

# Glad Tidings

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

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## Things That Steal Our Hearts Away

Jerry Fite

One of the first lessons we learn when we obtain a new possession is the necessity to secure or protect the new property from being stolen from us. Whether we are talking of a chain lock for our new bicycle, or a sounding alarm system for our new car, we understand our possessions can be stolen from us, and must act with wisdom in keeping them.

Once we become Christians, the Devil does not stop trying to affect our ruin. Peter, in writing to Christians, says the Devil is “*your adversary*,” and is walking about seeking whom he may “*devour*” (1 Peter 5:8). Just because we are now children of God, does not mean we cannot become children of the Devil by being entangled again in sin, living unrighteously, resulting in falling away from God (2 Peter 2:20-22, 1 John 3:9-10, 1 Timothy 4:1). We should pay attention to things that can steal our hearts away from God.

Pride can cause us to close our ears to God’s instructions. We become our own “Lord” and no longer come to God. Israel did this in Jeremiah’s day. Jehovah searched why Israel would no longer give heed to God. He sees His people saying, “*We are*

*Lords, we will come no more unto thee*” (Jeremiah 2:31). Literally, they are saying, “*we are broken loose.*” Pride had moved them to think their connection to God was holding them back. They are therefore breaking loose from God’s constraints, and will do what they want and come no more to God. Later, Jeremiah says, “*But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride, and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because Jehovah’s flock is taken captive* (Jeremiah 13:17).

Prosperity also steals hearts away from God. Ezekiel saw this among God’s people in his day. They were even doing worse than their “sister, Sodom” who was guilty of “pride, when they had “*fullness of bread, and prosperous ease...*” (Ezekiel 16:49). God had warned His people in Moses’ day that prosperity could turn the hearts of His people away from Him. When their money increased, their “heart” would be lifted up and they would “*forget Jehovah thy God...*” (Deuteronomy 8:14). Times of prosperity can lead us to thinking proudly that we alone are the reason behind our good fortune, not God. We focus on ourselves, and forget God. Jehovah sees our hearts being stolen from Him.

Prosperity and possessions are echoed in the New Testament as potential heart stealers (Mark 4:19, Colossians 3:5). But there are other things that can turn us from God. False doctrine can turn our heads and hearts from God’s revealed Word. False teaching can carry us away from the path of righteousness. Paul offers the inspired spoken truth as the antidote against false teachers as we grow in the Lord. “*that ye be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error...*” (Ephesians 4:14). We must demand that only the doctrine of Christ be preached (2 John 9). Anchored in the truth revealed to us by Christ through His apostles, we can combat a potential heart stealer (Romans 16:17-18).

We can also be carried away by “peer pressure” to which Peter succumbed and sinned. To please his fellow Jews in needlessly separating from eating with Gentiles, Peter influenced others, even Barnabas to be “*carried away*” by their “*hypocrisy*” (Galatians 2:12-13). Follow God even when the pressure is strong to please others. A humble spirit, a knowledgeable mind and a godly heart will anchor us from being carried away.