

Truth About Unbelief

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the kingdom of heaven and the connection between belief and faith, highlighting the need to act on truth and overcome negative attitudes to live a life of faith.

Duration: 46:45

Scripture: Psalm 91:1-2, Matthew 13:47, Mark 9:24, John 14:1, Acts 16:31, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Faith And Doubt", "Salvation Through Faith"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of belief and faith in God, highlighting the need to overcome unbelief, fear, and adversity through seeking God with all our hearts. It stresses the significance of applying biblical truths in our lives and the necessity of surrendering to God for salvation.

Transcript

So, in Matthew 13 verse 47, the Bible says, Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to the shore. And they set down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of this age.

The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into a furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said to them, Have you understood all these things? And they said to him, Yes, Lord.

And what we've been talking about the last few weeks is on this issue of parables. And it is interesting to see what our culture and the church has made Jesus out to be. A lot of times you don't hear the wailing and gnashing of teeth and outer darkness.

And we kind of want to avoid those things. Yet Jesus is crystal clear on these things. The reason is he wants to tell people the truth.

That's why he says, Have you understood all of these things? And most of us don't like direct confrontation. I don't know about you, but I don't. And I know many of you don't.

So a lot of times the parables would go through the back door. And I'm really recapping last week, just briefly, to get us on track here. So parables, Jesus uses parables to go through the back door.

Kind of hit us with the right hook. You know, we didn't see that one coming. And then it kind of opens our eyes.

And the reason, one of the reasons he uses parables is to awaken. Most go through life asleep to the things of God. The church, I don't know if you've noticed, but is asleep right now.

Especially in our nation. Rock-a-bye baby, go back to sleep. Don't worry about anything and just lulling this to sleep.

So one of the purposes of parables, and even to tell stories, is to awaken. So people look and say, Is that me? Or is that somebody else I love and I want to pray for? There's self-examination. So when Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a big dragnet that's thrown into the sea.

And the angels are going to take the good from that, put it in the vessels into the kingdom of God. And the bad are going to be cast into outer darkness, where there's wailing and gnashing. What is his point in saying that? Just to kind of kill some time? No, he wants to tell people, Listen, there's a judgment coming.

There's a judgment coming. That's why he says, Have you understood all these things? There's a judgment coming, a day of reckoning. Believing in God is the only thing that will save people.

And on this point, I actually find it interesting. Many of you know, the sermons are picked up now in a lot of different places and the articles. And we get a lot of feedback from all over the world, basically.

England and Denmark and Australia last week. And it's funny, a lot of times people say, Why can't you just talk about feeding the poor and being nice to people? Why do you have to talk about these things? And I want to say, Have you read the Bible? What Bible are you reading? As much as we want just the pleasantries, we can't forget that God says, There's a judgment coming. There's nothing more important than this, in my opinion.

Yes, paint the neighborhood, feed the poor. But at the end of the day, you better say, Hey, before I feed your belly, how's your soul? Where's your soul going? And Jesus was concerned, Have you heard? Do you understand these things? So there's a passion there. Yes, of course, help the poor.

Nobody's saying anything different, but I think these people get upset and they get convicted. And they want to lash out because there is a judgment coming and many people are not prepared. I'll just be honest with you.

I think it was Chuck Swindoll, I've said this last year, that said, If you look to your right and look to your left, in most of our churches, one of those will not be with you in heaven. Oh, come on, Shane. Well, if you look at the fruit and you look at, Is there genuine change in a person's life? Are they just going through the motions? Those statistics might not be far off because many are going to hear, Depart from me, I don't know you, when they stand before Christ.

And if it's not the pulpit's job, who is it? CNN? Fox News? The local paper? If the voice of one crying from the wilderness doesn't come from the pulpits trying to turn the nation back, it's not going to come from any place else. That's what God has designed to proclaim God's truth and the power of the Holy Spirit so that lives are changed. And that's one of the things about the truth about unbelief.

Here's the universal truth, is that believing in God is the only thing that will save people. And then he goes on in verse 52, Then he said to them, Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old. And what Jesus is saying here is there were old truths that Jesus taught.

He taught them old truths that they knew throughout the scripture, throughout the first five books of the Bible, and what they were raised in. But he also taught them new truths. Now these weren't really new, they just hadn't been revealed.

And these were the work of the Holy Spirit and Christ as King, Prophet, Judge, and as Savior. These were new things that the people had not been taught. Now I'm careful in this area because I don't believe that there are new truths out there that we need to embrace apart from the Bible.

You can get in a very dangerous course if you do that. Well, here God's speaking new things to me now that aren't really in scripture, and I believe God's revealing and God's showing, but everything should be grounded in his truth. As the old saying goes, if it's new, it's not true, and if it's true, it's not new.

But what he's saying there is a scribe, and if I had time, of course, we could talk a little bit more about this, but a teacher, a teacher instructed from God, they will bring out of their treasure things new and things old. They will satisfy the people from both angles. So the Old Testament, the things, old truths, principles, the old paths, and the new truths that Christ brought into humanity when he came and he preached, and he gave us the new truths that weren't taught in the Old Testament, even though they were fulfilled later in the New Testament.

And again, that's a sermon in itself. We could go through the Old Testament, foreshadowings of Christ, foreshadowings of these truths that were just revealed later. So then he goes on to say in verse 53, now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that he departed from there.

When he had come to his own country, think about this, he taught them in their synagogue, in his own country, in his own synagogue, where he grew up, so that they were astonished, and they said, where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is his mother not called Mary? And his brothers, James, and Simon, and Judas, and Joseph, or Joses, and his sisters, are they not here all with us? Where then did this man get all these things? So they were offended at him. But Jesus said to them, a prophet is not without honor except in his own country, in his own house. In a nutshell, this again will be another sermon in itself, but familiarity breeds contempt.

The more you get to know somebody, this is Jesus, we knew him. We knew him. We know his sisters, this can't be the Christ.

This can't be, we know Mary, we know Joseph, we know these people. They're familiar there. And that leads them to contempt, and they were jealous, really.

And then he went on to say, and this is the thrust of the message, verse 58, now he did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. But before I get to that part, I want to talk briefly, I want to actually take a side note, because I think it's important. This is an opportunity where I get to kind of show a difference here.

If you just read this, would you not read into this that Jesus had brothers and sisters? Okay, well this is where the Catholic Church gets what's called the perpetual virginity of Mary. That Mary was a virgin all of

her life. And going on the Catholic website, they said that brothers and sisters can mean extended relatives or even a spiritual brother or sister.

But they want to teach the perpetual virginity of Mary because they don't understand that the Holy Spirit impregnated her, and that was a perfect sacrifice, that Christ was without sin. But they want to protect that, so they come up with the perpetual virginity of marriage. Her virginity does not mean that she was sin free though.

She still had that sin nature. And they also teach the immaculate conception that Mary was free from original sin. So they start bringing in all these different things to try to explain away so we can also worship Mary as co-redeemer.

So it's an interesting side note there that they would say that no, that's not really Jesus' brothers and sisters because Mary was a virgin all of her life. But that's reading into the text, eisegesis, something that's not there, where exegesis is reading something that is there. And he clearly had brothers and sisters.

I have no problem with the fact that the Bible is saying that the Holy Spirit came upon Mary, impregnated her. How that works, I have no clue. But I know it wasn't of man's origin.

It was Christ without sin. He was tempted in all points like we are, but he was without sin. And that's why he now can become a perfect sacrifice.

So it's funny that he was inside a perfect sacrifice, sinless, was inside the womb of a sinner. Yet that DNA, that blood, did not tarnish him and who he was. But people have a hard time understanding that, so they try to explain it away.

Now here's the majority of the message is focused on this. Mighty works are often attached to belief. Throughout the Bible, there's no way you can get around this point.

From Genesis to Revelation, mighty works of God are often attached to belief. When a group of people believed, when a prophet believed, when a priest believed, when a king believed, when a lady believed, a barren womb believed, childless. Throughout Scripture, mighty works of God are often attached to belief.

But distress and confusion are often attached to unbelief. Jesus said, because of their unbelief, I could not do mighty works there. So that tells me if the people would have believed that he could have done mighty works in that town.

Now we can get off on an interesting side note here too, thinking that Jesus, and this is why I say this often, is a butler in heaven or a genie in a bottle and we can just believe it and if I have enough faith, he'll do whatever I want him to do. And that's not biblical either. In my opinion, belief is something that a believer has.

They know it to be true and they're going to trust God despite their circumstances and God honors that. Now here's the difference though. Belief, here's from the dictionary, belief is an acceptance that a statement is true or that something exists.

So I can say, okay, this is true or this exists, that's belief. Does that make sense? I believe in God. I believe in Christ.

Now faith puts feet on belief. So faith is the, it's complete trust, it's confidence in it, but it's also action. So not only do I believe it, I have the faith to act it out.

So they're actually married. Belief and faith go together. I believe it and I'm going to act it out.

By my acting it out, you'll see that my faith is solid and grounded. Now it's a funny story. You guys remember I told, I always say a year ago because I know it's way back then, it might have been two years ago, but about faith and belief.

It's an old story of that, they ran this huge cable across the Grand Canyon and the guy was, he's, I don't know what they call that, they walk over wires over deep areas, high areas, and that's just stupid in my opinion. But they have a name for that balance, you guys can tell me after the service, I'll write it down. But anyway, he was going to walk across that long wire over the Grand Canyon with a wheelbarrow.

And people said, I believe you can do it, I know you can do it, I've seen you do many things before, you can do that, I believe it. But then faith gets in the wheelbarrow. When he said, is there anybody that wants to sit in the wheelbarrow while I do this? No, no, no thanks.

Well wait a minute, isn't there a disconnect there? Because I truly believe that that guy can do it, he's gifted in that area, but I'm not going to go sit in the wheelbarrow. I don't have the faith to believe it, but that's often if we're not careful, that's how we'll approach God. I know he can do it, but he's not going to.

I know he can, but I don't think he wants to. And we look at God as a person. Yes, I believe God, I believe so much.

Well then live as if you believe. No, mm-mm. And I'm not a big proponent of, I don't preach a lot on giving and offerings and things, and I want to in the future, I want to touch on this because it has blessed my life tremendously.

Once we started giving back to God, how he multiplies, how he adds, and I see so many people, they believe in God, but their pocketbook says they don't. And over the last few months, we've helped quite a few families. And I don't want to tie this into anything, but many, many times, those people in hard spots are not giving.

They're not giving anything. And they say, well, I can't afford to give. And I want to say, you can't afford not to.

That releases, it unlocks the blessings of God. So I'm not one of those pastors that give, give, give, give, give, and push, push, push, push, push, because you can't give people the wrong motive. But if I just sit and say nothing, you are being deprived of the blessings of God.

It's amazing how many times we give, and we give, and we give, and we give, and God just gives it back. Because really what I'm saying, Lord, I trust you with this money. I trust you with this.

It's not mine anyway. It's yours. And I trust you with this money.

And we give. And God blesses. And that's how it works in this area of giving.

That's why churches, you'll see on either side, they always talk about it. People are like, oh my gosh, here we go with the money again. The church always wants money.

And I've often said we don't. And actually, this point isn't even my sermon. I don't know why I'm going off on a rabbit trail here.

But we don't. We're good. I don't get a raise if the tithe is up.

I mean, I took a huge pay cut leaving real estate and coming to do this. So it's not money focused. But on this side, I want to say, guys, give to God.

I don't care if it's here, it's Grace Resource, a different church. You should give where you're giving. But help people.

Give some of that. But let it go so it doesn't control you. And God will bless.

I had a big challenging situation. I talked to the elders about it. Matt even remembers last summer.

And I didn't want to talk about it back then because it was so new. But the month I paid off my truck, God put on my heart to sell it and give the money to a homeless couple that was coming here. They were sleeping out in their car.

I'm like, Lord, you've got to be kidding me. This is not you. Why am I thinking these thoughts? And of course, as you reflect, the devil's not going to put that's for sure.

So about weeks, I'm like, oh, Lord, this is impossible. I mean, come on. There's no way.

I just paid this off. I've been looking to do this for five years. You've got to be kidding me.

And I said, well, if their car breaks down or something, that'll be a sign. And guess what happened? Yeah, the tire came off. I think it was on 90th Street West out there.

Like, oh, man, Lord, but then, but believe, I believe he can take care of me. I believe he'll open a different door, but I don't know if he'll do it. You know, the faith and belief is different.

So it'd make a long story short. The elders, it was worth about 10,000. The elders said, why don't you sell it? Give them half.

We got them a Chevy truck, got them an apartment. And then I took the other half and went and got a vehicle with less miles and newer. And actually it was new at the time, which I normally never do.

That's against everything I do. But all the things, the discounts, the rebates, what they probably, I mean, the way God just put that all together, it's like I got back a lot more than I gave them. And the only reason I'm being transparent here is because I've seen God move when a person starts to give freely of themselves, because what I'm saying, Lord, I don't know.

And this isn't, this isn't not wisdom, right? We're not saying give everything, give it, give your whole life savings. I mean, you have to use wisdom there. But as you begin to unload the pocketbook, I mean, get Lord, this is yours.

Take some of that back. It begins to free you up. And belief comes in there because now I'm marrying my belief and my faith.

Because we believe God will, every one of you in this room that's a Christian, you believe that God will give back more than we give. And he will take care of us, but when it actually comes to doing it, that's where it hurts. There's a divorce there between faith and belief.

So let's talk about that. Truth, as we've learned before, must be acted upon. Truth has to be acted upon.

That's the faith. You can't just believe something. Actually, the Bible says the demons believe and they tremble.

And actually, the context is James is saying, you believe in one God, you do well, even the demons believe. So the context is not they're believing for salvation, but they believe that there's one God. They even know that there's one God.

So believing something and actually having the faith. And I think that's a problem. Even in my life, I can believe it, but it sure is hard to apply it.

And actually, the benefit comes from the application, not from just believing it. So belief and faith are revealed through attitude and actions. And what I mean by attitude and actions, what we do something, but also our attitude, our faith and our belief are in our attitude.

Is it a good attitude? Is it focused on God? Or is it grumbling and complaining? And oh, woe is me and look at the government taking all my money. Look at this and look at this. Look what's going on.

Just walking around, grumbling and complaining, grumbling and complaining. Yeah, I believe in God. Like Charlie Brown.

That's the faith. Faith is also in our attitude. We're filled with the spirit, love and joy and peace and long suffering.

Gentleness should flow out of us if it's in our actions, in our attitude. But many, probably some tonight say, God can't use me. He can't fix my marriage.

He can't get me out of this difficult situation. And I want to say, yes, he can. So live that way.

See, we allow our situations to change our attitude and we become negative and grumbling and complaining and we don't live like God wants us to live. I have faith, Lord, even if you don't, but God can do something, doesn't always mean that he will. So you have to remember that too.

Yes, he can restore a marriage. Yes, he can get you out of a situation. We've been, I don't know what's going on, but families losing some of their children to foster care and fighting the court system.

I mean, I'm hurt two or three this week, like, but there's no, it's hopeless. No, it's not. If God's in it, if God's in it, he can do it.

So act as if he's going to do it. Have the right heart, the right heart to prayer and worship. Because if not, the opposite of a right heart is a wrong heart and it's ugly.

You don't want to be around that person. So that's why the enemy wants to go after your attitude, because it does determine a lot. I'm not one of those guys, positive thinking and this, but I think positive thinking helps.

The Bible says, finally, brethren, whatever things are pure and honest and noble and upright, meditate on these things. Very healthy to be positive, very healthy to be encouraging. It's very healthy.

Even when you're going through difficult things, God watches your attitude and mine. He checks me on that all the time. Because you can do the right thing with the wrong attitude.

That's why the Bible says, God loves a cheerful giver. I mean, if somebody left here and go, that guy, man, I'm so mad. All right, here's \$100.

I get your point across. No, keep it. That's not a cheerful giver.

See, attitude and actions have to go together. And I don't know how it turned into an offering message. I have nothing in here about that.

But I do know that's a big area where we believe. I mean, I fought that for a month and a half. Now I will tell you, this is ridiculous.

I'm going to sell my, what the? Is God out of his mind? I mean, that's ridiculous. Who does that? Who does that? You know, so I fought that and fought that. And then God has just opened incredible doors.

But it was hard. I don't want you guys to think, oh, that was so easy. I just put on the paper the next week.

The funny thing is I even put the price a little high thinking it wouldn't sell. And I tried selling it six months earlier, not a phone call in three weeks. I get it in there one next day.

Down in Pasadena, the guy buys it. So like, okay, God, you're moving quickly here. But I'm trying to, you know, I tried it.

Well, let's put a little high and see what, see what happens. And then, but God will honor that. I'm just here to tell you that.

And, and I'm not one to say also that, oh yeah, do this and you'll get double your money next week. Maybe not. I don't, obedience doesn't mean we're doing something just to get more and more and more.

Obedience is because God wants us to do that. I mean, to me, a blessing is the house staying together. Appliance is not breaking.

Car's not breaking down. You just, life is, God blesses the whole life. It's not a tons of prosperity necessarily.

That's okay. It sounded like my baby. Truth number one.

Here's where I want to get to. All these are from the English Standard Version of the Bible. Truth number one.

Belief. Your belief must be watered in order for it to grow. If you want, if you're struggling with unbelief, belief has to be watered.

It has to. If it's not watered, it'll die. Just like anything else.

Belief has to be watered in order for it to grow. Hebrews 11.1. Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for. The conviction of things not seen.

So if my faith is built on the assurance of things hoped for, how do I find, how do I continually get that assurance? Through the daily news? Fifty Shades of Grey? You know I had to throw that in there again, right? Still running. I mean, that's why so many people have so much unbelief and their faith is faltering because they're not feeding it on the promises of God. I just turned to this this morning in Chronicles.

I think it was 2 Chronicles where Jehoshaphat is being overtaken by a large army and God says, listen, they will not overtake you. Just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. Victory's already been given.

Just praise in the beauty of holiness. You will see victory. Just stand still, Jehoshaphat, stand still and watch the salvation of the Lord.

That gave me enough motivation for the next week. But if you go on the news, oh, they're coming to get you, Christians. But isn't that true? Faith, belief, has to be watered.

You have to water it in order for it to grow. Because if it's not growing, it's dying. I've noticed that my faith doesn't just hold the middle ground.

It's either growing and growing, step back, but it's growing or it's withering and it's dying. And one of the key ways to know is, what is your attitude? What is your attitude? Most of the time, those who are grumbling and complaining, bickering, fighting, arguing, proud, arrogant, opposite of the fruit of the Spirit, their faith is faltering. And you have to water that.

And truth number one and number two go together. Truth number two, belief must hear the correct voice. Belief must hear the correct voice in order to grow.

It must be planted in the correct soil. Now what do you mean by that Shane? Well, I'm glad you asked. Romans 10, 17, so faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ, is what the ESV would say, but another translation says, faith comes through hearing, and hearing through the word of God.

So belief must hear the correct voice. Because a lot, do you know there's voices contending for your time? As soon as you leave here, right? There's voices contending, and to believe, and to have that belief be built, you must listen, you must hear the correct voice. And here's, on this point, I want to talk about why I promote so much prayer, and the word of God, and worship.

And it's funny, you know, people come to the church sometimes, or I'll see them out there like, man, you're just caught in this theme of revival, and repentance, and worship, and prayer, and yeah, if there's anything else out there that's going to work, you let me know. Anything else, I'll just change course. But of course I won't, I'm being facetious there, but here's why, prayer builds faith, because it builds a relationship.

If you're not praying, your faith is not being built. How many times have you talked to somebody, and said, I'm glad we talked, now I better understand your view. Spouses, right? Well, I'm glad we talked, now I better understand.

Or you talk to somebody, I'm glad we talked, now I better, same thing with God. Prayer does that. Prayer builds faith, because it builds a relationship.

And then the word of God, builds faith, because it reinforces God's will. So as I'm praying, and reading the word of God, I'm getting, I'm understanding the counsel, and the will of God, and I'm talking to God, building that relationship. And then here comes the third one, worship builds faith, because the heart opens up.

So as I'm worshipping, now the heart is opened up, to receive from God. They all work together. You can't have one without the other.

You can't just, well I've got the word of God. Oh yeah, you sure look like it. It doesn't have you though.

You don't pray, you don't worship. You have to have all that together. That's how you build faith.

And I want to read something, by Howard Hendricks. I think he was with, Dallas Theological Seminary. He passed away some time ago.

And it's really, this is, I've actually read this three times now, and every time, it strikes me, that he's on to something here. It's something we know, but I like the way he words it. I believe it's a sermon, or a reading, about living by the book, living by the Bible.

And he says this, at Professor Dallas Theological Seminary, many years ago, application is the most neglected, yet the most needed stage, in the process of reading the Bible. I want you to catch this. This is what I've been saying, for the last four years.

Application is the most neglected, yet it's the most needed stage, in the process. Too much Bible study, begins and ends in the wrong place. It begins with interpretation, and it also ends there.

But we've learned, that you don't start with the question, what does it mean? But rather, what does it say? Furthermore, you don't end the process, by asking, what does it mean? But rather, how does it work? Not if it works, but how? Understanding then, is simply a means, to a larger end. Practicing biblical truth, is day to day life. Here's the key.

Observation, I observe it, plus interpretation, without application, equals abortion. That is, every time you observe, the word of God, and interpret it, but fail to apply it, you perform abortion, on the scriptures. And you abort, the whole purpose of them, on your life.

See, talk about spot on, that is absolutely correct. But I've never seen it framed that way, that we, the scripture, remember I've said before, the power of scripture, is in the application. So many people know it, but they don't apply it, so they are aborting, the scripture.

The whole point of it, is not to read it and go, oh I can quote 33 scriptures, you wanna hear them? No I don't wanna hear them, I wanna see you apply them. And the application, and then when I apply them, my faith grows. Faith is fostered, faith is growing, through the reading alone.

But when I put wheels on it, or feet on it, then that faith, and that belief, just multiplies. Because now I have, practical experience. Because I've lived it out.

So truth number three, belief relies totally on God. Belief relies totally on God, even when we don't feel like it. Now let me add there, and especially when, we don't feel like it.

Belief relies totally on God. In Mark 9 24, the Bible says, immediately the father of the child, cried out and said, I believe, but help my unbelief. This is interesting.

This man had a son, I believe it was a son, who was sick. And Jesus said, just believe. And the man was being honest.

I could see myself saying this, Lord I believe, but help my unbelief. See the real problem with life, is not Sunday, it's Monday. You're all gonna leave here, lifted up like I am.

Man we believe God, this is wonderful, I can storm a thousand gates, I can storm the gates of hell, with a water pistol, when God's on my side. I'm so fired up, and then Monday gets here. And life changes.

And the difficulties come. And I have to say, Lord I believe, but help my unbelief. It's like you saying, God I believe you, I know your promises are true, I know that you are good, but this sin of unbelief, is creeping in.

Help. See the difference? God says, oh I can work with that. But the other person says, no, no, I don't care what happens, I know what the Bible says, but God doesn't do this, and this, and I've been, and the state's gonna do this, and they're gonna take my, and I just, and they just get on a pity party.

How do you do that so well Shane? Because I've been on the pity party. Yeah God can, but he's not going to. This is just a mess, I don't know how.

And many times, if you give the mess to God, it's wonderful how beautiful that mess comes out later. Do you know how many people, look back and say, Lord thank you for taking me through that, I don't want to do it again, but thank you. Thank you for that divorce, that ruined my life 30 years ago, but it broke me, and it brought me home.

Lord thank you for this, and thank you for that job opportunity, that fell through. Lord I was struck, but thank you so much, because where it brought me. Help my unbelief, but I do believe.

And here's the thing, when things are not going as planned, that's where unbelief comes in. You're probably saying, well Shane we all know that. Yeah we know it, but we forget it, don't we? It's very easy to believe, right now isn't it? I believe, if we could test your belief skill, it just increased quite a bit, from when you got here.

And then the enemy comes in with unbelief, and the situation is not what I thought, and this isn't getting any better. But that's why belief is so important, that I believe God, even when I don't feel like it. Because the majority of the time, I don't feel like it.

And God says, I can work with that. Listen just give me a heart, that is set towards me, and I can work with that. Give me that belief, and even your unbelief, give me.

God knows we're not perfect, we're not fooling him. So when I pray for big things, Lord give us a nice building, and inside of me I'm like, oh wait, that's gonna happen. I mean, it'd take years, and ever, I mean, this economy, but yeah he could, and he says no, just believe.

Believe me, even when you don't feel like it, even when things don't look right. Now here's the thing though, many people when they get in trouble, they have a perception of what God's gonna do. And when that doesn't happen, I don't get the kids back as quick, or I don't win that court case as quick, or my

healing doesn't happen, or I don't get that job back, we go into frustration mode.

But that's why if you bring it to God, and say listen God, my unbelief is creeping in, would you help? I don't know where this is going to end, but I'm gonna hold on to you the entire way. It could be valleys, and mountains, and darkness, and light, I'm gonna hold on to you the entire way. Because anytime I go in with an expectation, and the expectation fails, I begin to get bitter and upset.

You guys remember we've had a few different church options fall apart in the last few years. One was a merger, the first year that we started, and another one was a building last summer that just collapses. What happened with that? Well because I had an expectation right? Okay here's what's gonna happen, here's what's gonna, God come on, come on you're not doing this.

You're not, this is not, here's, okay I guess he's not going that direction, and then I just get frustrated and upset. Versus if I say, okay Lord obviously you have something better in mind, obviously you know, you know better, does he not care for us more than we care for our own children? Does he not, but many times we want the comfortable situation, we have it all picked out, and if you could just, if you could just rely on God, even when you don't feel like it, your faith would flourish, your faith would grow. Because that's when it's most important.

It's very easy to believe when we see things happening. And here's the next truth on, truth about unbelief. Fear is the enemy of belief.

Fear is the enemy of belief. And this is why I, tell many different people, it seems like every week I'm saying, would you please, please limit your media exposure. I mean we're dealing with people with depression, anxiety, all these things, and they're just posting all kinds of fear frenzy, you know, the enemy's coming to get you, the Illuminati, and the chemtrails from space, and all that.

I mean it's just like, boom, boom, boom, boom. And I just want to say, listen, get away from that. Get away from that stuff.

All that fear's feeding is not godly. Don't keep feeding that fear. In Mark 5 36, but overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the ruler of the synagogue, do not fear, only believe.

Do not fear, only believe. So when I'm trying to believe something, fear comes in, and it doesn't let me believe. It's the enemy of belief.

Because fear is, we don't even have a spirit of fear. When the Bible says, we don't have a spirit of fear, but of peace, sound mind, you guys know the scripture, meaning we're not created, there's not a fruit of the spirit, there's not a fear. You weren't even created as a child of God to have fear be part of your arsenal.

Yes, you'll be afraid, and so why? Because it's part of our sinful nature. But when we dwell on fear, and what could happen, and what's going to happen, and they're going to behead the president pretty soon, they're going to put an ISIS flag up the White House, and all this stuff, just folks, please, back off of it, or it's going to crush you. You're not meant to absorb all of this fear, all day long, every day, seven days a week.

And we start to believe lies, we start to look at different things, and we have no time for this, but we have so much time for this. We have no time to sit in the promises of God and worship, but we have tons of time to find out what's going on. And always, in every situation, people that do that are anxious, and irritable,

and scared, and fearful, and their faith is faltering.

Why? Because fear is an enemy of belief, plain and simple. And we can choose what we do. I can choose to fear, or I can choose to believe God.

I can choose to fear, or I can choose to believe God. In every situation. Doesn't mean it's easy, but there's a choice there.

Truth number five, unbelief does not please God, if you haven't figured that out already. Unbelief does not please God. Hebrews 11.6, and without faith, it is impossible to please Him.

For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. So I don't know if this is for anybody in this first service, or not, but let me tell you this, without faith, it's impossible to please God. Without believing Him, we cannot draw near to God.

Without faith, we cannot draw near to God. Without faith, we cannot truly know Him, and without faith, we cannot experience His blessings. And it's funny, sometimes you'll watch the news, or hear different things, and people will say, Oh, Christians, it's just about belief.

You know, you check your brains at the door, and just believe, just believe. Well, no, there's a lot of, the Bible's correct, scientifically, and historically, and archeologically, and we don't just check our brains at the door. A lot of this, you know, makes sense, and how God created the universe.

I mean, but at some point, at some point, belief has to come in, and say, Lord, I look around, and your invisible attributes are clearly seen. Clearly, creation screams, Creator, I believe in You. There has to come a point.

It's not all just intellectual. It's not just science. It's not just, it confirms this.

There is a portion where belief must be exercised. Because the Bible says right here, without faith, without belief, it's impossible to please God. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

That's why many people who are searching for God, I don't, the way I encourage them is, here's what I say, I say, seek Him. Seek Him in the Word. Get good books, but seek Him.

You've got to tell Him, Lord, I believe in You, but help my unbelief. I believe there's a God, but this other side of me says, there's not. Lord, would You show me? I want to seek You with all of my heart, with all of my strength, with all of my mind.

I want to find You. Would You help me? He's not going to say, oh, too bad, not until you get your life on track, not until you read that Bible all the way through, and you better get down within a year. God says, that's a prayer I can answer, because I'm not far from the brokenhearted.

There's a scripture I love, I learned many years ago, that says something along the lines of, that He will bring back what was driven away, He will bind up the broken, He will strengthen the sick, but the fat, the proud, and the arrogant, He will feed in judgment, thus saith the Lord. In the scripture, the whole point is, I will bring back what was driven away. I will find what was lost.

I will strengthen the weak, and heal the sick. But the fat, the proud, the arrogant, He doesn't even mean physical form, He's saying, the proud, the arrogant, I will feed in judgment. So, the flip side of that is the humble, and the contrite, and the broken, I will find them.

I will look for them. If they're just humble in heart, just broken in heart, that's all you have to do, stop fighting God. Stop fighting and say, Lord, I want to seek you with all of my heart.

And I believe, oh, I believe everything Shane's saying, Lord, it's welling up inside of me today. I believe that there's a portion in me, Lord, that there's an unbelief. Would you eradicate it? Would you get rid of it? Help me seek you with all of my heart.

And He will answer that prayer. I go through many times where I just, 100% devoted to God. He's removed all of that.

I'll die for Him today. But then when Monday rolls around, ISIS got another one. They're not going to be liking loud bowl pastors like me very soon.

This culture is not going to like these types of messages very long. As soon as we can silence the pulpit and silence the pen, then we can be lulled back to sleep. Stop waking us up.

Shh, shh, shh. Stop waking us up. And I have to be prepared for that, and so do you.

But God says, if you seek me with all of your heart, you will find me. I'm almost done, and I added this. I went back and forth, but I want to say this.

Truth number six, belief grows in adversity. Without adversity, your belief, your faith will not grow. Because a faith that can't be, a faith that is not tested cannot be trusted.

The majority of the solid Christians, I don't have to say all of them, that are very solid in their faith have went through hell and back, haven't they? They fought the court system. They fought the government. They fought different things.

They fought in-laws that weren't saved or family members that were drawing them away. They fought all these things. They fought death of a child.

They fought divorce. They fought all these things, and then when they come out of it as pure gold because they've been through the furnace, the Bible calls it the furnace of affliction. There's something about affliction that breaks something out of you more than just life would on its own.

See, I don't think people truly humble themselves unless God humbles you. Because we can say, I'll humble myself, not until God does it. Because you'll do about this much humility when God wants this much.

I mean, talk about humbling and humbling. If I would have humbled myself, I wouldn't be here today. I'd tell you that much right now.

That's why God made me give up, glad to do it, but gave up a great career, moved back home with my mom. I know some of you are probably bored of this story, but not everybody has heard it. And God just took away all that.

I had to sell everything, and then I went and worked with my brother digging ditches, digging up septic tanks for him with a square point shovel and a digging bar all day long. Go from 100,000 a year to this. And then I'd run to people, what are you doing that for? Humbling, humbling, humbling.

Go to work. Lord, I don't want to go to work. I hate, why'd you do, humbling and humbling and humbling and humbling and humbling.

Until you get to the point and say, I don't care what I do, Lord. I'm just serving you. Thank you for breaking me.

Had you not done that, I wouldn't have broke myself. So don't despise the chastening of the Lord. It's a wonderful thing if you yield to it.

And it's a frightful thing if you fight it. Those are the options. Embrace it or fight it.

And you won't win against God. You'll say, okay, this journey's gonna take a little longer than you planned until I humble you and humble you and humble you. And I don't know if I joke about, I don't mean to joke about this, but we see the majority of counseling in churches, not just here, a lot of churches, is marriage counseling.

And 90% of the time, I've talked to family therapists, I've talked to pastors, we just want to say, would you humble yourselves? Would you just humble yourself? Could you humble yourself and not be right? Would you just humble yourself? Nope. Put on that tightness. I'm gonna fight till the days as if you're gonna win this battle.

Really. That's why humility is so important. Belief grows in adversity.

Psalms 91 talks about, he who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress. Isn't it interesting he's saying my refuge and my fortress, meaning he needed a refuge and a fortress.

He experienced these things. He will cover you with his pinions as part of the bird there of the wings. And under her wings, you will find refuge.

His faithfulness is a shield and a buckler. You will not fear the terror of night nor the arrow that flies by day. Why? Because you're under the shelter of the Most High God.

But how, if I'm not under that shelter, how am I not gonna know about the adversity? See, that's the whole point of adversity. It causes me to run to the shelter. Without adversity, I don't run to the shelter.

Neither will you. That's one of the points of adversity. Keep me close to the cross.

Paul said, take this thorn away. And God said, no, my grace is sufficient. My grace is sufficient.

I'm not gonna take that thorn away because that thorn is a reminder and it'll draw you closer to me. So belief grows in adversity. And then I'm closed with this.

The final truth, truth seven is what I said earlier. Believing in God is the only thing that will save you. Okay, I don't know what brought you here tonight, but believing in God is the only thing that will save you.

Karma won't cut it. Sincerity won't save you. And belief alone is not enough.

You have to repent. And you have to truly believe in God. Acts 16, 31, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your whole household.

The context of that scripture is the household there. If a person's saved, it doesn't mean their whole house is automatically saved. But there's a dynamic that takes place when a man repents or a woman repents and then that flows into their house.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/q1jsk0xeQPc.mp4>
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