

## July 19, 2015 Hebrews 3:7-11 "Do not harden your hearts"

Notes will be in normal print. Overhead slides will be in \* **Bold Print**

- **"Therefore, just as the Holy spirit says, Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, and saw My works for forty years, Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart, and they did not know My ways; as I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest.'" Hebrews 3:7-11**

"Therefore"-Ron Walters, "Consider Christ, High Priest, confidence, boast of our hope, reaffirm Hebrew believers, challenge believers, concern over Hebrews intellectual belief-persecution, personal sin

"Today"-Urgency, now, do not delay, follow through, this very moment

"If you hear His voice"-Holy Spirit drawing, convicting, convincing

"Do not harden your hearts"- fathers' example in the wilderness. Several examples

- **"Then the LORD spoke to Moses saying, Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers' tribes, everyone a leader from among them." Numbers 13:1,2**
- **"When Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, he said to them, "Go up there into the Negev, then go up into the hill country. See what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many. How is the land in which they live, is it good or bad? And how are the cities in which they live, are they like open camps or with fortifications? How is the land, is it fat or lean? Are there trees in it or not"? Make an effort then to get some of the fruit of the land." Numbers 13:17-20**

Good instruction- "Going to Give", good military strategy, "Recon", meant to encourage them, show them what they can overcome through Him, 40 days, God Said-keeps His Word

The Spies report

- **“We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan.”**
- **“Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it.”**
- **“But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report, saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size.” Numbers 13:27-32**

The people rebel and God’s response

- **“All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron: and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder, would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” Numbers 14:2,3**
- **“Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey-I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have rejected. As for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness.” Numbers 14:30-32**

How is it possible to see God’s miraculous works and then rebel-Red Sea example? Scriptural lessons learned from the fathers’ failure-God keeps His Word, consequences of not trusting God, 40 years in wilderness, only Joshua and Caleb, Psalm 78- once again instruction of learning from the past

- **“Listen, O My people, to my instruction: incline your ears to the words of my mouth”**
- **“That they should put their confidence in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.”**

- **“And not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation. A generation that did not prepare its heart, and whose spirit was not faithful to God.”**
- **“They did not keep the covenant of God and refused to walk in His law; they forgot His deeds and His miracles that He had shown them.” Psalm 78 verses 1, 7, 8, 10**

Back to First Century Hebrews-Sobering words, many scriptural reminders. They did not know His ways. (Keeps His Word, will be obstacles, He always wins, He is faithful, and He will judge those that don't believe Him) Once again they were being taught the lessons of living by faith, today, if you hear His voice, He has spoken in His Son, do not harden your hearts. Challenge believers warning against intellectual belief. Rest –two types. Today-urgency, eternal truths, eternal consequences, now.

What is the lesson for us Today? -Can we not learn also from the old testament Fathers as well.

- **“They failed to commit themselves to Him in faith” (MacArthur)**

Two-Fold Lesson-Challenge believers, but also those who intellectually believe.

- **“Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts”**

Has not the Spirit of God revealed to us God's perfect and complete redemption plan?

Has not God Spoken to us and the world in His Son?

- **“God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these days has spoken in His Son” Hebrew 1:1,2**

Today-Is there not the same urgency, to respond to His Son, to be born of the Son, to put our faith in practice, to demonstrate the reality of Christ in us by the way we live our lives.

Do we hear His voice? -I have never heard an audible voice from God, God speaks to us through His Word, it is His Spirit that enlightens the Word, gives us understanding, impresses the truth on our hearts. If we are not reading, studying, and meditating on the Word, we are not hearing from God. Jail testimony (I may

have shared before) Can we trust our own thoughts? Listen to own accuse vs. Word

- **“So, faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ.”  
Romans 10:17**
- **“Sanctify them in the truth, Thy Word is truth.” John 17:17**

The Psalmist understood the importance of knowing God’s Word and trusting God’s Word and wanting God “according to His Word.” What a great way to pray! If God loves us according to His Word. (Ps.119)

- **“Revive me according to your Word”**
- **“Strengthen me according to your Word”**
- **“May Your lovingkindness also come to me, O Lord, Your salvation according to Your Word”**
- **“You have dealt well with Your servant, O Lord, according you Your Word”**
- **“Sustain me according to Your Word”**
- **“Deliver me according to your Word” (All verses from Psalm 119)**

But then there is the warning “Do not harden your hearts” The Fathers of OT did not know His ways. Should we not know His ways and His faithfulness to His Word and promises, and He will be faithful to also judge those who don’t listen.

In Hebrews 2 we were warned about drifting from the truth carelessness, neglect

- **“For this reason, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.” Hebrew 2:1**
- **“How will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation” Hebrew 2:3**

Here the writer (God) turns up the heat. “Do not harden your hearts”. Harden is more than carelessness or neglect, it is an attitude, it is rebellion.

For the believer it is this type of warning in the scripture that God uses to waken our hearts, examine our hearts, test our hearts. Perseverance-expand. In Christ we not only have been given the desire to change but the power to change as well. If God grants us life, there will be life. They will be change, yes struggles, battles, out and out war, but there will be victory. I believe in the preservation of the saints, that God will preserve us, He will keep us, He will change us, He is preparing us, we will enter his rest. But it is scriptures like this one that He used to waken the heart of the First Century Hebrews the same way we want to waken

our hearts today. If we are believers, our heart will be quick to examine our hearts, and do business with God as David. Personal – 4 weeks of meditating on this passage.

- **“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Phil.1:6**

How do we keep from hardening our hearts? What is it that hardens our hearts? Sin! I am not talking about struggling with sin and sometime even falling to sin. Every Christian battles against sin. Romans 7 one of the most encouraging passages in bible because we read about the Apostle Paul struggling with indwelling sin.

But the sin we need to watch out for is that sin that reflects resistance or even outright rebellion. And then again it may just an attitude we think is OK without any regard to the wisdom of God’s Word. Examples: Maybe it is an attitude that says:

I can go to R rated movies they don’t bother me.

I get enough Bible on Sunday mornings, I don’t have time during the week

I can listen in on worldly conversations, I just don’t participate

I really don’t like that person anymore and I am going to treat him/her accordingly. (Church)

I am entitled to hold this grudge.

I only look at that website out of curiosity

Should we not be keeping our hearts soft to God’s instruction. Are we striving for personal holiness? Personal Discipleship? Is it not God’s goal for us is to make us more Christlike? Has He not given “life in His Son? Are we not new creations ready to be molded into Christ image? Craig-Learned Follower

John Owen late 1600’s

- **“But few make any effort to thrive in this state, to grow in grace, to be changed from glory to glory into the image of Christ, to press towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to lay hold of eternal life, to be more holy, more humble, more righteous, more spiritually minded and to have their desires more and more transformed into the likeness of**

**heavenly things. The spiritual state which they have reached satisfies the church and gives them a reputation for being religious, so they are quite satisfied. But to be more holy and heavenly, to have their hearts more and more taken up with heavenly things, they think to be inconsistent with their present state. So, because of this foolishness, Christianity has lost much of its glory, and the souls of men have been deprived of the witness to the true power of godliness."**

Jonathan Edwards America's greatest theologian was convinced that the greatest influence he could have on his church was through his focus on his own personal holiness. If it is the goal of each of us to be more Christlike, will not God use us and this church for His glory. He has given us His Son, we have been born of His Spirit should we not want to keep hearts soft to our Savior's precious and perfect touch. Have we not been called for His purpose and His Glory and to be made in His image?

Now just as the writer of Hebrews was concerned for those who were not yet convinced and not yet trusting in Christ, The Spirit speaks "Do not harden your hearts." Even more dangerous are attitudes or actions that clearly violate the demands of scripture and people just want to "Keep practicing" their sin.

I only participate in that once a week because it gives me a break, I just don't want to let go of it.

I know I need to give this up, but I am just not ready.

A lot of this type of attitude comes from faulty liberal teachings. We often hear someone called a "Carnal Christian" or someone who has accepted Christ as "Savior and not as Lord." Where is that taught in the bible. Jail examples. Believers vs. I got saved, then years of yuk, treated like another check mark on bucket list of life. Concern Danger

- **"Therefore, if a man be in Christ, He is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come" 2 Cor. 5:17**

Christ brings life to a dead soul, desire to change, power to change, our need is Christ. Paul

- **"My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you..." Gal. 4:19**

- **“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you— unless indeed you fail the test?” 2 Cor. 13:5**

He will forgive, He will bring life, He will bring change, He will bring Hope. Examine your heart-Is Christ formed in you! Is it now time to yield! (Do not harden)

Just like the Israelites first came to Canaan and His earthly rest. We sit here today on the brink of eternity and His final rest. World getting darker. In Hebrews 2, we learned the greater role He has for us in the new heavens and new earth, I was excited about this new understanding. All creation moans for the revealing of the Sons of God. But just as Caleb and Joshua took God at His Word, and were able to enter into His Rest, we are His latest works of Grace and will enter His Rest,

Consider Christ, Our High Priest call us, can we not hear His Voice, B R I D G E

- **“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrew 12:1-2**
- **“Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, so walk in Him” Col. 2:6**
- **“Therefore, if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the thing above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.” Col. 3:1**

Transition to Communion-Prayer-soft, teachable, remembering Christ. Today

Communion-Moses, sandals, sacred, solemn but not reflecting on our failures but on Him

Today-Because of Christ

- Born of Him
- Dressed in His Royal Robes, His righteousness
- Names written in Book of Life
- Reservation in Heaven
- Peace with the Father
- Sin is Gone-NO more-East from West
- Ready for the wedding feast

Transition to closing song

Encourage those who want prayer — Last Song- He is Mighty to Save

Benediction-Close of service

We have a great High Priest who reigns forever, close today with this great verse from Hebrews once again starting with the word Therefore. Consider Christ

- **“Therefore, He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”  
Hebrews 7:25**