

STUDY NOTES

HEBREWS: A PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE FAITH

A Series At New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Soft Ears, Soft Hearts” on 2/9/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this study guide effectively, you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these notes for group study and reflection should read the biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 3:1-6

IF WE HOLD FAST TO OUR CONFIDENCE AND HOPE

In chapter 3, the writer of Hebrews makes the case for Jesus being better than Moses. Moses was a part of the house that Jesus is building, but make no mistake, Jesus is the one building the house. The house that He is building is the people of God: the Church. The writer of Hebrews tells us that we need to keep our confidence and hope in Jesus.

Jesus is a faithful builder.

- *The people of Israel lost their hope in God when things got difficult. Why do you think the writer of Hebrews warns us from losing our confidence and hope in Jesus?*

REBELLION, DISBELIEF, AND THE HEART

Read Hebrews 3:7-15. Multiple times in these verses, the writer of Hebrews references the link between the “hardening of heart” and disbelieving. The heart is the center of the inner life of humans and the source or seat of all the forces and functions of soul and spirit.

The heart is the seat of the will.

Our hearts become hardened when we begin to believe that we need other things that aren't God to satisfy us. Those other things don't satisfy but they look like they will. We are being deceived. In other words, we don't have to act for our hearts to start to become hardened. It is when we begin to believe that other things will bring us contentment that our hearts actually start to harden.

Our hearts remain open to the work of God when we recognize and resist the deceitfulness of sin.

- *We often think that our hearts become hardened after acting on sin, but the writer of Hebrews says that our hearts become hardened before we act. How have you experienced hardness of heart even before acting on sin?*

EXHORTING EACH OTHER

To oppose the deceitfulness of sin, the author tells us to “exhort one another every day.” That means we can't do this alone. We need other people around us to urge, challenge, or warn us when we are falling into the deceitfulness of sin.

- *Why do you think the remedy for the deceitfulness of sin is the exhortation of others?*
- *In order to be exhorted by others daily, what do you need to do to place yourself in situations where you can be exhorted?*

HOLDING FAST TO OUR ORIGINAL CONFIDENCE

In verse 14, the author returns to the idea of holding fast to our confidence in Jesus. This time, he links it to being exhorted by others. We need others to tell us when we should hold on to our confidence in Christ. It can be easy to drift toward putting our confidence in other things—even good things—but our confidence should be in Christ alone.

Where is your confidence today?

- *What good things do you often place too much confidence in? How have those things let you down?*
- *How can you know that your confidence is ultimately in Jesus?*
- *Pray with each other to find our ultimate confidence in Jesus.*