

Steps to a Hard Heart

Hebrews 3:7-12

Hebrews 3:12-13

*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.
But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Progression	Explanation	First Generation Covenant Community	Middle Generation Covenant Community	Last Generation Covenant Community
		Exodus 17:1-7	Psalms 95	Hebrews 3:12-13
Suffering	Suffering does not harden; it reveals what is already in the heart	Thirst - instant comfort without waiting in faith	David's throne threatened by Absalom and Adonijah	Being a Jewish Christian in Jerusalem: Social exclusion, imprisonment, loss of property, violence (Heb.10:33-34, 12:3-4; 13:13)
Unbelief	Forgetful of God's Promises & Past works. Unbelief is not atheism...it's the quiet measuring of God's goodness by the size of your problem.	Jehovah's past deliverance did not carry weight in present trouble	Questioning the Davidic Covenant as David flees Jerusalem (II Sam.7:13,15:30)	Is the cost too high? Was Jesus the Superior fulfillment of the prophecies?
Drift	Slow, passive loss of desire for a relationship with God & His Word	Tempting God instead of Trusting God	Attracted to the powerful, but wrong heir	Not resting Scripture - Heb.2:1 Not Praying - Heb.4:16 Not Assembling - Heb.10:24-25
Hard Heart	The heart no longer feels conviction. They can attend church and sin without sorrow	Transactional relationship with God - He was only as good as His provision for immediate needs	Betrayal - Ahithophel, Adonijah	Succumbed to social pressure, justified returning to Temple worship
Destruction	Sin never satisfies.	Their carcasses fell in the wilderness	Coup was exposed, judged, executed	Temple Destroyed

Three Symptoms of Drift

- 1) Not resting in the Promises of Scripture - Heb.2:1
- 2) Not running boldly to the throne of grace in Prayer - Heb.4:16
- 3) Not returning to the Assembly - Heb.10:24-25

Hard Heart Prevention (Heb.3:13)

- 1) Hardening is a daily process through problem-centeredness and disappointment with God - exhortation must match that pace
- 2) Check your community input - exhortation to reflect Christ and rest in His Word? Or, sight-based pragmatism?
- 3) Target the agent of hardening - the deceitfulness of sin, not the circumstances.
- 4) Ask those closest to you to assess for Blame, Justification, Minimizing, Comfort-seeking, and/or Reinventing the truth

Application points:

- 1) Work through the four steps – which step most accurately describes where you are now?
- 2) Bring one unanswered prayer or long-term disappointment back to the Lord this week.
- 3) Who can you exhort towards faith & Christ-likeness amid challenging circumstances this week?