

Healing for a Hardened Heart

Mark 6:45-52

“For they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.” (v. 52)

The disciples’ hearts were not hardened against Christ. They left all to follow Him. But they had to learn, as we do today, that just because we follow Him does not mean our faith is what it should be.

Every day we have to contend with the flesh, that part of our nature that is hostile to God and unbelieving. When the flesh is allowed to control, our hearts and minds are hardened from believing the way we need to, the way God wants us to.

God’s power is always available, but when our hearts are hardened, we do not expect to see it, and when we do, we don’t believe it. On the other hand, when our hearts are right, we believe God can do anything and we expect to see God’s power revealed on a regular basis. In fact, when we do, it’s a joy but not a surprise.

Is it possible for our hearts to be healed from hardness? It is, but it will take work and deliberate effort, because we’re so used to being controlled by the flesh. The good news is that The Holy Spirit will help us.

Here are the steps we should take to be healed of our hardened hearts.

1. Keep your mind high. (Col. 3:2)

The reason we need to set our minds on things above, not on things of the earth, is because we are no longer of this world. Our citizenship is now in heaven and all of our help and hope is there as well.

To set our minds where Christ is seated at the right hand of God relates to Christ's authority. We should always keep our minds on Christ's power and authority over all things (Matt. 28:18). The things of earth are carnal, temporary and will control us if we keep our minds on them. However, when our minds are stayed on Jesus, we expect to see God's intervention in our everyday walk, and when we believe, we receive.

Renewing our minds is the answer. We need an ongoing revelation of our Savior and His word. The more our minds are illuminated (Eph. 1:18-19), the more influence the new nature has over the old and the easier it is to have faith in God. In this place, nothing is impossible.

2. Keep your flesh under. (Rom. 8:5-8, 13-14)

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." (v. 5-6)

We don't bring our flesh under subjection by will power. We do it by the Spirit. We can always tell when we are trying to subdue the flesh the wrong way, because the flesh wins out. That's when we fall back into sinful ways. However, when we rely on the Holy Spirit, everything changes. That's the way to keep your flesh under.

There is still corruption in us, no matter how far along we are in our Christian walk. We always have to crucify the flesh. The secret is to make no provision for the flesh (Rom. 13:14). The word "provision" means planning in advance, or making preparations." Don't plan ahead and make preparations to sin. Make plans to put God first.

3. Keep your faith out front. (Eph. 6:16)

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”

“Above all” does not mean the shield of faith is more important than the other armor. It means that the faith must be “out front.” It goes ahead of us into the battle. All of the armor is equally important.

With our minds high, our flesh under, and our faith out front, we can better handle the fiery darts of the wicked one. They will come, and we have to be ready. They try to bring fear, worry, discouragement, sins of the flesh, anger, unforgiveness, and a host of other things.

When they come, we have to speak our faith as Jesus told us. Faith speaks. Declare what you believe. The more these things come, the more we must keep our faith out front. It won't be easy, but in Christ we are always victorious. Use God's word. Keep it in your mind, your heart, and your words.

When these things are followed and practiced regularly, they will heal our hearts from hardness and enable us to believe the way God wants us to. With this kind of heart in place, nothing is impossible. His power is made available and miracles can happen when we need them.