

The Master Surgeon

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The Context

Eph 4:14-16 - 14 so that we may no longer be children (infants), tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

...Next step...

Eph 4: 1 – 6 - I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The Condition

”It is a *spiritual condition of persistent unresponsiveness to God and His Word*, which (if not treated) can rise to the level of rejection and hostility. Apart from *divinely granted repentance*, this condition can mature to a *permanent and unchanging state, leading to condemnation.*”

HARDNESS AND DULLNESS OF HEART

The Heart

Physical

Heart beat means life (1 Sam 25), an obvious metaphor as “the centre” (Mat 12:40)

The Heart

Psychological

Debates (Mark 2:6), Remembers, reflects (Luke 2), Joy (John 16), Bitterness (Proverbs 14), Lust (Matthew 5:28), sympathy (Exodus 23:9), gentle, lowly (Matthew 11:29), self-deceiving (James 1:26), arrogant (Isaiah 9:9), hidden core of being (1 Peter 3:4)

The Heart

Religious

**Hidden self fully known to God (Luke 9:47),
Divine indwelling (Galatians 4:6), Far from God
(Matthew 15:8), the alternative to divine
possession is the demonic influence that can
drag the heart down. (John 13:2, Acts 5:3)**

Hardness or dullness of Heart (Symptoms)

Obduracy, blindness, deafness, moral insensitivity, foolishness, unbelief, stubbornness, stupidity, brutishness, deficiency in understanding, darkness, and stiffness of neck.

In Scripture (OT)

The Old Testament uses four verbs and one noun to express hardness of heart:

1. חָזַק (chazaq) “make strong, hard”;
2. כָּבַד (kaved) “make heavy, hard”;
3. קָשָׁה (qashah) “make hard”;
4. אָמַץ (amets) “make strong, hard”;
5. מְגִינָה (meginnah) “dullness.”

In Scripture (OT)

- **Stubbornness – Verbally vs Secretly (Deut 29:19, Psa 81:12, Jer 3:17; 7:24; 9:14; 11:8; 13:10; 16:12; 18:12; 23:17)**
- **Stiff-Necked – Animal vs Yoke (Exod 32:9; 33:3; 33:5; 34:9; Deut 9:6, 13; 10:16; 31:27)**
- **Uncircumcision – Circumcise the heart (Deut 10:16)**
- **Beast-Like Behavior – (Psa 49:10; 73:22; 92:6; 94:8; Prov 12:1; 30:2)**

In Scripture (NT)

1. σκληρύνω (sklērynō) Hardness (Matt 19:8 Divorce)
2. νωθρός (nōthros) (adjective in Heb 5:11 for “dull” of hearing)
3. ἀπερίτμητος (aperitmētos) (adjective in Acts 7:51 for “uncircumcised” in heart and ears);
4. σκληροτράχηλος (sklērotrachēlos) (adjective in Acts 7:51 for “stiff-necked” people);
5. ἀσύνετος (asynetos) (adjective in Mark 7:18 for “without understanding”).

In Scripture (NT)

- The parable of the Sower – 3 out of 4 prove to be unresponsive and unfruitful.(Matt 13:14–15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10)
- Feeding of the 5,000 (Mark 6:35–44), demonstrate that “their hearts were hardened” (Mark 6:52 ESV).
- “The god of this world” (likely Satan) causes blindness in 2 Cor 4:4, “The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God”

Prayer Points

Promise - Ezekiel 36:26-27 - 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Prayer Points

- **In what area did I choose to harden my heart towards Your message?**
- **In what area am I blinded by the demonic towards Your message?**