

Beware Brethren

Jeremy Richards

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Okay, we're going to go to Hebrews, Hebrews, chapter three.

Starting off. I hope everybody knows that I am not a. A complicated person, right? There are, I'm sure, different ways that individuals teach in churches all over the world. But I am just a very plain working person and I like practical things, things that work, things that have a result based on simple things that we do.

I like things just working well. And religion, I believe, should be similar, that it doesn't need to be something complicated. I'm not trying to necessarily change your life in the external, but rather share what is practical and what works at a low level in a person who doesn't have to know a lot.

There is practical religion, I believe, explained clearly in the Bible, in which people without degrees can understand, understand, put into practice and see a spiritual result. That's what I want for my own life. And that, God willing, is what we'll dive into in the book of Hebrews. It's not something that's going to probably make you president, but I believe it will take ordinary people and give them the kind of life and the fruit that comes from a biblical lifestyle. And that's my hope today, to go into Hebrew.

So in that when you start building. I hate it when I work on houses and I, you know, do rot, repair and build houses and stuff. And one thing that frustrates me more than anything is a fancy house with bad bones. I hate lots of extra trim on houses with rotten framing underneath. I hate it.

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I was like, what are these people thinking? They use junk material in the bones and then put fancy glitter on the outside and sell it for more. These people are crazy. I tell people I'd like, get rid of it.

Plain sheds, water works. That's what we want. Who cares if it looks fancy from the street? But that's my business. But I think that's Hebrews also.

It's looking for something that works. So we're in chapter three and we're told in chapter three, verse 12, we have been talking about this house, this spiritual house that Jesus is trying to bring people into. The most effective way to bring people into this spiritual house, one full of feasting and joy, is using the law. The law doesn't treat people nice. It doesn't make you feel good about yourself.

It leaves you in a condition of saying, oh, wretched man that I am, who will save me from this body of death? That is what it does. It makes you feel like junk for a minute, but it doesn't leave you there. If you remember, dives the Rich man, right? As he conversed with Abraham about Lazarus, saying, send Lazarus to my brothers, Abraham said, they won't listen.

He said, if they would not listen to Moses, they will not listen even if a man has been raised from the dead. Everyone track with me something here. Abraham is saying that the law is more effective than a person raising from the dead in order to draw people into a covenant of grace with Jesus Christ. That's strange. That's not always what we use to draw people to Jesus.

We're like, man, we got now, Jane, I'm not getting on you, please. We're like, we got free doughnuts, Sunday school and coffee, right? And we try to use other things as people. Hey, you can have this kind of life. You can look, act or receive this kind of thing.

But Jesus says the most effective thing is the law. Oh, the law hurts, it stings, it cuts deep. But it still is the most effective. Okay, but not everyone listens to that law. Just as dives brothers didn't listen to the law, so also not all of us have listened to the law.

And there is the possibility of rejecting entering into the promised land. Remember the 12 spies? They were giving the people the opportunity. Hey, follow. The two said, let's go in.

The 10 said, don't go in. The people acted in unbelief. And as a result of rejecting an invitation, they experienced life under the law in the desert. 40 years going around that mountain until all of their corpses fell dead in the desert. The law leaves dead people everywhere.

But Jesus hope is that dying people will recognize his goodness and flee to the cross to escape that death. That's what we're talking about. But we're going to be going into this. The danger of resisting an invitation. Okay?

Verse 12, chapter 3, verse 12. It says, Beware brethren, lest there be any of you an evil heart of unbelief in 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.

In chapter 3, verse 12, the author of Hebrews is issuing a warning. Beware. Be aware. There is a spiritual condition which impacts the life of an individual. There is a resistance to an invitation to enter into a house that has consequences.

We are to be aware, spiritually aware. If the reason you are told to be aware is because there are consequences. When we see signs up all over the place, beware. The logical conclusion is there is something inside that needs to be recognized and acted upon to save yourself some sort of consequences. These individuals are Encouraged to be spiritually aware.

There is a spiritual danger of which all of us are susceptible to that leads us to a place of consequences if we're not aware of it. The people called to be aware, he says, are brethren. Now we know that we're reading in the book of Hebrews, that it is a book written probably in my estimation, to Jewish believers who had fled after in the persecution of Saul and Herod, that they had fled and now they are being written to. If it is just Jewish believers, we can come to the conclusion. Paul says in Romans that my heart's desire is for all Israel to be saved.

That he desires Israel, his countrymen, according to the flesh, Jewish people to be saved. It could mean that it is just Jews themselves, or it could be Jewish believers. I believe it is Jewish believers here, and he is encouraging them. There is a danger that they are going to confront which is similar to the danger that their ancestors confronted when they were on the cusp of entering into the promised land. Their unbelief caused them to go back under the law for 40 years.

That danger we are all susceptible today. It is not just Jewish people who are susceptible to this kind of danger. Yes, that's true. That you and I also need to be aware of a spiritual condition that prevents us from entering into the fullness of the rest that Jesus Christ provides for his people. That's true.

Sometimes I'm going to nod my head for you.

That just because you have taken up the mantle and decided to follow Jesus Christ, that there are not spiritual dangers that are of immediate consequences spiritually to you as a person says, beware brethren, even though you may not be Jewish or maybe Jewish, I don't know, I'm going to say the same thing. Beware, brethren. There is something that we need to be aware of in order to successfully navigate that trial, that temptation, this that we are being told or warned about. In verse 12, it says, Lest there be in any of you an evil heart. An evil heart.

There are many things that the Bible warns us about. There's many sins. There's lots of things that we're told. It says, brethren, do not lie to one another. Let you who steal, steal no longer, but work with your hands.

It says, let us not commit sexual immorality, which is a sin against our own flesh. We're told not to worry about tomorrow. There are many things in which a person should be wary of here, but here we're being told to be careful, to consider. An evil heart. An evil heart.

We are told in our culture that individuals hearts are not evil. Not evil, we are told. And I don't know why. I don't even know this song or maybe who wrote it, but it was coming to my mind this morning. I'm not a good singer, but something like listen to

your heart.

Something like this, right? And I don't even know much about music, Jason, you know that. But I think that's pretty good summary of what our culture has been encouraging for the last some years. Listen to your heart. What feels good to you as a person, that is what you should pursue.

That has not always been the case. If you could summarize the culture of a nation, of an area, of a people group, of a family, you could say that maybe we are moving towards an area like listen to your heart. Hear that inner voice speaking. That's really what you should follow. But that has not always been the voice.

The speaking of our culture. I think at some point is like it's been, you know, do what's right. Your heart, yeah, has a voice, but doing right also is a voice. And there has been a people group that instead of doing what their heart wanted, that they said, you know, I need to do what's right. I need to think about what's better for my family, my culture, my nation, rather than just what my heart wants.

We as a culture are going to be suffering or enjoying consequences of decisions we make as a culture. It is astonishing. Listening to your heart has produced something in our culture.

Yes, that's true. Psychiatrists aren't upset. Counselors are busier than ever. I was talking to someone and. And they were putting their daughter in a psychiatric ward for a season.

I just trying to wrap my mind around \$3,000 a day. I was trying to think, okay, 3,000, you know, hey, do you want. Could she come and live with us for a few weeks?

Following your heart. The Bible talks about individuals, individuals, hearts. And in Psalm 58 it says, do you indeed speak righteousness, you silent ones? Do you judge uprightly, you sons of men? It says, no.

In heart you work wickedness, you weigh out the violence of your hands on the earth. The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they are born. Speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent.

They are like the deaf cobra that stops its ear, which will not heed the voice of charmers charming ever so skillfully. Back in Psalm 53 it says, the fool has said in his heart there is no God. Jeremiah said, the heart is deceitfully wicked.

The Bible's picture of our heart is not a reliable guide. It is something that should be viewed with suspicion that it does not always lead to good watering places, that what it does to us is not always for our spiritual benefit. Hebrews says that there is an evil heart, an evil heart. And this evil heart is susceptible to a certain condition. There are kinds of flesh that are susceptible to certain diseases and as a result you need to be careful of what kind of circumstances you put yourself into.

I've been around a couple people with their lymph nodes having a cancer or being damaged, right? And they had to remove those lymph nodes. And as a result their arm is susceptible to sickness because the lymph node deals with the sickness in that part of your body. And so some people wear coverings on their arms to make sure it's extra protected, not to get a cut or some sort of scratch, because it doesn't have the protection that their lymph node will offer. In your and I's case, an evil heart leaves us to susceptible to a condition called unbelief.

Our hearts are not predisposed to believe in the promises of God because they have their own immediate needs at the forefront of their mind. It thinks always what is best for me right now. It sometimes sees in the future. Sometimes people put off for a season certain things in order that they may experience physical benefit in the future. But ultimately it's always concerned about its own benefit, not what God says.

There is a condition in which individuals hearts are affected in a way where the forefront, the thing that is most recognized is not God's plan for their life.

Think about our own life. Last week, Do you and I go through life with a heart as our guide?

Acting, reacting according to the things that you and I makes us feel good temporarily in our conversations with people and our dealings with business and circumstances, in our attitude towards government and such. Oftentimes it is an immediate thing based on our heart's feelings. This is called an evil heart. Evil hearts are predisposed to reject the plan of God for their life. We get a little picture of this in the end of Luke.

In the end of Luke, and if you remember, there had been individuals, at least a couple of them, following Jesus during his ministry. But after Jesus had died, that reassurance of having a physical someone able to see and touch leader, that they became fearful there was mounting opposition against them. They had no one to protect them. And so they left. And as they were leaving Jerusalem, Jesus had told them to stay there and wait until they received the Holy Spirit.

But they were like, I'm getting out of here. My heart says, leave now for safety's sake. And so they left. And they met an individual on the road as they walked. And this individual, who we know is Jesus.

And So in chapter 24, verse 24, as they talked with him, this is the end of the conversation. And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the woman had said. But him they did not see, meaning Jesus. Then he said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory?

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. So we have two things weighing upon these individuals. We have their heart, an evil part, slow to believe. And Jesus now begins to expound to them the things in Scripture beginning from Moses and all the prophets concerning himself. Now these people have two things pulling them.

They are being tugged by their immediate needs. They are being directed by an evil heart of unbelief escape while there is chance. And they are now being torn by a burning passion within them from an individual who is speaking to them from Scripture.

And they have to decide what to do. The truth is, it is the same today. You are either affected deciding where you go, how you act, by one or the other. Either the things written in Scripture regarding Jesus Christ are directing you, motivating you, or you are an individual who is being directed by an evil heart. This is our heart.

I love the pictures. And what is described as a deceitful bow, one when you pull back, doesn't do what you expect it to. Has anyone ever pulled a compound bow for the first time and it snap you in the arm like that hurts, right? An arrow goes in a way that you are not expecting it to. You think you're shooting at something, you think you're directing it a certain way, but it ends up, you go in a different direction.

As an individual looks into the water, he thinks that the fish is in one spot, but there is something skewing his vision. That's something that always turns us. It is that deceitful staff upon which a man leans. It goes into his hand. You are expecting support, but it ends up in injury.

A deceitful heart always accomplishes the same thing in the life of an individual who leans upon it.

But there is a kind of burning in a heart that is based upon the view of Jesus Christ. In scriptures, they lead people different places. You have to understand, you can't go both places at the same time. You think that you can go north on I5 and go south at the same time? You're crazy.

You can't do it. And if you think that you're going north, going to Bellingham, but you're trying to get to Portland, you've got to turn. Turn around. You will never, ever get there. You say, jeremy, you're mean.

Well, I might be mean. Very mean. But it's true.

In order to get where you're going, you have to shift direction. If you want to be in a different spot, you cannot go in the direction that leads to destruction.

I'm not saying it feels good to your heart. It has nothing to do about how your heart feels.

It has to do with what is right.

Friends, you might think I'm mean, and I know my kids at times think that I'm mean. But I want to leave them with the foundation. I want to lay them with a foundation that they can stand upon. I want them to be able to lean in something that doesn't pierce into their hand when they need it.

I'm an awful, awful dad. We went hiking and everything was supposed to be ready. And Othniel somehow got in this van with these little hard rubber shoes with no soles. Not only no soles, but the thing under the sole was supposed to keep you from the hard plastic. Cross hatching was gone.

So he was hiking with these hard plastic shoes with no soles and completely worn out. And he was complaining about his feet hurting. You know how we do when kids complain. Quit complaining. You gotta be tough.

Then I looked at his shoes. I'm like, oh, my God, take those things off, right? We need to give ourselves a real understanding if we're trusting and leaning upon something that is ineffective at best. An evil heart of unbelief causes us to depart from God. It says in verse 12.

It says, departing from the living God, it may allow you to follow. Follow deities which are of man's making. You can manipulate, mold them. You can go into the wood and take your chainsaw, cut half of it up for firewood, and the other make into an image. Pound the thing down on your table with nails so it doesn't fall over.

And you can give to that thing and enable you yourself to do whatever you want. But the living God is not like that.

He doesn't change. He is not like other gods which men can manipulate. He is the holy God, and he does not change. If we want to Walk with God. We have to weigh out in

the balance.

I'm going to start in verse 13. It says, but exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Part of what. What we're doing here today as a group of people is exhorting people to resist the temptation to lean upon ineffective doctrines, but embrace that which is real and right.

That happens in a moment. And we're going to be getting into that for a little bit here. It is called today. It is right now. It is not yesterday.

It is not in your past. It is not how much you've done or how ineffective you've been up to this point. It is based in right now. And God is asking us to resist an unbelieving heart and today to make a choice. So many people are waiting for their heart to lead them in a path to follow God.

They're saying, when my heart backs up the scripture, then I'll move. But God is asking us to act upon his word. Irrelevant of how our heart feels. It's asking us, just like he's asking those two men who were walking away from Jerusalem. No, that's an unbelieving heart.

This is what the scripture says. Now do it now. Do it. From the very beginning, Jesus began to preach, repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand. We're called, hey, look.

Your goal, his command to us is not based on our feelings. It's based on obedience, you might say. And many of the people at the door of the ark as it was flooding, you're like, I don't feel like a boat ride. I get sick on ships. It smells in there.

I don't like animals anyway. I'm allergic to cats. I'd rather my heart says, stay outside. But Moses said, hey, it doesn't matter how I feel. Excuse me.

Not Moses. Excuse me. Thank you, Noah. Someone needs to shout when I get something wrong. Noah said, hey, look, it doesn't really matter what I feel like for 120 years, I'm building the ark not because I felt like it, but because I was commanded it, because I was told to do it.

My hope for you today is that you'll stop fully trusting your emotions in waiting for your heart to respond and say, no. I act in obedience. I come to Christ. I repent because I've been commanded to. And I express my willingness to him.

Here I am, your servant. That is what these two individuals on the road did. And they turned around and they went back to Jerusalem no longer acting out of an unbelieving heart, but a heart that was affected by the truth of Scripture.

I pray that every one of us, if we closed our eyes, could say, christ, my heart doesn't necessarily feel it. Well, I repent of the direction I've been going in. That is contrary to your word. I'm sorry I have broken your commandments and rebelled against you, and I come to you. I choose to.

I make the steps to do it out of obedience to you. I believe that God says he will give you a new heart, not according to the old covenant, but the new covenant. When he gives us a new heart, one that acts with his law. He puts his law in our minds and our hearts, and we end up wanting to do the things that please God. It becomes our pleasure.

It doesn't become a burden, it becomes our joy.

We're going to close there and have communion. I'm going to go into 1 Corinthians just for a minute, just to read some of the instructions regarding communion.

For I received from the Lord in 1 Corinthians 11 that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the same night in which he was betrayed took bread. And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, take, eat. This is my body which is broken, for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same manner, he also took the cup after supper, saying, this cup is the new covenant in my blood.

This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he comes. I would like you to know that Jesus Christ as a man was an obscure, poor, common laborer who, because of obedience to the Father, preached a doctrine, lived a life that enabled

every person to enter into a relationship with God that was not available to them before. Here we are 2000 years later, and Jesus Christ is still absolutely, without any doubt whatsoever, the most influential person every day that has ever existed for all eternity, and no one comes close.

He is that glorious man who, when men see, they fall on their faces as dead men, real worship happens when we can't even breathe. There is no one close to Jesus Christ.

He is the greatest man, every day, every day, influencing more lives than anyone else and all lives put together. John said, I suppose, or Luke, I suppose, if all the things that were written about him were written, the earth could not contain all the books. And still you And I here, 2,000 years later, in a teeny, obscure town called Kapelis beach, with barely, doesn't even have their own sewer system, are still proclaiming the glory of an individual called Jesus Christ and loving it.

And it says there will be a church proclaiming his name until he comes back. And so, as you and I take communion, it is a personal, public decision to glorify, to take part of that ministry of Jesus Christ, which is still affecting people today.