Glad Tidings

"And we bring you good of the promise made unto the fathers…" (Acts 13:32)

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"Pay Attention"

(Jerry Fite)

Paying attention is essential when you drive a car down the road, push a grocery cart down narrow aisles, and remain close to Christ throughout your life.

After the inspired writer of Hebrews has declared Jesus as the Son of God through whom all things are made and are upheld... after he has declared Jesus as the effulgence of God's glory, and the very image of His substance... after he has pointed us to Jesus' purification of sins, resurrection, and exaltation to the right hand of God...and after by inspiration the writer distinguishes Jesus from the angels in the first chapter of Hebrews, he begins chapter 2 with, *"Therefore we ought to give more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them" (Hebrews 2:1).*

By inspiration, the writer warns us, who have heard the word of the Gospel, and have started rowing our spiritual boat through the waters that lead to eternal life, to "take heed." Don't be lethargic in your journey to Heaven. Pay attention! Dear Christian, you can drift from the saving Gospel, and therefore be carried away from your Savior, Jesus Christ. "*How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3).* Keep rowing! Otherwise, you will be sliding away, spiritually drifting over the "Niagara Falls" of everlasting destruction.

Pay attention by keeping your focus on Jesus Christ. We have the four Gospels to anchor us in faith as to who Jesus is, and how He lived His life on earth. Look to Jesus and take note how "future joy" helped him "endure the cross" *(Hebrews 12:2).* When God allows affliction's weight to drive you to your knees, look at it as loving discipline, and *"lift up the hands that hang down, and the palsied knees; and make straight your paths for your feet, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather be healed" (Hebrews 12:12).* Lift your hands, placing them back on the oars, and keep rowing.

Pay attention by considering the example of how your spiritual leaders lived their lives, and faced their death. Then keep rowing... imitate their *faith (Hebrews 13:7).* Those men who presently watch over your souls as overseeing bishops are also worthy of consideration. As these shepherds are guided by the Chief Shepherd, they offer you enduring examples *(cf. I Peter 5:3-4).* Together you can avoid drifting by following the saving path of the Lord, while making your elders' spiritual work a joy *(Hebrews 13:17).*

Pay attention by making yourself available continually to the exhortations of fellow Christians. Christians are conscious of the dangers of drifting, and desire to follow the command to "exhort one another day by day." We do so "lest anyone be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin" *(Hebrews 13:12-13).* Don't neglect assembling with the saints weekly, you will not only be awakened from drifting, but will be *"provoked (aroused) to love and good works" (Hebrews 10:25).*

Pay attention to the promises of God. They will help you keep rowing, and resist the norms of this ungodly world. *"Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for Himself hath said, 'I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).* Do not drift away by heeding the siren call of "the love of money." It leads you "astray from the faith," drowns you in "destruction and perdition" *(cf. I Timothy 6:9-10).* God will not forsake you, nor fail you. The god of mammon will. Keep rowing, be awakened and instructed by the Word!