

190428-1 Watching Against an Evil Heart of Unbelief, He 3, 12-14-CThurman

We have been made to fellowship with Christ and God through the new covenant. This new covenant of God is an unconditional covenant. God freely chose some from among all of mankind to be the recipients of this covenant. He gives them everlasting life; He has imputed to them the righteousness of His only begotten Son, and He causes them to believe and understand that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God. God has provided everything for us so that we might live, walk, and abide in Him.

Ro 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ro 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

Php 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake ...

With that in mind He warns us against turning away from Him in disobedience. There are several warnings in Scriptures that He gives to us against apostasy. And that is what I want to spend our time together considering. The seriousness of departing from the living God.

Heb 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

This is a warning Paul through the Holy Spirit wrote to the brethren. The brethren of Christ are warned to keep their eyes open to every indication that they might be falling into the slightest unbelief. True brethren have a desire to walk with Christ.

Mt 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

There is in the children of God, because they have received everlasting life, a renewed spiritual hunger and thirsting after God to have their lives patterned after the life of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Here the implication is that not only do they *hunger and thirst* after righteousness, but that they will *feed* and *drink* of Christ, and thereby become satisfied and contented in God as they do His will.

1Ti 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things (life's foolish and hurtful lusts; everything that would distract us from the goal of living like Christ and for Christ); and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

There is nothing wrong with things necessarily, but because of our present weakness (the broken principle of sin in us) there is in everything a snare; a snare which Satan sets to catch us *unaware*. Things have a way of distracting us from Christ. Perhaps we begin to have the false sense of security, self-sufficiency, and independence. Perhaps we begin to think less of how much we need the Lord at every moment and in every part of our lives. Perhaps we think that prayer isn't really all that important. Perhaps other things begin to take precedence over the necessity of gathering with the saints when we meet together. I think this attitude, which is the beginning of apostasy, sneaks up on us little by little. And the danger is, we brush it off telling ourselves that everything is alright. The real snare that Satan sets is that we think that surely because God is blessing me with so many *things* that the way that I'm living must be right. You've been deceive. And you young parents, some of you have already established in your children a pattern of thinking about the service of Christ and this church. Everything but Christ is first. We're flirting with the world. We talk like the world. We act like the world. We look like the world. And it's costing us. And parents, it going to cost you in your children if you don't repent.

2Co.6.14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (The warning:)

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive (εἰσδέχομαι, 1ps. pres. ind. act.) you,

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

I want you to notice here that the new covenant, unconditionally enacted in our lives that is expressed here. In effect the Lord says, I have given everything for you to live and walk before me, so why join yourselves to them?

Beyond question the child of God should walk with God. They not only have the desire, but the ability to walk with God. And there is proof that we are walking with God. That proof is in the conflict that we have in our souls for walking with Him. Every child of God should be involved in the spiritual conflict. Proof that we're walking with God is that while on the one hand we joy in God our Savior we also distress because of the flesh that is in us. We worship God in spirit and truth while at the same time mourn over the constant propensity which would drive us to go the wrong way. And brethren that propensity to go the wrong way NEVER CEASES. It is constant.

I want to boast in me. Look at what I can do. Look at all I've done. Look at my accomplishments. I'm full of pride. I'm full of lust. I want to be rich. I don't want it all. I just want enough. I want folks to admire me. I want folks to look at my body, my ride, my house, my wife. Or, secretly, I we love looking at other women, or men. I love giving people a piece of my mind. I love being cranky and crabby. I love being rash, sharp, harsh.

The spiritual man grieves over just the potential in the heart to do these things.

Brethren, that's the old man. Those without Christ, this is all they are. But Christians, if we aren't putting off this body of sin; if we aren't putting away the deeds of the flesh, wrath, anger, malice, we aren't in conflict with the flesh; we are overcome by it. Brethren, our propensity to live after the flesh can't be prayed away. We can be so perfected so that it might eventually one day say, 'I surrender.' It will never in this life say, 'I quit.' The old man will never wave the white flag of surrender in this life. It comes with me into my prayer closet; we're impatient, distracted, cold, rather than being bold and open before the throne of His grace. We think to hide from the Lord the truth. It comes with me into the great congregation of the saints. It comes with me as I stand behind this pulpit. It comes with me in the pew. It is always with me. Brethren, this is the true Christian experience. Anyone that says any differently either is unlearned in the word of God and therefore ignorant of the genuine Christian experience or is has yet to receive God's gift of life. The conflict of the spirit against the flesh will not let up until we are either planted in the ground when we die or when we are changed at the resurrection. On the one hand the Christian desires to put off the old man and his deeds while on the other he wants to live for the world. This is the dilemma which only the living face. The dead, those without Christ have no such conflict. We note the word of God which commands us, *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.* (Ro.13.14) This means that we are to put on the works of Christ, do as He would, not as we would. We are not to make provision for the flesh. We are to provide for things that move us to do as He would, not things that promote the things of the flesh. The nearer we draw to Christ the less pleasure we find in the things of the world. I didn't say that the propensity to sin diminishes. I said the less pleasure we find in the world. The world takes on the perspective of the wise man Solomon who said, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.* (Ec.1.2) Christ, brethren, become more precious to us. He alone will deliver us from this body of death as we walk with Him.

Ro 7:24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

God, by the new covenant gave us all things in Jesus Christ without condition. He bestowed upon us everlasting life. We have been born again. It wasn't because

of anything we did; one day He reached down and gave us life. He imputed to all of us the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We have a perfect standing before God. I mean by that that the wrath which God had toward His elect was put away when His Son died on the cross for them. (Not when we believed, but when He died.) Then, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son when He died on the cross. We received the gift of faith so that when we heard the gospel of His only begotten Son we could receive it. He gave us a brand new disposition which made us willing to obey His commandments from that time forward. His word became precious to our souls. There is no other word like this word of God, our Bible. We love the Lord our God with all soul, mind, heart, and strength. He gave us His Holy Spirit to seal us as His own beloved property until He sends His Son again from glory. He teaches us His word. He gives us an understanding so that we can know the will of God as it is revealed in the Bible. Everything has been supplied us in Christ Jesus. This is an unconditional covenant.

Jer.31.33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Brethren, emphasis cannot be too strongly laid upon the truth that none of us did anything whatsoever to warrant receiving covenant from God. God and our Father shewed us mercy simply because He was pleased. He sent His Son because He was pleased to. The Son willingly came for us. He knew who we were before He came. We are the people of His choice. And because of Him we are going to be like Him one day. We are unworthy of the least of the mercies of God. We find His mercies are new every morning. **All of that considered we are prone to wander.** It is against this evil bent that we are warned of God not to fail of His grace. Grace is God's free supply to do what we cannot do ourselves: to obey.

2Co 12.5 Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.

Paul said, I can glory in what other men glory, but as for myself I cannot glory, except to say that I am unable to do anything ... but for the grace of God.

2Co.12.9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

may rest upon, ἐπισκηνώση, 3ps. aor. subj. of ἐπισκηνώω, ἐπί among, on, upon + σκηνώω, KJV, to dwell; the noun form of this verb, σκηνή and σκῆνος, is tss. tabernacle, habitation; tent; the power which rested on Christ (which is the Holy Spirit, cf. Jn1.32; Lk.4.14) rests, tabernacles upon those who will walk with Him.

10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

How is Paul strong when he is weak. Because it is in these times when the power of God works best: to show love, to show faithfulness, to show mercy, to be gentle and patient, to keep the heart, to keep the tongue, to show trust and confidence in God, and in so many other ways. But this wasn't something that came naturally for Paul. This was something he learned through those adverse circumstances.

Php 4:11 Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

We don't want to come into adverse circumstances, but only through them do we begin to learn to trust God. Then the Christian life becomes more than a theory; it becomes an experience. And to this end He warns us to continue in the faith.

He.3.12 Take heed,

βλέπετε, 2ppl. pres. imperative of βλέπω, watch

brethren,

ἀδελφοί, nom. pl., a noun of the sing. ἀδελφός, ἄ copulative prefix + δελφύς; those of the same womb, and so meaning those that have relationship together in the new birth, being born of God.

lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing

evil, πονηρός, KJV, evil, wicked, malicious, grievous.

ἀποστῆναι, aor. infin. of ἀφίστημι, ἀπό from, of, out of, since, forth + ἵστημι, KJV, to stand, be set, established, covenanted, appointed, to continue; , ἀφίστημι, KJV, to depart; fall away (Lk.8.13); to be drawn away (Ac.5.37); to refrain from (Ac.5.38); to withdraw (1Ti.6.5).

from the living God.

Those who depart from the living God are said to have *an evil heart of unbelief*. Why is it evil? Because their hearts are evilly affected, they are malicious, grievous, wicked against the God who loves them so.

13 But exhort one another daily (or, each day),

exhort, παρακαλεῖτε, 2prpl. pres. imper. of παρακαλέω, παρά beside, near, by + καλέω to call.

Part of the fellowship of the saints is calling to one another to come beside us so that we can encourage, and comfort, and warn each other against *failing of the grace of God*, departing from the living God by unbelief.

while it is called To day (always ready, always able in the moment, instantly when necessity dictates); **lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.**

*lest ... be hardened, σκληρυνθῆ, 3ps. aor. subj. pass. of σκληρύνω; 3.8 **harden not your hearts, 13 lest any of you be hardened, 15, harden not your hearts; 4.7 harden not your hearts; a spiritual schlerosis.***

*deceitfulness, ἀπάτη, dat. sing. of ἀπατή; always (7) tss. with the word **deceit.***

We know by the word of God and by our experience, because of the grace of life, that we can be deceived by our own hearts which has in it the evil principle of sin working at all times. Brethren, our foot is always on the threshold of coming into glory, into the presence of God. Don't allow the heart to become cold and indifferent. Don't become wearied with looking up to God. Be strong.

1Pe 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:

15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot ...

Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Now, I'd like to read into the 3rd chapter of the book of Hebrews. To set a quick context I'd like to supply the first and the last verses of chapter 2.

He.2.1 ¶ Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

...

He.2.18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

The things that God has done, and the things that He has said are sure. His word will not return to Him void. To these we are to give the more earnest heed. He will accomplish, as we have witness in the Bible, all that He has spoken. Whatever our experience keep trusting in Him. Let us keep our hearts guarded so that we have a right mind toward Him and the world.

*He.3.1 ¶ Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;
2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.
3 For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.
4 For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.
5 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;
6 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
7 ¶ Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,
8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:
9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.
10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.*

11 *So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)*

12 *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

13 *But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

14 *For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence (instead of apostatize, it is hypostatized, of His substance, we are so near to be in union) stedfast unto the end;*

made partakers, μέτοχοι, nom. pl., of μέτοχος, μετά with, change + ἔχω to have; KJV, partners, fellows.

*hold, κατάσχωμεν, 1ppl. aor. subj. of κατέχω, κατά + ἔχω, lit. to hold down; KJV, **hold fast (He.3.6; 10.23); retain (Phile 13); possess (2Co.6.10); seize (Mt.21.38); stay (Lk.4.42).***

*confidence, He. 3.14; ὑποστάσεως, gen. sing. of ὑπόστασις, which transliterated is hypostatic; KJV tss. *confidence, person, substance*; we are so near to Him as to be in union, rather than apostatize we are hypostatized.*

15 *While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*

*provocation, παραπικρασμῶ, dat. sing. παραπικραίνω, παρά by, near + πικραίνω **to be bitter**;*

16 *For some, when they had heard, did provoke (παρεπίκραναν, 3ppl. aor.): howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses.*

17 *But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?*

18 *And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?*

19 *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

4.1 ¶ *Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

In other words be diligent not to fail in the works of Christ, ceasing from our works and entering into His.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

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.**

8 For if Jesus (Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. (cf. Deu. 12.9-11)

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also **hath ceased from his own works**, as God did from his.

11 ¶ Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest,

*let us labor, σπουδάσωμεν, 1ppl. aor. subj. of σπουδάζω;
KJV, to be forward, endeavor, to be studious, diligent, labor.*

lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

12 For the word of God is quick (ζῶν, living), and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

By keeping apprised of the word of God the word of God keeps us apprised of our own state, the condition of our heart and mind.

14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

hold fast, κρατῶμεν, 1ppl. pres. subj. act. of κρατέω; KJV, to take, keep, hold, lay hold on, hold fast, retain, obtain.

15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (weaknesses); but was in all points tempted (of human weaknesses) like as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly

boldly, openly, freely, plainly; παρρησίας

unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain (receive) mercy, and find (discover) grace to help in time of need.

in time of need, εὐκαιρον, acc. sing. fem. of εὐκαιρος εὐ good, well + καιρος time, due season, opportunity, always, while; εὐκαιρος, KJV, convenient, and Wigram notes, for seasonable assistance.

The necessity to be chastened so that we might be kept in the will of God.

He.12.4 ¶ Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

In so many words, as long as we are in this present body of sin the battle continues.

5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

Chastening is an essential part of the plan of God to make us become willing to conform to the image of His Son. Without it, because of our old nature we would never be willing to obey. But by it we become willing participants of His grace. No child of God is exempted from chastening. A child of God may live as he will, but it is certain that judgment for sin will come.

The punishment for sin as far as the wrath of God is concerned us done. Jesus bore it all. We'll never suffer the eternal vengeance of God. But we are certainly subject to being chastened, punished, judged for not living as the children of God.

1Co.11.31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence:

we gave [them] reverence, ἐνετρεπόμεθα, 1ppl. imperf. mid. of ἐντρεπω, LXX, to rout an enemy; to reverence, regard.

shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

which are exercised, γυμνάζω, the word from which we have our English *gymnastics*; 1Ti.4.8 refers to the *exercise* of the body, γυμνασία.

We have a free subscription to the spiritual gym of chastening. We are put to it so that we might grow in grace.

- 12 *Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;*
13 *And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*
14 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*
15 *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;*

bitterness, Gr. root πικρία; there is the gall of bitterness, root of bitterness, being bitter against our wives, waters made bitter, belly made bitter, bitter envyings.

trouble, ἐνοχλή, 3ps. pres. subj. act. of ἐνοχλέω, ἐν + ὀχλέω to be vexed; so, to become vexed by.

- 16 *Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

as, ὡς, adv., as, like, like unto

Esau presents a natural example or type from which the children of God might learn an important spiritual lesson.

- 17 *For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*
18 ¶ *For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,*
19 *And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:*

20 *(For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:*

21 *And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)*

22 *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,*

23 *To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,*

24 *And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

25 *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:*

26 *Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.*

27 *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.*

28 *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:*

29 *For our God is a consuming fire.*

13.1 ¶ *Let brotherly love continue.*

All of the children of God have been made partakers of the new covenant through the blood of Christ. We are to guard ourselves so that we do not depart from Him in unbelief. The design of chastening works in us to be faithful. Despise that chastening we will fail of the grace of God and depart from Him in unbelief. For this we will not receive all that we should have at the coming of Christ. Let us *watch* ourselves and look to the coming of Christ our Lord.