



Hebrews chapter 3 focuses on helping the early church stay encouraged as they follow Jesus. The author uses Israel as an example of how to not harden your heart toward the Lord. The negative example of Israel serves as a positive example for how we are to live for the Lord. Sometimes bad news is what leads to good news. The good news is that the church is called to encourage. In this world we will be persecuted, harassed, and possibly attacked for following Jesus. One role of the church is to support each other when we encounter difficult times. The best way to encourage others is to make sure you are living a life encouraged by the Lord.

1. Researchers have investigated the phenomena of how encouragement affects the brain and the development of the brain. Share a time when someone encouraged you and it changed the trajectory of your day, week, or life.
2. Israel hardened their heart to the Lord while wandering in the wilderness. **Read Hebrews 3:7-11, Exodus 32:1, Numbers 12:1-2, and 20:1-12.** Discuss some of the ways Israel was disobedient to the Lord and the consequences they experienced.
3. The opposite of hardening our heart is having a tender heart to the Lord. **Read Romans 5:5, 2 Corinthians 4:16, Colossians 2:2-3, and 2 Timothy 2:22.** What does Scripture teach us about having a heart for the Lord?
4. The author wants the church to have a heart committed to the Lord and not a sinful heart. **Read Hebrews 3:12-15.** How have you seen sin hurt your relationship with others and with the church? How does sin cloud our vision?
5. **Hebrews 3:13** is a primary point of application in this entire text. We are called to be people of encouragement. **Read Psalm 10:17, Acts 9:31, Romans 12:6-8, and Philippians 2:1-3.** How can you be a person of encouragement this week?
6. To be a person of encouragement we all need to be encouraged. Where is an area in your life that you're feeling discouraged right now? How can this small group come alongside you to encourage you this week?
7. **Read Hebrews 3:16-19.** The chapter ends with a series of leading questions. It's almost a summary of the authors thoughts. Where do you need to enter the rest of the Lord this week?
8. Close your time in prayer. Pray for strength to invite a friend to meet Jesus.