

Four Things You Need to Know About God

by Shane Idleman

God's heart is not to condemn us, but to save us, and we must embrace His love to experience it.

Duration: 17:34

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Isaiah 43:1, John 3:17, Acts 3:19, Romans 5:8

Topics: "Gods Love", "Repentance Conversion"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the essence of real Christianity, rooted in unconditional love as demonstrated by God's love for us. The speaker shares personal struggles with addiction, brokenness, and the transformative power of God's unconditional love. The message highlights the importance of embracing God's love, recognizing our identity in Him, sharing the truth in love, and experiencing the refreshing presence of the Lord through repentance and conversion.

Transcript

I Think it's important to define Real Christianity because you're like well, you're a pastor. This is a church. How did you know John and real Christianity loves? unconditionally If you go back to obviously the teachings of Jesus and when we talk about Christianity It's just followers of Christ and authentic biblical Christianity has unconditional love We love people unconditionally and if you do you want to know why because God loved me God loved me unconditionally and There's a perception out there of pastors That often is not correct.

I was actually voted least likely to succeed in high school I was and I was an alcoholic I would say by the age of 18 So I can relate to addiction It cheated my way through high school probably graduated I think I've said this before 1.8 barely got by Still leaving high school not able to read very well and and learning disability challenges came from a very angry home my father was very angry and Wasn't a good environment walking on eggshells. Have you ever heard that term? I know exactly what that means You don't know what kind of mood he was in as a result to eating addiction Alcohol became overweight a poor self-image of myself and later in the teens So, of course, what does that lead to it leads to a wrecked life leads to steroid use and abuse crystal myth a lot of party scenes and So when I look back now and see what God has done on my in my own life it's all I can do to not want to share it with people and that's why we can love unconditionally because he first loved me he Loved me through all of that unconditionally. So who am I to not love others? unconditionally and offer the same forgiveness that has been offered to me and There's actually something through many of you talked about addiction and there's a lot of pain here

this morning Comes with memorials.

I just found out midnight I decided to text it forward this morning a family friend of 35 years passed away last night And we're hosting that memorial next Saturday as well, and there's so much pain and brokenness But the good thing about pain and brokenness is it can draw you right to the cross? It can draw you right to that relationship with God and we have a choice what I did in my late 20s Ruined my life And was some would say successful, but I was failing inside. I was dying inside and that Brokenness can be a wonderful gift if you allow it to push you towards that relationship with God Jesus said I tell you her sins and there are many have been forgiven Those who have been forgiven much love much and I don't quite understand the dynamic But the greater the pain often the greater the relationship. I know Christ is my Savior is my Lord I should be I should be on my fourth marriage or hungover today or buried in a cemetery.

I should be dead I should be laying in the curb But it was the grace of God that reached down and because of that pain because of that brokenness that relationship is close to me I I love Christ. I'm not afraid to talk about what he means to me and You can same thing with you that pain that brokenness can draw you to God, but often you know what it does is the opposite We become bitter become angry would become upset at God the very person we should be running to we run from That's why I love the song that Heather Sung and I could just I was just sitting there remembering my own life amazing grace How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I was blind, but now I see I was lost But now I've been found It was grace that taught my heart to fear and fear my heart relieved How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed? that's powerful that's powerful truth and Before I get into the four points, they're brief.

I don't want to keep you here I've got to preach a lot tomorrow as well And I'm looking forward to that's what God's called me to do He took the least likely and gave me a position of speaking to people and I was scared to death To speak in front of people it would never happen ever happen I'd rather have a leg amputated to be honest with you or a couple root canals and What God did is because of that of giving my life fully surrendering my life and being filled with God's Presence and God's Spirit and wanting to preach It is what he's called me to do. But before I get into that all of you, of course are welcome tomorrow I don't want you to any of everything. You're not welcome in a church We'd love to see you if you need hope and encouragement, but I was talking with John I was thinking the prodigal son story many of you know the prodigal son story, right? If you don't this man was given his inheritance early and what did he do save it? No, he spent it.

The Bible says a boob. It's a King James on riotous living which reminds me of I Las Vegas days 25 years ago and and going there and not remembering how I got home and The prodigal son and that's what it would parallel today. He was lost everything.

He's actually eating with the pigs The Bible says he's feeding the swine and he says I don't have food and he's eating the pigs food And he finally the Bible says he came to himself When the son had come to himself, he came to himself He said I've got to go home At least my father might forgive me might put me as a servant and the Bible talks about when the man was coming home The father actually ran to meet the son The father ran to meet the son. So that's the imagery we have of God sometimes we think of God as this mean cosmic killjoy and There actually are two different views we have this view of a cosmic ball of love Right or this angry abusive father That just wants to harm and do but there's that's not they represent clear representation of God He is that's why one of the attributes is love. So we see this father running to the Sun So the problem's not on God's side.

It's often on the Sun side not wanting to run back to the father So the four points I told you on this God's heart is not to condemn Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I've heard some things on TV God's heart is not to condemn John 3 17 for God did not send his son into the world to condemn He did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him That that's the heart of God.

Well, wait a minute. I thought God condemns. We'll see Biblical Christianity also believes in truth absolute truth truth of God's Word the heart of God is salvation The heart of God is to send his son to die for the world and then when people reject that gift That's a rejection that takes place then the condemnation comes later because they reject God's love So the first thing I want you to realize is God's heart is not to condemn Romans 3 10 there is none that are righteous.

No, not one There is none who understands there is none who seeks after God we all false we all fall short We're we all sin. No one is innocent. Not even you Shane.

No, we're all in the same boat we're all in the same boat and Here's the difference if we're all in the same boat When we talk about Christianity we talk about those who believe in Jesus The reason is this we're all in the same boat. I see a hole in the boat. This boat is sinking But those who embrace God's gracious gift of salvation say God I need you we hop out of the boat that's sinking And we want to help others come out of that boat come out of that that way of life.

That's destroying to them So that's the heart of God is to help people not hurt and one of the times many times the church gives people the wrong Impression condemning judgmental arrogant bigoted narrow-minded right But You have to love but you also have to share the truth and the truth is we're all in the same boat and our goal is to help people come out of of that and find a relationship with God Romans 5 8 declares, but God demonstrated his own love toward us and now while we were still sinners Christ died for us. I Mean you to read that again God demonstrated his love toward us and that while we were still sinners Christ died for us and this always I get a little teary-eyed sometimes at this verse because I often think wait a minute Wait a minute during my drunken binges in Palm Springs or my crystal myth weekends in Las Vegas Christ died for me Yes, he did 2,000 year years ago on on Calvary the old rugged cross We love to see that song but there's truth in that even before I was even conceived Christ died for that That's the love of God That's the love of God that sent who in the world's gonna send their own son Somebody said Shane send your son. I said no.

I'm sorry pick another option. That's not happening and God sent his son and died for us even while we were sinning Even while I'm rejecting him and bitter and angry even while I'm caught in this destructive party lifestyle Christ is still there beckoning come home prodigal son. Come home.

I died for that. Come home. Stop living in there So there's freedom there There's a story I heard this week and I'm sharing it tomorrow morning for sure and I wanted to share it with you on this point If God's heart is is not to condemn it.

It's a mother whose son comes home at 2 in the morning He's he's intoxicated He falls down on his bed hi, and The father hears the mother come up Out of it out of the bed walks over to his room and he says finally she's gonna let him have it Right. Finally, she's gonna let him have it so we've been waiting for we're tired of this kids messing around and Five minutes later. He didn't hear anything So he went in there and he saw the mom next to the son in bed with him caressing his hair just loving him and The the dad said what are you doing? And she said he would not let me love him while he's awake so I will love him while he's asleep That's the love of God That's the love of God Number two you are made in the image of

God You are made in the image of God.

Wait a minute Shane. I've heard all these other things No, you did not come from pre-mortal ooze of things just happening. You were created in the image of God You were if you want more information that I'm actually debating an atheist in March on this topic Because I love this topic of creating you God creating us in his image.

That's why they're shaming guilt Have you ever felt shame and guilt? There's just me don't leave me up here by myself Shame and guilt. Why is I the shame this guilt this depression? I can never measure up I feel depressed and instead of running to running to Christ. We run to Xanax Why is there shame and guilt because that image has been damaged? It's been marred.

It's been broken That image that God created us. Let us make man in our Image according to our likeness So when we're out of that relationship with God and we break that fellowship our image is marred his God's image in us Is is disfigured. It's spoiled.

It's marred. So I'm scarred with this and I have this shame in this guilt Because like Romans said there's none who none who do right no not one and many things many people think if I could just do good enough and if I could just be better if You can't you can't You can't trust me Number three true love tells the truth and I went down there and John listened. I just told him the truth Doesn't true love tell the truth Where do we ever get this notion that truth doesn't offend? Truth doesn't well, let's not say that What how would parents be measured today? Well, my mom told me I couldn't do that She must not love me.

No, the reason parents admonish and Exhort and rebuke sometimes is because they love so true love loves the truth and they love others enough to tell them the truth and I've heard it many times. The church is always against something, right? What's wrong with you guys? You're always against something Well, if I'm for lower taxes, I'm against higher taxes if I'm for equal rights I'm against oppression if I'm for children I'm against abuse if I'm for a man being set free then I'm against the sin that enslaves him Would that not make sense? Jesus says I tell you the truth See the truth is a wonderful thing. It's the thing we've forgotten in our culture today we want the love of God, but not the truth of God and They go together loving somebody to know to tell them the truth now, here's the problem though.

We don't like the truth Do we many times? I don't want to hear the truth. Just tell me what I want to hear But true love will tell you the truth Here's why when you realize when I realized the truth that I am a sinner and without God without Christ I am lost When somebody finally told me the truth and it convicted me I was upset I was upset for a while And my mom would pray for me. Thank God for praying grandparents and praying mothers.

I Remember I've shared this before at our at our church but my mom would used to used to put the Bible on her my ACDC and Judas Priest albums and Iron Maiden and Metallica and and all that you used to yeah. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah This don't don't let this fool you Don't let this fool you and I would get so mad But she would share it son.

That's not a good way to go son. You don't belong here Son, you don't belong here. Come home.

Can't you hear the heart of God? Come home Come home and loving and someone enough to tell them the truth and the final thing. You must embrace the love of God to experience it That's the thing we miss you have to you have to embrace you have to embrace the love of God to experience it And I talked to a

lot of people and it's always this how could a loving God you fill in the blank, right? And I don't have all the answers If we had all the answers there would not be a God We would be God. How could a loving God and I want to ask the follow-up question How could man reject his offer of salvation and love How can we reject it Not talking about you.

Let me talk about me. I'll tell you why I rejected because prideful sinful man loved his lifestyle. I Was prideful as arrogant still got to work on.

It's still a struggle Pride and arrogance kept me prevented me from having a relationship with God. So remember that God's heart is not to condemn You are made in the image of God I can prove that with anybody to prove that to anybody And and we are seeing an epidemic at least in the church up here You know, we run to and I was it wasn't joking about Xanax or oxy or or vac it in I'm sure people use that a lot to get through the pain But Jesus has come to me the Bible says come to me all your week and heavy laden and I will give you rest So the pain we're feeling the shame we're feeling the guilt. We're filling the confusion We're filling we just say God change it change it in me I need you see it's a step of humility, isn't it to say I need God is a step of humility The humble he teaches his way Verse that Heather shared is Psalm 34 18.

The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart and he saves He saves such as have a contrite spirit. The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart So you might be asking all right Shane, what do I do? Well acts 319 says repent Repent therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. So the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord That's it Once that sin is dealt with and it's not a popular topic right now Is it this is not a popular topic whatsoever, but I've told God when he called me to preach I'll preach the truth I want to preach the truth because I love people enough to tell them the truth So the Bible says repent in any of us all of us who are not right relationship with God repent and be converted that your sins May be blot out so times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord That were times of the words times of refreshing is like a revival happening within your heart.

That's what happens When that issue is dealt with and we take it all to the cross

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