

5 Deadly Consequences of a Hard Heart

For years, I have been teaching on the dangers of spiritual heart disease. Over time, I've witnessed countless lives fall into the patterns of this disease that can often contribute to the condition of having a hard heart.

Now more than ever before, we need to watch over our hearts with diligence, as the times we live in can condition our hearts to become hardened.

It doesn't happen overnight. A person can live a vibrant walk with God and then progressively move into a hardness that grows cold. They know what's right. But they just don't care anymore. Apathy rules their heart. Empathy is not as easily found any longer.

Where once belief was strong and vibrant, coldness, doubt and cynicism invade. Child-like faith gets diluted and stagnancy becomes tolerated.

How a Hard Heart Develops

There are a variety of ways we can develop a hard heart, but two main ones are worth mentioning:

1. **Hearing truth but not acting on it.** One huge way a hard heart can easily develop is when we know what we need to do, but we don't take action. We live in a generation that has access to more knowledge and insight than any other. We have the opportunity to hear truth all the time. The problem is, we hear so much, yet act on it so little.

We are surrounded by great teachers, yet many do nothing about it, which will lead them to eventually grow hard and cold. Truth is meant to be acted on, not just agreed with. We can

easily inundate ourselves with truth, but live with an under-response to that truth.

Many are deceived into thinking they “know” something because they heard it. Yet that truth is not an active reality in their daily life. Truth is meaningless unless it has been activated through acting on it and allowing it to manifest in your decisions.

Others know point-blank what is right, but choose to not take action.

When you subject yourself to good teaching and in turn do nothing with it, you can find your heart in some big trouble. The goal of the Christian life is to take what you have heard and as James 1:22aa puts it, “Be doers of the word and not hearers only.”

In some ways, a hard heart can be defined as someone who is *being exposed to biblical truth, yet doing nothing with it.*

2. **Not healing the issues of your heart.** But the biggest reason a hard heart develops is when broken experiences and broken issues of the heart never receive the healing needed. Masses of people right now are becoming hard, simply because they are not allowing God to heal the deep pain of their life.

Disappointment is one of the biggest areas that can breed a hard heart. I think what will separate hard hearts from the overcomers will be how we deal with disappointment.

Handled wrongly, deep disappointment can be a heart killer. The impact of painful disappointments will lead us to numbing out, disconnecting and growing cold if we do not seek to heal and stretch our heart muscles.

Everyone has their share of disappointment and trials. I don't find anyone who does not have some sort of trial or pain they

are facing, which could debilitate the life of their heart.

Many choose to invite God into that pain. Although excruciatingly difficult, they discover aspects of God's nature they never knew before. They find great strength and maturity during seasons of suffering, loss and disappointment.

Yet at the same time, many are being spiritually and emotionally taken out. On the outside, things seem fine, but underneath, cynicism, anger and hardness are present. The tender optimism once present has turned into a rock-hard coldness.

How do you get there? By not allowing God to heal your pain.

I believe we can go through seasons where we have been hurt or burned out, and God needs to heal our hearts while softening the hard places. There is hope for hardness. But there does come a point in time where that hardness can become impenetrable. God Himself could appear before you and nothing would change.

Consequences of a Hard Heart

The consequences of a hard heart go beyond just the person:

- 1. You'll hurt the people closest to you.** Families can erode, simply because one family member said, "This is as far as I am going." The stubborn hard-heartedness will impact the family, a church leadership and entire organization. Hard-heartedness does not just harden that one person. It influences everyone around.

It's this attitude that says, "This is as far as I am going to go." They just don't believe like they used to. Their world view has shrunk to what they can control. Childlike trust and faith have been siphoned out.

And as a result, one of the consequences of a hard heart is that people around you get hurt. People are hurt, families are

hurt. Your marriage will take a hit and relationships around you will experience the negative impact.

- 2. You won't give up things that hurt you.** Hard hearts often need addictive habits to keep themselves afloat, even though these tools of escape are having a negative effect.

And so you ask them, "Why do you keep this bad habit? Why do you do this?" Many times, you will get a cold response that reveals they don't want to change.

Even though their habit is harming their emotional and even physical health—even though it is having a negative impact on the family—it doesn't matter to them.

When you get hard, you are no longer connected to the consequences anymore.

People with hard hearts become incredibly stubborn.

They just say, "That's the way I am. Take it or leave it."

- 3. You'll block the flow of God's movement and direction.** God has a plan for your life, but He won't force it on you. All the work of God is done through the leading, prompting and empowerment of His Holy Spirit.

But when hardness is present, you won't be open to the signals of heaven that come to you. In fact, you'll think that God is far away—not because He is far away, but because your heart has become hardened to that vibrant connection.

Whatever group you are connected to, the hardness within you will impact those in the group. God's potential gets blocked. Your hardness is impacting others.

- 4. You become numb and cold to the things that should move you.** When you have a hard heart, it leads you to become more numb and checked out of life. It's not just about

being disconnected from an awareness of God's love and grace but also about impacting your relationships around you.

Normally, certain things would move your heart and lead you to change. Now, those triggers don't even touch you anymore.

5. God will turn you over to your desires. Because God is relational, He will not force His ways upon you. He will patiently love you even when you are in a place of hardness. But He will also let you go where your hardness is taking you.

Sometimes we need to go through some tough seasons to awaken ourselves to the need for our hearts to be softened.

How do you turn things around? With one decision.

Begin to give God your pain. Grieve those things you lost. Process through the heartache in a new way that invites God into those places.

You don't have to live with a hard heart. {eoa}

For the original article, visit .

Mark DeJesus has served as an experienced communicator since the 1990s. As a teacher, author, transformational consultant and radio host, Mark is deeply passionate about awakening hearts and equipping people toward personal transformation. He is gifted in helping people address the core issues that become limitations to their God-given identity and destiny. He is the author of numerous books and hundreds of teachings. Mark and his wife host a weekly online show called Transformed You and he writes at . His articles have been featured on sites like and . Mark and his wife Melissa enjoy each other and their precious children, Maximus and Abigail.