

## Hardened Heart

(The hardening of our purpose—whatever the reason—keeps us from being shaped and molded by God...)

### The human heart by itself is a very treacherous thing –

Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Matt 15:17-20 - 17 "Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? 18 But the things that come out of the mouth COME FROM THE HEART, and these make a man 'unclean.' 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. 20 These are what make a man 'unclean'; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean.'"

### When Christ calls us, the only thing that keeps us from him is us hardening our hearts –

Heb 3:5-19 - 5 Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. 6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast. 7 So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, 8 **DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS** as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, 9 where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. 10 That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' 11 So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'" 12 **SEE TO IT, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.** 13 But **encourage one another daily**, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. 14 We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. 15 As has just been said: "Today, if you HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS as you did in the rebellion." 16 Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? 17 And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? 18 And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Heb 4:4-7 - 4 For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work." 5 And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest." 6 It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. 7 Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before: "Today, if you hear his voice, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS."

**Being hardhearted towards others is a choice we can adjust** - Deut 15:7-11 - 7 If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the Lord your God is giving you, **do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother.** 8 Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs. 9 Be careful not to harbor this wicked thought: "The seventh year, the year for canceling debts, is near," so that you do not show ill will toward your needy brother and give him nothing. He may then appeal to the Lord against you, and you will be found guilty of sin. 10 Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to. 11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land.

### Multiple times the Bible shows God hardening someone's heart for two purposes

**To display HIS glory** - Ex 4:21 The Lord said to Moses, "When you return to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders I have given you the power to do. But I will harden his heart SO THAT he will not let the people go.

**When some choose not to believe God, He has and will harden their hearts so they can't believe** - John 12:37-40 - 37 Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" 39 **FOR THIS REASON** they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: 40 "He has **blinded their eyes** and **deadened their hearts**, so they can **neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn — and I would heal them.**"

### The dangers of having a hard heart

**When we choose to harden our hearts, we end up on the "wrath side" of God** - Rom 2:1-8 - You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at **whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.** 2 Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. 3 So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? 4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? 5 But **because of your STUBBORNNESS and your UNREPENTANT HEART,** you are **storing up wrath against yourself** for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 God "will give to each person according to what he has done." →

→7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

- Self-seeking
- Reject the truth
- Follow evil

**Unbelievers refuse because their hardened heart resists the very God who can rescue them** - Eph 4:17-19 - 17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. 18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. 19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

- Thinking is useless
- Unable to understand
- Unable to live Godly
- No longer "Godly-care"
- Lives very self-centered
- Live very ungodly

**Harden hearts keep us from truly obeying God and leave us vulnerable to sin**- Matt 19:7-9 - 7 "Why then," they asked, "did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" 8 Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives BECAUSE YOUR HEARTS WERE HARD. But it was not this way from the beginning. 9 I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery."

**Like Israel missed their blessing do to hardening their hearts, we are at risk of doing the same** - Ps 95:6-11-6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; 7 for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if you hear his voice, 8 **DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS** as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert, 9 where your fathers tested and tried me, though they had seen what I did. 10 For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways." 11 So I declared on oath in my anger, "They shall never enter my rest."

**Harden heart will keep us from accepting Christ even when He is right in front of us** – Mark 3:1-6 - Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. 2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. 3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." 4 Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent. 5 He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. 6 Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus.

**Hardened hearts hurt our acceptance and understanding of Christ** - Mark 6:49-52 - 49 But when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed that it was a ghost, and cried out; 50 for they all saw Him and were frightened. But immediately He spoke with them and said to them, "Take courage; it is I, do not be afraid." 51 And He got into the boat with them, and the wind stopped; and they were greatly astonished, 52 for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened. NASB

**Hardened heart distorts faith** - Mark 16:14 - Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

**Those that continue to stay hard-hearted are doomed** - Prov 29:1 - A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes WILL SUDDENLY BE DESTROYED — WITHOUT REMEDY.

**What things do we allow to make us have a Hard Heart?**

**We can allow situations, others, life... to make us hardhearted** - 2 Chron 36:11-13 - 11 Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. 12 He did evil in the eyes of the Lord his God and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke the word of the Lord. 13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him take an oath in God's name. He became stiff-necked and hardened his heart and would not turn to the Lord, the God of Israel.

**Choosing Desire/viewpoint instead of Fearing God** - Prov 28:14 Blessed is the man who ALWAYS fears the Lord, but he who hardens his heart falls into trouble.

- Only following God's commands only when YOU agree with it
- Not leaving comfort zone for God
- Allowing other things to equal or Bypass God as purpose

**Pride is one of the major causes of a hard heart** - Dan 5:18-21 - 18 "O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. 19 Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. 20 But when his HEART BECAME ARROGANT AND HARDENED WITH PRIDE, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. 21 He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.

- **Thinking high of ourselves we tend to question God's plan for us making us useless.**

**Refusing to receive and/or understand the truth** - Matt 13:11-17 - 11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12 Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. 14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: "'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. 15 **For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.**' 16 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. 17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

- **Not completely seeking God, GOD's way...**
- **Partially doing the above and at times mixing it with non-biblical doctrines**

**Leaning upon your own understanding** - Mark 8:14-21 - 14 The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. 15 "Be careful," Jesus warned them. "**Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.**" 16 They discussed this with one another and said, "It is because we have no bread." 17 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? 18 Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don't you remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" "Twelve," they replied. 20 "And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" They answered, "Seven." 21 He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

- **Using our intellect, worldly wisdom, experience, and anything else outside of God to understand God**

**The remedy for hard heart is completely getting to know Christ and be transformed accordingly** - - Eph 4:20-24 - 20 **YOU, HOWEVER, DID NOT COME TO KNOW CHRIST THAT WAY.** 21 Surely you heard of him and were taught in him **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRUTH THAT IS IN JESUS.** 22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being CORRUPTED BY ITS DECEITFUL DESIRES; 23 to **BE MADE NEW IN THE ATTITUDE OF YOUR MINDS;** 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

- **Taught based only on truth (Christ)**
- **Deny self and leaving old ways and teachings**
- **New attitude and new way of thinking**
- **Being Holy**