

From 'Faith and Family, A Personal Journey' Bible Study by Myra Green
Taught in conjunction with the musical 'Ruth, the Redeemer's Bride'

What leads to failed marriages? What causes divorce? I looked in the concordance of my Bible for the word divorce; that was a good place to start. I found that there were several verses in the Bible with the word divorce in them. The verses in the book of Mark seemed to offer the underlying reason for divorce so I started in the book of Mark, with Jesus' own words to the Pharisees.

Mark 10:2-5 "Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,"

Jesus said a hardened heart leads to divorce. The condition of the heart therefore must determine the success or failure of a marriage. But what exactly is a hardened heart? Is it a mean unfeeling heart? I was determined to know what God's definition was. I looked for the word hard, and ended up in Hebrews where hard hearts are the subject.

*Heb. 3:6-13 But Christ is faithful as son over God's house. And we are his houses, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast. (From Psalms 95) "Today, if you hear his voice **DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS** as you did during the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, where your fathers tested and tried me and forty years saw what I did. That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray and they have not known my ways. So I declared an oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' See to it, brothers, that none of you has a **SINFUL, UNBELIEVING HEART THAT TURNS AWAY FROM THE LIVING GOD.** But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*

Heb. 3: 18-19 And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

So a hardened heart is a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. So what do I need to believe? I read further into Hebrews for the answer.

*Heb. 4:12-13 for the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow: **IT JUDGES THE THOUGHTS AND ATTITUDES OF THE HEART.** Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

I needed to believe God through His Word, my Bible.