

# How to Handle Hate

by Shane Idleman

---

*The sermon explores how to handle hate through love, wisdom, and maintaining focus on God's work, as exemplified by Nehemiah's challenges.*

**Duration:** 54:36

**Scripture:** Nehemiah 6:1

**Topics:** "Handling Hate", "Responding with Love"

---

## Description

Shane Idleman discusses how to handle hate through the lens of Nehemiah's experiences, emphasizing the reality of conspiracies and the importance of responding to hate with love rather than retaliation. He highlights Nehemiah's steadfastness in the face of threats and false accusations, encouraging believers to maintain their focus on God's work and to discern the intentions of those who oppose them. Idleman also stresses the necessity of humility and the power of prayer in overcoming adversity, reminding the congregation that God ultimately has the final word in every situation.

---

## Transcript

Lessons from Nehemiah. And really they were trying to form a conspiracy against Nehemiah. You've heard of conspiracies, right? They're on the internet, okay? I'm not going to poke fun at anything, I'm just going to say there's a lot of them out there.

Aren't there? You know, like George Bush took down the Twin Towers so he could start the war with Iraq. Different conspiracy theories, one world governments, you know what they are. But there are legitimate conspiracies.

Legitimate. And that's what was happening here with Nehemiah. There was a secret plan by a group of people to try to get rid of him.

And the reason I titled this message, How to Handle Hate, is because he is going to handle their hate in such a way. But it's funny, I sent out the title to Susie for the CDs and different things. And as I'm going through it, I was reminded of something.

The Old Testament saints are a lot different than us. They were hardcore. Because you don't see love your enemy in this.

He would pray, Lord, curse this man. Get rid of this man. Take this man out.

So I'm like, oh, I've got to bring some New Testament stuff in here. Because, you know, how to handle hate, Nehemiah is a good example, but he forgets about the love. But also, with Nehemiah's situation, you can't just turn the other cheek and love your enemy.

Because the enemy was trying to kill him and his family and stop the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem. So I want to tie in a few things here. You don't need scripture references on this.

Everybody knows these verses. But it's a good reminder that we're actually called to love our enemies. When they say hateful things, we don't return back hate.

And isn't that hard on email? Or Facebook? Man, I have to hit that clear button a lot. And we want to respond. You hit me, I hit you back.

You say these chiding things, and I want to say these chiding things back. You assault me verbally, I want to assault you. You make fun, I want to double make fun.

Especially when atheists make fun of me. I'm like, are you kidding? Who should be making fun of who? Did we all just come from a little cell and now here we are? I mean, come on guys. And I have to restrain from a lot of that.

How do you respond? Well, number one, loving your enemy. So usually, now this can go both ways. I would reach out to them.

There was the LGBT community at the college that got upset. There's pictures on that too that I hate these type of people. And we actually love them.

We want to give them gas cards and help them. Hey, let's sit down and talk about differences. So here's the example from all this.

If you reach out and they're not receptive, be careful. You don't have to just keep pushing and pushing and pushing. I let them know, hey, I didn't steal your flag.

I took it out of an easement, which you can't put there anyway. And you can come have it back, and that's just not true. And the people are Facebooking, you know, you stole these things.

No, no, no. And sometimes you don't even have to defend yourself. So you have to use wisdom there.

I wish I had the playbook here. But sometimes I won't even respond. I won't even respond.

There's people who call themselves Christians, who just go off. And I say, I'd love to meet with you. Want to get lunch? And let's sit down and talk.

And then they just go on this spew of hate. And I'm like, okay, I guess not. I mean, who's really the Christian here? I mean, come on.

So you do want to try to, when it comes to hate, you do, if possible, reach out to them and say, hey, would you like to talk and see about our differences? And sometimes that has built a relationship with me. I can take you to people who struggle with same-sex attraction right now that I'm friends with. Or agnostics.

Many of you know the man I met at the college, who's high up there at the college. And we have an ongoing friendship, getting lunch soon, and big differences. And so you can see if people are receptive.

But if they're not, and I want to be careful here with that verse on, you know, don't throw your pearls to swine. But that has a lot of application in this, because you want to be careful, and you engage, but you don't have to keep engaging, because then it gets pathetic. Right? Please talk to me.

Please let me tell you about the gospel. If they're not open, they're not open. And once I say my piece, and these guys just still continue to post things, and the reason they do is they try to get at you.

Right? So finally, one time, an email six months ago, I said, hey, listen, I'm preaching this until the day I die. Your little things aren't helping. Do you think I'm going to go home and cry and stop preaching? I mean, what are you trying to accomplish here? It doesn't hurt me.

It actually makes me more willing and more motivated to preach the gospel. So, again, I wish I had a whole bunch of tips on this, but every situation is different. You love those that, you know, we are called to love, but you can't force it.

And sometimes God will put people in a position, and then they'll be ready to listen to you. And some of you know this, some of you don't, but I actually, I call it a privilege. I had the privilege of driving to North Hollywood and meeting two hours with a gay prostitute, a male gay prostitute, in his 30s.

Looked like he could be on GQ magazine. And his sister wanted me to meet with him because he was struggling with a lot of depression and anxiety and fear, and just sat down on his couch, and we talked, and she was there, and just, he was very receptive, very appreciative, very thankful. And, you know, he's like, just feels shame and guilt.

\$800 a night, you know, is what he's making. And he goes, Shane, I have no peace. I have no, you know.

So, the prodigal son story, kind of the gospel and getting your life back and full surrender. Didn't think anything of it. I think he had pneumonia or something, and I sent him my book.

Desperate for More of God. We have copies out there. And I think it was around Christmas time, I got the email that he actually died.

He passed away. But he was sharing my book with his friends and his family, telling them how he, God was doing something in his heart again. So, it's like God planted that for that purpose, loved, he was receptive, and I was able to actually speak at his memorial.

And other people from that lifestyle came, and we loved them. So, if there's opportunity there, you do it. But you don't have to constantly be defending yourself.

You don't have to constantly defend. You say, hey, here's what it is. But if they're not open, you can't force that.

It has to be God's word, God's work. And this will happen at the hospital homes a lot of times. If you go and you minister there, I would encourage you to do that.

If you don't, start, even if it's once a month. But I'll talk to people, and you can tell. I mean, there's this one guy.

He would give me the middle finger. You know, don't come in my room. Okay, I forget his name.

Okay, next time maybe. You know, but he died eventually. Do you guys remember him? I don't know if you remember him in West Palmdale.

And very not happy camper. And other people, no, don't talk to me. I don't want to pray.

Okay, can I get you anything from Walmart? Yeah, I need socks or pants, whatever. And then there's a door for the next time. And then one lady, she said, I'm just so depressed.

I'm so discouraged. I shared this on Sunday. I actually did her daughter's funeral that overdosed four years ago.

And God brought, I couldn't believe I saw her there. But she said she wanted to, she goes, I just need to know God. And there's an open door.

So it's just being available, and that's what love looks like. I haven't perfected this area, and I feel a little funny talking about this. Because I can be the other side, right? Let me tell you about love.

What I want to do is find out where these people work and go just visit. Oh, hi. Hey, how's it going? And I want to just kind of do that, but it's not going to happen.

So that's kind of what I wanted to show you and share just some of the examples I get of hate. And it's funny, the devil will tell you, the devil will show you this stuff, right? You don't have to look for it. Because I'll get people, friends of mine on Facebook going, who is this clown? And they'll send me the thing.

I'm like, I don't know. But now I know. Thank you.

I didn't know. See, I don't know about half this stuff until people say, have you heard this? I'm like, no, I don't want to hear it. No, thank you.

And then now I'm on some right-wing watch news organization, and people send me, hey, did you know this? No, I don't care. I don't want to know, you know. Now, I need to know if it's important.

But the devil wants you to see these things, so it discourages you. So it's not always people doing things. Sometimes the enemy brings in information you don't need to know, you don't want to know.

But you end up knowing to discourage. That's what he wants to do is to discourage us. And I guess they think, oh, man, they're making fun.

I'm sad. I'm not going to preach anymore. I don't know what their goal is.

But you have to remember that people are hurting inside. And that's really where it comes from. So if they're hurting inside, people hurt others.

And so you want to take that into consideration when you respond to them. And believe it or not, that guy, I did Facebook him a while back. And I said, hey, I'm posting a lot of stuff.

I'd love to get together and just hear my heart, see what we're about. He didn't even answer. He put on Facebook.

He said, somebody claiming to be Shane wants to meet with me. And then they start this whole other thing. I'm like, wow, these guys just do not want to.

And I don't think they want to get together. Right? They don't want to talk. They just want to spew the hate.

So that's just a rabbit trail from this Nehemiah study. And if you do have your Bibles, but let me just say a few examples of hate. Try to respond in love and see where that goes.

If they're unreceptive, it reveals their heart. And also, you can learn from your critics. You can learn from your critics.

But you don't always have to answer them. And what I mean by answering your critics is there is a church far away from here, kind of over Lancaster, I'll just leave it at that. But they're not real solid biblically.

They're more liberal. And there's people there that go there. And they will say things about, well, you're just loud and you're just this.

And I'm like, how can I, what are you trying to get at? What are you trying to say and trying to learn? Because I want to see how am I coming across to individuals. I met with a young man recently who's 30 and said, hey, when I first heard you, I just thought you were, you know, staunch and arrogant and to this. And now that I've gotten to know you, I see that that's not it at all.

But how do you learn? So I say, okay, how can I not come across that way sometimes? Now, it doesn't mean you always change things because of people. But we do learn from our critics, don't we? I mean, I hope so. And if somebody, if people see things, you might want to take it to the Lord and say, okay, is this an area I need to work on? Is this something I need to be a better example at? Because preachers are not perfect.

That's why I don't think people forget. I mean, I think they don't think, they think, because you're going to preach God's word for an hour flawlessly? You're going to say just the right thing at the right tone at the right time and not upset in the wrong way and pull out anger when you shouldn't have and not get loud when you should have been soft. And, you know, it's hard.

It's exhausting doing this for an hour, to be honest with you. I'd rather run six miles. When I get home, I just, because there's so much mental capacity.

You're trying, okay, is that going to, you know, should I not bring that up? And you try to put all this together. So let's talk about this for a minute. The last point that I want to leave you with on hate and truth and different things, and I've said it a lot of times, but it fits in perfect here.

The truth will offend people, but our attitude shouldn't. Let that sink in. The truth of God's word will offend.

There's just no way around that. But our attitude shouldn't. Our attitude shouldn't offend.

And that's what people are looking at. I know there's one young guy on Facebook who's following things, and he's like 20, I think, and he would just make comments, and sarcastic, and just drop the F-bomb, and you, this Christian, and I'm like, and so I Facebooked him and said, hey, if you ever want to talk, you have questions about God, I'd love to help and love to answer those questions, and kind of just leave it at that, and then we haven't heard from him again. So I don't know if it diffused it, but you can answer a gentle answer.

Right, and again, I'm preaching to myself here. I want to be crystal clear. I have not mastered this area.

I just talked to my wife. A gentle answer turns away wrath. You know that works in your home, too? And with your kids? And with your kids? You know, a gentle answer turns away wrath.

Because I came from an angry home with my dad, you know, just, you know, the higher you got the volume, the better you'd listen. But biblically speaking, that doesn't always work, unless you need to get somebody's attention. Now we're in Nehemiah chapter 6. Now it happened when Sanballat and Tobiah, I think we have it up there, Patty, if Christine will upload it.

Now it happened when Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem, the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard that I had rebuilt the wall and that there were no more breaks left in it, though at the time I had not hung the doors and the gates, that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me saying, Come up, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Anan. But they thought to do me harm. Isn't this interesting? Everything else fell.

So now they're going to Nehemiah and say, Hey, why don't we come and meet? And Nehemiah knows that they want to do him harm. So something we can glean from this is a couple things. Succeeding doesn't always stop the attacks.

And this is important because sometimes we, Oh, if I can just get through that, and then here it comes again. You ever have one of those days? I'm just not going to make it today. Or you get through something, yeah, that was good, God's great, and then here comes more attacks.

The enemy doesn't let up. The enemy doesn't sleep. The enemy doesn't slumber.

Praise God for breaks. But be prepared for ongoing assaults. Because I'm thinking he's looking for opportune times.

It didn't work on Tuesday. It didn't work on Friday. Let me come back next week.

Let me come back when you're tired. Let me come back when you're angry. Let me come back when you're lonely.

And he begins to work in those areas. That's what they did here with Nehemiah. Or we can learn from it.

Succeeding at something doesn't always stop the attacks of the enemy. And also, the enemy will offer compromise. This is huge.

So everything else didn't work, even threatening their lives. But this did work. He said, Okay, let's just compromise.

And don't you know that the flesh loves compromise? Right? Your flesh says, Okay, okay, okay. If you're not going to do that, let's at least do this. Anybody ever want to start fasting? Right after a big meal and a whole bunch of ice cream, you're like, Tomorrow morning.

And it sounds so good. Tomorrow morning, I'm going to go all week without food. Until tomorrow morning gets here.

And your flesh starts to negotiate. It starts to tell you, Well, what about this? And what about that? The enemy does that as well. That's how actually he gets people back into addictions.

Have you ever broke out of an addiction and then you go right back in? That's how he often does it. Small compromises. Listen, if I had a dollar for every alcoholic I met that thought they could just have one more, or they could just have one after many years of being sober, I would be a wealthy man.

What happened? Well, I thought I was fine now after five years or seven years or ten years. Negotiation. The flesh wants to negotiate.

Or people that go back to that relationship, they know they shouldn't. So the enemy will use negotiation. When he knows he doesn't have you, it's called compromise.

And we take one step at a time, one wrong choice at a time, one bad decision, and we find ourselves in that mess again. So just be careful in this area. We see it here in Nehemiah.

I've seen it in my own life. I'm sure you have too. Because if he can't pull you all the way down, he'll start.

That's really what he does. You've seen me do this before. But he wants us at the bottom.

So he leads us down one step at a time. And then the next step at a time until we're at the bottom. And that's how often the enemy works.

He usually doesn't show, for example, a couple the pain and the anguish of adultery. He tempts them with the temporary enjoyment of being out of God's will. Same thing with an abortion.

He doesn't show the young couple the pain that that's going to cause. So he never shows you the end result. It's compromise.

And that's how he makes us walk down the wrong path. Verse 3. So I sent messengers to them, saying, Here's what he's going to say. Okay, I'll come down and meet with you, right? Nope.

I'm doing a great work. I love this line. I'm doing a great work so that I cannot come down.

Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you? So Nehemiah said, I'm working. I'm busy. I'm doing what God's called me to do.

Why should this work cease and I come down and visit you? He prioritized things. So why should the work cease? Threatenings did not work, so let's try something else. What they wanted to try doing was misaligned priorities, and that's a form of ceased work.

Watch this area too. I know the title of the message is How to Handle Hate, but it took a whole new direction with this, because Nehemiah didn't do a great job handling hate. He just hit it head-on.

But what the enemy is doing here is he's having him misalign, take out of alignment. Have you ever had your car go out of alignment, it pulls to one side? Misalignment. So if the enemy can get us doing things that we're not called to do or busy doing things that do not matter and get us away from God's work, I wonder how many people are not fulfilling God's call because they're too busy or they're doing too many different things and their priorities are misaligned.

See, it should be going that direction. God wants us to do this. The enemy comes in and says, why don't you come down from that great work and come and do this? Misaligned.

I'll just be really transparent. This is a hard one for me, because there's so many things pulling in many different directions, and I realize that God's called me to four or five primary things, right? To be a husband, a father, to lead the church, to preach and to teach, and to get the message out there, different things, and to write and things. But if all other things come in, they begin to pull away from all those things, and I really don't have time to prepare a sermon.

I mean, I can just come up here and speak for a little while, but if you really want to get deep and we want it to impact the heart and I need to spend time with God, and many people don't understand that that's actually my primary calling, is to go and spend time with God to preach and to teach the word, to be filled with the Spirit and to feed the saints. But if I'm being called in all these different arenas, and that's why I try to say no more, I need it maybe more often, because there's so many different things coming up now, and I want to do a lot of different things. But I realize, I think it was a few weeks ago, after looking back at a week, I looked back at the week and I said, I haven't done hardly anything for God that He's called me to do.

And that's why I said, Morgan, this week, I said, I need to go to the hospital homes. I need to get back on that. Because anybody can get busy on media, social media, all these little tasks that we need to do, and of course, many of those things are important.

But I think there comes a time where you have to fine-tune, okay, this is what He's calling me to do. I can't always do this, I can't always do that. And that's actually why we have three or four people here that can help with counseling.

Because as much as I wish I could, we just don't have, I can't be at all these different places and handling things, we have people to do that. And it's interesting, you'll see people, they'll either get upset or they'll understand. One or the other.

No, there's not too much middle. Oh, I completely understand, or well, fine then, I'll just go to a different church. Okay, I'm sorry.

I just don't have, I can't have enough time. Again, I'm not trying to be mean, I'm not trying to be, I'm just trying to show you that it's even hard for me because I get off on this a lot. And the sermons do suffer, my time in the morning suffers.

And if I don't have that time, what God's called me to do. And it's true in your life as well. He will take your priorities and He'll misalign them.

Let me tell you what they are right now, in case you're not sure. You are called, number one, to build your relationship with the Lord. That's number one.

There's not a close second yet. That's number one. Everything else flows from that foundation.

So now look at your life and say, what is taking me away from that relationship? And I'll just give you a few hints. There's one. Oh, that was loud.

There's one, right? Or this one. Or this one. Three hours on Facebook? Oh my goodness.

And I have no time to pray or read the Bible. Or is there just relationships that are draining? I believe for every draining relationship, you need to have a builder. Those you can go to that will build you up and

encourage you.

That's why I actually love this church. There's a lot of builders here. There's a lot of builders here.

And volunteers and things. We build each other up. That's why I like coming to church.

But there's other things that will take you away from that energy and take away from your priorities. Now, of course, you're to minister to those who are difficult. And here's what I did.

I would sit down and maybe make a list of the top 10 things. Following hard after God. That's your number one priority.

And then if you have a family, that's right up there. Number two, you have to provide for your family financially, emotionally, spiritually, relationally. You have to be there for them, build that.

And then from that, you have the church body. You're part of the church body, and that's a priority. And being fed with God and His word and fellowship and iron sharpens iron.

And then from that, then you can go out and do other things. But often, people put other things first. Right, good example.

What do we do first thing in the morning sometimes? News. News, cell phone. Start texting, start emailing.

Many people look at the stock market, follow the New York Times, see what's going on, go on the news, and oh, now North and South Korea are getting together. Oh, now I can sleep at night. Right, we're just, we misaligned all our priorities.

So focus on the main things. And then verse four. But they sent me this message four times.

Can you believe these guys? Four times, come down, come down, come down. You know why? Because it eventually works, Samson. You get that one? Delilah kept pestering him and pestering him and pestering him until he finally gave in.

Be careful with the pesters. Because the enemy will do that. Do your kids ever do that? Right, I'm strong the first minute or two.

Broccoli, you're not getting a candy, broccoli. I don't say it like that, okay? But eventually, after 15 minutes, you're like, oh my gosh, would you be quiet? I have to get stuff. All right, have the ice cream.

Have the ice cream, have the chocolate. Please, let me get some work done. Let me have some peace.

Pestering, pestering, right? It worked, the enemy does that too. I tell people this all the time. Maybe this is for somebody.

Don't make a major decision until your heart's right. Until you have peace. Until you say, okay, Lord, I know you're leading me.

Because so many people would jump out of a job. They'll quit a career. Do you know how many pastors leave the ministry every month? I think the last time I checked, it was like 1,500 a month.

One out of 10 will stay in it their whole life. And it's often because of this. I'm done, I can't take it anymore.

Anybody said that? Oh, don't leave me hanging up here. I'm done, I can't take it anymore. And that's what they were trying to do, just kept going.

Fine, be quiet. To shut this person up, I'll go with them. But he didn't do that.

And that's what the enemy's looking for. And how do you stop that, Shane? Well, often you have to put up safeguards. And you tell the little rascal, you're eating broccoli.

Okay? You can go in your room until you stop saying that. You can take a stance. You don't have to constantly be beaten down.

And that's what happened to Samson. It just wore on him. And then verse 5, then Senballot sent his servant to me as before the fifth time.

Are you kidding me? Now he's at five times with an open letter in his hand. See, now they were all nice. They were nice.

Oh, would you come down and talk? Now they're going to get nasty. And that's what happens. Watch people.

Watch people, how they handle no. How they handle no will tell you a lot. I can see a lot of person when I say, you know what, we're not going to do that right now.

Do they throw a fit? Oh, fine then. Oh, okay, well, thank you for showing me your heart. Or do they say, no problem, let's just wait on God and see what God wants to do.

Ah, that's what I'm looking for. Right? We've had people, no, I don't think we're going to start that ministry just yet. Do they throw a hissy fit? And get upset? Or do they say, no problem, let's wait on God.

Oh, I like that. See? Not getting our way reveals a great deal, doesn't it? It shows who we really are. So this is, Nehemiah is watching these guys.

So the fifth time, they came with an open letter. And it said this. It is reported among the nations.

And Geshem says that you and the Jews plan to rebel. Therefore, according to these rumors, you are rebuilding the wall that you may be their king. And that's not going to be good to the real king.

He's not going to like this. And so they can see where they're going here now. And you have also appointed prophets to proclaim concerning you at Jerusalem, saying, there is a king in Judah.

Now these matters will be reported to the king. So come, therefore, and let us consult together. So actually, I think it was Artaxerxes.

I don't have that handy. But I think one of the kings allowed Nehemiah to come and rebuild the wall. So now they're saying, we're going to send out letters and tell the king that you're actually going to rebel against him.

And that will get somebody's head chopped off. Very quickly. And so did Nehemiah flee and say, okay, okay, don't do that.

Well, here's what he... First, let's talk about a few things. Often the enemy will increase the heat so that we react instead of respond. Okay? Often they'll increase the heat.

Do you know what that means? Increase the heat. Hurry, I need to know. I need to know now.

And the pressure. Pressure cooker. What happens in a pressure cooker? And that's often the enemy will try to cook that pressure inside of us.

Try to just keep pushing and pushing and pushing. Okay, and you react. Did a pastor just cuss? Right? They're watching you.

It happens up here sometimes. Here's what you've got to control. Come on, you know you all, most of you cuss up here.

Mm-hmm. Right? You're just holding it back because the flesh is still there. The flesh is still there.

I'm too transparent for you all here. I'll keep conservative for Sundays, right? So heat is often increased. Remember that.

When the heat is increased in your life, when the pressure is coming, and boy, does it come ever. I've never experienced more pressure than when we spoke at the college and debated the atheists. And then one time we did different things from all different groups.

People were actually Facebooking us saying, hey, there's groups coming from Los Angeles. They mean to do harm. And then security got involved with the sheriff's department there at the college.

And that was taken into consideration. And we had security there. And the pressure was applied.

And the college asked, you know, do we need to cancel this event? What? Three days away and you're going to cancel it? You know, so the pressure's there. And they want you to react and react and react. And just a side note, the guy who orchestrated that security there now is coming here to the church because of that event.

So you see, so we've got a good security team, by the way. So you see these things happening. And it'll happen in your own life.

It happens to me. When the pressure's put on you, do you react? Another word is explode. Oh, there's a lot of heads shaking on that one.

Right? Reaction. You go back at people and you react. And often God wants us to go through these things so we respond.

Respond in gentleness and meekness. Difficult, yes, isn't it? But that's what we see here happening. He's increasing the heat.

And lying is always a tactic of the enemy. Always a tactic of the enemy. That's why it's hard nowadays.

We don't know what news source to believe. I mean, who do you believe about what? Trump and Russia and this and Obama administration and this. Like, what do you believe? But lying is a tactic.

Where do you think all the civil unrest is coming from? Police officers are getting shot, nobody says anything. A couple guys in Starbucks get in trouble or get, you know, something. But who's stirring that pot? Lying.

See, we should be concerned about all those things as brothers and sisters in Christ. We love each other. And we stop that hate by bringing in love.

And I will tell people. I'll Facebook them and say, hey, you shouldn't post that. That just fuels the very thing we're trying to prevent.

What are you doing? Right? So lying is always a tactic. And they just blatantly lied about this person. They said, you're going to rebel against the king.

That was the last thing on his mind. So just rest in that and say, God, you handle them. I mean, these pages, these people have the pictures I posted.

The stuff is just, I just laugh. I just absolutely laugh. Because it's so untrue.

I hate pastor, hate this. I'm like, no, it's not true. So don't allow the enemies to speak life into you.

Or death. Don't allow the lies to penetrate. Because if you really know who you are in Christ Jesus, if you truly know what God's called you to do, you can allow that.

You just stand. You just stand. Lord, you know.

Because everything will be revealed at some point. But we often want to defend, don't we? And there's a time and a place to defend. I think if you have an opportunity to say, hey, listen, that's not true.

Here's what happened. Proverbs encourages you to hear both sides. Don't judge a matter before only hearing one.

But this is very broad. This would take a whole sermon. Because if something's happening in the church, you hear something.

Oh, I want to hear the other side so I can properly assess it. Then you need to. But if it's just people haters.

Actually, the funny thing is people calling us haters are actually the haters. Isn't that the irony? That's the gospel truth. And that's why laws are trying to be passed.

I just saw, it's in the news now, a pastor apologized to the LGBT community because of all of us Christians saying it's bad and we're being haters and we hate them. And no, no, that's not the right verbiage. We love.

We love enough to share people to tell them the truth. Think about this. If people didn't really care and love, we wouldn't say anything.

Right? If I don't care, I don't love. I don't care what you're doing. Do whatever you want.

But when you love, you might want to consider this. You might want to rethink this. So lying is always a tactic of the enemy.

Don't get caught up in it. And wait like Nehemiah did. Wait for peace and assurance.

God knows your heart. Then verse 8, Then I sent to him, saying, No such things as you say are being done, but you invent them in your own heart. So Nehemiah calls him out on it.

For they all were trying to make us afraid, saying, Their hands will be weakened in the work, and it will not be done. In other words, it will not finish. We will not finish the wall.

Therefore, O God, you strengthen my hands. You strengthen my hands. So a couple things we can learn from this.

Confront the lie with truth. Calm, cool, and collect. Remember that saying? Just calm, cool, and collect.

Because people are watching how you respond. And how we respond actually speaks more than our response does. Right? If I start, you know, if I respond, like, just throw this water bottle at somebody and yell at them, versus, hey, that's not true.

That's not how it happened. What speaks louder? You're not going to care what I just said if I checked a water bottle at somebody. And hit him right in the head.

I'm not going to show you what that looks like. And this must be in your arsenal, just like Nehemiah. O God, strengthen my hands.

O God, strengthen my hands. You trust in him. You look to him.

God, you strengthen these hands. You allow us to finish. You allow us to complete this task.

And then verse 10, Afterward I came to the house of Shemiah the son of Deliah, the son of, there's a lot of words here. Let's just say he was a secret informer. And he said, Let us meet together in the house of God within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you.

Indeed, at night they will come kill you. Boy, Nehemiah's going through a lot. So this guy comes to Nehemiah and says, Let's run.

Let's hide. Let's go into the temple of God. And let's hide there.

But that was not the right thing to do. Discernment is a necessity. Nehemiah, and we must have discernment.

Discernment is a necessity. I like what Ronald Reagan said. Trust, but verify.

By the way, who said Christians need to be gullible? You ever watch TV or see these ads? Send in your \$1,000 seed gift, and I'll send you this towel that I prayed over. And just lay it out over your safe, and you're going to make a lot of money. And people send, they fuel these people.

They send all this kind of stuff on Easter. Send in your resurrection seed. I know there's \$1,000, and you will harvest bountifully.

And they just keep, because Christians are so gullible. Normally, and actually it's not just Christians, it's charismatic, Pentecostal more so than any other group. That's why they target them, these people.

We don't need to be gullible. Gentle, yes, but not gullible. And verse 11, and I said, Should such a man as I flee, am I going to run? Am I going to hide? You see, you've got to know what God's called you to do.

And God said, listen, you go and you do this. You've ever felt that way? You go and you do this. Don't flee, don't give up.

You go in God's strength. That's why he said, am I a man, a man like me is going to flee? I fasted, I prayed, the king gave me permission. I have lumber, we're rebuilding the wall, and I'm going to flee? Are you kidding me? Are you serious? Tell the enemy that.

I do sometimes. Are you kidding me? Look at what God has done. You think I'm going to quit and give up and give in? And you build yourself back up in God.

And then the next verse, 12, Then I perceived, so Nehemiah became aware, and he realized that God had not sent this person at all, but that he pronounced his prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sambalot had hired him. For this reason he was hired, that I should be afraid and act that way in sin, so that they might have cause for an evil report, that they might reproach me. My God, remember, remember Tobiah and Sambalot according to their works, and the prophetess, Nodiah, and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.

So always remember this, false prophets are still in our midst as well. Do you know what a false prophet is? It's really a false proclaimer of God's truth. And often throughout the Old Testament, here's what the false prophets would do.

They would tell the people, peace, peace. The way you're living, no big deal. We're experiencing peace.

God doesn't look upon your sin the way that we read about. Peace, peace. When God says there's not peace, you're encouraging people in their sin.

Actually read Jeremiah 23 at your convenience. God actually says, I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not even spoke to them, but they spoke.

But had these prophets truly stood in my counsel, in my word, they would have turned the nation back to me. That's when he goes on to say, is not my word like a hammer, like a fire, like a hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces? But he said, but these false prophets have perverted the words of the living God. So that's how you see a false prophet.

Is what they're saying falsehood, clear falsehood. Like all these people saying, something we know is clearly sin, right? They're saying, it's not sin anymore. That's a false prophet.

That's a false proclaimer of God's truth. Or they tell people, hey, no worries, no big deal. God's winking at you.

He's turning the other way. He's not looking at your sin. Peace, peace.

Here's a great lie. Look at all the prosperity in America. Look how blessed we are.

God must really, really love us. No, you're confusing his patience with his approval. That's a big difference.

So there are false prophets among us today. And they actually will come into the church and they'll bring destructive teachings. And when they're confronted, they usually don't like to be confronted.

They'll have excuses. They'll twist the scripture. They'll twist things.

And you know it's a false proclaimer of God's truth if you know what his truth is. And do what Nehemiah did. Ask God to expose them.

That's what I do often. God, would you expose? Would you expose people that are false prophets, false proclaimers of your truth? And you can spot them easily sometimes. I mean, I don't know if, well, maybe one or two in the whole church.

But not tonight, right? But, well, you know, because they try to get people after their own, they try to get people after themselves. And telling, let me, if I can, and whispering things and turning truth and trying to get people to follow after them. A false prophet is always about them.

They identify with your felt needs. They lure you with, if we had time to read Jude, they're sensual. And they allure by always saying things that are not necessarily true and building you up with false humility and drawing you into them.

They're false prophets in the midst. And you ask God, God, would you reveal them? Would you reveal them to us and show us who these people are? And I believe that God will show us if we're open, if we're teachable. Usually they will come in where leadership is weak.

Usually these types of people will go into churches where the leadership is pretty weak. And what I mean by that is there are churches that say, hey, we're not gonna confront sin. We're not gonna say, we're just gonna, hopefully things will repair themselves.

There are churches. I'm not, and we have our own issues, of course. No church is perfect, but I know churches where you could tell the leadership there that, hey, this person is actually bringing their girlfriend or boyfriend to your service and they're not even, they just separated a month ago.

Well, brother, I hope the Holy Spirit convicts him. No, it's your job too. You can't allow that in the house of God.

If we know something, now you don't just, you lovingly challenge people. You say, hey, we can't allow that. If we know something, we can't allow that to happen.

So false prophets often look for weak leadership and they wanna elevate themselves. And they wanna point themselves to positions of leadership. That's where you'll often see, if people are too gung-ho, too, what do they call it, fast in the saddle, they just wanna promote, they wanna elevate themselves, they're not humble.

That's why I told you earlier, no reveals a lot. You say, no, we're not gonna do that right now. Do they throw a fit? Do they get upset? Or do they humbly agree and allow God to do that? And what I've noticed, those who are normally called by God are often the most reluctant to actually do something for God.

There's nothing wrong with being gung-ho, but often those people who are so wanting to elevate themselves and do something often have to check their own hearts. Because God will promote you. God will elevate you.

It's his gifting, his calling. He'll do it. Nobody can stop you.

People say, oh, the church has kept me down for years. No, they probably haven't. Maybe they have.

But God will promote. You try closing the door on God. I just read in Job this week, it says, if God imprisons a man, there is no release.

God opens a door, no man can shut it. No man can shut it. It's absolutely impossible.

I mean, I don't know what your beliefs are, and I'm not gonna say a lot, but, you know, some people think with our current president, there's just no way in the world that would have happened without God doing something. Whether it's judgment, whether it's, I don't know. But I'm just saying that God wants to do something, you're not gonna close that door.

If God says, I've called you to do, you fill in the blank, no man is gonna shut that door. Often, though, the delay is not necessarily a denial from God, it's a delay because our character isn't yet ready. Right? We have to go through the furnace of affliction and the humbling process and different things.

I mean, God will humble, I mean, oh, Lord. I remember when I first started Morgan, I remember our first church we went to together, we were married, I just started speaking, and I spoke at the men's breakfast. I still remember this.

And this guy goes to the, and if I mentioned the church and the pastor, you'd probably know. And this guy at the men's breakfast goes, oh, Shane spoke at our men's breakfast, you should let him speak to the congregation. And the guy said, that's a pipe dream, that will never happen here.

It's like, oh, whew, just defeated, right? And humbling, and humbling, and more humbling. And I can give you example after example after example. The biggest one I think I remember is when God called me back and the prodigal son came home and I gave up my job, gave up six figures, my house in Quartz Hill, sold everything, and I went to help my brother, and the first day, I'm digging up septic tanks.

What in the world is this? Where's my suit and tie and my Dodge truck with the V10 motor and jacked up? And it's just humbling, and humbling, and humbling, and crushing, because we don't do it ourselves often. So just be encouraged. Often, the greater the humility, the more God will want to bless.

The more God will elevate. The more you humble yourself, the more God will elevate when God does it. You have a lot of self elevators out there, but when God truly takes a person, oh, you've humbled yourself? Let me exalt you a little bit.

You're staying humble? Let me exalt you a little bit more. You're humbling yourself? You're staying broken? I'm your source? Let me promote you a little bit more. And that's how God does it.

It's directly related to our humility, because he knows. He says, no flesh shall glory in my presence. No flesh shall glory in my presence.

And that's one of my concerns for the church as we keep growing and growing and growing, always remembering who started this. Jesus Christ. And then who's going to keep it going? Jesus Christ.

It's his church. We're stewarding this church. That's why people, when we came to this location, people that used to be going here, they got all worked up, thinking, oh, they're going to take our building.

No, we're just stewarding. We're just stewarding it. That's it.

It's not your building, by the way. It's not our building. That's Shane's church.

That's Shane's building. No, it's not. And I truly believe it.

I asked my wife. I asked people. I asked Susie in the office.

She sees emails. She sees correspondences. Remember, it's God's church.

What does he want to do? Because no flesh should glory in his presence. He goes like this, I fall over dead. You understand that, right? Enough of him.

Who's next? I truly believe it's that fragile. Any time throughout the Bible, any time we elevate ourselves, God, it's just a stench in his nostrils because it's not genuine. It's not real.

And then closing here, verse 15. So the wall was finished, and it happened when all our enemies heard of it. All the nations around us saw these things, that they were disheartened in their own eyes, for they perceived that this work was done by our God.

To me, that was so encouraging because God says, having done all, stand. At the end of the day, God will get the final word. When you see a church that should have been ruined years ago and it's still standing, God gets the final word.

When you see a life that should have been ruined and your friends look back at you and say, nothing but God held you together. He gets all the glory and all the credit, and discouragement will fall back on the enemy. It always happens.

I've seen this all the time. The enemy's trying to discourage you, or that can be in people, right, too. Think of those who are trying to discourage you.

If you hold your line, you hold strong, everything we've been talking about, that discouragement will eventually fall back on them. It happens all the time. God always gets the final word.

I've never seen anywhere, if you have, I'd love to see it, where God is left the loser at the end of the day. Just think of one time. Now, things might not be happening in our time frame, but, I mean, I could tell you so many stories.

I'm just gonna leave you with one. I think it's, and I didn't check it, so please forgive me if I'm wrong, but I think it was Voltaire. He just hated God, hated the Bible.

Voltaire, English, Enlightenment days, and they actually used his house after he died. They bought it, Bible Society, and they printed, it was the number one printing house of Bibles, I think, in all of Europe, in Voltaire's house. That became, this mansion became a Bible press.

God will get the last word. Anytime you just try to extinguish his word, he'll bring up a fire over here. He'll keep his word alive no matter where it is.

You can look at church history, and God always gets the final say. He will always get the final say in your life. Never forget that.

Didn't we read somewhere that he who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ? So stop getting so frustrated at yourself because it's God who's going to complete it. You have to submit. We have to submit to the work, but it's God who completes it.

To me, that takes off all the stress. When I get myself, oh, well, this church is gonna go where God wants it to go. It's gonna succeed to the level he wants it to succeed.

God's got this. There's problems over here. There's a fire over there.

There's this issue. God's got this. God, your church is in trouble.

Go, go. I'm just gonna show up and preach on Sunday. You do it, and God will do that in your own life as well.

Don't be too discouraged. I know when things are really rough, really hard, when you feel like killing yourself. I was there in 1998 or so, and you just can't go on.

But looking back, I had to get to that lowest of the lows in order to finally cry out to God, and everything within me cried out. I said, Lord, you have everything. My life, my future children, my finances.

Lord, everything is yours. I lay it bare. Whatever you want to do with me, you do it.

I'm to the point now where I just, I can't go on. I'm done with life. I haven't succeeded.

I failed. And from that moment on, when he filled me with his Spirit, and God came in a tremendous joy and peace. And I know that you begin weeping because of the peace and the joy.

You're going through hell, but you feel so much joy. How is that possible? Because it's God's redemptive work. He said, okay, now I can work on you, Shane.

Now I'm going to pick you up. Now you can proclaim my truth, because in your weakness, I have been glorified. You finally got to a point where there's no Shane Idleman in the equation.

There's no more you. It's all about me. And then when you do that, God fills you with his Spirit.

There's no more fighting. You can throw me in jail, and I will follow you. You can send me to Africa, and I will follow you.

You can call me to pastor a church, which I thought was the last thing ever did even enter my mind. So see, don't despise the days of brokenness. Don't get in pity parties and beat yourself up, because what we do, we go back to the drink or back to the pill or back to the wrong relationship or back to the wrong media or back to the wrong.

We stay in that spot of pity and despair and bitterness instead of God saying, no, turn it over to me and let me fill you with my Spirit. You will see those who are the most, I believe the most filled with God's Spirit, if you could break it down to its lowest common denominator, they have went through tremendous pain. Like Tozer said, God must break a man greatly before he can use him mightily.

Same with women. Same with all of us. God will break us until we finally get to a point we say, God, I'm all of yours.

And some of you maybe aren't there yet. Maybe that time is coming. Maybe you've been there.

But that's my encouragement tonight. Just turn it all over to Him. But the enemy will whisper, no, no, you're not going to have fun anymore.

You're going to go to, that's what he told me, you're going to go to Sudan. Right? And go to Africa. I don't even, God gives you the desires of your heart.

Missionaries, He gave them that desire. Pastoring, He gave them that desire. Going to, I mean, she's not here so I'll say it, but Paula who's over at Hospital Homes and social worker with those, watching her interact with the patients and the things you have to go through, changing them, ministering to them, just the love she has for them.

It's just amazing. You can't do that unless God calls you to do that. So who wants to be called to God tonight? This will take a whole new direction right now, but I'm encouraging, who wants to be called of God tonight, just in your heart, just say, Lord, I'm giving you everything.

I'm not just playing church anymore. I want to be filled with your Spirit. If that means experiencing the gifts of the Spirit, I'm all open.

Because I think many people are afraid of that, of that Holy Spirit. Because they see things on TV or they hear about weirdness. Being full of God's Spirit is incredible.

So during worship, we're going to sing a few songs. You can come to the altar. You can come back for prayer.

But let's surrender our lives completely. And you're probably saying, I can't do that 100%. Lord, I don't... My will doesn't want that.

Then pray this. Lord, make me want to. Lord, crush this will of mine, this self-centeredness.

Lord, I want to, but I don't want to. Would you take this out of me? Would you take this self-centeredness out of me? Would you help me in this area? And God will answer that prayer.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31957.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/how-to-handle-hate/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

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

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

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