

## SERMON-BASED STUDY: RESPONDING TO GOD'S VOICE

**Hebrews 3:7-19, ESV** – <sup>7</sup> Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, “Today, if you hear his voice, <sup>8</sup> do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, <sup>9</sup> where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’ <sup>11</sup> As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’ ” <sup>12</sup> Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. <sup>13</sup> But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. <sup>14</sup> For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. <sup>15</sup> As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.” <sup>16</sup> For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? <sup>17</sup> And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? <sup>18</sup> And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? <sup>19</sup> So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

### Notes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

### QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

### ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 What does it mean to *hear the voice* of God? How can believers do this today?
- 2 How does a hardening heart develop over time? Why is this the typical way it happens?

- 3 Why does the author say the following statement twice: *Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion*? Why is the word *today* significant?

## DIGGING DEEPER

A **Ephesians 4:17-24, ESV** – <sup>17</sup> Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

- 4 What does Paul mean by the *futility of their thinking* and a *darkened understanding*? What are some examples of futile ways of thinking or behaving that are present today?

- 5 How can we actively *be renewed in the spirit of our minds* to align with Christ's teachings?

- 6 What does it mean for the new self to be *created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness*? What does this mean for the life of a believer?

B **1 John 2:1-6, ESV** – My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. <sup>3</sup> And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, <sup>5</sup> but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: <sup>6</sup> whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

- 7 What does it mean to *know him*? How does obeying God's commandments reflect a genuine understanding and love for Christ?

8 What does it mean to abide in Christ? How did Christ *walk* during his time as a human? How can we walk in the same way?

9 How can the truth of God's grace, as seen through Jesus' sacrifice, help Christians to deny worldly temptations?

## TAKING IT HOME

Describe a personal "wilderness" or testing experience in your faith. How did you respond? How can you cultivate a stronger faith to avoid the pitfalls of unbelief in your own life? How can we apply the lesson of not delaying our response to God?

## PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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## FOR FURTHER STUDY

Proverbs 28:13-14

Jeremiah 17:9

Matthew 13:14-15

Mark 4:24

John 14:26; 16:13