

A heart-shaped rock, light blue-grey in color, sits on a weathered wooden plank. Several rusty nails are visible, some protruding from the plank and others partially embedded in the rock. The background is a blurred, dark, overcast sky and water, creating a somber and reflective atmosphere.

# Warning Against Hardening of Heart

Hebrews 3: 7 - 19





Purpose of warnings are to help us to  
focus, not make us fearful

BEWARE  
OF  
TRIPPING

A photograph of a residential area, likely a public housing estate. In the foreground, a yellow pillar supports a white sign with red text that reads "BEWARE OF TRIPPING". To the left, there is a red-framed structure and a bench. The background shows a paved walkway, a grassy area, and a multi-story white building with laundry hanging on balconies. Large trees are visible behind the building.





# Overview

- What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?
- What are the consequences of a hardened heart?
- How can we cultivate a believing heart for God?



# Hebrews 3:7-19

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ “

# Hebrews 3:7-19

<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. <sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

<sup>15</sup> As has just been said:

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts  
as you did in the rebellion.”



## Hebrews 3:7-19

<sup>16</sup> Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

A heart-shaped rock, light blue-grey in color with a rough, textured surface, sits on a rusty metal stand. The stand consists of several vertical rods and a horizontal base, all showing signs of rust. The background is a blurred, overcast landscape with a body of water and distant hills.

What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?



# What does it mean to harden our hearts?

Hebrews 3:7b,8

Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not **harden your hearts**  
as you did in the **rebellion**, during  
the **time of testing in the**  
**wilderness.....** [b]

[b] Psalm 95:7,8

Psalm 95: 7,8

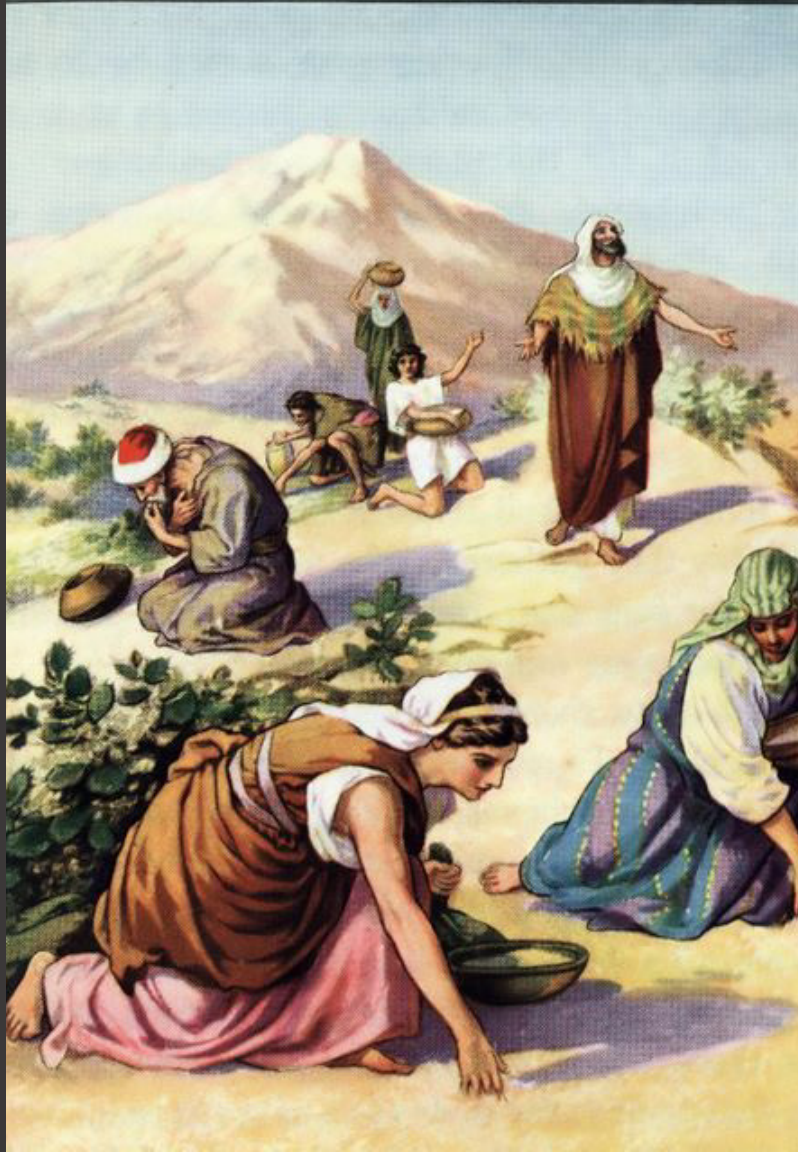
7<sup>b</sup> Today, if only you would hear his  
voice,

8 “Do not harden your hearts as  
you did at **Meribah**,

as you did th day at **Massah** in  
the wilderness,

**Story in  
Numbers  
20**

**Story in  
Exodus  
17**



# What happened before Massah?

- God set the Israelites free from slavery
- God performed supernatural plagues against Egypt
- God parted the Red Sea for the Israelites
- God fed the Israelites with bread from heaven daily



# Exodus 17:1-7

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> So they quarrelled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.”

Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?”

<sup>3</sup> But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “**Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?**”

<sup>4</sup> Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.”

# Exodus 17:1-7

<sup>5</sup> The LORD answered Moses, “Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. <sup>6</sup> I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarrelled and because they tested the LORD saying, “**Is the LORD among us or not?**”

# 40 years after the incident in Exodus 17...



Yet the LORD says, "During the forty years that I led you through the wilderness, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet."

*Deut 29:5*



# Numbers 20:1-13

In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

<sup>2</sup> Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. <sup>3</sup> They quarrelled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD!

<sup>4</sup> Why did you bring the LORD’s community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? <sup>5</sup> Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!”



# What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?

*To lose faith and not give the benefit of the doubt to God at the first signs of uncertainty, even when God has been gracious and faithful throughout.*





We don't always get to  
read the final chapter in  
the story.

At some point, we need to  
decide for ourselves, *do  
we harden our hearts  
towards God? Or do we  
trust Him in faith?*





# What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?

To set the posture of our hearts against God



So that at the first signs of uncertainty



Our immediate response is to doubt Him and His goodness towards us



It is the first step towards total unbelief towards God.



# Overview

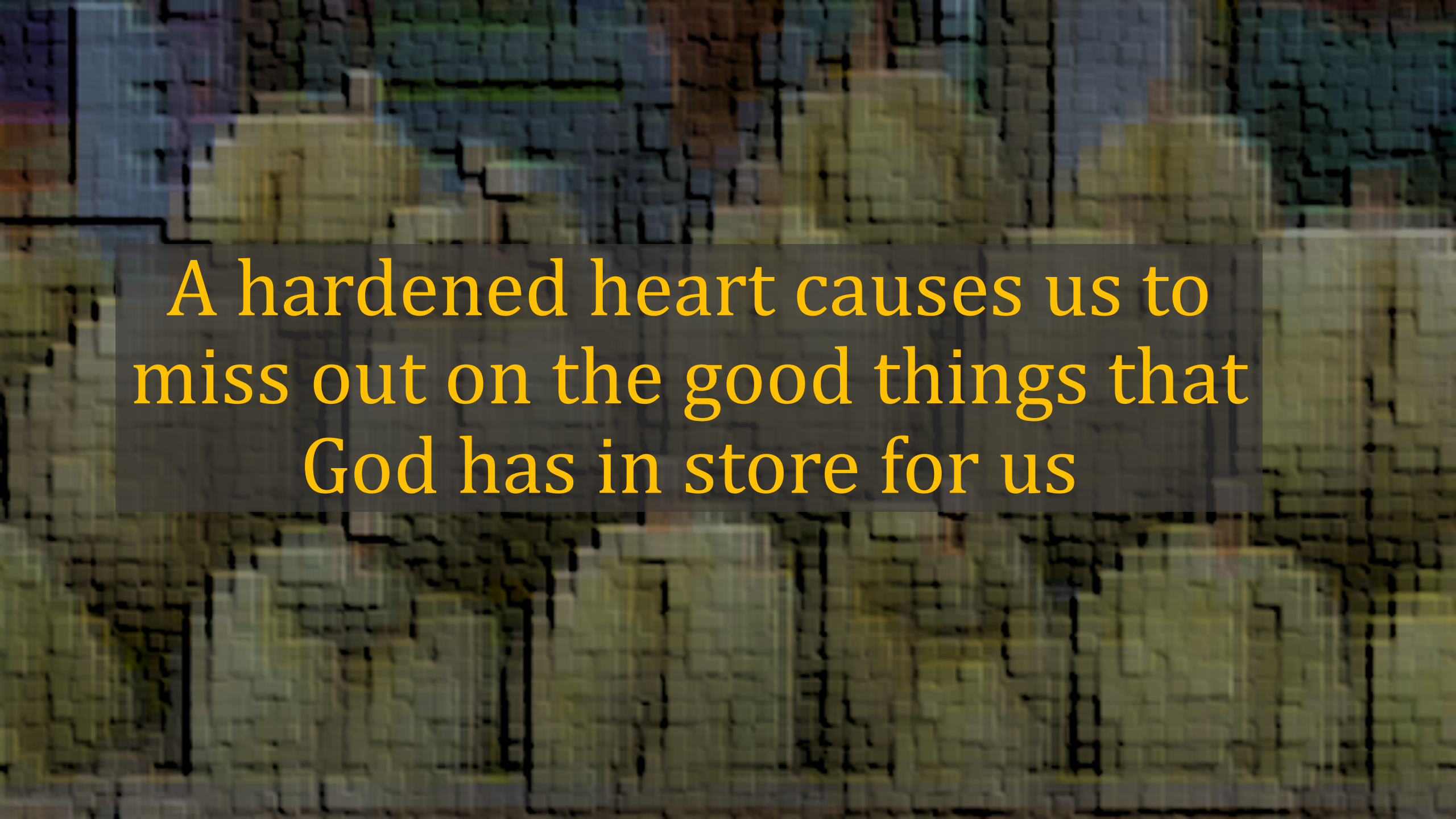
- What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?
- What are the consequences of a hardened heart?
- How can we cultivate a believing heart for God?

# A hardened heart displeases God

<sup>16</sup> Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? <sup>17</sup> And **with whom was He angry** for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed?


Hebrews 3:16-18





A hardened heart causes us to  
miss out on the good things that  
God has in store for us





God's will for us is good, pleasing  
and perfect – Trust Him

COMC  
Adventure Grove



A heart-shaped stone, possibly a piece of slate or a similar dark grey rock, is the central focus. It is balanced on a stand made of four rusty, vertical metal rods. The rods are attached to a horizontal base that appears to be a piece of weathered wood or metal. The background is a blurred, overcast landscape, suggesting a beach or a rocky shore with water in the distance. The overall tone is somber and contemplative.

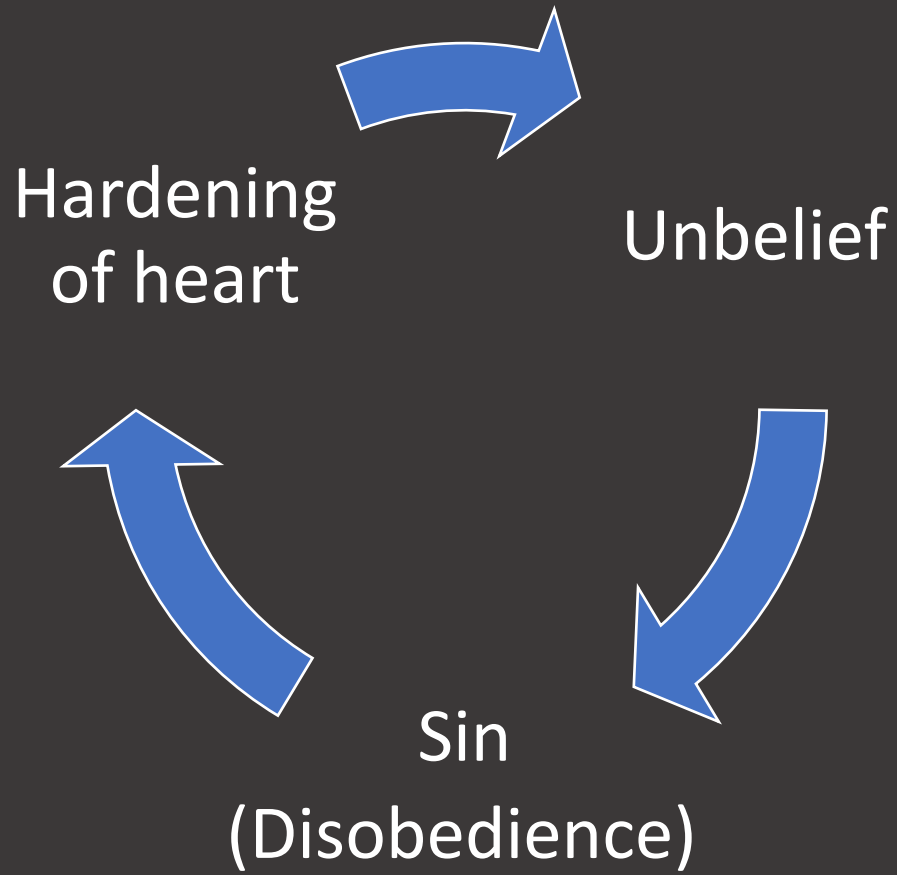
A hardened heart leads us to sin  
and rebel against God



Trust and Obedience are linked



# Vicious cycle of unbelief and disobedience

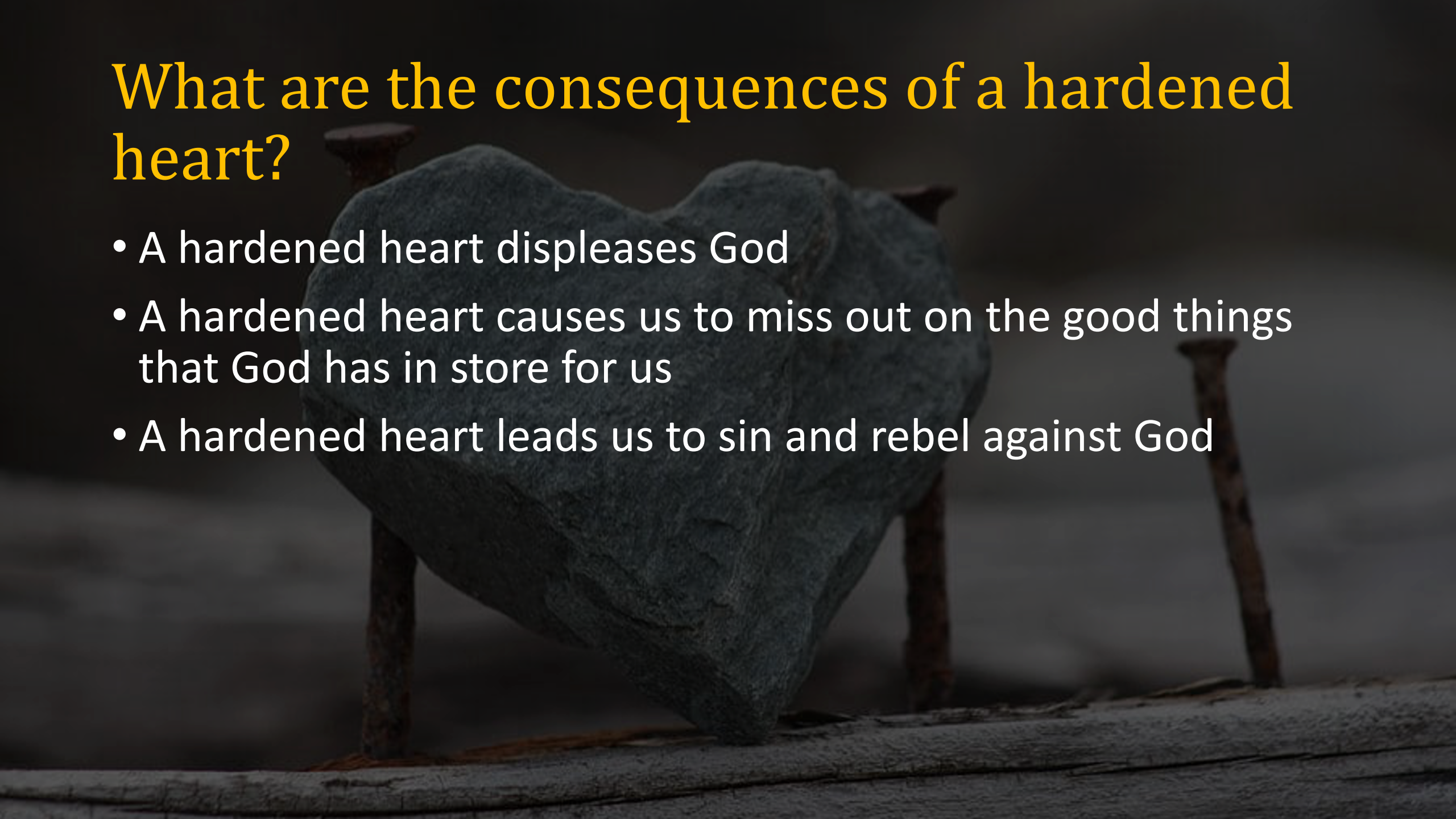


*...so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*

*Heb 3:13*

# What are the consequences of a hardened heart?

- A hardened heart displeases God
- A hardened heart causes us to miss out on the good things that God has in store for us
- A hardened heart leads us to sin and rebel against God





# Overview

- What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?
- What are the consequences of a hardened heart?
- How can we cultivate a believing heart for God?



<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

*Hebrews 3:12-13*



# How can we cultivate a believing heart towards God?

- We need to be on the lookout for the condition of our hearts
- We need to encourage one another (we need community)
- We need to encourage one another daily (frequency matters)

An underwater photograph showing two steep, rocky cliffs on either side, creating a narrow passage. The water is a deep blue, and sunlight rays are visible filtering down from above. A dark, semi-transparent overlay covers the bottom half of the image, providing a background for the text.

**We need to be on the lookout for the  
condition of our hearts**



A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands clasped together in a prayerful gesture. The person's face is partially visible in profile, looking down. A Bible is resting on their lap. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be a bed with white linens. The overall tone is contemplative and spiritual.

# Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

# Hebrews 3:7-19

<sup>7</sup> So, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. <sup>10</sup> That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ “



How we react to God's  
Word reveals the  
condition of our  
hearts





**We need to encourage one another  
(we need community)**





Even heroes need encouragement

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But God has put the body together, giving greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

1 Cor 12:24-27







We need to encourage one another daily  
(frequency matters)



<sup>12</sup> See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.  
<sup>14</sup> We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

*Hebrews 3:12-14*

# Do not harden your heart against God!

- What does it mean to harden our hearts against God?
  - *To lose faith and not give the benefit of the doubt to God at the first signs of uncertainty, even when God has been gracious and faithful throughout.*
- What are the consequences of a hardened heart?
  - *It displeases God*
  - *We miss out on good things that God has in store for us*
  - *It leads to sin and rebellion against God*
- How can we cultivate a believing heart for God?
  - *Know the condition of our hearts as revealed through God's Word*
  - *Be part of a Christian community*
  - *Encourage one another daily*





God, in His grace, continually reaches out to  
us, even when we are far from Him



## Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.