

How to Harden your Heart

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[0 : 00] How to harden your heart. The heart is the engine of human existence, someone has said. Over 40% of deaths are caused by issues of the heart. Ultimately, every death is caused by heart failure.

! Life ceases when the heart stops doing its job. God checks the condition of our heart. The Bible speaks much of the heart. We see, for example, Psalm 26 verse 2.

You might like to turn to that one. Psalm 26 verse 2. Now you see these how-to sessions down at Bunnings, they have them, don't they? How to build a pergola or how to fix this or that, how to plant this or that. This is a bit different tonight. How to harden your heart. The Bible speaks of that.

Psalm 26 verse 2. David cried,

Hebrews 4 verse 7. Hebrews 4 verse 7. Hebrews 4 verse 7 it says, Today, Hebrews 4 verse 7 is relevant.

[3 : 23] Today, present tense, Today, Today, If you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

It's relevant, Isn't it? When it says today, It's still today, Today? So that's for today. Hear his voice, Hear his voice, harden not your hearts. There's many dangers we can see that can affect the spiritual life, the heart, and can steer a heart away from God.

Someone has reckoned four of them. Success. People get successful, They get, They get sort of a bit above themselves.

They get selfish as well. That can harden the heart. Sloth. Just slacking off. Stress. Can harden the heart.

Now when something is, I guess the stresses of life at times, Hardens the heart. Now for some of you that play the guitar, You would know that the tips of your fingers get hardened.

[4 : 40] You know, especially this end. As you're pressing the strings, They get hardened. And if you've not played the guitar for a while, like last week, You notice, Oh, I've lost that hardening.

It's about a year since I've played. And you know, there's a hardening that happens. And it's the same with the heart, isn't it? The heart gets calloused, And it gets hard unto God. Pharaoh hardened his heart.

He hardened his heart. Despite repeated beckonings and warnings from God through Moses.

There's a saying, The same sun that melts the wax, Hardens the clay.

The same sun that melts the wax, Hardens the clay. Depends what the substance is. You see, of course, as the word tells us about different qualities of soil.

There's the wayside, all rocky and hard. Or there's the good soil. It's been dug up and nourished and fertilized.

[5 : 48] And it's ready to receive, to grow, to spring life. And what's the quality? What's the nature, the characteristic of the heart? Proverbs 4.23 says, Keep thy heart with all diligence, For out of it are the issues of life.

Keep thy heart. Guard it. Put a sentry over it. Put a guard around it. Put a garrison around your heart. Keep it. Keep it with God. With all diligence.

The fact is, people close their hearts to God. They close their hearts and minds to God. Isn't it sad when you see someone who's like that? They just, they don't want to know.

You know, when you see the door-knocking people, You see those people. What a sad thing it is, To see people blinded and deaf, And blocking out God. But most especially from their heart.

And let's be honest tonight. Christians can get their heart out of sorts with God. I was challenging a sister who was very honest with me.

[6 : 53] She replied by email, Because we hadn't seen her for some time. And I tried to be encouraging and facilitating, Sort of supporting.

Gently stirring and provoking. And she said, She said this, And I'm quoting her now. And she's been very, very honest. And I think this is true for a lot of people.

People who aren't here tonight, for one thing. She says this, In her email. I quote, I do have trouble getting to church. It is work, tiredness, family, And just plain backsliding.

She was being very honest with me. Amen. Very, very honest. Work, tiredness, family, Just plain backsliding.

Hardness of heart. We've got to guard against that. Keep your heart. There are some things to avoid, Some things to seek for. So how do we harden the heart?

[7 : 55] I put to you three things that I reckon, And this is not an exhaustive list by any means, But I'll write them down just to, Just to kind of capture them. I was hoping this pen would be a bit thicker than that.

But, Self-will.! And pride. The self. The self. That's a big obstacle, isn't it?

The self. Another one is, Sloth. Oh, sorry. That's not yet. Spiritual adultery. Having other gods. And inactivity. These are just some thoughts of mine. I'm sure there's many other things we could write down.

But the things that stood out to me in looking at this today.

So we see three themes. How to harden your heart. How to harden your heart.

[9 : 01] Let's look at these things. Hebrews 3:13 talks about people hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. The devil is a sly old fox, isn't he?

Deceitfulness of sin. It's deceitful. Looks good. It's got nicely wrapped. It might be very attractive. But at the heart of it, Australians have a heart problem.

It's a heart problem. In the heart of man, the heart of people. It's the heart that God truly sees and he counts as most important. Now we might like to turn here to 1 Samuel 16.

1 Samuel 16. People like to use this when they say, oh, dress standards are irrelevant, you know. God just looks on the heart. It doesn't matter what you wear.

That's what some people use this to kind of twist this and take it that way. But that's not really what it's saying. We see here David was the eighth of eight boys.

[10 : 02] Eight boys. He was number eight. Imagine at tea time when mum calls the kids to the table and the little runt there, little eight. He might just get the scraps left at the end of the meal, you know.

He was number eight of eight boys. And just the little tack of David. And we see in 1 Samuel 16 verse 7 that God sent Samuel the prophet to anoint a son of Jesse to be the next king.

In 1 Samuel 16 verse 7 it says, But the Lord said unto Samuel, as he was going to make a selection here, Look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him.

For the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. So here was David, the prophet Samuel, was going to select and commission the next king.

And David, he wasn't even on the picture at first. You know, they looked at the seven and then Samuel said, Well, where's the, is this all you've got? And they said, Oh, well, there's David. David is just a little shepherd boy down the road here.

[11 : 12] Little David, you would discount him. He wasn't sort of in the, kind of the short list. He was kind of off the short list, David. But he was David, he was somewhere between, some I reckon, between the ages of 10 to 15.

He was an, he may not have even been a teenager. Maybe he was 13. We don't know the exact age, but certainly he was an adolescent. And when he was selected and commissioned as king, really it was, he wasn't a man, really, as we would reckon a man.

He was still a child. Yet he would have to wait till he was 30 to actually take the throne. Some, maybe 13, he had to wait till he was 30. And then he reigned for 40 years.

And 1 Samuel 16, verse 13, we see where Samuel anointed him. When he was ultimately selected, it says there, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren and the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.

David had been appointed and would start God's training program. In fact, he was anointed three times. It was here, he was anointed to be king of Israel in the place of Saul, who'd been rejected by God.

[12 : 32] In 2 Samuel 2, verse 4, David was anointed king of Judah by the men of Judah. And then thirdly, in 2 Samuel 5, verse 3, David was anointed to be accepted as king, king of Israel, by the elders of Israel.

We see here Samuel told Saul, 1 Samuel 13, verse 14, And the context here is that Saul had disobeyed.

We'll get to that. He goes here in Samuel, talking to Saul. He says, But now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart.

The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart. And the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.

Here's a contrast here. We've got Saul, great king Saul, mighty king Saul, and little shepherd boy David. And one preacher compared King David with King Saul like this.

[13:35] Of Saul, the first king of Israel, it's recorded he received a new heart and a new mind. Saul could walk with the prophets, and God's spirit would come upon him. Saul knew the anointing of God, yet he wasted it.

The old preacher Samuel, the prophet Samuel, warned Saul that God would rather have obedience and submission of heart than the fat of rams. But Saul hid some things in his heart.

In 1 Samuel 15, 22 to 23, it talks about stubbornness and rebellion as the sin of witchcraft. Saul made out he was doing God's will, and then he blamed the people for keeping some of the spoil that he should have destroyed.

The Lord, through Samuel, gave Saul very clear instructions to destroy the Amalekites and that pertaining to the Amalekites.

We pick up the story here in 1 Samuel 15 from verse 13. 1 Samuel 15 from verse 13. And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord, I have performed the commandment of the Lord.

[14:47] Saul was making a big, you know, hoo-ha. He was kind of saying, yeah, I've done everything you told me to do. I've done everything God's commanded me to do. And Samuel said, what meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears?

Bah! What was that? And the lowing of the oxen which I hear? Moo! What's all this noise?

What's this bleating and this mooing going on? And Saul said, they have brought them from the Amalekites. They have brought them from the Amalekites. For the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God, and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Saul had grossly sinned here. Of course, we know David himself also would commit grievous sin.

Taking another man's wife and then engineering that man's death, David was not without fault.

But at the heart of it, the heart of David was different from the heart of Saul. At the heart of David was a heart after God. Now, some preachers kind of, satirically kind of pointed out here that maybe in a church situation, we would kick David out of the church for sexual sin, a gross sin, a blatant, glaring sin, but maybe stubborn rebellious Saul, we might allow him to stay as the deacon.

[16:17] You know, God looks at sin. He looks at the heart. He looks at the heart. God saw the heart. He saw the heart of Saul, and he saw the heart of David. And he still does.

The word records that David was a man after God's own heart. Now, for all his failings, he was commended. Much commended. So we can learn from David, not to discount.

Sin needs to be dealt with. A heart after God speaks of integrity. It speaks of pleasing God. In contrast, backslides, we see a hardness of heart.

A hardness of heart. We can have either a divided heart, or a whole heart. And the word calls us to love God with all of our heart. G-d 6, that familiar one, verse 4 of the Shema of Israel.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy might. And these words which I command thee, this day, shall be in thine heart.

[17:19] Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest start. And thou shalt bind them, as a sign upon thine hand.

You know, he used to wrap those pieces of scripture, and wrap them, and tie them to themselves, upon thy hand, upon the frontlets, between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts, of thy house, and on thy gates.

Now, you see that today. I know a Messianic Jew, a believer in Christ, who still adheres to some Jewish traditions, and he has got scriptures, on the doorposts of his home.

The Messianic, yeah, so, they're in a little capsule, the scriptures are there, so that people walking into his house, see, wow, something different here. Of course, as believers, we can have scripture

texts up in our home, which is a great thing to do.

We can learn to develop a heart for God. Love him with all your heart. It's the fundamental scripture of the Bible. Love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart.

[18 : 26] Have that heart, that is filled with his love, with love for him, love for his truth, doctrinal purity, the truth that makes us free, is life changing. Put it in your heart.

In Acts 13, 22, it says, and when he, God, had removed him, Saul, he raised up unto them David, to be their king, to whom also he gave a testimony, and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.

It's Acts 13, 22. So David had a testimony. A man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. He was well pleasing to God.

His will was God's will. A whole heart, a whole heartedness. Half heartedness is a spiritual problem, isn't it? Half heartedness in the church of God.

We shouldn't have half heartedness. But God can heal our heart problem. I put to you how to harden your heart in three simple, easy steps. There's probably many more you could write and reckon.

[19 : 33] Self-will and pride. Spiritual adultery. Unfaithfulness to God. Sloth. Laziness. Inactivity. Now I would put to you something rather, how we ought rather, God helping us to soften our heart.

Soften your heart. How to, wouldn't that be much better to do and to teach you such a truth as that?

God helping us that we look at the scriptures and see, how can we soften our heart before God?

How can we have a heart like David? A heart after God's own heart. We'll see some truths from David's life. How to have a heart like David.

A heart to repent. Sort of the opposite of having a heart that is full of self and pride and selfishness. But rather having a humble heart.

A heart that's humbled before God. David had such a heart. We see in Psalm 51, he had a heart to repent. Psalm 51, you might want to read the whole psalm.

[20 : 42] But verses 1 and 2, just to get a taste of it, have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Keep humble before God.

That's how to have a humble heart. That's how to have a heart that's tender-hearted before him.

David confessed his sin. I have sinned before you, Lord. I have sinned against the Lord, he said. He responded to failure by repentance and he found forgiveness.

Don't stay here. Move over to here. Amen. Don't have that hardness of heart. I'm going to do my own thing. Me, me, me.

Rather repent. Put your trust in God. Come with a humble heart. Acknowledge your sin. In David, he came to a place where he said, Search me, O God, and know my heart.

[21 : 48] Try me. There was a softness towards God. He sought after God. 2 Samuel 21, verse 1. There was a famine in the days of David. Three years, year after year, and David inquired of the Lord.

Have that heart that you want to inquire of the Lord. Lord, what do you want me to do? Let that be your heart. To come in humility and repentance. In that dependence upon God.

Not self-dependence, but God-dependence. Jeremiah 24, verse 7, it reads, And I will give them a heart to know me. Jeremiah 24, verse 7. I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.

Let go of half-heartedness. There's no time for that. People of God, how much time have we got?

And you might say, oh, about 15 minutes. No!

How much time have we got till it's over? We're gone. There's no time for half-heartedness. Rather, aim for whole-heartedness. Have faith in God.

[22 : 56] Learn to be soft towards Him. Our Lord heals the broken-hearted. You might feel, well, I'm here. God heals the broken-hearted. Let it be broken up.

Let your heart be broken up before God. As David did, and David found forgiveness then. He found forgiveness despite the failings of his flesh. And of David now, he's so featured in the Word of God. We hear of the city of David, the seed of David, the throne of David, the house of David, what's more, the son of David. David, David, acknowledged in the Word his testimony of the stature of the man in spite of his mistakes.

David had a heart right with God. He failed many times, but he sought and found God's grace and forgiveness. And so can we. The pathway of repentance, to know God's forgiveness, to know God's righteousness granted by faith.

Half-heartedness. Hard-heartedness is counteracted by repentance. Another aspect of finding a heart that's tender, being tender-hearted towards God, is having a heart to worship.

[24 : 09] A heart to worship. A heart to worship. of the 150 psalms in your Bible, David is credited for writing over half of them.

Psalm 103, a psalm of David, bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me. Bless his holy name. David had a worshipful heart.

Psalm 100, a psalm of praise. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord, he is God.

It is he that hath made us and not we ourselves. We are his people and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and enter his courts with praise.

Be thankful unto him and bless his name. For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting and his truth endureth to all generations. The psalms of David, filled with praise, filled with adoration of God.

[25 : 14] Psalm 18, verse 3, I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from mine enemies. Psalm 27, 1, the faith of David, the Lord is my light and my salvation.

Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid? Amen. I can see a sister repeating those words from her heart. She's hidden the word in her heart.

Amen. That's what we need to do, isn't it? Such that we've got it inside of us. David cried out with love towards God. Psalm 18, verse 1, I will love thee, O Lord, my strength.

Amen. And Psalm 9, verse 1, he says, I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. I will show forth all thy marvelous works. David had a heart after God.

He was a psalmist. He was filled with praise. He was filled with worship as he praised God from the heart. And we can make melody in our hearts unto the Lord, can't we?

[26 : 16] You know, sometimes we can make melody in our hearts. Maybe we might hum along. You know, if you can't sing, you can hum. Amen. You can make melody in your heart.

It doesn't matter what it sounds like out of your mouth. You might have a joyful sound coming out of your heart. That's what matters. We can have thankful hearts. Hearts that worship with heartfelt worship and thankful hearts.

God commends us, you know, see the story of the ten lepers. Only one went back and thanked him. And God wants us to thank him, doesn't he? Don't be like the nine, be like the one.

Be like the one, the leper, who came back to say, thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Our Lord wants to fill our hearts with praise, to know the joy unspeakable.

Now, you might say, preacher, well, look, it's hard times for me right now. You don't know what my fig tree looks like at the moment. What are we going to do when the fig tree doesn't blossom?

[27 : 15] What are we going to do? Amen? What are you going to do, sister? What are you going to do, brother, when your fig tree doesn't blossom? Habakkuk 3, although the fig tree shall not blossom, and there be no fruit in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet will I rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds feet, and He will make me to walk upon high places.

Yet will I rejoice in the Lord. It doesn't matter the circumstance, the joy, it's not connected to that. It's connected to Him. Amen?

And we can have a heart to worship no matter what. Even when joy seems impossible, God can make it happen in your heart, and you can make melody in your heart unto the Lord, can't you?

Can't you, brother, sister? Truly you can. We can have a heart to worship, even when worship, even when joy seems impossible. And another reflection of the hard-heartedness of men is sloth and inactivity.

[28 : 30] The opposite of that is having a heart to serve. A heart to serve. Brother, sister, have a heart to serve God. David had such a heart.

In Acts 13, 36, for David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep and was laid unto his fathers and saw corruption.

It's telling of David's passing. He ran his race, he finished well, it says he served his own generation by the will of God. Of course, David served in lots of ways.

As the shepherd boy, as the shepherd boy, he took the brothers lunch down to the trenches, as it were, to the battle front, and then he went home a giant slayer, the champion of Israel.

Who would have thought humble young David could take down this formidable foe? David served. David served, it says. God wants our hearts ablaze with love and that love that leads us to action.

[29 : 33] In Luke 24, 32, the two are walking down the Emmaus road and the two disciples and then Jesus joined them.

They didn't realise who he was for a time and they said one to another, did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us, by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures, did not our heart burn within us when he talked to us, when he opened the scriptures?

We need some holy heart burn, don't we? Holy heart burn. You might get some of the unholy heart burn, but we need some holy heart burn, don't we? For that heart to burn within us.

I'm not talking about the burning bosom of the Mormons, but the heart burning within us when God touches our heart and we get to know him more. Now I'm going to call a volunteer.

Brother Mick, I saw that hand. Just come forward, Brother Mick. He's such a willing volunteer. I'm just going to do a demonstration here tonight about having a heart to serve.

[30 : 33] Now I'll just put my stethoscope on here and just, now which side is the heart? The right side, isn't it? Anywhere. The right. The right? Okay. I've just got my stethoscope on here.

I'll just, just, just, quiet. now what did I hear?

The heart of God. The heartbeat of God. What did I hear? Souls. Souls. Souls. Souls. The heartbeat of God. The heartbeat of God is souls, isn't it?

That's what it is. And David had such a heart that he knew God's heartbeat. God's heartbeat. We need some holy heartburn to get, to get that sense of what does God put the priority on?

It's souls. When he saw the city and he was moved with compassion and his heart was moved with compassion, how are we spiritually tonight? Hard-heartedness.

[31 : 35] Hard-heartedness. It can creep up, it can creep up on us. Now it's a question I've used of a dear one in my life and I said, how are you going spiritually?

And it kind of provoked them and they, a bit of a hostile reaction. I didn't mean it that way. I was doing it in love and care and concern for this loved one in my life.

How are you going spiritually? That's what really matters, isn't it? How are we spiritually?

Half-heartedness. Hard-heartedness. Hard-heartedness can creep up on us.

Hebrews 2 verse 1 it says, Therefore we ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip. Backsliding.

You know that dear sister who wrote to me, oh, getting to church, it's work, it's tiredness, it's family, just plain backsliding. Backsliding.

[32 : 34] Can be that subtle slip sliding away. Like a slippery dip. You just can't stop once you get going in the wrong direction. We ought to give thee more earnest heed.

Sometimes it can be a slow process of decay. As someone has illustrated it, it was a stormy night, a violent storm one night, and a large tree that, you know, this massive, impressive, majestic tree came crashing down and this stately giant of a tree and it was found lying across the pathway in a park.

Nothing but a splintered stump was left behind and people came and checked it out, the arborists, you know, the council, whatever, the people come and have a look and the tree fellas wanted to see what was going on and a close examination of the tree stump, it was found, it was rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart.

The weakness of that tree, that majestic, giant, stately tree felled by the sudden storm was because just a teeny weeny little insect and then more and more of them found their nest within its bark.

Backsliding happens like that, people. It's like white antsing, isn't it? You know, that wall sounds alright but what are the joists and timbers?

[34 : 04] What's happening behind? We've had some signs of white ants, we've had some signs of termites and it could all come crashing down upon us one day.

Who knows? It's those slow, subtle little, you know, probably munching away at the timbers in your house. It can happen, can't it?

Slow, slow, subtle but steady. White antsing. What is eating away at the heart? Let's, with the Holy Spirit's help, guard against these signs of hardening of heart.

Let's guard against them. Firstly and foremostly, are you saved? You know, the great heavenly heart surgeon stands ready to perform the life-saving operation that we need.

if you're outside of Christ tonight, how is your heart? To fix the problem, we need a heart change. It tells of having a brand new heart, a brand new start, a new spirit, a new heart, not just turning a leaf.

[35 : 05] I've heard of Jehovah's Witnesses like that. There's a man in our former town, and he was transformed. He stopped going down the pub, his life was changed. He'd become an upstanding Jehovah's Witness, still as lost as hell as he could be, but yet, he turned a new leaf.

People can do that. Oh, I'll stop doing this, stop doing that, I'll start wearing a tie. They're lost, down to hell. It's not turning a new leaf, it's finding a new heart, it's receiving a new heart, transplant.

That's what matters. And how is your heart? Is it hardened with self-will and pride, or is it humbled before God? Is it filled with spiritual adultery, unfaithfulness to God, idols take his place, his rightful place, our God is a jealous God.

Don't do it. Worship him in spirit and in truth. The Lord Jesus says, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Don't stay here in sloth and in activity.

Get out of the hammock and say, jump out and say, yes sir, I'm reporting for duty. Serve God.

Serve God. There's nothing greater, nothing better that you can do with your life.

[36 : 22] It's important to get a heart check, isn't it? Check your heart, analyse the problem. There was a story told of a car mechanic. He received a repair order one day. The driver of the car was hearing this clunking noise.

clunk, clunk, clunk. Seemed like every time he was going around the corner. Clunk, clunk, clunk. So he took the car out, the mechanic took the car out on a test drive, and sure enough, whenever he turned around the corner, clunk, turned this other corner, clunk, oh, it sounds pretty bad.

Got to check what the problem is. And as he analysed the situation, then he wrote out, he found what the problem was, and he wrote down for the customer in the service docket, he said, we've returned your car to your sir, it's been repaired, the service has managed to find the problem, we've removed the bowling ball from the trunk.

So you've got to work out where the problem is. Where is the problem? Brother, sister, is the heart the problem? Are we right with God? Are the things we need to look at as believers the things that can creep up on us, like those little munching termites in the tree, or in the walls of your home?

I pray not, God willing, but locate the problem. Is it the bowling ball in the boot? Maybe it's just something simple, it's something that, these are simple things, aren't they?

[37 : 44] The word of God is simple, isn't it? Being a Christian is simple. Locate the problem. Is it a hardness of heart? And just to close, one more little picture I want to paint of this truth before God tonight, of the newness of heart.

The Bible talks about a newness of life, a new heart, and the answer is that. It is that alone, a completely new heart. There was a London businessman who was telling the story of an old warehouse that he was selling.

You know, this great big warehouse, this great big building, this big structure, and it had been lying empty for months and months, and it needed repairs, vandals had damaged the doors, smashed in the windows, there was trash all over the place.

It was just a big mess. And a prospective buyer came along to look at the property, and the owner said, look, I'm going to take paints to replace the broken windows, I'm going to bring a crew in to correct all the structural damage, to clean out all of this rubbish here, and to get it all nice and tidy for you.

And the buyer said this, he says, forget about the repairs. Forget about it. When I buy this place, I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building, I want the site.

[39 : 02] And that's true with God, isn't it? We can't just clean up our act, turn over a new leaf like a Jehovah's witness might do. say, I'm going to try to be different. It's got to be not some renovation, but a total demolition and rebuild.

And guess what God does with us, isn't it? You might think, oh, look, I'm going to try really hard.

You get some people like that, oh, look, I think I'll try harder, I'll try to be a Christian, and I might come to church every once in a while, and I'm going to try to brush up my act and talk a bit cleaner

and act a bit nicer to people, and somehow think that they can do a renovation job themselves. It's not that. It's got to be a complete demolition and rebuild when you become a Christian. The old has passed away. All things have become new.

And thank God he makes a new heart on the inside of us. Not some improvement, but a total rebuild. that warehouse was slated for the wrecking ball.

There wasn't any point trying to tidy it up and clean it up and patch it up. It had to be demolished.

And that happens too for us as believers, isn't it? To become saved. We don't try to clean up our act and make some human effort to save us.

[40 : 30] We may still undertake those changes, God helping us once we save, but that doesn't save us. It's God's work by his divine spirit. It's his grace and all his grace that makes us brand new.

And he just wants the sight, he wants you, and the permission to build. God knows our heart's true condition. Will you harden your heart like Pharaoh, or will you make your heart tender hearted before God?

Let us pray. Lord, we love you and thank you that your word is truth to our hearts. Lord, we cannot reckon all the wonder of it, and yet these are simple truths here today.

Lord, we know your word says today, harden not your hearts. Lord, help us to not be in such a state. We pray for ones on our hearts here tonight that we might prayerfully bring them before your throne, Lord.

Our heart goes out to them, ones that seem to have hardened their heart in some fashion or other.

[41 : 42] And yet, Lord, we're all just as frail and needy here today. It's only by your grace, only by your Holy Spirit's heart.

Lord, we're in filling and leading that we can know any truth. Lord, help us to have a sensitivity of heart.

Help us, Lord, to hear your heartbeat. Souls, souls, souls, to get a sense, to get a grip of reality, of eternal realities.

opportunities. Help us, Lord, to put everything in that priority that we won't think we'll settle for a season of backsliding, but rather we'll say, no, time is too short to play any more games.

I have to get right with God. Let us seek you, Lord, we pray, each one here tonight, that individually, one by one, one soul at a time, we'll see true revival.

[42 : 48] One soul at a time. As each one of us has that holy heart burn, as your word speaks to us, it'll just catch fire in our hearts, and it'll burn in our bones.

Lord, the word that we have to get hold of it, make it alive to us, Lord. Draw us, Lord, let us be such that we'll have a heart like David, for all his miserable failings, yet you counted him a saint of God.

And, Lord, each one here, too, can know that humility of heart, we can know that tenderness of heart, that worshipful, serving heart, to know you and to live such that our lives will be a testimony to your saving grace, and that grace that is greater than all our sin, that grace that David found.

we thank you, Lord, for that grace that it still avails tonight, it still is available today. It's for a limited time only, we know, Lord, that one day time will be over, as we would reckon it.

And yet, Lord, we pray each one here tonight will be moved, move upon us, Lord, by your spirit, move upon us, spirit of God, move us, move us, Lord, like you moved Noah, you moved him to do something.

[44 : 15] Move us, Lord, from a place of inactivity and being static, stagnant, move us from that place of comfort zone, and move us, Lord, into action.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.