

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Staying The Course

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When a professional ball team or personal investment strategy goes down to more defeats than wins and more losses than gains, the tendency is to lose confidence in the management or strategy. The tendency is to bail out and change the course. Staying the course is a frightening proposition.

In Christ, we do not have to worry about the management or strategy that saves our souls for Heaven. For our manager is God, and He is perfect. The strategy is faith in Christ, and this is certain victory for us in eternity. So, changing managers and His strategy is out of the question. We must stay the course.

In staying the course, we will have to “cut straight” God’s word. Paul writes, “Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). “handling aright” literally means to “cut it straight.” This is more than just being able to divide the New Testament from the Old, but it involves the diligent work of applying the truth with no varia-

tion to our minds and into our lives. We must not deviate to the right nor left if we are to stay the course.

In staying the course with Christ, we must abide in His doctrine. John, setting the parameters of fellowship writes, “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9). If we are to stay the course, we cannot go beyond what Jesus has already taught us in his word. After all, Heaven’s certain strategy of salvation through faith in Christ, has been once and for all time been delivered (Jude 3). We cannot improve upon this with man’s wisdom. For such wisdom is foolishness with God almighty (1 Corinthians 3:19). Through the knowledge of Christ we have all we need or ever will need to reach the ultimate goal of heaven.

Many today seem to have lost faith in the doctrinal approach to reach souls and save them for heaven. Churches believe they must offer what the world wants to attract their interest and then later give them the doctrine that saves their soul. Jesus and his

apostles did not seek crowds through fun and games, but addressed the masses lost without a shepherd with hope in the chief Shepherd. meeting their spiritual needs. He said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). Paul with unashamed confidence says “the gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:17), and he was ready to preach it, to a lost world as they were, not as they first enjoyed a warm-up game, drama, or rock band.

If we stay the course unto heaven we will have to finish the course. Paul saw the final step before him and welcomed it. “I have... finished the course and kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judges, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8). We can join this valiant soldier of the good fight and receive the victorious crown in the end. Those who love Jesus’ appearing will be those who presently are staying the course he has blazed and put before us.