now, we can take out a principle from that, a scriptural truth from that. We talked about it, I think, the last week or the week before, where they were going to the temple of false gods, consuming the meat that was worshipped and sacrificed to this false god, and then they go and take communion with Christians.

And Paul said, don't do that. You can't mix the two. So there's a very wonderful principle there.

But for the most of us, unless you're someone out there who have not thought about an example, we don't really or aren't concerned about eating meat sacrificed to an idol. Now, if somebody were to bring me something and said, Shane, I cooked this chicken. We actually sacrificed it on a pagan altar with the satanic cross on Halloween night.

And I'm, oh, and it sounds so good, looks so good. I'd say, you know what? You're going to have to throw that in the trash. Just knowing that, just knowing that now, I cannot partake of that.

I can't be included in that. And so there are scriptural truths there. And also, we see that Paul shaved his head to relate to the culture.

He actually circumcised Timothy. See, you better not apply that thing. Don't go around circumcising your friends.

Why? Why? Because, well, he was trying to relate to the Jews there. Ironically, he didn't circumcise Titus, I believe, because it was in a different setting. But there's an offense here in the culture.

So see, Paul is responding to the culture, the meat sacrificed to idols. He's shaving his head for this certain reason. He's having Timothy circumcised so they can relate to the Jews.

So there are things that are cultural. So you have to use wisdom. You have to use discernment.

You have to look at the totality of God's word. And again, Rebecca, Genesis 24, when she met Isaac, she put on her veil in token of her subjection. See, it's a full covering.

So my thought would be, okay, Morgan, I read this in the Bible. Next Sunday, you need to put on a head covering. Would that send any kind of message? Would that be, would it, I don't know.

I think in our family and out in the community, it would probably hurt our witness more than help it. Again, just from our perspective, not trying to step on toes. Especially if you, and what I read in the Bible, it's a full covering.

And that just would not work in the United States of America. So if people, the long story short, if people are convicted, we have people here, people where at events I speak, they wear head coverings, they have a submission to God's word, they feel it's what God's called them to do. I encourage them to just go for it.

Do what God has put on your heart, the conviction. If you have a conviction there to do it, I would say run with it. But I can't see how it's applicable in our culture based on why it was necessary then.

Because the whole point was, and here's what I've noticed, I'm gonna get in trouble today. Of course, just that last 20 minutes, I'm gonna get about 15 negative emails on that one from different, because there are groups that are very, very conservative. And so let's say the wife's wearing a head covering and she's upset and this and that.

It's funny though how she can be upset and arrogant and not humble and not really underneath her husband, yet she has a head covering. See, you missed the whole point. The whole point is not the covering, it's the humility and gentle spirit.

So if you don't have the humble and gentle and gracious spirit, what good is putting something on your head? It makes no difference. See, it's the heart issue. What is the point of the scripture? So again, what

is God saying? Well, the Bible says it, yes, but even the devil quoted the Bible.

The devil quoted the Bible three times to Jesus. Now, I'm not saying that's the same context whatsoever, but I am saying just because the Bible tells us to do something, we have to put it in historical context, applicable context, grammatical context. What does that mean? What does the grammar say? Actually, the original language? And you really look at what God is saying, because I'm not gonna be like that man who said, thank God you gave us victory today.

Lord, I'm sacrificing the first thing that comes out of my door. And he did. Whether it was bemoaning her virginity and he never gave her to marriage.

I mean, I'm hoping that's what that passage is talking about. But I'm not gonna do that. So you have to look at the heart of God, the nature of God, the character of God.

What is it gonna mean? What message is it going to send to others? And what about if I made her do it? Made Morgan do it, made my kids do it? You put that thing on. See? Missing that gentleness, that humility. Now it's a forced regulation and not something being done from the heart.

So that's my three cents on that topic. If somebody wants to do that, feels called to do it, they read the Bible, they want to honor the God in this area, I say go for it. I encourage that.

But don't come up and chide other women because they don't. Because you have to allow different views on things that are not essential. Verse 16, but if anyone seems contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

So I want to deal with this word here. If someone seems to be contentious, that's why I titled it, focusing on dealing with a contentious spirit. I'm gonna read from the Geneva Study Bible.

It said, against those who are stubbornly contentious, we have to oppose them. Oppose this, that the churches of God are not contentious. Now the Geneva Study Bible's interesting.

It came over with the pilgrims on the Mayflower. It was actually before the King James. So there was a Bible before the King James.

And the pilgrims brought it over, the reformers used it. John Calvin, Eric Zwingli in Switzerland, and John Knox here in Geneva. The Geneva Study Bible.

But their point is this. We must stubbornly, those who are stubbornly contentious, the church must oppose them. So how do you convict a contentious heart? Can I ask you that question? How do you convict a contentious heart? You hit it head on.

You hit that contentious heart head on. So that's what I'm gonna do this morning briefly. But let's talk about this word contentious.

Do you know what it means? Provoking arguments. Is there anyone in this room? Does that fit you? Anyone in here provoke arguments? Hills that are not hills to die on, you make them hills to die on. There's a spirit of judgmentalism there.

You provoke it, like provoking a snake. And isn't it funny, the Bible says, fathers do not provoke your children to wrath. A contentious, you know those people, come on.

They always wanna argue. They always wanna argue. They always wanna stir up the pot.

The pot does not need stirring right now, it needs calming. Calm the waters. So let me ask some heart searching questions.

Are you harsh? Are you harsh and unloving? Can you be more clear? Shane? Yeah, are you harsh to people? And unloving? And uncaring? Do you lack compassion? Do you lack sympathy with those caught in sin? This is a biggie. Do you ever meet someone or come across someone caught in sin? Do you have compassion for them? Or do you bring out the gavel? Guilty, guilty. Are my arms open or do I have that gavel in my hand? A contentious spirit, guys, will kill you spiritually.

Are your words seasoned with grace or seasoned with pride? Do you look for the good in others and hope for the best? Now this can backfire sometimes, but it's what Jesus did. Do you go at others looking for the fault? Here's the problem. If you go to others looking for a fault, you're gonna find one.

You will find one. You follow me around for one week, you're gonna find a fault. I thought Pastor Shane would be nice in traffic.

He gets a little upset. Boy, oh boy, I wonder how he's a pastor. Look at how his kids act.

They run up on the pew and say, that's nice to be pastor's kids. Always coming from people who don't have kids. Right? Praise God.

Funny story. Right when Francis Chan resigned from his church, we visited his church right before we planted this church. And the person who took his spot, his kids were running on the pews.

And we're like, oh, praise God. It's not just us. There's hope there.

Now granted, we tell them not to and talk to them, but kids will be kids sometimes. But you notice the contentious spirit always wants to fine tune your parenting. They want to argue and debate doctrine all day long.

So what about this? They're contentious. They're judgmental. So do you look for the best in others or do you look for the faults? Do you try to pick people up or do you pull them down? Now I should tell you, this is coming from someone who has struggled with this.

And it was easy to tell you what I'm about to tell you at the first service because my mom wasn't here. But now she's here at the second service and she'll remember this. As I was growing in the Lord, around 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, I'm reading the Bible through every year.

Why aren't you? I'm preparing. I'm getting somewhere here. So all this knowledge, I'm getting all this knowledge.

I'm reading books. I can quote the Puritans. I've read dozens and dozens.

All this knowledge and all this knowledge. I'm just getting so knowledgeable about God and because of that, the Bible says, knowledge humbles you. Did you catch that? It doesn't say that.

Knowledge what? Puffs up. And I don't know if she remembered exactly, but she said something like, Shane, your family doesn't even want to be around you. Oh, ow.

Why? Are you sinning? You can't do that. You can't go there. You can't drink that.

You can't, you can't, you can't, you can't. All biblical, right? Everything I said was what the Bible says, but it's coming from the wrong heart. The go get them heart.

And if you ever want to go get them about sin, don't go get them. Be broken first. Be broken.

Pray for them. You should go at people wanting, wanting restoration, not confrontation. I mean, I know there are people out there who get excited when they hear about other people sinning.

Oh, I knew it. Man, when's the church going to get them? When's the church going to get them? Oh, I've seen this over the years. Somebody will come and tell me something.

When are you going to go talk to them as a church? When are you going to apply Matthew 18? Well, you're out of this discussion because your heart's not right. See, you should never want to apply church discipline like, oh, I can't wait. It should break your heart.

There should be a brokenness. Oh, they're caught in sin. Can't you see? But if you're on the other side of this, this might help.

How to deal with a critical heart. How do you deal with it if you're on the receiving end? Well, if you want some experience, here's what you do. Plant a church and be a bold pastor.

And you'll get a lot of experience on criticism. What cracks me up is I'll say something or preach, and then you get criticism on either side, no matter what you do. What I just talked about, I'm going to already get emails on women pastors.

Here they come. They're already coming. They already started during the live feed.

And some people say, oh, I can't believe you believe that. They should be women pastors and this thing. And then I get this side like, you weren't rigid enough.

They should only teach the nursery. Only kids under three. Only kids under three.

And they should never pray with a man. You're praying with a woman. God's Spirit's moving.

Get away. Women can't pray. Do you read the Bible? Oh, you took the verse out of context.

The majority of people I pray with are women. The majority of prayer team people we have are women. The people at 6 a.m. worship is getting close, but it's normally women.

Pastor Shane, we've got to do this in our community, mainly women. Women are a God-given gift to the church. Thank God.

But you have to keep it in order. So everything, everything that God has given them to do and meant to do, we should be walking in that and allowing tons of freedom, but just staying within the scriptural boundaries. And I found there's tons of peace there.

You don't have to monitor things and you don't have to worry about things. And I've had people get upset when I've had, let's just say it was just a blessing leading. Not people that come here, but they'll email it.

It's like, you can't have a woman up there leading worship. You're out of order, Shane. Well, I don't know, it sounded pretty good.

That was a pretty powerful sermon. That was a pretty powerful service. But see, she's still under the headship of the altar board, under the direction of the leadership.

And so you get people carried away on either side. And I recently commented on that, on the Beth Moore-John MacArthur controversy. And the little video, just a quick little video, is like 50,000 views.

And guess what? Not everybody's happy. Do you think that hurts me? No. Here's why.

Here's what you need to remember. Many people who lash out at you are unbelievers. Expect it.

Expect it. I'm not gonna try to get too technical or too out here with this, but this is true. We can prove it.

There's a political party that is actually trying to infiltrate the church and bring in fake pastors, fake preachers to try to compromise God's Word, infiltrating with unbelievers. But also, many are Pharisees. Many people who critique you and criticize you, they are modern-day Pharisees.

Expect it. Expect it. I've come to expect, actually, after a week goes by, I'm like, Lord, nobody's upset at my sermon.

Was it from you, really? Or was it just me, just up there? Because normally, normally, especially this kind of message, the modern-day Pharisees, if they could punch me through the television, they would be punching me right now. And then carnal Christians, oh, I hate that guy. I hate that guy.

Especially when I post things about Halloween, it's not a great holiday, and people go, you should be judgmental. You're mean, you're mean-spirited. No, I just don't think you should dress your kids up like witches.

Call me stupid. But be careful. Be careful.

Now, there's a, oh, this is a rabbit trail if I've ever seen one. I better comment on that real quick. The root of Halloween, from trick-or-treat, dressing up, praying against evil spirits, the pumpkin, carving the pumpkin on your porch was to ward off evil spirits.

The whole thing is demonic. However, if I buy a pumpkin and get the seeds out and roast them in the oven, and somebody's, Pastor Shane has a pumpkin up on his sink. Oh, Lord.

Judgmental heart. Judgmental heart. Because I think you can redeem the theme of Halloween.

I'm not going to walk around scared. We can't do anything. Jesus has overcome hell, death, and the grave.

Jesus overcame the darkness. On October 31st, on October 31st, I can do what Martin Luther did in 1517 on the church doors of Wittenberg, Germany. He nailed the 95 theses, calling the church back to God, and I can call the nation back to God and say, we are worshiping Jesus Christ tonight.

There might be demonic influence. There might be different things, but we're going to get these pumpkin seeds out. We're going to cook them, and I might make a pumpkin pie.

You know, there's freedom in that. See, there's freedom in that. But when you start to, let's say, dress like demons and have witches and warts, careful here.

Are you redeeming the theme, or are you resembling Halloween? See, there's a difference. But watch out for the Pharisees on this one, too. Holy smokes.

The church is so arrogant. Many in the church are so arrogant or so carnal. It's hard to find that middle ground.

And here's the final reason why you need to not worry too much about those with a critical heart. You should pray for them as many of them are caught in sin, and they lash out. Have you ever been caught in sin? Don't raise your hand.

Let's be honest. When you're caught in sin, let's go where the rubber meets the road. You can't stop smoking weed.

You can't stop taking Xanax, Vicodin, opiates. You can't stop drinking. You can't stop looking at porn.

Whatever it is, when you're caught in sin, are you joy-filled? Are you happy at the victories of others? You love others? No. You're mean-spirited. You're angry.

You lash out at others because your own weight of your sin is hurting you, and hurt people hurt others. So many times when people lash out at me, lash out at me, I just pray for them. And if I go to their Facebook page, you know, oh, you're trolling Facebook.

No, if you say something mean, I might look at your Facebook page, just telling you that. And you look at it, your heart breaks for them because you can tell they're not in a good spot. And you just pray for them.

And I would say the last, I think 10, just sometimes if I come across something that sticks out, the last 10 people who have said something like mean and nasty, I said, here's my number, or here's the church number, I'd love to call and talk to you about this. How many of you think take me up on that? Zero. What does that tell you? Armchair quarterback.

It's easy to critique from a home, but if you get somebody on the phone and challenge them, they're often, because truth invites scrutiny. Hey, if we're missing it here, and I should have clarified, we are open for constructive criticism at this church. Constructive criticism that goes like this.

West Side Christian Fellowship, we so appreciate your church. It's helped us in many ways, but I don't understand this. There you go.

Versus all capital letters. You arrogant, judgmental, right-wing conspiracy. Hold on.

Where are you going with this? We can't have a dialogue until you back up, hot shot. You gotta be open for constructive criticism. How else do you grow? Do you want me to give you a personal example? I got loving constructive criticism from my wife last week on sermons.

She said, I hope you take this right. Don't get mad. I'm like, oh, Lord.

She goes, but it just seems like you've been lashing out at pastors a lot lately. That's true. I gotta work on that.

But I get so mad at the pulpits. I know, I know, honey. Just take a break for a while.

Don't lash out on other pastors or ministers. Okay, okay. But you see the church dying.

You see the culture allowing transgenders to read to fifth graders. I was just in an event in Anaheim. I left at 5.30 this morning from Anaheim.

Went to an event last night for the Pacific Justice Institute, Brad Dacus, who they represent Christians in California. You would be shocked, shocked at the garbage they're trying to push through. There's a lady they're representing who decided to have a Bible study at a veteran's home.

But they come against her saying that's elder abuse. Elder abuse for wanting to do a Bible study at a veteran's home. I could have slapped somebody.

This is ridiculous. They're telling kids in our schools. It's okay.

I saw the curriculum. It's okay to experiment with the other sex and have sex before marriage. It's okay.

In the schools, government-funded schools. Church, you need to wake up and be the voice of truth and say not on our watch. Write the school districts.

Write the teachers. Write the libraries. And say enough is enough.

And you can say it in grace and love. But see that's the other problem. We don't say anything when we're not bold.

So I get so angry sometimes. Yeah, I might say a little bit too much. Okay.

Constructive criticism. Okay, bring it back in. But these things should upset us.

How can a person remain callous? Oh, oh well. It's not my deal. Yeah, it is your deal.

We're called to do business until Christ returns. We're called to fight the warfare. Edmund Burke.

You know the famous quote. The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men and women to do nothing. So that excuse, well, I'm just gonna love them and hope God changes them.

That's out the door. That's not even biblical. Jesus said, I will love them enough to confront them.

He goes, oh Shane, look at the woman caught in adultery. Yeah, do you keep reading the scripture? He said, don't go and do it. He said, don't go do it again.

Don't sin again. Jesus said, for this reason I have come to preach repentance. For this reason, go out and preach repentance.

John the Baptist came into the scene. They didn't even know who he was. He preached repentance.

Repentance is throughout the gospel. The church walked in the fear of the Lord calling people to kumbaya. Repentance.

Peter said, you stiff neck people. You put Christ on the cross. What must we do to be saved? Don't worry about it.

We're just gonna love you. He said, repent and believe in the gospel. You challenge the heart.

That's how you start. You change the soul of our nation. As you go to the arrogance of the heart and you preach repentance and are returning back to God.

Where are the pulpits again crying out for repentance, saying run to the altar, run from God's judgment, run to the arms of a loving savior. That's our only hope. You can't hide the word repentance with the word love.

Did you know that? You can't hide the word repentance with the word love. They stand together, married. I love you enough to tell you the truth.

I'm not smiling during writing these points. My heart is breaking. Did you know that a hard heart is a sure sign that the Holy Spirit is not working in your life? Oh, you read the Bible.

You can quote scripture. You can post little Facebook things that are cute. I'm talking about the Holy Spirit moving in your life in a powerful way, wrecking the lives of others, wrecking the lives for others.

You're hungry for more of God. You want more. A hard heart is a sure sign the Holy Spirit is not working.

Could it be? Just entertain this thought. Could it be that the Holy Spirit of God is not working mightily in your life or in your families just because your heart has become cold and callous and dead to the things of God? It's either that or lukewarmness that will quench the Spirit of God. Those are your options.

Is there anything in the middle? No. Pride and arrogance, a hard heart, or carnality and not living for Christ and living like the world. Those two things will quench and grieve the Spirit of God.

You come to church. You leave here just as empty as when you arrived. You have no more direction than you did last week.

The Bible's still boring. Worship was not that great. I just don't know what's going on.

One of the two options. One of the two options. You have to crush carnality and repent and be on fire for God or you have to humble yourself and allow God to break that hard heart.

Do you know I'm a prideful man? Did you know that? If I ever introduced myself as, I'm humble, Shane, because all of us, pride is in all of us. All of us. I'm a prideful man.

I think it was C.J. Mahaney who said, I'm a prideful man working on humility on a daily basis. But see, when you admit it, you bring it to the light. Pride starts to come up in all of us.

The enemy, I think it was Robert Murray McShaney or one of the preachers a couple hundred years ago. Incredible story. Or John Bunyan.

I think it was John Bunyan who wrote Pilgrim's Progress. A man came up to him after he preached a sermon. He goes, oh, that was an incredible sermon, man.

You did so good. He said, oh, don't worry, the devil already told me that 10 minutes ago. You get that? Ah, pride, puffed up.

Pride, pride, pride. God keeps us humble. He keeps us broken to be used by him.

Can you show me one person that God has used in a mighty way who is very prideful and stayed prideful? Who in our culture? Who do you know? What godly person do you look up to that is very prideful and arrogant? No one. Why is that? Because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. You want to receive from God? Humble yourself.

The Bible says humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. In due time, he will exalt you. But if you exalt yourself, he will abase you.

Humility is so important. Verse 17. You thought it was almost over.

Too bad. Don't worry, I'll give you the fast version. Fast version here.

Paul basically says, I hear that there are divisions among you. So I wanted to let you know that a healthy church will have divisions. Pastor Chuck Smith used to call it blessed subtraction.

A healthy church, a vibrant church will have sin going on. They will be confronting sin. Marriages will be... The demonic... Do you think this church is free of trouble? Oh, Lord have mercy.

If you could see what I see in one week, one week of God moving and wrecking lives in a good way, restoring marriages, prodigal sons, kids wanting... I could just name it, name it, name it. Here comes this side. Oh, boom! Ministry division.

Marriages falling apart. Separation. Kids walking away.

What's going on? When God's at work, the devil's at work. There's two kingdoms colliding. So he's saying here that a divisive heart was causing division.

So I'm gonna leave you with this thought. Is your heart causing division in your home, on the job, or in the church? Is your heart causing division? Ungodly division. Do you look for sin under every rock or watch a person's every move? Let me give you an example.

People have come here over the last nine years or so, and they usually, if they don't stay long, when they do this, they go, I'm coming here to see if you really preach the truth. Well, you can watch the sermons. You can look at our doctrinal statements.

You know you're coming, though, with a critical heart. And any time a person comes with a critical heart, a judgmental heart, they're gonna find something, correct? It could go like this, but I didn't see any benediction today, and you didn't use my translation of the Bible. Ah, I see you have celebrate recovery.

Don't you know that comes from Saddleback Church? We don't have that. I'm just giving an example. Hey, I didn't see a cross in the lobby.

And by the way, what seminary did you go to? And I heard you're having a harvest festival. Don't you know that Halloween is Satan's birthday? What is wrong with you guys? It's just an alternative where we're gonna exalt Christ and have a safe environment. By the way, we don't have a harvest festival.

I'm just saying this is a critical heart. This is a very critical heart. Is that a Christmas tree in the lobby? That's my favorite.

Don't you read the book of Jeremiah where they put up a tree and they worship? Yeah, but I'm pretty sure we're not worshipping that tree. We're worshipping that tree, the Savior that was hung on that tree. There's nothing with expressing light has gone into darkness and overcome sin, death, and the grave.

Isn't it amazing how many people try to extinguish the most incredible time of year? Our family loves Christmas time. Christ, mass. Shane, that's a Roman Catholic thing.

Well, not in my mind, okay? We love this time of year. Why not allow people that freedom? They're not worshipping idols. They're not going after Satan.

They're not being deceived just because they don't read your version of the Bible. As long as it's a good version, a formal equivalence, a word-for-word translation, give people some leeway. I just get emails weekly because I don't use the King James.

Did you know that? I can't believe how deceived you are, Pastor Idam, and I loved your sermon until you got to the part where you didn't read the King James. Well, crying out loud, can you show me where I was misled in that verse? No, it's all over the place. Well, just how was I misled by reading the new King James? Please show me.

Okay, critical heart, contentious heart. That heart needs to be broken and crushed because I guarantee they're not doing anything good for God. Well, while we're on the topic, the King James, written in 1611, went through 33 translations.

At one point, it was called the Wicked Bible because it said, thou shalt commit adultery. So people have to, there's translations. They clean it up.

They get improved with the time. This is not the God spoke, thus saith the Lord, thy will be done. He didn't speak King James language.

God speaks through the power of the Holy Spirit and gives us essential truths. We do not have the exact manuscript because we would worship it. Well, Shane, how do we get our Bible? I'm glad you asked.

There's a one-hour sermon we just uploaded to YouTube, How We Got Our Bible, What Translation Is Best. Go to our YouTube channel. You can watch the whole hour-long message on that.

But the reason this is applicable is because it comes up all the time. Greg Laurie, they said, Greg Laurie, on your radio station, Shane. We own four radio stations, the church does.

And Greg Laurie's on there. And I'll get emails saying, how can you let him on there? He read from the Message Bible. Well, I guess we'll cancel him.

Now personally, I don't like the Message Bible written by Eugene Peterson. It's actually a commentary. You should look at a good study Bible and use the message or NLT or things that are not word for word, they're thought for thought.

Use them as commentary with a good standard Bible. But look, can you see the arrogance in these statements? Can you see the hard-heartedness? Because they just want to pull people down. Either they're not believers, they're a modern-day Pharisee, or they themselves are caught in sin and they're lashing out.

No one filled with the spirit of the living God is going to have a judgmental, arrogant spirit. What they will do is things will hurt them. I saw some things last night at the event I wouldn't have done.

I would have did differently. I probably wouldn't have had alcohol available. It just kind of hurts me.

There was a silent auction where they gave away things. I wouldn't do it. But see, those are personal convictions.

I'm not going to have a judgmental spirit about that. And again, this is coming from a guy. I could just say ex-Jehovah Witness, ex-judgmental spirit.

And it still wants to creep up sometimes. That's why, I don't know, how do some of you not worship? How do you not stay in the Word of God? How do you avoid church? How do you not make Christ a priority of your life and still get through life? Please tell me. Because I need to hold on to Him every day.

He is my anchor. He is my sure foundation. That song we just sang, should I ever need reminding of how I've been set free? There is a cross that bears the burden that another paid for me.

How do you get through the day without clinging on to Christ in all areas? How do you do it? You don't. That's why prescriptions are on the uprise. They're calling it an epidemic.

Everybody's running to everything except God. I ran into one guy yesterday. He's a taxi cab driver.

He is so, he's so fearful. I could just hear it in his voice, of a big earthquake in California. Like, yeah, that would not be good, but who are you trusting in? Not God.

See, everything begins to alarm you, and you're afraid of everything. When you're trusting God, the sovereign hand of God will move on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to them. So I'm just, I just want to let you know, a hard heart will affect your worship.

Lord's not getting me to get away from this one either. A hard heart will affect your worship. What I mean by that is I can tell when people are like this in church, they're bored during worship, nine times, well, let's say 9.9, 9.99, 9.9% of the time, can you say that to one person? They have a hard heart.

They just stand here like the rock of Gibraltar because their heart is a rock of Gibraltar. They've got a hard heart. And I commented to my wife, we had an altar call at the first service.

Everybody wants to humble themselves and get rid of that hard heart, come to the altar. It was full, it was, it was full. But I could tell about, I knew there's about six people I knew, yep, they're not at the altar, and they need to, they should have ran to the altar.

I mean, it's that bad. But see, it affects your heart. Worship, you can't worship.

You can't worship with a hard heart. You'll get excited at the World Series tonight, but you won't get excited about God because the heart is hard. It affects your parenting.

Do you lash out on children? You lash out at your children? You'll throw the word of God at them? Something that broke my heart this week, and believe it or not, we have people that come here that struggle with same-sex attraction. And then people are like, oh, I can't believe it. We have people here that struggle with alcohol, with pornography, get over it.

Get over it, people struggle with sin. They're welcome here. We are not, we are, did you know we're a welcoming church? Hold on, I didn't finish.

Not affirming. We don't affirm sinful lifestyles, but we welcome sinners seeking the grace of God. But people lashing out, people lashing out at their kids.

One of the things as I'm researching this, one of the big LGBTQ and the movement and a lot of it's kids, a lot of it's because it's fashionable, I can't really believe, but the kids, here's what, I talked to a major ministry on Friday that deals with thousands of those struggling with homosexuality. A major, major, major ministry. And they said, Shane, the most disheartening thing is when a child comes out, their parents hate them.

They lash out at them. How could you? Oh my God, you know your father's gonna be, you know what the Bible says, instead of saying, son and daughter, we're gonna help you through this, there's a God who can answer and we're gonna love you regardless. See, that's how you have to act.

That's the heart of Christ. You see the hard heart, how it's hurting the nation? You think the civil unrest is going to stop because of your little Facebook post on there putting down the other political party? Now granted, I don't like the other political party. I'm not mentioning party, I'm just telling you.

I'm just saying though, that's not gonna win the day. When our representative in our area, this big scandal just came out with our representative in our area in Congress, I reached out to her, a known bisexual going through a divorce, and I said, our church would love to pray with you and I would love to talk to you and point you to the cross and point you to hope. We reach out.

That upset Christians. I'm gonna lose my mind. Oh, you need to give her the truth.

What do you think I do every Sunday? You need to tell her what God's word says every Sunday. What do you think I do every Sunday? But there comes a point in the time where you need to hold the sinner and preach the cross. That's how you show them the love of Christ.

I can show you about the wrath of God with tears in my eyes. It was said 100 years ago, don't preach about hell unless you can weep for the people you're preaching for. Don't tell them just about heaven.

Tell them about hell and let it break your heart. When have you broke for the homeless people? Oh, Los Angeles and Gavin Newsom. Look at these homeless people.

Why don't you go down there and see about the man who lost his whole family, who's a veteran. Our nation has given up on our veterans and we have created half the problem. Give them hope.

Why does that break your heart? See, from a broken heart, that's where you'll take action. Could it be you're not involved in ministry because you have not a broken heart? I'm gonna tell you a prayer, I pray. Don't look down on me from this, but it's this.

God, give me boldness. God, give me boldness. Every day, God, I need the boldness to speak your truth.

I need that boldness to write articles. God, I need that boldness to preach, not even water down your mouth, not even one ounce. I need that boldness.

I don't wanna compromise. I don't wanna apologize for you. God, I need that boldness.

Let the fire of John the Baptist go through my lips. Let your word be like fire and the people be like chaff. Let the spirit of the living God speak boldly through me, but you better know it.

You know what else I pray? God, break me. Break me. Give me love.

Give me brokenness and love for your people and for others. God, I need both of them because if not, I'm gonna hurt somebody. Can you imagine a sermon with all love? That's why we're in the predicament we are in.

Just love them, Shane. Don't say that stuff. Just love them.

My wife told me not to be that pastor, so I'm gonna be quiet now. I just get so angry. At this event, I knew a person, they went to a mega church, like 30,000 members, and this pastor will not speak out on the issues.

They don't even want a voter registration guide to tell their people what the different candidates stand for. That's pleasing the masses. But we got all kinds of party and people.

What does God's word say? God's word doesn't say be politically correct. It says preach the word of God. Paul said, Timothy, be ready in and out of season.

Rebuke, exhort, proclaim. Preach the word of God and let it pierce the heart. Bring down heaven and pull people out of hell.

One more out of the fire. One more out of the fire. That's what we should be singing.

We should be worshiping. Have you experienced God? Is that maybe why you're not worshiping? Think about that new song. Many people don't understand the lyrics.

Another in the fire. What in the world does that mean? My kids ask me that. Another in the fire.

I explained it a few weeks ago. The three Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were caught in the fire and they were not being consumed by the fire. And the king said, what is going on? What is going on in the fire? There's another in the fire.

Then he looks like the son of God. That's the same son of God that told the lions, shut your mouth. That's the same son of God who will walk through you through the valley of darkness, through the shadow of death.

He will hold you up with his hand. That God will be with you in the fire. The Bible says you will avoid the fire.

The Bible tells me, and I know all hell is gonna break loose over the next 20 years with this kind of preaching in this kind of nation. I'm not winning a popularity contest. There will be laws that will say, preach that again, pastor, and you're going to jail.

It's coming, but I've got another in the fire. I pray it doesn't. I pray it doesn't.

I pray that doesn't happen. I've got a family to lead. You think I'm bold now, you should see if I didn't have a wife and kids.

Oh, Lord, have mercy. But you have to care for those who've been entrusted to you. You preach with boldness, and people are hungry for it.

Are they not? They're hungry for truth. I had a lady just this week. Ah, it's too far.

How far do you live? 18 minutes away. And you just drove from? This morning. So people are hungry.

There's hunger for there. We hear, it's all, it's saying the same thing. We're hungry for truth.

Where's this at? We've got thousands of followers on Facebook. The number one thing is, where's the church? Hungry for God. And again, I don't take any credit because God built the church, but you've got to humble yourself.

Now I look back and say, no wonder he embarrassed the life out of me. No wonder God humiliated me. No wonder I can't rest on my PhD in church history or my doctoral in biblical counseling.

You can give me a doctorate in that. I don't know. No wonder I can't rest on my great speech and my exhortation.

I'm just polished, but I can't rest on anything. I cannot rest on anything but Christ and Christ alone. That is my foundation.

And when God, wait, hold on. When God says, oh, now I can use that man or that woman. Now I'm gonna fill them mightily with my spirit and they are going to do great exploits because they are filled with the passion and power of God.

Amen. Well, I'm just gonna close with that, but I'm gonna say this. If you don't know God this morning, the only reason that's preventing you is because of pride.

Pride will prevent you from entering the kingdom of heaven. That's the only thing that prevents a person from entering the kingdom of heaven that knows about God is pride. I am God.

I don't want God to, people, this can be a long sermon. I want an hour and 10 at the first minute. But they say, I don't want there to be a God telling me what to do.

I want a God telling me what to do. What's wrong with you? Pride. I don't want a God interfering with my life.

I want a God wrecking my life and rebuilding it on a foundation that will never fall. It will never fail because that God has built your life. See, God's not in heaven saying, let's make a deal.

He's saying, this is the deal. There is no altering the truth. You're not gonna get to heaven and say, well, or before God and say, well, I'm gonna negotiate with you.

I'm a good negotiator. You'll fall down before Christ and you'll be without words. And he'll say, depart from me.

I don't even know you. I knew about you, but I don't know you. I don't have a relationship with you.

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