

# Truth a Hill to Die On

by Shane Idleman

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*Absolute truth is a hill on which to die, and we must stand on it, not compromise the gospel, and be united with God, the Spirit, and the Word.*

**Duration:** 26:00

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 23:21

**Topics:** "Truth"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of men taking on their God-given role as spiritual leaders of their homes. He believes that the state of the family directly impacts the state of the nation. The speaker urges men to stop blaming others and instead take responsibility for restoring and rebuilding the family. He also highlights the significance of absolute truth and encourages listeners to stand firm on it.

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## Transcript

Men have forsaken their God-given role as spiritual leaders of their homes. Period. For as the family goes, so goes the nation.

We have got to stop blaming other things and other people and start seeing as men take the burden of responsibility on our shoulders and say, not on my watch. I can't help to restore and rebuild the family. That's what's wrong with our nation.

Look within, look in the mirror. You're listening to the radio ministry of Shane Idleman. His books, CDs, articles and radio program can all be found at [Shaneldleman.com](http://Shaneldleman.com). What you're about to hear is a message entitled Seven Things You Need to Know.

Shane's unique style of communication has led to speaking engagements across the nation. He is the author of five books and currently resides in Southern California with his wife and children. We hope you enjoy this thought-provoking message.

When Pastor Mike asked me to speak about a week ago, I knew we were going to dedicate Gracie and I began to think of dedicating our children and they're so young and what would I say to our children if I just had one opportunity? In 45 minutes, what would I say to our children? What would I want them to glean from my walk with the Lord, from my wife's walk with the Lord? That's what this message really came from, is out of that desire to share with them, to share to the next generation, to share with you. If I just had 50

minutes left to talk with my kids and impart wisdom to them, what would it be? That's really what I started to focus on. I also just turned 40, which to young adults, they say, God, you're so old.

My mom says, son, you're just beginning. It's like, what is it? Am I old or is it just beginning? Yeah, just beginning. Okay.

I started to think of these things. What would I leave my children? Because whether we realize it or not, there's a crisis in our nation. There's a crisis of character in our nation.

What would I leave them with? That's what the text is today. It's Philippians 127. Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel.

I mean, if I could sum it up, that's what I would say. Let your conduct be worthy of the gospel. And after I finished my last book, One Nation Above God, what we're trying to do in this nation, many radio interviewers and different press releases, they would always ask, Shane, how did our nation get into the situation it's in today? Why are we on such a decline morally? And they'd say, I know the answer's complicated.

I know there's many different reasons. And I'd say, you know what? Not really. Not really.

It's actually very simple. It comes down to this. Men, men have forsaken their God-given role as spiritual leaders of their homes.

Period. Period. For as the family goes, so goes the nation.

And we have got to stop blaming other things and other people and start seeing as men take the burden of responsibility on our shoulders and say, not on my watch. I can't help to restore and rebuild the family. That's what's wrong with our nation.

Look within. Look in the mirror. And again, I'm not here pointing fingers.

This message is just as relevant to me as to anyone in the room. And I began to think of that. What would I tell my children if I could just sum it up, if I could sum it up for you? What would I tell them? And the very first thing, the very first thing, the foundation on which our lives are built, the very first point I would make without question, without doubt, without second-guessing it, is that absolute truth, absolute truth is a hill on which to die.

And it's a military term, is it not? There are certain things in battle that are hills on which to die. We must take that mountain, they would say. We must hold this ground or we will lose.

This is a hill on which to die. Many things in church are not a hill on which to die, which we love to argue about. Why are they standing? Why aren't they standing? Why are they raising their hands? Why aren't they raising their hands? Why are the services so charismatic? Why aren't they more charismatic? Why are we singing the old hymns? Why aren't we singing the old hymns? Why do they dress up? Why don't they dress up? And it goes on and on and on.

Those are not hills on which to die. This, sir, is a hill on which to die. I don't say that arrogantly.

I say it with humility and brokenness. We are living in a post-modern culture. Do you know what that is? Modernism came first.

It says there's a right, there's a wrong, there's a good, there's an evil. But post-modernism says we can't really know the truth, can we? Can we really know the truth? That is so arrogant to claim you know the truth. We can't claim that we know the truth.

It depends on your situation, on your circumstances. That's where the term situational ethics comes from. Depending on the situation, I can lie, I can cheat, I can manipulate.

We're living in a post-modern culture which denies truth. What's true for you might not be true for me, right? And what's happening is our culture, as always in every time of church history, and that's why you've got to stand on absolute truth, the culture eventually permeates into the church. And the church wants to be liked.

The church wants to be loved by everybody. The church doesn't want to upset anybody. We don't want to offend anybody.

Well, excuse me, but the message of Jesus Christ hurts and it offends. It hurts until it offends, as Oswald Chambers said, until there is nothing left to hurt and to offend. It's a pierces the soul.

It divides. Even joint and moral is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of man. We live in a post-modern culture.

It's in the church. It's coming in the church. And what's happening now in our culture is something called the emergent church movement.

And I want to be careful here because I do not like when people are divisive and they attack and they're just critical of everything. But we must not confuse attacking with contending. When this movement as a whole departs from absolute truth, they are departing, not us, and we call them back.

We contend for the truth. We say, you cannot leave this truth. I'm not attacking.

I'm contending for the faith. Right before that verse in Philippians 127 where Paul said that we let your conduct be worthy of the gospel, he says, I have been appointed for the defense of the gospel. But in our church in the post-modern with young adults, we say, we can't really know truth.

That's so arrogant. No, sir, it's arrogant to challenge God. That's arrogance.

And my life was literally turned upside down. I don't know if my wife will remember, but a few years ago, I had a meeting, a lunch with an emergent church pastor, large church, who's associate pastor. And again, I want to be delicate here because Paul often would point out certain individuals.

I'm not naming names. I'm not naming churches. I'm not attacking.

I'm contending for the truth. When they depart from it, they open themselves up for constructive criticism. We said at lunch, and it was one of the most disheartening conversations I've ever had with a Christian leader.

The first thing he told me, which blew my mind, he said, you know, Shane, we can learn a lot from other religions. I said, well, I'm sure I didn't hear him right. I mean, I'm not, what? We can learn, you mean that the spiritual disciplines of other religions should motivate us more, right? No, that's not what I mean.

He said, we can learn how to pray from Hindu and different groups, Muslim, and we can learn how to meditate from the Buddhists. We can learn from these groups. And I thought, I don't mean to be, what's wrong here? The Old Testament says, do not bow down before their gods or follow after them.

Do not follow after their practices. The Assyrians, the Philistines, the Egyptians, the Hittites, the Persians, all the different ites, all the different religions of the Old Testament drew the children of Israel away from God, not closer to him. How can I learn to relate to God from a religion that does not know the true and living God? How can I? Now again, we're to be friend, to be nice, to understand, to seek, to respect, to love, but we are not under any circumstances to compromise or divide this truth.

A. W. Tozer said, God blesses the peacemaker, but he abhors the religious negotiator. We don't negotiate God's word. We live it, we preach it, we breathe it, we love it, we're called to proclaim it, we're called to guard it.

And I couldn't believe what I was hearing. And then he went on to say, we also shouldn't mention sin. No, Shane, listen.

He said, and I had to go home and jot this stuff down because it was just mind boggling. He said, we shouldn't mention sin. People already feel bad enough about themselves.

They don't need us pointing out those things. Now there's a little truth in that. We don't need to be sin sniffers, pointy fingers, condemning Bible thumpers.

I understand that. But you don't go all the way the other direction and say we should never mention sin. He said, people already feel bad enough.

They already know they're sinners, Shane. I said, you know what, I've got to disagree with you. Eighty-five percent of our nation thinks that they are on the wide road, or I'm sorry, the narrow road to heaven.

They think they're good people. They think they're going to get to God and say, look at all these good things I did. Eighty-five percent of our nation think they're good people and they're right with God when they deny His word.

The need to address this issue I believe has never been greater. How do we talk about a Savior but not sin? How do we talk about relationship but not repentance? How do we talk about heaven but not hell? We can't avoid the controversial things just because they'll upset people. I mean, the good news, the good news can only be appreciated when the bad news is the backdrop.

God's love and His mercy and His grace. Well, if you don't discuss hell and righteousness and holiness and God's judgment, those things mean nothing. They mean nothing.

He said we shouldn't mention sin that upsets people, and I could not believe it. Jesus said, I came to seek and to save that which was lost. I did not come to call the righteous to repentance.

I came to call sinners to repentance. So what's happening in our church, we're not talking about the foundation of doctrines of the Christian faith. We're not talking about sin, repentance, the blood of Christ.

As a result, the church is a mile wide but an inch deep. We have people coming to tickle my ears. Tell me what I want to hear.

Don't tell me what I need to hear. When you start talking about these things, people get upset. Why? Because the light of the gospel is being shined into the darkness.

That's why people do not like the truth of God's word. That's why our nation wants to remove Him from our schools, remove Him from our public buildings. Don't talk about Him at city council prayers.

Don't mention His name anywhere because it's the light of the gospel shining on the darkness, shining in on the sin. They want to get rid of it. In the last statement, He said, blew my mind, He said we also should not mention the fear of the Lord.

It makes people feel uncomfortable. I mean, can you believe this? There's pastors across our nation saying this. Now I understand what they're trying to get away from, the rigid, fundamental, pointing fingers, there's no love, nothing.

They're rebelling against that but they go the polar opposite. Instead of meeting in the middle and saying, yes, we do need more love in our church. We need to be more welcoming and accepting and loving place of worship.

But we cannot compromise the gospel. We shouldn't talk about the fear of the Lord because it makes people feel uncomfortable. Just saying that, may I be honest with you, makes me feel uncomfortable.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding.

He said, teach your children to fear, raise your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Admonition, it's a Greek word, nothesia. It means to plant into the mind the fear of the Lord and the things of God.

To plant those things into our children's mind. That's how you train them in the fear of the Lord. It's great to read Jonah in the Bible studies, but me, a man of character, plant the things of God into their lives.

Have a healthy respect and reverence for God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of understanding. Jesus said, don't fear him who can kill the body, but fear him who can kill both body and soul in hell.

Jesus said to fear the Lord, but we're not supposed to talk about those things. That's why many, many people in the church today are not truly converted because the white light of the gospel has never penetrated their heart. They've never seen their need for a savior and they've never turned to him.

That's just the truth. I left that meeting so discouraged and I thought, why can't we be united? No wonder why we all just can't get along. I mean, I can be friends with you, I can go to lunch, we can do things, but I can't fellowship with you.

You're on the wrong page according to God's word. And as I begin to get home and study unity, unity. You hear that in the Bible, be peaceful, be united, have unity.

But do you know what unity in the Bible is? Never unity with man. It's unity with God, unity with the spirit, unity with the word. And then from that, we are united with fellow believers who have united the same cause of like-mindedness.

That's what unity is. See, and I was confusing. I was like, God, I've got to be united.

Lord, what's wrong with me? I mean, what am I missing here? And he's departing from truth. So I can't fellowship in that. I can't be a part of that.

And again, this movement as a whole. I'm not talking about lighting and ambiance and mood and candles and the praise and worship. I'm talking about doctrine, the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

When you depart from that, you grieve and you quench the spirit of God. And like Samson, he wished not that the spirit had departed from him. He knew not that the spirit of the Lord had departed from him.

Remember in Revelations, Jesus saying, I stand at the door and knock. I come quickly. Repent.

Do the first works. Repent. Repent.

Or I will remove your lampstand. Repent. And every time I think of this issue of church, I'm reminded of a story I heard probably 20 years ago now.

I'm sure some of you have heard, but it bears repeating because it brings us home perfectly. It's that story about where there's this large battleship on the coast of Alaska. It was midnight.

They were doing deep water exercises. It was in dense fog. But the captain was out on the bow of the ship and he saw way in the distance, way in the distance, a light.

He said, there's another vessel fast approaching. Wake up the signal man. Wake him up.

The signal man got up and they signaled to that vessel, change your course 10 degrees. We're on a collision course. The signal came back, collision inevitable, collision confirmed.

But you change your course. The captain said, what? Who does this guy think he is? Signal back. I am the highest ranking officer in the United States Navy.

See what he does with that one. Tell him to change his course. The signal came back, captain, with all due respect, I'm a seaman, first class, change your course.

By now he's furious. He throws down his coffee. He gets, he said, give me that signal.

You give me that signal. I'll signal to him. I am a battleship.

I am a battleship. If you do not move, I will blow you out of the water. The final signal came back.

The captain almost fell to his knees. He said, captain, with all due respect, change your course. I am a lighthouse.

Hold it. That's our culture. That's our culture.

God's word, get out of the way. Move. You get out of the way.

But it says, I cannot move. I stand unmovable. I cannot yield.

I am a solid rock on which your life must be built. I cannot move. It will not move.

I have a message for the emergent church or liberalism or any other ism out there. God's word cannot move. It cannot move.

If the whole world ignores it, it stands as a light. It stands as a light, a guide. But we say, you get out of the way.

I don't want to change my opinions to fit the Bible. Mr. Bible, you move. Absolute truth, you move.

It says, I can't. I am a lighthouse given to guide, given to direct. I am a point of contact.

You will listen to me and move and avoid calamity. But if you ignore me, you like the ship will run your vessel upon the rocks and be destroyed. It cannot, it will not move.

And I'm tired of debating it. I'm tired of people trying to twist it. I'm tired.

Just take it for what it says. It cannot move. Conform your opinions to the Bible, sir, because it cannot change.

It will not change. Absolute truth is a hill on which to die. It is a hill on which to die.

Of course, we must remember we don't worship the Bible. We worship the Lord Jesus Christ. But his truth is revealed, absolute truth.

And all this confusion, there's so much confusion, you know, in the church even with homosexuality and this and that. There's really not confusion. This is what's confusing people.

They don't want to take it for what it says. There's no confusion. There's no confusion.

I've had people support abortion with this book. God help us. God help us.

They support a lifestyle that they enjoy the flesh is pointing them to with this book. You better read it in its totality. You better not pick and choose.

That's dangerous. And what I'm finding is many people don't know what it says. And these shepherds, the shepherds in the church and the blood-bought church of Jesus Christ are leading people astray.

It reminds me every time of Jeremiah 23. God says, I have sent these, I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not prophesied to them, yet they spoke.

But had they truly, had these people truly stood in my counsel and had they truly caused them to hear my word, they would have turned them from their evil ways. But they have perverted the words of the living God. Is not my word like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? Is not my word like a fire that devours? But you have perverted the words of the living God.

Why? By not warning, instructing, guiding and leading. By leading people away from this, not closer to it. And I would tell my kids with tears in my eyes, truth is a hill on which to die.

I told the first service, I should be on my fourth marriage. I should be hungover this morning. I should still be snorting crystal meth and crank and all the different things.

But the truth has set me free. Jesus Christ said, you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. It is the truth that stands strong.

It is the truth that will prevail. It is the truth that stands like a lighthouse. It is the truth on Jesus said, you will build your church.

It is the truth on which Jesus said, the rains came, the wind blew, the floods came. But that house, that house, it was founded on the rock of God's word of Jesus Christ did not fall. As you can see, I feel pretty passionately about this.

But that's why, because I see how it's changed my life. And a lot of times people will come and they'll say, I want to preach too. I want to do what you do.

I say, okay, do you want to go through what I went through? It's that brokenness and God humbling you and breaking you and taking everything out of your life that you hold on to this, you hold on to the truth of God's word and you actually experience it. You actually experience God's word. It's not something to just be read, but experienced.

I would tell them with tears in my eyes, this is a hill on which to die no matter what. You don't debate it, you proclaim it. You don't remove things.

You have that be the plumb line, the set of plans. We would never build a house without a set of plans, but we'll build our lives without this. It makes no sense.

No sense. So once I would get that point across, this is a hill on which to die. I would say with equal, with equal passion to the next generation, to my kids, to whoever, once you have truth, once this is your truth, this is your foundation, you have truth, it's a hill on which to die, please, please, I beg you, do not become a modern day Pharisee.

Do you know the Bible says also truth does? Truth puffs up. Be careful. Be careful.

You can become a modern day Pharisee thinking of yourself more highly than you should. None of that matters. What I just said, none of that matters if you not have love.

I mean, what did Jesus say? You'll know that they are my disciples by how well you translate the Greek, by how well you understand the Hebrew. They'll understand because of your PhD in church history. They'll know that you're my disciples because Shane, you used an inductive, deductive, immediate approach to your sermon preparation.

Nope. They'll say that's great. It's not it.

They'll know you're my disciples because of my love for eschatology and theology and pneumatology and all these ologies. No. No.

Be careful. You'll become a modern day Pharisee. Thank you for listening to the radio ministry of Shane Eidelman.

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