

---

# Words of Truth

---

## Hebrews 3:13

By: Brian A. Yeager

To avoid departure from the living God, the inspired penman of this letter wrote this: *“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin”* (Hebrews 3:13). All faithful saints know that the word of God is able to save our souls (Psalms 19:7-11, Acts 20:32, Romans 1:16, Romans 10:14-17, I Corinthians 15:1-2, I Thessalonians 2:13, II Timothy 3:15-17, and James 1:21-25). However, as I have taught often over the years, faithful brethren are just as important to our salvation as is the word of God. I have long desired that brethren would understand that we are essential to each other for salvation. The word of God teaches that, as we are going to study from this text.

The inspired instruction to exhort one another is later repeated in this letter. Notice: *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”* (Hebrews 10:23-25). The Greek word in Hebrews 3:13 and Hebrews 10:25 is “παρακαλέω”. It means: “to call near, i.e. invite, invoke (by imploration, hortation or consolation): — beseech, call for, (be of good) comfort, desire, (give) exhort(-ation), intreat, pray. To call to one's side, call for, summon; to address, speak to, (call to, call upon), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.; to admonish, exhort; to beg, entreat, beseech; to strive to appease by entreaty to console, to encourage and strengthen by consolation, to comfort; to receive consolation, be comforted to encourage, strengthen; exhorting and comforting and encouraging; to instruct, teach” (Strong's # 3870).

We know that exhortation, comforting, etc. works through teaching (Acts 2:40, Acts 14:22, I Thessalonians 4:13-18, II Timothy 4:1-5, etc.). We know that we teach one another in various ways (Colossians 3:15-17, I Timothy 4:12, Titus 2:3-6, etc.). You cannot stop there though. Exhortation goes further than that. You can see this in how this same Greek word is translated as “comfort” and “exhort” in the following Scriptures: *“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men”* (I Thessalonians 5:11-14).

We have the responsibility towards each other as brothers and sisters in Christ to watch for each others souls. That responsibility is greatly emphasized in the statement “while it is called To day.” This takes us back in the context to verse 7 and extends into Hebrews 3:15 and Hebrews 4:7. Those statements taking us back to Israel provoking God in the wilderness (Numbers 13:1-14:38) as we have studied already. Had the children of Israel watched for each other, instead of caving in to sin, the outcome would have been different. “To day” is a reminder that tomorrow is not promised (James 4:13-16; cf. Proverbs 27:1).

While the hardening of the heart is something we have already studied in this context, the deceitfulness of sin is a new point in this context. Upon conversion, we as Christians should have put off the old man that was corrupt according to deceitful lusts (Ephesians 4:17-5:11). Remember, in the world, you were deceived by sin (Titus 3:3). Saints should have been awoken (I Corinthians 15:33-34). Yet, we know that when people desire to do that which is sinful, they find ways to justify it (I Samuel 15:1-26, Proverbs 16:2, Proverbs 16:25, Proverbs 21:2, Proverbs 30:12, and Hosea 12:1-14). Except for Caleb and Joshua, the children of Israel did that when the spies gave their false report (Deuteronomy 1:19-46). The children of Israel just did not want to go forward. Deception hardened them.

Over the years I have seen many so-called “brethren” that failed to see the importance of being among faithful saints. So often, they only focused on faithful brethren to worship with. They failed to consider faithful brethren who will help them stay true to the Lord. When Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus wrote to the saints in Thessalonica they made this relevant statement: “*As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*” (I Thessalonians 2:11-12). We need to be like Paul, Silvanus, and Timotheus for each other.

Prevention is the key. We should work hard to prevent one another from erring. If prevention fails, before an erring saint is hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, we need to be willing to correct one another (II Samuel 12:1-15, Proverbs 27:5-6, Acts 18:24-28, Galatians 6:1-2, James 5:19-20, and Jude 1:22-23). Based on the situation, what ends up happening will vary as we all should know. The effort to save should be the constant that does not change. We are supposed to be a spiritual family (Ephesians 3:15) and show it (John 13:34-35).

After this brief study, you should be able to consider how important brothers and sisters in Christ are to each other. After conversion, it is of great importance that disciples find faithful saints to join (Acts 9:26; cf. I Corinthians 12:14-27). You see that in the great efforts made with the first congregation of Christians on earth to be together (Acts 2:41-6:7). To be referred to as “one of you” (Colossians 4:7-11) is a sense of membership; belonging; family. Furthermore, as we have thought about in this study, being part of a faithful congregation is also about accountability. Brethren, continue to work hard in helping each other be saved!