

# Are Your Hearts Still Hard

by Randy Krahn

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**Scripture:** Matthew 15:21, 1 Corinthians 4:14, Ephesians 4:11, Galatians 6:2, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Mark 7:24, Hebrews 12:5, Matthew 9:36, 1 Corinthians 3:6

**Topics:** "Discerning Heart", "Compassionate Care"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Jesus, encourage us by your spirit. I pray, Father, that you would quicken your word to us. Help us to receive your word with meekness, Lord, that it might grow and produce fruit in our life.

In Jesus' name, amen. I was reading this morning briefly about Jesus sharing with his disciples, and he exhorted them, and he said to them, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. And they weren't really understanding what Jesus was saying and seemed to frustrate Jesus.

And he made a comment to them, and he said, are your hearts still hard? You don't understand what I'm saying to you. You're just thinking naturally. And a lot of us, we lack discernment.

The Holy Spirit is speaking. We're hearing messages, a lot of messages, but we're not really hearing what the Spirit is saying. And the reason is because our hearts are still hard.

There's a problem with our hearts. And what we can say about the disciples is they were very exceedingly zealous. And then after a bit, then they understood that he wasn't talking to them about bread, but he was speaking to them about hypocrisy.

He was speaking to them about these kinds of things. And so it's important for us to understand the things of the Spirit, because the Spirit gives life, and the flesh doesn't profit anything. And some people

understand different ways.

I have nine children, and they all understand different ways. Some of them are very gentle, and some of them are very tough. And they understand love differently.

In the same way in a church, people understand love differently. You know, some people understand love if you spend time with them. Other people understand love is if you give them gifts.

The scripture says that God loves us if he disciplines us and corrects us. But some of us, when we get a message of correction or exhortation, we don't think it is love. We say, oh, here the guy goes again, beating me up.

But it's because we lack discernment, and we lack understanding on what is safe and what is good. I've seen the children and the little ones, they get into things, and they open up the cabinets, and they're going for things that are poisonous. And a mother is constantly between all the tasks, keeping one eye on those little ones.

Because soon they're getting into things that can cause them harm. And exhortation has to come. However it is, exhortation has to come.

Because it's important, yes, to take away the harmful things and put them higher or put them away. But in life, harmful things come to us. And we have to come to discern between what is good and what is bad.

What is good food and what is bad food. What is not food, what is poisonous. And Paul, when he's sharing with the churches, he went different places, he preached the gospel, he preached repentance.

And then the people responded, and many got born again. But not only did they get born again, they had need of teaching, of training. And a lot of times people go from town to town and have crusades.

But what happens to the people? Well, just join a local church. Well, how do you know what they're feeding in that church? What if they're feeding bleach there? Oh, bleach is good. You can clean a lot of things with bleach.

But not to be ingested. Legalism is going to kill you. You might think that you're cleaning up the person with bleach, but you're going to kill them if you can feed them only with bleach.

It's profitable for certain things, but not... Paul would set up places, little fellowships, and he would appoint elders in every city where he would go. People who had a good character, who were mature in the faith, and he would have a desire to see them grow spiritually. Can you imagine? I mean, we're all about family here, and children, and you don't take care of those children.

You don't nurture them and train them and teach them the ways of the Lord. How many people you know that go around from town to town and have children, and then they leave, and they leave children behind? What do you think about people like that? Within a church, there's many gifts, a diversity of gifts, but there's also a need for pastors and shepherds, and for teachers and instructors. And Paul didn't just run to a town and talk about how many people came to Christ, and then run off to another town and never mind them.

He had a father's heart. He had a mother's heart. You say, well, how could he have a mother's heart and a father's heart? Because God has a father's heart, and also he has a mother's heart, because he created

both male and female.

He understands both. We look in 2 Thessalonians, the church that Paul planted. In verse 1, he says, for you yourselves know, brethren, that our coming to you was not in vain.

And even after we had suffered before and were spitefully treated at Philippi, as you know, we were bold in our God to speak with you the gospel of God in much conflict. It's important that we have confidence in our secret life, that we have confidence before God, so that when we share the gospel, the good news, the hope of Jesus with people, we can be bold. It says, the wicked flees when no one pursues them.

They get anxious and they run. People who are practicing sin, they don't have confidence. They hide in darkness.

I remember a time in my life, I didn't want to be around where the gospel was preached. It was convicting. I felt judged.

And rightly so, because Jesus says, I don't condemn you, you have that which condemns you. That's what judges you, it's my word. God's word judges us.

On the last day, it's by our words we'll be justified, and by our words we'll be condemned, we'll be judged by what God says. There's no partiality. Oh, well, you're a really good person.

You're a really bad person. We're judged according to what the scripture says. The word is the dividing line.

You have that which judges you, my word. And Paul here is saying how they were there preaching the gospel with boldness and much conflict. Our exhortation did not come with nor was it in deceit, verse 4. But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as man-pleasers, but God who tests our hearts.

For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness, saying things that we might get advantage from you or get a nice offering from you when we pass the hat or the plate. We didn't tickle your ears with words that you wanted to hear so that we got a bigger offering. God is our witness.

Nor did we seek glory from men. We didn't speak to try to have men praise us about how wonderful eloquent speakers we were, or how we just really spoke wonderful words that tickle men's ears. We weren't looking for glory from men, neither from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ.

Look at verse 7. But we were gentle among you as a nursing mother cherishes her own children, so affectionately longing for you. We were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you have become so dear to us. Here we see the people of God in Thessalonica, the church of Thessalonians.

And Paul's saying we didn't come to candy coat or sugar coat the good news. We came to speak the truth in love. And we were gentle among you in our doing, because we really, really care for you.

We really, really love you. And that love that we have for you, it doesn't come of ourselves, it comes from God. Because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts.

We can't help but extend that love to you. Today being one of those holidays, national holidays called Mother's Day, we see a picture of Paul speaking about how gentle he was in the church, as a nursing mother is with an infant. I've never seen anyone disciplining a tiny infant that's doesn't know its right hand from its left.

Maybe there's small exhortation at different times, but so gentle, so nurturing. And if we want to see newborn agains come to become rooted and grounded in Christ, then we need to have this kind of mother nature. A mother will give her life for her children.

A good mother will. I've shared this in times past. I've seen with a big family, the mother go without eating to make sure the children have enough.

And then after things are tidy, clean up, and then to eat a few bites off the children's plate that have been left over. Not every time, but I've seen it. I've watched it.

That's a mother who loves her children. And we have to have this kind of nature. Yes, for men.

Yes, for women. But we have to have a nature of a mother, a caring nature, a gentle nature. It speaks of women to be honored as women who have a gentle and a quiet spirit.

These the Lord doesn't despise. Not to be outwardly adorned with gold or costly clothing or a boisterous nature. To draw attention to self.

But to be clothed with meekness and humility and gentleness. So all can see this is a woman who loves God. And not only that, but want to speak briefly about fathers.

And Paul goes on to say some things in Corinthians. I believe it's Corinthians. I don't know the exact place, but he says, though you may have 10,000 instructors in Christ.

You might have 10,000 people who could stand up at this pulpit and give a good word. You do not have many fathers. Now, Jesus says, don't let anyone call you father.

You have one father, even God. Well, when we call someone father as a title, you know, father, so-and-so, father, so-and-so, as the Catholics do, right? Just calling someone father for the sake of the name and principle alone. We don't want to honor people because they hold a title specifically, although the word does talk about that.

But it says, honor your father and mother that you might live long in the land. You can say, we'll call no one father, but my kids call me dad. My kids call my wife bum.

That's not what Jesus was speaking of. And there's a principle. If someone becomes born again through your testimony, and you labored long with them, and you had them in your home, and you fed them at your table, and you took care of them.

And when they were sick, you visited them. And when they got astray, you went and reached out your hand toward them, and you sought them out. You poured your life into them.

A father and mother make sacrifice continually for their children, as God even does for us, as he speaks of the father looking every day for the prodigal son. I called my daughter this week. I have one daughter that's not fellowshiping with us.

And I don't talk to her often, but I said, hey, I'm thinking about you. And I said, I want you to know that even though I don't talk to you often, I think about you every day, and I pray for you. A father is always concerned about the one that's going astray.

A father knows the state of his children. If they have the diarrhea, they know. If they're not eating, they're sick, they know.

The mother knows. The father knows. And same with our heavenly father, he knows if we're not right.

And he says, the father's heart would be to leave the 99 that have no need of repentance, and to seek for the one that has strayed. The one that has gone astray. Because Jesus said, I didn't come to call righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Jesus had a mother's heart. Jesus had the father's heart. He sought the one that was lost.

He said, I didn't come except to seek out the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he says in Matthew 15. He says, the healthy don't need a physician, but the sick. He came to bind the brokenhearted, to set at liberty those in prison houses, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of Jubilee.

But many were not willing. He said how he longed to gather the chicks, the little children of Israel, under his wings, as a hen would gather her little ones under her wings for protection, for warmth, and for safety. But they were not willing.

Brothers, sisters, we need to come to have this kind of nature, whether you're a mother, or whether you're a father, to have a heart for the people. Whether it be the people of God who are backslidden, or whether it be the people in the world who have no hope. Peter was sent to the Jews to minister the good news to the Jewish people, and God called Paul to be a minister unto the Gentiles, to reconcile and seek and save those that were lost.

And to take Jews and Gentiles and reconcile them in one new man in Christ. So he said there's neither Jew, nor Greek, nor slave, nor free, nor male, nor female, but one in Christ. To reconcile them in one body through Christ.

Through the death of the cross, but not only this, through the resurrection. 10,000 instructors in Christ, but not many fathers. Do you have a father's heart for the lost? I heard Brother Zack share something interesting.

He says if you are just a father or mother who takes care of your own children, you're no different than the little dogs and the cats. Because they take care of their own. He said it has to extend beyond that.

Not neglecting our own, but it has to extend to others. How can you love your neighbor as yourself if you're not interested in the well-being of others, rather than just seeking our own, me and mine? The love of God extends beyond just the family of God. He didn't just die just for the family of God.

He gave his life, it says, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. For a good man, someone might dare to die. But for an evil man, would anyone give his life? Jesus gave his life.

He was poured out Paul as a drink offering, going to places knowing that he was going to suffer. Why did he go? He said, the love of Christ compels me. I am a bond slave of Jesus Christ.

I've been bought with the blood of the lamb. I've been bought with a price. I'm not my own.

I cannot help but give myself a ransom for the Lord Jesus Christ because he gave himself a ransom for me. To know the love of God would surpass his knowledge. To know the depth and the height and the breadth of the love of God.

We sing this song, the love of God. If the sky could contain the parchment of all those things written about the love of God, or the ocean, the ocean deep, to know the love of God which surpasses what's in our heads. You know what? I don't know, but pretty much all my children have hurt me in one way or another as a father.

I still love them and how much more God loves us. I discipline my children as best I know how, but God disciplines us perfectly. The discipline of God is a key part of knowing the love of God.

He said, if you are not a son without discipline, then you're in trouble because God disciplines them that he loves and he scourges every son he receives. If we don't discipline and correct our children, we don't love them. You're spoiling them.

And if you are head of a church and you don't discipline and correct the people in your church, you don't love them. You're spoiling them. You ruined them.

10,000 instructors in Christ but not many fathers. Look at the ratio there. 10,000 people who know the word of God but don't have a heart after God.

10,000 people who can quote scripture, who can find passages, who can teach on all kinds of topics but don't have a heart for God. They don't have the heart of God. They don't have a burden for the lost.

I was listening to a message long ago from David Wilkerson. He got a call from the wife of one Leonard Ravenhill. And the wife called and said, David, you got to come down here.

Leonard is in prayer. And he's locked himself in his room and he's weeping. And he's wailing violently.

And I'm concerned he's going to die of a broken heart. And David came and he knocked on the door and he wanted to talk to Leonard Ravenhill. And they sat and they spoke.

And he said, David said to him, Leonard, this is not your burden. You have a burden for things that is God's burden. You have to lay your burden on the Lord.

Leonard said, David, you don't understand now. But one day you will. And David went on to share in his message and he says, now I understand the burden of lost people.

The burden of lost children. The burden of lost family. The burden of the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

The burden of the lost pagans. That God would share his burden with us. Are you able to share the burden? Can God share his burden with you? Are you able to bear one another's burdens and fulfill this law of Christ? In Matthew 15, in verse 21, Jesus had just finished being with his disciples.

They were eating food with unwashed hands and the Pharisees were finding fault. It's easy to find fault if you're looking to find fault. If you want to listen to these messages, you'll pick out where I quoted a wrong scripture from the wrong place or the word wasn't exactly the right thing, but it wasn't spoken out of error.

It was just spoken from mistake. And here they find fault with these brothers. They didn't wash their hands before they were eating.

And the Pharisees said, bunch on cleans. And these guys think that they're somebody special. Jesus thinks he's somebody special.

And look at how he doesn't even teach his disciples how to clean themselves properly before they eat. It says, the Pharisees washed their hands in a very special way before they ate. They were very clean outwardly.

And God is not as concerned as how clean we are outwardly, although outward cleanliness is good. But inward cleanliness is best. And he says, it's not what you put in your mouth that makes you unclean.

It's what comes out of your mouth that defiles you and makes you unclean. And he goes on to say to them, for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. Verse 19, murder, adulteries, fornications, thefts, lies, blasphemies, all these things defile a man and make him unclean.

But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man. Then Jesus departed from there. And he went to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

And behold, there was a woman of Canaan. She's the Phoenician, the Syrophenician woman from Mark in chapter seven. And from from that region, it says in the other passes that Jesus sought to just hide himself for a bit and maybe find some rest.

Not that people would know where he was, but they found him. They sought him out and they found him because they were desperate for help. They saw that he had a father's heart.

They saw that he was like gentle, like a nursing mother, that he really cared for them. And then he didn't turn anybody away. He healed them all.

Usually he healed them all. And here's this Syrophenician woman, this Canaanite woman, as it says here. And she finds Jesus in this house and she comes and she bows down at his feet and she's she's worshipping him, it says in Mark 7. And here it says, behold, the woman of Canaan, she's there and she's crying out to Jesus.

She's desperate for a miracle. This woman is a mother. This woman has a burden for her child, for her daughter.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David. My daughter is severely demon-possessed. Now, you know, today there's a lot of people.

I see them even in archers sometimes. I've seen them in many places. They call themselves Christians.

I can see that they're demon-possessed. You can see the evil spirits in them. They're not in a good place.

Does that make them Christians? If those Christians who are possessed find themselves unrepentant, going to hell, do they go to heaven? I've heard a lot of teaching on these things. Scripture says you're either a child of God or a child of the devil. Scripture says greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world.

We have the spirit of Christ in us. We have the spirit of Antichrist working in the temple. We can be oppressed.

I do not believe a born-again believer can be possessed. But yet we see them in our churches. And so if you see someone who's unrepentant, you see them in bondage, you see them full of evil spirits, whether it be of the house of Israel, the lost sheep of the house of Israel, or whether they be like this Canaanite, be a pagan outside the church, yet find themselves at your feet, the burden is always to see the people free.

A third of Jesus' ministry was casting out evil spirits, yet it's not understood. I don't know too many people doing it. I don't see a lot of people getting free.

I see some of them possessed, they put them in positions in the church yet, because they're good people. They're useful to the people in the church. They don't have discernment.

Why don't they have discernment? Because their hearts are hard. Because of the deceitfulness of sin, they lack discernment. We need to be able to rightly discern, just as we discern the state of our own children, that we would know the state of the flock.

We'd know the state of the people in the fellowship. There's ways to know the Holy Spirit is able to give revelation of these things. Not just by the fruit, but also the gift of discernment, which I believe in.

It says the eye is the window of the soul. And he says if the eye is good, the whole body is full of light. But if the eye is bad, the body is full of darkness.

But if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness. And we know something else, that Satan or the powers of darkness masquerade as angels of light. And they give an appearance of being the Holy Spirit in there, but all of a sudden when light encounters darkness, the darkness doesn't, it overwhelms it.

And they manifest, and you can see them like rattlesnakes. The eyes move like this, like rattlesnakes. There's uncleanness there, but at first glance it looks like someone full of the Holy Spirit.

Satan is always trying to counterfeit what Jesus is doing. He's always trying to deceive people and lure them after himself. So we don't chase angels of light.

You'll know them by their fruits, not by their gifts. And that's what glorifies God. So here we see this woman, her daughter's severely demon possessed.

And the woman is desperate now for a miracle for her daughter. And she knows that the only way she's going to find help is if she can get to Jesus. And she finds out where he's hidden away after he's been dealing with these Pharisees and all that.

And here she is asking for help. We see the heart of Jesus in this matter. The disciples, Jesus didn't answer a word.

The disciples came and urged him saying, send her away for she's crying out after us. She's annoying us. She's disturbing us.

This lady is just continually, constantly pestering us here. You know, we're here to rest and you know, we have God's business to do here. Jesus isn't saying anything.

And Jesus answered and he said to the woman, I was not sent except for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now look at the implications of this one right here. I know some people close to me who say that this verifies and validates that Christians can have evil spirits because the lost sheep of the house of Israel represent Christians.

Specifically in this context, it represents Jewish people. But if you look at the broad sense, a Jew is neither one who is outward or inward or circumcision is not in the flesh, but a Jew is one who is one in spirit. And we can become a spiritual Jew by being grafted into the vine, both Jews and Gentiles into one new man in Christ.

So we can be of the house of Israel. Someone who's been born again. Someone who's been grafted into the family of God, both Jews and Gentiles.

And then we see someone who can become caught up in sin as brother David said, get bit in the face by a snake. And you can have the serpent poison your heart and desire conceives in the heart. It gives birth to sin.

When sin fully manifests, it brings forth what? Death. The death can be working in us. The one who claims Jesus is Lord.

Death can be working in them. It says the spirit that now works in, not on the shoulder of, but in the sons of disobedience, we're not to be partakers with them. So we have to be careful that we have the Holy Spirit in us and that we repent of sin and that we don't invite sin into our life.

Because there's stays and we have to be careful about these things. And so Jesus says, I came not for the Gentiles specifically, but I came for the lost sheep of the house of Israel, implying that there were Jewish people there who were demon possessed, that he was setting free to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers and cast out demons. Freely we've received, freely we give.

And then she came, she worshipped him saying, Lord, help me. Here's a woman who doesn't, he, she doesn't quit. She didn't get the answer she wanted.

She continued to ask, ask and it shall be given. Knock, seek and you shall find. Knock and the door shall be open.

Everyone who asks receives. Think of the persistent widow who sought justice from a judge who didn't fear God nor regard man. She got her request by persistent asking, seeking and knocking.

We need to continue persistent prayer, asking, seeking and knocking for our lost family, for our lost children, for our lost neighbors, to have this kind of burden that Leonard Ravenhill had and that David Wilkerson eventually had. To see God deliver a people who were in great darkness, that they would see a light, that we could be that light. He goes from there.

And Jesus answers and says this woman while she's there worshipping, you know, any other angel receives worship, they say, see, you don't do that. Anybody who's doing his worshipping of man don't do that. But Jesus never, ever rebuked anybody from worshipping him.

He was the son of man, but he was the son of God. He never told them, don't worship me. He couldn't change who he is.

Jesus answered and said, it is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs. In other words, deliverance from evil spirits and demons was associated with bread for the children. And she said, yes, Lord.

She didn't say that's not true, Lord. She said, yes, Lord. Yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from the master's table.

Then Jesus answered her and said, oh, woman, great is your faith. Let it be as you desire. And her daughter was healed that very hour.

The mercy of Jesus. Now he extends his ministry to the Gentiles because the father told him, grant her her request. This woman had great faith.

The centurion, he had great faith for his servant. What love he had. Like a father for his own son, this worker he had, he loved him so much, he went to meet with Jesus and said, speak the word.

I know that your word has power. You are a man of authority. Just say the word and it'll be done.

We want to come to that place in our life where our words have authority. That we speak the words of life. That the things that we say, there's power, there's life and death in the tongue and that our tongues would be used to build up and not to tear down.

Even if it has to do with exhorting and rebuking and comfort, that it would all be for the edification and not for the destruction. Because that's the heart of a mother and that is the heart of a father. Paul went many miles.

He visited those churches, even from prison. He wrote them letters. He was burdened about his children.

He wanted to see them well. He says, lest I labored for you in vain. I don't want to have labored for you in vain.

I sent this brother. I sent that brother. I wrote this letter.

I wrote that letter. I want to see you guys finish well. And then the Holy Spirit gives the man a revelation that he says, after my departure, ravenous wolves are going to come in and devour the flock.

Some of you are going to be destroyed by these preachers that come. They're prosperity guys and they're going to come. They want something from you.

They're out for you. They're going to fleece you. They're going to deceive you.

And he said, I've got to warn you about this thing. Be vigilant. Be on guard.

Be watchful in your prayers. Be faithful to God. Fix your eyes on Jesus.

Don't become distracted with all the stuff going on around you. Love the Lord Jesus. Love him to the end.

It's not how you start. It's how you finish. May the Lord Jesus help us to finish our race well.

To have a heart for the lost. To have a burden for people. To have a burden for our lost children.

Our lost families. Our lost friends. Our neighbors.

Strangers. To be vessels ready to hear the Holy Spirit say something. To give an encouragement.

To speak a word. Something. A gentle word can break a bone you know.

May the Lord Jesus help us. Being this Mother's Day. That we would have a heart of a mother for the people around us.

And the heart of a father. Not just for our own. But the interest of others.

To really sincerely care for them. That this love of God which we claim to know would surpass knowledge. That it would extend into our hands and feet.

That we could be vessels of honor. Sanctified and useful to the Master. Prepared for every good work.

That when we hear his speak we would say, speak Lord. Your servant is listening. To be effective ministers of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless you.

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