

Hebrews: Danger of Unbelief Part 1 (Hebrews 3:7-19)

Memory Verse: “But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” **Hebrews 3:13**

Introduction:

In the first of a 2 part Bible study, we will learn of one of the most dangerous sins known to mankind – the sin of unbelief. It would be unsurprising to see you quake in fear as you read these words. What this sin can do to us and what it means for us will be revealed throughout the course of this study.

Danger of Unbelief

1. Hebrews 3:7-11 recounts the events of Numbers 13-14. What happened here and what was the sin of the people? What was the consequence of the sin?

- **Brief summary: Moses sent 12 spies into Canaan to scout the Promised Land. Ten of them returned with fearful tales of giants while only two (Joshua and Caleb) returned with a report that they can gain victory. The people were discouraged and even wanted to rebel against God and return to Egypt. As a punishment, the Israelites were to wander the wilderness for 40 years and no one above the age of 20 would enter the Promised Land except for Joshua and Caleb.**
- **The Israelites complained about: water, food, meat, more water, leadership**
- **Their hard heartedness even provoked Moses to anger to strike the rock and disobey God**
- **Hidden question: What can people do to support their leaders?**
 - **Not complain, constructive comments, help out with the workload**
- **Hidden question: God in his wrath prevented the Israelites from entering the Promised Land. Does it seem weird that God is wrathful?**
 - **The problem is that WE don't have this same reaction. God in His righteousness has the right reaction to everything**

2. In verse 12, the author is clearly speaking to Christians as he refers to them as brethren. Is it possible for Christians to have a heart of unbelief and depart from God? Can you think of any examples?

- **The obvious example is backsliding or even renouncing God**
- **Departing from God doesn't necessarily mean only a whole pulling away. Any time our relationship with God is lessened, we are departing from God. Thus, any time we sin against God, we pull away. What causes us to sin? It's because within us lies a sinful heart of unbelief that doesn't believe God at face value.**
- **Having doubt or too little faith is also the same as having unbelief**

3. Read Hebrews 3:13. The Bible calls us to exhort each other DAILY. What are some ways we can do this?

- **Pray for them, call them up, have fellowship together, angels and mortals mailbox**
- **It also says today as we are procrastinating creatures and we are likely to put it off**

4. We are given this warning as we Christians may have our hearts hardened through sin's deceit. In what ways might sin deceive Christians?

- **Sin can deceive Christians in lots of ways. You think it's harmless or unimportant**
- **A man who no longer loves his wife may love another woman and deceive himself that it's for love, when it really it is his heart that is the problem.**
- **Idleness may contribute to that. We can remember King David's idle days on a rooftop where he saw Bathsheba**

Theme Verse: “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” **Hebrews 12:1-2**

- **Hidden question: How does exhorting each other daily prevent us from becoming hardened?**
 - Fellowship and mutual support. Constant reminders help you to stay on track
 - Knowing other people who can help and may be going through the same thing may also help
- **If we look at every sin we do actually a display of our unbelief, sin suddenly seems a lot more serious. Sinful behavior is a symptom of our unbelief**

5. By contrast, if we hold steadfast and not have an unbelieving heart, we are partakers in Christ. What does it mean to partake in Christ? And what is this confidence that we are to hold?

- **To partake in Christ means to be a part of his house, which was discussed last Bible study.**
- **The confidence we hold is the first gospel message of salvation we heard**

6. Verses 15-19 make it clear that the Israelites were not allowed to enter the Promised Land because of their sin of unbelief, a very serious charge. In each of the examples below, what is the unbelief and what was its consequence?

Matthew 13:53-58

- **Unbelief: The people from Jesus’ own area did not believe in Him**
- **Consequence: He did not perform many miracles there. We miss out on God’s blessings when we do not believe**

Matt 14:23-27

- **Unbelief: Jesus could not protect him from the stormy waves. In our life, when problems seem too overwhelming, we look away from God as our answer and the only thing we need**
- **Consequence: Peter began to sink.**
- **Solution: Peter cried out for help to Jesus and looked unto Him as his only salvation.**

Numbers 20:12

- **Unbelief: Moses disobeyed God and struck the rock to produce water instead of just speaking the water to come out. To disobey God is not belief that He is a God of His Word, and that He is just, righteous and holy. Our act of disobedience reveals a heart that doesn’t believe in the consequence of our sinful action.**
- **Consequence: Moses and Aaron were not able to enter the Promised Land. We too will have to face consequences for our disobedient actions.**

7. In the table below is a list of sins. On the right hand column write what is the sin of unbelief that underlies these sins.

	What is the unbelief?
Anxiety/fear	God is not able to help or protect you
Lust	What God has to offer is not as good as what you can get yourself in the world
Lying	God is not a God of truth
Complaining	God cannot provide for my needs

Concluding remarks:

Underneath all sins lies the great sin of unbelief. The people of Israel had all the evidence of God that anyone could have asked for. He dynamically delivered them from trouble time and time again. Yet time and time again, their hearts were hardened and they fell away from God. They did not believe that He could provide for them and take care of their needs.

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Their unbelief deprived them from what would have been a wonderful relationship with God. Poor foolish Israelites...

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