**Turning Away from God**

**Introduction:**

God’s people were led out of Egyptian captivity by the hand of God. But something happened on the way to the Promised Land. Hebrews 3:7-11 Their hearts were hardened and they turned away from God. One can fall away today as they did. The Hebrew writer continues on in the next three verses and tells us how to avoid this great tragedy.

**Text:** Hebrews 3:12-14

**Body:**

1. **Take Care** (Verse 12)
* The Greek word: “blepo” [present tense] means make a habit, constantly observing with a view to avoid. Be continually on your guard.

Examples of what displeased God: I Corinthians 10:5-12

* Your salvation needs all of your thought and care. Don’t trifle with it. Consider your ways. Haggai 1:5-6
* The believer can become an unbeliever. Evil thoughts are actively harmful and destructive. Jeremiah 17:9-10, Mark 7:21-23
* “Unbelieving”: Lack of faith Hebrews 10:38-39 The pressure of circumstances may drive you into an unbelieving state of mind. This may also happen when you associate with those who doubt God’s Word. “Heart”: Intellect, Emotions, Will Luke 6:45
* “Depart”: Fall away Turning away from God to any degree is very dangerous. Luke 8:13, I Timothy 4:1
1. **Exhort One Another** (Verse 13)
* “Exhort”: Urge, Warn Hebrews 10:24-25 There must be mutual exhortation and encouragement. We must love each other enough to warn of forsaking God.
* “Still called today” – Don’t put off warning others. Take advantage of today. II Corinthians 6:1-2
* “Be hardened” – deaf and blind to sin Become insensitive to sin. It isn’t as painful as it used to be. A dangerous condition is arteriosclerosis (hardening of arteries). The same Greek word: skleruno is used in the text. If the truth of God’s Word doesn’t move you as it once did or if God’s love doesn’t motivate you as it once did, you may have become hardened. Romans 2:4-5
* “Deceitfulness of sin” Sin may mislead the mind; lead it away from the truth; cause it to believe what is false. If sin was not such a pleasure, it would not be such a problem. Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God. Hebrews 11:25 Sin seduces by arousing desire or hope. It entices by being beautiful or attractive. It uses false appearances, lying promises, and fatal traps. Romans 7:11
1. **Remain Firm to the End** (Verse 14)

“Partakers”: Sharers in Christ, Participators, Comrades Hebrews 3:1

“If”: Conditional I Corinthians 15:1-2 Only persevering faith is saving faith. II Peter 2:20-21

We must try and bring back those who have strayed. James 5:19-20

“Hold our confidence”: Assurance, Foundation We need a solid, unshakeable confidence in Christ. “Firm to the end”: Fixed, Stable, Sure Hebrews 10:23

**Conclusion:**

Yes, if we are not careful, we can develop an evil heart of unbelief. But by following these steps, we can remain faithful to the end.

Bobby Stafford January 20, 2013