

Today Is the Day

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[0 : 00] Would you stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together, Hebrews chapter 3, verses 7-19.

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, leading you to fall away from the living God, 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.

For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confession. As it is said today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion. For who were those who heard and yet rebelled?

Was it not all those who left Egypt, led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?

So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. May God add a blessing to the reading of his Word. Would you please be seated? I find it interesting how people will pay to see things, read things, and do things that will make them feel scared.

[1 : 58] People pay to go on roller coasters. They'll pay to watch scary movies or enter a haunted house and read horror novels. These kinds of scary things trigger their adrenaline, cause their hearts to race, their energy levels to rise, offering a thrill with little risk of actually having something bad happen to them.

Now, they may go home and sleep with the lights on after they've checked to make sure that nothing's under their bed, a monster or a bad guy or something like that.

And after a while, the effect wears off. I think it's also very strange that the things that should truly scare people don't scare people.

One of the scariest things that I've ever read is in the Bible. In Matthew 7, 15 through 20, Jesus warns his listeners to beware of deceitful, false prophets, whom he likens to wolves dressed in sheep's clothing, seeking to harm and to devour the unsuspecting.

Jesus tells his listeners then how to identify them, that they will bear bad fruit. They will teach false doctrines which contradict God's Word, which contradict his instruction, which tragically, though, will give people a false sense of assurance and a false confidence and a false gospel that cannot save them.

[3 : 37] Now comes the scary part. In Matthew 7, 21 through 23, Jesus says to the crowd, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

On that day, many, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do mighty works in your name?

And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers. Of lawlessness. Jesus says a day of judgment is coming. And on that day, he says there will be many, many who will hear him say, I never knew you.

Depart from me. It's possible to know a lot of things about Jesus, to claim to do a lot of things for Jesus, but never truly know Jesus.

[4 : 42] Judas is the prime example of that tragic reality that Jesus speaks about in Matthew 7, 21 through 23. Judas was one of Jesus' 12 disciples.

He heard Jesus preach. He saw Jesus perform amazing miracles, raising the dead, feeding the thousands with a few loaves and fish, walking on water, calming storms, casting out demons.

But in the end, Jesus knew, as he always knew, that Judas was not one of his true disciples. But Judas had everyone else fooled.

He was deceptive. He was good at masking his true attitude towards Jesus and his true motivation for following Jesus from everyone else, even from Jesus' 11 other disciples.

They spent three years with Judas as they ministered with Jesus. And when Jesus told them, told his disciples at the Last Supper, that one of them would betray him, none of them had any clue as to who he could be talking about.

[5 : 50] None of them pointed the finger and said, I'm pretty sure it's Judas. This passage in Matthew and the example of Judas teaches us a sobering reality.

There have been and are many who act like Christians, who talk like Christians, who look like Christians, but who don't really know Christ.

In John 6, 28 through 29, Jesus is asked a question by some who were in the crowd when he had multiplied the loaves and the fish. John 6, 28 through 29 say this, Then they said to him, to Jesus, What must we do to be doing the works of God?

And Jesus answered him, This is the work of God that you believe in him whom he has sent.

Believe. Have faith. Trust in him as the Son of God and what his first coming achieved.

Those who will hear Jesus say, depart from me are those who never truly trusted him. They sought something from him other than the one thing that they most needed from him, salvation, which is something that only he can provide.

[7 : 09] During his life on earth, Jesus consistently told people to believe in him, consistently warned people about the consequences of rejecting him. The consequences of rejecting him is to hear him say, depart from me.

Those who consistently reject him will ultimately be rejected by him. Jesus consistently taught and contrasted the kingdom of God with the reality of hell.

The Bible says hell is the only alternative to an eternity spent in God's kingdom. It is the opposite of perfect fellowship with God.

Jesus taught that hell is an eternal place. In Matthew 23, 33, 25, 41, in Mark 9, 43, he spoke of hell not in a figurative or symbolic sense, but as a real place with real experiences that take place there. Jesus described hell with vivid imagery. In Matthew 8, 12, he said it is the place of outer darkness where people will weep and gnash their teeth. In Matthew 25, 41, Jesus spoke of hell as an eternal fire and in Mark 9, 43 through 48 as a fire that will never be quenched.

[8 : 29] Jesus' parables consistently portrayed people rejecting God's invitation to fellowship and receiving the alternative for the rejection, which was to be banished from his presence.

All sin is rebellion against God, your holy creator, and hell is the just punishment for rejecting who he is and what he's done, giving us his only son, Jesus, who willingly sacrificed his life on the cross to atone for our sins.

Jesus taught that hell is eternal and those who go there will suffer eternally for their rejection of him, their only hope for salvation. Jesus gave this warning many times, but he also gave good news.

Jesus, the one who warned about hell so often, is the one who saves us from it. In John 3, 16 through 18, Jesus gives both the good news about what he's done, what God has done, and a warning about what will happen to those who reject him as he speaks to Nicodemus.

John 3, 16 through 18, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

[9 : 52] Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only son of God.

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible, God's word, is full of warnings from God. God gives these warnings because he loves the world, because he loves the people he's created in his image.

In Ezekiel 33, 11, God tells us that he takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked and in 2 Peter 3, 9, he tells us that he does not wish for anyone to perish but to repent and be saved.

Hebrews 3, 7 through 19, our text this morning is one of those warnings. In this passage, the writer of Hebrews under the Holy Spirit's inspiration is giving a push to his Jewish readers who are on the fence.

They've heard the gospel. Some had apparently made some kind of profession of faith in Jesus, but they were starting to drift away from the great salvation of Jesus Christ.

[11 : 01] They've begun to experience persecution for their faith in Jesus. They are wondering if following Jesus is worth it. They are in danger of exchanging a more comfortable existence on earth

for an infinitely uncomfortable existence in hell.

Some in this group are in danger of hearing Jesus say to them one day, depart from me. To this point, the writer of Hebrews has used Old Testament scriptures to prove that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of God, superior to angels, superior to Moses, the only one who is able to save us and restore to us the dominion and the fellowship that we had with God before sin entered this world.

The prospect of God's judgment should be terrifying to them. And so he's urging them here, to not follow in the rejection of those who came before, to not harden their hearts towards God and suffer the consequences for that.

He's also urging those who are genuinely saved to keep holding on. As Jesus taught on the day of judgment, many will claim to know him, but only those who have truly trusted in him, only those who have truly put their faith in him, who truly believe and have remained steadfast in that faith until the end.

are truly saved. And so the main idea for this morning's message from our text is that those who harden their hearts towards God will not enter his rest.

[12 : 33] Those who enter God's rest hold firmly to their confidence in the Lord to the end. Those who harden their hearts towards God will not enter his rest. Those who enter God's rest hold firmly to their confidence in the Lord to the end.

In Hebrews chapter 3 and 4, the word rest appears 11 times. And the word today appears five times. The writer of Hebrews uses the word rest to describe the future, eschatological rest, for those who have trusted in Jesus Christ who will experience this world to come where there will be no sin and we will live in paradise with God as man did in the beginning before sin entered the world.

The word today is used for the present time. It's an invitation in the here and now to trust in Jesus Christ because tomorrow is not guaranteed and eternity awaits for all of us.

Today will come to an end but eternity will last forever. The longer I've lived the more I become aware of the importance of today. The more I become aware of the uncertainty of tomorrow and the more I become aware of the reality of death.

The reality that people die when we don't think that they should. When it seems too soon, in middle school and high school I had friends who died in car accidents.

[14 : 07] I had one who died from being electrocuted. In college I had a friend die in his sleep from a heart condition. No one, including his father who was a doctor had any idea that he had.

In the past year I had a friend from high school and a friend from college who died. all the time. Every day we are reminded of the reality of death.

But we don't think it will come for us. At least we think it won't come today. It's like the writer of Hebrews is reaching out and trying through his words grabbing his readers by the collar who are wavering, who are drifting, who are in danger of neglecting the great salvation of Jesus Christ. And it's like he's saying here, wake up! Don't you realize what's at stake here? Your eternity. Don't harden your heart toward God.

Don't reject his gift of salvation. Don't be deceived by sin. Stop being indifferent. Don't waste your life avoiding the suffering for Jesus because if you reject him you will suffer forever for your sins.

[15 : 30] Examine your hearts. Don't fall away. Stop playing games. Don't be like your ancestors who put God to the test. You know where that leads. But to those who are saved, who are enduring in their faith and their confident hope in Jesus, it's like the writer of Hebrews is slinging their arm around his shoulder and putting his other arm around their waist and holding them up and encouraging them.

Whispering in their ear, hold on. Keep going. Press on, friend. Persevere. The Lord sees you and he knows you and he loves you.

He's taken your burden. He's paved the way. Rest assured of that truth that he is with you. He will keep you to the end.

I don't know for sure which one of those two groups you're in today, but I am sure that the Lord knows and I know that he has a word for you today.

And I pray that you will hear what you need to hear from him today and that none of you will one day hear him say, depart from me.

[16 : 51] I never knew you. Our passage today contains three truths that I hope the Lord will use to either call you to enter into his saving rest today or encourage you to hold on, knowing he has an

eternal hold on you.

So the first truth, we have an example to avoid in verses 7 through 11. Verse 7 begins with the word therefore, and again whenever we see that word we ask ourselves what's that therefore there for? In verses 1 through 6 of chapter 3, the writer of Hebrews, this is why that therefore is there, he presents the reasons for why Jesus is superior to Moses, whom the Jews revered.

Moses was a servant in the household of God, he was faithful in that, but Jesus is the son of God over the household of God. Moses was faithful, but Moses failed.

Jesus was faithful, and he never failed. Those who truly are part of God's household are those who hold fast to their confident hope in who Jesus is and in what Jesus has done.

[18:10] The case for Jesus' supremacy is further emphasized here by the assertion that since Jesus is greater than Moses, they must not harden their hearts to his message as the Israelites harden their hearts towards God during the Exodus under Moses.

Verse 7 begins, therefore, as the Holy Spirit says. Now, right here, we need to kind of pause and zoom in and look closely at those five words because they're important.

as the Holy Spirit says. I count to four, there's five. The writer of Hebrews is about to quote a portion of Psalm 95 with the preface, as the Holy Spirit says.

And in saying that, he's affirming two principles about the Bible that are important. First, is the Holy Spirit's role in inspiration, in the formation of Scripture.

God is the author of Scripture. Scripture. When you read the Bible, you are reading God's Word. The second is seen in the tense he uses.

[19:19] He doesn't say, as the Holy Spirit said in the past tense. He uses the word says in the present tense. This is a testimony to the living character of God's Word.

Every time you open the Bible, the Holy Spirit speaks. through his words, though his words were recorded long ago, they are living words.

The truths they declared back then are just as true today. The writer of Hebrews states this truth more explicitly in chapter 4, verse 12. There he says, for the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The Bible is God's Word. It's divinely inspired. It's inerrant. It's trustworthy. It's alive. And it's powerful. The writer of Hebrews also demonstrates here that we should read the Old Testament in light of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the interpretive key. He's the connection between both testaments. He's the fulfillment of the promises and the prophecies and the patterns contained in the Old Testament.

[20:37] In Psalm 95, 7 through 11, that's the passage of Scripture the writer of Hebrews wants his readers to understand here in the light of Jesus Christ.

And so again, those verses say, today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion on the day of testing in the wilderness where your fathers put me to the test and saw my wonders for 40 years.

Therefore I was provoked with that generation and said, they always go astray in their heart. They have not known my ways. As I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest. The book of Exodus records God's delivering his people from slavery in Egypt.

God did this in miraculous ways. He sent a series of ten plagues on Egypt before Pharaoh then finally let God's people go.

soon after they left Pharaoh changed his mind and he sent an army after them. The Hebrews reached the Red Sea with no way to cross and with Pharaoh's army on their tail the people were afraid and they began to complain.

[21:47] They complained to Moses about God. They complained to Moses about Moses. They were upset. They wished that they'd stayed in Egypt instead of dying in the wilderness.

And then something miraculous happens. God parts the Red Sea. The Hebrews cross over and once they all get safely to the other side God drowns Pharaoh's soldiers in the waters.

The people then commence on a journey to the land God promised to give them. A land described as flowing with milk and honey. Once they get to the outskirts of that land, the land of Canaan, God tells Moses to send twelve men representing each of the tribes of Israel to spy out the land.

These men go and they do that for forty days. They come back and they give their report. They say the land is just as God told us. It is flowing with milk and honey.

They brought back fruit from the land which was bountiful and plentiful. Everything seemed to be going just as God said that it would. But ten spies, ten of those twelve spies had bad news. [22 : 58] They let the people know the current occupants of the land were big and they were strong and they lived in fortified cities. This is frustrating just to read because think about what they had just experienced.

God had just delivered them from one of the most powerful nations in the world at that time and now they get to the place where God says I'm going to give you this land and they look at powerful people and they think what are we going to do now?

They'd forgotten who God was, they'd forgotten what God had done. Not all of them did though.

Caleb, one of the spies, he hadn't forgotten and he speaks up and he tries to quiet the people and dispel their concerns and he says let's go, let's go take it.

He trusted that God would deliver on his promise just as he had delivered his people from slavery. Unfortunately, God's people chose to fear men and what men might do to them more than they had faith in God and what he would do for them.

The people weep and they wail, they moan and they groan, they rebel against God. Numbers 14, 28 through 30 records God's response to his people's faithlessness and disobedience.

[24 : 16] He tells Moses what to tell them. Say to them, as I live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you. Your dead bodies shall fall in the wilderness and all your number listed in the census from 20 years old and upward who have grumbled against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell except Caleb, the son of Jephunneh and Joshua, the son of Nun.

The warning in Psalm 95 is sobering and it's serious. Just as God did with Israel, he will shut out from his rest those who rebel against him, those who are unfaithful, those who presume on his grace, those who reject his promise to provide, who harden their hearts, who test his patience, who doubt his ability and who choose to go their own way, who choose to live in fear rather than faith. Like faithless Israel, those who presume on God's grace will wander and they will die in the wilderness. Those who reject Jesus will die in their sins and they will spend eternity in hell in the outer darkness.

Many heard the promise but only a few from that large group entered the promised land. God's point the Holy Spirit is making through the writer of Hebrews couldn't be more clear.

God is patient but his patience runs out. And if you continue in your unbelief, if you continue in sin, if you continue in rebellion and rejection, you will not enter God's rest.

[26 : 06] And so he's saying here, he's employing here, don't follow that example. Now with that example of Israel's rebellion as the backdrop, the writer of Hebrews exhorts his readers to take care, lest they experience the same fate.

And so now we come to the second truth, an exhortation to heed. An exhortation to heed. In verse 12, the writer of Hebrews begins to apply Psalm 95 to his audience.

He says, take care brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. In the Greek, the word take care is written in the imperative.

It could be translated this way, watch out. And notice that he says any of you. In other words, he's saying all of you, everyone, reading this letter, everyone who is hearing these words, watch, watch out.

Danny's car is equipped with one of those collision avoidance systems. If you start drifting off the road a little bit, a picture of a coffee cup will appear on the dashboard with a suggestion that maybe you need to rest, that maybe you need to let someone else drive, which is really annoying to me.

[27 : 30] I was like, you're a machine, I am a man. You do what I tell you to do, I don't take suggestions from a car about whether or not I need to rest.

But I remember the first time I was driving her car and it sensed that I was about to get into a collision. Have you ever been in a situation like that?

And I mean, bright red lights are flashing on the dashboard, alarms are going off in the car, and when you see that, your reaction isn't to hit the gas pedal, but to step on the brake.

Watch out! And when you hear that, what do you do? You stop. And in this case, you stop to examine your heart. And the author of Hebrews says, examine your heart, whether or not you truly believe.

One of the worst pieces of advice our culture gives to people is to follow their heart. An unbelieving heart is the worst thing to follow, because it will cause you to fall away from the living God.

[28 : 43] God talks about this in Jeremiah 17, 9-10. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately sick. Who can understand it? I, the Lord, search the heart and test the mind to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit.

of his deeds. One of the worst things that can ever happen to a person or to a people, besides dying in their sins, is for God to give them over to what their evil, unbelieving heart desires.

And we read about that in Romans 1, 18-25. Verse 5.

And their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever.

[30 : 12] Amen. So how do we combat an evil, unbelieving heart? Verse 13 provides a remedy.

Hebrews 3.13 says, 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.

The Apostle Paul gives a similar command in Colossians 3.16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

In other words, what we're hearing here is a way to resist a hardened heart is to immerse yourself in the word of Christ, to immerse yourself in his church, to sit under good teaching, to exhort one another, to encourage other believers to not be hardened by this deceitfulness of sin, to be proactive in this, to do this today.

Don't wait. Don't hesitate. Don't see these things as an option, but a priority for you, for others.

Look, all of us were born with a hardened heart which leads to eternal death.

But God, because of his love for us, replaced our hearts of stone with a heart of flesh. Ezekiel 36.26 says, 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.

[31 : 39] While we were dead in our sins, God brought us to life by his grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2.4-7 says, So, how do we know if we've received this heart of flesh?

How do we know if we've been made alive in Jesus Christ? Verse 14 tells us, For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

In John 6, again, many people who were following Jesus started grumbling about him, started grumbling against him, started grumbling about the truths that he was teaching about himself.

And in their grumbling, they were taking offense to Jesus. And Jesus knew this. And he knew that they didn't truly believe. In John 6, 65-68, the Bible says, And he said, This is why I told you that none can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.

After this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, Do you want to go away as well?

[33 : 29] Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed and we have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.

Friends, brothers, sisters, that's it. That's how you know. When life is hard. When things happen that don't make sense to you.

When things happen that you don't understand. If you truly know Christ. If he's truly saved you. You say to yourself, But whom else am I going to go to?

There's no place else for me to go. Jesus has the words of eternal life. He's saved me. I believe in him.

There's no one else I can trust but Jesus. Some of my lowest points in life have been some of my highest points in my walk with Jesus Christ.

[34 : 32] I'm sure many of you can say the same. In fact, I know for some of you that is the case. But for those of you who are wavering, those of you who aren't sure, verse 15 here is for you.

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart as in the rebellion. Friends, you've heard God's voice this morning. You've heard him speak.

Now hear this from Jesus in Matthew 11, 27 through 31. All things have been handed to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Come to me. All who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Today, Jesus says to you, come to me.

[35 : 49] Come to me. I'll bear your burden, and I'll give you my rest. Today. Friend, today.

Not tomorrow. Today. You'll either hear Jesus say, come to me today, or you will hear him say to you, one day, depart from me.

Don't harden your heart. Turn to Jesus. Don't wait. Today. Today is the day.

Now the third truth, an explanation to understand. In verses 16 through 19. In verses 16 through 19, the writer of Hebrews makes his final push for those who have not believed to believe, and for those who have believed to persevere in faith.

Again, he says, for who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt, led by Moses, and with whom was he provoked for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, and whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

[36 : 54] And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. Ultimately, God is the one who completes the work he began in us when he saved us.

Philippians 1.6 says that. He is the one who ultimately upholds us and guards us. 1 Peter 1.15, one of many passages that say that. But we have a responsibility.

We are called to endure. We are commanded to persevere, to be faithful, and reject the sin of unbelief.

Israel committed many sins in the wilderness, but ultimately the one that kept many of them out of the promised land was the sin of unbelief.

They failed to enter God's earthly rest. How much more terrible is it to fail to enter God's eternal and heavenly rest for rejecting the only hope of salvation, Jesus Christ?

[38 : 07] Friend, if you're here this morning and you've heard this, today is the day. And if you haven't believed this, if you've been rejecting, if you've been rebelling, if you've been running, God in His grace has brought you into this place to hear His voice and to receive His invitation to come.

Don't wait. Tomorrow's not a guarantee. Today, if you hear His voice, turn to Him. Why should you turn to Him? As He said, He takes the burden.

He takes the burden for our sins. On the cross, He who knew no sin became sin so that we, by faith in Him, become the righteousness of Christ. He's willingly taken it all.

He's endured the wrath of God on the cross in our place for our sins. And in replace, He gives us His righteousness, His sinlessness, His holiness.

In the eyes of the Father, He sees us as righteous. He sees us like He sees Jesus Christ, His sinless Son. And we're saved.

[39 : 23] And we'll talk about this more next week, but we enter into His rest, the moment of salvation. There's a rest to come, but there's a rest in Christ. If you've been saved, you know what I'm talking about.

Just a rest from the fear of what's happening in this world. A rest from the fear of what's going to happen tomorrow. A rest from the fear of what will happen to you in eternity.

A rest in knowing that God knows you, He sees you, and He loves you, and He saved you, and He will keep you, and He will cause you to persevere to the end. And that's the invitation for you this morning.

Don't harden your heart. God has brought you here to here, and today is the day. Not tomorrow. Today. For those of us whom God has been gracious to save, here's how I think we should adjust our lives according to what we've heard.

Encourage one another daily so that none are deceived or hardened by sin. Encourage one another daily so that none are deceived or hardened by sin.

[40 : 33] You know, in my experience, and I'm sure you can say the same, the best coaches, the best teachers, the best friends, the best pastors, the best bosses, are those who tell you what you need to hear.

Sometimes what you need to hear is something comforting. Sometimes what you need to hear is something challenging. Sometimes what you need to hear is something that will correct your attitude or your behavior.

And sometimes, sometimes you just need to hear Jesus loves you. Jesus loves you.

And whatever you're going through, sometimes the most comforting thing that we can say to one another is just a reminder Jesus loves you. Every day, not just when we're in church, but every day we should be seeking to encourage one another.

A text message, an email, a phone call, a coffee, a lunch, whatever. Just encouragement. Hey, persevere. Hey, what's going on here?

[41 : 49] you know better. Hey, Jesus loves you. Those words go a long way. And we'll close this morning with God's word having the final word about this in 1 Thessalonians 5, 9 through 11.

Speaking for those who have been saved. Let's pray.

Lord, we we thank you for this warning in your word. God, we thank you that you tell us like it truly is.

And Lord, today your word has a message for one of two groups of people. For those, Lord, who have rejected you, who have rebelled against you, who have ran from you, God, we pray for them that in hearing your word, your truth, your call to come, that they would come to you, that they would turn to you, that they would trust in you, that they would be saved by you, and they would begin to experience the rest that comes when you save someone and transform them and then work in them to make them more like you.

So God, we pray that today would be the day where they would continue to wrestle with you about this until they submit to you as Lord and Savior and experience just your love that is unlike any other.

[43 : 48] God, for those of us whom you've been gracious to save, there's a warning in here for us too. We know that we still wrestle with the flesh. God, we know that sin can cause us to be hardened and so Lord, we pray that your word has softened our hearts this morning.

That God, we would encourage one another more so. That Father, we would be used by you to just be a blessing to others in this church and in this world.

And that we would seek to live our lives for you, Lord, in ways that please you, knowing your word and knowing that what you have prepared for us is more than worth whatever we might suffer here for being a Christian.

And so God, embolden us and strengthen us to persevere and we thank you that we know that the good work you begin is a good work you complete.

Thank you, God, for your grace. Thank you for your truth. Thank you for your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.