

FAITH

THE CURRENCY OF THE KINGDOM

PART 13 - UNBELIEF HARDENS THE HEART

This is the penultimate resource in this series, so for this one I want us to dive into Hebrews 3:7-19, as we are to learn from those who have gone before us and not be found coming short of all He has for us due to unbelief.

Hebrews 3:7-19 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.'" Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, while it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me." For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

This spoken-written testimony in Hebrews is there for our benefit. This is just as much a now reality, as it was when it occurred. We like to somehow think and believe that this was something that they, the Israelites, did and we are somehow void of the reality being testified to by the writer of Hebrews. We believe this at our own peril.

The very first verses speak to this being a now reality and one which we must pay extra special attention to.

V7-9 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.

Why on earth would the Holy Spirit have to tell us today not to harden our hearts when we hear God speak His Word to us. We would never do that because we want everything He has for us, don't we? We say and sing things like, "we want more of you" and "this is my desire to give you my entire life", so why on earth would the Holy Spirit be warning us to not harden our hearts when we hear His Word?

Because He knows all things and the true state of our hearts, even when we don't, while being convinced we absolutely do. Just like the Israelites, we to can be absolutely blinded to a reality all the while

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perceiving and believing we are in it.

Unfortunately, this was the pattern of the Israelites, who although seeing and being part of God's miraculous works, they were still led astray in their hearts and did not know His ways. This led them to not be able to enter into His Sabbath Rest.

V 10-11 "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.

The very next verse is the writer of Hebrews giving us, the church, the Father's warning.

V12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

I am positive that within the Israelites not one of them believed they had an evil and unbelieving heart, and yet here we see God warning us of the very same thing. Outside of blaspheming the Holy Spirit and calling the Spirit evil, I personally believe unbelief is the next greatest sin which keeps us out of the life He has called us into, just like it did them.

The man in the book of Mark cried out after being rebuked by Jesus, "I do believe, help my unbelief". Have we found ourselves at times saying the same thing? If we have this is ok but we must confess this unbelief before Him and not allow it to continue to dictate how we live.

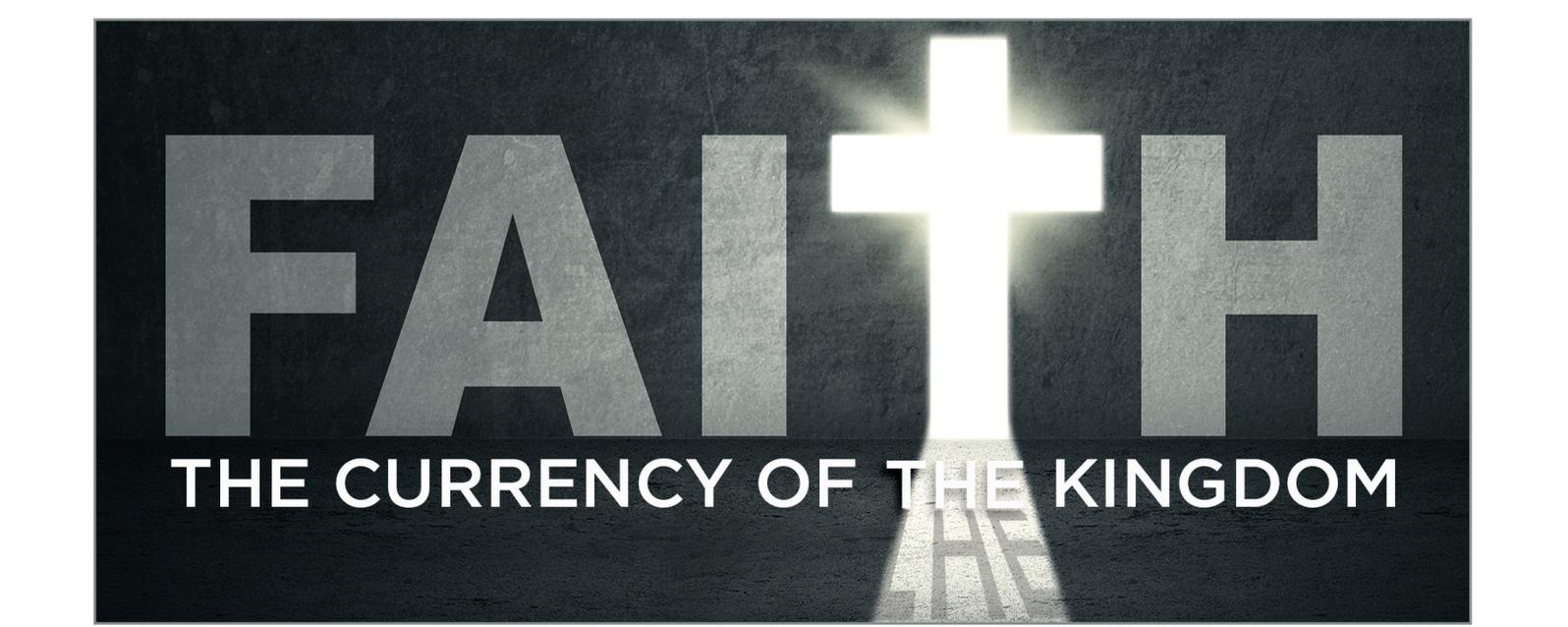
It's way too easy just to say "O this isn't me at all", and our lives are saying something entirely different.

We see in verse 13 the heart of the Father for us all to encourage one another day after day, as long as it is "Today", so that none of us will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

V13 but encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

As a follower it is still possible to have our hearts hardened by sin, and as we know, anything not done by faith is a sin. The hardening of our hearts prevents us from hearing, receiving, seeing, understanding and living out the Word of God. Because of our unbelief we fail to enter into the God given reality that's for us.

This is a massive reality that many unfortunately are not even aware of. We blissfully go about our days possibly unbeknown of this reality and so fail to enter into a greater life in Christ due to our disobedience. Of course this isn't something we intentionally do or are aware of, just like the Israelites.



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God was angry with those who came out of Egypt, His own people whom He saved, who were led by Moses. A wrong perspective of God can have us create our own version of God and so just like the Israelites were unaware of their true reality we too can be of that kind. It's the true knowledge of God that comes from the fear of the Lord that is to keep us firmly anchored and founded in the narrow way of life.

Can we see why the Scriptures say daily encouragement is required? Daily encouragement to spend quality time with the Spirit, so the Spirit can reveal all truth and write it upon our hearts and minds. Encouragement to step out and into the unknown where God awaits us and everything He has for us to accomplish through divine grace. Encouragement to live the narrow way out, not turning to the left or the right.

May we be found leading this encouragement of others and modelling what it is to live out this life of faith in Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is faith of the Spirit so essential to our life in God?
2. Why is it fully possible for followers of Jesus to have hardened hearts?
3. What role does the Holy Spirit play in keeping our hearts soft and full of belief?
4. Why is unbelief a sin and what are the consequences for us of unbelief?
5. Daily encouragement is a massive aspect of living out a Godly life. How often do you encourage yourself and others to enter into ALL God has for us as His people?