

Unstoppable Love - God the Pursuer

by Shane Idleman

God is an unstoppable pursuer who desires a relationship with us, and we must stay anchored to Him through spiritual disciplines to avoid spiritual death and destruction.

Duration: 47:23

Scripture: Romans 8:38

Topics: "Gods Love", "Sovereign Grace"

Description

The sermon titled 'Unstoppable Love, God the Pursuer' emphasizes God's relentless pursuit of us, challenging the misconception of God being distant or angry. It delves into the concept of wandering from God's safety and the need to return to Him. The sermon highlights the importance of recognizing God's pursuit, rejecting lies of unworthiness, and understanding that nothing can separate us from God's love. It also touches on the responsibility of responding to God's call and the balance between God's sovereignty and human choice.

Transcript

It is Father's Day weekend, obviously, you know that. And a message has actually been on my heart quite a while, and I felt this was a good opportunity to give it tonight, and the title is Unstoppable Love, God the Pursuer. Unstoppable Love, God the Pursuer.

And if you were paying any attention to the lyrics of the last song, that will make sense to you, because God's love is unstoppable, and I think it's good sometimes to stop and look at Him as the pursuer. It's something we miss, and as I studied this this week, I definitely was just taken back again at how much He actually pursues us. Because if you ask people who God is, many people will say He's angry, He's mean, He's aloof, He's distant, He's unconcerned, and He's hard to find.

When actually, none of that is true. And actually, when the country, our country, America was first established, there was something pretty big known as deism. I don't know if you've heard that before, but it's almost like God took a big clock, wound it up, and He said, there you go, people, live your life, I'm going to be out here in a different universe, and He's distant, and that concept has still traveled on.

He's not mean, He's not aloof, He's not distant, He's not unconcerned, and He's not hard to find. He is actually pursuing us, and pursuing you. And many scriptures confirm this, and I want to talk about that in a little bit, but first, I'm going to backtrack to exactly a year ago, because this message ties in with a

message I gave a year ago on Father's Day, that was titled, Prone to Wander.

I don't know if you remember that message, if you didn't hear it, go to our website, it's one of the most requested messages we've had on YouTube, and Vimeo, and OnePlace, and the radio, and people are wanting CDs of that, and Prone to Wander, Lord, I feel it. I feel that wander within. And where I left that message a year ago, I want to pick up, and kind of complete that thought, but before I get there, let me kind of backtrack what we talked about a year ago.

I hope that's okay, I don't think anybody's remembered. I actually didn't until I looked at the notes. I remember the concept, I remember the title, but not many of the points.

Prone to Wander. And it was taken from that verse in Proverbs 27, Proverbs 27.8, like a bird that wanders from the nest, so is a man who wanders from his place. And I will throw it out there, this applies to women as well, but there's a place of safety.

As children of God, there's a place of safety that we have to remain. That's why I promote spiritual disciplines so much, praying, and reading the word of God, and living a life of integrity, and brokenness, and humility, that's a safe place. When you get out of that place, when you wander from that place of where God has called you, that's where danger is at.

If the enemy can get you away from that, come on, like a bird that wanders from its nest. I think a lot of cats find the birds wandering from their nest, don't they? I haven't seen too many cats climb a tree and go way on the last limb and grab the bird. It's usually when he's wandering, and that's how the enemy will pull you and me away from God.

Wander, come on. And wander away from that place of safety and protection, like a bird that wanders from its nest. So is it, and if I can just say this, so is a person, male or female, who wanders from his own place.

Now wander means to depart, to stray, or to retreat. It's almost like God saying to us as men, son, you don't belong here. Son, this is not what I've called you to do.

It's time to get back on track. You don't belong here. This is not what I've called you to be.

This is not who I've created you to be. It's time to come back, because that wander within will take you away. You remember the famous hymn, prone to wander, Lord, I feel it.

I feel that I'm prone to wander. That's why, and we talked about it a year ago, the wander within must be restrained. Throughout the Bible, kings fell, prophets lost their anointing, and priests were removed.

And men and women throughout history have detoured from their destiny by wandering away, wandering from that place. And we know what that place is, don't we? Some of us right now are saying, I've wandered. I'm far from that place.

Others know. They've been so close to hell, they're close to, they'll smell like smoke. I mean, we know the danger of wandering and having that thing that we shouldn't have, and it pulls us back in.

And God, you're distant, you're away, and wandering is the tool of the enemy. To get you away from that, again, back to spiritual disciplines. I would encourage you to become men and women of prayer and fasting and worship in the Word of God.

That's the safety. That's the place. When you remove those things, when you remove the power of prayer, the power of worship, you actually remove yourself from the God-ordained covering that protects the family, that shelters us.

And the devil says, come on out, wander. Come on out. Often, and here's the scary statistic, often if the father wanders, so will the children.

So will the children. And I don't have the exact numbers and I couldn't find it online, but I heard it, I believe, on the radio, that if men are going to church, there's about a 55% chance that their children will. Even if it's just the men.

Even a higher statistic, if both father and mothers go, it's like 87%. But if just the husband goes, there's a 55% chance. If just the wife goes, there's about a 15% chance.

See, God, I believe, and we talk about equality, I see men and women equal in God's eyes. But there's distinct and separate duties and functions in the way He created us. When kids are scared at home, they go grab me and tell me to get a baseball bat.

When they're hurt, they go grab their mother. There's difference here. There's a different way He's created.

And as the man, the spiritual leader leads, there's a dynamic that takes place where the kids, like a magnet, follow. They see my dad and my father doing this, they follow that lead one way or the other. Either toward God or away from God.

Today, virtually every social problem, social injustice, and behavioral abnormality can be traced back to absent, delinquent, misbehaving, drunk, or sexually immoral dads who didn't respect or understand their enormous calling. Kenny Luck wrote that in one of his articles. They wandered from that place.

They wandered from that place of being in that place of safety and protection. And just this week, it was kind of funny, I chuckled a little bit, but there's a popular pastor on the radio that I do love to listen to down south of us. A few hours, we'll just leave it at that.

And he said something that I hear a lot, and I know what they're saying, but I don't know if it helps. And he said, men don't need to come to church on Father's Day and get beat up. Mother's Day is for encouraging mothers, and Father's Day is for beating up the dads.

And I knew what he was saying, and I don't disagree necessarily, because who wants, I mean, that's not the goal of a church, shouldn't be there, just beat up, beat up, beat up. But let me tell you something. The majority of change that has ever taken place in my life was often preceded by tears.

I often didn't change until it hurt. And yes, men need to be encouraged, women need to be encouraged, we don't want to beat anybody up. But I found, I found that men need to be challenged.

They need to be, like a coach, get up, pick yourself back up, you've fallen, but you can get back on track. Get back in that ring, go to round 12, you're losing your family, you're losing your marriage, you better wake up, and they need to be challenged. Because without that hurt, without that slap in the face, there's not a waking up of a, like if somebody passes out, you give them that little smelling salt, or if they're kind of not coming to you, you slap them in the face.

Why is that? It's a little wake up call there. And I think we've drifted so far now that we don't want to, and there's a lot of pastors, there's one locally, I've had, spoke about this before, and he said the same thing, men don't want to come up in Father's Day and be beat up. I got it.

But they need to be challenged. And encouraged. And we gravitate away from the thing that men need.

We need to be sometimes be awakened from that spiritual slumber, from that spiritual sleep. Some of you know who Dr. Michael Brown is, I came across some interesting words he said this week. And I had to include it in this sermon.

He said who changed, who changed things from a God-centered faith to a man-centered faith? From take up your cross and deny yourself to bypass the cross and empower yourself? Who changed things from holiness being beautiful to holiness being bondage? And from the early church being known for its high standards to the contemporary church being known for its scandals? Who changed things from the people of God being a threat to the powers of darkness to the people of God being active participants in the darkness? Hurtful words but true. They would see we've wandered, we've wandered. And this won't come as a shock to many people, but I know a lot of Christians, I spend time with a lot of Christians, not just in this church, I've spent just as much time in the last month with people outside of this church than I have inside of this church.

And let me make a statement here that is absolutely true and I hope many people take it to heart. When I come home from certain things and I talk to my wife about friends we know, the majority of the friends we've known for the last 10-15 years and you know Facebook and used to do things with, it's alarming how many people have wandered. And they don't understand it because they haven't rejected God, see that's a big difference.

They haven't rejected Him but they wandered from Him. In their conversations there's nothing about God. There's no time for prayer, there's no time for Bible study.

And when you try to look like historical Christianity you're labeled as a Pharisee, you're labeled as hardcore, you're labeled as too extreme. There's just no change, they look just like Hollywood, their conversations about climbing the corporate ladder and making the big bucks and about this and having some beers and watching the game and all this stuff. Okay got it, there's some of that's fine and dandy, but you've drifted, you've wandered from God.

There's no heartbeat of God in your pulse, you're dead, you're dying spiritually and it hurts to see this because just in many of the people going now starting on medication or starting on therapy or starting on counseling and all these things, they say, oh what's wrong with me? Listen you've wandered, you've wandered from God and you need to come back to that anchor, you need to come back to the spiritual disciplines. God is pursuing, God will not give up, it's unstoppable love, He pursues. But the majority of Christians, and I will get emails on this statement, the majority of Christians sitting here, the majority of Christians listening on the radio or on the website, they have wandered from the truth, they have wandered from God, why? You can tell He's not your anchor, you have no time for Him, He's an afterthought, not a priority.

I spend time with people I used to know for the last 15 years, sometimes we'll go and do something, when do you ever pray, I'm too busy for that, when do you read your Bible or I get it on Sunday when I go to church, what? How are you gonna make it in these dire times without God being everything, without Him

being the heartbeat, the soul of everything you do, every word that's said, every action that is done is filtered through my passion of God, where's that at? And that's where they come, oh, he's mentioning, you're just hardcore, no, it's biblical, historical Christianity to have God at the center, have Him at the center of everything. So let that be a challenge, have you wandered from God? Quick test, what do you do when you get up in the morning? What's your priority? Big cup of coffee, a donut in the newspaper, He's not first on your mind. Checking Facebook, checking emails, getting back to people and then maybe you'll try to squeeze in something later, that's not a priority, that's an afterthought.

See when God is everything, when you're anchored to the truth, when you're on fire for God, you go to bed hungry, you wake up hungry for more of Him. It's just part of who you are, it's seeking God, that's where tomorrow morning, every Father's Day, I get up about 5.30 in the morning, I go to church two hours from here where nobody knows me and I just worship and I'm fed with the word of God, I'm so hung, I can't wait to do that tomorrow morning and then get home and please don't understand, I'm not perfect, don't look at me, I'm pointing you to somebody, not me, but my heartbeat has to be towards God because guess what, the wanderer within will destroy me, He will. If I get back into certain lifestyle habits that I had in my younger years, it will destroy me.

If I begin to get out of His word and into the carnality and carnal nature, it will destroy me and my family, I know it and I'm fearful of that, that's a very good fear because it's the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge and actually if you're reading the book of Acts, the church was started in the fear of the Lord, there's a holy fear that says, Lord I have to be anchored to you because if I'm not anchored to you, I'm drifting. Those are our options and as Christians, because of the flesh within, we like that middle ground, we like our God in a box and in a little paper bag and we draw from Him when we need Him. He's not everything, He's not an all-consuming fire, He's not an all-consuming passion within our life and yes it takes work, yes it's difficult, but I'd rather die trying and pursuing Him than fall short and be wandering like a man outside his nest and be caught by the enemy.

I don't know if you've looked around lately, but this is serious stuff we're dealing with. What's going, this is serious stuff, this is called spiritual warfare where the principalities of darkness are set on you and on me. They are coming, they are here, they will prevent, they want to prevent, but God, so you're like, oh people, oh Shane, I don't want to talk, listen, but God, He's greater, who He was in me is greater than He was in the world.

God, they can't stop anything that God's doing, but you got to stay to the anchor, you got to stay anchored to Him, you cut that rope and you're just off drifting wherever you go, you're wandering, so come back and come back and come back. That's the heartbeat, that's the heartbeat of a church on fire for God, is they have to have prayer, they have to have worship, they have to have the Word of God. That's what draws us back.

This should cause every man in this room and hearing this message to engage in worship and prayer to tear down the works of darkness. I love what Al Whittingill said, I've quoted a few months ago, without the heartbeat of prayer, the body of Christ will resemble a corpse. The church is dying on her feet because she is not living on her knees.

Man, shame is hurt. Exactly, exactly. Remember what I said, the majority of people will not change unless they are hurt.

Try experiment tomorrow, go visit some rehab centers and ask them what brought you here? Oh, just nothing, I just decided to get up. No, the spouse said here's divorce papers, or the child said you're not my daddy anymore, you stop hurting my mom, or after the mom has had the kids removed because of her third arrest, possessing crystal meth, and her kids walking around the neighborhood while mommy's passed out. That's usually the pain that draws them back to their need for God.

Same thing in the church, same thing here. And people laugh, but I'm serious, that's why sometimes the Joel Osteen sermons aren't just going to cut it in these dire times. I don't say that to joke.

Do you need encouragement? Yes, we need it all the time, I do. I'm going to get something early tomorrow morning. Yes, yes, but those things are not going to cut it in these dire times.

People need to be awakened from your spiritual slumber. Grab and say, shake and say, wake up, you are dying spiritually, and you're causing your family to die spiritually. Wake up, oh slumber.

And this is where I left off last year. Many men are left saying, and women, I've done too much damage. I've done too much damage.

I actually hear that quite a bit. We're talking to couples or people coming off of a long term addiction, or the kids have, you know, just saying, I've done too much. I've done too much.

And I always remind them, and I will remind you, but God, you don't put a period right there. Yes, there will be consequences. Yes, the journey is going to be a little difficult.

Yes, you'll have to carry some baggage, but God, but God, you never, we can never say, I've done too much damage. Many, let me just tell you this. It's often not until a person does a lot of damage that they finally say, I'm done with this damage.

Lord, can I come home? Do you think the prodigal came home when he still had \$100,000 in his bank account? He lost everything. Depending on the translation, you read squanderous living, riotous living. Basically, he was in Vegas for a couple months, and let's leave it at that.

And he was feeding, eating with the pigs. And he said, I know, I know what I'll do. I'll return to my father and just say, I'm a servant in your house.

And it actually says when he came to himself, when the prodigal son came to himself, what caused him to come to himself? Went in the jackpot, made \$100,000 on roulette? No, pain, hurt, discomfort, that caused him to come to, I'm going to eat a little corn thing that the pigs eat? How did this happen? Now, then that's, usually that's when God does his deepest work, when we're in our deepest pain. So don't, don't give up. Don't give up.

I would tell every addict this same message. No, you have not done too much damage. If you're still breathing, if there's a breath in your lungs, if there's a thought in your mind to pray and seek God, you have not done too much damage.

God is still pursuing you. You would be amazed. Again, picking up from last year, you would be amazed at what God can do with humility, brokenness and repentance, like clay in the hands of a potter, clay in the hands of a potter.

And I can hear it now, Shane, when are you going to stop talking about humility and brokenness, repentance? When the church does. When we're full of humble, broken people serving God, I'll stop. Here's the message.

Now, that was a long introduction. Unstoppable love, God the pursuer. Do you know what pursue means? It's to follow in order to catch.

And when I started, do it for yourself. Look in Genesis. Did God pursue man or did man pursue God? And that's one of the distinctions you need to remember with Christianity.

Religion is do, do, do, trying to reach up to God. Doing, doing, doing. Christianity is God reaching down to man and pursuing him.

Did God pursue Noah? Did God pursue Abraham? Abraham, go out of the land of your fathers and I will show you what you will do. Did he pursue Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Did he pursue them? Did he pursue Moses? His whole life, pursuing him, backside of the desert, 40 and pursuing. Did he pursue Joshua? Now behold, my servant Moses is dead, but you, Joshua, take courage and do not be afraid.

Was God pursuing the judges? Was he pursuing the nation of Israel? Was he pursuing the lost sinner? Christ died for us before we, while we were yet sinners. He was pursuing man. Turn back to me.

Turn back to me. What was the whole point of the prophet? The whole point, God sent messengers to send his people this message to come back. Pursuing, pursuing, pursuing.

God is pursuing. That will change your view of God quickly. Not up in heaven doing this.

Just go next week, you've got it. He's pursuing. Then we make choices that have consequences and we get mad at God.

Isn't that what happens? But God's pursuing the whole time. A couple scriptures, Psalm 25, 7. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways according to your love. Remember me for you, Lord, are good.

Man, sometimes I can't get through these scriptures. Just the, just the love of God, love of, I'm just, how, how, how many chances has he given us? That, that, that just set me back yesterday. How many chances? I should have been dead at 14.

I honestly, I don't know how I made it to 18. 21? Do you know how many nights I don't remember how I got home? Not dozens, hundreds. And he pursued and he pursued.

So see, when you look at life through that lens, you've got to have a little, a little pain there, a little, a little, God, I love you. I sing these songs. I worship you.

You're everything. You're everything to me. I mean, you just, just look at the lyrics we're just saying.

Try to stop your love and you would wage a war. Try to take the very thing you gave your life for and you would come running, tear down every wall, all the while shouting, my love, you're worth it all. People say, oh, that's too sappy.

No, you've never met the risen Savior. That's why it's too sappy and emotional because your heart has never truly been engaged. I get all these tough guys.

I don't like saying that kind of stuff. Yeah, really? When was the last time you wept over your sin? When was the last time God so powerfully moved in your life that you, you just, you just sat there in the presence of God? It's not sappy. The problem is your heart is disengaged, but God demonstrated his own love for us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5, 8, Psalms 100, for the Lord is good and his love endures forever. His faithfulness continues through all generations. He pursues even the sinner.

He pursues somebody caught in sin. Shane Howell, oh, where do you want to start? Start with conviction. Do you realize that God could create people without conviction? There's, there's just a puppet, nothing.

I know, but they feel that conviction. They feel that conviction. They feel that conviction.

This is before that, that shooting took place. I, I prayed for earlier in Charleston that, that, that it was recorded that, that the guy said he, he, these, the people were so nice to him. They were so nice to him, but he still had to go through with it.

You don't think he was going through a hell of conviction? Conviction, God pulling the sinner, drawing the sinner. What about the word of God? So you have the word of God. Tim Tebow puts John 3, 16, and you know how many million people Google John 3, 16? I don't, 40, 50, 60 million.

It was the most requested Google, but just right here. On one hand, that's sad because people are like, I don't know what that means. In America, and they click it for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever, whosoever believes in him will not perish, but have everlasting life.

They've got conviction. They've got the word of God. They've got articles.

They've got blogs. They've got books. They've got pastors.

They've got teachers turning through the channel. They've got friends. They've got Facebook.

They see all this. You don't tell me God is not pursuing you. That's why people say, how can a loving God send people to hell? He doesn't send them there.

They reject his pursuit. It's written everywhere. His invisible attributes are clearly seen everywhere.

Just look, pursue. God's pursuing. Look, there's a creation, and you're part of it.

Pursue the creator. There's a conviction. There's a word of God, and there's all these different avenues that God uses to convict and draw.

It's not easy to enter hell. We have to fight God, ignore him all of our life, suppress conviction, and reject his pursuit. If you think about that, it's not people, you know, you might misunderstand what I'm saying, but it's not easy to end up in hell.

You actually have to fight God all of your life. Ask an atheist at 50 and see how angry he is. Why is he not, he was so much angrier than he was at 20, and then at 30, because they get angrier and angrier and angrier.

They're fighting, you're fighting God your entire life. Stop. You're not gonna win.

How can a loving God send that person to hell? He's not sending them. They're rejecting his pursuit. They're rejecting his call.

They're rejecting his conviction. They're rejecting the word of God. How do you know the word of God is true? Because you want to remove it from everything.

You don't care if any other book is in courthouses or in hotels or in schools, but when it comes in the word of God, you say, get it out of here. Why? Because there's power in the name of Christ. There's power in the word of God.

That's why people want to remove it. That's why. That's why.

So they're rejecting God their entire life. They get the end of their life. They say, well, there was no God.

He didn't reveal himself. He revealed himself everywhere and in everything, but you kept rejecting. And it goes back to this.

The pride of your heart has deceived you. When a person takes their final breath and ends up separated from God for eternity, it's because the pride of their heart has deceived them. You have to remember one thing about God.

He is not a puppet master, meaning, well, I'm just going to control everything. He gives us up over to our own desires and our own cravings. Charles Spurgeon said, men do not seek God first.

God seeks them first. And if any of you are seeking God today, it's because he first sought you. On that note, I think it's important.

I think I have a few minutes still. On this issue of God pursuing you in salvation, I'm actually emailed, people email me this almost every single week. You know, what side are you on? When it comes to salvation and God pursuing us, it's very simple.

Just remember this. God is sovereign, but you will be held accountable for your choices. It's a very healthy view.

Thank God for God's sovereignty. If I was trusting in my four kids alone, alone to, I hope they find God someday, and God's just going to be up here going, well, me too, I don't know. But he draws, and he convicts, and he challenges, and he will pull them to him.

The Bible says that nobody comes to the son unless the father draws them, draws them. So here's the two different beliefs. Free will, man is free to accept or reject God's offer to salvation.

Or election, God elects only certain people for salvation. Paraphrasing C.H. Spurgeon here, a great error is to neglect one side of the word of God because we do not know how to explain the other. God is sovereign in all things, and man is free and responsible for all his actions.

The system of truth is not one straight line, but two. And we don't know where they cross until eternity. And that's a very healthy, balanced view.

We believe that God is sovereign. The Bible says that, do you save yourself or does God save you? Okay, we know that. Do you seal yourself with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption, or does God do that? Does God draw and convict? So we see God is clearly involved in the salvation process, but we also see that man has a responsibility.

And I'm going to get to that briefly on this issue of predestination and election. It's clearly taught in scripture, so let's talk about what this is. It's a process, and this is just actually my opinion of studying scripture and looking at different things.

It's a process by which God, who lives outside of time, established certain parameters before the foundation of the world. Think about this. He clearly called Noah to preach righteousness.

He called Abraham to bring forth the nation of Israel. He called the prophets to call the nations to repentance. Before Jeremiah was even born, God says, I formed you.

I knit you together in your mother's womb so that you'd be a voice for the nations. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit in his mother's womb. Okay, that's going to be real hard to say God wasn't involved with that one.

He just did it. He was as a little baby filled with the Holy Spirit. Why? Because God said, I'm going to call you, John the Baptist, to be the greatest prophet that ever came.

You're going to preach repentance, and you're going to prepare the way of the Messiah. You're called to do that. That's sovereignty.

I don't know why people get upset at this topic. I thank God for his sovereignty, because that's who's in control. Whosever sovereign is in control.

God's sovereign. His sovereign plans will prevail, so you better just line your plans up with Him. It's very healthy there to know that.

Revelation 13.8 refers to Jesus as the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world. In Ephesians 1, chapter 1, if you read that beginning of verse 4, confirms both election and predestination. Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

Having predestined us to the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. So we can't discard election and predestination any more than we can discard our responsibility as seen in Romans 10.9. If, if, if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. We have a responsibility to confess.

We have a responsibility to believe. We have a responsibility to repent. Well, if God is sovereign, Shane, how does that work? I don't know.

I just accept them both. You have to. You'll get a headache, because personally, I can't see how God can call us to do this and then say, oops, you don't have the ability to perform what's being asked.

That would be like punishing a one-month-old baby because she couldn't get up and walk. Get up and walk. Get up and walk.

Okay, yeah, I'm telling you, you know, they can't even understand what you're saying. So there has to, when God tells a person to do something, He has to enable them and give them the ability to perform that task. So again, He gets the credit.

He gets all the glory. Salvation is His work, but we have a responsibility. Romans 1, 18 through 20 tells us that we are without excuse.

So how can a person be without excuse if they aren't able to perform the task? When I tell my, listen, you're, if I tell my son, you're, you, you have no excuse. You were able to perform what I asked you to do, clean the yard. You have no excuse.

You weren't sick in bed with a broken leg. You were able to perform it. In the act of salvation, God receives all the glory and all the credit.

Salvation is His work, not ours. We are never outside of His sovereignty and control, but we must receive His offer of salvation. Jesus in Mark 10, 15 said this, assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.

Man must repent and believe, but God's sovereign plans will prevail. He pursues. He initiates.

He draws. He convicts, but you have to respond to that invitation. Pretty simple.

They say, well, God's, you know, well, the Bible's crystal clear that He's calling sinners to repentance. Actually, that's the role of the church. One of the roles of the church is to call sinners to repentance.

I think even Jesus said something like that. I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. So you see, and both sides get mad at me right now.

I'll get emails from Armenians. I'll get emails from Calvinists. I said, well, let's come to the middle, that God is sovereign, but man has to repent and believe in the gospel.

So God pursues the sinner. There's no, I don't believe any, look at all the, you're hearing on the, I don't know if you are, but if you're watching some of the Christian sites and Muslims coming to Christ through dreams and visions and different things that God is pursuing, then there's a conviction, there's a drawing of a spirit, and man rejects that. So he pursues the sinner.

So there goes our vision of God is up in heaven, hiding, okay, it's hard to find. He's aloof. He's distant.

He doesn't care. He's angry. He's not angry.

If he was angry, we'd be wiped out. How does an angry person pursue you? If God is angry, why does He pursue? And the second part is He pursues the wanderer. He pursues the wanderer.

And I know tonight there's people here, people listening to this later, who you have wandered. You've wandered in many areas. You've wandered maybe in spiritual disciplines.

You've wandered in anger and your attitude. You wandered maybe in some addiction that you haven't been able to kick. You've wandered in certain things.

And I want to encourage you. It's almost as God's saying, son, you don't belong here. Daughter, you have value and you have worth.

And something that you need to remember is the enemy cannot stop God's love and His pursuit of you. That's one thing the devil cannot do. He cannot stop God's love and he cannot stop God pursuing you.

What he does to you and to me, he gets you to believe a lie. You ever said anything like this? I'm a failure. I'm worthless.

I'm stupid. I can't overcome this. I dealt with all of those.

Many of you know my story. I was overweight as a kid and I was teased a lot for being fat. So what did I do? I didn't shake.

I'm useless. You know, I'm stupid. I barely graduated high school.

I had a learning reading disability. I couldn't even write out of high school. My letters looked so bad and just felt I'm so unworthy.

I'm a failure. And things people would say, you know, you're just in construction. You're a redneck.

You'll never be, you know, this whole thing. Don't laugh at that. It's just because you work hard.

Your neck gets red out there at the shovel. And we believe these lies when in reality our weakness actually can become our greatest strength. When God says, good, now you realize that you are just dust of the earth.

You're nothing. Now if you turn all that over to me, watch what I'll do. So you take that weakness and you take it to God.

So when the enemy says, you've done too much damage, you're a terrible mom. You're a terrible dad. You can't control your anger.

You can't control your tongue. You can't look how you treat them. You're a loser.

You're a wreck. Instead of saying, oh, you're right, and you wander more from God to get away from the Bible more, get away from church. God says, no, use that now to come back to me.

I'm still pursuing you. Don't believe those lies. He can't stop my love.

He can't stop my pursuit of you. You just need to recognize that you have worth. You have value.

You need to come back to me so I can establish you and set you up. And as soon as we start going that direction, here comes the enemy again. He just throws in lies.

That's all he really does. When the Bible says we wrestle not against flesh and blood, we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness. How do we wrestle against them? I haven't been in a physical wrestling match with any demon, but boy, sure did, right? That's how they come in, believe lies.

Everybody's mad at your church. People leave because you're too hard. You draw a hard line.

You're too hardcore. You need to soften up. And then I get back into the Word and back into worship, back into prayer.

It's bubbling up inside of me. I don't know. I don't know.

I guess I better bring it because the Lord's bringing it in my own heart. And you deal with these lies. You deal with these PK, pastor's kids.

You know how many of those go, people are saying, oh, pastor's kids. You know, I better watch out. They're going to be the wildest.

And you're going to be having so much trouble. You're going to have four teenagers at one time. It just lies and lies and lies.

And that can get you upset. And you live in this fish bowl. And that's what the enemy will do.

He will plant lies. So how do you remind yourself who you are in God? How do you live without Christ at the center of your life? That's why I say that often. How do you live without God's Word penetrating your heart on a daily basis and worship on a daily basis? How do you do that? How? You can't.

The wonder must be drawn back. Romans 8, 35, who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Now, let me remind you, Paul is writing to the church in Rome to believers. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulations, shall distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or pearl, or sword? As it is written, for your sake we are killed all day long.

We are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. And then here we go.

You know the famous verse, for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any created thing will be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. That basically means nothing. So we separate ourselves.

We remove ourselves. I am persuaded that nothing can separate me except me. Nothing can.

Nothing can separate you and God. Nothing. Except when the enemy plants those seeds of doubt, those seeds of discouragement.

He plants those lies. The biggest thing I think right now nationally is there's just this dissension. There's this division.

You know, the race wars. I'm like, there's no race wars. It's a heart, hard hearts.

These are hard hearts. One of my best friends was African-American when I was 12 years old, John Conaty. Well, good friend.

I mean, this growing up, this is, this is believers. There's no race war. It's unbelief and unconverted people who are causing all of this drama.

That's what it is. It's the unconverted heart, the sinful heart that's causing this. And you think it's going to get easier? You think the darkness is going to go back in the closet? Oh, he's coming out now.

When the spirit, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him. Shane, that's Old Testament. Yeah, but read it in context.

Zachariah, I believe it is. He's saying that the spirit, when the, when the enemy comes in like a flood and he's going to take you out, it's the spirit of Lord, the Lord that raises up a standard against him. He'll reach down and he'll pull the prostitute out of the pit of hell.

He'll reach down and pull the addict out of the pit of hell. He'll reach down and pull the wonder, the adulterer. He'll restore the marriage.

He'll reach down and pull. He's pursuing. And you think of all people, everybody caught in sin.

You just want to reach, reach out and say, Hey, listen, God's pursuing you. God's pursuing you. No, he's not.

Yes, he is. Just repent and turn back to him. He's pursuing, but you got to turn around and grab the arm so he can pull you up and stop fighting God.

That's what happens. Where can I go to flee his presence? Nowhere. If I go to heaven, of course he's there.

But the Bible even says, behold, if I make my bed in hell, he is even there. If I take the wings in the morning and go to the other parts of the sea, you are even there. You're holding me with your right hand.

You will guard me. You will guide me. You'll sustain me.

I can't go anywhere and flee your presence. Nowhere. So he's everywhere pursuing.

You just have to turn in the right direction. I mean, that's the true Father's Day message. Unstoppable love.

God the pursuer. Let that be encouragement. Every one of you, including myself, should leave here highly motivated, knowing that God is pursuing us.

What's the other side of that coin? A distant God who vanishes and leaves us to ourself. That's the Father's Day message, that he is pursuing us. It's an unstoppable love.

And as an encouraging word to fathers, dads, I would encourage you to live that out in your homes. I don't care if your kids are three or 33 or 53. You can resemble Christ's unstoppable love and pursuing them and show them how to pursue God.

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

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/shane-idleman/unstoppable-love-god-the-pursuer/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net