

Introduction:

- In this series we're going to study a few great sins of the heart that work directly against living a life of godliness.

1. Hard-heartedness is when your heart doesn't receive the spiritual impressions that the Word should make, and when your heart doesn't obey God's commands,

Acts 7.51–53 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always **resist** the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, 53 you who received the law as delivered by angels and **did not keep it.**”

2. God-centered instructions for conquering hard-heartedness.

3. Heart-focused instructions for conquering hard-heartedness

A. Remember the majesty and presence of a holy God, who is constantly watching everything we think and say and do.

B. Think carefully about the greatness and the importance of Biblical truths which should affect you, and about the duties that the Lord requires of you.

C. Think often about the love God has shown to us in Christ, and His bloody sufferings as our Redeemer.

D. Try to gain a greater grasp of the evil and the danger of a hard heart.

E. Take notice of the sad and damaging _____ of hard-heartedness in the world.

Matt 23.37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that **kills** the prophets and **stones** those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, **and you were not willing!**”

Matt 13.3b-4 “A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

Matt 13.19 When anyone **hears the word** of the kingdom and **does not understand it**, the **evil one comes and snatches away** what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

Ezek 3.7 But the house of Israel **will not be willing to listen to you**, for they **are not willing to listen to me**: because all the house of Israel have a **hard forehead** and a **stubborn heart**.

- Hard-hearted people are _____ and unmoved by truths such as these:

1. They are the _____ of sin, and under sin's power, but don't feel it.

Rom 6.16 **Do you not know** that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves** of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

2. They have the _____ of countless unpardoned sins on them, and yet they don't feel it.

3. They have the forceful warnings and curses of God _____ them in His Word, and yet they don't feel it.

4. They are under the power of _____, are ruled and deceived by him, and yet they don't feel it.

2 Tim 2.25b-26 ...God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may **come to their senses** and escape from the **snare of the devil**, after being **captured by him** to do his will.

5. They may even know that if they die without Christ they will go to Hell forever, but they don't feel the danger of it, and keep on living _____ in sin.

6. They know that life is short and they're going to die someday, but they don't feel it enough to prepare for _____.

7. They know they're going to die someday and stand before the Lord to be _____ for everything they've done, and yet they don't feel it.

8. They have a world full of _____ in front of them where they see hardened, admittedly Hell-worthy people defying God's Word and dying in their sins, and yet they don't feel it.
9. They are constantly being _____ by God, who warns them and calls them to repentance, and yet they don't feel it.
10. They are fully aware of how Christ suffered, how He was crucified, and how He shows us God's love, and yet they are _____ by it.
11. They have the everlasting _____ of Heaven offered to them, and they know how much the people in Heaven would disapprove of their sins, and yet they don't feel it.
12. They have been told about the _____ of Hell and know that it is worse than even the worst sufferings of this life, and yet they don't feel it.
13. They have heard the joyful _____ that believers have for being saved from their sins and from Hell, and yet they don't feel it.
14. They have many evidences of their hard-hearted condition, but they can't see them or feel them, and instead talk and act like everything in their life is good, and everything with their soul is safe, _____ _____ how to be saved.

Acts 16.29b–30 with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas...and said, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**"

Rom 3.11 no one understands;
no one seeks for God.

F. Devote yourself to being under a Biblical, _____ ministry, and in fellowship with serious, enthusiastic Christians.

**Is 58.1-2 “Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
2 Yet they seek me daily
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that did righteousness
and did not forsake the judgment of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they delight to draw near to God.**

Matt 15.14 (NKJV) And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”

G. Take notice of how _____ tenderhearted Christians are to sins that are far less than the ones you make light of.

H. _____ of friendships, examples, and conversations that harden your heart.

1 Cor 15.33 Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”

I. Beware of sinning willfully against what you _____ to be right.

Heb 10.26–31 For if we go on *sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth*, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a **fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. 28 **Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses.** 29 How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by **the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?** 30 For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, **“The Lord will judge his people.”** 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

J. Practice the “habits of _____”, such as holy living, fervent praying, Scripture reading, Christian fellowship, and listening to Biblical preaching, but beware of letting them become a _____ habit.

K. Realize that all the aims and efforts of the devil are to try to:

- _____ you through doing other work,
- _____ you with other thoughts or priorities,
- _____ you spiritually through entertainment, pleasures, or people,
- Make you _____ through procrastinations,
- So that:
 - Your heart will be _____ to the Lord,
 - Your time and opportunity to walk with the Lord will be _____,
 - Your life will be more of a _____ to the devil than to the Lord.

Conclusion:

- Don't you think these are things that ought to be seriously considered?
- Don't these things deserve our prompt attention?
- Ask the Lord use these instructions to soften your own heart.