

Reflection Questions: Hebrews 3:12-13

For the message, "Let Us Encourage One Another" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on April 13, 2025

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Hebrews 3:12-13

12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. **13** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Let's get started...

- What initially grabs your attention in this text? What questions or thoughts arise as you reflect on what it's saying?

QUESTIONS

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- (1) In the sermon on this passage, the pastor began with a quote from author Jodi Picoult, "You can fool yourself, you know. You'd think it's impossible, but it turns out it's the easiest thing of all." What do you make of this statement? Agree? Disagree? Why?
- (2) The author of the Book of Hebrews calls his brothers and sisters in Christ to "take care" (meaning "to watch out for something, to be aware of something"). In this case, he calls them to take care "lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God."

What are some subtle ways an "evil, unbelieving heart" could take root in someone's life? What might be some signs of an initial drifting away from God (cf. Hebrews 2:1)?

- (3) The author then calls his brothers and sisters to "exhort one another every day." The word "exhort" is often translated as "encourage," meaning "to come alongside someone to encourage, to urge, to console, to cheer up, to invite or to summon" someone.

Can you describe a time when someone has done this for you? What was that like?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- (1) In the sermon, the pastor said that Christianity is inherently a relational spirituality, and that growth in Christ is a community project. He also said encouragement is a spiritual discipline, like reading the Bible and prayer. How are you growing in your understanding that our faith in Jesus while being a personal thing is never meant to be a private thing?
- (2) How do you think we could build a culture of encouragement into our community of faith? What are the obstacles? What would be the rewards?
- (3) The text talked about the possibility of being "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."
 - Do you think a person is always conscious that this is happening?
 - If this were to happen to you, how would you want someone to come alongside you to encourage you? What would you need in that moment even if you might not want it?
 - What fears or obstacles might keep us from speaking hard truths in love to one another?

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- (1) How do you think our church can become a counter-example to the isolation and disconnection so many people feel in our city?
- (2) What would it look like for our church to be known as a community that builds others up in a city that tears them down?
- (3) What role does putting into practice encouraging one another play in validating the Good News of Jesus that we proclaim?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....