

With the continuation of Jesus' centrality to the Old Testament narrative, the author of Hebrews makes a strong declaration that He is the high priest and apostle of our confession. In the following section he then exhorts his audience to "take care" as we walk together toward Christ and our experience with Him, avoiding the deception of sin and a hard heart that would ultimately follow.

Hebrews 3:7-19

Take Care

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Most people are familiar with the idea of a hard heart. It describes a person who is unteachable, prideful, and perhaps difficult to love. While no one seeks to grow in their hardness of heart, a soft heart can also carry connotations of cowardice, weakness, or susceptibility, if we aren't careful with how we define it. Knowing genuinely what it means to have a soft heart is one thing, cultivating it is another.

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

HAVE you ever experienced a hard heart, personally or from someone else?

HOW would you describe hard-heartedness?

WHAT does it mean to have a soft heart toward God and others?

HOW does someone gain a hard heart?

HOW would you say a person gains a heart that is soft and tender toward the Lord and others?

Hebrews 3:7-19

Take Care

Read Hebrews 3:7-19

OBSERVATION

Who does the author quote in vs. 7, and in what tense is it written?

What passage is referenced in vs. 7-11?

Describe the warnings given in vs. 7-8 and vs. 12.

What command do you see in vs. 13?

According to vs. 14, what have we come to share in?

In vs. 16-18, what three questions are asked, and how are they answered?

What conclusion is given in vs. 19?

INTERPRETATION

Read Psalm 95 and consider the contrast between vs. 1-7 to that of 8-11.

Read Numbers 13-14 and recount the “rebellion” referenced in Hebrews 3:8. Consider too Exodus 17 and the reference to Meribah and Massah in the wilderness (Psalm 95:8).

How do these accounts in the OT shed light on how the people, even though they had seen God’s work, went “astray in their hearts” (Psalm 95:9-10)?

How is the audience in Hebrews facing similar challenges in their experience with the Lord, presenting the potential to “fall away”? Consider Hebrews 12:5. How can we face the same challenges? See Mt. 7:21-23.

What does the author mean when he says to “take care” in vs. 12? How are we to do this? Consider vs. 13.

How does the “deceitfulness of sin” harden us? (vs. 13)

Is vs. 14 an explanation of how we come to share in Christ, or a definition of a Christian? Consider 3:6 as you respond.

What is the author’s concluding thought of unbelief amongst the body of “believers”? How does 1 John 2:18-19 inform us on the same topic?

APPLICATION

How can you begin to “take care” right now, in your walk of faith? What role does listening to the Spirit have to do with your growth toward a tender heart so you might better be able to “take care”?