

A Warning against the Hardness of Sin

By Nick Bibile

Heb 3:13 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.

Here the author of Hebrews is speaking to the Christians, giving us a warning that our hearts can be hardened by the deceitful of sin.

We can praise God with our mouths, show our obedience to the Lord when things are running smoothly but when tough times come, hardship and difficulties comes the real person, the real heart will emerge. Remember the children of Israel they were the visible, professing church of God and when they were redeemed by the power of Pharaoh they praised God as things worked out for their benefit, but when they came to the wilderness, it hurt their flesh and their hearts became hardened against the Lord. We are not different than the children of Israel, when our comforts are interfered with circumstances and problems many professing Christians behave just like the hardhearted Israelites.

Remember this verse in Hebrews 3:13, "That none of you may be hardened by the deceitful of sin" is not written to the unbelievers but to the church. That means even people who are in the church; people who are in the ministry can fall into this trap of deceitful of sin. Worldliness, covetousness, and inconsistent behavior can harden the hearts of many. The result is that many hearts become cold without any feelings.

The hardening of the heart is a gradual process, it's like the fat that accumulates around your heart which comes gradually due to the unhealthy foods that you eat, and it is the same thing spiritually. It's like a car window frozen with frost but you did not see the freezing happening as it is a gradual process that you may not even notice. This is the deceitfulness of sin. Remember the backsliding is a gradual process. Charles Spurgeon said, "Hell is sometimes a precipice but far often smooth and a gentle slope." This is the deceitfulness of sin.

Before even the smallest sin bothered you and it sent chills in your body and saw the exceeding sinfulness toward God. You wanted to stay pure before God even a small grain dust of sin showed and you were bothered about it but now it does not bother anymore. Before you saw these sins like deadly serpents and now you can tolerate them as you have a more careless lifestyle. Secret sins give little or no concern at all. Now watching basket ball games, base ball games, foot ball games watching them for hours and getting excited over sports, have much time to watch all the other things on TV, you have time to spend on leisure but you haven't even read and studied God's word, no time to pray and no time to encourage someone, no time to witness, no time to see how someone is doing and these things even does not bother you anymore. Spurgeon said, "Some like to sleep at the very mouth of hell and dream of heaven."

There is a gradual increase of worldliness and selfishness and a gradual decrease of private devotion towards God. Your private prayer will become shorter and shorter and often times forgotten and not even thinking of heavenly things as you are choked with worldly things. You have no desire and pleasure in reading and studying the word of God as the pleasures of the world excite your flesh but does not bother the spirit. We can be good pretenders and look at other peoples faces of their sins but never convicting us and saying we are guilty before God, Oh, divine Holy Spirit, wake us from this deadly lethargy.

Many hearts have become so calloused that we have no longing for the Savior our Lord. We have no love for him. Even though we have read the following scripture.

1 Cor 16:22 "If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed."

We have read and heard this scripture many times and yet soon forgotten. The wife whose husband is away is looking forward for his return, thinking of him often, yet many have no desire even to think of Jesus whom they profess to love him outwardly but not inwardly. No passion for the Lord as their sins has separated from the Lord. They have a tradition of religion but not a relationship.

Remember the church of Ephesus as they were strong in their doctrine, they knew their theology well not like the Corinthian church yet they back slide gradually as their hearts were hardened and no more feeling or emotions toward the Lord. Jesus rebuked the church of Ephesus by saying, "But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first." (Rev 2:4)

When a heart get hardened to a certain extent you will have no more sorrow of sin anymore as it the heart is covered with worldly sinful fat. Before it bothered you when you sin and great fears came when you sinned and there was humility of repentance as you have grieved the Spirit of God. You did not have rest as you were bitter with the sin not anymore as you are well rested in comfort and peace. There is less grief in sin as you are indulging in it more.

The first time you drank the cup of sin by mistake but now you feast the cup of sin with excitement. The first time was a fault but the second time and the third time you run after sin. Many have descended so low and they don't even know of it. It is time to wake up and see where you are in the sight of God. You need a strong rebuke a strong spiritual spanking, strong sermon to wake you up, shallow, mellow, pussy foot sermons will make you very comfortable. We need to cut the fat of the heart with the strong sword of the word of God. It may hurt many but it is for your own good as it may feel you spiritually healthy again and instead of hating the preacher you should love him for telling the truth.

Remember the heart is deceitful and sin is deceitful. The deceiver may whisper to your ears and tell you, see the sermon of the preacher did not talk of your sin, no one knows about it and by the way you prayed pretty good, you attend church, you are pretty well situated in the church, don't allow anyone to bother you. Some are tempted to go to the very verge of the mountain precipice, look down and get a delicious feeling of danger. They will live at the verge as they enjoy the world, they have more worldly friends than Christian fellowship but they will say, 'I know my limits.'

A lady was looking for a driver and three applied for the position. The lady asks the first driver who applied, "How near can you drive me to danger?" The first driver said, "I believe I could drive within a foot without fear." The lady refused. She asked the same question for the second driver. And the second driver said, "I can drive within a hairs breath and yet you will be perfectly safe." The lady said no to him when the third driver came she asked him the same question, "How near can you drive me to danger?" The third driver said, "Please madam, I never tried, I always drive away from danger." That's how the Christians should be not living close to danger of sin and enjoying the pleasure of being safe at the precipice.

Sin is so deceitful as it may tell you, "its ok as it is easy to repent of it and God will forgive you right away so enjoy now and repent later. The old serpent hisses out and says, "God will never cast away his people." He is pretty good in quoting scripture, "You may tread upon serpents and they shall not bite you." Remember we cannot use Doctrines of Grace as an argument for licentiousness.

What is the solution? As long it's called today, exhort one another everyday. (Heb 3:13) When we see coldness creeping into the church it is our duty to protect is from apathy and to give not only the sweetness of the word of God but also to give the bitterness of medicine for the patient who is suffering from it. The word exhorts means to encourage, advice and give warning or caution someone. Remember Satan is working night and day with his demons and our flesh is the greatest enemy we have.

Deception comes first and then the hardening of the heart. The apostle said, as long as it called today, it's a daily exhortation.

Ps 95:7-8 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness.

Hebrews 3:7-8 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice, 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness.

The following scriptures of Christ Jesus need to be heeded.

Matt 6:19-20 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust [\[1\]](#) destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

John 6:27 27 Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal."

Matt 10:28 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

I Pet 1:14-15 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct.

Heb 10:25 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.

Loving one another.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

In exhorting one another there is mutual care for one another.

1 Cor 12:25 that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

Praying for one another.

James 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Admonishing one another

Romans 15:14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.

Comfort one another

1 Thes 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Edify one another

1 Thes 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Kind to one another

Eph 4:32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Have compassion for one another.

1 Pet 3:8 Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.