

SOFTENING A STUBBORN HEART

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As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, **do not harden your hearts** as you did in the rebellion." (Hebrews 3:15)

Five keys to softening a stubborn heart (and help avoid disaster)...

I. Take opportunities to do _____.

a) **Mark 3:1** Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there.

A. Jesus went around _____ good!
Acts 10:38 ... God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around **doing good** and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

Galatians 5:6 The **only** thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Application #1 - Do not grow weary in doing _____. (**Galatians 6:9**)

II. Refuse to tolerate a _____ spirit.

A. The Pharisees had _____ hearts.
Mark 3:2 Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he **would** heal him on the Sabbath.

Application #2 - A true relationship with Jesus will help you be constructive, _____ critical.

III. Obey the " _____ ", not just the "letter" of the law.

A. Jesus made a clear _____ between the two.
Mark 3:3 Jesus said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone." **4** Then Jesus asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

1. **Spirit of the law versus letter of the law.**
Def: What is LEGALLY right vs. What is MORALLY right.
2 Cor. 3:6 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

B. Don't _____ what Jesus is doing in your midst.
Mark 3:5 He looked around at them in **anger** and, **deeply distressed** at their **stubborn hearts**, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored.

Mark 3:6 **Then** the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the **Herodians** how they might kill Jesus.

Matt 12:9-14 – *parallel*

Application #3 - Though our lives are shriveled with sin, if we reach out to Jesus we can be completely _____!

IV. Seek Jesus with your whole _____.

Jeremiah 29:13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

A. Jesus was a _____ deal! Crowds sought him out!
Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. **8** When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.

B. You must know your _____ before you will seek help.
Mark 3:9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. **10** For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him.

Application #4 - Seeking Jesus is not a passive pursuit but a desperate _____.

V. _____ Jesus, not just know "about" him.

Mark 3:11 Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." **12** But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.

A. Believe it or _____, there is a spiritual reality.
James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.
1 John 4:4b (NASB) ...greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

Application #5 - If you really know Jesus, you will _____ others about him.
