



Hardness of Heart

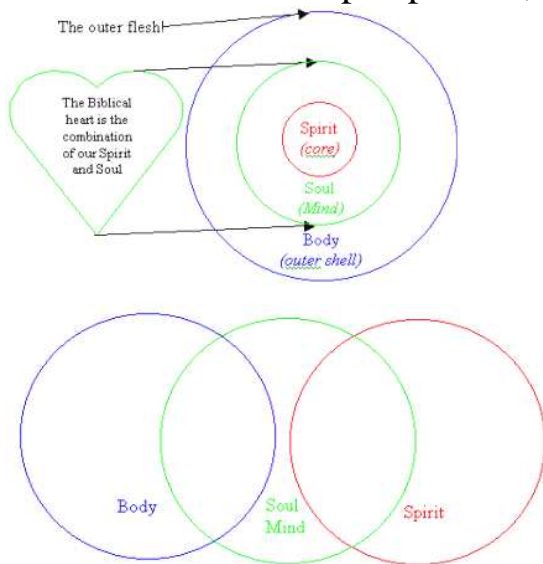
Jesus noted the Jews and “looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts”(Mark 3:5)

Notice in Mark 3:5 (*above*) that Jesus was grieved at the hardness of the Jews hearts. Since Jesus clearly is focused upon our hearts we should ask, “What is the condition of my heart in His eyes?”

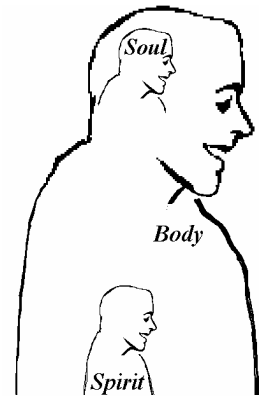
Seriously, what is the condition of your heart? Obviously I am not referring to the physical organ in the center of our chest; instead, I am referring to the very core of our being. We have learned in earlier studies that our (*Biblical*) heart is actually the combination (*joining together*) of our human spirit and our soul (*Observe the image below. If you would like to see an additional study regarding our human make-up, from a Biblical perspective, you can obtain an Internet copy of the Bible Study entitled, “Spirit, Soul and Body”*

<http://www.rivkah.org/PDFs/040205.pdf> .)

From a biblical perspective, our heart is made up of the



combination of our born-again spirit and our mind, “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord” (1 Thess 5:23). That core which is composed of soul and spirit is so closely



correlated that only the word of God can separate the two interrelated aspects, “the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword,

*piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a **discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart***” (Heb 4:12).

Notice how the Bible portrayed the hearts of the people that lived during the time of Noah, “GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,



Hardness of Heart

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and that every imagination of *the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*” (Gen 6:5)!

We tend to group “sinners” into the same category as those people who lived before the flood; we view them as individuals having their hearts hardened! Is hard heartedness a condition exclusive of “sinners?” Before we answer, we better honestly assess the condition of our own hearts! Ask yourself the question, “What is the sensitivity of my own heart towards God?” In this Bible Study we are going to investigate a Biblical pattern through which we may honestly learn to assess the condition of our own hearts.

Let me start by making it absolutely clear that in order to avoid a hard heart we must avoid sin, “exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be **hardened** through *the deceitfulness of sin*” (Heb 3:13). We must live holy lives! Now don’t get off track; part of the good news of the gospel is that whether we live holy or unholy, **God’s love toward us remains exactly the same**. However, Living holy will definitely change the sensitivity of our heart towards God. Our holiness does not change God’s heart toward us; but our holiness will definitely change our hearts toward God! Realize this, an unholy life (*violating our conscious*) will absolutely **harden** our hearts toward God! Yes, we have been forgiven of all of our sins; nevertheless, sin naturally hardens our hearts! Notice how sin and a hard heart are associated with Pharaoh who “saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he **sinned yet more, and hardened his heart**” (Ex 9:34). Obviously, it is important for us to live a godly and holy life in order to maintain a pliable heart!

Further, we must realize that unbelief is another significant aspect that influences the condition of our hearts! If we are more dominated by our senses than we are by our sensitivity toward God’s word, then our heart will definitely be adversely affected! We all tend to be strong in one area of spiritual development and yet weak in another area.

The Lord called his disciples, “and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1). Then He sent them out, “into every city and place, whither he himself would come” (Luke 10:1). And, “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name” (Luke 10:17). Nevertheless, a not long thereafter, His disciples came across a child was afflicted with a demon that they were unable to cast out. The father of the boy described his son as follows, “he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water” (Matt 17:15). Naturally, His disciples asked, “Why could not we cast him out? 20 And Jesus said unto them, **Because of your unbelief**: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and **nothing shall be impossible unto you**. 21 Howbeit **this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting**” (Matt 17:19-21). Most people believe that this demon was somehow more powerful and, “**this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting**;” however, Jesus was not focused upon the demon; He said, “**Because of your unbelief!**”



Hardness of Heart

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The issue was not a demon; it was their unbelief. Apparently, the child manifested some kind of seizure and in the eyes of His disciples they could not cast out the demon! The point is that this kind of **unbelief** does not come out but by prayer and fasting! When we fast and pray we literally force our physical bodies to realize that our spirit is in touch with some unknown sense to the human body, “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:7)! The disciples’ hearts were hardened because of what they observed in the afflicted child!

Now we are going to investigate another situation involving Jesus’ Apostles. One of the goals of this lesson is to get a perspective of how we can actually test the condition of our own hearts. Let’s begin by reading the episode recorded in Mark 6: 45 “And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. 46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. 47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them. 49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: 50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. 51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. 52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: **for their heart was hardened**. 53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore” (Mark 6:45-53).

Now notice in v51 that the disciples, “were **sore amazed in themselves beyond measure**, and wondered. 52 For (This word “for” is a connector word; another word that is perhaps more meaningful is the word, “because.”) **they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened.**” We would all admit that experiencing the supernatural power of God is a wonderful blessing! For example if we went to get prayer, say for a headache and the pain immediately vanished, we would naturally get excited! However, if we get more amazed or influenced by witnessing the supernatural than the natural, it means that we actually have a hardened heart (*towards God*)! We are going to explore the veracity of this statement throughout this study!

Let us consider more closely the actual “hardened heart” circumstance that Jesus Himself referenced out of the passage that we have just read. When Jesus took the loaves and blessed the bread during the feeding of the five thousand (*Perhaps as many as 15,000 when we count women and children as well.*), do you think that Jesus was “sore amazed” when He broke the five loaves of bread and suddenly the original loaf had somehow been restored? Do you think that he was “sore amazed” and said to Himself, “Whoa! It actually worked!” Further, Jesus gave the disciples and they fed the people. Realize that he disciples did not each pull a wagonload of bread and fish that Jesus had personally loaded up for the people; instead they each carried a basket and **the bread and the fishes were literally multiplied in the hands of the disciples!** They did not consider this miracle!



Hardness of Heart

Jesus noted the Jews and “looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts”(Mark 3:5)

They had more left over after everyone had eaten; they took up 12 baskets full of food! This means that they took up as much as they all started out with in the first place! They should have realized that anybody who can feed 15,000 people and end up with the original would have no problem walking on water! Instead, they did not consider and the result was that their hearts were hardened!

The issue is that we probably need to redefine a hardened heart! In fact, we don't give enough credence to the possibility that we ourselves may possess a hardened heart! Jesus was not sore amazed! On the contrary, He would have been “sore amazed” if the bread had **not** multiplied!

We are going to review just a few of the numerous times that the Bible describes a hardened heart! The Bible is replete with examples of people with a hardened hearts, “the LORD said unto Moses, **Pharaoh's heart is hardened**, he refuseth to let the people go” (Ex 7:14); “But when his (*Nebuchadnezzar's*) **heart was lifted up**, and his mind **hardened in pride**, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him 21 And he was driven from the sons of men; and **his heart was made like the beasts**” (Dan 5:20-21).

We observe that a hardened heart will make us spiritually retarded! Pharaoh actually asked Moses to pray for him, “Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, **I have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you**. 17 Now therefore forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and **intreat the LORD your God**, that he may take away from me this death only” (Ex 10:16-17). Nevertheless, not very long thereafter he took the great army of Egypt with the full intention of destroying Israel, “**the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh**, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea” (Ex 14:9). Pharaoh himself witnessed the great miracle of the pillar of fire that produced darkness unto the Egyptians and light to the children of Israel; nevertheless, he was not moved, “And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and **the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these**: so that the one came not near the other all the night” (Ex 14:19-20). Pharaoh was so hardened that even in the midst of this miracle, he decided to attack Israel! He was spiritually retarded! The problems of the Egyptians did not end there, “the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25 **And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily**: so that the Egyptians said, **Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians**” (Ex 14:22-25). Finally, one of the Egyptians with a lightning fast mind said, “let us flee for God is fighting for Israel!” It is utterly amazing that only after their wheels



Hardness of Heart

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came off of their chariots that the Egyptians decided to flee! Prior to this they had experienced countless plagues and miracles; nevertheless, their heart was hardened!

We must understand that anybody can be vulnerable to a hardened heart! Notice in the story of the rebellion of Korah who murmured and rebelled against Moses. Moses told those rebels, “if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. 31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: 32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods” (Num 16:30-32).

Nevertheless, “**on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron**” (Num 16:41). Clearly, the hearts of the children of Israel were hardened!

Are there other examples of hardness of heart in the New Testament? Notice Mark chapter eight; the disciples had already witnessed the feeding of 5,000 in Mark chapter six with only five loaves and two small fishes. Nevertheless, here in Mark chapter eight the disciples were in a situation involving less people (*only 4,000 people this time; and, they had more food (7 loaves of bread)*)! You would expect that the disciples would have been quick to say, “This is going to be easy; if we can feed 5,000 people with five loaves, feeding 4,000 with seven loaves will be a snap.”

We can understand the narrative better when we realize that Jesus was actually trying to get His disciples to comprehend that they too could minister food to the people, “this he said **to prove him**: for he himself knew what he would do” (John 6:6). Perhaps just days earlier, His disciples had witnessed the same kind of a miracle; instead of remembering the miracle, notice the dialogue, “his disciples answered him, **From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread** here in the wilderness?” (Mark 8:4). His disciples acted like the first miracle that took place only a few days before never even happened! Obviously, they had completely forgotten the incident; or more likely, they preferred not to remember because of the hardness of their hearts!

This whole portion of the Gospel of Mark is definitely focused upon “hard heartedness.” As we continue with the story notice how the concept of a hard heart continues to persist in the narrative, “And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away. 10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. 11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. 12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. 13 And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side. 14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. 15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. 16 And they reasoned among



Hardness of Heart

Jesus noted the Jews and “looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts”(Mark 3:5)

themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread. 17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? ***perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?*** 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? 19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. 20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. 21 And he said unto them, ***How is it that ye do not understand?***” (Mark 8:9-21).

Jesus was making it clear that their failure to perceive was the result of a hardened heart. When we become sensitive to God, all we need to receive from God is the slightest word. But, when we are hardhearted God practically has to hit us over the head before we realize that He has been speaking to us! In fact, God is always speaking to us; our problem is that we need our hearts softened in order to hear from Him.

Now understand this, our hearts are exactly the way that we ourselves have fashioned them up to this point in our lives! That is why the scripture teaches, “For ***as he thinketh in his heart, so is he***” (Prov 23:7). Our heart is the result of our own thinking! If we are having difficulty hearing from God, that condition is the result our own thinking! In order to hear from God we need to soften our hearts. We need to realize that in the past we have been the architects of our own hearts. **The good news is that we can change our hearts!**

Nobody is totally sensitive to God and nobody is totally insensitive to Him. We have read earlier where Jesus said, “***perceive ye not yet, neither understand?***” The point is that our understanding is the principle thing, “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, ***and understandeth it not***, then cometh the wicked one, and ***catcheth away that which was sown in his heart***” (Matt 13:19). Once we begin to understand, we can begin to change!

Christians hear truths of God but if they have no understanding it is useless to them! I used to work with technology; nevertheless, when the communication engineers would start talking about network routers working improperly because of a split horizon that meant absolutely nothing to me because I had no understanding.

Notice the point that Jesus was making in verse, “Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not?” He was referencing the fact that God gave humanity a lot more than the five senses! We have a sixth sense. Obviously, this sixth sense is the ability to hear God by faith!

Jesus said in verse 18, “and ***do ye not remember?***” In order for us to be successful we must have the ability to recall when God moved on our behalf in the past! However, remembering is not a matter of the physical brain retrieving information; instead the human heart is the key element that influences our memory! My mother used to claim that her sons had “selective hearing.”

Sports fans have no problem remembering the precise statistics of their favorite team. The true sports fan will always know exactly where his team sits in the rankings. He knows



Hardness of Heart

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where they stand in defense and offense; and, how many games his team is ahead of their chief rival. It follows that he also is quite aware of the record of each of the opposing teams in that division! The reason that the American sports fan remembers all of these things is because his heart has been set upon his team! There is nothing wrong with the human brain. Our physical brain will remember whatever our heart has been set upon; and, it will have difficulty remembering those things that are not a matter of the heart!

You probably were not counting; however, we have observed four specific characteristics of a hardened heart: (1) not perceiving spiritual truth; (2) a lack of understanding; (3) the inability to hear God’s voice; and (4) the lack of spiritual memory. Each of these characteristics can be observed in one small passage after the feeding of the multitude: “And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? **perceive ye not yet, neither understand?** have ye your heart yet hardened? 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and **having ears, hear ye not?** and **do ye not remember?**” (Mark 8:17-18).

I was taking a nap at my wife’s childhood home in Trinidad, Colorado, and a train came by and practically rattled me out of the bed! I wondered how anybody could have ever grown up in that house. However, she does not remember the train being a problem for her family. Essentially, they hardened themselves to the sound of the train. We humans have the natural ability to harden our hearts to whatever we choose. The human brain has a corticothalamic-reticular arousal loop located in the frontal lobe; this part of the brain is most involved in directing and controlling mental processes such as attention. This same system of the brain locks out what it does not want to process! This system in the brain allows soldiers during wartime conditions to be able to sleep through an incoming artillery barrage. This system in the brain allows a mother to sleep with the television blaring; nevertheless, if her baby cries she will immediately hear and respond!

God never intended for us to be unable to hear his voice! However, the devil taught us while we were in the flesh to shut-off and callous over our hearts so that we would not be able to hear from God! Through this process we naturally hardened our hearts towards God! The devil is the original source of the hardness in our hearts! The good news is that we can turn this condition around! It is abnormal for us to be unable to hear from God! Jesus said, “**My sheep hear my voice**, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). Before we can receive the antidote we must recognize how serious this abnormal condition of a hardened heart really is! God never intended for us to be unable to hear from Him!

The fact is that whatever we focus our heart upon, that thing will become meaningful to us, “For they **considered not** the miracle of the loaves: for **their heart was hardened**” (Mark 6:52). They did not consider the information that they had, “He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes” (Mark 6:38). Even with Jesus specifically asking them about the loaves, they still did not consider the matter. God made us so that whatever our dominant thoughts are focused upon, we will remember those things. Those things will also tend to control us. For example, the adulterer had focused his thoughts on illicit sex; the alcoholic had focused his



Hardness of Heart

Jesus noted the Jews and “looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts”(Mark 3:5)

thoughts on his next drink; and the addict had his focus upon his next fix. God made us this way for a specific purpose! Likewise, God made us so that we could block out whatever we do not choose or even desire deep down to remember! That is why some people hear a message and their life is literally changed while others fall asleep! The only difference between those two is the condition of their hearts! Notice that Abraham (*the father of the faithful*) blotted out certain negative aspects, “being not weak in faith, **he considered not his own body now dead**, when he was about an hundred years old, **neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb**” (Rom 4:19).

When our belief in God's word affects us more than any outward conditions of the world, the devil will be utterly unable to make us believe that we are sick! On the other hand, every time that we violate our conscious, we have just added a tiny little layer between God and us. The tiny layer never changes God's attitude toward us one bit; however, it definitely does affect our attitude toward God!

We have already studied how that Jesus' disciples “**considered not** the miracle of the loaves.” Now as we resume with the sixth chapter of Mark, we will recall that they had just fed the five thousand, “And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men” (Mark 6:44). Now continuing with the passage notice exactly what happened next, “45 And straightway **he constrained his disciples to get into the ship**, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. 46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. 47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land. 48 And **he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them**: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and **would have passed by them**. 49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out: 50 For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid. 51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and **they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered**. 52 For **they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened**” ((Mark 6:45-52).

When we carefully look at this passage we first need to appreciate the concept that Jesus literally **forced** His disciples, “he **constrained** his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side.” Jesus actually ordered or obligated His disciples to get into the boat! At this point we must remember that several of them were fishermen; this means that they naturally were sensitized to the fact that the weather was about to change and that the sea was going to get rough! This is the reason that He had to “**constrain**” His disciples to get into the boat. They understood that the situation had the potential to get dangerous!

When the storm came they did everything that they could think of to survive! Because they were so focused upon survival they totally forgot about the feeding of the five thousand. They did not realize that Jesus had told them to “get into the ship, and to **go to the other side**.” He did not tell them to get into the ship, go half way across the sea and then sink! If



Hardness of Heart

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they had been thinking spiritually they could have said, “Wait a minute guys, Jesus said, ‘get into the ship, and to *go to the other side.*’ This means that we have a word from God that we can do what He said!” We can glean a good lesson from this experience and relate it to the various storms that we may face: during any storm cling to His word!

Their preoccupation with survival kept them from really having a sensitive heart towards God! When we are totally preoccupied with daily living we naturally desensitize ourselves to hearing from God, “Therefore ***take no thought, saying,*** What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (*This is just a side note: However, did you observe in that passage how we humans take a thought?*) 32(***For after all these things do the Gentiles (unbelievers) seek:***) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness” (Matt 6:31-33). Instead of being preoccupied we can focus our thoughts, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, ***and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ***” (2 Cor 10:3-5). Paul said, “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, ***think on these things***” (Phil 4:8); “For ***as he thinketh in his heart, so is he***” (Prov 23:7). On the other hand, when we are not focused upon God we become desensitized to His voice.

Christians are not necessarily doing evil things! However, when we spend a great deal of time on things that do not build us up, we are in one way or another hardening our hearts. If we spend lots of time watching television, that is not necessarily evil; the problem is that we always are working on our hearts, and since television is worldly we are developing a worldly heart!

Consider the fact that Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled” (John 14:1). He would never have given us a command that we are unable to carry out. Therefore, if our hearts are ever troubled, that heart condition is a result of our own making!

Whatever we focus our hearts upon is exactly what will come out of us! We are each individually responsible for the present condition of our own hearts! Our heart gravitates toward the direction of our dominant thoughts. If our dominant thoughts are on sports or economics, or politics, or making a living, or whatever, our hearts will focus upon those things. When we are overly focused upon any of those things, the net result is that our heart will naturally harden towards God.

We cannot be fluent in sports, politics, television programming and then be able to supernaturally hear from God! Notice what the Bible teaches us about Abraham and Sarah, “And truly, if they had been ***mindful (If their mind had been full!)*** of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned” (Heb



Hardness of Heart

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11:15). Notice that their mind would have been **full** of the idea going back to Babylon! We cannot be tempted by something that we do not spend time thinking about! We can go nowhere that we have not already experienced in our minds, “as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov 23:7). This means that whatever dominates our thoughts will be the very thing that comes out of us in the future!

This society teaches (*focuses our attention*) upon the following things: self-gratification; acquisition of possessions; sexual gratification; medicinal enhancement; economic survival; materialism etc. When we expose ourselves and begin to focus upon these things we harden our hearts towards God! Instead of accepting these things we must reject them! For example the commercial that the flu season is about to arrive!

The only way that we can change things in our future is to prepare our hearts today! Obviously, we must not allow our hearts to be hardened towards God!

Notice what Solomon wrote, “He that hath *a froward heart findeth no good*: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief” (Prov 17:20). The NIV renders this passage as follows: “A man of *perverse heart* does not prosper” (Prov 17:20). Just a few verses later the NIV once again says, “A man's own folly ruins his life, yet *his heart rages against the LORD*” (Prov 19:3). A crooked heart will destroy our soul! Man’s ways are crooked and God’s ways are straight. The word crooked in Hebrew means to bend. If you have not yet read the *Rivkah Ministries*, Bible Study entitled, “*Evil, Where did it come from?*” <http://www.rivkah.org/PDFs/021010.pdf> and you would like to know more about the crooked way, you can obtain a copy of the study and from [Http://www.Rivkah.org](http://www.Rivkah.org).

The point is that we live out of our hearts! Therefore, we must allow only the word of God influence us! Notice Proverbs 27:19, “As in water *face reflects face*, So a man's heart reveals the man” (Prov 27:19). We can look into our own hearts just like we can see our face in water! Only by closely looking at yourself can you see and change your heart! Proverbs teaches, “For *as he thinketh in his heart, so is he*” (Prov 23:7). This means that we can change our lives by changing the things that we allow ourselves to think about! Finally look at this truth, “The *backslider in heart* shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man shall be *satisfied from himself*” (Prov 14:14). This means that we can achieve satisfaction as a result of a pure heart. We live out of our hearts, “**Keep** (*guard or protect*) *thy heart with all diligence*; for *out of it are the issues of life*” (Prov 4:23)! In order to guard our heart with all diligence, it means that our first priority is to properly watch over those things upon which we allow in our thoughts! “To day if ye will hear his voice, 8 *Harden not your hearts*” (Heb 3:7-8).

This week we have focused upon the major thing that inhibits us from hearing from the Holy Spirit of God; next time we will take a closer look at the most important aspect of hearing from Him!