

# Do Not Harden Your Heart

*The Book of Hebrews*

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**Bible Text:** Hebrews 3:7-19  
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Well, we're proceeding through Hebrews at the moment and we come to one of those more solemn parts of the whole letter and the title, really no surprise this when you see the passage that we've got, Hebrews 3:7-19, the title is this, "Do Not Harden Your Hearts." That's what it says, doesn't it, do not harden your hearts as we have it in verse 8 of our passage before us tonight.

Well, in all of the epistles that we have whether they be of Paul as this one has Paul's fingerprint upon it, we don't know for sure, but in all of them, whoever has written them, they're written by inspiration and there is always a careful development, that's the way the argument proceeds and how one thing follows another, and how different themes sort of come back again or disappear for a while and then resurface or applied slightly differently, that we can see in this a divine hand and we can see inspiration, can see what inspiration means, that at the end of the letter was known at the beginning and the beginning at the end, and everything sort of dovetails together in a way that no human work could do, that the writer at the end didn't have to stop and say here at the end of chapter 3 of Hebrews, say, "Oh, I missed something out. I'd better go back and put something back in chapter 3," or chapter 5, or somewhere else. "Oh, I got something wrong there and I'd better just go and cross that bit out and I'll express it a bit differently and then it will fit together with what I'm now saying." As though it was a bit of a journey into the unknown and as they were writing it, they were surprised to find something, "Oh, I didn't think that was going to come up here now." That it was a far more orderly and far more purposeful way in which God brings inspiration to pass. So nothing's accidental, everything's inspired. The order in which things appear is inspired, the structure is inspired, and we can see how the writer here has brought in what he now brings in right here.

We've noted before that throughout Hebrews we find that you have some very encouraging things followed by some very stark warnings. Yes, some of the most frightening passages in the whole of Scripture that have sent Christians running for cover because they have been so instilled with fear when they've read them and thought that they must apply to them, and the fact that they're running for cover suggests it's not actually for them but they're tender-hearted folk and they're simply hearing something that God really intended for somebody else to hear. But we find them as we find them as

we go through Scripture, and each one is applied depending on what has just followed, and depending also on the wider thrust of what each letter is trying to achieve, and here, of course, we're looking in Hebrews.

Well, we'll recall from last week that the writer was establishing there something very very vital, very very vital because these people were drifting back to observing the law, and thinking that that might be sufficient cover to avoid being persecuted. And indeed beyond that, beginning to think, "You know what? There's something good in this, the old covenant, and going back to circumcision and having the old feast days once more, and doing some of the ritual washings and cleansings, and it may be that Aaronic priesthood really had something in it and we should go back to that." And the writer is variously saying, "That is a disaster. That is apostasy. Do not do it." And that's a little bit where we are this evening but as we saw last week, he holds up a contrast between Moses and Christ, between Moses who, in a way, is the figure who represents the law. The law came through Moses, that's who it came by, but although it was that we think of the 10 Commandments and Moses surely and on the mountain receiving the tablets of stone, but of course, it was more than that and you had all of the sacrifices. They were given by way of revelation to Moses so it's part of Moses' law, the high priesthood of Aaron his brother, that that was the appointment and the Lord showed in fine detail exactly how the priesthood should function, what it should do, when it should do it, which sacrifices to make on which days, how to go about it, how to officiate.

Well, a great ministry that it was and the writer is at pains to say what a great man Moses was, that he was a servant, he was one that was regarded as such, faithful in all God's house. Deliverer and leader of the people for that particular period, and the law remaining in that particular fashion in place, well, in place until the Lord Jesus Christ came and then there were changes. And the writer, though holding Moses in such high esteem then says that he's now been eclipsed. The Lord Jesus Christ is greater than he. He's actually not a servant in the house, it's actually his house, the house being the household of God, God's people. Moses stood alongside the people as one of them, had his frailties and his infirmities, had his moments when he didn't there perform at his best but the Lord Jesus Christ is above him and he's a high priest that is above Aaron as high priest, is brought in under the law of Moses. Great dignity, a Day of Atonement, what a day that that was, how important and now something more important has come, someone more important has come, and he's brought a stronger, deeper, richer ministry and that is wonderful.

Now he turns to the warning, that if you won't hear that then there's trouble ahead. So having set up something beautiful in this contrast between Moses, great man though he was, just as he said angels, great beings however they are, that the Lord Jesus Christ in stature by virtue of who he is and therefore who he is, what he can do is streets ahead of everyone, anything else. But if we won't hear it, then the writer goes on to give us these stark warnings, right? So my first heading this evening: the Bible is not a comfortable read. The Bible is not a comfortable read. A lot of people think that it is. A lot of people feel that that's all it is, it's just nice warm words all over the place, and that everything about it is just okay. Well, they obviously haven't read the book, have they? They obviously haven't read the book. They haven't read the passage we're reading this

evening, and as you have seen Psalm 95 which suddenly changes tone, doesn't it, there and we have the last part of Psalm 95 which is that big quotation of the Old Testament in Hebrews 3 and picking up at verse 7, and it's not comfortable reading. Not meant to be comfortable reading at all.

The words that we see in there that talk about God and the attitude that he had toward those people because it says today, we notice that that's an attitude he still has towards people. For instance, verse 10, "I was angry with that generation." He was angry. Well, that's not comfortable, to think that God is angry is a very uncomfortable thing. And in case we didn't get the message the first time through, it's repeated in verse 17 as the writer kind of interprets the passage a little bit, asking a question. "Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?" Well, that's uncomfortable and the Bible is an uncomfortable book because God is an uncomfortable God. It's not comfy. It's not all cozy. In fact, it's not cozy at all. Deadly deadly serious and very very exacting.

So one might at this time of the year wince and my wife has already had reason to wince and hearing of another part of this county and those friends about precisely what was said about the reason for Christ coming down to earth at Christmas, and we understand when he said not to save us from our sin but to tell us that we are beautiful. We're beautiful. Well, there you are. There's a time and a place, I'm sure, to be told you're beautiful but it was not what God's intention was in sending his Son to be here at that first Christmas. Well, that's a comfortable thing. Who doesn't want to be told that? If somebody told me that, I'd suspect they're a liar but anyway I'm sure it would be nice to hear it, but in spiritual terms that's not going to help anybody at all.

No, it's saying that actually don't worry, God is really comfortable with any crumb of faith. Just a little bit of response. Just a little bit of a turning toward him, perhaps come at Christmas, sit in a church, sing a few songs, go out again, maybe stand around the Christmas tree there this coming Thursday and that'll do nicely, and somehow you'll be very happy with that, very content with that and you can leave it at that for the next year if you like. Well, maybe turn up for the odd wedding, if there's a funeral. Well, okay, turn up for that as well. A little bit of faith. A scrap of faith. We can sort of get a microscope, "Oh, I think he might've believed this one, you know, I think he said a couple of times he talked about God a couple of times a year. I did hear that. Well, perhaps he's a believer and God will be satisfied with that. He'd be happy with that."

Well, I have to disabuse you of such thoughts and sadly you'll hear variations of what I've said and, in fact, from many pulpits. You hear it at Christmas especially but actually you'll hear it all the year through sadly. No, God is not comfortable. He is not pleased with, he is angry and the words are very very strong, that he is grieved. He looks at sin and does not wink at it or feel that that's something they can just overlook at occasions his anger and that is expressed very strongly in this passage that is before us this evening.

Well, many people think let's remove the Old Testament. Let's do ourselves the favor here. A lot of the difficult things and problematic things are in the Old Testament, so if

we can just park up the Old Testament, that will sort it and we can actually get that comfortable God. People say this. In fact, they say this a lot, that there's a big change that somehow and don't ask me how, God sort of changes from being the Old Testament God, well, there seems to be a lot of judgment and a lot of anger and a lot of difficult things to read. A lot of people seem to die. And then it all changes and we have the New Testament, and there's the Lord Jesus Christ and there is grace and forgiveness and there is mercy, there is the cross, and everything is different now, and God somehow is different now and we can just put the Old Testament aside.

Well, we can't, can we? Dear friends, we can't because the New Testament as has been done here lifts whole chunks of the Old Testament and quotes it verbatim and doesn't just reach for some of the more grand statements about the character of God or some of those wonderful promises that are there, but here it's taking on the hardest passages, one of the most difficult passages, if you like. Well, that's not comfortable at all.

It talks about judgment, doesn't it? And it talks there about, well, the works of God. Let me tell you what those works of God that they saw whether they were the works of God that they saw in Egypt when God judged Pharaoh and sent the plagues and there was a lot of death in those plagues, a lot of people died, a lot of young children died, babies died. It was an extraordinary, heavy, severe judgment that God brought. And then when Pharaoh's army went careening after the Hebrews when they were released from their bondage in Egypt and the Red Sea, of course, covered them up there on the seashore next day. The water washed up the horses and chariots and all the horsemen of Egypt. Severe.

There is that quotation, Psalm 95:7-11, and that is the Psalm, well, if you look at it in situ there, we can see this Psalm, a call to worship in which then also turns into a warning, and it is given by the Holy Spirit. This isn't lesser inspiration, as though these hard passages in the Old Testament were perhaps less inspired, there was less of God about them and so we can play fast and loose with them and somehow dismiss them and come draw up a God who tells you that you're beautiful. Well, we haven't got that liberty, have we? And instead we have the Holy Spirit stated here as the author of all of it. All of it, the difficult bits of it, the uncomfortable parts of it, the parts that do speak of judgment and wrath and a God leaving people to die and being very angry with them, and there, as we see, the bodies that were scattered in the wilderness.

They saw the works of God, "Their fathers tested Me, tried Me nine years and saw My works 40 years." Marvelous works some of those works, provision. Water from the rock. They saw manna coming from heaven. They had quail there lying at their feet ready to be eaten. They had all manner of help. Even their feet didn't swell. Their clothes, their shoes never wore out. What a remarkable situation. And if they cast their minds back which, of course, they're often loath to do, they could remember all the way in which God had already delivered them. The plagues we mentioned. The parting of the Red Sea. Mount Sinai and the giving of the law. And yet they rebelled and what the writer here is doing, what Psalm 95 is doing is just drawing on a couple of key events that sum up that rebellion against God and how God treated the people of that day.

And one of those instances is in Exodus 17:1-7. We mentioned the water from the rock. Well, it is that instance where the people there quarreled with God, the day of rebellion, the day of trial in the wilderness. Well, what do we read in Exodus 17:1? We read this, "Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, 'Give us water, that we may drink.' So Moses said to them, 'Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?' And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, 'Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.' And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'"

Well, that idea of temptation and contention, these ways in which, well, that comes actually into the language of Psalm 95, "That day of trial, that day of testing when your fathers tested Me, where they tempted Me in that way, that they thought ill of Me, thought I couldn't provide for them and put Me to the test. Well, that's how I answered them with water from the rock but I didn't forget them and their contention and their temptation, their Massah and Meribah," which became the name of the place where it happened.

So that's in view. That's one of the acts of rebellion here when it talks about, "your hearts being hardened as in the day of rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness." But there is also more and perhaps the most famous rebellion in Numbers in chapter 13, an occasion when the people were really right on the verge of being able to enter the Promised Land and they sent in spies, don't they? Send spies to go into the Promised Land to look how fair the land is, gauge the crops and the fruits, and have a look who's there and what they're about. And they bring back their report or rather reports because the majority, they sent a member of each tribe to go. Well, the majority of them come back actually with a pretty negative report and it's left to Caleb and Joshua to bring the minority report. They're the only two out of the 12 that actually give a proper assessment but it's a famous occasion.

Let me just read part of it, Numbers 13, just reading from verse 26. Here they are, "Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation of the children of Israel in the Wilderness of Paran, at Kadesh; they brought back word to them and to all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. Then they told him, and said: 'We went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.'" They had various things they brought back. "Nevertheless the people who dwell in the land are strong; the cities are fortified and very large; moreover we saw the

descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the South; the Hittites, the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea and along the banks of the Jordan." And they're saying therefore it looks bad. Anak, well, he was one of the giants. They had giants, the Anakites, the descendants of Anak. Huge men like Goliath. "We're not going to fight them, are we? Are we going to be sufficient to take them on?" And reels off as well the 10 spies, as it were, report back and all these other tribes, "They're all hostile, of course, they're all at our throats. They won't be an easy taking. They'll fight us tooth and nail and who are we? Who are we to fight against such strong people, giants and the kind?"

So that was what one group thought and it was left, then, to Caleb in verse 30, "quieted the people before Moses, and said, 'Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.'" That's his report and Joshua's report. That's their assessment but that wasn't the assessment of the majority and the reaction of the people was to believe the 10, that they were doomed, that they should go back to Egypt, that they had no future, that they were never going to be able to enter into this Promised Land. It was too too much for them.

And God told Moses he was going to destroy them, destroy them all, and Moses prayed and interceded. But God solemnly declared that their bodies would fall in the desert. So turning there to Numbers 14 and following on from that incident, verse 20, "Then the LORD said: 'I have pardoned, according to your word,'" that is, Moses' intercession, "'but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD--because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.'" Except, of course, Caleb and Joshua who would.

And so that was the result and that was the beginning of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness led by the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night. But essentially were we to have traced there the nature of their wanderings, it was here and there around in circles until that generation, all who were aged above 20, had died, that God was so provoked by their unbelief. Notice there 10 times, so that incident of Exodus 17, that was one of the 10, that was one of the stand-out moments and other things like the rebellion of Korah and his people, Miriam and Aaron when they sought to usurp the leadership from Moses. Other times as well, and the people just did not believe the promises of God and God judged them and this was the last of that whole catalog and one with great finality. Therefore the Lord declared, "They shall not enter My rest. They're not going to get into the Promised Land. This generation must die in the desert. They tested Me, they've tried Me, they've grieved Me, and they must bear their punishment."

And this is what is spoken of, so in Hebrews 3, who are those who rebelled? Well, it was the people that Moses was leading. He led them out of Egypt, they had been baptized into Moses there in the Red Sea and through the cloud and still rebelled, and they were the people who died. They had Moses. They had his leadership. They had been there at Mount Sinai. They'd seen the water come from the rock. Why, they'd also seen many of

them the plagues visited upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Quite a lot to really conclude that the greatness of God and the need to obey him but they did not and they disobeyed him.

So it was them. With whom was he angry 40 years? Those who sinned whose corpses fell in the wilderness. One by one over those 40 years, familiar faces suddenly they drop by the wayside. It was serious stuff. And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest? Those who did not obey. So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief. These are difficult things, aren't they, friends? These are difficult things. These are uncomfortable things that God is not to be played with, not to be put to the test, not to be trifled with, not to be threatened as though they would say, "Well, if you don't do this and do that, I'm going back to Egypt. I'm giving up on you. I'm packing this thing up. If you don't match my hopes and expectations right here, right now, I'm going back." We ought to be pleased with that. We ought to be warned in this and the people of that day were to be warned in this, that if they are thinking that they can dispense with Christ, the one who speaks to them now not Moses, it's actually the Lord Jesus Christ, that if they can hear his voice just as they could hear the voice of God in the ministry of Moses, in the miracles, the plagues, the Red Sea, Sinai, water from the rock, and all the other things, they really think that they could escape? Did they really think that God would overlook what they do, the Lord not be angry with them?

You see, he's bringing a warning in here. It's uncomfortable and that's the Bible, isn't it? It's uncomfortable work and we need to know that we're at peace with this God. We need to know that we have found our rest in him, that we're trusting him. We're not those who were rebellious hearts and disobedient because the warnings are here if we are. Just dwelling on this a little further my second and final heading: unbelief. This is the sin. This is the sin that is at the bottom of it and we see it in verse 19, don't we, "So we see that they could not enter in," those people who disobeyed, those people who having heard what Caleb and Joshua said, "Surely, we can go and we can beat the giants. God is with us. Look at the promises of God." And said, "No, we want to go back to Egypt, in fact. We think we've been brought out here to die." That was unbelief. What they were expressing was what lies within them, the depth of the human heart, something very ugly, something very horrible. Unbelief. That is what stopped them entering into the Promised Land. That is why God declared of them that they shall not enter my rest. They will perish in the wilderness. They're going to spend their 40 years until every single last one of them aged above 20 is finished with. Unbelief.

Unbelief. Well, we were thinking this morning, weren't we, well, who are we? What are we? We tried to define what are we as human beings. Well, we find it hard because we don't really know who we are ourselves but we can say this, if you want a big word that really captures so much of what the human heart is, that big word is unbelief. That is one of the capital, chief, head sins. Unbelief.

And what is unbelief? Well, it is what we find here in verse 8, rebellion. It is rebellion. It is to hear the voice of God and say no to it, and to refuse it, and to rebel against it for that's what these people were doing here. They have the promise of God, there is this land

and they can see the 10 of them that are going to give a negative report at the end, but they can see it's got plenty there. It is a land flowing with milk and honey and the food there is good, and here are the grapes that they brought on their shoulder. Great great foods and good livestock they'll be able to bring up there. Well, that much they agreed but then they refused to believe that God had the power to be able to get them in to beat the Anakites, to be able to beat the Amalekites, and the Jebusites and the Canaanites and everybody else that was there. They did not believe God could do that. They refused to believe it. They rebel against what they knew of the character of God as witnessed by the things, the works that he had done that they had seen. They said, "No, we refuse to believe it." That is unbelief. That is what unbelief does. And of course, when we look at what that is, well, so much of that bound up with what it means to have a sinful heart, a heart that says, "No," that refuses to hear and believe and trust and follow the word of God.

It is a rebellion and rebellion is spoken of. It's in verse 8. It's there again in verse 16. Rebellion that's the whole heart and the nature of it. And again in verse 15 another refrain from Psalm 95. And unbelief connects with so much else. When you begin then to unpack unbelief, well, you find it links up with lots of other sins, that they all kind of are there together, a kind of whole compacted mass of what sinful humanity is actually composed of and they're all sort of acting upon each other and enforcing each other, and bringing some further strengthening to each other.

We can think, can't we, how pride, pride is all built into unbelief. Unbelief and pride, if you really want two big headings of what human nature is in its sinfulness. Well, it's unbelief and it is pride, so pride would assert, "Well, who is God to tell me what to do? Who has got the right to tell me what to do? I will decide." That's what the devil offered Eve and Adam, wasn't it? He said, "You will have your eyes opened and you'll be able to discern between good and evil. It will be your, your power and God's denying you that power and you should have it." Well, pride would say, "Yes, I should. I should have the right. I should be able to decide these things, not leave it to God. I'm the one to make my mind up about this, thank you." Well, you can see that that is all part of unbelief too. Unbelief says, "No, I'm not going to listen." It says, "No, I'm not going to do what God has said. I need to do what I want to do." There's this sort of positive aspect, if you like, of that, that is going to energize you to do the opposite, if you will, or do something different to what God has spoken.

So it creates mayhem in the mind. Our thinking is completely wrong. And of course, our will will not conform to the will of God. If we're saying no to him and his will, then surely our will is completely in the wrong place. "I will not." And saying, "I will not," [unintelligible] sent to the Promised Land, "God will be with you." "No, we will not." That's what the 10 spies brought up and lots of the people believed that and were all for going back to Egypt because they don't believe that God could do what he has promised. "We will not go in," they said, and so God took them there at their word and said, "Well, you will not go. And I shall swear there in My wrath I will be angry with them. I will solemnly speak to them and say, 'You will not enter there.'"



So unbelief. Wrong affections. Well, that is built into it as well. If we're not going to listen to God, we're listening to something else and it's the lust of our heart and the pride of life, the lust of the eyes, these are the things instead that are the drivers. These are the things that are setting up a whole range of other objects that we can choose and desire and then can incline our will towards. And we can see that one thing leads to the other and none of it good. One sin or sinful action and engagement compacts another. Pride and unbelief work together and all for ill and not according to the purpose of God.

That's how we find that this is what the writer calls out here, this is what's happening, it's unbelief. They would not hear the voice of God and that warning still applies, and the writer in chapter 4 is going to very much take something of what it means for that today and what this rest is that is promised, to show that this wasn't just once upon a time, this wasn't just for the people there and then. This is for us all every day, today in fact, as of today. "Today if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts," and he takes that up again in verse 15, quotes it again there and this is what the writer would have his people to hear.

They're hardening their hearts. They're hardening their hearts against what God has spoken and spoken particularly in his Son, because we know already, don't we, right at the beginning and it is as if the writer has set us up for this precise moment. We can't argue against this. And if the people are going back to the Old Testament, well, Psalm 95 will condemn them for returning to Aaron when they've got the great high priest who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Because what do we read right at the beginning? Hebrews 1:1-2, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds." And I won't go and repeat the sermons that we had on those opening verses and the glory of Christ then.

Ah, God is speaking. The voice of God. So where do we hear it now? Well, it was the prophets and now that's changed. It's now through his Son. He's speaking to us by his Son. That's the one that is superior to Moses. That's the one at the beginning of chapter 3 of Hebrews who is now outranking Aaron, whose high priesthood is at a higher level, who is up 10 leagues from where Aaron was. And so what are they doing now? Are they now when God's voice is there speaking to them in his Son going to refuse the Son? Are they going to neglect so great salvation? Are they going to dismiss Christ for what God has said has now been superseded in the law of Moses and all the ceremonies and all of those observances? Well, then that will be disaster, and that's what he's saying, and that will be disaster. That won't get you anywhere. That will get you under the same judgment that the people here came under. Refusing the voice of Christ, his person, his ministry, what it is he is proposing to do, that he will save you from your sins and thinking, "Well, I've heard that but that's not enough. I need these other things too." That is to commit the sin of unbelief. That is to see as we have at the Communion Table the bread and the wine and for these things are good, and then say, "But they're not enough. But no. They're not enough. They can't get me into the Promised Land. I've got to do a bit of fighting on my own here. [unintelligible] with my own strength, pile up some works perhaps to be able to show God just what a wonderful person that I am."

And that would be unbelief because God says, "You cannot rely on any of that. You must rely upon My Son. And if you rely upon Him, then everything falls into place. You'll fight with giants and you'll win. You'll be able to take the land. You will be able to move forward. You'll know deliverances, and I will be with you to bring you through extraordinary things. But that won't be because of your works, that'll be because you believe in Him." And so not to believe in him is the sin of unbelief and the sin of unbelief, as we see in the record of Scripture here, not comfortable reading, does not lead to a good destination, no good end, because the rest ultimately we'll see in chapter 4 more particularly, but that rest is heaven. Heaven.

The Promised Land, we thought about that this morning, didn't we, with Abraham. The Promised Land, well, it's more than Canaan, it was actually heaven. No heaven for unbelief. Refusing God. And now when he speaks to us by his Son whom he has made the worlds, appointing him heir of the whole world, well, there's nowhere else for us to go. But if we're in him, well, friends, then we have everything, don't we?

So it's a warning. It's bringing a solemn warning and it's for all of us and any of us at any time to hear because we should, we should actually have every confidence in God. This is what we are to see in verse 14, isn't it? "For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end." That we stay confident. We stay confident in him. We still say it's about him, only about him. There's nobody else in the picture. Nobody else since Moses, great men like Aaron, great people. There's David and Solomon, wonderful, but in the end they're just pointing us on to somebody greater, David's greater son and it's the Lord Jesus Christ and we put our confidence in him. We put our hope in him. We say that him and him alone. We're not looking to anybody else.

And we're saying that now and we're going to say it tomorrow and we're going to say it next year, which we're nearly into, and by the grace of God we'll say it the year after that. Every today that we will have, we will hear the voice of God speaking to us by his Son and saying, "Believe in Him." And we will say, "Amen." And we will put our confidence in him today, and tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, and we will ensure that we are regulating, guarding our hearts to make sure we're not going astray. There's so much in this passage, isn't there? All the deceitfulness of sin. Unbelief is subtle. You know, vicars can tell you the complete opposite of what the Bible says and feel very reliably that that is what they're saying and decry ministries like this as dreadful and frightening you and doing reputational damage to God and to the church.

Well, sad that that is and that is deceitfulness of sin that it make you thinks you're actually holier and closer to God than people who actually are preaching the word of God. Puts the world topsy-turvy. It stands it on its head because sin is deceitfulness. That's another of its operations. That's pride working there. We feel good about ourselves and place our opinion above God, even the plain teaching of Scripture but that is an absolute absolute disaster. So we watch for murmurings within our own hearts or rebellion within, for where we might be refusing some commandment of God, or where we are refusing to have confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, finding something else,

spiritual experiences, we may be hungering for some extra dimension of power and we think if we don't have some strange meeting, it may happen. You know, all the things that there are out there, they're all essentially unbelief. All essentially refusing to believe that if we do it as God has decreed it here and place all our hope in his Son, well, that somehow it won't work. Well, he has a different view on that.

So we watch our own hearts. We know that we can be deceived. We know there's unbelief still there. There's pride, that's still there. There's all of the machinations of sin. They're still there somewhere and the Holy Spirit within, well, helps us to work hard to keep those things under check. But they can be subtle and they can be clever and they can sometimes surprise us. And so we're on our mettle, we're on our guard making sure that our hearts are not being hardened, disbelieving the promises of God, feeling he's not capable of getting us into the Promised Land into heaven when really the Lord Jesus Christ has done it all, and he's already in heaven and he's able to save us to the uttermost if we keep that confidence steadfast to the end.

So may we be, well, put it like this in the spirit of Caleb and have the spirit of Joshua who said, "No, surely, no, we can surely enter the land. This can be done." And they're not saying that out of the flesh, they're saying that because they know the power of the glory of God and we have the Lord Jesus Christ before us. They didn't have that and so how much the more we can see we have every reason to keep our confidence to the end.