

GOD'S MESSAGE FOR TODAY

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Text Hebrews 3:7-14

■ Ronald Meredith, in his book *Hurryin' Big for Little Reasons*, describes one quite night in early spring:

Suddenly out of the night came the sound of wild geese flying. I ran to the house and breathlessly announced the excitement I felt. What is to compare with wild geese across the moon?

It might have ended there except for the sight of our tame mallards on the pond. They heard the wild call they had once known. The honking out of the night sent little arrows of prompting deep into their wild yesterdays. Their wings fluttered a feeble response. The urge to fly -- to take their place in the sky for which God made them -- was sounding in their feathered breast, but they never raised from the water.

The matter had been settled long ago. The corn of the barnyard was too tempting! Now their desire to fly only made them uncomfortable.

(Larson, 38)

God has always had a message for those who would listen. He speaks to stir our hearts -- to draw us up to Him. He longs for us to be what we were meant to be in Christ. Our text begins with the words, "as the Holy Spirit says." God is speaking, then and now. Some may hear the voice of God for the first time today and some may hear it again for the first time in a long while; some may be made uncomfortable by the sound of it. Whatever the case, God wants to speak to us and we need to listen. The Lord is trying to call us away from the things of the world that are keeping us from Him.

Look with me in our text at several *aspects* of the Spirit's message for us today.

I. IT IS A MESSAGE OF URGENCY (vv.7-8).

A. The message is conditional (v.7).

Notice the word "if." "IF TODAY" you will hear. There will come a day when those who reject the message will no longer hear the invitation.

B. The message is instructional (v.8).

The Spirit is saying, "Do not harden your heart." Do not rebel. Do not resist.

**II. IT'S A MESSAGE OF *WARNING* AGAINST PAST MISTAKES.
(vv.9-11)**

A. It is a warning against a **lack of faith** (v.9).

B. It is a warning against a **lack of faithfulness** (v.10).

C. It is a warning against **missing out on God's blessings** (v.11).

**III. IT IS A MESSAGE OF EXHORTATION AND
ENCOURAGEMENT (vv.12-14).**

A. It is an exhortation **to believe God** (v.12).

B. It is an exhortation **to encourage one another** (v.13).

C. It is an exhortation **to endure to the end** (v.14).

CONCLUSION

■ For years, the opening of "The Wide World of Sports" television program illustrated "the agony of defeat" with a painful ending to a ski jump. The skier appeared in good form as he headed down the jump, but then, for no apparent reason, he tumbled head over heels off the side of the jump, bouncing off the supporting structure.

What viewers didn't know was that he chose to fall rather than finish the jump. Why? As he explained later, the jump surface had become too fast, and midway down the ramp, he realized if he completed the jump, he would land on the level ground, beyond the safe sloping landing area, which could have been fatal. As it was, the skier suffered no more than a headache from the tumble.

To change one's course in life can be a dramatic and sometimes painful undertaking, but change is better than a fatal landing at the end.

(Larson, 21)

All the *aspects* of the message in our text point us to a call for action. It is a call to respond to the invitation of our heavenly Father. The invitation is, "Will you give your heart and life totally to Christ today?"

References

Larson, Craig B. ed., Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching Baker Books