

STAGES IN THE HARDENING PROCESS / *Romans 9:20*

Stage	Example
Stage 1	
Abandoning God's guidance from his Word or believers	"I don't read the Bible or attend church." "Who are they to tell me what to do?"
Stage 2	
Willfully disobeying God, based on desire for sin or unresolved conflict with God	"I know it's wrong, but I want it." "Where was God when I needed him?" "How could he do this to me?"
Stage 3	
Justifying sin as not really being sin, but as being essential for the person's welfare	"I'm not sure this is really wrong." "I'm not as bad as the others." "I'll feel better."
Stage 4	
Rejecting the Holy Spirit's conviction	"I know I'll feel guilty, but I don't care." "I'll just ignore it."
Stage 5	
Becoming entrenched in the sinful behavior	"I'm in too deep to get out." "I might as well finish what I started."