

Hebrews 3.12-14

The Heart of Unbelief

The warning strikes at the heart of our greatest need and greatest trial - unbelief, refusing to trust God and instead leaning on self as the core of everything that matters. The abandonment of selfish ideas, plans, struggles... God warns us that we are to be on our guard, and more, to be our guard against something that many don't even see as a problem.

So here is the dynamic that is in play for us –

- Beware, be always on your guard for yourself and for your brethren.
- You are specifically watching for this "evil heart of unbelief"
- To prevent this, we are commanded to exhort one another daily
 - Every day - this today is the only one you have, the only one you have been promised or guaranteed.
 - What's more, it is the only today that your loved ones have also...

- But it is a specific warning, unbelief grows through hardening, SO... we are to be on our collective guard against that hardening
- And this hardening occurs through the deceitfulness of sin...

- The final aspect of the warning is the promise
 - We ARE partakers so long as we hold fast to the end
 - So long as our love and affection are not less when we end than when we started
 - So long as our lives demonstrate by the power of God's Spirit that we ARE changed.
 - So long as we remain His, which demonstrates that we ARE His to begin with...

1 John 2:19 (NKJV)

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

So, the warning aims at this promise - but there are miles to go before we're done...

I. WHAT IS UNBELIEF?

- a. Spiritual ignorance - to not understand the things of the spirit, you may possess the facts but do not rightly understand or apply them

1 Corinthians 2.14

John 8.42-47

- b. Refusing to believe the source of the instructions of Scripture

John 5.39-47

- c. Failure to submit to what you DO understand.

Romans 10.1-4

- d. Rejecting your need for the absolute saving power of Jesus

Galatians 2.16

- e. Refusing to believe that the demands of God as given in the gospel actually apply to you.

Romans 3.23

Romans 6.23

- f. Flat disobedience to the commands of God

Acts 17.30-31

II. WHAT CAUSES UNBELIEF?

- a. The corruption of nature inherited from the fall
- b. Willful ignorance - the question of the fall is "Did God Say?". It is still the question today!
 - i. Trusting of man's reason
 - ii. Trusting of "science"
 - iii. Trusting the authorities of man
 - iv. Trusting the evidence of the physical senses over all else despite any spiritual evidence

c. Love of selfish desires

d. Love of sin

John 3.18-20

e. Attachment to the things of this world

Phil 3.7-11

f. Indifference to the grace that is offered

Jesus describes this attitude in Matthew 7.6 –

“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”

g. The work of the enemy

1Peter 5.8

- h. The reality of suffering - Jesus promised suffering if we followed Him. But too often we either don't believe Him when He said so or just ignore it, then when suffering arises, we turn from Him believing that, somehow, He has failed us. It is a testimony to the shallow nature of our faith and the reality of our unbelief. But it can also be attributed as a cause of further unbelief, driving the weak and immature follower away from Christ.
- i. Pride

Matthew 7.20-23
1John 2.15-17

III. HOW TO WAR AGAINST IT

- a. Work to possess and understand the truth of God

2 Timothy 2:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

¹⁶ But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness.

b. Seek after grace, always more grace

Let Paul's prayer be yours for yourself and for the brethren

Ephesians 1.15-20

c. Work to release your grip on the things of this world

d. Do not despise the grace you have been offered –

- i. The sight of sin is grace
- ii. The desire for deliverance, no matter how slight, is grace
- iii. The knowledge of Christ as deliverer is grace upon grace upon grace...

Romans 6.20-21

e. Reject the voice of the enemy

James 4.7-10

f. Pray for deliverance

2Peter 2.9-10

g. Deny self

Matthew 16.24-26

h. Fight the fight for the brethren

i. Speak the truths God has given you both to yourself and to the brethren