

# The Big Problem With Compassion

by Shane Idleman

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*The big problem with compassion is that most people lack it, and this lack of compassion affects everything, causing division, hurt, and pain in our lives and in the lives of those around us.*

**Duration:** 51:20

**Scripture:** Matthew 14:13

**Topics:** "Compassionate Living", "Repentance"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of compassion, highlighting how Jesus showed compassion even in moments of solitude and distress. It delves into the impact of lacking compassion in various aspects of life, such as relationships, church, and personal growth. The message stresses the need for a broken and contrite heart, repentance, and seeking God's will with a compassionate spirit.

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## Transcript

The message tonight is the big problem with compassion. The big problem with compassion. I'm going to tell you why I titled it that in just a minute.

But this is a popular story. It's called The Feeding of the 5,000. The kids are learning it.

We've learned it many times before. But let me read it. When Jesus heard it, when he heard about John the Baptist's death, he departed from there by boat to a deserted place by himself.

And I stopped at the first service. I had kind of a check, and I wanted to stop at the second service, too, and remind you that often Jesus would go to a deserted place and spend time with his father. If Jesus did it, how much more ought we to do it? And many times we get so busy that we don't have that time.

You've got to make that time. You've got to guard that time. You've got to put that high on your priority list above the golf game, above the video game, above your Facebook time.

I put it right up there with work. It has to be on the calendar because it's a priority. And that's where Jesus would get direction.

He would spend time with his father, choosing the 12 disciples, spending time with his father, going out and ministering, spending time with his father to a deserted place. There's a quietness there. There's a stillness when you're not rushed.

I don't do it very often, but once a year I try to get up to a cabin. There's a retreat. There's no Internet.

There's no phone. There's nothing. And you sit outside.

So for two days I'm going to be doing this, huh? And it takes a few hours, but finally you realize that you're not racing against the clock. You can just sit, open your Bible, and just stay on a passage for an hour. Those times are the most refreshing for me because I come home revived.

And I would encourage you to do that. I know it's hard. We've got four little kids, and sometimes I give my wife time to just go walk on the aqueduct, go take a break, just absorb what God is speaking to your heart.

So I would encourage you to do that. I think it's missing in the church today. So many people want to follow God.

They want to hear from God, but they're not taking the time to spend with him. It's like you're married, but your spouse lives in New York. There's no connection there.

So Jesus was in a deserted place. Then when the multitudes heard it, they followed him on foot from the cities. And when Jesus went out, he saw a great multitude.

Instead of getting upset with them, he was moved with compassion for them, and he healed their sick. So it's an interesting picture here. These thousands of people are coming, and Jesus was going to spend time with his father.

Instead of getting upset, he had compassion on these people. And for some reason, I wanted to stop on that word today and talk about this word compassion. It just kind of leaped out.

As I began to study it more, I began to realize that this is a major issue in our lives. But before I get to this, I want to ask the question, why do many people fail to see the compassion of God? You realize a lot of people don't think God's very compassionate. Just throwing down lightning bolts, right? Why are you even in church? I'm going to strike you down.

And that's not the God of the Bible. Sometimes we look at the judgment of God, or the hellfire, brimstone, and all this stuff, and go, oh, that's God. Well, the compassion of God is what comes first.

God's calling people to him. Yeah, but what about the judgment of God? Yeah, but what about John 3.16? For God so loved the world, his compassion, that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes is saved. I mean, children can grasp it.

And God would send messengers. He would send his word. He would send conviction.

This isn't an angry God that says, oh, you blew it today. Here comes a lightning bolt. You're dead tomorrow.

This is a God who lovingly draws us through conviction, through the prompting, through preaching. It's a lovely thing. Listen, kids, and here's why.

Because God has set truth in motion that can't be reversed. So when he says choose life that you may live or choose death, it's your choice, once he says that, he can't say, well, I changed my mind now, a thousand years later. Truth is set in motion.

And what happens is we respond to the truth one way or the other, and that's the consequences. But this isn't a God that says, okay, too bad, you're out of luck. This is a God who draws and convicts.

There's a word in the Bible that God draws us. Nobody even comes to the son unless the father draws them. And there's a drawing of God.

There's a compassion. It's a loving father. And I found that once compassion runs its course, then the judgment comes.

So we rush to the judgment. We see the judgment of God, the Old Testament God is what we call it. But let me remind you, God is not the Old Testament God.

He's the same before the Bible was written. He's the same when the Bible's over. It's the same God.

It's the same book. And you say, well, we don't see. That's why a lot of people change about hell and the wrath of God and all these things.

Well, now we're in the New Testament. It's a different dispensation. Well, no, it's the same God.

The New Testament is being fulfilled. The Old Testament was written over thousands of years. The New Testament, a very brief time.

And it's the fulfillment of God's compassion, God's compassion bringing Christ. So many people fail to see the compassion of God. On the flip side, they fail to see the judge in Jesus.

Do you know that he's your judge? Think about that. Jesus Christ will be your judge someday. That's why A.W. Tozer said, I love him because he's my savior.

But I fear him because he is my judge. And it's a very healthy view. It's very healthy to see God as a judge, a righteous judge.

But at the same time, a loving, compassionate father. And I know I can fall in this trap, but we'll have this view of God where you just don't love me. Or you're just mean, you're just angry.

And it's actually, I don't picture, I could be wrong. But I don't picture a mean judge as if you're throwing down the gavel, get out of my presence. I see the loving judge saying, son, daughter.

You've given many opportunities your whole life. I reminded you, depart from me. I don't know you.

I can't because you didn't choose life. I see a judge, he's not willing that any should perish. And if you believe the Bible, it says he's not willing that any should perish.

He's long suffering. So look at the compassion of God. Look at the love of God.

But our culture wants to paint this picture of some mean killjoy. Angry. God, just do the right things.

But all God's judgment is, is judgment upon sin. But he said, before I judge, I'm going to lovingly, compassionately provide the way of escape. So ultimately, in the end, who's to blame? Really? Us.

Because we rejected his call. Those who reject him, they reject his call to compassion. Now here's the point I really want to get to on the big problem with compassion.

You see how I really emphasize that, right? I'm going to be a little honest and transparent. I was with the first service. And I'm hoping it's beneficial with you as well.

But I was actually shocked and I was saddened as I studied on this topic. The reason compassion stood out for me is I spent the whole week studying this topic. And I was saddened because the big problem with compassion is that most people lack it.

That's the big problem. And I would venture to say that most people in this room lack compassion. You want to know why? I've been guilty.

I've been guilty. I looked and said, Lord, help me. Give me the heart of a loving father.

Lord, give me that broken, contrite heart. Lord, I need that. I need to be broken.

Because as you study God's righteous, holy standard, you'll see you fall short. But I believe that the benefit to this is recognizing our need for more compassion. And here's what a lack of compassion is doing.

When we don't have compassion, whether it's our home or the church, there's division. There's hurt and there's pain. What I realize is compassion affects everything.

Our whole life. How I respond to people or how I react. You see the difference? I can respond in compassion or react in anger.

Compassion controls everything. How do I treat the person who's getting on my nerves? How do I treat, now I'm coaching a team, the kids that aren't as good. How do I treat the neighbor who I just don't like? How do I treat church people that hurt me and my family? Or you? Fill in the blank.

How do we do this? Compassion affects everything. It affects our mood, our attitude. You hear that word mood swings? Really? I don't think they're mood swings.

They're pride swings. Compassion affects everything. And Obadiah says, reminds us that the pride of your heart has deceived you.

Here's the thing. When pride comes in, we have a callous heart, we are living in deception. I'll just shoot you straight.

Because James 1.22 says, be doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Part of doing the word of God is getting the heart in the right position to receive from God. See many times we think of doing the word of God as don't do this, don't go there, don't smoke that, don't hang out, don't, don't, don't, don't.

And that's doing the word of God. And that's true. But also part of doing the word of God is having a heart that resembles the heart of the Father.

You stiff-necked people, your heart's not right. You hard-hearted people, your heart's not right. Hard-heartedness and compassion are enemies.

And that you will not understand, truly understand the nature and heart of God unless you can have the heart of God. I like what David Ravenhill wrote in his book, *Surviving the Anointing*. He says, I fully believe

that another key to surviving the anointing is to maintain softness, gentleness, and tenderness.

And here's what he said, if after a period of time goes by in my own devotional life, I'm no longer able to weep or be moved by compassion, then I should be concerned with the state of my own heart. Did you catch that? See, here's the problem. Many people study this religiously, but they've never been studied by this.

They can spend hours, hours a week in the word of God, but not be moved. They can do devotionals, but their heart's not being moved. And what he's saying there is true.

Throughout the week or a month, there's not some compassion there, and some breaking, and some tears, and some looking at the condition of the heart, and God, draw me in, and the Holy Spirit working in your heart. If there's not that there, then study just becomes dead formality. Let me talk to you guys who love to study the Bible, but have not wept in years, you have not showed compassion.

You need to check your heart. Because the Bible is not just to read it for theological education so we can tell people off and show them our point of view. The whole point of the Bible is to review the heart.

So application takes place, and the heart breaks. And you're not going to experience the heart of God without compassion. See, the whole way to understand the will of God, if I want to learn what's your will for my life, but I have a hard heart, you will not determine God's will for your life with a hard heart, because your heart's closed.

It's closed off to the things of God. And this week, I also saw one of those big concrete trucks, and I thought this would be a good analogy. You know those big concrete trucks that are driving around? Please, tell me you see concrete trucks, right? What are you talking about? Ten yards of concrete weighs a lot.

Do you ever wonder why the mixer keeps turning? This isn't rocket science. Why is it turning? So the concrete doesn't dry. It keeps it pliable.

It keeps it wet. It keeps it usable. And if that thing breaks, you know what happens when the concrete dries in the truck? They send a guy through that little hole with a jackhammer for a few hours.

It's not pretty. They can mess up the truck, jackhammering in. You've got to throw all the concrete out.

So the whole point of that mixer is to keep that concrete from settling. And that's the part of compassion. That's what it does with your heart.

It keeps it going so that hard-heartedness doesn't set in. The compassion allows like clay in the hands of a potter. But when you become hard and callous and cold, and all of us can, it's hard to hear from God.

Do you ever go into your devotional times angry? It's okay a few times. I mean, it happens a week. But when you start to go into it angry all the time, and God's not moving in your heart, folks, I would tell you to put this aside for a while and spend some time in prayer and worship, and then open it afresh.

When the heart's now, it's open now, it's ready to receive. Here's what really got me. Studying on this topic of compassion, I thought, okay, what's a word that's opposite of compassion? Well, I not only got a word, I got 20 words.

And it began to really show me, God began to really show me what is the problem in many of our hearts. Because what is compassion? It's love too, right? Without love, we have nothing. Without compassion, we have nothing.

You can quote the Bible till you're blue in the face. It doesn't matter. Unless there's compassion.

See, with compassion, now I have the heart of God. Now I can see people as God sees them. Now I can minister how God wants me to minister.

Now I can make decisions based on love and compassion. Now the words that come out of my mouth are based on love and compassion. Now I'm aligning myself with the word of God because my heart's right.

Remember the analogy I've used before? If I keep my hands like this, can any of you hand me anything? Can you hand me that pen? Can I borrow your Bible? Come on, can I? What's going to happen? That's how most Christians are walking around. Their hearts are closed. They think they're open.

Their hearts are closed. They're not receiving from God because the heart's closed. God says, come to me with a broken and contrite heart.

I will then open up your heart and then you can receive from me the things I want to do in your life, the ways I want you to minister, the things I want to accomplish. You've got to open your heart and be receptive because then you're like clay in the hands of a potter. What happens when the clay gets hard? No more in the hands of a potter.

You set it up. Well, doesn't that look nice? It just stays there, hard as a rock. No longer pliable, no longer useful.

Now, here's the thing. Here are the words that are opposite of compassion. Let me know if this fits you.

This is the ouch part of the sermon. Opposite of compassion, you are unkind, you are harsh, you are mean, and you are callous. You know what a callous is? Keep doing that week after week for days or with a shovel out in the construction and you begin to have calluses.

You don't feel anything. So the opposite of compassion is when your heart has grown callous. You don't feel anything.

They're going to lose their house. I don't care. Their kids are rebellious.

I don't care. They're hooked on this or in rehab. I don't care.

At least it's not me. There's a callous. There's a coldness there.

That can happen on the worship team. That can happen on me, in me. That can happen with the people serving.

That can happen with the people on the pew. We can all become cold and callous because as I often say, by default, right? That means you don't have to do anything. By default, your heart will get hard.

You don't have to do anything. Just don't do anything and your heart will get hard. By default.

It's bent on going hard. That's why you've got to bring it back. So callous.

What about unfeeling? Have you ever been called unfeeling? You could care less. You don't feel my pain. You don't feel anything.

And people get excited about that. That's not a good character trait to have. Unfeeling.

There's nothing worse than an unfeeling, callous, cold spouse. Is there? That's right. Remember? Surgery hurts.

But what's the end result? Health. Health. The only way to get rid of a cold, callous heart is to confront it, folks.

It's to pull it out. To break it out, really. Unfeeling.

Disagreeable. That's the opposite of compassion, yeah. Disagreeable.

You know who you are. You know how I know because, man, I can run the line on some of these pretty close. Disagreeable.

Another word, argumentative. You just want to argue about everything. You're just disagreeable.

Just argue, disagreeable, argue, disagreeable, disagreeable, disagreeable. Nobody can please you. You're a lack of compassion.

You sure you want to keep reading? Disagreeable, cruel. You're just cruel. You're unloving.

You're hard. You're unfriendly. You're tough.

You're spiteful. You're unrelenting. You're uncaring.

That's a mouthful, but it's true. You know who the best gauge of this is? Ask your spouse or ask your kids. Out of the mouth of babes.

And your spouse, if they're honest with you, say yes. These areas. Now, let me bring in a big word of encouragement.

There's a big difference between a struggle and a lifestyle. Most people struggle with these. Sometimes I'll go, wow, I've been hard and unfriendly and tough and spiteful.

Will you forgive me? I'm sorry I did that. Then the devil has no foothold. He humbled himself again.

Darn it, God says, now I'm pleased. But what I'm concerned about is the plethora of Christians who make every excuse in their book to avoid all of these things. They're all of these things.

Yeah, but you don't know my this. You don't know my situation. You don't know how I was raised.

You don't know what I'm dealing with. You don't know what I'm putting up with. No, I don't know, but I know none of that is of God.

And as long as we allow excuses to hide, as long as we hide behind excuses, we're not gonna see change. Trust me, I could say, man, have you ever pastored a church? No, yeah, that's why I'm hard and loving and unfriendly and tough and spiteful. It's hard.

No excuse. God says, I don't care, I put you there. You better develop the heart of a shepherd, not a drill sergeant.

I often say, I think God called me to be a pastor as much as he did for me as for you because it breaks and it breaks and it breaks. And then God says, now I can use you. See, it's okay to struggle with these things.

I mean, I don't know too many people who haven't. The concern when I have is the I don't care approach. Yeah, no, big deal, I don't care.

Well, you better care because you're not pleasing God. Tough, spiteful, unrelenting, uncaring, unaffectionate. Does your spouse ever say you're unaffectionate? Unsympathetic? Uninterested, heavy handed, hostile.

Hostile is a war term. Remember how people would say, are you friendly or are you? Okay, so what are you? With most Christians? You realize brother is shooting brother and sister is shooting sister in the church. Do you realize that? This is a hostile environment, very hostile environment.

If we don't just, if we just look at somebody wrong or just you took my parking spot. It's just a hostile, we walk in like we're walking on eggshells, have you ever heard that phrase? It's like I'm walking on eggshells in my house or in my church or that's not good. That's not compassion.

Compassion says, crush the eggs. I don't care if there's eggshells and yolk all over the floor, come on in. Let's get together.

Let's not have the enemy have a foothold, a strong. He loves to just get in with a little uncompassion. Is that a word, uncompassion? I don't think so.

Lack of compassion. That's what he loves. Here's some more words.

Insensitive. Are you, yeah, whatever, care less. Abusive.

This isn't just physical. Do you know there's such thing as verbal abuse? Where you can murder with your mouth, kill with your tongue. That's not compassion.

A compassionate person who's working on compassion, they weigh their words carefully. They're very quick to listen but slow to speak. I actually was hit with almost all of these today.

This morning I was coaching a baseball team and we're tied, 7-7, last inning. Base is loaded, two outs and my son gets up to bat. Now I've got all these parents, oh, you're a pastor, aren't you? Yeah, yeah, thank you.

Strike one. Come on, Shane. Strike two, oh Lord.

Man, you know we practice. We practice. That's what we practice for.

That's why it's called practice so you can get in the game and you can hit the darn ball when bases are loaded. That's what's going on in the heart. Strike three.

But what does compassion do? It's all right, it's all right, you did good. Next time, come on, is he going in there and inside going, you're just lying. Man, I'm so... Unloving, unloving, unfriendly, tough.

I'm not sympathetic, crush that ball. Unaffectionate, uncaring, heavy-handed, hostile, insensitive, abusive, cold-hearted, and hard-hearted. It was coming up.

But he'd probably be scarred for life, right? So you give him a, all right, good job. Go ahead, Nick, we'll get him, 7-7. Oh, that's wonderful.

So close. Base is loaded with zero outs. And then got one out, two outs, and then, oh, pastor's son comes up to bat.

Isn't that perfect timing? But I can feel these things come up. And even throughout the week, you know, with our spouses. And once we get away from God, I mean, we leave on a high usually after church.

Oh, worship, prayers, and then Monday sets in. You know, I laugh about that, but it's true. Come Monday or Tuesday, these things start to come up at work and at our home.

And that's when it takes the majority of our energy to defeat it. Isaiah 6-10, render the heart of this people insensitive. Their ears are dull and their eyes dim.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed. This is interesting. Often God would parallel insensitive people who are insensitive and a hard heart to dull ears and eyes that don't see.

Is he talking about physical ears and eyes? No, he's talking about spiritually. Those who are insensitive and have a hard heart, you're not seeing clearly. You're walking through God's will as if there's a big fog, but you think you're walking perfectly because the pride of your heart has deceived you.

See, compassion opens up all of that. Compassion says, Lord, I'm this clay in the hands of a potter. I want clear, and then he goes, okay, good.

God says, good, now I can shape you. Now I can get you in my will for your life. Now you want to serve in this ministry.

This capacity, you want to do this. Now I can work with that because now you're clay that's moldable instead of clay that's hard. A hard heart dulls our ability to perceive and apply truth.

Here's the interesting thing. A hard heart sees the opposite way. The hard heart thinks they are God's spokesmen.

The hard heart thinks that they are the standard by which to judge everybody. The hard heart thinks that they can quote Scripture at the right time and do this, and no, your heart's deceived you. We need the heart of a shepherd again.

Here's the interesting thing too. A soft heart recognizes that it's hard at times, but a hard heart rarely recognizes that it's hard. Because why? The soft heart is humble and flexible and moldable and open to the things of God, and they see it all.

Do you ever draw closer to Christ? You see just how much of a sinner you are? Or was it just me? I'm opening up too much of this service. But the closer I get to God's holy standard, my attitude, my thing, everything, you see how, so the same thing with this, with humility and brokenness, once you see it, you're like, oh, God, these things in me are sickening. Lord, take away this pride and the selfishness.

Take it away, Lord, I see it. Those who don't see it, there's where the concern lies. They just don't see it.

And sometimes it takes a hard wake-up call. Like when Nathan, after a year, came to David, when he cheated with Bathsheba. Knocked on, he said, you're the man, David.

You haven't figured out for the last year? You're the man. And sometimes we need to hear it, you're the man. Or you're the woman.

You are destroying your family. Sometimes people need to hear that. You are destroying the family.

And the spouse says, yeah, I'm glad you told him, Shane. I wanna say, yeah, so are you. Both hard hearts.

Both hard hearts can destroy a family. And that's why this message touched me this week, because this is a big problem. This is a big problem.

We don't have compassion. Do you wanna know why? Because we have silly arguments and fights and people leaving the church over the most ridiculous things. Unbelievably ridiculous.

We pull each other down. Nobody wants to do that. And not just here, I mean the church at large.

I'm not here scolding. I'm here saying the church, the majority of people I know, including myself, we have gotta work on these areas. We've gotta work on these cold, hard-hearted areas.

Also, I've noticed this. I've noticed this. That strong proponents of truth, those who love this the most, often can get the hardest hard.

Those who love the truth the most usually have the hardest hard. Why is that? Because this puffs up. Did you know that? The more I get into this, yay, yay, look how spiritual I am.

You're not spiritual. John says this, and Matthew says this, and Luke says this. Oh, did you read Thessalonians? First Timothy.

Boy, you're really good at quoting scripture. Why don't you obey it? Why don't you let it penetrate your heart? So we have this. The Bible says knowledge puffs up.

Knowledge puffs up. We can contend for the truth. Yeah, but you're contentious.

Well, I'm contending for the truth. Yeah, but you're a jerk. Yeah, but the Bible says this.

Yeah, you need to apply it and just shut your mouth. Let's be honest. Now, I know what you guys are thinking, too.

I gotta get a CD of this afterwards and give it to such and such. Right? Well, I'll give you that. Usually there are.

I'm gonna send this to some people, too, by the way. But also, God wants us to look at our own hearts. Because as I was studying this, I'm like, Lord, I can be unkind and harsh and mean and callous and unfeeling and disagreeable.

People say, a pastor? Yeah, of course. What do you think? We're perfect? Same struggles. The big difference is saying, Lord, I don't wanna do that.

I don't wanna be that way. And when I'm unkind, hey, I'm sorry. That email might have come across.

I might not have said hello and I was rushed. You're making it work. God says, oh, I can work with that.

That's a sinner who needs a Savior. But I wanna recommend a good book. It's very little.

Take about 20, 30 minutes. It's called Contentiously Contending. So you know how you're contending for the faith? It's by Anton Bosch.

I emailed him this morning because I didn't see the e-book was available, but they said they'll have it hooked up within a day. It's only a dollar on e. You just download to Kindle. Right there.

Best resource I've ever seen on balancing love and truth. The problem is we gravitate towards one side or the other. So this book, Contentiously Contending.

You're contending for the faith, but you're doing it contentiously. That's not good. So if you hear this on the radio, you're watching this on the internet, push pause, write it down.

Contentiously Contending. And really, it's going after apologetic type ministries. All they want to do is beat people up.

So if you want to beat people up with the word, and you don't have a lot of love in your life, this would be a good resource for you. Highly recommend. I've went through it a couple times.

Because we can get so focused on the word, we begin to use it as a weapon. And throw people. Throw it at people.

And use it. Bam, bam. Instead of lovingly, lovingly confronting and challenging.

I'm not sure if you're aware of this, but very rarely do I speak to people individually like I do to you corporately. You know, with the shouting, loud, passionate. Don't do that very often with just a person.

It's more of a conversational style, and helping them. So it's having that balance between when to speak boldly, and contend for the faith, and at the same time, how would Jesus perfectly balance truth and grace? I mean, this guy's what we would consider a manly man. Beaten up, didn't do anything.

Said, what's your case? I'm just gonna stand here like a lamb to the slaughter. Pulling the hairs from his beard. Crown on his head.

And he just took it. Like a lamb to the slaughter. Yet he was merciful and loving.

Yet he could make a whip and drive money changers out. Yet he could tell the prostitute, hey, I forgive you, but go and sin no more. Balancing, perfectly balancing truth and love.

That should be your goal, the goal of your life. Never, hear me good, never compromise on truth. But unless it's underscored with love, you become a modern day Pharisee.

And people don't see the love behind it. You can talk about gay marriage and love the homosexual. You can talk about men addicted to pornography and feel for their struggle.

You can love the truth and love love and join them together. Actually, it's interesting too. I'd say, actually pulpits are silent on this and we haven't done it intentionally.

We just haven't talked about it a lot. But even in the church, domestic violence occurs quite often. And it's directly related to a lack of compassion.

It's always tied to a hard prideful heart. I'm the man of this house. No, you're not.

God is, and you better submit to him. And we go out in rage because we lack compassion. You see how this affects everything? It'll affect your worship, folks.

That's why most people are dead to worship. Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. You realize you're actually singing, I was blind, but now I see.

I was lost, but now I am found. He bore God's wrath on the cross. As if it's a bingo number or something.

It's, yeah, it's no big deal. The compassion, if you say, Lord, baptize me in your love. Let me feel your Holy Spirit in my heart.

You would cry during those songs. I would cry those songs because you could feel the compassion of God. That's one of the marks that somebody feel with the Holy Spirit.

Mightily in a powerful way is love and joy and tears. And they have all, they just can't. I just felt this love, and I don't know how this happened.

I'll tell you what happened. You got out of the way, and the Spirit of God came inside of you. So now you feel the love of the Father.

So that's how humans have to express it. I have to weep, I have to cry because what is going on is not right. I feel the heart of God, and most people don't feel the heart of God.

If a pastor doesn't weep sometimes over sermons, there's something wrong with that. There's people on their way to hell, and we're just gonna act like it's no big deal. There's people abusing and being abused, and it's like, it's no big deal.

The compassion should drive us to the cross. It should drive us to everything. That's compassion.

Paul said, you can preach as good as everybody. I don't care if you have not love, it profits you nothing. You can understand all the mysteries and have great faith.

All you people with great faith. But if you have not love, it profits you nothing. You can sell everything.

Everything gonna be burned at the stake. If you have not love, it profits you nothing. The greatest gift is 1 Corinthians 13.

It's titled The Greatest Gift. Read it tonight. Put your name in the blank.

When it gets to love is patient. Love is kind. Love doesn't envy.

It's not rude. It's not arrogant. It's not proud.

It doesn't keep any wrong done against it. It always trusts and hopes and perseveres. I mean, that's amazing.

You can sell everything and Paul says, doesn't even matter. You just wasted your time if you don't have love. And it really, it's hard because I see so many people spend time in the word, spend time in church, but they're just dead and dry and callous and cold because they have outward disciplines, but not a changed heart.

You see how important that is? Without compassion, there's nothing. Compassion will open up your eyes to God and to the word of God. When you read this with compassion, Lord, show me what you want me to learn today.

I wanna have compassion on your people. I wanna have compassion on the world. Help me.

And you open up the word, it becomes alive. Then it doesn't become a weapon. It becomes a tool.

Big difference. Think about this. Both a surgeon and a thief use a knife.

What's the difference? One to heal, the other to harm. Too many people are harming because they lack compassion. Here's how it plays out in our home.

When we don't have compassion, we want to conquer. You wanna win the argument. You wanna win the fight.

You wanna conquer, conquer, conquer. Without compassion, you'll be uncaring. I'm gonna revisit these terms to bring it home.

At home, you'll be uncaring, unaffectionate, unsympathetic, uninterested, heavy-handed, hostile, insensitive, abusive, and cold-hearted. You're saying, man, that's me. Guess what? You wanna know what the good news is? God doesn't say, do all these things for the next year and then I'll consider it.

He says, all you have to do is break. Why do you think I preach that so often? All you have to do is break. Break, what are you talking about? You know what I'm talking about.

You know exactly what I'm talking about. Do the thing you don't wanna do. Break, bring it to God, repent.

God says, if you bring a contrite and broken heart, I'm not gonna cast it away. God actually says, I desire mercy as a sacrifice. The blood of rams and goats and bulls I used to bring for the sacrifice.

God said, okay, it's wonderful, it's nice, that's a covering of sin, but here's what I really desire, a broken and contrite heart. That I will not cast away because now the heart's right. See, it's all about the heart being right with God.

Your whole Christian walk is about your heart being right with God. Your whole Christian walk, the victorious Christian life, your heart is aligning with God. That's what we're trying to do in preaching.

That's what you should be trying to do with the word of God. That's what you should be trying to do during prayer and worship. Aligning your heart with the heart of God.

Then God's will doesn't become, we've turned God's will into some little mysterious thing. Can I find his will? What's his will? He says, just obey my principles, just pray and seek me. Well, Shane, I don't know where to, do I move next month to take this job? Pray, seek him, obey his word, you'll know.

What do I do? You seem so confident. Yeah, if you're seeking, the reason you're not feeling confident and you're everywhere is because you're not seeking God. God's will becomes, I love it when you're in the center of God's, when you're seeking him, you're like, Lord, whatever doors you open.

Okay, that door didn't open, good, it wasn't meant to be. That door didn't close, okay. You just walk through the doors that God opens.

When you make decisions that God will bless, commit your works to him and your thoughts will be established. He commits, you commit your works to him, your thoughts will actually be established. He'll guide you how? By the renewing of your mind.

What is that good and perfect will of God? Everything hinges on compassion. Maybe it's just me, but I began to realize that and said, wow, we've been missing it. Because we think if I just read the Bible all day, trust me, I love reading it.

But this without compassion is called Phariseeism. Praying without compassion is called going through the motions. Coming in here and worshiping like this, without compassion, you get what you put in.

That's why people leave no different than when they arrived. It's a treadmill. Well, they might say, Shane really upset me today.

But other than that, I'm not coming back to that church. That guy, he's relentless. No, I'm trying to help.

But before you can help, it often hurts. And we go to church when we don't have compassion. Instead of compassion, we hurt.

We hurt people. We are hard, callous, disagreeable, unfriendly, and tough. When we go to work, we are hard, callous, disagreeable, unfriendly, and tough, and competitive.

Our day-to-day life, we have no compassion for others. We could care less. Life is all about me.

Have you ever fallen in that trap? Life is all about me. If things are not going right, I don't care about others. It's all about me.

And we get that hard, callous heart. But I go to church, I have the sign of the fish on my car, I like casting crowns on Facebook. It doesn't matter.

The sign, here's the sign of a true Christian. You know what it is. Love.

They'll know that you are my disciples by your theology. Well, yeah, you want to have correct theology, but will they know that you're my disciples because you can quote all 66 books of the Bible? The titles? Will they know you're my disciples because you come to church all the time? No. You have heroin on? No.

Christian music? No. They'll know that you are truly Jesus' disciples by your love. That's it.

That's how people know genuine Christians are by their love. I don't have a lot of time to get into it, but there's an insert in your bulletin that I picked up from gotquestions.org. It really is good on answering this

question, what are the causes and solutions for a hardened heart? So you might say, okay, Shane, okay, I'm captivated now. I'm listening.

Sin causes hearts to grow hard, especially continual and unrepentant sin. Isn't this interesting? Sin, I mean, you fill in the blank. We know if there's sin in our lives, it's unrepentant and unconfessed, it turns into a hard heart.

It's hard. It's like concrete. It's like stone because we're not meant to absorb that.

Christ said, ask for forgiveness. Confess your sins before one another or confess them to God and He will deliver you. He will set you free.

So confession is healthy. Confession is saying, Lord, I've been wrong. I'm wrong in this area.

I'm confessing. I'm not allowing this sin to grab hold of me. That's why you'll see a hard heart are tied to besetting sin.

Somebody hooked on pornography, do you think they have a hard heart or a soft heart? Good. Somebody who's hooked on bitterness and anger and they're not gonna let it go. No way, definitely not tonight.

I don't care what he says up there. Guess what? Do they have a hard heart or a soft heart? They're holding on to unforgiveness for years. I don't care.

I know what the Bible says, but do they have a hard heart or a soft heart? You see, this isn't rocket science. This is crystal clear in Scripture. If we hold on to sin, we'll have a very hard heart.

The example I gave in the bulletin, it's in the paper today too, this article, on how so many people say, I know what God's Word says, but... I've shared it a few times. It still just blows our mind. My wife and I a few years ago received an email from a young mom in her 20s.

Said, hey, I'm leaving my husband and our two small kids. I know what God's Word says, but God just wants me to be happy. Does she have a hard heart or a soft heart? Exactly.

You see how this plays a role in everything? Another person I was referring to in there, the marriage they were separated, and she's seeking God's will about her marriage while she heads to Vegas with her boyfriend. Hey, call me stupid, but you guys are way off base. Way off.

You're not even close. But they all say, I know what God's Word says, but he just wants me to be happy. I know what God's Word says, but... So you hold on to that sin, that unconfessed sin, and it will destroy you.

It will give you a hard, calloused heart. God is crystal clear on that. So back to the concrete analogy.

Once that mixer gets to the location, and this happened when I was a little kid, I remember they would mix this concrete and the mixers start pouring it, right? They're going to pour a patio. Well, my dad would see me turn on the water hose and start playing with the water. He's like, oh, no, no, no, no, no.

Get way away from this concrete. Why? What's going to happen? You start spraying water on that, it's just a mess. You're not going to... It'll look like a... Well, it won't look good.

It'll just be concrete everywhere. But the next day we came back, and he said, you can spray that all day long with the water hose. It won't even matter.

What happened? It was too late. The water wasn't going to make any difference. The only way to get rid of that concrete now is to get a sledgehammer or a jackhammer and break it to pieces.

And I truly believe that's what needs to happen in some of your hearts. A little water sprinkling here and there, a little change here and there, your heart has to be broken. Your heart has to be broken.

Not with a sledgehammer, but God says, is not my word like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? Is not my word like a fire that devours? You've got to spend time in God's word with Psalm 139. Search me, oh God, and know my heart and see if there's any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Lord, search my heart.

And then Jesus goes on to say, when it was evening, his disciples came to him saying, this is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the multitudes away that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food. But Jesus said, they do not need to go away.

You give them something to eat. And they said to him, we have here only five loaves and two fish. And he said, bring them here to me.

Now this could be a whole sermon on God takes a little, makes a lot, and different things. But I really thought about this. That's true.

God says, bring what you do have. No matter what's going on in your life right now, just bring what you do have. Say, Shane, I don't have anything.

Yeah, you do. What do you think we've been talking about for the last 50 minutes? You can bring a broken and contrite heart. And God says, I will not cast it away.

It's interesting. I was reading last week a book about William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. Many, I think it was 100 years ago, back when they just had Telegraph.

I think it was, you know. Is that right, Telegraph? Close? Morse code. Somebody said, no.

But he had a whole group of people away, and they're trying to set up a ministry and housing and different things. Everything was falling apart. Nothing was working.

They're about ready to quit. So they sent him this long telegraph, or long whatever it is, a letter through the system. And they're expecting this long return back.

And all he came back was with two words. He said, try tears. Try tears.

If you let that sink in, what that means is he's saying, listen, you can't try to do all this stuff. You've got to allow tears to flow. You've got to allow broken and contrite, a humble heart to guide you.

Try tears. If you don't know where you're at with God, if you've never repented of your sin, try tears. It's called confession and repentance.

God says the only thing that will keep you out of heaven is a hard heart. Is that interesting? Their hearts are hard. Romans 2. They're hard hearts.

But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, which is a hard heart, you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Why? Because you

have a hard heart. So the whole reason I'm saying that is so your heart can break and you can say, Lord, I need you.

So I don't know how you came in here, but if you came in here not knowing God, you can leave here knowing Him. You can come in with a hard heart. You can leave with a heart that's been saved and set free in a soft, broken, humble heart.

All you have to do is say, Lord, I need you. I repent of my sin. I confess Christ is Lord and Savior.

I'm giving my life over to you. And God will honor that prayer because it's a broken, humble heart coming to a loving Father. And some of you that are Christians, you need heart surgery tonight.

Let this message sink in and let God do His work. And pray this. Search me, O God, during worship and know my heart and see if there's anything in my heart that offends you.

And trust me, when you pray that prayer, get ready because He'll start bringing up things. And it's things you already know. I've rarely found that, oh, I never thought about that.

Yeah, that's right. That happened five years ago. I never really thought.

We all know. We know we need to repent to Heaven, get our hearts right back to God.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4sjlVJHvamU.mp4>

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