

Are You Developing a Hard Heart

by David Wilkerson

Hardness of heart is a sin of the church that can be overcome through a broken heart and a vision of Jesus, and by receiving the searchlight of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 59:27

Scripture: Isaiah 1:4-6, Isaiah 1:16-17, Isaiah 6, Matthew 6:33, Romans 2:21-24, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:22

Topics: "Hard Heart"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the passage from Isaiah 6:9-10 where God sends Isaiah on a mission to a people who will not understand or perceive his message. The preacher emphasizes the incredulity and concern of Isaiah, questioning how long a people can endure such hardness of heart. The preacher warns the congregation about developing a hard heart themselves and highlights the danger of focusing on the sins of others without addressing one's own sins. The sermon concludes with a personal anecdote about a legalistic evangelist and the importance of showing love and compassion like Jesus.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing to World Challenge PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 214-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. Are you developing a hard heart? Are you developing, are you getting a hard heart? We're going to examine that. Some of you may be surprised what you hear tonight.

You didn't know it, but your heart is beginning to get hard. Isaiah, the sixth chapter. You know this passage very well.

There's only 13 verses in this chapter. You know the story of the year the king Isaiah died. Isaiah sees the Lord sitting upon a throne high lifted up, trained for the temple.

You remember the seraphims with six wings covering their eyes, and they say, Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, and it shakes the door of the house where it's filled with smoke, and he falls in his face saying, Where is me? I'm undone. And the seraphim goes and takes a loud call from the altar and lays it on his mouth. He's cleansed, and he hears a voice from heaven saying, Who's going to go for us? And he says,

Here, my Lord, send me.

And he's sent on an incredible mission. He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not. Verse 9. And see indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, and that means hard and thick, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted and healed. He said, Lord, how long? And he said, Until this city's been wasted without an inhabitant. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, the word that was brought this morning from this pulpit dovetails clearly with what you have spoken to my heart tonight. We thank you, Lord, that you made it clear to us, very clear to those who were here in the service this morning, that we were to deal with all hidden things in our lives so that the freedom and the glory of God could be manifest. Lord, I want you to pour deep tonight.

I want you to show us how awesome this word is that you gave to the prophet Isaiah. Lord, it's a heavy word that you gave to him, and we've got to receive it because Paul used it, and Jesus used this very message. It's for us to do what Isaiah saw and heard from God is what we need to hear and see from the Holy Ghost tonight.

Lord, I thank you for the freedom there is tonight. We worship you and praise you. We give you glory and honor, and I break through in the preaching of the word.

Every demonic spirit has been cast out of this house so that we can hear very clearly, touch every ear. Give us three open ears and open eyes. In soft talks we pray.

Amen. There's nothing worse that I can imagine than a Christian becoming hard of heart. And you may be sitting here tonight in this meeting not realizing that a little bit of hardness has already begun and the Holy Spirit is trying to stop it before it goes any further.

Now, hardness is not a sin of the world. It's not a sin of the world, it's a sin of the church. Now, consider Sodom and Gomorrah, for example.

Here's a city that was totally depraved, that was turning to violence and homosexuality. I'll ask you a question. Were they hard-hearted in Sodom because they even tried to rape angels that were visiting? Were they hard-hearted because they tried to take Lot and Seth out and rape him and sodomize it? You say, were they hard-hearted? No, they were blind.

The blood of this man had blinded their eyes. They were blind, but they were not hard. And I know that because Jesus said, if the gospel that was preached to Chorazin and Bethsaida had been preached in Tyre and Sidon and Sodom, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

They were not hard-hearted, they were blinded by the blood of this man, and there's a difference. Now, in Christ's time there were two cities that were the hardest, or the blindest of all. There were the wickedest cities in this time, Tyre and Sidon.

And there were two other cities where most of his mighty miracles were done, Chorazin and Bethsaida. And Jesus said it one time, it shall be more tolerable and more merciful and there'll be a judgment for that city, speaking of Sodom. For Sodom, it's going to have more mercy on the judgment day than you who sat

under the Word of God, he says, in Bethsaida, saw my miracles, you sat under my teaching, you heard the gospel time and time again, and you hardened your heart to it, there's going to be more merciful.

Sodom had no Bible, Sodom had no church, it had no revival, it had no prophet, it had one man who had a vexed soul, the Bible said, who vexed his soul night and day by the things he saw in Sodom. He said to Chorazin and to Bethsaida, who had done mighty miracles, he said, if the mighty miracles that have been done in you had been done in time, Sodom, and he mentioned Sodom also, they would have repented long ago and sacked Cathanasius. Now, hardness is the sin of believers, it's the sin of those who sit the most often under the Word of God, they see most of his miracles, and they see his power in action.

And the Word of the Lord that comes from time-spare chance is going to either break you and melt your heart, or it's going to harden you. God has given us that power and that authority, and I want to show that to you very sternly tonight. Now, there is a remnant, and this passage will bear it out, there is a remnant who's going to hear and repent and be changed by the Word of God.

But according to this, there are going to be many, many that harden their heart. Now, hardness of heart is not rejection of hearing the Word of God. In fact, you go through all the scriptures on hardness, and you will find that people who were healed, they loved to hear the Word.

They loved to sit under Jeremiah. They loved to sit under the prophets. They said, come let us hear what the prophets say.

They flattered their prophets. They would ennard their prophets. They would say, I love to hear the Word.

You talk to any of these who had hard hearts, and they would say to you, He's my Lord, He's my God, I serve Him. I'm a child of the living God. They were not God-haters.

Now, let me share some things that the Holy Spirit put into my heart, and I know He put it in my heart for tonight. I've been praying and seeking His face about this message, and God made it clear that I had to deliver it tonight in this service because He knew He was coming. He knew you would be here.

I'm not pointing anybody out, but it's for the church, for this church. First of all, hardness comes from embracing the message of holiness without a vision of Christ's utter holiness in our own hearts. In other words, there's no vision of what that means, no heart.

It's just accepting the doctrine of it, accepting the message of it, without the inverting of the vision of Jesus Christ and His absolute utter holiness. I'm convinced that if I stood before Jesus right now, and I can tell you looking in the eye, I'm not living in an open sin. I've sensed my heart.

If there's anything there, the man will show me. And like Bob said this morning, we'll keep on saying this as we go. But I'm convinced that if, like Isaiah, if I stood before the Lord right now in His presence, I'd find in my face that I'm unclean, I'm undone.

I'm convinced if you, anyone, I don't care how holy or righteous you are, I don't care what your testimony is, if you saw Jesus, if you had a vision of the utter holiness, the otherness of Jesus, the absolute purity and holiness of Jesus, we couldn't stand in His presence. We would be melted and broken. We would seem so black, so filthy in comparison.

Who can listen to some of the strongest holiness preaching that a man ever preached? How would you like to sit under this kind of message? God's people are blind. A sinful people laden with iniquity. A seed of evildoers, children that are corruptors, having forsaken the Lord.

They provoke the Holy One of Israel to anger. They're falling away backward. Their whole head is sick.

Their whole heart is faint. From the sole of the feet to the head, there's no soundness at all, but rings and bruises, putrefying sores. He said, you've been like Sodom.

How would you like to ever look past a priest like that? A bunch of Sodomites. There's nothing, there's darkness everywhere I look. Until this man preached holiness, he told it like nobody else told it on Spanley, it was a trumpet call, it was thunder from heaven.

He said, you're Sodom assemblies are abomination. God is sick and tired of all your meetings, because he's hiding his face from your upraised hands. Why don't you come and raise your hands? Well, how would you like to sit under preaching like that? You think it's hard to hear tongues go church? He said, there's mischief in you.

There's holatry, backsliding. Your idols are going to be destroyed. There is ruin among the house of God, among God's people.

That's Isaiah the prophet. Can you believe these words came from the man who had unclean lips? All of that I read to you before Isaiah 6, before the vision. And he was preaching holiness.

There's a doctrine there. It's a good doctrine. It's a straight message.

But he's not yet had the inworking, he's not yet had the vision of Jesus, and he's out of holiness. So what he has to this point is a message to the people. To the nation.

He sees the ruin in the nation. He sees the ruin in the country. He sees the ruin all around him, but he's not seen it yet in his own heart.

He's a good man, he's really a righteous man, but there's not been the vision of Jesus in his own heart at this time. I've talked with pastors and Christians who are so hard on others, they have absolutely no patience. In fact, a few of the ministers that have fallen now and been on our knees will often amend some of their hardness on others.

There was a hardness there. There was a cutting. There was the message of holiness.

There was a word of separation. But I want to tell you, when this holiness message that is preached for my purpose today is not combined with mercy, it comes out just as hardness. Presents it as hardness.

And it comes to lay hardness, rather than mercy before God. Listen to Isaiah. He said, Woe to them that call evil good and good evil, and put darkness for light and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

Now that's an uncompromising message. It's a wonderful message. It's God's message.

It's the message we should be preaching. And God needs messengers of holiness. He needs voices to rise and cry out.

But you see, much to do with holiness preaching. And I know, there was a period in my ministry, I preached holiness without having that vision. I'll tell you, I could see the ruin in the land.

I wrote books about the ruin in the land. I wrote prophetic books. And still have not had the complete vision.

I don't have the full vision yet. But I've had a glimpse of that. Isaiah said he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up.

He saw seraphims unable to look at that glory. They were crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God of hosts. And those thundering voices that proclaimed the holiness of Christ, the holiness of the Father, actually shook the doors of the temple.

But not only did it shake the doors of the temple, that cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, shook Isaiah to the core of his heart. And it brought him to his knees. Then he cried out, Oh God, I'm undone.

And I feel like Isaiah was down on his face before God and he was saying, Oh Lord, I preached this message. I've seen it in others. I've seen the ruin all around me.

I've seen a wicked nation going to hell. And it was so easy for me to preach that. And I've never had this kind of experience, my Lord.

You're turning the sunshine on me, your servant. You can do nothing but say, I'm wasted. I'm finished.

Lord, unless you touch me, unless you praise me, I can't speak. I'm hopeless. I've got to have... You purged my heart.

Then said, Oh, woe is me. I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean lips.

Now see, I'm a bonus in the heart to my speech. I'm not even thinking that. How can you preach all of that? How can you say, wicked nation? How can you say, abomination of my sons? And yet you say, I'm a man of unclean lips.

God was saying to his servant, You can't talk of my holiness until the coals of fire touch your own heart. Until your own iniquity is taken away. I will not allow nothing in my servants that is wicked or evil to stand before me.

And it was a vision one on one. This wasn't happening in the church. It wasn't happening around the body.

It was happening in a lone encounter with the Lord. I don't care, you beloved, until you have that lone encounter with God. You're not around any other members of the body of Christ.

But the Holy Spirit has you alone, one on one. And He's saying to you, I have borne this thing in you for so long. I have endured it patiently.

And I love you and I care for you. But there's an ultimatum I give you now. Your sin cannot stand in my holy presence.

Now Paul dealt with a class of Christians who believed they could preach to others about holiness. Preach to others about their sins and not deal with their own. He said, you must teach others.

Are you teaching yourself? You that preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say that a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? But folks, I have not achieved yet. I can say with Paul, I have not arrived. But I can look you in the face.

I can look the Lord in the face today. And I can thank Him for the searchlight that went down into the innermost part of my soul and said, demon, you can't stand in my way and call you not a nation of holiness till you have been called for the call of God has touched you. I received one of the greatest compliments a servant of God could receive today walking in his church this morning.

A woman looked me right in the eye and she said, Brother David, thank you for loving Jesus so much. That's what should be seen in every man or minister of the gospel every second year be able to say, I see Jesus. I see Christ.

Nothing can harden your heart quicker than beating the sins of others while holding their secrets in yourself. Looking at other's sins and not dealing with your own. When I was a young pastor in the village of Pennsylvania had an evangelist camp played 18 instruments.

Called him the musical soldier. Eighteen instruments. One of them was a comb, for example.

So you imagine. But I never heard a preacher in my life preach so hard. He preached against makeup on women.

He called them painted barns. He preached against the shirt dressers and the bobbed hair. The biggest legalistic week I ever had in my lifetime.

Our people getting more and more discouraged and sliding down in their seat and bowed and bowed. I never heard a man so hard on women, especially that man. I thought he hated women.

I had the ladies in the church and my wife said, what's wrong with that man? We just barely got through that thing and I knew something was wrong. I met him again. I never had him back.

We got through that week somehow. Never knew that that whole time that man was a homosexual. And that man wound up molesting a 14-year-old boy and getting 40 to 50 years in prison.

And now he's in prison today. Raped his own son. But nobody could preach more than that man could.

He called it a holiness mess. He wasn't holiness at all. I tell you the only way you can preach holiness is with a broken heart and having a vision of Jesus.

A man who really preaches holiness has a broken heart because he's seen his own heart. He's seen it in the face of Jesus Christ in the presence of his holiness. Do you witness to all this and then slip out and rape yourself or indulge in pornography, that little thing that keeps coming back in your heart? You see, hardness is like a cancer.

It begins in a very small area and begins to spread until it affects the whole body. And that's the problem of holding on to a besetting sin. It creates a hardness in that one area.

For a while, the word of God will convict you about that particular pet sin. And then you don't lay it down and you continue to take pleasure in your unrighteousness. And what you do rather than let the Holy Ghost deal with it and lay it down and let the fear of God work its sweet work in you, you try to

overcompensate in other areas.

You say, well, I'm 99% free. Let me give the 99% to Jesus. And we overcompensate by praying louder, shouting louder.

Now, I'm not saying if you shout loud, this is your problem. I don't want to get into that. I said because when you're really free, you will shout.

I mean, you'll praise the Lord. But there's a tendency to overcompensate and be loving and kind to others. To overcompensate.

The man who cheats on his wife usually comes home with flowers more often than others. And he's always complimenting his wife on her cooking. I mean, he's a sweet liar.

Again, if your husband's been a bad man, take that. You see, there's a tendency to say, well, it's really not a big thing. I only do it once in a while.

Now, I'm almost through. It's just kind of, I'm tapering off. Oh, yes, you're tapering off.

For the last ten years. You see, you've got to beware because the hardness is already sitting in. And God may have to turn you over to the lie that you're living.

Because you are, my friend, living a lie. In fact, I want to go to 2 Thessalonians. 2 Thessalonians, the second chapter.

I want to show you something frightening. 2 Thessalonians. Second chapter.

Second Thessalonians. You know something? I've just turned three yards. Well, that's one pinch of hardness.

If you're tired and weary, don't be afraid of that, but don't doubt in Jesus' name. The Lord wants to minister to your heart right now. Praise the Lord.

Don't be quiet about it, will you? Don't be quiet about it, will you? He said, if that works for you, talk like that. Now, I've got the anointing on me. The Holy Spirit's on me.

And He's going to speak to your hearts tonight. We're going to get right through to His word here. All right, 2 Thessalonians 2, verse 10.

2 Thessalonians. Second chapter, verse 10. It starts with verse 9. Even Him who is coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs of nine wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.

Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie that they all might be damned to believe not the truth but have pleasure in unrighteousness. Pleasure, and they're like, look at me, please.

There's a lie here, and I want you to see the delusion. The delusion is to finally be able to sit in Times Square Church. In fact, I was going to call this getting high at Times Square Church.

It comes down, and this is the delusion, that you can finally sit under an anointed Holy Ghost ministry, have various pastors seeking God and delivering the very heart of God with such power and such authority that it's like a knife, and it cuts, but finally you're able to sit and it doesn't touch you anymore, just like water running off a duck's back. It doesn't touch you because you so protected that area and that heart, your only heart in one area, but because you have protected that little dark room where you keep that little secret there, and it's never been dealt with, there's never been victory in that one area. Never.

Never since you've been a Christian have you been set free from that one area. And the Holy Ghost keeps coming and knocking at the door, and he says, open it up, just open it up. I love you.

I want you to have total freedom. I want you to be able to be clean and righteous so that you can have the power and the peace and joy of the Holy Ghost. Open it up.

Let me clean it up. And we keep saying, not yet. And we play with it, and we indulge in it, and the heart was finally, we get a covering over that, it becomes like stone, it becomes purified, and that purified spirit moves all through the system, all through the spiritual life.

Until finally, he said, we've deluded you. You can sit under the anointing and pray and everybody thinks everything is all right, but you've got this little hard spot, that black stone, that purified area in your life which is covered. God can't touch it.

The preaching can't touch it. The Holy Ghost can't touch it. There's a hardness in one area that will eventually spread through your whole system.

I want you to go to Luke, the 13th chapter, please. Luke 13. Now, I don't have any problem with anybody saying amen, any time.

You're singing with great power and I start preaching and everybody got so quiet on me. Luke 13. 23, verse 23.

Do you love the Lord? Amen. Well, let's look at it. Verse 23.

Luke 13. Then said one, Dear Lord, are there few that would be saved? And he said unto them, strive to enter in at the straight gate. For many are sent here who seek to enter in but not be able to.

Then once the master of the house has risen up and he shut the door, you begin to stand outside and knock at the door saying, Lord, may it open to us. Who else is sent here? I don't even know who you are. Then you should begin to say, Lord, we've eaten and drunk in your presence.

You've trod on our streets. I've sat under your preaching. I've sat under the teaching.

But he said, I tell you, I don't know who you are. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity. Depart from me.

Now listen, please. Listen very closely. Here's a people who ate and drank in his presence.

He sat under his message and they shut up. They're just out of the kingdom. They don't enter in.

I tell you, I've met, I know faces. I don't remember names, but I see faces in my mind right now of people that came and sat here for a few months in this church and they're gone. And they were once, appeared to

be so tender, they would flatter the pastors.

You'd come back, they'd pat you on the back and say, oh, thank God, I've been looking all my life for preaching like this. I want to be in a church where I'm convicted. And you don't find them there.

And if you do meet them somewhere, and you say, I met a man recently and he disappeared from the church and I met him not too long ago and there was a hardness, there was a wall I couldn't reach, there was a hardness there. And I know in my heart the reason for it because finally, that truth came up against that black stone. That truth came up against that one place in his life of hardness.

And he just couldn't take it anymore and he just walked out. And many, many of them have received that. And I wonder how many there are here tonight.

Especially tonight when he deals with secret sin. I wonder how many are going to be able to let the truth break in on that. And open up the door and say, Holy Spirit, I've had enough.

I want you to come in and give me my total cleansing. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

I want you to know that God has revealed his unspeakable wrath at this lip service without a heart surrender. There is wrath revealed in his word against just mocking the words and going through the motions without having the heart clean. God wanted, do you know why God put this warning in Isaiah? Let me tell you why it's important to me.

Jesus quoted from it and Paul quoted from it and I'll say it to you in just a moment. But you see, God showed us something here in the sixth chapter of Isaiah. He's trying to reveal his wrath against a certain kind of believer.

He's talking to his children. He's talking to the church. He's not talking to Sodom now.

He's talking to us. Isaiah sees the Lord in a quandary. The Lord is saying to his created beings, Who are we going to send? And Isaiah can't understand what's going on.

God's in a quandary because he sees a people he's going to have to deal with in a very special way. He's going to have to have a new kind of prophet, a new kind of evangelist that had never been known on the face of the earth. There's a new one coming forth.

And Isaiah's just been cleansed now and his heart is one with God. And Isaiah's standing by after being cleansed and he's standing by and God isn't even talking to Isaiah. He's talking to his created beings.

Perhaps he said to them, he said, Who's going to go first? Who shall we send? And Isaiah cries out, Oh God, send me. And he didn't even know what it was about. And he knows, I don't know if he would have been willing to say, send me.

Because he was going to take on a frightful mission. A mission that no evangelist or prophet had ever been called on to bear. He's going to have to stand before people and reveal a part of God or something of the nature of God that people don't want to hear.

Because they want to hear that God is love, God is mercy, Lord's suffering, and He is all of that. Because if I want a man who will not be afraid to stand before the people and declare my wrath against mixture, my wrath against human sin that creates harmless, because there are people on the earth that have heard so

much of my truth and now they're closing their ears and they're shutting their eyes and they're fat, their hearts are becoming fat and dull and God says, I've got a word for them. And Isaiah says, hear my word, send me.

And God says, all right, Isaiah. Let's look, go back to Isaiah 6. I want you to see how frightful this mission is. And it's the mission he's called me to tonight.

And it's not pleasant. But I tell you, God was speaking this morning and I want us to hear what he's saying tonight. And if you look, Isaiah 6 again, verse 7 again, well, let's look at verse 5. God said, I raise me for I am dim because of men of unclean lips.

All right, go down now to verse 7. And he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lord, this hath touched my lips and your iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged. Verse 8. Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who is God for us? Then said I, hear my, send me. Do you know what God was going to say to that man? I'm going to put such a burning word in your mouth when two things are going to happen to anyone who hears you.

It's either going to melt them and heal them, or it's going to seal their doom. In other words, it's going to hasten the hardness that they have set their hearts on. You're going to find everyone who has that hard beginning, who have begun to close their eyes and their ears to the truth, and I'm going to send you on a dreadful mission, Isaiah.

And look at verse 9. This is the end of side 1. You may now turn the tape over to side 2. Go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people, he's talking about his own people, make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed. Folks, look this way please.

Isaiah is incredulous. I believe, he couldn't believe his ears, because he even says, look, how long? How long can a man do that? How long can a people endure that? How can I go, when I have been preaching to this people, of your mercy and your love, how can I tell a people that? How can I go, and do such a dreadful work, that those who are beginning to close you out, I go and finish the work. Now, you'll find out from the scripture, that Jesus says, they hardened their heart, they shut their eyes, they closed their ears, it was a work that was initiated by those who heard the word.

They had set themselves to that. There's one ear that protects it, they don't hear, Oh beloved, if you have an area in your heart tonight, that you won't let go, you will not let go, I beg of you, name of the Lord, let the gospels be preached tonight. Come and break you.

If it doesn't, it will only harden you, and you'll walk out of here tonight, more hard than you've ever been. Because I have the same mission tonight, I'm an ear to the Holy Ghost, and Isaiah the prophet had. I've been sent tonight, on a dreadful mission, to say to those who've heard the gospel here, dreadful month after month after month, and you raise your hands and you seek the Lord.

I have a dreadful mission tonight, before this message is over, to set you in hardness. Hopefully, that when you become free to like a rock, at least the hammer of God has a chance to break you. Because Jesus said, whether you be hot or cold, but not look warm.

Paul quoted Isaiah 6 to the chief Jews in Rome. They got up and walked out on him. He sat for days and weeks, ministering Christ, expressing God's heart, and then he finally said, I know you're not hearing the word, listen to it.

He said, your eyes are dull, your ears are dull of hearing, you've shut your eyes, lest you could see and hear. He said, Paul said, Isaiah said properly of you, you would do this. He said, the very words of Isaiah are coming to you right into my eyes.

I'm seeing the promise of Isaiah, before, right before my eyes. Jesus, listen, I'm going to ask you a question. How, and this is, I couldn't taste this message tonight, until God answered something for me.

I said, Lord, how can I represent you like that? A God of love, a God of justice and mercy, how can I go forth as a messenger to harden the hearts of those who have already initiated that in their hearts? And Jesus answered that question for me in his scripture. He quoted from Isaiah to the religious scribes and pharisees who went through the motions, who acted religious, and their hearts were far from him. He said, you hypocrites, where did Isaiah prophesy of you? He quoted the same passage.

These people draw near to me with their mouth, they honor me with their lips, but their heart is not with me. Their heart is far from me. And what a nauseous sight God saw.

He saw his people drawing near to him, calling on his name, praising and worshiping and honoring the Lord. Outwardly, they looked pious, they looked holy, but the Lord said, something's got their heart. Something has their heart.

You can sit in this meeting this morning and here tonight, where the praise of the Lord will mountain to heaven, and the glory of the Lord is coming down and touching multitudes of us. But I tell you, God looks on the heart. God looks down and he probes deep.

And Jesus, what an incredible moment that was when the disciples came to him and said, Master, don't you know they were offended by what you said? And Jesus didn't soft-code his message. He didn't send an apology. He said, leave them alone.

They've hardened their hearts, they're blind, and they're leading from the blind, they're headed for the ditch, leave them alone. Can you imagine Jesus saying that, and the whole segment of your society, leave them alone. They're religious, they go through the actions, they go through the motions, but something else has their heart.

They've turned away. My heart's a lot with me. And that's my question tonight.

Is your heart fully his, or is it turned away to business? Is it turned away to some pleasure, to a pet sin that you keep falling back to every time? You see, these people, the Bible, Jesus said, these people draw nigh to me. Don't listen if you say, draw nigh to me, and I'll draw nigh to you. Yes, but I'll tell you what, if somebody has your heart and he draws nigh to you, it's going to be for hardness.

It'll be the hard one. And I tell you tonight, I tell you tonight, if I know God at all, if he's ever called me, if he's ever anointed me with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is here tonight, under his own and his authority, to give you your last and final ultimatum, saying you're going to deal with this thing in your life, because I love you, and I'll not stand by any longer. I'll not stand by and let you destroy yourself.

And there'll be a hardness set in, because you will not again hear it as strong as you're going to hear it right now, through the demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost. Not through what I say, but what the Holy Ghost is saying to your heart right now. If there's something there drawing and pulling you away, there's a gospel that's entrusted to us as his faithful servants, that that thing will totally possess you unless you lay it down.

And I said, Lord, why such an ominous warning? Why is there such an anger in your heart against a hardness? And believe it or not, God spoke to my heart that it's because of his mercy these kind of warnings go forth. It's his mercy. Because you see, God's ultimate desire for us is freedom.

He said, you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. That's God's ultimate purpose and his goal for all of us. And I'll tell you what, when the people begin to pray and seek God for revival, when the people in this city begin to leave hold of God like so many thousands have done in New York City, he'll do just exactly what he's done.

He'll come in and set up a church right in the middle of Broadway, and he'll send a word to you, there's something happening down at Times Square Church, and you come, and he'll send forth a word. He'll send a convicting word, a cutting, piercing word. And believe me, brother, sister, it's all important.

It's life and death how you respond to the convicting word of the Holy Ghost. It's absolute life and death how you respond. Stephen stood before that religious crowd, and he said, you stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Ghost.

Well, what he said, you've heard it all and you've resisted it all. You've become betrayers, murderers. You've killed the prophets, and you've killed the Son of God.

And when they heard this message, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on Him at their teeth, and they cried out in a loud voice, and they stopped their ears, and they ran upon Him with one accord. But you see, we don't stone the preachers today. We don't lash on them with our teeth.

No, we go up smiling, and we say amen to everything they say. And we pat them on the back, and we flatter them, and be able to have the courage to stand up and preach the word of God. And we sit in town square church, and we hear it until it comes out our ears.

Now, beloved, I'm not speaking to everyone there. Many of you have been changed, and God has brought it all out, and you want God to do something, and already the word of God is beginning to melt your heart. Already you feel the hammer coming down, and already you're crying, oh God, yes, I want it out.

There's hope for you, brother, sister. God's going to do it. But you see, there are others who were healed, and they gnashed their teeth.

Others were offended. Don't you know? Brother, know thou not that the Pharisees were offended after they heard your sayings? Leave them alone, they're blind, he said. We've got people that hear the message, and they walk out, and they say, I don't care what anybody says, I know he was preaching at me.

I know for a fact the preacher doesn't like me. I know somebody's got his ear. I know he was up there tonight venting his spleen on me.

Oh, there are people that are offended. I get letters. I get letters.

And I get calls. Some of the pastors do too. And they'll say, Brother Wilkerson, I've been deeply offended.

Deeply offended by the word of God. They're good. I've had some tell me, I've had preachers who've offended me, and pushed me around, and now I come here and you offend me.

Well, the kind of offense you're getting here, brother and sister, is from the word of God. It's not personal whatsoever, it's the Holy Spirit dealing. Do you know that God doesn't have much to offer a person that shuts their ears and their eyes? He doesn't have much to offer.

There's nothing there. He said, leave them alone. There's nothing there to offer them when you become stiff necked before Him.

The Lord will come bursting at you with truth. He'll burst upon you with a stinging, convicting word that's like a knife goes into your heart. What will you do about it? Will you say, Oh Jesus, yes, that's me.

Tell you what, before I close, I want to just unburden my heart to you on a matter. I've heard people say, Well, I don't like going to Times Square Church because it's so big, and I don't get to know the pastors intimately. You know, I was in a little church, and the pastor used to, we'd have picnics all the time, we'd play ball with the pastor, and we were buddies, and I'll tell you what, you know what God showed me this afternoon? You know when we stand before the judgment? We stand before the Lord when you and I are redeemed.

We stand around the throne of God. Are you going to say, Pastor Dave, Pastor Bob, you are a real buddy to me. Man, I thank God for all those ball games we played, all the picnics we had.

Are you going to stand before God and put your arms around your shepherds and say, Thank you for being faithful to the Holy Ghost. Thank you for sending the Word from Heaven. Thank you for the knife of God.

These pastors love you, but we're not here to be buddies, we're not here to have ball games, we're here to preach Jesus to you and get the sin out of the church. We're not here to be liked and loved, and though we love to know that you respond in the Word of God, but the thing that makes us reap the fruit more than anything else is to see the Word of God taken, people becoming doers in the Word of God. Sure, it's a grief not being able to know everyone in this church better.

It's a grief to all of us that we can't come and know you by name and be personal and close. But I tell you one thing, I'd rather stand here tonight and look you in the eye and preach the Word that gets down into your heart and convicts you of your sin until you're so provoked and so broken before God that Christ has been formed in you, that we can present you like Paul said, in the fullness of Jesus, and on the judgment day, we can say, Master, God above, and the Lord God will be there, all the pastors. Here they are, man.

We, your flock, these are your children. We brought them in. We saw Jesus in them.

Hallelujah. I don't want to be your buddy. I want to be a shepherd.

Hallelujah. And I say unto you now, I say to you now, said the Lord, I have spoken once, and twice, and three times, and not only that, I've spoken to you time and time again. I've spoken to you in love.

I've spoken to you in wrath. And yet you have closed your heart. Now by the living mercies of the Holy God, hear His word, and repent of your iniquity, repent of your sin, and call on the name of the Lord, and harden not your heart, harden not your heart, but receive the word with hope.

And if you receive it with hope, if you receive it now, I will come and cleanse you, I will sanctify you, and I will come with an axe, and lay it to the weed, and I will cut off the very roots. I'll cut off the roots. I'll come with my sword, and cut off everything that binds you to this world.

And I'll give you a freedom. You shall know the truth, and the truth alone shall set you free. Will you stand? Look at me.

There's love coming from this pulpit. We don't preach like this just to be heard. No, it's hours and hours and days in love with God, trying to say, Oh God, break it.

Don't let people come to Times Square Church and put on a show. We pray, God, don't let any sin or iniquity reign in any heart up here. And don't let it reign in the lives here.

I heard a young man here this morning. I looked down to him, and I said, What's happening? He said, David, I feel like I'm losing it now. God's been talking to him to lay something down.

And son, until you lay that down, until you keep that air of hardness, nothing's going to change. Ask God to turn on the searchlight. Is there one last tie to the world? Cut it.

This is the service tonight, to have it cut. Heavenly Father, cut. Cut.

Lord, if we'll do that, there'll be a freedom here tonight such as we've never seen. There'll be joy break out in this house, Lord. Hallelujah.

Beloved, if you're wanting to cut it, come on, stand here right and don't come unless you are ready. I mean ready to say, God, I've got to have this thing broken. Up in the balcony, here in the main floor, wherever you're at, I want it broken tonight.

I've got to be free. I want to be free. I don't want to harden my heart.

Up in the balcony, wherever you're at, come. Move in closer, please, move in closer. Jesus.

Lord, to Jesus I surrender. Lord, to Him I give. I will ever love and trust in His service daily.

I surrender, Lord. I surrender, Lord. Lord, to Him I give.

I surrender, Lord. Lord, to Jesus I surrender. Hallelujah.

He's my God. The reflection of the Savior. Take me, Jesus.

Take me now. I surrender, Lord. I surrender, Lord.

Lord, to Him I give. I surrender, Lord. Now, you get up here.

I want you to raise your hands in that song. Make it your prayer right now. Lord, I surrender.

You've got to let it, you've got to let it. God says it's got to go. It's got to go.

No ifs, no ands, no buts, no justifications. There's no other way. It's got to go.

It has to end. It has to end. You can't taper off.

It has to go tonight. It has to end and He has to strengthen the power of you. Say, Jesus, I do the best of my knowledge and ability.

Everything that's in me, I give up my sin. I give up everything to you. I surrender.

Church, let's all raise our hands and sing I surrender all. Let's worship Him as we do it. I surrender all, I surrender all My ears are open, my eyes are open, and my heart is open Come Holy Spirit, cleanse me Now thank Him for doing that right now Thank you Jesus for cleansing The cleansing of the blood The cleansing of Jesus Precious blood And the Word, the Word cleanses and hears The Word cleanses and hears all Hallelujah If you've got a heavy heart You said the rest of the Word's given me a heavy heart You need not have a heavy heart If you know that your ear is open Your eye is open You've opened up your heart Doesn't mean you're walking in perfection But it means you're open up Lord I'm open, hallelujah How many can say you're open to the Word of the Lord?

You love that Word? Hallelujah Hallelujah Praise you Jesus Now Lord, I'm asking you to bring a spirit of joy And victory And peace in the Holy Ghost Look at me please Look up here It doesn't take the Lord all night You say I've done this before Now we're back to my sin But I'll tell you what the difference is If you stand here right now and you're allowing The Word to produce the fear of God The holy fear of God And that holy fear of God That in turn produces a love for Jesus Love is not a motive in itself It has to be connected with the great fear of God The living fear of God It's the love and the fear balanced And that produces an incredible work in you Some of the choir members this morning Came to me and said By watching, we were watching And we saw, we could literally see The countenance of people changing People being healed and saved And changed and transformed by the Word of God You wouldn't be standing here tonight If your heart was hard You understand that?

Now you may have the beginning of that But right now you're dealing with it But you've got to have a spirit of faith now To believe God said He said you call upon me And I'll answer He said you confess your sin And I'll pray for you And I'll forgive you And I'll cleanse you From all unrighteousness Then even if your heart's hard You say Lord I've been so hard Hit me whatever you have to hit me with Break me Lord here I am Lord how hungry Oh God But oh has he produced a hatred for sin in you Is there a loathing of that sin If there is Then there's word of victory tonight for you Hallelujah Glory to God Lord Jesus I'm asking now by the power of the Holy Spirit I delivered my heart Lord I preached the word that you told me to preach You turned a searchlight on Lord You sobered us before you

And Lord I not take that back I stand right before you now as your servant And I say once again to those at this altar That we have got to be honest with you We cannot flirt with our sins any longer Lord bring that holy soberness to us Sober us so much That we'll say God I'm going to keep coming to the truth I will not hide from your truth God I want the knife to my heart Oh God produce a love for the word in this church Produce a love and produce doers of the word and not just hearers Don't let it go in one ear and out the other Lord let this have its mark What we heard this morning and tonight And every message that goes from this paper God produce up holy sanctified people Who are not living in fear But they're living in the faith of God's word Hallelujah God come against the spirit of

fear And bind me to the name of Jesus and I cast it out That there be a freedom to worship God tonight in holiness A freedom to worship God in holiness Hallelujah Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord We're going to sing blessed be the name of the Lord And before you go downstairs to be counseled if you're here for the first time We want to counsel with you personally Before we do I want the joy of Jesus to begin to rise in your heart Hallelujah We're going to sing blessed be the name And I'll tell you something If you can sing that And you say blessed be the name of the Lord You know it's flowing from the deeming of the Holy Spirit in your heart You can stand and look me right in the eye and say Brother Dave I don't want to run from Jesus I

love him with all my heart I'm not going to run from him I'm running to him Hallelujah And I came to him before I drew near to him But I drew near to him with that desire to hold on to myself I'm drawing near to him now with the desire to let go of him When you've got that desire to let go He then will come That's what it means to stand close to Jesus And he'll bring it about But you've got to stand close to Jesus with a hatred for your sin Hallelujah He'll do the rest Glory to God Blessed be the name of your church Let's sing it Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed

be the name of the Lord There's power in the name Power in the name There's power in the name of the Lord There's power in the name Power in the name There's power in the name of the Lord Oh, blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the name Blessed be the name Blessed be the name of the Lord There's victory in the name Victory in the name Victory in the name of the Lord Victory in the name Victory in the name Victory in the name of the Lord This is the conclusion of the tape

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/16/SID16944.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-wilkerson/are-you-developing-a-hard-heart/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net