

Tried, Proven, and Rejected

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Hebrews 3:7-12 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

- I. After considering Christ for more than two chapters we are warned about falling into the same sins that our Old Testament ancestors did.
 - A. They saw the Lord's works on their behalf for 40 years.
 - B. They provoked the Lord to anger when they were tried with their unbelief.
 - C. They proved the Lord for 40 long years and He never once failed them.

Joshua 21:45 There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

- D. And for all this they never really knew the Lord.

Hebrews 3:10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

ERR, v.i. *L. erro*.

1. To wander from the right way; to deviate from the true course or purpose.

- E. So even in the broadened revelation of the New Covenant there is the danger of provoking God, having a hardened heart, and missing the boat entirely while sitting in the church and seeing the wonders of God all your life.
- II. Here is the instruction God gives us here to avoid falling into the same snares and ending up lost.
 - A. First of all, HEAR his voice; LISTEN to God and keep and obey what you hear.
 - B. Do not allow your heart to be hardened by your self-centered feelings about injustices done to you by God or anyone else because of some loss or hardship in your life.
 - C. Look to the example of those who have come before you, especially your own family.
 1. No one is better at seeing the faults of their parents than their children.
 2. Use that talent to your good and God's glory by not following their bad examples in the things that brought them heartaches and loss in their lives.
 3. Build upon the good they gave you and add to it whatever wisdom God gives you – just make sure it is God giving it to you and not the world, or your own rebellious and foolish heart, or the devil himself.
 4. Every generation has its own trials and challenges, and every generation makes its mistakes and either loses ground or gains ground spiritually.
 5. Your generation will be no different in this respect.
 6. Your children will see your faults and failings, also.

7. Hopefully, they will seek God's face and wisdom, and help in building a better heritage for their children and grandchildren.

- III. The example God held up here to the Israelites was an especially bad one.
- A. They rejected God and refused to love him and trust him all their lives.
 - B. In spite of the best leader they could have had.
 - C. In spite of the miraculous delivery from their life of misery and poverty and cruel bondage in Egypt.
 - D. In spite of 40 years of daily provision in the wilderness by unquestionably miraculous means.
 - E. In spite of obvious divine intervention to deliver them from their enemies many times.
 - F. In spite of hearing God's voice from the mountain and see God's judgement on the sinners among them that went too far.
 - G. In spite of the Tabernacle and the priesthood and all the understanding God revealed to the through the sacrifices and offerings which pointed to Christ and his coming.
 - H. From our point of view, looking at the experience of Israel in the wilderness as a whole, it just seems extremely heinous, but we need to remember that it all happened one day at a time, just like our life does.
 - I. What will those looking back on our generation think about us when they look at our life as a whole?
 1. More importantly, what will our life as a whole look like at the judgement?
 - J. They tried God and proved him – they found him faithful and could not honestly accuse God of letting them down one single time – He always came through for them.
 - K. Can we say the same thing? Of course we can!
 - L. How could they not have believed on him? And how could they not have known his ways?
 - M. How can we not trust him? And how can we sit in church all our lives and not know God and how He works?
 1. We do it one day at a time, just like they did.
 2. We live in today only, and do not keep collected in our hearts and minds what God has done for us through the weeks, months, and years.
 3. Before today's manna is gone we start worrying about tomorrow's.
 4. Every trouble we encounter we imagine to be our end, forgetting how God has delivered us from so many troubles before.

- IV. But not everyone in Israel was like that – only the majority.

Hebrews 3:16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.

- A. There was Joshua and Caleb, but they were not the only ones.
- B. The children of this generation that always erred in their heart and provoked God to anger, they believed God and they inherited the promises, and took the land.
 1. They saw God's mighty works in their generation and they did not throw them to the wind with their petty, selfish, foolish, cowardly hearts.
 2. Even then it was not all who trusted God – they had an Achan, but the prevailing moral winds changed and God was glorified in his people.

- C. Now God is telling us to do likewise in our generation.
1. Do not repeat the ignorance and blunders of the generations before us.
 2. Determine that your life will be about listening to God's voice as He speaks to you through his written Word.
 3. Believe God through the good and the bad, knowing that ALL things work together for your good.
 4. Look to God for the future and trust him as He proves himself over and over.

Hebrews 3:13-14 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;

5. We are to encourage and look after one another in trials and troubles and necessities, and do all we can to prevent that hardening of the heart toward God and his ways.
6. It is to be the business of our life to pray and exhort and encourage one another daily.
7. We are foolish and neglecting our duty to God and the truth if we just sit back and think someone is going to be alright if they have made a profession of faith and been baptized.
8. This is also part of our spiritual warfare.