

TAKE DILIGENT HEED

John Edwards

In Joshua’s appeal to the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, he said, *“But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul”* (Josh. 22:5). We need this teaching today!

TAKE DILIGENT HEED.

The words *“take heed”* appear 55 times, but this is the only time the phrase *“take diligent heed”* occurs in the Bible. It suggests exceedingly, greatly, very (showing magnitude or degree) — up to abundance, with muchness. In other words, *“be very careful”* (NIV, ESV, NASV).

TO DO THE COMMANDMENT AND THE LAW. This is an exhortation to obedience. It is written, *“Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey...”* (Dt. 11:26-28). We have the same choice today: to obey and be saved (Heb. 5:9) or not obey and be punished (2 Th.

1:7-9). The final appeal to obedience was made in the final book when John said, *“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city”* (Rev. 22:14).

TO LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD. This connects loving the Lord with doing His commandments. Jesus said, *“If ye love me, keep my commandments”* (Jn. 14:15). John wrote, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous”* (1 Jn. 5:3). If we love the Lord, we will do what He says.

TO WALK IN ALL HIS WAYS. You might circle that word *“all”*. Jeremiah pointed out: *“...it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps”* (Jer. 10:23). The Lord’s word directs us to walk in the Lord’s ways. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Is. 55:8-9). How are you walking?

TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. This was the constant appeal of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, which

has as its keynote *obedience*. God’s desire for His people may be summed up in these words: *“O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”* (Dt. 5:29).

TO CLEAVE UNTO HIM. *“Cleave”* suggests to cling and keep close. It represents loyalty unto the Lord. When one cleaves, he will not leave! Deuteronomy 30:20, *“That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days....”* When Barnabas was sent to Antioch, he *“exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord”* (Acts 11:23).

TO SERVE HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND SOUL. This is what the Lord requires (Dt. 10:12). Samuel declared, *“...turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart”* (1 Sam. 12:20).

Doing, loving, walking, keeping, cleaving and serving all go together. The only way it will happen is if we *“take diligent heed”*. May we make the needed application to our lives today!

TEACH THEM THY SONS, AND THY SONS' SONS

Nicolas Edwards

These words are often emphasized in the book of Deuteronomy, like in chapter 4:9. Israel is warned not to forget the Lord when they come into the promised land and prosper. To prevent this, they were to *“take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently... teach them thy sons, and thy sons’ sons.”* We are just one generation away from what happened in Judges 2:10: *“There arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”* Thus, it is so important that we teach our children and our grandchildren diligently!

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign

upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates” (Dt. 6:6-9). If this was the case in the homes of Christians today, a lot of problems would be solved.

THESE WORDS SHALL BE IN THINE HEART. To teach the commandments of God, to anyone, requires that the words be in our heart! We can't teach what we don't know. This involves our hearing, learning keeping, and doing (Dt. 5:2). This requires our being taught and our reading the Bible.

TALK OF THEM. We learn something about what it means to teach our children diligently. We talk of the words of God, when we are sitting in our house, walking by the way, morning and night! Constantly, our talk is of the commandments of God! What do you talk about every day? Does your talk consist of God's statutes? I am afraid in many, so called Christian, homes everything is talked about but the word of God. This is seen in the great ignorance of people today and the willing admittance of some, who would

say, such conversations never occur. Joshua was told, *“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night...”* (Josh. 1:8). *“Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh”*, the Lord said in Mathew 12:34. One's speech is a mirror of one's heart. One who has the word in their heart, who meditates therein day and night, will have a speech full of the word. One who speaks of carnal things all of the time has a heart full of carnal things and little of God's word.

SIGN UPON THINE HAND, FRONTLETS BETWEEN THINE EYES. God's word must ever be before us, His commandments are on our hands, our forehead, the doorposts, the gates. This depicts the constant exposure to God's word, as well as the familiarity we should have with it. That which a person hears and sees is what makes up one's heart. One's heart is what makes up one's thoughts, speech, behavior, conduct, attitude, appearance, etc. What are we filling our hearts with? *“These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart”*. Let's get to teaching them diligently!

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