

The Blessing of Brokenness (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, desperation, and brokenness in the church, calling for a return to utter dependence on God. It highlights the need for humility, prayer, and a deep longing for God's presence. The speaker shares personal experiences of brokenness and transformation, urging believers to seek a genuine relationship with God and to embrace the cost of following Him wholeheartedly.

Scripture: Matthew 11:28, 2 Chronicles 36:15, Isaiah 57:15, Psalm 51:17, James 4:8, Acts 3:19, Psalm 34:18, 2 Corinthians 7:10, Joel 2:12, Mark 2:17

Topics: "Repentance", "Dependence on God"

Description

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Transcript

Moving, I was like, this is, and then bam. But I believe it was just that God getting us to the spot of utter dependence on him. Utter and complete dependence on God.

I will not share my glory with another, God said. No flesh or glory in my presence. The breaking of the church.

And here's what's been concerning. Like I said, we're angry, but we're not humble. I'll get excited when I start seeing all night prayer meetings again.

Our church, we just concluded two weeks of service every single night at 6 p.m. Altar was full, people being delivered, set free, marriage, it was, we saw more in two weeks than I saw in two years. It was that desperate people do desperate things. God, we have to lay hold of you.

I mean, I guess, maybe it's me, but I claim the promises of God. If you seek me, you might find me. If you seek me with all of your heart, you will find me.

Jesus said, if you believe on me, as the scriptures say, out of your belly will flow rivers of living water. So it begs the question, where are these rivers of living water? God cannot flow through a prideful heart. And so

the cure is simple, but it's not easy.

It's repentance plus desperation. And this will hit home with many here. Repentance, and as I said earlier, the call is not to Washington and Hollywood and Sacramento, but to us.

God's always looking his people to turn back to me from Nehemiah and Daniel interceding on behalf of the people, Ezekiel interceding, and you look at that prophetic voice, and do you read the Bible, many of you, and do you ever get into the prophets? And Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and Joel and Amos and Obadiah and Jonah, Mike, what was the major theme? Seven steps to financial prosperity? My people have forsaken me, return. And it breaks my heart because God is calling people back. It's that yearning, it's that desire, come back to me.

I don't want, he actually says right before the fall of Jerusalem, if I remember correctly, 2 Chronicles, he said, I sent messengers to my people, rising them up early and sending them, why? Because I had compassion on my people, but they mocked my messengers, they despised my words, and they scoffed at my prophets until the anger of the Lord arose against his own people. And the call is always back, back to return to him. And that's one of the things, if you study traits, especially in the Old Testament, of a false prophet, did you know that a false prophet would say, peace, peace, when there is no peace? Always tickling the ear, never challenging the heart.

Somebody who genuinely loves you will tell you the truth about sin, and the hope, the only hope we have in Jesus Christ. And so what I wanted to get to really here was this point of desperation. That's where we are missing it.

And I know people like you do all the time, they're diagnosed with cancer, and I've got friends right now, one stage four cancer. And usually when you find out, is there not an urgent, an urgent, drastic, aggressive approach, correct? Most people, there's an urgency there. You get aggressive, you change.

Wait a minute, you're not eating like that anymore, you completely change your diet? What in the world is going on? I've gotta take action, I'm desperate, I'm intense. How much more then for the things of God should we not be intense? Listen, you can call me extreme, you can call me a holy roller, just don't call me lukewarm. There's gotta be an extreme and intensity in following after God.

There's a desire for God, and desperate people do desperate things. Isaiah prayed, these prophets are crying out, folks, oh God, would you rend the heavens? Would you come down and break us open and rip open the heavens, and even the mountains would shake in your presence? It's interesting, oh God, rend the heavens. Did you know, though, the soil must be ready for the rain? Have you ever grown anything on concrete? Why? The hardness of the heart.

Unless your heart breaks, you'll never receive mightily the things of God. You prefer the sacrifice, but he brings the fire. Actually, most of the sermon notes are out in the lobby in part one, and part two I'm working on right now.

The title is The Beauty of Brokenness. The beauty, brokenness is beautiful. A.W. Tozer said, before God can use a man mightily, he must hurt him deeply.

And if I had a lot of time, I could go into a lot about how this is applicable in my past. I was district manager for 24 Hour Fitness, and I followed everything the world says is important. Six figure income in my 20s, custom home.

I got the American dream, but I was dying inside. Through a series of events, God broke me and humbled me, and then I finally came back. The prodigal son came home.

I said, God, are we done now with the breaking? No. Very humbling time of my life. I had to move back home with my mom.

I sold my home, crying out to God, being filled with his spirit. The Bible's coming alive. I just want more worship.

I just turned off, I don't know if it's still around, GAC, Great American Country, George Strait. I just want to get a 12-pack and hop on a train. So I had to get rid of those distracting things, and I just came back to God, and the only job I could find was digging up septic tanks.

Here's your, by hand. I know how to run a backhoe, too, but I wasn't allowed to use that. A digging bar and a shovel for the day.

And people see me, what are you doing? And the humiliation of it, and the brokenness, and God was just breaking and breaking and breaking and humbling. Oh, the blessing of brokenness. Folks, there's too much pride in the church, folks.

Another thing people don't know is I struggle with dyslexia, and I had a learning and speech impediment and disability growing up, and failed at school and graduated high school with a 1.8. Proud of that. And so you think I'm coming up here resting on my degree that I don't have? I don't have a master's degree, but I have a degree from the master, and that's the difference. That brokenness.

Now, I'm not saying education's not important. When I came back to the Lord, I just read everything I could on systematic theology, from John MacArthur to Jack Hafer, from Charles Spurgeon to Norman Geisler, and I read American History, and David Barton and Wall Builders. I actually endorsed one of my books, and I did tons of studying because my heart was right.

But I realized the blind beggar even has to be worthy of my attention. Jesus will go to one place for one woman at a well. He would stop and heal a blind beggar.

And once at church, we gotta get back to that place of brokenness. Over that two-week period, I would see a felon and a correctional officer on the altar. It was just full.

People were backed up. I couldn't believe the moving of God's Spirit was so powerful and so profound. Desperation, brokenness.

Isaiah said, woe is me, for I am ruined. I've seen the Lord of glory. See, all the people we read about, did you know that God broke them? Did anyone read his utmost for my eyes, Oswald Chambers? Did you know he was an intellect until God broke him? D.O. Moody was a nobody until God broke him.

Wesley came to America wanting to evangelize. He left back and went to Europe, humbled and broken. Then God filled him with the Spirit.

I can take you to John Bunyan, David Brainerd, Wesley Whitfield's, the Welsh Revivals, and God breaks a man or woman first before he uses them greatly. Because that arrogance stands in the way of God moving in a powerful way. Because when it's arrogance, I'll only go someplace for a certain dollar amount.

I don't wanna talk to these people. I wanna go sit somewhere. My me, my name, and self-exaltation.

Jeremiah said, oh, that my head were waters and my eyes a fountain because of the sins of my people. And David, David, how broken was David? How can God say a man after my own heart when he just had a guy killed and cheated with his wife? How's that, a man after God's own heart? Because you have to remember, God is looking at repentance, not the fall that hurts, it's staying down that does. Now, I'm not encouraging you to do that.

Please don't do that. But my point is, he would say, created me a clean heart, renew a right spirit within me. Oh, God, that the bones you have broken may rejoice.

My God, I love you, I need you. Come back to me. Do not remove the joy of my salvation.

And there was brokenness and there was just desperation. Ezekiel cried out to God, Amos cried out to God, Jonah cried out to God. There was a desperation for God's people to turn back to him.

The disciples had to be crushed like olives so the anointing oil could flow through. Why don't you ask the olives how they feel about olive oil? Do you know where you get the perfume from, ladies? Ask the flower petals. See, it's in that brokenness, because God's my witness.

I come up here now when I speak, speak from pulpits. I say, Lord, what do you want to say? I'm not worthy to be up here. If the truth be told, who is worthy to come up and proclaim, thus saith the Lord? It is only through brokenness that God can use you.

And I see so much arrogance. Shane, can you be crystal clear what you're talking about? Look at our Facebook posts. Look at our, I gotcha, this arrogance, and I'll fit God in sometime if it fits in my schedule, and this uppity-ness that has to be broken at the foot of the cross.

And I believe that arrogance in the church is preventing a mighty downpour of God's spirits. I hope this doesn't hurt anybody's feelings, because the end result is good, but my associate pastor, he's preaching for me today. He's like, well, are you excited, are you ready? And I'm not excited.

In the sense that there's a burden. There's not excitement about the judgment of God. There's a burden.

I'm burdened. The burden of the Lord, the burden of the Lord. So in one sense, of course excited, but really there's a burden.

There's a, when you have to unload what God has put on your heart, and that's where that excitement release comes from. So leaving you with this question, is there any hope? Is there any hope to be healed of spiritual cancer? Let me shoot you straight up front, it will cost you. It will cost you.

I'm well aware in a group this size, not everyone is going to embrace what I'm saying, but there is a cost. There's repentance, there's desperation, and there's anguish. Any of you heard of David Wilkerson? Before he died, he said something that's amazing to me in one of his video clips.

When God decides to recover a ruined situation, he finds a praying man and baptizes him in anguish. Did you know the flame in the upper room continues to burn? The flame in the upper room, in the book of Acts, that flame, that power of the Holy Spirit, that continues to burn. There's a desire for prayer.

There's a desire for standing up for God, and I often wonder where are the Isaiahs and Jeremiahs calling the nation back to repentance? Where are they? Where are the Peters and the Pauls who spoke with such authority that even their martyrdom did not silence them? They are dead, yet they still speak. Where are the John Wycliffs who stood so yielding for the truth? He was called the morning star of the Reformation. Where are the William Tyndales and the John Husses who were burned at the stake for simply declaring the truth of God's word? Where are the Martin Luthers who said, but here I stand, I can do no other when faced with execution? Oh, where's the John Knoxes? I love John Knox of Scotland, one of the reformers who was in Scotland.

He said, give me Scotland for the cause of Christ or I shall die. Where are those saying, give me America for the cause of Christ or I shall die? Look your children and your grandchildren in the eyes. The hope is in us turning back to God and getting a revelation of his spirit and working in our hearts and working in our lives.

John Wesley said, give me a hundred men. I don't care if they're clergy or laity, as long as they fear sin and love God and we'll storm the gates of hell. Oh, there's always been a praying church, a remnant that would go out and pull down heaven.

And so where are they now? The Lindas, the Mikes, the Bills, the Jim, the Chris's, you name it, where are they today? That desperation. I could talk about fasting but I don't wanna keep convicting people too much. It's interesting.

This is even in my notes so I hope it helps but something that they're finding with fasting, somebody from, I think it was 2016, won a Nobel Prize for something called autophagy. It's a Greek word, autophagy, self-consuming. And they found that in a state of fasting, the body actually will go after the cancer cells, needing the energy and the glucose.

And how epigenetics, the study of genetics and genes and how they change and how the body is so benefited, the physical benefits of fasting and how much, look at the spiritual benefits as well. It's amazing. So of course, there are those here who are not believers.

You haven't drifted from the Lord, you don't know him. And so the same call, believe it or not, goes out to you, repentance. Well, Shane, what's the difference? Repentance for a believer is I'm repenting of my callous, hardened, hard heart and I'm turning back to God.

Repentance for an unbeliever is saying, I don't know God. I'm on the wrong path and I need to get on the right path. The word repentance, whether it's Greek or Hebrew, is a turning in the mind that leads to a turning of inactions.

And there's a repentance that takes place. So the question is not, do you want to go to heaven? It's, do you want God? And I wanna close with this final scripture, Matthew 16, we can put up. For what profit is to a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? And I'll never forget, this is a scripture that leaped out at me is that right when I came back to the Lord, 1999 or so, I was broken.

I remember the living room floor. I remember the tears. I remember this mighty filling of the Holy Spirit coming into me, having a joy unspeakable and a love for God's word and this boldness for the truth.

And this scripture leaped out and said, my Lord, have I been following everything that doesn't profit? What does it profit you to gain the whole world but lose your soul? And you look at the top athletes, the wealthy movie stars, the top professionals and not that those things are bad in themselves, but God, Jesus said how hard it is for rich man, wealth, why? Because it's a competing God. How hard it is for that man to enter heaven. So there is for you too, repentance and desperation for you if you don't know the one true and living God.

And there's a hymn we sing sometimes where a pastor and I love it. Some of the lines go like this, I come broken to be mended. I come wounded to be healed.

I come desperate to be rescued. I come empty to be filled. I come guilty to be pardoned by the blood of Christ the lamb.

And so folks, that's what we have to get back to. I didn't come here, I didn't come with anger in my heart or frustration. I came with a lot of sadness.

Can you see how far we've drifted? If we're not calling good evil and evil good, then you might wanna check the news later today. We have so far drifted from God that in his mercy and his grace, I truly believe there is hope because there is a God who listens to the prayers of his people. See, I remember when the church prayed.

Thank God I saw up there the two prayer meetings you guys have. But did you know that that should be the powerhouse of the church? They would ask Charles Spurgeon, how is your church and ministry so powerful because you don't see the 100 people in the basement underneath me praying at every service? See, prayer moves the hand of God. When the church prays, God listens.

He says, my house shall be called a house of preaching, worship, my house shall be called a house of prayer. Even told the prophet Amos, he said, listen, put away from me the sound of your instruments. Put away these things and let justice run down like a river and righteousness like a mighty stream.

So if God is breaking you, I would encourage you to submit to that breaking. Humble yourself this morning. No matter what group you're with, if you're a believer who've drifted, get back on track.

If you're a believer who's on track, let this be motivation, encouragement. If you're somebody who doesn't truly know God, you need to turn completely over to him. What I fear most is the fact that I was raised in a Christian home.

I went to a Christian school. I'm American, aren't I Christian? See, I had a religion, not a relationship. I'll never forget, I was in my teens.

I don't wanna date myself, but Ozzy Osbourne, ACDC, Judas Priest, all that. My mom would go and put a Bible on those and say, and she's praying, I say, mom, mom. I says, and I would get mad, I would storm out the door.

I said, don't pray for me, I wanna have fun tonight. But wait a minute, I had religion, but I didn't have a relationship. I didn't want God because God took me away from my sin, but that is true, nothing, what can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Christ and that deep work of repentance in the heart of a human, a sinner coming back to God is beautiful.

So take that step today. Let us know, let someone know. Let me know afterwards if you need resources, but don't have religion and not a relationship.

You do not want to leave this earth with a question mark here. Do I truly know Jesus? Don't leave this life with a question mark. There's a solidifying effect that takes place.

Listen, I know people that go to seminary. We love seminary. I mean, I don't see one way or the other, but they're so caught up in pneumatology and eschatology and soteriology and inductive and deductive approaches to their sermon preparation and three points in a poem and their hermeneutics and their homiletics.

I'm like, but do you know God? Do you know the power of the Holy Spirit? Has the Holy Spirit so radically changed your life? Do you believe the scripture that Jesus says, when you believe on me, you will do these things. When was the last time you saw someone healed or set free of addiction? That is the living church of Jesus Christ. We should be out doing great exploits for Christ because the filling of the spirit.

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