

An Important Activity
(Hebrews 3:13)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are concentrating on "an important activity" mentioned in this verse.
2. We learn from this verse that God's people are to *"exhort one another."*

Discussion:

- I. LET US FIRST EXAMINE WHAT THIS VERSE TEACHES US TO DO
 - A. In Hebrews 3:7-12 a warning is given against developing a hard heart that will lead to a departure from God.
 - B. On the basis of this warning, God's people are to exhort one another:
 1. *"daily"* [on a regular basis]
 2. *"today"* [while opportunities are present].
 - C. Participating in this important activity may:
 1. prevent someone from being *"hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"*
 2. help someone to remain steadfast (Hebrews 10:23-25).
- II. TO BE EFFECTIVE EXHORTERS, WE MUST ELIMINATE AND AVOID THINGS THAT CAUSE DISCOURAGEMENT
 - A. We must eliminate and avoid "pessimism" as demonstrated by the 10 spies (Deuteronomy 1:27-28).
 - B. We must eliminate and avoid giving "foolish advice" as demonstrated by Epliphaz (Job 4:8) and Zophar (Job 11:6).
 1. Job needed some encouragement, but his friends did not help him.
 2. He called his friends *"miserable comforters"* (Job 16:2).
 - C. We must eliminate and avoid "provoking others to anger" (Colossians 3:21).
 - D. Let us avoid things such as these that will cause others to be discouraged.
- III. TO BE EFFECTIVE EXHORTERS, LET US LEARN FROM POSITIVE EXAMPLES
 - A. Two of Judah's best kings, Hezekiah and Josiah, were exhorters.
 1. (2 Chronicles 31:4) Hezekiah gave a command for the benefit of the priests and the Levites *"that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord."*
 2. (2 Chronicles 35:2) Concerning the priests, Josiah *"encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord."*
 - B. One of the greatest exhorters of all was a man named Barnabas.
 1. He encouraged the needy through his generosity (Acts 4:36-37).
 2. He encouraged Saul by speaking up for him (Acts 9:26-27).
 3. He encouraged the church in Antioch (Acts 11:22-24).
 4. He encouraged John Mark.
 - a. (Acts 13:1-5) Mark accompanied Barnabas and Saul on their missionary journey.
 - b. (Acts 13:13) For some reason Mark returned to Jerusalem.
 - c. (Acts 15:36-40) Barnabas insisted on giving Mark another opportunity.
 - C. Let us learn from these great exhorters and follow their examples.

Conclusion:

1. In the world we have to contend with many things that are discouraging.
2. In the church, Christ wants His followers to *"exhort one another"* (Hebrews 3:13).