

Hebrews 3:5-19 Handout- Jump in!

The writer is informing the Hebrews that their right response to knowing who Jesus is should be persevering in the faith!

When we rightly understand who Jesus is, it changes everything! It's the difference in standing on the edge of the pool nervously or jumping all into this Christian life that God has graciously called us to. This results in us persevering to the end.

1. The Plea

Plea: Persevere in the faith! Hold on to your confidence and hope.

True believers will persevere in faith. They will persevere through hardships and trials because they trust Who is in control.

The writer of Hebrews is concerned for these Jews. They were doubting and wavering in their faith because they had suffered major rejection. They had decided to no longer trust in the traditions and rituals of the generations before. They were now trusting in the person of Jesus and his finished work on their behalf.

The writer is trying to give them confidence in Christ. Jesus is Superior. He's worth it so persevere in your faith!

If we're true believers, we'll jump all in to this Christian life and stay in until God calls us home.

Persevering isn't a duty but a delight.

2. The Problem

Problem: divided heart

A. A divided heart is not a healthy heart.

Divided means split into parts, not united. The Hebrews' hearts were torn between their old life and their new life in Christ.

An undivided heart is a miracle that occurs at salvation. When a spiritual transformation takes place, God enables people to follow Him wholeheartedly.

"An undivided heart describes our "position," but may not always describe our "practice." That is where we must learn to rely wholly on the Holy Spirit." (unknown)

When your heart is divided you are distracted and it is detrimental to your physical and spiritual life.

Your spiritual heart is meant to work for one purpose: glorify Jesus. But when its divided, it is confused about its purpose, and it will not work properly. In fact, we'll feel sick spiritually and we'll be weak and ineffective. Therefore, we will not thrive spiritually.

A heart divided cannot thrive.

B. A divided heart means that we don't really trust God.

The Israelites claimed to love and trust God. They had even experienced him in unimaginable ways. Yet, they were wavering in their faith rather than trusting God to care for them.

We can see how God was faithful to the Israelites from the beginning of their journey to the end of their journey. The difference between us and them is that we can't see the end of our journey. And that's scary! But we can trust the One who knows the beginning of our story and the end of our story. And we can trust that He's the same One who carries us through.

C. A divided heart leads to a hardened heart.

Divided hearts aren't living for the purpose in which they've been created.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." The first and greatest commandment is first for a reason. If we get that part right, then we'll get everything else right.

The Israelites never meant to rebel against God and harden their hearts. It was one compromise at a time that led to a physical and spiritual place they didn't want to be.

"Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay." (Dr. Adrian Rogers)

3. The Plan

We can't just "wing" the Christian life. We need to know the expectations and boundaries.

a. Listen

God speaks to us, and we must listen. He speaks through the Holy Spirit's conviction, through His word and through wise, godly counsel.

b. Remember

We must learn from the mistakes of the Israelites. They were self-focused and more concerned with their own desires rather than God's glory.

We need to remember and learn because these people were not just "making mistakes," they were belittling our God.

c. Watch Out

Because we have the natural inclination to rebel, we must stay on guard because our hearts are prone to wander.

Sin is sneaky and normally its one small compromise that leads to another.

We must not just hate other people's sin but our own. We need to recognize our own sin, hate it and then repent of it.

D. Encourage One Another

Defined: give support, confidence, or hope to (someone)

We can't give what we don't possess. Therefore, jumping all in matters. Therefore loving God with all of our hearts, soul, mind and strength matters. It benefits us and others.

Encouragement is key to helping others persevere in the faith.

4. The Product

Product of a divided heart: consequences

Israel's great failure was not complaining or even the lack of perseverance. Those were the products of a bigger issue. Their failure stemmed from a divided heart.

When we love God with all our hearts, soul, mind, and strength then we will have an undivided heart. We will have a heart that lives to bring God glory. We will then experience God's blessings rather than consequences.

We can persevere in the faith because we know our Jesus is worth it. Let's jump in and persevere to the end!

Homework Questions

Why does rightly understanding who Jesus is matter?

What was the plea the writer gave to the Hebrews?

Why were they wavering in their faith?

What reveals whether a person is truly saved or not?

What was the underlying problem for the Israelites?

How is a divided heart a problem?

Why does having a plan make sense for a Christian?

What does God's word say about encouragement?

Find two verses and explain how encouragement impacts others.

What consequences did the Israelites endure because of their divided hearts?

What consequences do we endure because of our divided hearts?

Find the verse "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, all of your soul, all your mind and all your strength." (It's found in a several different places.) What is the context around these verses? How does that make us better understand what it means to love Him with everything we are?

Personal Reflection Questions:

What are some things that cause you to waver in your faith?

How have you seen sin sneak into your own life?

How would you rate yourself as a listener, remember, watcher, encourager?

Why do those things matter?

What are some things you could do to strengthen yourself in those areas?

What is one thing you can do today to encourage someone?