



A Genuine Warning

Hebrews 3:12-15

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away (rebel against) from the living God (living dynamic person not an idea/doctrine). But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” (it will not always be today) that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” Hebrews 3:12–15

The Process

Evil

Not wanting to live in the light of truth, lives in the shadows and becomes weak and unbelieving

Unbelieving

Has lost confidence in God, has no reason to persevere and begins to ...

Turn Away

The heart no longer sensitive to the word of God becomes ...

Hardened

The Mechanism Leading to Hardening

- The deceitfulness of sin
- It deceives and the person who gets deceived first is me!
- I have no problem seeing my wife and children's sin, mum and Dads
- Camera illustration
- 20-20 vision with everyone else's problems but blind to my own
 - Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. Mt 7:4–5
 - Make it work for you
- Why are we so surprised when our own sin get pointed out? Yet we defend ourselves and think we have done nothing wrong. We have been misunderstood

The Deception Snowball

The Devil Deceived Us

John 8:44 - He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Sin Became Powerful and Deceitful

But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. For sin ... deceived me and ... killed me. Ro 7:8-12

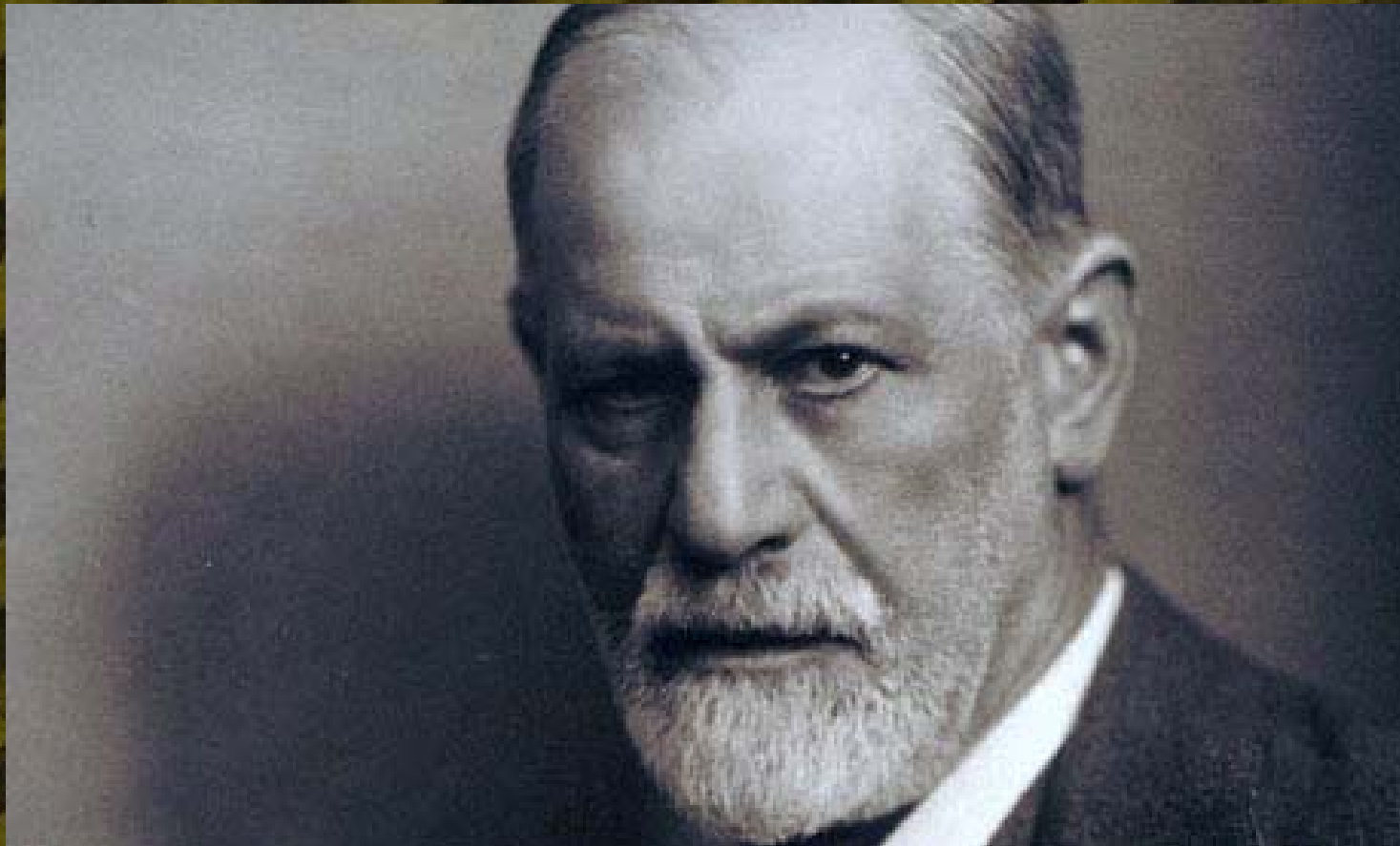
Our Hearts Became Deceitful

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? Jeremiah 17:9

We Became Self-Deceiving

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. James 1:26

Sigmund Freud



Sigmund Freud

- The shallowness of current approaches to what is wrong with people contrasted with Freud
- The id is our sinful nature
- The self-defence mechanisms – we don't want to face the ugly truth about ourselves so we deny and bury what seems unacceptable to an idealised image of what we are like
- We have innate grandiose desires for pleasure and violence
- We energetically defend against acknowledging these realities to ourselves and set up mechanisms to defend us from seeing our true selves
- The id and self-defence mechanisms

Example 1

Freud

Fantasy: Tendency to retreat into fantasy in order to resolve inner and outer conflicts.

Biblically

People fantasize rather than face their problems biblically. Fantasy covers failed hopes, laziness, unrealistic ideals of success, unforgiven hurts, and loneliness. A lonely single woman with a boring job may read romance novels, watch soap operas, and daydream about being glamorous, successful and beloved.

Example 2

Freud

Displacement: Defence mechanism that shifts sexual or aggressive impulses to a more acceptable or less threatening target; redirecting emotion to a safer outlet; separation of emotion from its real object and redirection of the intense emotion toward someone or something that is less offensive or threatening in order to avoid dealing directly with what is frightening or threatening. For example, a mother may yell at her child because she is angry with her husband.

Biblically

People scapegoat, blame, and attack innocent, helpless or even guilty parties rather than face their problems biblically. A man yells at his wife, kids and dog after a hard day at work. Throws an ash tray through the TV when his team loses, grumbles and rages at minor injustices rather than deal with the pride that drives him.

Example 3

Freud

Denial: Refusal to accept external reality because it is too threatening; arguing against an anxiety-provoking stimulus by stating it doesn't exist; resolution of emotional conflict and reduction of anxiety by refusing to perceive or consciously acknowledge the more unpleasant aspects of external reality.

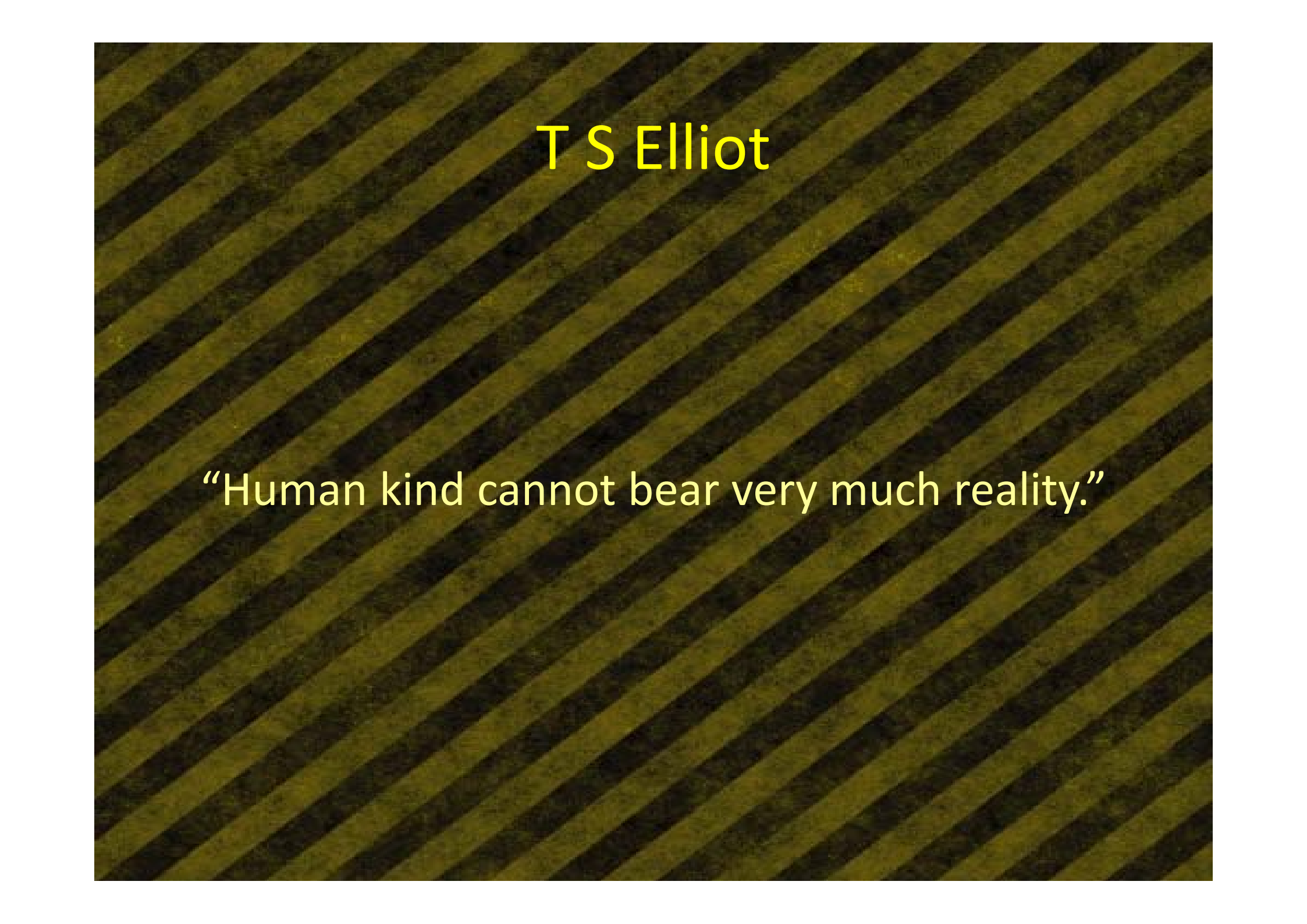
Biblically

People deny or avoid reality to save face or hide from consciousness of guilt. A mother excuses her son's drunkenness and trouble with the law by saying "He's a good boy. He just got in with the wrong crowd."

Other Typical Examples ...

- People cover failures with other successes
- People rationalise their behaviour, make excuses and shift blame to put themselves in the best light – its ok to be bitter because my husband is an alcoholic
- People use euphemisms about themselves and others to avoid guilt or any attribution of responsibility – I'm just irritated not angry, I just had a few drinks, he acts that way because he has low self-esteem
- People compare themselves to others to look good and to justify themselves – thank God Hitler lived
- People blame others for making them act the way they did – if only they would treat me with respect I would not get angry, its only human to get angry
- We change the subject or crack jokes if an awkward or threatening subject arises
- We monopolise conversation, filling silences to keep others at bay and to keep from feeling like failures
- We run from problems by watching TV, drinking, smoking, promiscuity, workaholism, compulsive eating
- We mock or put in a box those whose opinions or problems threaten our own commitments and behaviour

- We get defensive accusatory, testy, or talk loudly, or try to bully others to defend ourselves and make a show of competency
- We overdo penance by saying poor me; I'm so horrible and such a failure
- We minimise the seriousness of problems, its nothing, or the difficulty of change, I promise I will never do it again
- We lie outright to look good or to avoid looking bad – my car makes me sin
- We lie subtly putting ourselves in the best light by innuendo, embellishment or careful selection of data.
- We think highly of our own opinions on every issue
- We tie up our identity in certain grandiose roles – counsellor, parent, pastor
- We pray for help before performing a certain responsibility and then rehearse our own success afterwards without thought of God
- “‘I did that,’ says my memory. ‘I could not have done that,’ says my pride, and remains inexorable. Eventually – the memory yields.” Nietzsche



T S Elliot

“Human kind cannot bear very much reality.”

My Need

- I needed you before sin
 - “If there had been no fall, if we had never sinned, we would still need help because we are human ... I need to wake up in the morning and say, “God, I am a person in desperate need of help. Please send helpers my way and give me the humility to receive the help that you have provided.” Tripp
- I need you so much more as the result of sin – walk in the truth and help me see my blindness

The Remedy: Community

- But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb 3:13
 - Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye. Mt 7:4–5
- And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. Heb 10:24–25

Serving Structures at The Project

- Community groups
- Discipleship
- The City

