

Hope: When God Doesn't Heal

by Shane Idleman

When God doesn't heal, it's not always because of a lack of faith, but because of His sovereign plans, and we must have compassion on those who are insignificant and apply God's Word to our lives.

Duration: 55:39

Scripture: Matthew 20:29

Topics: "Compassion", "Healing"

Description

Shane Idleman addresses the challenging topic of healing in his sermon 'Hope: When God Doesn't Heal,' emphasizing that while God can heal, He does not always choose to do so according to His sovereign will. He shares personal experiences of praying for healing and witnessing both miraculous recoveries and heartbreaking losses, highlighting the importance of faith and compassion in the face of suffering. Shane encourages the congregation to understand that spiritual wholeness is more significant than physical health and to show mercy to those who are suffering, regardless of their circumstances. He also discusses the potential barriers to healing, including lifestyle choices, spiritual attacks, and the need for a steadfast mind anchored in God's truth.

Transcript

Matthew 20, verse 29. And we're in a series on hope, obviously, by this behind me. And that is actually ending tonight.

We've been doing a four-part series, number four's tonight. And I'm going to talk to you tonight about an interesting topic on when God doesn't heal. When God doesn't heal.

And many times, maybe it's just me, but when I read the New Testament, I get a little jealous. Jesus went, and everywhere he went, he healed them. The Apostle Paul, just an handkerchief would fall, or a shadow, and they would be healed.

They did miraculous signs. And my back, for example, what was a week, you know, of what is going on, Lord, and heal me in this area. And with that brought many different things.

And you know, we've all prayed for things, and God didn't heal. I remember at A.V. Hospital, I was in the emergency room, a month and a half now, and just praying for a man who was in coma, Lord, heal this man. I felt great leaving, and then we did his funeral here a week and a half later.

And another girl, this time last year, it's in my Bible, it was a journal note, I think she was dying of cancer at 14. Very, very sad. Very sad to go to her home and experience that, and feeling God, and praying for prayer, and healing, and not being embarrassed about it.

But yet, getting the word that she died two days later. And it's a very hard thing. I don't know if it's me, because I see it more, but God doesn't always heal.

But he also does. And I've seen him do amazing things, and it's hard to be caught in that friction of, he can, but Lord, will you? And why doesn't he do it for others? And why doesn't he do it for these people? And why can't we just tell the people in the wheelchair, Lord, heal them, like you did, God, and have them, and it's a hard point to discuss. And I'll just tell you up front, I don't have the answer.

I don't know why he does sometimes, and why he does in others, other than according to his sovereign will, and things that we're not aware of. And I've listened to Jerry, Johnny Eric Tata, I don't know how to pronounce her last name, I always get caught up on that. Many times where, even though it's difficult, she thinks, I mean, how many millions has she reached? Or if you've seen the guy, I don't even know his name, no arms and legs.

Talk about a powerful speaker, and the joy of the Lord is in it. So you wonder, you know, how God just works through all of that. So I do want to encourage you, I went through tremendous back pain, and that turned into anxiety, and just, Lord, what is going on in my body here? And it's debilitating, and crying out to God, heal me, and it was a process.

I'm glad I'm standing up here today, but, and that didn't spark the sermon, we just happened to find ourselves in Matthew 20, but I do pray for a lot of people. We go to the hospital homes, and many of you involved in the hospital homes, if you're not, I would encourage you to do so. And I pray like Paul, for some of those people to just be healed.

I mean, Lord, what is going on? And so it's not always linked to faith, because there's some groups out there, you just don't have enough faith, brother. Oh, no, trust me, I've prayed until my faith has been worn out. It's not always just faith, we just don't know the sovereign plans of God.

And I've actually found there's a lot of comfort in that, because if it was all up to my faith, like, Lord, what's wrong with me, and there must be, versus Lord, I don't know why I'm going through this. Now, one of the good things was I spent about three or four hours every morning in the Word, in prayer, and in Psalms, oh, thank God for the Psalms. And just, he redirected a lot of my heart, actually made me more compassionate again for people.

So I can see how he uses these things. And that's the topic tonight, and it might go a few different directions. But the message is when God doesn't heal, based on Matthew 29, now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

And behold, two blind men, sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David. Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet, but they cried out all the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David. So Jesus stood still, called them, and said, What do you want me to do for you? Then he said to them, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes, and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him. And I also had more of the passage that I was going to read and go up, but I just got stuck on this for a while. And one page turned into two, and two turned into three, and three turned into four.

And I said, I better stop there, or you'll leave before I'm done, or I'll have to do part two. And I usually prepare sermons based on what God puts on my heart. And if it's stirring me, it's going to stir you.

And being led by the Spirit, not having to get through a whole text, and not being subject to a certain area. But one thing that I think is comforting is Jesus was God. He was the Son of God.

And we talked about that last week, the hypostatic union of Christ. Fully God, yet fully man, a mystery we will not understand on this side of heaven. And because of that, he knew the perfect will of God.

So when he would heal, they would be healed. He knew the perfect will of God. But in other spots, he would talk about going into cities, and he could not do many works there because of their unbelief.

So you start to see that belief definitely plays a role, and faith definitely plays a role in healing. And I haven't found a scripture yet, maybe you can point one out for me, where Jesus healed somebody who didn't want to be healed, or was upset at God, had a terrible attitude, rebellious and unrepentant. Jesus said, well, I'm going to still heal you anyway.

Usually their faith came in alignment with, Lord, help me. See, Lord, I need to be made well. Or the woman bent over because Satan afflicted her.

Woman, thou art loose from your infirmities. And she rose up. Another girl, Talitha Akumai, a rise little girl, and a rise from your death.

They mocked him. So just everywhere he went, he just was healing and delivering because he knew the perfect will of God. He had the power of God residing in him.

So do we, but also our sinful flesh comes in. I mean, if we're honest, we pray for people sometimes, wouldn't this be so great, and Shane healed this person, aren't they so wonderful? So our flesh gets in there, and that's why we have to just rely on God. But a few things I pulled from this I want to share with you.

The first lesson is a lesson on spiritual wholeness. You can be physically blind but spiritually whole. These blind men, they said, Jesus, Son of David.

Son of David was a messianic term that the Jews used knowing that the Messiah was going to follow the line of David. So they knew, Son of David, have mercy on us. So they were physically blind, they were physically impaired, but they knew who he was.

But on the flip side, how many people are perfectly whole but don't know who he is? So spiritual wholeness, it's a lesson on spiritual wholeness that we look at people, oh, look at them, they're this, they're that. But if they know the Savior, they're better off than the people who are perfectly fit who don't know him. And many of you know I worked in the gym industry for many years, and that was probably one of the most prideful, idolatrous places.

I mean, there's mirrors everywhere, and everybody's just measuring this and this. And they're in perfect shape, marathon or perfect shape, but if they don't know Christ, they're dead spiritually. And there's a

wonderful lesson there that you can be hurting physically, but if you know the Savior, you're better than most of those on the planet because you're in right relationship in your spirit.

We also gleaned a lesson on compassion. This point right here struck me very deeply this week because we're lacking in a lot of compassion, especially when I read a commentary by John Nolan. I would recommend his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew.

He said, The crowd is not focused on what the blind people are saying, only on the disturbance that they create. No doubt they think that they are honoring the significance of Jesus by trying to silence the voice of such insignificant people. And I realize that we do that today.

We silence the voice of insignificant people. And here's why. They don't help us, they don't promote us, and they don't benefit us.

Have you ever thought about that? The people we stay in most contact with are usually the ones where there's a mutual benefit. We stay in contact with those friends who might have some pull, might have some money, might have some... What can you do for me? But insignificant people, they can't help me at all. They can't give me anything.

They can't help me in any way. They can't promote me. Insignificant people.

And that's why we have to be careful in a church. We can have the tendency to... Insignificant. I need the big givers.

I need the influential people. No, we need everybody. Jesus had compassion on those who couldn't do anything for him.

And if the truth be told, he had compassion on all of us. We're so insignificant in his eyes, yet he had mercy. And I just want to encourage you.

There's people out there. There's people out there that you need to have mercy on. They're insignificant.

I think of little kids, how people just treat little kids like trash sometimes. Get away from me, kid. Just bothering little kids.

I want... We need... The heart of Christ is to minister to the insignificant people. So as a church, we should be focusing on those who are broken and hurting and don't have a family. And one of the wonderful things about the hospital home, you can't get into a harder ministry than that.

I'm going to people who can't do anything for you. Nothing. And he had compassion.

But these people are silencing the voice. Can you imagine the crowd telling blind people to shut up? Jesus, Son of David, have mercy. Oh, leave him alone.

Leave him alone. He's too busy for you. God forbid when we get into that busy mode and we say we're too busy for insignificant people.

Because we're not busy when it comes to people who can help propel us or help share the same thing. They'll cover lunch. They'll play for golf.

They'll... Whatever it is. We tend to put insignificant people on the back burner. Quick test.

Who are you going to call back first? The insignificant person or the person who might have some information for you that benefits? And that's a wonderful lesson right there. And the sad truth is we don't reach out to people who don't help us or promote us or benefit us. We consider them a burden.

When somebody comes into your place of work, Jesus isn't going to... I don't have time for this person, but what about if your boss walks in? What's the difference? Because this insignificant person is bothering me. And I would just encourage you to change that heart, to have mercy on those that Christ had mercy on. Because you'll be filled with the Spirit.

God will not bless a person who's not merciful. When Jesus taught on the Beatitudes, he said those who are merciful, those who are broke and humble in spirit, God will reward them because they're showing mercy to those who can't show it back. I think that's one reason Jesus said, care for widows and orphans.

Go visit those in prison because they can't do anything for us. It's an act of mercy. I would encourage you to do that.

It's one thing to say that sounds great, but it's another thing to put feet to it and actually do it. Also, a lesson on healing. This is interesting.

A lesson on healing. Jesus would often ask people, and I really, theologians are divided on the answer, but he would often ask people, do you want to be made well? I mean, to me, that doesn't make, well, of course. Who doesn't? But do some people really want to be made well? We must want to change in this era of healing.

We must want to change. You might say, well, Shane, no kidding. Well, think about this.

We have Bruce Jenner, who's woman of the year. He's the world's most famous example of transgender identity. Then we have Rachel Dozal, the white woman who identifies as black, a prominent example of being transracial.

Then there's Jewel Shepping, who blinded herself so her mind could be in harmony with her body. Now she's a poster woman for being transabled. Let's not forget about Gary Matthews, a.k.a. Boomer, who believes he's a dog, apparently has an example of being transspecies.

You can see these videos on YouTube. You just cry. Hold on, I'm not done yet.

And now there's Paul Wulst, W-O-L-S-C-H-T, who thinks he's actually a six-year-old girl stuck in the body of a 50-something man. As reported by Ashley Goldberg, at age 46, this man deserted his wife and seven children to live his true life. He says, I have an adopted mommy and daddy who are totally comfortable with me being a little girl, and their children and their grandchildren are totally supportive.

We have a great time. We color, we do kid stuff. It's called play therapy.

No medication, no suicidal thoughts. I just get to play. In the YouTube video, he's dressed like a little girl.

I just... Lord, I mean, forgive me, but I don't know to laugh or cry. I just... Lord, what... But this is a culture void of God. When you remove God, you will see all Romans 1. How often have I quoted that? And I just might do that again today to remind us that this is what happens.

When you... It's almost like when you say, Okay, God, get out of my way. I'm going to be whoever I want. Well, you're going to want to be a snail.

You're going to want to be a dog. You're going to want... This guy Boomer, he eats dog food and walks like a dog. The girl who blinded herself is trans-abled, so now she can better connect with her mind.

And that's just sad because this is the hope. We have it right here. Hope.

It's right... What's right above the hope is the cross. That's the hope, so there's no shame in telling people that. As a matter of fact, like the statistics I gave you last week, I think that 85-90% of the people, Christians, don't even tell people about Jesus.

No wonder. We like to be closet Christians. We walk through the mall all day and not talk to anybody.

Let me go shopping, not talk to anybody. I know people at work, I'm definitely not going to mention Jesus there at work because they're going to think I'm weird. And we never offer hope.

I also received this email from an ER nurse. I think it was a year or two ago. She said, Shane, I'm an ER nurse and I care for many people.

You're right about how they love their sin and play the victim. Most of them don't want to change. They do not believe in victory, and I'm including believers.

They do not want to see themselves for who they really are. Their pride doesn't allow them to submit themselves to a holy God. And the more I talk to people, the more I counsel on different things, there's a lot of truth to this.

Not everybody wants to change. Do you want to be met... That's why Jesus said, do you want to be made well? And people, yes, of course. But you have to want to be made well.

Some people like that victim mentality. They don't really want to break free of that, what's holding them. How do you know, Shane? Because they don't apply God to their life to get out of that many times.

You know somebody wants to stay trapped if they don't want to obey the Word of God. As much... I have a heart for addicts. As much as you want to help them, many of them want to continue in that.

I don't like the consequence of shame, but I like the high. I don't really want to change, but I do. And they're caught in this thing.

They're not prepared for change. They don't want to humbly acknowledge that God needs to change them. So on that note, healing must start... Once a person wants to change, then healing must start with the application of God's Word.

Now if you've never heard that from here before, I'd be shocked. But there's nothing new under the sun. A lot of times when I work on a sermon, it's like, well that fits here again, that fits here again, because there's nothing new.

The Bible says, the Old Testament says, choose the old path, the old way. It's the path on which you will never get lost. So it starts with the Word of God.

Let me read again Romans 1. I'm going to skip all the way down to 21. And it might help shed light on what's going on with these stories I just read. Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were they thankful.

See, the reason he's saying this is most people know there's a God, except there's an atheist, they'll put up signs about Christmas and different things. But most people look around and say, Creator, you know, and I've talked about this many times, right? The heart and the liver and the kidney and the function works together with the central nervous system and the skeletal system and the mind with the neurotransmitter seems to put all this into play. Yeah, that just happened, right? I mean, come on.

It's ludicrous. Even if there's a stronger word. So that's why he's saying, if people know, before this it says, God's invisible attributes are clearly seen.

Clearly seen. I mean, I was talking to a scientist the other day and I didn't realize, but if the oxygen and the nitrogen levels on the planet were just skewed, just a tiny bit by my life. Gone.

I mean, you're talking just the ratio, just a little. So what keeps all that just perfect? I mean, come on, let's think this through. So his invisible attributes are clearly seen.

That's why they said, although they knew God, there is a God out there, they don't glorify him as God. Nor were they thankful, but they became futile in their thoughts and their foolish hearts became dark and professing to be wise, they became fools. And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man.

Therefore, God gave them over to uncleanness and the lust of their hearts. Basically, God said, I'm giving you over to what you desire. I'm giving you over to those evil thoughts.

Dishonoring their bodies among themselves. Who, here's the key, exchanged the truth of God for a lie. So there's an exchange process here.

There's always an exchange process. Either you grab the truth or you grab the lie. So they exchanged the truth with a lie.

And then, they worship and serve the creature rather than the creator who is blessed forever. Amen. So once you exchange the truth, you say, here's the truth, I don't want the truth.

I'm exchanging it for a lie. Once I do that, I begin to worship the creation, not the creator. And this is a great point to remind you.

You can highlight this. You should have this come up in your calendar once a week to remember to help keep you on track. A lie is always the first step in the wrong direction.

Satan came to Eve. Did God really say? Listen, a lie is, believing a lie is always and acting upon that lie is always the first step in the wrong direction. Sometimes, I mean, I could list 20 examples.

Sometimes we'll hear the example you don't deserve this. You'll hear that thought in a marriage, a hard, difficult marriage. You don't deserve this.

Oh yeah, that's right, I don't. You can do better. Yeah, that's right, I can.

Or the addict hears, just start tomorrow. Yeah, start tomorrow. Or, I've had a hard day today.

I'm going to have whatever. You fill in the blank. Whatever, our favorite.

Yeah, that's right. I've been doing good for a week and I deserve it. You believe that lie, that's the first step in the wrong direction.

All the time, anytime, in your marriage, in whatever you're struggling with. Somehow, in some way, we believe a lie. That's always the first step.

Or, you exchange that lie for the truth. Now you'll better understand what Paul said. Take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

I'm putting my thoughts captive like in a jail cell. Is this thought a lie? Then you're going in jail. Or is it the truth? Then I'm going to act upon it.

So anytime anybody goes in the wrong direction, the first step in the wrong direction began with a lie that they believed. I mean, think of dozens of examples. Not just in marriage, but in getting in trouble in something.

Even financially. Nobody will ever find out. I've worked so hard.

You know, we believe, and then we take the step. It always begins with believing a lie. And here's why.

The truth turns me in the right direction. The truth of God's Word puts me back in the right direction. That's why if you do any form of counseling, if you're going to do any form of advice, start with the Word of God.

And I tell people, listen, are you ready to apply what the Word of God says? No, I know what that says. This is beyond that, Shane. Well, you're not ready.

That's not beyond that. That is the answer. So when you begin to embrace the truth, it will put you back in the right direction emotionally, physically, psychologically, and spiritually.

But here's the big question I mentioned at the beginning. What do you do when God doesn't heal us on this side of heaven? And you might not need this sermon this week, but you'll probably need it someday. Because all of us pray for healing.

I mean, I remember when I had a root canal. Oh, my God, did I want healing. Man! I'll just take Vicodin for a month.

Oh, no, no, that's not going to happen. So I grinned and bared it, right? Tough guy. A couple of days, you know, finally wore off in the pain, but it was like unbelievable.

And you're wondering, like, Lord, what's wrong here? I'm your man. I mean, you know, just help me here. And going through that, and those are insignificant.

I mean, there's people going through living it with panic attacks and anxiety and fear and depression. So I'm not minimizing all of that, but I do want to remind you that there is an anchor you can hold on to. You can be going through hell but still holding on to heaven.

You can be going through hell and still hold on to heaven. And still, it's where the thoughts go. That's why I left Philippians 4. Thank God for it.

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true and honest and upright and just, pure things, meditate on those things and change where that direction of the mind is going. But I'm going to do something I haven't done before. I don't think I've talked about it in different places, but I'm going to talk about three things that may prevent healing.

Three things that may prevent healing, and these are just true. These are biblical, and I think it'll really help. Number one, consequences.

Some pain, depression, suffering, anxiety, and so on, you know the list, is the result of our lifestyle choices. This is where sometimes I upset people. Before you run to Xanax, run to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

That's okay to do. They're consequences. James 5.16 NIV That'll upset some people too on that one.

Therefore, the nearly inspired version, right? James 5.16 Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. That tells me that if there's some sin in my life, God might use suffering and a physical ailment to get me back on track. Because we don't listen until, I don't know about you, but my kids don't listen until you make them listen, somehow.

Right now they've got this elf on the shelf to make kids good. I had Belt on the shelf. You know, it's that that something gets your attention.

So we cannot ignore this, and I hate when psychologists or Christian therapists, whoever, oh no, no, no, you can't always just blame sin. I'm not always blaming sin, but I'm saying it is one of the reasons why a person can stay in a spot of not being healed. Look what he says here.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. I don't know what else to say to that. That's pretty clear.

You don't need a degree in the Greek language to understand what that means. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. In other words, what we sow we reap.

What we sow we reap. God is merciful, but often there are consequences. So if there are consequences, it's still good to say, don't fight it.

Say, God, have mercy on me, just like these blind men did. God, have mercy on me. That's why this song, Good Good Father, man, that sometimes brings me to tears every time.

He is a good, good father. When you say, Lord, I've been a bad, bad boy. Say, have mercy on me.

I shouldn't have done this. Lord, have mercy on me. I don't want these consequences.

I'm relying on you. I'm relying on your perfect strength and your perfect will. Lord, begin to heal me.

Show me. What can I do? How can I improve? Lord, show me what is creating this. Is there consequences to my sin or to wrong choices I've made? I want to give you a great example.

If you didn't hear this, you should. Do you ever listen to Family Life Today with Dennis Rainey? They had a pastor on there who I enjoy. I've followed his ministry for about 15 years.

Tommy Nelson. He wrote on the Book of Solomon. He teaches on the Song of Solomon.

He teaches on the Song of Solomon. He's a very powerful speaker on the board at Dallas Theological Seminary. Well, he had a nervous breakdown.

And they call it the dark night of the soul. And he said, I don't care how many scriptures I quoted. My body was just on fire.

And before he said why, I already knew. Listening. No Sabbath day for 30 years.

Preaching four or five times a weekend. Up early. Teaching young men's groups.

Men's studies. This. Conferences.

Seminar. He's just going. And you can only go so far before your adrenal glands.

It's what pumps in chemicals. Serotonin and L-Dopamine and all these chemicals. Cortisol, which is not actually good when you need it, but if you're always running on this, your body's going to say, I'm done.

So he went into this just total meltdown. Took off two months. What's going on with him? What's going on? But the condition was because of no Sabbath.

And he got to it later. He said he didn't rest. Ever.

He was just like my dad. Like I was raised to. You just work.

So I have to force myself to take a Sabbath because the body needs it. So when you go against God's design, there are consequences. And he was for months and having tests.

Blood tests are fine. Everything's fine. They don't know what's going on with him.

It's very hard. He met with somebody who said, oh, your serotonin is completely depleted. You need these.

I think it's some type of inhibitor or something that actually will go in and help your body recreate. And serotonin is what allows us to experience pleasure. I'm sorry.

L-Dopamine. Dopamine experiences pleasure. Serotonin is more the relaxing thing.

And even talking about this, people say, oh, come on that psychology. I want to say, no, that's how God designed us. You don't tell a diabetic to stop your insulin shots.

I mean, what's the difference? However, you don't run to that. That's my, I mean, I need Xanax. I need Vicodin.

I need Valium. You run to God first and take inventory of your life and see what's going on there. So he said there's no external reason why this was happening.

I just had to stand back and trust in the sovereignty of God and the bare word of God to take me through this. Because your body doesn't care that you're quoting scripture. You're hurting.

And he said the hardest people to deal with were this time was those evangelical Christians who don't believe in any type of getting the body back balanced. And it's an interesting topic because on one hand we don't run to, we don't want to rely on certain drugs. We don't want to just go and give the doctor, but on the other hand, sometimes there's wisdom there in how the body operates and how it functions.

He got on this little pill that readjusted his serotonin level and about three weeks later he came in to his wife and said, I'm back. I'm back. I'm back.

I'm back. It recharged his battery. It redid because it's how God designed it.

God designed cortisol to be in a fight and flight. Okay, here comes a lion. Here's my spear.

I'm going to get it. Okay, that's good. But not to be in that constant state all the time.

That's why I often come out against caffeine, all these monster drinks, because you're keeping your body in a constant state of fight or flight. It's hard to sleep. It's hard to get up.

And we're just constantly living like that. There will be a price to pay. You're robbing Peter to pay Paul.

That's how God designed it. Sometimes we have to look at our lifestyle and say, is this a consequence of this? Yeah, but Shane, what about be anxious for nothing? But everything in prayer is application. Yeah, be anxious for nothing.

It's telling us don't worry about certain things. But when your body chemistry is going haywire, you know, it's just and you have to be careful. You have to be very careful.

I want to be delicate here too, but sometimes the medical industry is more on prescribing something than looking at what's really going on. Funny story. Hope this guy doesn't hear it.

Went to the doctor for my back, right, this week. Did my blood pressure. Shane, you're 180 over 110.

And you went and got these four beta before things, this. I'm going to get you on some blood thinner. I'm sitting there going.

Hold on. That was a really small cuff. Can I try the bigger cuff? Oh, they didn't use the bigger cuff? No, they didn't.

Oh, okay, you're fine. So that, I just almost started ingesting all of that. Not wise.

That would have been very bad. So that's something, trusting in God and not always because that's all I want to do is prescribe something. Prescribe something.

And from time to time, I think God has given us certain things. But it can't be what we run to. We run to Him, ask for wisdom, and let Him direct us.

And I'm sure it's embarrassing. He took everything away. Oh no, your blood pressure's fine.

Yeah, I figured that. I'm not going to jump on this stuff without consulting and looking at different things. So that's just one example.

Another example. Example B. From healing. This is big.

Withdrawals and the usage of acceptable drugs. Now a drug is a substance. Anything that alters us psychologically.

There are what withdrawals are. It's not just the heroin addict that has withdrawals. I'm actually working on a book.

It's the past year and a half. I don't know when I'll finish it. It's on this topic of helping people addicted from everything from sugar to caffeine to oxy to heroin to alcohol to marijuana to you name it.

There's addiction there. There is a way to get out of that. But in studying this topic, I came across something called post-acute withdrawal syndrome.

So although somebody can get through the initial stages of coming off of something, the first week which I call hell, I tell people pray for heaven but expect hell. Just try giving up coffee for two days. You'll see what hell on earth is.

We're in this culture of accepting all this stuff. So anyway, once you get through the initial stages, right? Okay, glad that's over. Well, in a couple weeks, even up to a couple months, although your physical symptoms are now subsided, now the mental ones kick in.

That's why it's called post-acute withdrawal syndrome. And it happens months later. And that's the number one cause of relapse for any type of user.

It's because everything's going good and then BAM! Panic attacks. Fear, irritability, palpitations. The heart's pounding.

What's going on? And then they go back to the source that initially caused it instead of running to God. So in those cases, I would tell people, not dying. You'll get through it.

There's what's happening. Your brain chemistry is all messed up. Your neurotransmitters are trying to function now correctly.

That's why you're having the heart rhythms. That's why you're going through anxiety attacks and panic attacks. That's why your body's trying to readjust because of the abuse that's been going on for many years.

So see, oh Lord, heal me, heal me, heal me. Why isn't he? Because of the consequences. So you see, a lot of this fits together.

There's consequences for our actions, for our sins. Here's another consequence. Not spending time in God's Word so that healing takes place.

The mind controls everything. Everything. The mind controls it.

So if all we're focused on is ISIS, Monsanto, financial collapse, the war on Christmas, the Second Amendment. I saw all this on Facebook within an hour. You know what Monsanto is that people are

saying? They're destroying our soil, they're spraying stuff in the air, they're killing everything, there's no more seeds, and they're destroying our food.

Well, my king still sits on the throne. Use wisdom. ISIS, yeah, it's coming.

Second Amendment, we're in the fear factor mode. And the mind, I'm not going to belabor this point many times before, but I want to show you the consequences of not being in God's Word. I mean, just turn to the Psalms, and they're like, God, you are my refuge, you are my strength, you are my provider.

You'll bring mountains, wipe out entire mountains, just bring them to nothing. The enemies will bow to you, nations will have to bow to you. You rise one king up, you put another king down.

You control with just the word of your mouth, the waves in the sea obey him. That's power. So if you stay in the Word of God, and you change your mental diet to focus on God, then you're joyful and thankful.

That can change, and that can bring healing. I truly believe that. So there's consequences.

One area why we're not healed. The other area is condition. The condition of the body.

Why do I go to a four-year-old's funeral who died of leukemia? Talk about sad funerals. I mean, we're in a sinful, fallen world, and often there's not complete healing on this side of heaven. And just that statement's going to make people mad, because there are groups that think you should be healthy, wealthy, and wise no matter what.

What do you do with Paul? I mean, what do you do with some of the strongest Christians I know? Sometimes healing doesn't come, and that's why I wanted to stress that point on mercy. Folks, we've got to start having mercy on people. The person on insulin chides the person on Xanax.

The person on beta blockers chides the person on amoxicillin. What I mean by that is somebody's like, oh, you shouldn't take amoxicillin for your strep throat. Let God heal you.

Well, why are you taking beta blockers and Coumadin to lower your blood pressure and get your blood thin? Well, that's different. No, it's a result of a bad diet in and out every day. Oh, I might have struck a chord with this crowd.

But think about how we do that. The person addicted to seven diet Pepsis a day mocks a person who can't stop Oxy. We just, mercy, mercy, and then I love Christian leaders who chide everybody, and they weigh 350 pounds.

I want to tell them that's called gluttony, and that's bad. I mean, we need to start having a little bit more mercy and understand that we're all in this thing together. Doesn't make it right.

But let's, mercy, God, mercy. Mercy as we're going through things. And I've confessed before, I went through the Judgmental Pharisee, you know, time frame.

It was pretty long. I could point out everything. Look at that, people.

But I had to have a venti coffee in the morning, a venti coffee at night. 600, 700 milligrams of caffeine, and I was addicted, but I could, oh, how come they can't stop that? How come they can't stop this? And they just eat too much, and they just do this. They can't stop drinking.

They can't stop their drug use. Well, I couldn't stop my drug use. Shane, oh, absolutely.

If you don't think caffeine is a drug, just Google it. Just Google it. It's a central nervous stimulant that affects the mind in the same way the opium does.

I mean, we've just got to wake up. I know these aren't popular sermons, but I may have got a deal that I'm here to help. In order to help, it hurts.

Right? And all you have to do is take this to God. I am absolutely convinced if you say, Lord, I don't like what he said, but do I need to work on that, that you're, yes, yes, the hound of heaven, the Holy Spirit will work on certain areas of your life that need correction. And that's why I love a loving father.

He warns us, hey, you might want to stop that. I mean, when I see 12-year-olds walk around with monster drinks, I get, oh, do you have any clue what you're going to turn into? Exactly what the thing says. Monster.

Just go online. How much has road rage increased? I think it's like one-third of all fatalities now are due to road rage. Is there connections here with all this? And the suicide rate, and we're putting all this stuff in that stimulates.

But you know this about drugs, right? Whatever it does to you, what does the reverse happen when you come off? If you're taking something that accelerates, crystal meth or something, you're going to come down very hard. If you take something that brings you down, then you're going to come up and be anxious and irritable all the time. There's a reverse effect there.

I know this term is probably way more than you wanted, but it's true. And the next reason is combat. So we have consequences for our sins, just the condition of the body sometimes, and then combat.

You know, I want to say something. I don't know why. I've ignored this twice now, feeling prompted to say this.

On the condition of the body, you know, a lot of people, there are people now, a lot of people that need to take insulin and different things for diabetics. But I've seen countless people reverse that by taking care of their body. So you don't have to run to the shot.

Now, there are some people 12 years old, but now it's called, they've got a new term, child onset obesity. When you have little kids that are obese at 10? I'll just tell you right now whose fault that is. It's not the child's at that age.

It's the person putting the stuff in the refrigerator, in the pantry, and not teaching and helping. And I have four kids that like to eat a lot, so I know. Very difficult.

Very difficult. I said, well, now you're not eating anything today. I can't have anything.

Yeah, I'm going to cut up a pomegranate right now. It's interesting how you can lead your family. I cannot buy enough pomegranates now to last three days.

I'll buy 12 pomegranates. They're gone in three days. See, they follow.

If I want to get my wife to eat, here's one thing we've always been challenged. She was a sugar addict. I was trying to be more healthy.

I just have salads and healthy stuff. Now she starts eating the same thing. See, you're leading by example in the home.

You're leading by example. I see so many people running to the doctor when they can cure themselves. Not all the time, right? Big disclaimer.

In the gym industry, I see so many people, yeah, I'm a diabetic. Can I be honest? You're about 100 pounds overweight. The diet is very unhealthy that you're on.

I mean, they'll tell me I can't have carbohydrates, but they'll come in with a 32-ounce Pepsi. Well, Shane, it's a diet. Well, it has aspartame.

Aspartame is a chemical that the FDA shouldn't have proved. And what that does is your body doesn't know there's no calories. Your body sees a sugar substitute, so it's going to kick in everything as if it was calories, and it's going to be a detriment to the body.

That's why they're linking lots of Alzheimer's or different things to people's diets, because you're not feeding the body what it needs to proper functionally. And every time somebody gets mad at this type of sermon, or what I'm saying is because they're convicted. I've never had anybody say, get upset that it's taking care of their body.

That's not true. Diet patient says, right here, no calories. Yeah, no calories.

A calorie is just a unit of energy. If I consume 2,000, I can probably consume 3,000 calories a day, but I better burn 3,000 calories a day. It's just a unit of energy.

So just because there's no calorie, fat free, if it's junk and garbage, it's not going to help the body. And once you start to feed the body what it needs, you won't be craving a lot of the junk, because you're feeding it what it needs. So that's just a whole bunch of extra advice on the condition of the body.

Yes, sometimes people need insulin. I've recommended it. I've recommended Xanax.

I've recommended what's that other word I just mentioned for root canal? Vicodin. If somebody is going through tremendous pain, and hey, try this for a day or two. Don't get hooked.

Oh, I don't feel good. But God has given us sometimes these things to get... And I know people don't agree with that. But I don't recommend it often.

But if you need to do that, I don't want somebody to feel guilty. Some of these things are a gift from God. But when they become abused, they're not a gift.

And that's the danger. And the last thing is combat. So there's consequences to our sins and to our choices.

Sometimes it's just the condition of the body. Many of you, you know young kids who have died at four, five, six from leukemia or cancer or God forbid asthma. I mean, it's terrible.

It's just the condition of the body. But the third thing is combat. Some pain, depression, suffering, etc.

is the result of spiritual attack. There's no way around this one. No way around this one.

Jesus healed a lady bent over for 17 years. He didn't say, your sciatic nerve is kind of messed up here and you kind of sleep wrong. He said, why should this daughter of Abraham be inflicted, tormented by the devil? And then he said those famous words, woman thou art loosed from your infirmities.

And she stood up. Why should this child being thrown in the fire continue to convulse? Jesus said, out of him. The man sitting in the tombs, living among the tombs, Jesus came.

So what do we have to do with you? Jesus, we are legion, we are many. Jesus said, I don't care. Out of him.

So there's, unless you believe that that no longer applies, well, I don't. I mean, there's demonic influence and it's real. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

You're not going to beat the devil with your 9mm. Okay? You're not going to beat the devil with putting extra locks on the door. The battle is spiritual.

You pull down strongholds. You cast down arguments. If you look at the imagery there, that would be a wonderful verse to teach on sometimes.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the powers of darkness, against rulers of this age. And it talks about casting down arguments. Like, what does that mean? Something that's going against God, you cast it down.

You don't embrace it. You bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. You say, that's not a right thought.

That's a wrong thought. And if the devil's coming against you, this breaks down, and this is sick, God, help me. God, help me.

And you fight demonic realm, you fight it with prayer. You fight it with fasting. You fight it with the spirit-filled life.

If I'm going through something, you know what I'd probably do? I would fast, I would pray, and I would go visit all the hospital homes. And show mercy, and be filled with the spirit of God, and get off my trip, and count all my Christmas presents, and start serving God. And the devil hates worship, he hates prayer, and he hates fasting, because you're starving the flesh, the very thing he's using against you.

That's how you fight the devil. Well, Shane, it's not working. Well, keep trying.

What's the Bible say? Knock, and it will be open to you. The strongest Christians in God's kingdom are also the strongest knockers. See, there's something we don't talk about anymore.

Perseverance. We don't talk about... I said a prayer for three minutes. When is the last time you spent an hour on your knees? That's how you pull down arguments, and cast away things that are highly exalting themselves.

You cast them down. In order to keep Paul humble, he was given a thorn in his flesh, a messenger of Satan. Well, somebody once asked me, Shane, what do you do if it's the consequences of sin? How do I

know if it's a condition of my body? Or how do I know if it's a demonic attack? Good question, right? I'm going to give you a very, very good answer that works all the time.

I cover all my bases. Lord, if this is a demonic attack, Satan has no power here. He's defeated on the cross.

I'm not going to allow it in my home. I'm not going to allow it in my body. I'm claiming victory.

I'm speaking it out. Go watch War Room. Watch what she did, walking around that house.

There's nothing wrong with that. That's too Pentecostal. No, I'm walking around my house saying, devil, you are not welcome here.

You're not going to bury my 10-year-old at 17 because of a heroin overdose. You're not going to take my son and get him addicted to alcohol. You're not going to take my two daughters and get them raped.

You have no, no, no, no control in this house. The demonic realm was crushed at the foot of the cross. I'm going to sit, I'm going to pray, and I'm going to worship.

I don't care what I have to do. You have no power over me. Greater is He that's in me than He that's in the world.

You've been defeated. The lies are over. You've been defeated.

That's it. That's one. The next one is, Lord, if there is any unclean thing in me, if there is iniquity I'm holding in my heart, if these things are happening because of the sins that I've done or something I'm doing, Lord, please show them to me.

Reveal them to me like David said. Created me a clean heart. Renew a right spirit within me.

I want to see the joy of my salvation return to me. Lord, I'm justifying. I'm blame-shifting.

I'm a sinner. I can sneakily do things, but you illuminate. Show me.

Show me if what is happening is directly related to something I'm doing that I need to repent from. But Lord, if it's a condition of my body, I'm holding on to you. You're my anchor.

You're everything. Listen, I've felt anxiety and palpitations. My wife will tell you so bad that I thought I was going to die.

Let's make plans for the church. I'm out of here tomorrow. But I'm holding on to the rock.

I'm holding on to him as I go down. I don't know if that was... What was that from? Condition? This? This? Demonic attack? I'm covering all bases. I think that's biblical.

Because woe be to the man that says, no, I haven't done anything to cause this. Really? We just don't know. That's why God says, come to me.

But he also says, whoever wants wisdom, wisdom, ask. I mean, there are so many things that God has showed me when I just ask, Lord, just show me. From ways to heal our kids, from certain things when they were sick growing up, to certain ailments.

One of the reasons I get hooked up on this caffeine thing with coffee is because he's been showing me for probably 12 years, my wife will tell you. And what it does to me, it makes me irritable and anxious. And if we can just sum it up, a jerk.

Right? Leave me alone. ADD, give me away. Type A personality.

And you can't be a pastor and have those qualities. You know, it's not a good thing. You shouldn't even be a husband or a father or a mother.

So he's showing me how what I'm doing to my body is hurting others. And he's convicting. It's a loving father.

And I see people, so many people abusing different things. I mean, I could spend 20 minutes on sugar addiction that would make all of you get out here and squirm. And the foods we're consuming, that some of it has no nutritional value at all.

The pesticides, the herbicides, the fungicide, everything, chemicals, all kinds of junk going against God's design. And here's the results. Childhood obesity is now an epidemic.

Cancer, heart disease, number one killers. I mean, this is not rocket science. And it's so sad because it wasn't until I would see people in their 60s that would come to me and say, Shane, I got to make changes.

Doctor doesn't give me much time. Why waste an entire life? So see, God lovingly warns and confronts and challenges. And it's still another page, but let me just read one of my favorite Scriptures.

You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in you. So the whole series on hope is staying anchor to the anchor. He will keep the person whose mind is steadfast.

Now this is interesting. He will keep you in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast. Well, all of us can say, I've been there and I'm not in perfect peace sometimes.

That steadfast there is a word. It's keeping your mind back. It's going to drift, but it's back on God.

You're steadfast. You're persevering. You're anchoring.

It's falling away, but you're going back. Lord, this isn't right, but I'm going. You're keeping your mind steadfast on him because you trust in God.

And he will keep that person in perfect peace. I want to show you a video. It shows the spread of Christianity.

And sometimes we forget about how big God's mercy is and his love and his hope and how he just encompasses everything. And his mercy, his word will travel. So as you watch this, just kind of reflect on God's greatness.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/32/SID32121.mp3>

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