

Bible Studies

Stiff-necked

"I have seen these people," the LORD said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them." Exodus 32:9-10 And the LORD said "I have seen this people, and they are a stiff-necked people indeed! Deu 9:13

"You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. Nehemiah 9:29

One of God's long time complaints against the Children of Israel was that they were stiff necked. Frequently God gives this a primary reason for His impending judgement against them. Now we know that the things that befell Israel serve us as examples, occasionally of what we should do, more often what we should not. The danger then is that we too could be stiff necked and thus incur God's wrath.



What do you think it means to be stiff-necked?

One way to find out what the Bible means by a phrase is to look at the places where it occurs. Other adjectives around the phrase help us understand it's meaning. As you go through try to give some examples of the kind of behaviour involved.

Deuteronomy 31v27

2 Kings 17:14

2 Chronicles 30:8

2 Chronicles 36:13

Nehemiah 9:16-17

Jeremiah 17:23

A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy. Proverbs 29:1

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What are the effects of a stiff-neck likely to be?

There are many things we could associate with being stiff-necked; hard hearted, rebellious, stubborn, arrogant, inattentive, pridefull or untrusting. For me the idea which sums it up is **UNRESPONSIVE**.

There are many reasons that people fail to receive the manifold blessings that God so liberally promises. Sometimes it is sin, unforgiveness or disobedience. But sometimes it is simply that we are unresponsive to God.

When God speaks we ignore, when God requests we decline, when God orders we disobey. We are always slow when it comes to spiritual things.

Jesus told a story of two sons.



Read Matthew 21:28.

What were the two responses?

What other two responses are possible?

Most of us are those who say we won't, and then, having thought it over, still don't. We should be those who say yes and put our hearts, souls and strength straight into it.



Luke 9:61 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but...."

"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Acts 7:51

Our unresponsiveness is in fact resisting the Holy Spirit.

In what areas might we be unresponsive to God?

I will suggest just a few. In worship. When an appeal is made. When God gives a prayer burden.

Why are we so often slow to respond to God?



How much of our behaviour towards God is negative?

Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Psalm 110:3

"When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise the LORD! Judges 5:2

What I find most frustrating is those who are least responsive to God are often the most demanding of his blessings and the most disillusioned when He fails to come to the party.



What is the Cure for unresponsiveness?

Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. Deu 10:16

What is a circumcised heart?

The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live. Deuteronomy 30:6

Do not be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; submit to the LORD. Come to the sanctuary, which he has consecrated forever. Serve the LORD your God, so that his fierce anger will turn away from you. 2 Chronicles 30:8

The cure for a hard heart is a broken heart. A heart that genuinely love God and wants to do his will. A volunteers heart. A soft heart. We must be quick to obey. Quick to respond.

God will change our unresponsive hearts, we get to choose whether it is done the easy way of the hard way.

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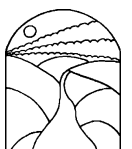


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One way to find out what the Bible means by a phrase is to look at the places where it occurs. Other adjectives around the phrase help us understand it's meaning. As you go through try to give some examples of the kind of behaviour involved.

Deuteronomy 31v27	<i>Rebellious</i>
	<i>Not trusting</i>
2 Kings 17:14	<i>Would not listen</i>
	<i>Did not trust</i>
2 Chronicles 30:8	<i>Submit to the LORD.</i>
	<i>Come to the sanctuary,</i>
	<i>Serve the LORD your God,</i>
2 Chronicles 36:13	<i>hardened his heart and</i>
	<i>Would not turn to the LORD</i>
	<i>arrogant</i>
Nehemiah 9:16-17	<i>did not obey your commands.</i>
	<i>Refused to listen and</i>
	<i>failed to remember the miracles</i>
	<i>rebelled</i>
	<i>did not listen or</i>
Jeremiah 17:23	<i>pay attention;</i>
	<i>would respond to discipline.</i>

A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy. Proverbs 29:1





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