

# Hardness of Heart

First we learned that Compulsory Christianity is NOT Christian at all.

Second, we learned that church discipline is administered by God on His kids, NOT by His kids on each other.

Third, we learned that Sin is NOT following God's instructions as written and Freedom from Sin is given by following them.

Now, HOW MANY people in this world ignore God's instructions on salvation, worship & daily living? Why?

**Eph. 4:17** So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, **in the futility of their mind**, 18 being **darkened in their understanding**, excluded from the life of God because of **the ignorance that is in them**, because of **the hardness of their heart...**

To **COMPEL** Christian behavior through Rules & Regulations with Fear & Doubt & Guilt & Shame **does not change the heart!**

To **PUNISH** and discipline Christians for not meeting your standards of behavior **does not change the heart!**

To continually **EDUCATE** and demand **DEVOTION** and inspire **EMOTION** about your beliefs **does not change the heart!**

It is **HARDNESS OF HEART** that is the source of ALL rejection of God's Word: (*futility of mind*)

**Exodus 7:13** Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen

**Psalms 95:8** Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, As in the day of Massah in the wilderness

**Mark 6:52** for they had not gained any insight from the incident of the loaves, but their heart was hardened. Won't **THINK**

It is **HARDNESS OF HEART** that is the source of ALL re-interpretation of God's Word: (*darkened understanding*)

**Tree of knowledge of Good & Evil** - I KNOW what is good & bad & right & wrong! *Scripture must be corrected!*

**No Prophet comes out of Galilee** - I KNOW the way things should be to be proper & right! *I cannot be corrected!*

**And they forbid them to preach this Jesus of Nazareth** - evidence, even miracles, are ignored! *You cannot correct others!*

It is **HARDNESS OF HEART** that is the source of ALL self righteousness despite God's Word: (*ignorance in them*)

**Lord, Lord we have done many great things in your Name** - My efforts for God show God's greatness!! (*Mine, really*)

**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites** - Practice religion to be seen by men! (*get nothing from God*)

**I'm a spiritual person** - Don't need "church" Differences in churches don't matter I'm better than THAT person! (*darkness*)

How can God get through our hard hearts and actually CHANGE US to be like Jesus Christ?

**Ezekiel 36:22** "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went. 23 "I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD," declares the Lord GOD, "**when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight**. 24 "For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. 25 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 "Moreover, **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you**; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 "**I will put My Spirit within you** and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

**Acts 2:38** Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." **Follow those instructions and receive a New Heart and a New Spirit**

**Rom. 8:11** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. **The new Heart & new Spirit WANT to follow God!**

**Gal 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**

**HOW do we KNOW that God is getting through to our hardened hearts?**

The **hardened heart** chooses Pride and Anger to deal with people doing wrong to us. The New Heart chooses...?

The **hardened heart** chooses argument & disputes when people disagree with us. The New Heart chooses...?

The **hardened heart** chooses hurtful & vulgar language to deal with people who irritate us. The New Heart chooses...?

The **hardened heart** chooses comfort & convenience when it's time to assemble together. The New Heart chooses...?

The **hardened heart** chooses MY beliefs & MY feelings & MY understanding for daily living. The New Heart chooses...?

Which heart is making your most important decisions?

The **Hardened Heart** that says "I'm Right, don't try to correct me! I can't help the way I am! That's only your opinion!

Or the **New Heart** that says "You do not know what right & wrong is! Let God help you! Listen to what God actually says!

The more you listen to the **New Spirit and develop the New Heart**, the **MORE SELF CONTROL YOU HAVE**.

The more you listen to your **old hardened heart**, the more Anger & Pride & Temptation & vulgarity **CONTROL YOU!**

**And here is the most frightening part:** To all those who would not listen & would not control themselves to follow God -

**Exodus 7:3** "But I will harden Pharaoh's heart **Exodus 14:17** "...behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians

**Joshua 11:20** For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, to meet Israel in battle

**John 12:40** "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART TO BE HEALED

If you **PROFANE** God's Name by hardening your heart to His instructions, **HE will harden your heart fully** to blind your mind, darken your understanding & parade your ignorance before all to make you **detestable** before others as He did Israel.

If you **RESPECT** God's Name and allow the New Heart to follow His instruction, wisdom, knowledge & freedom are yours.