

Message Notes

"The Symptoms of Serious Sin"

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

Introduction - "What hump?"

A Quick Review of first 6 weeks

Symptoms of Serious Sin

A look at Hebrews 3:1-19 in it's historical context

1. *Fixing ourselves on Jesus*

Hebrews 3:1-6

2. *Do not harden your heart*

Hebrews 3:7-11

Psalm 95:7b-11

Exodus 17:1-7

Numbers 13:21-14:35

3. *How not to harden your heart*

Hebrews 3:12-13

4. *The real evidence that we are followers of Jesus*

Hebrews 3:14-19

A note on eternal security

Five symptoms of serious, life threatening sin

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Application - "What hump?"

Hebrews 3:1-19

¹Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ²He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. ⁶But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, ⁹where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. ¹⁰That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.' ¹¹So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.'"

¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

¹⁴We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. ¹⁵As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion." ¹⁶Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? ¹⁸And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Other passages used (grab a pew Bible):

Psalm 95:7b-11

Exodus 17:1-7

Numbers 13:21-14:35



What hump?



**BE KILLING SIN
OR IT WILL BE
KILLING YOU!**

A study of John Owen's "A Mortification of Sin"



Foundation for Mortification

Romans 8:13

“If you through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body you shall live.”



THE MEANS OF MORTIFICATION (ch 14)

**NINE PARTICULAR DIRECTIONS IN
MORTIFYING SIN (chs 9-13)**

**TWO GENERAL DIRECTIONS IN
MORTIFYING SIN (chs 7-8)**

WHAT IS MORTIFICATION? (chs 5-6)

**FOUNDATIONS FOR MORTIFICATION –
WHY DO IT? (chs 1-4)**

THE MEANS OF MORTIFICATION (ch 14)

**NINE PARTICULAR DIRECTIONS IN
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WHY DO IT? (chs 1-4)**

Symptoms of Serious Sin

Symptoms of Serious Sin

**A look at Hebrews 3:1-19 in its
historical context**

Symptoms of Serious Sin

1. Fixing ourselves on Jesus

Hebrews 3:1-6

¹Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. ²He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. ⁶But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.

Symptoms of Serious Sin

2. Do not harden your heart

Hebrews 3:7-11

⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, ⁹where your fathers tested and tried me and for forty years saw what I did. ¹⁰That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ ¹¹So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Psalm 95:7b-11

⁷Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert, ⁹where your fathers tested and tried me, though they had seen what I did. ¹⁰For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, “They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.” ¹¹So I declared on oath in my anger, “They shall never enter my rest.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Exodus 17:1-7

¹The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ²So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” ³But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?” ⁴Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.” ⁵The LORD answered Moses, “Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

²¹So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob, towards Lebo Hamath. ²²They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmi, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) ²³When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. ²⁴That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there.

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

²⁵At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land.

²⁶They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁷They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. ²⁸But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. ²⁹The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan."

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

³⁰Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.” ³¹But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” ³²And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. ³³We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

¹That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. ²All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! ³Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” ⁴And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

⁵Then Moses and Aaron fell face down in front of the whole Israelite assembly gathered there. ⁶Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes ⁷and said to the entire Israelite assembly, “The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. ⁸If the LORD is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. ⁹Only do not rebel against the LORD. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

¹⁰But the whole assembly talked about stoning them. Then the glory of the LORD appeared at the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites. ¹¹The LORD said to Moses, “How long will these people treat me with contempt? How long will they refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miraculous signs I have performed among them? ¹²I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a nation greater and stronger than they.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

¹³Moses said to the LORD, “Then the Egyptians will hear about it!

By your power you brought these people up from among them.

¹⁴And they will tell the inhabitants of this land about it. They have already heard that you, O LORD, are with these people and that you, O LORD, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. ¹⁵If you put these people to death all at one time, the nations who have heard this report about you will say, ¹⁶‘The LORD was not able to bring these people into the land he promised them on oath; so he slaughtered them in the desert.’

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

¹⁷“Now may the Lord’s strength be displayed, just as you have declared: ¹⁸‘The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.’ ¹⁹In accordance with your great love, forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

²⁰The LORD replied, “I have forgiven them, as you asked.

²¹Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, ²²not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times – ²³not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. ²⁴But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it. ²⁵Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out towards the desert along the route to the Red Sea.”

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

²⁶The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: ²⁷“How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. ²⁸So tell them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say: ²⁹In this desert your bodies will fall – every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. ³⁰Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. ³¹As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected.

The historical context of Heb 3:1-11

Numbers 13:21-14:35

³²But you — your bodies will fall in this desert. ³³Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert.

³⁴For forty years — one year for each of the forty days you explored the land — you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.’ ³⁵I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die.”

Symptoms of Serious Sin

3. How not harden your heart

Hebrews 3:12-13

¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Symptoms of Serious Sin

4. The real evidence that we are followers of Jesus

Hebrews 3:14-18

¹⁴We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. ¹⁵As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” ¹⁶Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? ¹⁸And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Symptoms of Serious Sin

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1. Inveterateness

[The state of being hardened, habitual, deep rooted, chronic]

“If it has lain long corrupting in your heart, if you have suffered it to abide in power and prevalency, without attempting vigorously the killing of it and the healing of the wounds you have received by it for some long season, your distemper is dangerous”

~ John Owen – The Mortification of Sin quoted from *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, page 90

Symptoms of Serious Sin

2. Taking License

“Sin ain’t no big deal”

“Applying grace and mercy to an unmortified sin... The flesh would fain [eagerly, gladly] be indulged unto upon the account of grace, and every word that is spoken of mercy, it stands ready to catch at and to pervert it, to its own corrupt aims and purposes. To apply mercy, then, to a sin not vigorously mortified is to fulfill the end of the flesh.”

~ John Owen – The Mortification of Sin quoted from *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, page 92

Symptoms of Serious Sin

3. Legalism

“When a man rights [seeks to correct or amend] against his sin only with arguments from the issue or the punishment due unto it, this is a sign that sin has taken great possession of the will, and that in the heart there is a superfluity of naughtiness [James 1:21]. Such a man as opposes nothing to the seduction of sin and lust in his heart but fear of shame among men or hell from God, is sufficiently resolved to do the sin if there were no punishment attending it; which, what it differs from living in the practice of sin, I know not. Those who are Christ’s, and are acted [activated] in their obedience upon gospel principles, have the death of Christ, the love of God, the detestable nature of sin, the preciousness of communion with God, a deep-grounded abhorrency of sin as sin, to oppose to any seduction of sin, to all the workings, strivings, rightings of lust in their hearts. ”

~ John Owen – The Mortification of Sin quoted from *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, page 93



Isaiah 29:13

The Lord says:

“These people come near to me with their mouth
and honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.
Their worship of me is made up
only of rules taught by men.”

“Try yourself by this also: When you are by sin driven to make a stand, so that you must either serve it and rush at the command of it into folly, like the horse into the battle, or make head against it to suppress it, what do you say to your soul? What do you expostulate [discuss earnestly] with yourself? Is this all—“Hell will be the end of this course; vengeance will meet with me and find me out”? It is time for you to look about you; evil lies at the door [Gen. 4:7]. Paul’s main argument to evince that sin shall not have dominion over believers is that they “are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). If your contendings against sin be all on legal accounts, from legal principles and motives, what assurance can you attain unto that sin shall not have dominion over you, which will be your ruin?

“Yea, know that this reserve will not long hold out. If your lust has driven you from stronger gospel forts, it will speedily prevail against this also. Do not suppose that such considerations will deliver you, when you have voluntarily given up to your enemy those helps and means of preservation which have a thousand times their strength. Rest assuredly in this, that unless you recover yourself with speed from this condition, the thing that you fear will come upon you. What gospel principles do not, legal motives cannot do.”

~ John Owen – The Mortification of Sin quoted from *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, page 94

Symptoms of Serious Sin

4. You've been spanked,
and it doesn't make any difference.

“God oftentimes, in his providential dispensations [provisions, orderings], meets with a man, and speaks particularly to the evil of his heart, as he did to Joseph’s brethren in their selling of him into Egypt. This makes the man reflect on his sin, and judge himself in particular for it. God makes it to be the voice of the danger, affliction, trouble, sickness that he is in or under. Sometimes in reading of the word God makes a man stay on something that cuts him to the heart, and shakes him as to his present condition. More frequently in the hearing of the word preached – his great ordinance for conviction, conversion, and edification – does he meet with men. God often hews men by the sword of his word in that ordinance, strikes directly on their bosom-beloved lust, startles the sinner, makes him engage unto the mortification and relinquishment of the evil of his heart.

Now, if his lust has taken such hold on him as to enforce him to break these bands of the Lord and to cast these cords from him – if it overcomes these convictions and gets again into its old posture; if it can cure the wounds it so receives – that soul is in a sad condition.”

~ John Owen – The Mortification of Sin quoted from *Overcoming Sin and Temptation*, page 95-96.

Symptoms of Serious Sin

5. Bitterness, Unforgiveness and a Demanding Spirit.

What hump?