

If not now, when?

Hebrews 3:7-15, "So, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. As has just been said: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.'" The Holy Spirit's message can be summed up in one word: "**Today!**" 2 Corinthians 6:2 says, "Today, if you will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts." We are to "exhort one another daily, while it is called 'Today'."

"*Now is the accepted time.*" When is the day of salvation? - **Today!** We should say "yes" to whatever it is that God wants us to do - *today!*

1.) If it is ever right to do God's will, then it is right to do it - today!

We don't have the right to go on living without God's will being done. No one could believe that it is alright to continue a life of murder then, just before he dies, quit murdering people. No one would ever claim that it is all right to go on stealing and being dishonest for awhile then, at some convenient time, quit being a thief.

Do you know the most horrible sin in God's sight? The rejection of His will for your life. If you are not doing His will then you are against God, and God's will for your life. As long as you continue rejecting God's will, you are living in deliberate, willful sin - and that is a horrible thing.

Don't try to defend your delay in accepting God's will for your life. To postpone doing God's will is like: the murderer who continues to murder, the blasphemer who continues spewing out oaths, or the adulterer who continues his vile sin. Not to do what you know to be God's will is an open sin. It is the willful sin of disobedience against, God.

If you admit what God's will is for your life, then you must admit that it is right to do it **TODAY!**

2.) We ought to do God's will today, because today the Holy Spirit calls

Hebrew 3:7, "The Holy Spirit says, 'Today.'" The verse continues, "if you will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts."

Do you care what the Holy Spirit says to you? Are you interested in the voice of God? When you hear the Holy Spirit - that is the day to obey God. God gives an alarming example in the words of our text. The children of Israel would not hearken to the voice of the Holy Spirit, who kept telling them, "Today, believe in God. Today, trust Him for salvation. Today do God's will," and, because they would not listen, they died in the wilderness. God says, "Don't be like

them! Don't let your heart become hardened, lest God's wrath fall on you too!"

Many in Jesus' day, would not listen to His voice, and they finally crucified Him. Stephen said, "*You stiff-necked people... You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!*" (Acts 7:51). What was wrong with these people? They would not listen to the Holy Spirit. That was the reason for the terrible punishment that came on them in A.D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus; and the Roman army came on a nation that would not listen to God's voice through the Spirit.

Those who die out of God's will, will only be able to blame their hard hearts and the fact that they would not listen to the call of the Spirit of God. When the Spirit of God says "**Today**," it is time to listen and do God's will. Today the Holy Spirit may be speaking to you. If He is moving upon your heart, for you to dally, trifle, or delay is to continue in sin. Such delay, such disobedience, such resistance to the Spirit of God can harden your heart.

3.) The danger of a hardened heart makes it urgent to act today!

The Spirit urges, "*Today, if you will hear His voice, hardened not your hearts, but exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*"

The hardening of the heart is the most terrible calamity that can come upon anyone this side of the eternal lake of fire.

The fact that most Christians responded to God in their childhood is because the child has the advantage of a tender heart and a tender conscience that grieves over sin. The child is easily moved by the fear of punishment. He knows that it is dangerous to go on in sin. But, as one violates his conscience, goes against his reason, ignores the call of God and the principles of honor and righteousness, he will harden his heart and become accustomed to sin. By resisting the Spirit of God, and continuing in willful sin, one hardens his heart. The days and weeks go by and, unknown and unnoticed, his heart is being hardened, his conscience is being dulled, his perception of right and wrong is becoming inaccurate and faded. Delay in doing God's will, will harden the heart.

To miss God's will *unknowingly*, is sin, but to continue in rebellion, resistance and self-will delay is a deadly sin that will have a hardening effect upon your heart. This danger of hardening your heart warns you to do God's will today. Every hardened unbeliever was once a tenderhearted child, who trembled at the thought of judgment. But delay hardened his heart.

Every drunkard, or drug user, was once a pure and innocent child, beloved of parents with a promising future. But, the years have hardened his sensibilities and made him ignore his duties to family, to self and to God.

Every prostitute was once a sweet little girl, precious and gentle, with holy possibilities. But sin, unrepentant in the heart, with the passing of days, dulled the pangs of conscience and led to indifference about holy matters.

Oh, that much-to-be-feared danger of a hardened heart. Don't reject God's will any longer. If you reject God's will today, your heart will be harder tomorrow.

The danger of a hardened heart impels honest thinking people to do God's will, while they can!

4.) The immanence of Christ's return to earth makes it urgent to do God's will

Matthew 24:44 has a solemn warning from Jesus Himself, "*So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.*" Jesus **will** return to this earth. There will be a resurrection for all dead. "*After that [After the dead in Christ rise] we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.*" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)

Christians who are alive when Jesus returns will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye and be caught up to be with the Lord, taken away to the Father's house of many mansions. Jesus said, "*If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am.*" (John 14:3).

Those who are unprepared to go with Jesus, who are still alive on the earth when Jesus returns, will go into the terrible Tribulation, a time of such trouble and sorrow and war and plagues as this world never saw before nor will ever see again.

To be left here on earth with every Christian taken away, to be left here with every true preacher gone, every real church closed, to be left here where all principles of righteousness and morality are ignored and Satan has his way in the Great Tribulation, will be a horrible state. Yet, that is the punishment of those who are unprepared when Jesus returns for His own.

No one knows when Jesus will return to earth. However, many times we are warned in God's Word to be ready and watching for Christ's return.

In view of Christ imminent return we ought to do God's will **today**, this very day, without delay

5.) The uncertainty of life - and - the certainty of death press upon sensible people the wisdom of doing God's will today!

In James 4:13-14 there is a solemn warning: "*Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*"

It is presumptuous for anyone to say that he knows what will happen tomorrow. How do you know you will buy or sell tomorrow? How do you know you will go to work tomorrow? How do you know you will get home today? Human life is like a vapor "*that appeareth for a little times, and then vanisheth away.*" Man's life is like the morning fog, which soon vanishes under the heat of the rising sun.

This lesson is brought home to us in Psalms 103:14-16, "*For God knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a*

flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more."

Your life may seem so established, so important, but it is really like a blade of grass that could be plucked in a moment, crushed under a heel, or blown away. How fragile, how uncertain is life itself.

The son of President Coolidge blistered his heel playing tennis. In a short while he died of blood poisoning.

A tiny clot in the blood can stop a capillary in your brain, and you would die. People have strangled to death on a fly, or gnat. The scratch of a nail or one streptococci germ in the throat could mean your death. A simple fall from a stepladder, a cut on the hand, a ride in an automobile or on a plane, could cut your life short.

Everyday people die unexpectedly. The old and the young die. The sick and the healthy die. Life is but a vapor. Your hold on life is insecure, so the Spirit urges you to do God's will today. Death is a certainty. Hebrews 9:27, "*Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment*, Proverbs 27:1, "*Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.*"

A man who leaves this world tomorrow, and has not made provision for the future, should not complain if sensible people call him a fool. A person who prepares for meals for tomorrow, for a bed tonight, or for an education for the future, but does not prepare for death, *which could come at any moment*, surely is guilty of senseless folly. Because life is short and death so sure, do God's will today. "*Today if you will hear His voice, Harden not your hearts.*" "*Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*"

6.) The mounting wrath of God on all who reject His will impels you to do God's will today!

God was grieved at the children of Israel who would not hear the voice of God, "*So I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.*" (Hebrew 3:11) And this wrath of God is on everyone who rejects, or delays, to do His will.

Jesus said in John 3:18, "*Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.*" Christ did not just say that one who dies without Christ will be condemned, but, He said, the one who is without Christ is condemned **already** He is already condemned!

John 3:36 says, "*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on Him.*"

The anger of God abides on every unbelieving person. If you have never believed on Jesus Christ, have not trusted Him to be your own Savior, or depended on Him to forgive your sins, then the wrath of God abides on you.

What a terrible truth! God's anger mounts up every day and never forgets the insult you do Him. God, never for a moment, is pleased with you if you reject His will, but, rather, His wrath is on you.

1 Corinthians 16:22 states, "*If anyone does not love the Lord - a curse be on him!*" The King James translation uses the word *anathema*, which means, "*accused*." If you do not love the Lord, you are under the curse of God. How God must be grieved over your rejection of His will. You eat God's food, breath God's air, live on God's bounty, and exist by His mercy, yet you reject His will. Not to accept Jesus Christ, the loveliest One of the entire universe, is a sin that deserves and has on it the curse of God.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as your Savior, do not love Him, do not have Him as your own personal Savior, you are accursed of God. And, God's wrath mounts up against you every day.

Psalm 7:11, "*God is a righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day.*"

If men were sensible, surely they would be terrified at the thought that "*God is angry with the wicked every day.*"

You say, "*I'm not so bad, I'm not wicked,*" however, in God's sight, you are wicked, if you do not trust Him to save you. God is angry with you and His anger mounts ***every day!***

These Scriptures, which I have given, press upon our hearts the thought that God's wrath and His anger keep mounting up and growing hot against the who reject Him. Is it any wonder that so many are cut off suddenly without time to get right with God? No wonder God turns people over to a reprobate heart, to believe a lie. No wonder the Holy Spirit ceases to call and leaves men to their own doom and destruction.

I have given **6 REASONS** that should appeal to any sensible person and convince them that they ought to do God's will. I have also tried to show that chance and opportunity could soon be gone.

Do you feel the voice of the Holy Spirit calling you **TODAY**, urging you to do God's will?

Accept God's will now!