

CONDITION OF THE HEART

Exodus 6:28-7:7

Calvary Church of Pacific Palisades

March 27, 2011 ♦ Sunday Morning Worship

Proverbs 4:23 Guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

- King Belshazzar SECURE HEART ... handwriting on the wall ... weighed, measured. Daniel 5.
- Herod Antipas ENLARGED HEART ... silver robe; eaten with worms and died. Acts 12.
- Man who made a bunch of money INDULGENT HEART ... set out to build bigger barns. Luke 12 “fool”
- TWO MEN ... one who’s heart is discouraged, the other who’s heart is hard.

Please open your Bibles to Exodus 6:28. Page 44.

Recent events remind us how quickly things can change. Security, significance and success ... washed away by a Tsunami, shaken by an earthquake, news of cancer, loss of a job, “I want to divorce.” Today reminded that no matter what we read about on the front page of the WSJ, EXPERIENCE IN OUR PERSONAL LIVES, **God is sovereign over the affairs of men, and over the condition of our hearts.** Choice to give our hearts to Him.

Review ...

Ex 6:2-5 Name is YHWH, covenant keeping God, sees the plight of the oppressed and is moved to action.
Ex 6:6-8 Seven-fold promise ... “I will”. **Strength week long.** YHWH signed contract.

READ 6:28-7:2

Moses heart was discouraged ... he felt like a complete failure. He had lost heart.

Faltering lips ... third time he has reminded God of his inadequacy, his disability. Inferiority COMPLEX. Moses ... “No one is going to listen to me. I QUIT.” Hear this from someone almost every week.

Ill. Friday afternoon. ill. Tempted to quit ... Larry

How often do you allow discouragement, or inadequacy or insecurity to keep you from doing what God has called you and equipped you to do? Like Moses, lost heart? **“Can’t go on.”**

Moses felt like a failure ... secretly vowing to never speak publicly again, especially in Pharaohs court. Moses inability was the very thing that qualified him to serve God. No different with us.

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. 1 Peter 5:6

God doesn’t need gifted servants, He only uses humble, dependent servants. Rely on His power.

No one like weakness. No one wants to admit weakness. Yet, we are most powerful when we admitted his weakness. **God’s power is perfected in weakness. 2 Cor 12:9** Boast about weakness.

When our hearts are discouraged, **When we are most tempted to quit, God is most likely to act.**

If your heart is discouraged, stop focusing on your weakness, start focusing on God’s power that works through you. Get your eyes off yourself ... inadequacy, failure, disability ... focus on God.

Don’t quit, don’t give up ... God says, believe me, I’m in this with you and I’m ready to act.

READ 7:3-4a

Pharaoh’s heart was hard ... he believed he was in control. Had a proud, stubborn, resistant heart. Over-inflated ego. The illusion of power and control kept him from submitting.

When we are most tempted to think we are in control, God shows us His power.

12 times Exodus reminds us of the condition of Pharaoh’s heart ... you can’t miss it.

7 x Pharaoh hardened his heart. 5 x God hardened Pharaohs heart.

Snake	7:13	Pharaoh's heart became hard, he wouldn't listen
1 st Blood	7:22	Pharaoh's heart became hard, he wouldn't listen
2 nd Frogs	8:15	He hardened his heart, he wouldn't listen
3 rd Gnats	8:19	Pharaoh's heart was hard, he wouldn't listen
4 th Flies	8:32	Pharaoh hardened his heart, he would not let the people go
5 th Livestock	9:7	His heart was unyielding, he would not let the people go
6 th Boils	9:12	But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart
7 th Hail	9:35	So Pharaoh's heart was hard, he would not let the Israelites go
8 th Locusts	10:20	But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart , he would not let them I go
9 th Darkness	10:27	But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart , he was not willing to let
10 th Firtstborn	11:10	But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart , he would not let them go
Pursuit	14:8	The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so he pursued

God gave him every chance to submit. Refused. Over and over again, he hardened his heart.

Ill. Personal ... God speaking to me about something. Asking me to forgive. NO WAY.

Finally, God hardened Pharaoh's heart. So why in the world would God do that?

THREE REASONS WHY GOD HARDENED PHARAOH'S HEART...

1. **To show who is really in control.** Not just over affairs of men, but over our hearts as well.

Daily life is a battle for sovereignty, who is really in control. Me or God? Resist long enough, makes much more difficult to admit God is really in charge.

Ill. Personal ... am I going serve God, or myself? Soft-hearted or hard-hearted?

Hard hearted believe they are in charge. Power struggle with God. My will or His will?

2. **To bring him to a place of surrender.**

Hard hearted are unwilling to submit, surrender. Not about to give up control, power. So God exercised some muscle to reveal just how powerful He really is. Not about showing off, about revealing glory.

Hard hearted have to hit the bottom before they are willing to relinquish control. And everyone has a different distance they have to go. I've seen it again and again. But the longer they resist the more hardened they get. Ill. Girl ... prayed that she would hit bottom.

God not giving up on Pharaoh. Chance after chance after chance. Stubborn. Eventually he would hit bottom, maybe he would look up and reach out to God. Took the death of his first-born son.

3. **To deliver those who are oppressed and abused.**

God had made a promise (7-fold) and this Pharaoh was standing in opposition to God's promise.

God was not going to sacrifice his people, his promise ... for one individual's obstinate refusal to submit.

If your heart is hard, stop resisting now. Let go of control and surrender to God.

READ 7:4b-7

Everyone in this story finds out who is really in charge. Moses and Pharaoh, the Israelites and the Egyptians. No one escapes God's control or its repercussions, whether directly or indirectly.

The choice is ours ... will we harden our hearts or submit to God's power and control?

Ill. Resisting God ... hiding from Him, refusing to surrender; find security, success and significance in Him.

Conclusion:

Don't let a loss of heart take you out, make you quit.

Don't let a proud, stubborn, resistant heart keep you from submitting.

Invite God to soften your heart, make it your goal to surrender your heart.