

# *Often Reproved*

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Proverbs 29:1 He, that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

- I. God reproves all men three ways;
  - A. Through his Word.
    1. When the truth is presented to their minds about their neglect of their duty.
    2. When they are made aware of their transgression against God by his Word, through His messenger.
  - B. Through his Providence.
    1. When He defeats their selfish schemes.
    2. Men seek to exalt themselves, but God intervenes.
    3. Men seek to be rich, but God frustrates their plans.
    4. Men have a thousand ways to pursue their selfish schemes, but God has a thousand ways to frustrate their plans.
    5. Every obstacle, which God in His providence interposes in your way of selfishness, is His reproof.
  - C. Through his Spirit.
    1. God can simply impress the mind in many different ways.
      - a) Dreams
      - b) Feeling of impending death (fear)
    2. With the sudden death of friends and companions in sin the mind is reminded of the judgement of God.
- II. Every reproof a person receives is a message from God.
  - A. It is God's gentle dealings to soften the heart and turn his mind and heart to God.
  - B. It is not other men trying to control him or reprove him — it is God himself dealing with the soul.
- III. Every time a person reacts to reproof by stiffening his neck he moves himself closer to sudden destruction.
  - A. He has used up and thrown away one of the limited avenues God has for softening his heart.
  - B. His heart is hardened MORE than it was before the reproof.
    1. He is blinder still.
    2. He is more set upon himself still.
    3. He is more dull of hearing still.
    4. His mind is darkened more still.
    5. God could perform the grandest miracle right before his eyes and he would not be the least impressed. (i.e.: Pharaoh, the disciples)
  - C. The next stroke of God's hand must be much more severe, and therefore much more painful in order to have a chance of softening the heart.
- IV. Those who live in much light, but continue to stiffen their neck, will be destroyed suddenly.

- A. Instantly.
    - 1. You will be thinking that you will have another chance, just as you always have.
  - B. No warning.
    - 1. You will be expecting one last warning before destruction comes, and therefore you will have time to repent then.
  - C. Unexpectedly.
    - 1. You will be in a state of mind that you think you are not deserving of destruction yet.
- V. Destruction with no remedy.
- A. Destruction is not just another reproof.
  - B. It is not one more punishment.
  - C. It is not a means of God to convert the soul of the sinner.
  - D. It is the END.
  - E. There is no more reproof; no more opportunities to repent; no remedy to fix your situation then.
  - F. It is TOO LATE when destruction comes.

Zechariah 7:11-12 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts.

2 Chronicles 36:13-16 And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD God of Israel. Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.

VI. Take heed not to harden your heart.

Hebrews 3:12-15 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

Psalm 95:7-9 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

Isaiah 55:6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: