

## Cultural Influence & the Gospel

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### Ephesians 4:17-24

#### Being Past Feeling

- Doctors use anesthetics to desensitize people to pain.
- Satan uses “devices” to deaden Christians to sin & error – 2 Cor. 2:11. Compare Rom. 1:29-32.
- People can, and do, become hardened to sin – 1 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 3:12-13.
- “Being past feeling” Eph. 4:19 – “to cease from feeling pain. Hence to be apathetic.” (Vincent's Word Studies)

#### What We Become Hardened Towards

- Compassion – the pain of others (Mat. 9:36; Jude 22-23).
- Morality – not even blush (Jer. 6:15; 8:12).
- Ethical standards – lies, rejection of truth, lack of integrity, selfishness (1 Tim. 4:2; 2 Pet. 2:12-14).
- Romans 1:32 “who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.”
- Spirituality – no guilt for lack of study, prayer, service, worship, fellowship, brethren become incidental (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:25).
- Family – neglect of roles, responsibilities, mates, children (Eph. 5:22-6:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).
- The lost – prayer, defense of the Gospel, modeling Christ, outreach (Mk. 2:16-17; Lk. 7:36-48).

#### How We Become Hardened

- Most do not start out that way...
- Lack of Knowledge – Hos. 4:6; Heb. 5:14 – some not taught what is sin; others have forgotten.
- Failure to put off the old man, and put on the new man – Eph. 4:17-24. Compare – Rom. 12:1-2.
- Constant influence of worldly people & things – 1 Cor. 15:33; Pro. 6:27. Compare Heb. 3:13; 1 Jn. 2:15-17; Gen. 13:12.

#### Must Become “Sensitized”

- Heb. 5:14 – Able to discern between good and evil.
- Immodesty – 1 Tim. 2:9-10; cf. Pro. 7:10. Modest – “Orderly, well-arranged, decent...” - (W.E. Vine); “Respectable, honorable” (Arndt & Gingrich) – 1 Tim 3:2 “Good behavior” as of elders.
- Propriety – “A sense of shame, modesty” (W.E. Vine); Used in Gk. as opposite of “promiscuous” (ability to blush – opp. Jer. 6:15; 8:12).
- Moderation (sobriety KJV) – of a sound mind, sane, in one’s senses; curbing one’s desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate (Thayer).
- Foul language – Eph. 4:29; 5:3-5.
- Fornication – 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 18 “Flee!”
- Doctrinal error – 2 Tim. 4:3-4. Compare Jas. 3:1.
- The lost – Mat. 9:36-38.
- Devaluing the lost shows that we value worldly things above the soul – Mat. 16:26.

#### Decision...

- We can become desensitized to good things or bad things in many of different ways.
- The problem is, when we are hardened to sin, we no longer feel its pain or see its danger to others.
- When we become desensitized to the world, and to God’s word, we will be lost and we can help no one!
- The “good news” is that our minds can be renewed, and our senses exercised to discern between good and evil.
- Why not begin today?

**2Co 2:11** lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

**1Ti 4:1** Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

**1Ti 4:2** speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

**Heb 3:12** Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

**Heb 3:13** but exhort one another daily, while it is called "TODAY," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

**Mat 9:36** But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

**Mat 9:37** Then He said to His disciples, "**The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.**

**Mat 9:38** **Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."**

**Jud 1:22** And on some have compassion, making a distinction;

**Jud 1:23** but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

**Jer 6:15** Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; Nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time I punish them, They shall be cast down," says the LORD.

**2Pe 2:12** But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

**2Pe 2:13** *and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,

**2Pe 2:14** having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. *They have* a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children.

**Heb 6:4** For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

**Heb 6:5** and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

**Heb 6:6** if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

**Mar 2:16** And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

**Mar 2:17** When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, "**Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance."**

**Pro 6:27** Can a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned?

**Pro 7:10** And there a woman met him, *With* the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.

**Eph 4:29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

**Eph 5:3** But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

**Eph 5:4** neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

**Eph 5:5** For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

**Mat 16:26** **For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**