

How God Uses Your Brokenness

by Shane Idleman

God can use our brokenness to rebuild us and strengthen us, and He can use us to help others even in our brokenness.

Duration: 22:52

Scripture: Psalm 34:18, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 61:3, Malachi 2:16, Matthew 5:32, Romans 8:28, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Philippians 4:6-7, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:7

Topics: "Trust in God", "Restoration"

Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes that while divorce is not encouraged without biblical grounds, separation can be a necessary step in toxic marriages to allow for healing and restoration. He highlights the importance of seeking God during difficult times and contending for one's marriage, even in the face of brokenness and pain. Shane shares personal experiences of how God can use brokenness to rebuild lives and relationships, urging individuals to trust in God's restorative power rather than seeking quick fixes through new relationships. He stresses that true healing comes from humility and a vibrant relationship with God, rather than from societal expectations or judgments about divorce. Ultimately, Shane encourages the congregation to look to God for strength and guidance in their struggles.

Transcript

If a marriage is challenging and there's no biblical grounds, we can't support divorce. We couldn't encourage divorce. There's just no biblical grounds for it.

But Shane, it's a very tough situation. Look at the situation I'm in. Well then, what I would recommend is separation.

Move outside. If you're in a toxic environment and it's difficult, maybe kids are in danger. Get out of that environment so that possibly healing and restoration can take place.

Not for the goal of being divorced. The goal is being restoration. How many men finally wake up when they see their wife pack their bags and their kids and they're leaving.

We're going to mom's house. If a man is wise, he'll wake up and he'll repent and not head to the nightclub. But many people look for that as an excuse.

Ah, there's my excuse. And we're going to talk about that in just a minute on separation. And people sometimes get mad on this point of separation.

Shane, you shouldn't tell people that. I'm not saying divorce. I'm just saying get out of that environment if it's toxic.

You guys need to seek God. You guys need to work on your relationship with God. But our kids will see it.

Well, they already see it. They already see the yelling and screaming at home. They already see the holes being punched in the wall.

They already see the alcohol or the drugs being abused or used. They already see the anger and the cussing. You go to church and then you act like it's Satan's house on Monday.

They see that already. But if you say mommy and dad are going to work on each other, we're going to work to restore this marriage and it's going to be, and hopefully that's the goal. That's the point of separation is to remove yourself from that toxic environment.

So here it appears that Jesus is saying that a divorce is not legitimate. Then marriage is not legitimate. But if the divorce is legitimate, then remarriage is legitimate.

And in the context of the day, I'm reading a commentary, their certificate of divorce was specifically given in order to permit and endorse remarriage. So when Jesus said, it has been said, anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce. That's interesting because in the old Testament that never happened.

What happened? The man would kick her to the curb. Maybe the woman would if she was, could provide, but somebody would kick somebody to the curb. No, nothing.

Just bye bye. So Moses initiated a certificate of divorce. It was actually to help the woman, believe it or not.

Study the early church fathers, study the historical context of this whole passage. What it would do is they would give the woman a certificate of divorce. So now she's not homeless with nothing.

It's a certificate of divorce saying, I release you as the husband. So she is free to remarry. But Jesus said, I tell you, you can't just give her a certificate of divorce at your whim.

You have to do it when that marriage covenant has been broken. That's when you have grounds to do this. But how many of you know that God is the God of restoration? Even in that, even when adultery takes place, I've seen marriages restored and stronger afterwards.

Now I'm not encouraging that. Please don't, don't mistake that. I better reword that a little bit.

But it's true sometimes because the marriage is dying, it's dead and that happens and the spouse is broken. Both spouses are broken. Hopefully I can't believe this happened.

And through that brokenness, God begins to rebuild that marriage and calls that marriage out of that darkness and begins to put them as a shining light where they're counseling people later on in their life. They have marriage studies in their homes because they learn from that. What we believe this is or could

be attributed to is a persistent, a persistent pattern of unfaithfulness.

A persistent pattern. I've had friends growing up, even Christian friends, they cheat on their spouse. I remember one guy 15 years ago I talked with him and wouldn't you know it, three months later, cheats on his spouse.

A year later, different person. Like you got a problem. Fool me once, okay, fool me twice, you know, that whole saying.

But there's a consistent pattern here of unrepentant sin where they keep breaking off the marriage relationship. So we believe, and we believe that Jesus teaches there is grounds for divorce. But how do we know if the husband or wife isn't going to change? How do we know if this won't bring them to complete brokenness? That's why you wait on God.

Seek the one who has the answer. Don't be going through YouTube listening to 50 marriage sermons. Seek God who has the answer.

It's amazing, the marriage sermons I give on can I divorce my spouse because of adultery, there's like 70,000 views. There's another one, can I divorce my spouse because of abandonment, another 70,000. See, people are looking and it's good to give God the counsel.

It's good to give wise counsel. But at the end of the day, you need to go and you need to seek God. Because people say, but Shane, it's actually getting worse.

And you know what I say? Don't give up, look up. Because often the darkest, at the darkest hour, that's where the light shines bright. Sometimes God has to get people to the complete rock bottom before they look to the rock who is at the top and they build their life on that rock.

So don't discount, you don't know what God is doing. You don't know what God is doing in their heart, but they left me, they're dating somebody else. Let me tell you, when the hound of heaven is let loose on that person, they will not be able to sleep at night.

They will be restless because they know they're out of God's will. So you let God loose through the prayer closet. You pull down heaven, you put on the weapons of your warfare, and you get and you seek God and you do battle for your family.

That's how you fight this battle. But what do most spouses do? Okay, he got plan B, I better go get plan B. And they settle. And they're never happy.

Many times. I shouldn't say never. But the statistics on second marriages, the divorce rate's actually higher.

Did you know that? The grass is not greener. I love what somebody said. The grass is the greenest wherever you water it.

Now, I'm not, I'm not discounting difficult, very difficult marriages. I can't share a lot. But there are people, you know, I've talked to, I'm not really working with them anymore because it's terrible, but the environment is terrible.

They hit them or they put a knife to their throat. I'm gonna kill you, you fill in the blank. The kids are there, the kids are traumatized, it's terrible.

So I'm not discounting that. I'd say you get out of there. But don't forget to seek God.

Don't forget to look to Him to be your strength. Because often we run to the next relationship. And we miss what God wants to do.

How many people run to a relationship instead of God and get in a bunch of trouble? Most of you can raise your hand if you're honest. Couldn't we? Come on, don't leave me, just me? Just me, just this whole church, in the balcony, come on. Anybody up there? Okay, there's a couple, there's a couple.

Okay, there we go. Not everybody, thank God. You know, there are exceptions.

You know, some pastors were raised in a leave it to beaver home and they've never experienced anything difficult and their marriage is great and that's wonderful. But I went to the school of hard knocks. It teaches you a little bit of things and it wakes you up.

And as funny as this will sound, I would have not, I would not change my past now. Because those who have been forgiven much love much. God used that.

God used that. And He'll use it in your own life as well. He'll use that past brokenness, that past pain to build you up and to strengthen you and to encourage you.

Out of the ashes you will arise. Why? Because God's rebuilding you up. God's says, I'm looking for humble, broken people.

And if you walk around, I'd rather, I'd rather be humble and broken by God than walk around with a, with a, with an arrogant attitude all the time. I've never been divorced. Well, good for you.

You're so arrogant. Do you even know God? Do you have a vibrant relationship with God through that brokenness? So remarriage, I don't believe is the issue here. Jesus isn't really talking about remarriage.

What's He talking about? Legitimate divorce, manipulation and abandonment. He's talking about abandonment. You can't just abandon your spouse.

Except if that spouse does this. So I like what this theologian said, J. Noland on this point. He said, the normal understanding of Matthew 5.32 runs the danger of leaving the woman involved a double victim.

Think about this. First, she has been divorced by a husband who may well have been, have rejected her at his own whim. Boom, you're rejected.

If that's not, have anyone ever been through that? If that's not bad enough, have you ever got that call? I don't love you anymore. I'm with such and such now. Wow.

So that's number one. Number two is, guess what? You can't remarry. Ha, ha, ha.

But that's what some Christians would teach. See, that makes this person a double victim. I don't see that.

I don't see that in the heart of God. I can tell you a personal story right now. We've been, we've talked to a little bit.

We know this family. We're praying for him. Twenty-four, twenty-five years old, abusive husband, probably cheating on her, loves pornography.

And now she can't get married again. He's moving on. What's the end of it? The Bible says, yeah.

But you also look at the heart of God, the context of Scripture too. What is Jesus trying to do here? What is it? What's the whole point here? Because of the hardness of your heart. So again, clearly understand that I'm not advocating divorce, nor am I saying that if you're currently separated, that divorce is an option because better opportunities await you.

God hates divorce and anyone who has been there knows why. I want to read it word for word so I don't misapply that one. That's why this subject is so difficult because you have to find that, you have to walk a tightrope.

On one hand you're advocating divorce, which is not good, but on the other hand you're not giving people hope and you're creating just a situation, environment where we don't see the heart of God. So what about the people sitting here this morning saying, did I make a mistake? Because this happens all, every time I teach on this, but Shane, we didn't divorce right. We didn't do things right five years ago, ten years ago.

I actually met my husband as a result of an affair I had and he was the person I'd cheat on. So is God saying, well, tough luck now, you're going to hell. I know this and I can back it up with Scripture all day long that God says, when you turn to me, when you return to me, I will build you up.

I will strengthen you. Now if you can fix a situation, you better fix it. That's called repentance.

But if you can't fix it, if you can't fix it, take it to God. You say, Lord, we did not do this right five years ago or ten years ago. Lord, this is a result of adultery.

God, we are so sorry. And God will take that broken heart and he will begin to build you up and strengthen you and take out of the ashes. He'll be able to rise you up again like that song.

I love that song. Out of the ashes I will arise because God lifts you up. Again, see, I'm not validating what took place, but why don't we offer that person hope just like we offer every other sin hope? I've noticed this.

It makes me a little bit sad in our drive and our need to relate to the LGBTQ community, which is something we should be doing. It's no different than any other. But in our drive to do that, we almost give that more grace than we do those who went through divorce.

I've seen it. I've seen it many times. That's why I say carry around the big D. Well, better do it since you weren't here last week, maybe, some of you.

What happened in my early years, in my 20s, walked away from God, alcohol, anger, arrogance. I destroyed a marriage. We were not believing.

We're not walking with God. My wife cheated on me and left, and I didn't care. I went to Plan B, C, D, E, F, and G, and just for a year just rejected God.

But God got me to a point of complete brokenness, complete brokenness before him. I remember the house. I remember the room.

I remember the street. I remember early in the morning, and I just started to worship God. God, I'm so sorry.

The prodigal son's coming home. And when the prodigal son comes home, there is tears. I started reading the Bible.

It was coming alive. I turned off, like I told you, GMAC, all the country music, back when Garth Brooks and Shania Twain and Faith Hill and Tim McGraw and all that was just popular. I'm just listening to that all the time, wondering why I can't stop drinking, you know, just listen to all that.

And then it was a joke, kind of. And so everything changes. Now I want worship on.

Now I want this on. Now I'm contending for my marriage, even though she's still living with someone else by this time. I'm still contending.

Oh, God, this is wrong. And I'm fighting it. I'm built.

I'm just contending for a few years, just contending and contending and contending. I sought counsel. I was in the word of God.

I was in worship. I was in church three times a week. And just, I'm fighting for it, Lord.

That's why. But I can't change the heart of another person. And so after a few years, a few years of singleness in my 20s, 29, 30, 31.

Now I'm teaching. Weight loss seminars got put on my heart to preach. And I'm writing a book.

And I'm all this single living with my mom. Now I had to move all the way. I had to sell custom home in Quartz Hill in my 20s and move back in with my mom and dig ditches.

God knows how to humble, let me tell you. And it was the most humbling, beautiful time of my life. So much peace.

So I'm moving forward. I meet Morgan at a church. And I'm like, oh, Lord, this is, I need to know from you.

I can't go through that again. Too much pain. And she'll tell you, I probably broke off the relationship a half dozen times before we got married.

You know, you probably didn't know that. I kept breaking up, kept breaking up. And a pastor friend of mine said, you better ask your marrier or you're going to lose her.

He pulled me aside. You remember, huh, Linda? And but the reason I did, I was so fearful. I can't go through this again.

I can't go through this again. God, I can't go through this again. So I said, Lord, I need to know.

And I told Morgan, I said, I'm going to reach out. I met you. You know, this could go somewhere.

I got to reach out to my ex-wife. It's been over a year. And my mom confirmed it.

She said the same thing. She didn't know I was thinking this. So I emailed her.

I said, hey, I've met someone. I just need to know, am I still free? Are you, are you, you know, is there, is God doing anything in your heart? And it was almost like the email was just a kind of a mocking tone. Like, please leave me alone.

I've met someone. We're getting married. Move on with your life, please.

Like, well, if that's not a closed door, I don't know what is. So see, people don't know the pain I went through for years of contending. Just this morning on Facebook, and did I block him? You bet I blocked him.

They said, I need to repent to my congregation. I'm in adultery still with my wife. And I'm causing my wife to commit adultery.

How foolish is that? Now, if it's true, hey, wonderful. But they are so far out in left field. They don't even know what they're talking about.

That's a sign. That's a heart of a judgmental, arrogant spirit. That's not of God.

That's, it's so far out of context, not only abandonment, not only adultery, not only waiting, but God, so I shouldn't be married to a wonderful spouse and have beautiful kids. I should just, just still be single. It doesn't make any sense to me.

But these little negative, if the demonic realm will put negative things out there, and they'll start to harass you. Now, if there's truth to something, and you've got to repent, you've got to come clean, clean, let God rebuild. But that, and I still get that all the time.

When people hear sermons like this, you unrepentant, you shouldn't be pastoring. Did you hear my story? Did any of this make sense? Do you read your Bible? There's grounds. Even if you don't think there's grounds, you cannot say for certain, because this scripture is pretty clear.

It's pretty clear that what Jesus is saying. There's denominations. One reason we had to be non-denominational, even though I wouldn't choose, you know, I don't think there's anything wrong with certain, like assemblies of God, or out the Lancat, the Baptist church out there.

I could never pastor, ever. So you can, you can, you can be gay in your twenties. You can kill somebody.

You can be a drunkard. You can be a fornicator. You can be a partier.

You can be the worst, and come to faith in Christ, and then you can pastor? But you can't if you've had a divorce in your twenties that God used to wake you up, and to give you a, just a, that's where the brokenness comes from. The people don't get it. They're like, oh, man, I love your preaching.

Don't you understand? You don't want to go through what I went through. That's what I went through, the brokenness. That's where it comes from.

Don't elevate me. Elevate God, who took a broken, empty person, and put the spirit of the living God on him. I think the more God breaks you, the more he'll use you.

It is doubtful that God can use a man greatly until he has hurt him deeply, A.W. Tozer said, and that is so true. So from a strong anointing, there's pain. You hear a worship leader just singing their heart out, like

you heard? You talk to them, I bet there's some pain linked in there.

It's through that pain, that brokenness. The best preachers who will ever speak to you have been broken. You hear those guys on TV with the \$5,000 suits, and they say positive things? That won't ever penetrate your heart.

It's those who have been rebuilt. Why? Because they've been rebuilt by God. That's it.

They've been rebuilt by God, and they have a testimony to share with others. You can mock me. There's churches down, I won't even tell you the street, I almost did.

Close call. They said I shouldn't even be pastoring, because that's not a real church. He didn't go to seminary.

My Lord! Do you see my library? Do you see what I read, what I meditate on? Systematic theology, and soterology, and numatology, and eschatology, and inductive and deductive approaches to my sermon preparation, sir. Don't assume because you don't go to institution, you're not educated. Because God said, I will teach you.

The living God said, I will teach you. Yes, this is my venting sermon. Thank you.

But I don't think there's anything wrong with seminary. If you have the time, you have the money, you have the energy, that's great. If God calls you to do it, that's wonderful.

But don't chide someone just because they haven't went to some formal education. Because, oh, this is going to ruffle some feathers. A church cannot call a pastor, a seminary cannot make someone fit for leadership.

Nothing can accept a call of God upon their life. That's it. When God calls, when God calls a person, that's the calling.

And people say, I want to be a pastor someday. And we say, we're just going to watch you for a while. What do you mean? I'm just going to watch you.

I don't understand. Either, either God will call you or he won't. How will I know? The people will say he's a pastor.

You'll be a shepherd before you're called a shepherd. That God calls a person. There's so many.

And if you wonder why, why are so many churches dead? What is going on? Have they been called of God? I can name a half dozen pastors right over that hill who have not been called of God. Not bad intentions. I just want to help people.

Well, great. Go be a civil servant. Don't be a pastor.

If you're just doing it just to help people. Because that's not what a pastor is. Well, I just want to, you know, be involved in the community.

That's not what a pastor is. What is a pastor? They are a shepherd and a watchman to preach the truth of God's word to lead a generation back to him. That's the call of a pastor.

It has to be on your life before you step to that pulpit. Don't call yourself. Oh, don't call yourself Charles Spurgeon said, if you can do anything else in life, do it.

Don't become a pastor. But Shane, that doesn't make sense. Oh, it makes perfect sense.

Because if you're called of God, you can't do anything but preach. Paul said, I much preach the gospel for this calling. I have been called.

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