

July 2016 Newsletter – Dealing With Emotions – Review

Now we get to the problem of hardness and being hardhearted in the NT using the *skleros* word group. The first one we want to look at is Romans 2:5, “*But after thy **hardness** and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*”. The word impenitent is *ametanoētos*, which speaks of a dynamic where the individual cannot change his mind about Christ and is linked to hardness of heart.

The soul's heart has become stiffened to the place where it can no longer function as it should! It has now become hard. The unsaved man or woman that is exposed to the Gospel of Christ, exposed to his love, his grace, his kindness and forgiveness reject it due to their hard hearts. Many Christians can get to the place where they need to repent toward grace, Bible Doctrine, the spiritual life dynamic and they don't because of the hardness of their hearts. “*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if **God peradventure** will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*” 2 Timothy 2:25

Picture, if you will, a father trying to lead his child down the right path, but the child stiffens up like a board digging his heels in because he doesn't want to go that way. That's the stiffening spoke of here, but not of the body, but the soul and the will. So we can have a stiffening of the heart, a stiffening of the neck and a stiffening of the back.

The next one we want to look at is Acts 19:9 where Paul had been speaking at a synagogue for around three months talking to them about Christ and salvation, but they became hardened and refused to believe on the Lord. “*But when divers were **hardened**, and **believed not**, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.*”

The word **hardened** is the imperfect passive indicative of *skleruno* and the word **believed not** is the imperfect active indicative of *apeitho*. *Apeitho* is to believe as the result of being persuaded, while *apeitho* shows that they did not believe because they weren't persuaded, that is, because they were **unpersuadable!** *Skleruno* tells us that the reason why, the thing that prevented their believing on Christ was because of the **hardness** of their hearts! But because of the passive voice it tells us that they became hardened after listening to Paul teach, reason, argue, etc., all the various points on why Christ was the Messiah and how forgiveness came through faith in him.

The imperfect tense denotes an action going on during a period of time, but came to an end. Paul was there three months teaching and preaching from the Scriptures about how Jesus was the Messiah and paid the penalty for their sins, but all during this time their hearts became hardened toward the message and they did not believe on him, that is, they refused to believe on him because their hearts had become hardened and they were unpersuadable. What this shows us is that they were basically negative to the Gospel all the way through the 3 months. The **passive voice** of hardening means that they became hardened, which was due to their pride and negative volition toward the Gospel of grace.

We see the idea of hardening in Romans 9:18, “*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*” God hardens those whom he wishes to harden; a passage that has much debate over the years. But now we can see how God hardens people. He does so by giving them the truth! People use this expression to denote the idea, “The sun melts butter, but hardens concrete”.

God gives people the truth; the truth about heaven and hell; the truth about forgiveness and judgment, the truth about his kindness, his grace and patience; the truth about the blood of his Son who died for them, but with some people their pride and negative volition come in, they react and their hearts become hardened and they will not believe.

All three verses: Hebrews 3:8, “*Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*”; Hebrews 3:15, “*While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*”; Hebrews 4:7, “*Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*” are given to Church Age believers not to harden their hearts. It was originally addressed to the OT saints of God, but is reapplied to the NT people of God. **Don't harden your hearts!** And what is the thing that hardens our hearts? **Negative volition toward God's word and living by faith!**

“If you hear his voice”, which is the communication of the Word of God, is in the 3rd class condition of **if**, which says, if you hear his voice, now maybe you will and maybe you won't, but if you do, do not harden your hearts! So how can the phenomenon of the communication of the Word of God end up in hardening our hearts? When negative volition toward truth and pride come into the picture, then our hearts will end up being hardened.

Hebrews 3:13, “*But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*” gives us an even more clearer picture. It tells us that there is a dynamic going on in the inside of the flesh nature that is negative to the Word of God. It is the sinful nature that is proud and in open rebellion toward God. It deceives us and it hardens our hearts.

But for the people of God he has made a wonderful grace provision whereby we can **confess** all our resistance to and reactions against the truth, recover the filling of the Holy Spirit, get out from under the control of the flesh nature, start living in the new nature and start taking in the Word of God once again believing it and living by faith!

Hebrews 3:12, “*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*” also gives us insight into this dynamic for it connects the idea of having an evil heart, which is a hard heart, with unbelief! And a warning for us to avoid it. This whole passage deals with the heart becoming hardened or stiffened by unbelief and a turning away from God, which also deals with turning away from the spiritual life dynamic of faith in the Word, which God has given to all believers as a grace provision for us to live in. The key for all this is the soul's heart functioning as it is supposed to in the spiritual life dynamic. But when it tightens up, stiffens up and becomes hard due to negative volition and unbelief, then the flow of the spiritual energy is stopped.

The word **hardness of heart**, *sklērokardia*, is used three times in the NT: Matthew 19:8, “*He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.*” Mark 10:5, “*And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.*” Mark 16:14, “*Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.*” Once again we see unbelief connected to hardness of heart and even the apostles had this problem because they did not believe he had risen from the dead! So unbelief results in the hardening of one's heart and hardness of heart contributes to further unbelief! We are hardened because of the presence of sin in our bodies.

Hebrews 3:13, “But **exhort** one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” gives us a way out of this, which is to exhort, or encourage, as the case may be, each other every day to stay with the faith rest dynamic. To **exhort** is the present active imperative of parakaleo, which is a command to we all are to do everyday. The **frequency** of the action is to be **every day**, *hekasten hemeran*, telling us how important it is to do this each and every day, not once a month, not once a week, but **every day!**

God provides the Word; he provides doctrinal teaching; he provides faith; and he provides the new nature apparatus to metabolize doctrine, but we must avail ourselves of it. And because the deluding influence of Satan, his world system and the body's sinful nature is so strong, we are easily pulled away from the spiritual life dynamic of the faith rest life. That's why we have to encourage each other every day because we can't let one day go by, for one day could be for the rest of our lives!

We must remember Jesus Christ. We must remind ourselves of the faith of Jesus Christ; the faith that he lived by when he was here on earth. Hebrews 12:2, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Galatians 2:20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Christ lived by faith in the Father; he ran the race course by faith that the Father had chosen for him. And so must we. Faith in the Father's **plan** for our lives; faith in the Father's **promises**; faith in the Father's **protection**; faith in the Father's **provisions**; faith in the Father's **power**; and faith in the **process** that the Father chooses to perfect our faith!

Now the Holy Spirit will enable us to trust the Father and do his will, but we cannot allow ourselves to get to the place where we are **resisting** him as the OT Israelites did! Acts 7:51, “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do **always resist the Holy Ghost**: as your fathers did, so do ye.” And **grieving** him in Ephesians 4:30 by holding on to anger and resentment. “And **grieve not the holy Spirit** of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” And in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we have the **quenching** of the Holy Spirit. “*Quench not the Spirit.*”

So we have the **resisting** of the Holy Spirit in Acts 7:51; the **grieving** of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 4:30; and the **quenching** of the Holy Spirit in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. The **quenching** of the Holy Spirit is where believers try to shut down the communication of Bible Doctrine to them by suppressing the teaching by doctrinal Pastors. The **grieving** of the Holy Spirit is accomplished by our refusing to let our bitterness and anger go, refusal to forgive and live in the filling of the Holy Spirit. And the **resisting** of the Holy Spirit uses the word *antipto*, which doesn't have that many references to in the NT, but there is reference to it in the Septuagint's translation of the OT using the word marah.

Now **marah** means to rebel, not to just passively resist, but to outright rebel against God, to not only disobey him, but to intentionally go in the other direction! Like Esau who intentionally went out and married Hittite women just to spite his parents. It is found in Numbers 27:14, “For ye **rebelled** against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of Meribah in Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.” **Mârâh** also had the ideas of bitterness, pride and anger in the matter of intentional rebellion against God.

So to resist the Holy Spirit, as we have stated here, is not to just **fail** to do what God wants; it's not to just **resist** the Holy Spirit, but **to intentionally go out and do the opposite of what God wants!** But with one more thing - it brings out the idea of having **bitterness of soul!**

Healthy Soul and Healthy Body. (Classes #181-192)

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 3 John 2 - αγαπητε περι παντων ευχομαι σε ευδοουσαι και υγαινειν καθως ευδοουται σου η ψυχη. “Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.” NASB

We have four verbs here: **I pray** is the present middle indicative of *euchomai*; **you may prosper** is in the present passive infinitive of *euodoo*, εὐδοῶ; **be in good health** is the present active infinitive of *hugiainō*; and **prospereth** is the present passive indicative of εὐδοῶ again.

John said that he was constantly **praying** this prayer, the reality of it in that he was actually praying for them and that he was benefited for doing it concerning the matter of their health and prosperity. *Peri panton* says that he was praying **concerning all things** in their lives.

You may prosper in the present passive infinitive tells us first of all that he wants their prosperity to be a daily reality in their lives. The passive voice tells us that they receive the action of being prospered. And the infinitive mood tells us that this was the purpose of his prayer that they would be prospered.

But what is meant by prosperity here? The word is a compound of two other words: *eu* – good, and *hodos* – journey, that they would have a good journey. They looked at life differently than we do; they looked at life as a journey on their way to heaven. Now the question is would it be a **good** journey, or a **bad** one? Now there are several things that would make our journey a good one, instead of a bad one and being filthy rich is not one of them. A life of peace and joy; having a healthy body and healthy soul; surrounded by people who love you and whom you love; fulfilling God's will for your life, the completion of our faith and our souls are some of the things that makes our journey a good one.

Be in good health is the second aspect of his prayer that he is praying for them; the present active infinitive of *hugiainō* shows that this is the purpose of his prayer and this does get into the physical health of the believer. There is suffering that does come in this life; suffering because of the angelic conflict; suffering because we get older; suffering because of the trials we go through, but being healthy is to actually be the norm for us. So we can be healthy throughout life, a few aches and pains, an occasional bout with illnesses, etc., but basically healthy. And the Scriptures are full of references to this matter, and even around us in many of our elders we see that believers have lived to the ripe old ages of being in their 80” and 90's with very little health problems. So John wants them to be healthy.

But both **prospering** and **being in good health** are tied to the idea of **even as thy soul prospereth**, which gets us back to *euodoo* again – having a good journey. The phrase in the Greek is *kathos euodoutai sou he psuche*. **Prospereth** is in present passive indicative of εὐδοῶ again, which tells us that he wants this to be a daily reality for them in life.

Now we notice that the phrase begins with the preposition *kathos*, which denotes a norm or standard, or a degree of something. So what it's saying is that our journey through life, as to whether it will be a good one or bad one, and our physical health is tied to the standard of how our souls are doing! Our physical health and our journey we will experience in life is tied to the degree of our soul's journey through life. So what makes a good journey for our souls? Do we live in the filling of the Holy Spirit? Is our soul's experience one of peace and joy? Are we getting rid of our scar tissue? Are we living by faith? Are our souls becoming completed? Do we fellowship with God along the way?

The *hodos* word group looks at the path we take in life from different perspectives. *Hodos* is the path we have chosen to walk in our life; *eisodos* looks at our entry onto this path at some point in time; *exodos* looks at the exit from this path when we arrive at the end of our journey; *euodos* looks at the life we had on this path that it was a good life. *Eisodos* and *exodos* were terms used on the Greek stage. The actor entered onto the stage, that was his *eisodos*; the actor played the part he was to play, and at the end of his play he exited the stage, which was his *exodos*.

For the Christian God has put us on the path in life that he wanted us to take, which is our *eisodos*, our entrance, or our entry. Our exit from this life, which is our *exodos*, comes to us at the end of life. These two concepts are pretty much cut and dried; the issue now turns to our *euodos*. What kind of life did we have? Was it a good one? Was it a good journey?

All cultures have various ways of expressing our journey through life in that it was a pleasant one, a prosperous one, that things go well for us in life, that we don't have many pressures, problems, trials and suffering. In America it's to be successful, a satisfying career, making money, having nice material things, a large family, well respected in the community, etc..

But **you may prosper** is in the present passive infinitive of *euodoo*, εὐοδόω, is in the passive voice telling us that this "prosperity", this good life is something we receive from God out of his grace! We don't earn it; we don't deserve it; we don't merit it; it is from God who blesses us! **He blesses us, if we choose the path he has chosen for us!** "*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*" Psalms 1:1 "What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." Psalms 25:12

But if we choose to go down the wrong path, (and we do have a choice for God will not coerce our volition), if we choose to follow the advice of the unsaved or the reversionistic believer, (one who has departed from Bible Doctrine and living by faith), if we choose to go down the path of gratifying our OSN lusts and emotions, if we hang around with the wrong kinds of people, if we choose to immerse ourselves in the things of the world system, then it won't be a good journey for us in life!

John prays that our journey through life will be a good one, that we will end up with the right man or woman, that we will work in a field that we enjoy doing, that it will be productive, constructive, that it will be the Father's will for our lives and that our lives will glorify God. And it will be if we choose to go down the path chosen for us by God.

To **be in good health** is the present active infinitive of *hugainō*; God actually wants us to enjoy good health! But he uses the active voice here to denote the believer's responsibility to make the right decisions to bring about good health in their lives. The passive voice has been called the voice of grace for it looks at the concept of God's grace in doing things for us. While the active voice has been called the voice of choice for it looks at our volitional responsibility to make right choices in life.

Good health isn't an automatic thing; it doesn't come about just because we are alive, or because our parents were healthy, or because we have read about it, or because we are sick and tired of being sick and tired. It comes about as the result of believers making right decisions in their lives and acting on those decisions. It begins with eliminating all "foods" that aren't nutritional. Next one needs to start incorporating only the foods in life that our bodies can handle in balanced proportions that promote good health. Nutritional supplements may be needed or helpful. Then proper rest, proper exercise and then into the area of developing a positive, healthy soul.

The concept of **prosperity** deals with: 1) *thou mayest prosper*, which gets into the external aspects of our life, such as family, friends, work and many other things; 2) our personal **health**, which gets into the internal physical aspects of our life; 3) *even as thy soul prospereth*, which gets into the internal dynamic taking place in our souls.

The final aspect of our prosperity in life, which is first in importance, is our soul being prospered, *kathos euodoutai sou he psuche*. The last word for **prospereth** is the present passive indicative of εὐδοῶ again and in the present passive indicative it tells us that the soul is **being** prospered. So what is it that prospers the soul? It is Bible Doctrine that has been metabolized by faith under the filling of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual life dynamic prospers the soul.

The original has the word **kathos** with *euodoutai sou he psuche*, (our soul's journey through life), and by using *kathos* we have introduced here the idea of a norm or standard by which something else is measured or connected to, **which tells us that our personal health and our journey through this life is connected to our soul's journey through life!**

Our soul's journey uses the passive voice, which tells us that the subject receives the action of the verb, as the soul is receiving the action of the spiritual life dynamic of peace, etc., it will be prospered. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit walking in love, joy and peace as believers everyday in life, then our soul's journey through life will be a good one! But if we aren't, if we are walking according to the dynamic of the flesh nature, then it won't!

*“This I say then, Walk in the **Spirit**, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the **flesh**. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Galatians 5:16-23 “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, **which war against the soul;**” 1 Peter 2:11*

It's easy to see how the emotions of bitterness, anger, fear and guilt can be extremely detrimental not only to the soul, but the body as well! It's also easy to see the contrast and benefit to the soul, (and the body as well), of living in the love, joy and peace that the filling of the Holy Spirit brings to our souls. What this tells us is that having a good journey through life, having God's spiritual blessings on us, of being blessed in our comings and goings, of being blessed, successful and productive in life in accordance with God's standards is connected to the condition of our souls.

Is our soul being blessed? Is it growing toward completion? Are we getting over our problems? Our scar tissue? Our OSN reaction? Is the spiritual life dynamic having more control over our souls and our lives? It was for these believers that John was saying that their souls were being prospered. The present tense describes an action that was continuing on into the present as they lived in the spiritual life. And as the result their journey and path through life was a good one and not only that, so was their health. They were continuing to enjoy good health, better health than they had before as the result of having a healthy soul. Remember all believers in Christ will end up at the same destination of heaven, but not all of them will have a good journey through life on their way there!