

FBC Today

f i y o u t h

● No. 38, Jalan SS17/1D,
47500 Subang Jaya,
Selangor, Malaysia.
● +603 5621 2623
● fbc.subangfamily@fbc.com.my
● www.fbc.com.my

MAIN SERVICE
| Physical & Youtube |
Sundays 8:45am / 11:15am

YOUTH SERVICE
| Physical |
Sundays 9:00am

SUNDAY SCHOOL
For Ages 3 to 12
(Preschool to std 6)
Physical Classes
8:45am / 11:15am

U N L E A S H I N G T H E G O S P E L **ENGAGE | ENCOURAGE | EDIFY**

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To Persevere, Live Like Jesus
(Part 2)**

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TO ENDURE, Consider Jesus. TO PERSEVERE, Live Like Jesus (Part 2)

A meditation on Hebrews 3:7-19

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "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 works for forty 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.'"

NEXT WEEK'S SERMON
January 28, 2024
The Lord's Prayer (Part 2): Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done
Matthew 6
PREACHER
William Ngeow

PULPIT PROGRAM
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More information will be available soon, watch this space.

Israel in the wilderness for 40 years is referenced here from Psalm 95 and many were left dead in the wilderness. Today as we read this, we are reminded that their dry bones continue to be an example and warning for us.

8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, – The real issue was the hardness of their heart. And it is the same with many of us today.

The remedy for this is three-fold:

1. Submit to God's authority through His inspired Word

The Word of God must be central to a Christian's life. We are reminded that "no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet. 1:21). Or, as Paul puts it, "All Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16). Accepting the Bible is the irrefutable Word of God, knowing what it says, obeying what it says, is at the very core of a healthy Christian life.



We must learn from Israel's mistakes in the OT, and avoid the vicious and perpetual cycle of sin-punishment-repentance-forgiveness that is characteristic of their history. As God spoke to them, he speaks to us today. What will our response be?

2. We must make sure that our hearts are in line with God's through a proper relationship with God

All sin begins in the heart – examine yourselves and you will know this to be true. Some of us may even fool ourselves into thinking our heart and motive is right, but God is not fooled. If God did not relent with Israel in delivering punishment, we cannot expect a free pass and do whatever we like.

3. When we submit to God's Word and His ways, we enter into His rest

Firstly, there is no rest for the soul that is under God's wrath! God's rest refers to "a place of blessing where there is no more striving but only relaxation in the presence of God and in the certainty that there is no cause for fear." It must be said that this does not mean we are immune to troubles, illness, or even poverty. We can and must be in God's rest despite the natural challenges of life.

¹²Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.

Take care – be vigilant, be ever watchful

Unbelieving heart – One that does not consider God (ie. "God does not exist"), or take Him seriously (ie. "God exists, but thinks all religion leads to God"), or take Him for granted (ie. "I know who God is, but

I am sure He will accept me even if I don't do everything he says"). Habitual unbelief leads to a hardened heart and unbelief ultimately means disobedience in God's eyes.

¹³ *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.*

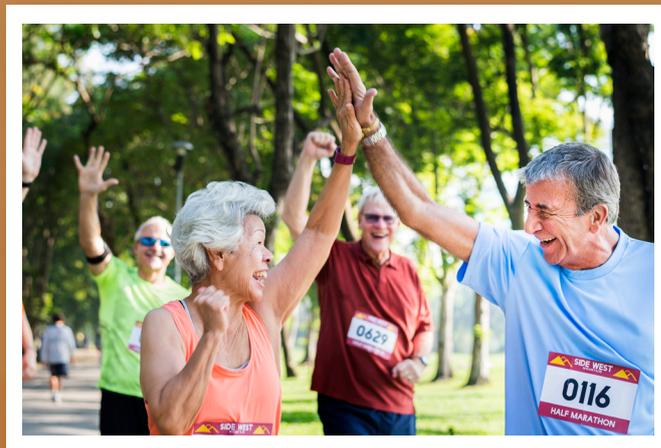
Exhort – the root word has the idea of coming alongside someone to give aid. We are to encourage one another with the truth of God. It is a sense of mutually building one another in the ways of God, which will likely include chastising and rebuking when needed.

One another – we are responsible for encouraging each other, this includes everyone, not just the ones you like or prefer to hang out with

Every day – You can read this as "as often as you meet" or "purpose to meet as often as possible" and encourage one another.

As long as it is called "today," – When is it "Today,?" Every new day is today. It was today when it was written and every time someone reads it... it is still today. This means, doing it perpetually, every day, and all the time.

That none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. – we are called to do these things to prevent being "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin". Sin is deceitful. It proposes to do something else than what God says, promising to deliver better results. One clear example of this today is the (wrong) message in some churches that active sin in our lives is irrelevant and we can live as we want because we are forgiven and God loves us. These people are deceived.



¹⁴ *For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.* ¹⁵ *As it is said,*

"Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." share in Christ – we are united in Christ in every way, which may include suffering, as Christ did.

if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. – we clearly have a part to play in persevering in our faith till the end, just as Christ was faithful and obedient to God till the end on the cross. We are able to achieve this only with the help of the Holy Spirit, lest we strive to act with human strength alone and fail.

¹⁶ *For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses?* ¹⁷ *And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?* ¹⁸ *And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?* ¹⁹ *So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.*

Rhetorical speech can be seen here and it reinforces the previous warning that we should see what Israel did in the wilderness, and do the exact opposite if we do not want to perish in our wanderings due to a hardened heart and unbelief.

CONCLUSION:

The Christian life is like a marathon and the race starts when we start our journey with God. Because it is a journey, we need to persevere diligently, until the end. We do this by studying God's word and obeying it all.

We must be aware to not harden our hearts against God because it means we are purposefully resisting His sovereign ways with us, instead, we need to soften our hearts toward God by submitting to His Word and His ways. Our hearts need to be pliant to God and his purposes for us.

We are cautioned against unbelief because it renders us not only unwilling

but unable to appropriate God's blessings (which may or may not include health and wealth).

To enter God's rest, we must persevere in obedient faith and to persevere, we must avoid the deceptive sin of unbelief.

We must practice the essential service of mutual encouragement to one another daily.

We must hold fast to our invaluable salvation in Christ and we do this through personalizing the story of Israel in the wilderness, which is a good example of a bad example. This is a case of studying Israel in the wilderness and doing the exact opposite.



by Donald Cheah

Donald leads the Saujana LifeGroup and Co-Leads the LifeGroup Ministry with David Ng



PrayerSpotlight

Prayer for Special Teens Ministry

- Pray for God to provide more facilitators for Buddies Chat Line (Volunteers recruitment plan)
- Pray for Special Needs Teen families who are currently facing great challenges and need counseling and family therapy for mental health issues.
- Pray for God to provide wisdom, discernment and strength to the ministry team members: Micky, Christine, Liana
- Pray for the non-believers among the families to be in touch with Jesus Christ soon.

