



# NCG

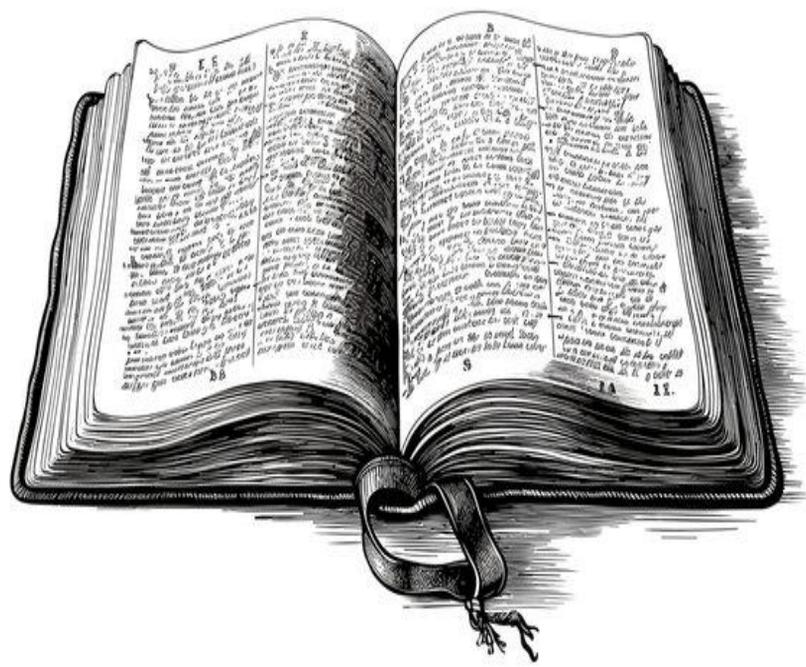
New Generation Church

of HAWTHORNE



## **Bible Study Lesson Series** **“Battling The Vices of This Present Age”**

**January 28-2026**





# **Bible Study Lesson Series** **Battling The "Vices" of This Present Age**

**January 7- 2026**



# **“The Vices of this Present Age”**

## **Hindrances to Spiritual Maturity**

### ■ **Dullness**

*Hebrews 5:11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

- Lacking in spiritual **Sensitivity**: Limited discernment and agreement and cooperation with “carnal or worldly” things.
- Lacking in **Clarity**: Not in tune with “Truth” as revealed through the Word of God
- Loss of **Desire**: No motivation to pray, read scripture, or engage in worship.
- Feeling **Disconnected**: A sense of distance from God, church, or spiritual practices.
- Performing **Rituals**: Going through the motions of faith without feeling.
- Increased **Worldliness**: More interest in non-spiritual entertainment, materialism, or worldly concerns. (“Distracted” from spiritual things)
- Spiritual **Evasion**: Shifting focus from personal spiritual challenges to others' faults or theological debates.
  - **Blaming** others for inability to overcome personal struggles
- Spiritual **Weariness**: Feeling tired, drained, or helpless, spiritual burnout.

### **Overcoming Dullness**

- “13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is **unskilled** in the word of righteousness, for he is a **babe.**”
  - **Spiritual maturity requires a far greater discipline in the Word**
- “14 But solid food belongs to those who are of **full age**, that is, those who **by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**”
- **Spiritual senses must be trained and “used” or “developed”** with the resulting manifestation being greater discernment of good and evil.

# **“The Vices of this Present Age”**

## **Hindrances to Spiritual Maturity**

### ■ **Emptiness**

- Two battles we face one is **demonic** and the other is **internal** from the realm of our human souls
  - One battle from the **outside**, the other battle from the **inside**
- Sources of Emptiness:
  - Emptiness can come from prolonged **grief** (any state of loss! Grief is not limited to death)
  - can come from an inability to move pass **failure**. Get stuck on “what if”!
  - failure is a part of life but when it holds a person captive to its circumstances it manufactures a destructive energy
- Broken Relationships:
  - Inability to “**Trust**” due to inability to move on from past hurts
  - Unbroken “**Soul Ties**” (cleaving and yearning to past illegitimate relationships)
- Idleness:
  - Open door for **attacks** against the **mind**
  - Preoccupation with distractions such as social media and not properly allocating time to gird up the mind
- Unfulfilled Goals and Dreams:
  - Danger of our own plans that were not the plans of God! (“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (Jeremiah 29:11)
- Isolation:
  - Result of repeated attacks against the mind
- Numbness: Feeling emotionally flat or empty during religious services.
- Cynicism & Irritability: Increased negativity, impatience, or a loss of spiritual joy.

# **“The Vices of this Present Age”**

## **Hindrances to Spiritual Maturity**

### ▪ **Hardness**

**Psalm 95:7** For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture And the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice: 8 “Do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion As in the day of trial in the wilderness, 9 When your fathers tested Me; They tried Me, though they saw My work. 10 For forty years I was grieved with that generation, And said, ‘It is a people who go astray in their hearts, And they do not know My ways.’ 11 So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest.’”

**Hebrews 4:1** Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. 3 For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: “So I swore in My wrath, ‘They shall not enter My rest,’” although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4 For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; 5 and again in this place: “They shall not enter My rest.” 6 Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, 7 again He designates a certain day, saying in David, “Today,” after such a long time, as it has been said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.” 8 For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. 9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. 10 For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

**Mark 8:14** Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat. 15 Then He charged them, saying, “Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.” 16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “It is because we have no bread.” 17 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, “Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened? 18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?” They said to Him, “Twelve.” 20 “Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?” And they said, “Seven.” 21 So He said to them, “How is it you do not understand?”

**Romans 2:5** But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who “will render to each one according to his deeds”:

# **“The Vices of this Present Age”**

## **Hindrances to Spiritual Maturity**

- **Hardness** - Four scriptural examples
- Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not release the children of Israel from their captivity
  - God gave him 10 chances
  - God followed up by intensifying his hardened so that he would take a look at himself, but to no avail
- The children of Israel hardened their hearts in the Wilderness 10 times!
  - (1) Lacking faith before the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:11–12)
  - (2) Complaining over the bitter water at Marah (Exodus 15:24)
  - (3) Complaining in the Desert of Sin (Exodus 16:3)
  - (4) Collecting more manna than they were supposed to (Exodus 16:20)
  - (5) Attempting to collect manna on the Sabbath (Exodus 16:27–29)
  - (6) Complaining over the lack of water at Rephidim (Exodus 17:2–3)
  - (7) Engaging in idolatry in the golden calf incident (Exodus 32:7–10)
  - (8) Complaining at Taberah (Numbers 11:1–2)
  - (9) Complaining over the lack of food (Numbers 11:4)
  - (10) Failing to trust God and enter the Promised Land (Numbers 14:1–4)
- The great dangers of Hardiness
  - Willfully blocking out the Word of God from our spiritual ears
  - This will always lead to a dangerous weakening of Faith that can be completely disabling in the life of the believer
  - This will directly lead to spiritual obstinacy symptomized by:
    - Refusing to hear God
    - Refusing to repent
    - Severe loss of feel Compassion towards others
    - Suppression of Truth
    - Dominated by Pride
    - Willfully ignoring the leading and guiding influence of the Holy Spirit
    - Overcome by negativity and constant Complaining