

Encourage One Another

(Hebrews 3:12-14)

Introduction.

A) While living in the Mississippi River Delta, every spring I would observe the farming ritual of preparing the soil for planting. As early as possible, late February or early March, farmers would hook-up the turning plows or large discs and head to the fields. They would turn the soil over to loosen it up from packing down of the previous harvest and winter weather.

The purpose was to loosen or soften it up to receive the seed. Seed does best in loose, not packed or hardened soil. You gardeners do the same thing.

B) Now apply that to the spiritual realm. Hardened and unteachable hearts are not willing or not able to receive spiritual truth, instruction, or seed that produces spiritual fruit.

According to the passage we read, the key to a receptive, softened, or teachable heart is the giving and receiving of encouragement.

C) Contextualize Hebrews 3:12-14.

I. The Warning against Unbelief (3:12)

Principle: A hardened attitude is the result of a habitual neglect of the spiritual.

A) The Danger – “apostasy” (3:12a)

B) The Example – “Israel” (3:7-11)

C) The Cause - “unbelief” (3:12b)

II. The Prevention of Unbelief (3:13)

Principle: Frequent, mutual encouragement in godliness is to prevent a believer from becoming hardened by sin.

A) Remedy – “encouragement” (3:13a)

A summons, a strong statement, or a challenge toward positive spiritual movement. It has a sense of urgency. It is not simply a compliment, not just being nice, or just telling someone what you think.

B) Vocabulary (II Timothy 3:16-17)

The Bible is the language of encouragement.

C) Goal – Spiritual movement (3:13b)

Spiritual movement is toward each other (inward), toward God (upward), and/or toward others (outward).

Note: Community is assumed as a part of the equation of encouragement.

III. The Joy of Perseverance (3:14)

Principle: Although we are partakers, we can only enjoy the fullness of companionship with Christ through faithful perseverance.

A) The enduring relationship – “holy brothers”(3:1)

B) The potential companionship (3:14a)

C) The key (3:14b)

Conclusion (3:15)

What is your reaction to someone speaking truth into your life.

Have you positioned yourself so that someone can speak truth into your life?