

The Fight Against Sin & Unbelief

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[0:00] Well, in the book of Hebrews, chapter 3 this morning, a few weeks ago we were in a different set of verses that we were memorizing.

! And this was this set of verses. One of the verses was in that verse pack. And at the time that we were memorizing that it really stood out to me as a challenge.

You know how it is. You read the scriptures. You come across a verse. Maybe you've seen it in the past. But for some reason, Spirit of God really impresses it upon your heart and mind at another time in your life.

Well, that's kind of what happened to me that Sunday as we were working on that memory verse. And so I was really challenged to consider that a little bit more. And so I thought I would pass the challenge on to you for you to consider a little bit more as well.

So in Hebrews 3 we'll be taking a look at verses 12 through 15. And as we do that, or before we do that, I want to give just a little bit of background that I think will be important as we consider finally those verses specifically.

[1:18] And 12 and 13 really more specifically. So let me give you that background information somewhat of the date of the book, certainly written after the ascension of Jesus Christ and before the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, which happened in A.D. 70.

So it was around A.D. 64 that the book was written. So as I said, the Jewish temple still in existence, all that went along with that, the sacrifice, etc., were all still taking place at that time. The letter was written to a church that consisted mainly of Hebrew Christians, people who had been part of the temple worship in the past, the sacrificial system, but somewhere along the line had heard the gospel message and professed faith in Jesus Christ.

And as a result, no longer participating in the old sacrificial system in the temple worship. And also while they had experienced some persecution in the past, they were living in somewhat of a time of peace.

They weren't, as it says in Hebrews 12, shedding blood as a result of their faith in Christ at this time that this letter was written to them.

[2:39] So the purpose of the letter, well, because it was written during this time of peace, some were beginning to be tempted to turn from Christ and turn back to their former days, the days that they were spending and worship in the temple and all that went along with that.

They were attracted to the various elements that were connected with their Jewish religion, that they had left, the beautiful temple, the altar, the priest, the sacrifice, the festivals, the special observances.

There was a lot that went along with what they were part of in the past. And at this time in their lives, because they didn't have that, they were starting to look on themselves and what they did have presently as something less than what they had in the past.

And so they were facing this temptation of going back and giving up what they presently had in Christ. So the letter is written to show them the superiority of Jesus Christ in the gospel, to warn the people about unbelief and turning from Christ and returning to their former lives, and then also to encourage them to a kind of activity that will help them recognize the sinfulness or the deceitfulness of sin, and recognize whether or not unbelief is existing in their hearts, and if they're at that point of turning away from Christ and going back to their former days.

So it's important for us to consider these first couple points, and so let's start with the supremacy of Christ. And I'm just going to move quickly through this, although it's worthy of a lot more attention than I'm going to give it this morning, because I would like to get to, okay, what do we do in response to these first two points?

[4:54] What do we do practically in order to examine myself and make sure that I'm not being overcome with a heart of unbelief in helping others do the same?

So that's what I'm really going to focus on this morning, but again, important for us to take some time and look at these first two points, the supremacy of Christ in chapter 1 through chapter 3, verse 19.

Christ is superior in many ways, going down the list of things there. In the past, indeed, God spoke to the people through the prophets, but when Jesus Christ was here, he was speaking through him, not as merely a human prophet, although he was human and he was a prophet, but he was speaking as the Son of God.

And Jesus also was the heir of all things. He made the universe. He is the radiance of God's glory, the exact representation of his being.

He sustains all things by his powerful word. He provided purification for sins. And he sat down at the right hand of God the Father.

[6:09] So just in those few verses, 1, 2, and 3, he really unloads on them the many great ways Jesus Christ is superior.

So you see what he's really trying to do here, grab their attention right away of all that they have in the person of Jesus Christ and as followers of Jesus Christ.

But then he also presents the fact that he's superior to the angels. He has a special relationship with the Father. The angels are to worship him, Christ.

The angels are God's servants, but Jesus, the Son, rules over a righteous kingdom. Jesus is eternal and was there in the beginning and created all things.

He does not change. He sits at the right hand of God the Father. And also rejecting Jesus' message carries a greater judgment. His message was confirmed by great signs and wonders and miracles and other gifts of the Holy Spirit.

[7:13] He rules over all things. And he's presently crowned with glory and honor because of his sacrifice and is a merciful, faithful high priest for his followers.

So he's superior to the angels as well. There's no way that they can compare with who he is and what he has done and what he was continuing to do on their behalf as a faithful high priest.

But also he's superior to Moses. Moses, highly esteemed in the minds of the people, and rightly so, as a prophet, as one that spoke to God, or God spoke to him.

And so he was worthy of honor, but the point he's making is Jesus is worthy of greater honor even than Moses. Whereas Moses was a servant in the house, or part of the house, Jesus is the builder of the house.

And so the builder is worthy of more honor than the house itself. And just like a painter would be over the painting itself. And we recognize whoever built that house, what a magnificent structure it is, but we're also thinking and understanding that the one, the house is not the thing that is great and magnificent, even more than the builder, but the builder is over the house.

[8:42] And so it is Jesus over Moses. And while Moses was faithful in God's house as a servant, Jesus was faithful as a son over God's house.

So there's a distinction there. Just trying once again to, to help the people understand the superiority of Jesus Christ. So that's just in the first three chapters.

There's much to follow in the rest of the book, where he's trying to communicate to them the superiority of Jesus Christ. He's telling them that Jesus and all that they have in Christ is superior to anything from their past.

And that those things that might be appealing and alluring to them presently, really, there's no comparison when compared to Jesus Christ.

And so this is really a very important point for us to remember when we consider what we do to help each other avoid sinful, unbelieving hearts that might move us to turn away from Christ and the living God.

[10:03] You see what, because that's what they were being tempted to do. And so you see what the writer is doing here. He's doing with them what we are challenged to do with ourselves and with each other.

So we can learn much about what we're expected to do today with each other as we see what he's doing with these believers. And one of those things is he's emphasizing the superiority of Jesus Christ to anything that might be appealing or alluring to them now that would draw them away from

Jesus Christ.

We'll get to some of the specifics later on. Next, he moves to showing them the danger of unbelief and turning from Christ.

So here we have superiority of Christ, the great wonders of Christ and all that they have and now helping them see the dangers of falling to unbelief and the deceitfulness of sin.

So again, we're learning something of how to help each other as we view what he's doing and what he's communicating to these people. And he does this by showing them the bad example of the children of Israel that they set in their relationship with God in chapter 3, verses 7 through 11.

[11:27] And he's referring back to Psalm 95, verses 7 through 11, when he brings us up to the people. And he grabs their attention with the exhortation that it's the Holy Spirit who was speaking back in Psalm 95, although through a human author, but helping them understand this is just not a challenge that came to them back then or comes to us today, written then, but also comes to us today as we're also reading the latter, that it's not something that's just coming from a concerned man, although it is that, but that man is speaking as one guided by the Spirit of God.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. So we have to view this as not as a word of man, but as the very word of God that came through God, the Holy Spirit, and preserved for us to read today.

So he grabs their attention. So as the Holy Spirit says in verse 7 that he's writing to them, as he said it then, he's saying it as well today.

If you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts. So he's telling them that as they hear the Holy Spirit through the letter that's written to them, they're not to harden their hearts like the children of Israel as they did in the past.

And as we think back to the children of Israel, and this is where we could go into great depth in which how, in the different ways that God was being gracious to them, the great promises that he made to them, promises to go into the promised land, promising them great provisions in the land that they would possess.

[13:30] But they did not hear it. They would not hear it. When they had the opportunity to go into the land, they saw the circumstances, the challenges, and interpreted those difficulties, those challenges that were set before him as things that would negate God's promises.

That no, we won't be able to go into the land. Things are too great. There's giants in the land. We can't go in. We have to go back. And so, through those unbelieving hearts, they turned away from the promises of God.

All the good things that God had promised for them for them and that was waiting for them, just for them to take possession of. Could have been theirs. But they would not hear of it.

And so, as a result, God took them into the wilderness for 40 years, still did great and marvelous things and wonders providing for them over and over again, but still, they had those hearts of unbelief and rebellion against God during those 40 years.

years. And so, the consequences, well, those who out of unbelieving heart had shown contempt for God, they weren't allowed to enter the rest God had promised them.

[14:54] And as a result, they would die in the desert. And so, we think of that correlation, what the author is trying to help the readers, the recipients of the letter, understand, is this is all that God had done in the past with the children of Israel.

Let's think now of what Christ has done for us and the great wonders that he has done and all that you have in Jesus Christ that all you have to do is go forward and possess it and enjoy it.

and they're being tempted to forget it and see that something else is more attractive and more alluring. And so, they were at this point of decision, some of them within the congregation who probably were mere professors rather than possessors of the gift of God and his Holy Spirit but still they were in the congregation there and they were at this point of turning back from Jesus Christ to something that was far less.

And so, now the writer comes to them with this challenge which is where we want to spend the bulk of our time this morning. And I've divided this section up, these next few verses up into two sections.

One, God's plea and the other our practice. Within the plea of God in these verses that the writer has recorded we see something that we're called to do what I say both personally as individuals but then also corporately that we do for each other.

[16:45] One really being dependent on the other one activity necessary if I'm really going to effectively carry out the other.

What I do in regard to myself individually in my evaluation of where I am in my Christian life is going to have a direct bearing on how I really even want to minister to others and how I do that. And so, we look at these two different aspects but first I want us to see the plea here. God's plea and I want us to see these verses really as a revelation of the heart of God for his people, for this church.

And I think it comes out in these different exhortations that we see in these verses. Let me read the verses quickly starting with verse 12.

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's called today so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

[17:58] We've 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.

So the first challenge here is see to a brother's. The idea is to take heed. The emphasis of the word is to this is something you start but that you don't stop but it continues on.

There's some real duration here that carries on with what you start. We're not going to give up doing this. Be seen to it constantly.

Keep a watchful eye ever open to this practice and what he's calling us to. So God knows what's at stake and doesn't want them to be overcome by unbelieving hearts and the deceitfulness of sin.

See to it! Maybe we've used that phrase before when we're trying to encourage others or children or somebody else that something very important needs to be done.

[19:14] See to it! See to it that you do this and you get this done. So we're really communicating this has to be taken care of. You can't ignore it to the point where it doesn't get done.

See to it! It's that plea of God. Don't let this go by. But see to it that this is taken care of. He says see to it that none of you.

See God is not willing that any should perish. He desires that all of them would pursue this and not be caught in sin's deceitfulness.

The good shepherd doesn't want to lose any sheep. When you think that we're not important, you are important when it comes to the work of God in your life.

See to it that none of you has a sinful unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. It's out of the love of God that it reveals what is the real cause of missing out on relationship with him.

[20:17] It's this unbelieving heart. It's hard to hear some of that sometimes. I don't want to hear that kind of conclusion about myself. But if we don't communicate that truth, you will miss out.

And so it's out of love of God for people, those people and his people today that we understand that this turning away what we're dealing with when it comes to this whole matter of temptation turning from Christ is flowing out of the deceitfulness of sin and a heart that's at that point of unbelief and turning away from Christ.

So it's good that we hear the hard things that sometimes we need to be confronted with. The individual who has a righteous believing heart sees Christ for who he is and of course repents and believes and perseveres in following Christ.

So God's sending out a challenge to the church for them to see to it that they have true hearts for Christ and the living God. But he also calls them to encourage one another daily as long as it's called today so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

As long as it's called today there's still time. And so we see the urgency of his plea here. Oh you know write this another time you know and it'll be okay certainly they'll never do that.

[21:55] they'll never turn away you know I'm just imagining things at this point. And so we put it off I don't see to it but instead let it go.

No today see to it today. The activity that we're going to discuss and that we're called to has to be done today. We can't put it off.

There's too much at stake when it comes to these challenges that he's setting before the people. so we need to be sure that we have true believing hearts of faith in Christ when it comes to our daily walk.

So this is the heart of God. The heart is heart full of love for these people. And so we have to think now well when these pleas come, these exhortations come, of course there's a response.

And so what is our response? What is God calling these people and of course us to today when it comes to these challenges that we might not be being tempted to turn from Christ to an old former way of worship like the children of Israel, but there's all kind of idols that we're tempted to go after and follow that are having influence in our affections, our loves, and in our minds, what we think, so that we put ourselves in the danger of being deceived by sin's deceitfulness, thinking, oh, maybe it would be better.

[23 : 37] I'm missing out on so much and being a follower of Christ, or this isn't happening in my life, so I may as well just go back. And no, you know, we all face challenges like that today.

And so the practice that we're called to is something that we must give ourselves diligently to, personally as an individual, but also for the sake of my other fellow members and worshipers of God.

And so what is the practice, our practice, let's take a look at that. First of all, our response is that we have to take it seriously. Just from the challenges set forth here that we've taken a look at already, see to it brothers, encourage one another daily, do not harden your hearts.

These are all commands for us to follow, for us to give ourselves to in obedience. And the commands for us to follow that have a direct bearing on certainly your eternal destiny, because we have to be honest that even within our own church here, they may be those who are mere professors and not real possessors of the truth in Jesus Christ and the gospel.

And so while we might be challenged, thinking, why are they saying this to me? I'm a believer. It never hurts to be challenged to the point of examination. there's too much at stake for us to kind of take offense to a challenge to us when it comes to our walk with God and where our heart is in regard to our love for Jesus Christ.

[25 : 23] So I need to take it seriously for my own benefit, but also for the welfare of others who are among us, who may have hearts of unbelief and who are being deceived by sin's deceitfulness.

So just with that same kind of concern that I might have for myself, I have to begin having that same kind of concern for others. It's no more this American culture thing that independent, I can do it on my own, I don't need anybody else.

That is really not the church of Jesus Christ. And if we're not careful, we can fall into that kind of thinking and functioning where we're really just kind of functioning independent of each other, and in reality, we need the intervention of one another in each other's lives if we are to go on day by day by day, successfully standing against sin's deceitfulness.

So it's something that we have to take seriously. But we also have to take it specifically. And this is what I was challenged with when the memory verse came across for us to learn.

And I saw those commands, see to it, encourage one another daily. I was confronted, well, how am I seeing to it? In regard to myself, but also in regard to others.

[26 : 55] You know, how am I really specifically interacting with others in the congregation that would indicate that I'm encouraging them daily so that they wouldn't be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

And so we have to move from the command to the specifics of, okay, what does it look like for me? What am I, how am I going to live this out in my day today?

And so we have both that personal application and the application that relates to others as well.

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful unbelieving heart. That whole idea of turning away is where we get this word apostasy from.

It's defined as an act of someone who has previously subscribed to a certain belief and who now renounces his former professed belief in favor of some other which is diametrically opposed to what he believed before.

[28 : 03] We don't want that to happen. But that was the danger back then and it indeed could be the danger today as we already know from our own church experience, from people who have dwelled with us.

And now through hearts broken, we know they're no longer with us, temporarily, we hope. But it can happen today. And so we have to take it seriously and specifically.

So this is what we're endeavoring to prevent in our own lives and in the lives of others, this kind of apostasy. And to do that, we need to engage in some certain specific activities, again, that I'm going to do personally, but that I also will do with others to help them.

So let's first focus on the personal activity, where we take it specifically in regard to myself.

So there's some questions that we need to answer. Still kind of general questions, but I hope I'm spurring you on to a little bit more specific thinking.

[29 : 13] So what activity do I need to be engaged in so that I'm seeing to it that I don't have a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God? And that was the question I was asking myself when I saw those verses.

What activity do I need to be engaged in that will help me identify if I have a sinful, unbelieving heart, rebellious heart that has been hardened by sin's deceitfulness?

Really, maybe the same question asked in two different ways. And so I came up with some thoughts on that, and you might have some thoughts and hopefully I can provide you some time as well to share some additional thoughts because there's no way that I'm providing an exhaustive list here of activities.

But certainly it's going to entail some self-examination where I sit down and really look at my life and ask myself that question, do I see some real evidences in my heart and my life that show a life of obedience to Christ and faith and love for him?

is there some specifics that's really showing up in my life? Is there something I'm really not willing to give up to follow Christ?

[30 : 29] It would be a good indication of where my heart is. You know, your heart is still kind of tied to that. You know, outwardly it looks like you're just fine.

You're one of the brethren. children, and you've got a life that seems dedicated to Christ, but you know there's something there that you just are unwilling to give up, that for some reason at some point in your life you're convinced that Christ still isn't enough.

There's still something that can give me more than what Christ can give me. You see, that's what they were facing back then. There's something in the Old Testament way, Old Testament system, that's so attractive, and it could bring more to my life than what Jesus Christ can.

And so they were being tempted to go back to it. And so you have to think through, what am I hanging on to? That indicates really my heart is not really all there for Jesus Christ.

And we can't think that that won't raise its ugly head some other time in the future. We can't think that all is well and all is safe. I can continue on here. There will come a time because Jesus Christ doesn't want you to settle for less.

[31 : 56] And certainly he is worthy of all, not just part. And so that's the challenge, some self-examination. God's love.

I have a heart and mind receptive to what the Holy Spirit says in God's word. Is that where I'm at in my life? I give myself to solid teaching of God's word where I'm listening to it, I'm in God's word, reading it, studying God's word.

I've got a heart for God and it shows my desire, my activities to draw near to him. And that's not something subjective that's out there and can't put your gram onto.

These are specific ways that we actually live that out, that desire, that heart to love for God. We're going after him. I mean, Carol would think it's strange if I said you're so important to me and I love you with all my heart, if I'm always running away from her and not really giving and devoting myself to her.

in specific ways and pursuing her and to know her. And so it is in a relationship with God. In fact, look at Hebrews 2 verse 1 after he's presented them with the superiority of Jesus Christ and some other things.

[33 : 16] He says, we must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard so that we don't drift away. You see, they were giving attention to these other things. Their minds and their hearts were going back to here.

And the writers, challenging, no, no, you need to give more attention to these things that you've heard so that you don't drift back. And so we're thinking specific ways, how can I give more attention to the things that I've heard, the things that God has spoken to me?

Well, the only way I can do that is get in the word in some way to hear what he has said. And then Hebrews chapter 3, notice what he says there, therefore, holy brothers who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

It's kind of that same idea, fix your mind. I mean, that takes some specific activity. It lets you know that I'm not playing around here. I'm being serious about this because I know where an unbelieving heart can take me.

and I know that sin is more deceitful than what I have capability in myself to recognize and turn away from. So I have to fix my mind on Jesus, not on this idol over here because, again, that will raise its ugly head and it will capture my heart sometime in the future.

[34 : 46] We need to be captivated by Jesus. So fix my mind. How am I going to fix my mind on Jesus? Specific ways. It always has to be worked out specifically.

That's what I have to challenge myself with. You know, if it's not being worked out specifically, then it's not happening. We've got to be honest with that.

That's not where my heart is evidently. So we have to be serious about that. And I can, of course, turn to him in prayer with humble, submissive heart of love and faith.

That's part of that personal activity. If I don't have a heart for God and faith in Christ, well, then I need to call out in repentance and faith in Jesus Christ while it is called today.

And then I need to commit myself to the oversight of other believers and elders. That's a whole matter of church membership and really committing myself to a body of believers because I understand that I can't stand on my own.

[35 : 52] That's part of sin's deceitfulness as well, thinking that I'm okay. I can manage on my own. I don't need. We do need. And the sooner we admit that, the better off we will be and the church body as a whole will be as well.

So those are some of the things that we can do specifically when it comes to me personally so that I'm seeing to it that I don't have a heart that's hardened turning away from Christ or in that place where it could turn away from Christ and I don't have myself in a position where I make myself susceptible to being deceived by sin's deceitfulness.

Okay, I can give you 30 seconds to share anything else. Give me a chance to breathe a little bit here. Any other thoughts that you might have that you would share?

You might have other things that you could put on that list as you move through the week and as you anticipate that these are good ideas. Here's another one he didn't mention that I need to be seen to it that I'm doing this coming week.

This is going to need to be a part of my life. Roger. I don't know about you but as I get older I see time compressed but I've only got so much time left and it's become so precious to me and how am I going to spend it?

[37 : 27] Is it going to be for something that's going to come for eternity or is it going to be something that just passes away? Yeah. Yeah, it's a good challenge. I'm not as old as you are, Rod.

It's okay. No, I'll never catch up to you. Yeah, that is the challenge. As we think of growing older, it comes on our mind a little bit more.

Carol's in mind thinking, how did I get here? Well, we got here and got here sooner than what we anticipated. Yeah, that's the challenge. And so we consider those things that are truly important.

Well, let's go on to the next part. Because as it relates specifically to us as individuals, it also relates to what I do to help others.

You see that he says here, see to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God, verse 12 and then verse 13, but encourage one another daily as long as it's called today so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

[38 : 33] Let me take you through some of the words and phrases before we get to some of the specific actions that we do for one another. Encourage one another daily.

The root meaning of the word encourage has to do with coming alongside to give help, like this ministry of the Holy Spirit, the paraclete. It means to exhort, to call aloud, to utter in a loud voice, to call urgently, to beg and treat, beseech and exhort.

Again, remember, this is what the writer is doing for these people. And so we're learning in something from his example what he's doing for them that we need to be doing for each other.

And the recipients of this letter are urged by the writer to exhort one another, not to harden their hearts. So it's pretty much saying, follow my example. As I'm doing with you, you do with each other. So that no one has a sinful, unbelieving heart.

He says, encourage one another daily. We've talked about this a little bit. This whole matter of daily. This supposes a state of close church fellowship, without which they could not have had access to each other.

[39 : 49] I think, well, things were a bit different back then. People lived closer proximity. You know, they saw each other daily. And some of that is true. true. But we need to be careful that we don't come to the conclusion, therefore, I can't do that.

No. It means that I have to think creatively so that I am doing as often as I can on a regular basis so that no one is being hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

So I'm not delivered from this exhortation because things are different in how we live with each other. It means we've got to think, again, creatively in how we're going to do this, quite possibly on a more regular basis than what we're already doing it.

Am I making myself accessible to others specifically and regularly to do what this command is saying? Or have I just kind of fallen into that practice of really just secluding myself?

I'm the kind of person that could do that. You know, Carol says, when she dies, I'm going to go off and live into the mountains. Well, that's not the case, my dear. And because there's, do I enjoy the mountains, living out outside and that kind of thing?

[41 : 12] Well, yes, I do. But that doesn't mean therefore go and do it. That means be careful that you don't allow that to rule your heart in such a way that you withdraw from other people that you need and that might need you in their lives.

So I have to think creatively, how can I reach out and be involved in the lives of other people, even when it might seem difficult to me? Am I making myself accessible in specific ways and on a regular basis so that I can be doing this?

Deceitfulness means trickery, stratagem. Sin is tricky. It seldom appears as it really is. It always masks itself. It lies and it deceives.

So because of the very nature of sin that it's deceitful, people need other people who love God and them enough to help them identify and overcome sinful, unbelieving hearts.

Even at my age, not as old as Roger, but still, one who has been saved a number of years, I can be deceived by sin's deceitfulness.

[42 : 26] There are things I'm not going to see. And I need the help of those who love God and love me enough to come alongside and help me see that. As hard as it's going to be for them to do that, they still need to do it.

And I need to be doing that for others as well. So the questions we need to be answering in the brief time that we've got left, similar to the ones who did for us personally, what activity do I need to be engaged in daily, regularly, in a consistent, ongoing manner, in order that I'm seeing to it that others don't have sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

What activity do I need to be engaged in that will help others not have a heart hardened by sin's deceitfulness, thinking specifically? And of course, some ideas that I've jotted down here, cultivating relationships with others so that I can know them beyond surface information.

I'm not usually going to do this with some that I have no relationship whatsoever, so there's some ground work that I have to do even that leads up to doing this kind of ministry.

I may go up to them and when they come in, hey, how are you doing this morning? Certainly Sunday morning I do have opportunity to do that. And so I'm going to get to them.

[43 : 46] I might sit next to somebody rather than sitting next to myself. And man, we haven't sat next to them, I know nothing about their person, let me go over there and sit next to this person.

Cultivating those kind of relationships that are door openers to other things that we have to do in each other's lives, that are essential. So because this is essential, this is essential, I need to do this. It can't be, I'm just uncomfortable with that poeey. We just can't allow that kind of thing. You know when I say that to myself too because I tend to dish out those little excuses that are comfortable, that will protect my comfort.

It just can't happen. Well, commit myself to other activities, praying for them, confronting them with the truth and love, rebuking one another, and you know, we just go on with other exhortations and scriptures that are already written there that will show us what we need to be doing for one another. And so the heart of God in this passage communicated to us the challenges there for us as individuals and what we're going to do.

[45 : 05] And so we have to ask that question, what am I doing personally and also on behalf of others to live these verses out? That again was the challenge that was set before me when I saw these memory verses that I just present to you.

And if you see you're weak in really following through with these verses, don't stop there. Think, okay, what am I going to do?

What am I going to do to see to it beginning this week, this day even, that will be activity that will keep me from being ruled by a sinful unbelieving heart and will help others as well.

the first thing we can do is pray. So let's pray together. Father, this morning we do give thanks for your great work of grace for what we've been talking about this morning Jesus Christ did.

And leaving heaven and coming into our world, humbling himself and doing the things essential and necessary that had to happen in our lives. And then the writer of this letter was being faithful to the people he was writing to.

[46:17] And so the word comes to us today as well. Certainly we need your help as human beings still affected by weaknesses. But even as we learned in our verse today, your grace is sufficient for your power is made perfect in weakness.

So may we see that today as you continue your transforming process, your work in our lives, moving us to the place of hearts fully dedicated to you where we're truly encouraging one another in the same way.

In Jesus' name, amen.