

Hebrews 3:3:7-19

by Don McClure

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hearing the Holy Spirit and avoiding hardening our hearts in order to be a partaker of Christ and experience spiritual growth.

Duration: 39:12

Scripture: Hebrews 3:7-10, Hebrews 3:12-13, Hebrews 3:15-16

Topics: "Gods Rest", "Faith And Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of entering into God's rest. They explain that it is not enough to simply admire or acknowledge God's power and revelation, but rather to actively participate in it. The speaker encourages listeners to face their battles and struggles with confidence, knowing that God's power is sufficient. They also highlight the responsibility of believers to respond to God's invitation to be partakers of Christ and to not harden their hearts. The sermon draws inspiration from the book of Hebrews and references the story of the spies in the Old Testament.

Transcript

Today, though, Hebrews chapter 3 in verse 7 is where we'll pick it up. Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit saith today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation in the day of the temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart, they have not known my ways.

So I swore in my wrath, they will not enter into my rest. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

For we are made partakers of Christ, and we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. While it is said today, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke, albeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? To whom swear he that they should not enter into his rest, but them that believe not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Father, we thank you now for your word, and we ask that as we look to it, that you would minister to us, Lord, that there wouldn't be any of us with this evil heart of unbelief. Lord, that our life wouldn't just be as a

carcass just spread all over, dying in the wilderness. Rather, Lord, we would find that rest, that entering into that place, Lord, of being a wonderful partaker of Christ, and all of your power and your love and your work, your ministry, Lord.

We thank you for your word, and we ask that you would show us and teach us, instruct us, Lord. Perhaps if today we find our heart and our life in the wilderness, how do we find that rest? Teach us. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, the book of Hebrews, one of the things that I love about the way it's kind of structured is it has kind of some wonderful teaching, wonderful doctrinal aspects, fundamental ways in which it just lays out the identity of God in many of his attributes, of his power, of his genius, of his glory, of his majesty. Some of the verses, you just get into them, and that you just almost have to just stand back and almost in awe of who the Lord is himself.

Hebrews does this, I think, as wonderfully as probably almost any book in all the Bible. But it is also a book that it goes back and forth between those types of pictures, revelations of God on how that he is the fulfillment of all of these wonderful pictures given to us in the Old Testament, how he completes them, he fulfills them, and we are to take that in and to study it, to consider it and contemplate it as we ought to be doing. But then it has these little spaces to where now it stops and it exhorts us to enter into it.

It doesn't just simply say, now, isn't that a nice picture? Isn't that a wonderful story? Isn't that a great revelation? What do you think about it? But then it turns around and it talks to us about our responsibility to actually act upon it, to do something about it. God just didn't come to just want to just draw a wonderful picture and show all this great power and glory and majesty to a weak, pathetic, anemic human being such as you and me, and then just say, you know, well, now we'll go on to something else and leave me as I am. No, rather than that, he shows me these things that then it may move something within my heart that I'll be drawn into it.

For here is the writer of Hebrews tells us here in verse 14, he says, For we are made partakers of Christ. The whole purpose of the book of Hebrews is not just simply to tell me who Christ is, to tell me what Jesus has done, the work that he has accomplished, to reveal his glory and his magnificence and the grandeur of his being. But then after that revelation of who he is, now it has many wonderful exhortations to say, now this is for you to enter into, to be a partaker of.

And what it means that that word partaker, it means a participant, a sharer, an associate, a full partner. Here the Bible tells us after it shows us Jesus Christ in his greatness, in his strength and his power, if he now he turns, he says, by the way, are you aware you're a full partner of this? You are to be a partaker of this. You are are a fellow.

You're an associate. You're a sharer. You are to be a participant in who he is.

And the wonderful thing there is having believed in Christ, the moment I come to him positionally, I am that. From God's perspective, it's just like perhaps the moment that you, you know, had a child. That child became your heir.

You know, maybe they didn't know their name yet. It took them a couple of years to figure that out maybe. They didn't know who you were.

Took time. They didn't know how to walk or talk and they didn't know anything particularly. But with time, they didn't really have any more when they were five years old or ten years old or twenty or thirty or forty than they did the moment they were born.

They were your heir then. And so also with the Christian, the moment that you and I come into a believing faith in Christ, we are a partaker of this positionally. It is all ours.

But the whole process of the Christian life of growth, of maturity is how do I now become a partaker of it, entering into sharing in it, experiencing it, making my experience, my activity or my position, my experience and my activity of life. That's what God wants. And I hope it's something that every one of us want as well.

And here he wants to tell us as he exhorts us to into this experience and knowing that I am a partaker. Now he wants to tell us here in these verses, not only that he wants to see it happen, but he also tells us, I believe, simply and wonderfully how. One thing to want to tell me I'm an heir, but then how? To tell me I've got all of his riches in heaven and glory are mine.

How? Fill me in on this. And how do I enter into this? Well, here he tells us in verse seven, he says, Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit saith unto us today, if you will hear his voice, hard not your hearts as in the provocation in the day of the temptation, the wilderness, he said, when your father's tempted me, prove me here. He looks and he says, the first thing that he says, if you want to be a partaker is that you are to hear today, as the Holy Spirit would say today, hear his voice and as he would speak to us.

And the wonderful thing he also says down in verse 15, while it is said today, if you will hear his voice, hard not your hearts. And in verse 16, it says, For some, when they heard, they provoked, they heard, but they didn't really listen in a sense. And God wants us, I believe, to hear, number one, to hear the spirit, the key to ever being a partaker of Christ, to ever, ever entering into anything at all, the most fundamental, the most basic attribute of a Christian who has entered into rest, to a Christian who is a partaker of Christ, a Christian who is experiencing his strength and his glory and his being, the very first and simplest and most fundamental of all of the qualities is that there's somebody there that their heart is open to hear the spirit of God, that they want to hear him.

They want to have that communion, that fellowship with the spirit of God. Simply speaking, the Bible reveals to us the Holy Spirit essentially today for you and me. He is the one with whom we have to do, you might say.

No man comes to Christ, the Bible says, lest the spirit draws him. You're a Christian today. You're a Christian because the Holy Spirit drew you to Christ.

Wasn't that preacher or this person or that or somebody else? It was the spirit of God maybe using that book, using that radio or TV program, using, you know, that church service you were at or that service you were hearing. He may have been using that, but it was the Holy Spirit calling you, drawing you to Christ. The Bible says no man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.

Now that's just audibly making, you know, the verbiage of it. Nobody can know the Lordship of Christ, experience the Lordship of Christ, but by the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one, essentially, Jesus said, all that the Father has is mine, all mine is thine, and the Holy Spirit, he will take of mine and show it and give it to you.

The Holy Spirit, essentially, he is the one through whom I offer my humanity to God's deity and the one through whom God offers his deity to my humanity. If I'm to become the partaker of Christ, I've got to be somebody that I'm a partaker or a hearer of the Holy Spirit to open up, not just simply, well, I heard him once when I came to Christ, I heard him calling. You know, he not only calls, another way you might know, if you want to know if you ever hear the Holy Spirit, do you ever feel like you've sinned? The Bible says that the Holy Spirit, Jesus said about the Holy Spirit, when he comes, he will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

The Holy Spirit, he comes along that if you have any realization within, you know what is wrong, you know what is right, and you know the consequences of it, that's what Jesus said. Holy Spirit, when he comes, he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The Holy Spirit, he will come and he'll tell your heart, this is wrong, this is how it's made right, and this is the consequences, the judgment that'll happen.

The judgment will be, you know, wonderful in Christ eternally if you come to him, that your judgment, if you don't turn to him and respond to him, will be terrible. But the wonderful thing is, is that if you ever even have a conviction, there's the Holy Spirit speaking to you, and the Bible says hear him, hear what he says, but don't provoke him. When he says something, say no, I don't want to do it, I don't want to listen, I don't want to go your way.

But the wonderful thing is when somebody just determines within their heart, Lord, I want to learn how do I hear, and how do I respond without provoking God. But when you, the Holy Spirit, speaks to me, then I begin to do and I begin to respond. Paul says, be not drunk on wine where it's in excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

I'm not only simply even to hear the Spirit, God wants me to aggressively, longingly desire that my life would be filled with the Holy Spirit. Luke 4-1 tells us, and Jesus being filled with the Holy Spirit was led by the Spirit in the wilderness where he was tempted to the devil for 40 days. But here we have Jesus filled with the Holy Spirit and then led by the Spirit.

How we ought to be, Lord, I want to hear, I want to be filled, I want to be led by your Holy Spirit. Paul writes in Galatians 5-16, he says, this I say, then walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Here Paul looks there and he says, you know, all the wonderful things about to hear, to be filled, you know, to be led by the Spirit, to want to find myself walking in the Spirit.

He says, if you walk in the Spirit, just with that dimension of your life, Lord, I want as I go home, as I walk out of here today, as I go to work tomorrow, I want to go in there, you know, filled, led, hearing, responding to the Holy Spirit, just walking in a sense of your presence and of your life. In Galatians 5, Paul says, live in the Spirit. He says, if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

If I have, if God has given me a spiritual life, if He's given me a life in the Spirit, Paul says, doesn't it make sense that we ought to want to walk in it? To know that I'm a spiritual being, to know that God has given me, and I've been born of His Holy Spirit. How we ought to be ones that long to walk, to be filled, to have, you know, that strength and that power. And then Paul in Romans 8-13, he says, if you live after the flesh, you shall die, but if you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you live.

Here Paul says, the ability to overcome our own carnal nature, our own weaknesses of our own flesh, our own trials, our own temptations, it is going to be by the power of the Holy Spirit that we'll mortify the deeds

of the flesh, that we will discover this wonderful spiritual life. And Jesus said, you'll receive power, after which the Holy Spirit has come upon you. The wonderful thing is that when we look in the Bible and we realize, the very first thing, if I want to know how to be a partaker of Christ, then Jesus says, you know, be filled with my Spirit, live in my Spirit, walk in my Spirit, hear my Spirit, respond to my Spirit.

May I ask you today, are you hearing Him? Is there that sense within you or in your life that says, Lord, I want to hear and I want to live and I want to walk. I want to know your power. I want to enter into being a full partaker of Christ.

I want to have a full partnership. I want to be a full associate in every way I possibly can. John 10, Jesus said, a thief comes but for to rob and to steal and to kill and destroy.

I've come that you might have life. You might have it more abundantly. Here the Lord, He looks at us and He says, I want to give you a Spirit hearing life, a Spirit filled life, a Spirit led life, a Spirit empowered life, a Spirit, you know, empowered marriage, a Spirit empowered home, a Spirit empowered career, something there where there's a man or a woman and who they are day by day.

The power of God is literally going with them. The thought of realizing that God is looking at you and me today and He says, not only I have this life and this power available to you. Here in this text, He is exhorting us to say, by the way, don't go to work without it.

Is it the American Express card or one of them says, don't go somewhere without it. I don't know what it is now, you know, but home, don't go home, don't go home. Oh, don't leave home without it.

Thank you very much. That's the one that somebody will get a song about probably right there. But anyway, don't leave home.

I just put my wife on a plane this morning. She left home. She'll have a great few days.

But we don't have one. So anyway, poor thing. She has her ways.

But anyway, but on how do we, in a sense of don't leave home without, you know, the spirit, we ought to have that within us to think, Lord, don't don't send me home. Don't send me into my marriage. Don't send me to my family.

Don't send me into my job without somebody there that I don't send me there without the resources of your love, of your power, of your strength, of your genius, that I might be a full partaker. I mean, what a wonderful not only offer, but to realize here the Lord exhorts us. He says, by the way, you must have this.

It just isn't some sort of an extra added plus for those that really want to be strong Christians. That ought to really want to be right on, that ought to want to be dynamic. He says this is just fundamental for every child of God that wants to be a partaker of Christ at all.

So it begins here with hearing, but then it goes on. And then he tells us in verse 80, he says, Harden not your heart, he says, in the provocation of the day, the temptation of the wilderness, your father's tempted me, proved me, saw my works for 40 years. And you know, wherefore I was grieved at that generation.

Here is something that is the Lord looks now. Secondly, he says, not only do I want you to hear the spirit, but secondly, he says, I want to tell you, you've got to consciously be somebody that you are determined not only to hear the spirit, but to harden not your heart. Harden not your heart.

Here it is something that God looks at the children of Israel. And of course, you know that if somebody wants to be, you know, hopefully a partaker of Christ, I want to be a share. I want to be a full associate, a full partner with him in his glory.

Then God, you know, he says, hear my voice. And then secondly, you will be tempted. You will have times where you will be tried and you will be tempted to provoke God or to harden your heart.

There will be those times that will become upon your life, just like they did for the children of Israel, where there they got out and on one hand, so thrilled with God, they even when they left Egypt and they got out there and Moses took him out and said, this is how we're going to live. And he laid him out. Initially, they all the entire congregation of Israel says this.

We will say in this. We will do. We will follow him.

They all responded wholeheartedly. We are going to say and we are going to do whatever it is God wants. And of course, I suppose that's in the heart of every Christian.

We ought to long for that. We all know those times. But yet what happens? Why is it that we don't do those things? Why didn't the children of Israel? That's our illustration here that the Bible gives to us.

And here you see the children of Israel. They spent some 40 years out there in the wilderness watching God. And there is they watched him.

Here the Lord says he's where I was grieved at that generation. Here is he looked at him, you know, and he says, your father's. He says there for 40 years, they tempted me, proved me, and they saw my works for 40 years.

God said, what an amazing thing to think of somebody for 40 years, knowing full well that unbelievable power of God had seen it like nobody else. Probably before or since almost for 40 years, they saw his work. They saw his plagues as they were brought, you know, upon Egypt.

They all saw it. They all realized what was, you know, something there, an unbelievable power was being unleashed upon the planet. They saw there is the river turned to blood.

They saw as Moses went before the Red Sea and stretched out his rod and it opened. They saw when they walked through on dry ground through the midst of a river. They saw the river as it was closed upon Pharaoh and his army.

They saw there is the manna. It came out of heaven day by day to meet their needs. They saw the pillar of fire that warmed them by night.

They saw the cloud that covered them from the noonday heat and led them through the wilderness. They saw the water that came out of the rock. They saw the quail that came out of the sky.

They saw their enemies destroyed. They were somebody that their testimony could, you know, was one there that as God utterly destroyed their enemies. They saw a power unknown to man.

They saw there is the children of Israel and by, you know, they destroyed Sihon, the king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan. Later on, when the children of Israel finally did go into the land and the spies ran into Rahab in Jericho, perhaps you remember the story, there's some spies came in, now finally when

the children of Israel under Joshua, they're in the land, they're entering into it. And they've sent some spies to go to, you know, check out how to, you know, they wanted to go and approach Jericho to take that battle.

And there they found, you know, as they found this woman Rahab in town and she hid the spies. But there when she is talking to these spies that have come in, they're now going to take the land. Listen to this, the harlot woman in Jericho, this is what she has to say.

She's been living there her whole life. She said here unto the men, the spies, I know that the Lord has given you the land and that your terror is fallen upon us and that all the inhabitants of the land, they faint because of you. For we have heard how the God dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt and what you did under the two kings of the Amorites that were on the other side of Jordan, Shihon and Og, whom he utterly destroyed.

And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you. For the Lord, your God, he is God in heaven above and in earth beneath. Here the children of Israel, they spent 40 years afraid to go into the promised land.

Afraid to go conquer it. Afraid that for 40 years they saw God's power, they experienced it, and even the world, Jericho, they looked and they saw this and they knew the children of Israel were coming to their land. They knew that they were destined to have it.

They knew that God had promised it to them and they knew they didn't stand a chance themselves against God, even though the children of Israel looked at them. And it's terrible because when the children of Israel sent in earlier on at the beginning of the 40 years, when they were out there, they were afraid to go in, even though God said it's a land flowing with milk and honey, I'll give you houses you didn't build, cities you didn't build, olive years you didn't plant, wheat fields you didn't plow, houses you didn't build, wells you didn't dig, I'll give it all to you, I'll destroy everybody around you. And he says, I am going to bring you into a land where the enemies are great here and mightier than you are, to destroy them.

Here God told the children of Israel, you go on into this land, yes they're greater and yes they're mightier, well they sent in the spies. First set of spies, 40 years earlier, when the spies came back 40 years earlier, it says in Numbers 13, but the men that went up, they said we are not able to go against these people for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report unto the land that they had searched, about the land that they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying the land through which we have gone to search.

It is a land that eats up its inhabitants thereof, and all the people that we saw, they are men of great stature. And there we saw the giants, the son of Anak, of which some are giants, and we in our own sight we were as grasshoppers, as we stood in their sight. And all the congregation lifted up their voices, and they cried, and the people wept that night.

And all the children of Israel, they murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and the whole congregation said unto them, would to God that we had died in Egypt, that we had died in this wilderness, and wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey, were it not better for us that we should just return to Egypt? And they said to one another, let us make a captain, and let us return to Egypt. Here they are out there, and they hear, go on into this land, they look over Jordan, they send some spies in. The spies come back and say they are

huge, there are giants in the land, oh it is a land flowing with milk and honey, they come back with grapes, they come back with all this is so rich and so wonderful, but there is one problem.

We can't take it, they are bigger than we are, they are huge, they will destroy us, we have no ability. And here the next thing you know they provoke God, their God, he told them before they even saw it, before they even sent their spies, by the way I am sending you unto a land that they are greater and mightier than thou art, to give thee their land for an inheritance as it is this day. God says, yes, you have no ability yourself to conquer it, but that is the secret of hearing my voice, I will give it to you, trust me.

Now you go, and they said no, but yet for forty years, manna every day, pillar of fire by night, cloud by day, quail out of the sky, enemies destroyed, and here all that they did was they provoked God as God continuously showed a power that was unbelievable, a power that you would think next to those enemies they would say, hey wait a minute, one day they would put it together and say, look at all of this power that sustains us every day, that miraculously preserves and cares, will it not be sufficient for when we get into the land to take care of the enemies, and they never correlated the two, and they lived in unbelief, they found themselves staying out of the land, and they provoked God, here was something that they pushed him and pushed him and pushed him, and God says I have shown you my power, my presence, my works, like no one has ever seen for forty years, and you still won't believe me. But let me ask you, is this not true with you and me? Is this not our struggle exactly the same as well? Which one of us here as a Christian has not seen the saving power of Christ on the cross, the river that he has opened for us into eternity to be in heaven with God forever and ever through his suffering on the cross, dying for me, what power, rising from the dead, sending his Holy Spirit into me, bearing witness with my spirit that I am a child of God and of his child and heir, heir of God and joint heir with Christ? If you're a Christian, you know this, because the Holy Spirit tells you. You've seen his power.

How many battles has he fought for you and enemies has he already destroyed in your life to bring you as far as you are, to sustain you? How many times is there not the pillar of fire by night, the cloud by day? His presence, his blessing, his provision that you and I know only too well comes from his power. We see it as well as they ever saw it themselves. And yet, amazingly, I can be as a Christian today, I can live in the wilderness side of life.

I can be somebody that I don't really hear his voice, and then when the trial comes, I harden my heart. When God brings me to Jordan River and he says, go on into the land, go on the other side, and we look over on Jordan and our enemies or our giants is our unloving marriage. The enemy, the battle we have on the other side of Jordan, it's our family, it's our children.

It's maybe our health. We look over there, our career, our job, our finances. And we look over there and God says, trust me, I will meet your needs, I will fill you, I'll care for you.

Don't harden your heart. You know, I'm just staying right here. I sent some spies over into that marriage once and she's, she's a child of Annick, I tell you.

She's, she's got giant genes, you know, or something in her DNA. I'm no, I can't handle it. I don't have the resources to know how to love.

I can't handle these children. Powerless. And aren't we all? You know, all of these things.

When we look there and realize my career or, you know, my, whatever it may be, my health, my finances, and God looks over there and he says, trust me, rejoice in me, rest in me, and don't harden your heart. Don't say, no, it can't be so for me. That you can work within my heart and work within my life.

You see, it's through these very trials, these very temptations. The children of Israel, when they were away from the borders of Canaan, when they were away from Jordan, on one hand, they could love God and rejoice. They just stayed in the wilderness.

They could say, oh, he's great, he's wonderful, I love him. But then when the real trials came, they backed off and said, not me. I can't do that.

I can't go there. But we don't realize so often it's those very trials and these very temptations that came into their life that stopped them from being a partaker. God wanted them to be a partaker of his power, but you've got to, but their God, in order for them to really enjoy his power and experience his power, he had to give them a trial that required his power.

And they were afraid. They hardened their hearts. What if it didn't come? That's what happened.

Friday morning, morning and evening, it's a wonderful devotional by Charles Spurgeon. The one for just this last Friday morning was out of Job 10.2, where Job, speaking to God, he says, show me wherefore thou contendest with me. Here, Job, he finds himself there.

God, why am I seemingly contending with you? What's this contest going on somehow or another? I realize in all of these trials and all these struggles that are going on out there in the battles of life, it's really you and me that's contending, isn't it, God? And Job there, he looked at all of this. He says, this out here, it's just like, this is just some silly little game there that you put me through, some trial, some testing to contend with who you are. What's it all about? Great question, isn't it? Spurgeon's comment on this, the devotional, he says, perhaps, O tried soul, the Lord is doing this to develop thy graces.

There are some of thy graces which would never be discovered if it were not for thy trials. Dost thou not know that thy faith never looks so grand in summer weather as it does in winter? Love is too often like a glow worm, showing little in the light except it be in the midst of surrounding darkness. Hope itself is like a star, not to be seen in the sunshine of prosperity but only to be discovered in the night of adversity.

Afflictions are often the black foils in which God doth send His jewels of His children's graces to make them shine the better. It was a little while ago that thou wast on thy knees and was saying, Lord, I fear I have no faith. Let me know that I have faith.

Was not this really perhaps unconsciously praying for trials? How can thou know that thou hast faith until faith is exercised? Depend upon it. God often sends us trials that our graces may be discovered and that we may be certified of their existence. You see, here, you know, God with the children of Israel, He wanted them to be a full partaker of Christ and He says, Here, I'm going to give you, you know, enemies, battles that are bigger than you, that you require Me.

And yes, you will contend with Me. You will find yourself there on your knees crying out, God, I can't go into the land without you. You will have to hold Me and carry Me and strengthen Me every step of the way.

And God says, Yes. That's how your faith will be discovered. That's how you'll enter in.

Trials make the promise sweet. Trials give new life to prayer. Trials bring Me to His feet, lay Me low and keep Me there.

You see, if I'm finding that I'm somebody, if I really want to be a partaker of Christ, well, I need to hear His voice, harden up my heart. And then the next thing, He goes on. Now He wants me to literally head off into His ways.

For here the Lord, He tells them in verse 10, He says, Wherefore, I said, I was grieved with that generation. I said, Did they always err in the heart? They have not known My ways. Here, they have not known My pathways.

They have not known the ways of God. One of the things that happens is somebody is going to be a partaker of Christ. One of the, God has this way.

First of all, He says, Hear My, hear My Spirit. Harden not your heart. And He says, Now head off in My ways.

To understand this, in Psalm 137, it says, He made known His ways unto Moses and His acts unto the children of Israel. One of the things about the children of Israel is they all knew the acts of God. You could ask any one of the children of Israel, a couple of million of them, about the acts of God, what it was.

They could all tell you about the plagues. Oh yeah, they were something. They could tell you about the Red Sea.

You wouldn't believe what it was. You open it, we'd walk through, dry. Here it's all held back in a heap.

Looking at this, just held the water, held against us. We walked through as in a tunnel, through the Red Sea. Unbelievable manna every day.

Pillar of fire at night. Cloud by day. Quail to feed us.

Destroyed armies. God did this and God did this. Their testimony could be unbelievable of the acts of God.

But if you would have turned to any one of them and say, Now, why did He do it? What are His ways? What was He up to? What was He thinking? What were His processes within this? Why? Who is He? What is He trying to accomplish in your life through all of these things? They would have sat there and said, Got me. But boy, it was something. It was something.

I'm going to write a book on it, I am. I was there. I was an eyewitness.

They knew the acts of God. Moses knew His ways. And here God told the children of Israel the sad thing about you.

He says, They always err in their heart. They have not known My ways. They did not become a real partaker of My heart and My life, My passion, My being, who I am, a sharer, a full partaker of who it is, the opportunity to discover why I love them, why I'm caring, why I'm so caring and empowering, what I'm up to within it.

I think that one of the most wonderful things about being a child of God is not just the inheritance to land. It isn't just going on the other side of Jordan and all of a sudden God's blessing you and He's doing

wonderful things. And there's houses you didn't build and wells you didn't dig and vineyards you didn't plant and blessings all around.

And to look there and say, Is this wild or what? But more than all of that is that through life somebody becomes a partaker of the ways of God. They find themselves as they sit on the front porch and maybe they see the blessings of God and then they know and they rest in all that He is and all that He has done and how wonderful He is to them. More than all of that they say, You know, the greater riches of it all is I know His ways.

I know His heart. I know what I seem to mean to Him. I've discovered something about His presence and of His life and a dynamic about Him.

I never would have known had I not been frightened at Jordan and tried to wonder about the other side if I hadn't contended with Him. If I hadn't had these trials, if I hadn't had these struggles, if I hadn't had these heartbreaking times, if I didn't have that loveless marriage, if I didn't have this crisis in the home, if I didn't know these things, I never would have known His ways. And here as the writer of Hebrews, he said, Would you want to be a partaker of Christ? A full sharer in His glory and His might and His majesty and His goodness? Somebody that is really drawn into all that it is.

Hear His voice. Harden not your hearts in your trials, in your struggle that you're in now. Don't harden it.

Find yourself, Okay, Lord, you want to go across. You want to go over? I'm scared to death. God says, Fine.

I'm not. I'll be with you always until the end of the age. Let's go.

Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. And then lastly, He then wants us to not only hear the voice of the Spirit, to harden not our heart and head on into His ways, but He wants us to heal others. He says in verse 13, He says, But exhort one another daily, while it is called a day, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, departing from the Lord.

Hear Paul, or the writer of Hebrews. He now looks at somebody there that has understood any of these things, that has entered in. Somebody at all there that is a partaker of Christ.

He now turns to that person. He says, Listen here. You've got a job.

I want you with your life to be somebody that you exhort one another daily, while it is called a day. While you've got the day now. While you've got the time now.

While you've got the opportunity now. Encourage. That's what the word exhort means.

We think of exhort like somebody sticking their finger in your face. You better, you better, you, you, you, you. You know, or one of those.

The word exhort, it's actually the word where we get the comforter from. The Holy Spirit who comforts. The word comfort at all, it could be comfort one another just as easy as exhort one another.

It means to encourage one another, to build up one another. And here there is something there. It simply looks there.

As somebody says, If you have learned to hear His voice, to harden out your heart, to head into His ways, now I want you to turn and heal others. There's no such thing as a Christian. I'll tell you, every one of us knows what it is to stand at Jordan's shores and to look at the other side of what trial or what struggle or what burden or what heartache or what hopeless thing there is or what enemy over there.

Which one of us doesn't fully understand that? And what is needed so often there is that somebody that has found a way to the other side, somebody that has found the strength and the presence and the power and knows He's there and knows that He will bless and know that He can lead you through anything. He says, Now you come over and you help those that stand on the shore with their home and their life and their walk. Today if you'll hear His voice, harden out your heart, that you now come and exhort one another daily.

Well, it is called today. So soon this life will have passed. And our opportunity to look to people and to encourage them and to build them up.

Won't need them in heaven. Won't need encouragers in heaven. You all need encouragement.

We'll be on the other side fully, every one of us. There won't be anybody that's timid or fearful. But how many of us would maybe look at it back and say, I wish I had been there for you when you needed me.

I wish I had taken the time to pray for you and encourage you. I saw you there standing on the banks of Jordan from the wilderness side and you were overcome with fear. You looked at your home and you thought you couldn't get it.

You got to a place where you were hopeless with this and that and you were giving up. I should have come, prayed for you, talked to you, encouraged you. This is what the body of Christ is all about.

And this is what partakers of Christ are all about. That when we find ourselves in life, we realize God looks and He says, you may be a partaker of me. There's no life like this, is there? And nothing so wonderful.

I look at this sadly so often I see people that live in the wilderness. They can have a lot. They can do a lot.

You know, they can experience a lot. But I also know there is nothing in all the world like entering into His rest. Like some of where we have ceased from our own labors, we'll look at this next week in chapter four.

But where we begin to discover what it is to rest in Him, to know His power, to know His sufficiency, to be able to look at any enemy, any battle, straight in the eye. So give it your best shot. And then we'll let the Lord give His best shot.

See what He does. Oh, today, today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart. Today perhaps some of you, there's a battle, there's a struggle, there's a heartache.

It stands before you as big as a giant and you're like a grasshopper before it. Just, you know, a giant. You know what a picture they had.

They said, we're like grasshoppers before giants. Not a fair battle. It's to come up and just step on it.

And the Lord says, you got that right. You are like a grasshopper. But I'm not.

That's why one day you'll love me so much. Because I gave you the land. I gave you my power.

Day by day you learned to need me. You knew what it was when the trials came. Instead of hardening your heart again and again and again and again, one day you said, soften my heart.

Isn't there a chorus, soften my heart? So let's pray. Lord, how we thank You for Your love for us. And Lord, I just pray today just as a body, as the fellowship of partakers in Jesus Christ, Lord, as we come today, Lord, as partakers, we want to not just hear how to be a partaker, but Lord, help us know how to heed You and not harden our heart.

Perhaps some of us right now, there's a battle in our life. There's a struggle. And Lord, we just look and we are just like the children of Israel.

We're just like the spies who said, You don't understand. I have seen it. And Lord, You look at us and say, Have you seen me? The only difference between Joshua and Caleb who had the good report and the ten who had the evil report was Joshua and Caleb said, Yes, all of that is true.

But one thing they didn't see that we did. We saw the Lord. And He is able to deliver us.

Lord, may we be ones that we see You because we are determined to be partakers. Lord, help, I just pray right now for the heart that just may be crying out, the one that just needs, Lord, Your Spirit to come and to whisper and to comfort, to encourage, to say, I will give it to You. Trust me.

I died on the cross. You've seen my works for many years. Don't harden your heart.

I want You to learn my ways even through this trial. Teach us these things, Father. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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