



The Book of Hebrews 3:7-11_Harden Not Your Hearts!
Resurrection Sunday, March 31, 2024

Holy Text: Hebrews 3:7-11

Working through the Passage

Hebrews 3:7 (KJV) Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

- Remember, *wherefore* is *therefore*. These exhortations and warnings are connected to those before them
- And the author reminds us that his words aren't those of man, but of God's: "as the Holy Ghost saith..." Given the skepticism and man-centeredness of the day, this IS a needful reminder! (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)
- Indeed, the author quotes the Psalmist:

Psalms 95:7-11 (KJV) For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. 10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: 11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

- The writer implores the hearer to embrace the urgency of "**Today.**" Why?
 1. Because God should be obeyed when He speaks. Who are we to delay our obedience?
 2. Because tomorrow is promised to no man. (Prov 27:1; Jam 4:13-15)
 3. Because to disobey "today" demonstrates a hard-heart and grieves (angers) God!
- And Today, what what is God saying? **What is His primary message?**
 1. God commands men everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30; Rom 2:4)
 2. Of what? Of sin! (Rom 3:23, 5:12, 6:23; 1 John 3:4)
 3. God commands we then turn to Jesus Christ for the forgiveness sin! (Mark 1:5; Acts 2:36-38; Rom 10:9-11)
- This message is urgent and must be embraced "TODAY," because judgment awaits all men.
2 Corinthians 5:10-11 (KJV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

Hebrews 3:8 (KJV) Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: 9 (KJV) When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

- This next command, "Harden not your hearts," is important because of mankind's propensity (including God's people) to do just that!
- "Propensity" ("tendency, inclination") might be understating the actual situation. Scripture is FILLED with examples of God's people refusing to listen to Him!
- The provocation...the day of temptation...points to the consistent unfaithfulness of Israel in the wilderness with Moses.

- From the Idolatry at Sinai (Ex 32) to the rebellion of Korah and his company (Num 16). The consequences of such often resulted in severe judgment from God (plague and death).
- God used words concerning them like “stiff-necked,” which is an image for a hard heart.¹ (Ex 32:9; Deut 10:12-16)
- The **command** in our Text is “Don’t be this way!” Can you think of a worse condition than having a heart unreceptive to the Words of God?
- **What is a hardened heart?** Our definition: *A hard heart is a heart that will not hear and obey. It is not necessarily a confused heart. It understands, but is more committed to its own will than God’s. In short, it is a person to whom God has spoken and likely has greatly blessed, but who still will not submit to Him.*
- It is a devastatingly sad state given the love and mercy of God. (New 9:7-17)
- **What causes a hardened heart?** A love of **sin** certainly does, particularly a prideful love for ease and “good times.”

Matthew 13:19-21 (KJV) *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*

- And the more one traffics in sin, the harder one’s heart becomes:

Matthew 24:12 (KJV) *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*

Ephesians 4:19 (KJV) *Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

1 Timothy 4:1-2 (KJV) *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

- Dangerously, after prolonged disobedience, God Himself can give one over to hardness! (Rom 1:22-32)
- **How might one be healed of a hard heart? How will you know?**
 1. It requires an act of God: a new heart of flesh rather than stone. (Ezek 11:9)
Ezekiel 36:26-27 (KJV) *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*
 2. This wonderful transformation happens when one repents and believes in Jesus!
2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*
 3. You’ll know because as you are sanctified (continually purified) by the Holy Spirit, your affections will change and your receptivity to God’s Word will increase. (Jam 1:21-22)

¹ Also called an uncircumcised heart, Acts 5:51-53.

