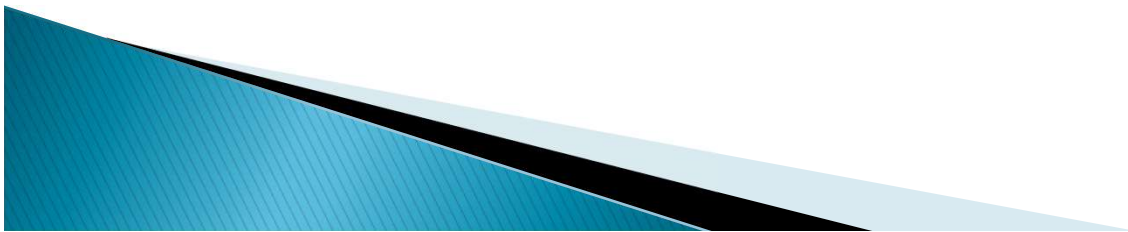


**NEAR,  
NOT FAR,  
and ALMOST**



# NEAR, NOT FAR, and ALMOST

- ▶ Near: “to, at, or within a short distance or interval in space or time” (AHD)
- ▶ Not far: not “to, at, or at a considerable distance” (AHD)
- ▶ Almost: “slightly short of; not quite; nearly” (AHD)
- ▶ Some “almosts” are fortunate
- ▶ Many “almosts” are not
- ▶ Mark 12:28-34
  - “...You are not far from the kingdom of God”
- ▶ Acts 26:28
  - “...I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and **altogether** as I am...



# A HEART PROBLEM

- ▶ Paul and Barnabas in Antioch of Pisidia
- ▶ Acts 13:42-51
- ▶ Opportunity for salvation rejected. So close!
  - **Near:** But **Envy**
- ▶ Romans 10:1-9
- ▶ Even today, God and truth rejected, and the issue can be an attitude of heart

## The Bible Answer

Hebrews 12:15

Proverbs 4:23

# NOT NOW

- ▶ Paul in prison in Caesarea
- ▶ Reasoned with Felix and his wife Drusilla about righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come
- ▶ Acts 24:25
- ▶ Good: Fear!
- ▶ **Almost**: “Go away for now; **when I have a convenient time** I will call for you”
- ▶ The devil’s lie: “tomorrow”

## The Bible Answer

James 4:13-17

Psalm 90:12

2 Corinthians 6:2

# ONE THING

- ▶ Rich young ruler
- ▶ Mark 10:17-22
- ▶ **Almost:** “**One thing** you lack”
- ▶ “But he was sad at his word, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions”
- ▶ Some command you will not respond to with obedience?
- ▶ Some sin you would not give up to enter the kingdom?
- ▶ “Really, just one sin I don’t want to give up will keep me out of heaven?”

## The Bible Answer

Luke 14:33

Matthew 16:24-26

# YOU WERE

- ▶ Christians in the region of Galatia
- ▶ Galatians 3:1, 5:7-8
- ▶ **Not Far:** “You **were** running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?” (NIV)
- ▶ “This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you”
- ▶ Galatians 1:6-9
- ▶ The ever present danger of false doctrines
- ▶ Colossians 2:8

## The Bible Answer

1 Timothy 6:20-21

2 Timothy 2:15

2 Peter 3:17-18

# HAS FORSAKEN

- ▶ Demas – Paul’s fellow laborer
  - Philemon 24; Colossians 4:14
- ▶ 2 Timothy 4:10
- ▶ **Almost:** Had been Paul’s highly commended fellow-laborer in the gospel, but now “has forsaken me [Paul], having loved this present world”
- ▶ Psalm 73:2

## The Bible Answer

1 John 2:15-17

Galatians 5:24

2 Peter 2:18-22

Hebrews 10:32-39

Romans 13:11-14

# WHAT ABOUT YOU?

- ▶ Are you letting some attitude of the heart stand between you and service to God?
- ▶ Are you active now...or are you procrastinating?
- ▶ Is there one thing you lack in commitment...or are you fully devoted to the will of God?
- ▶ Are you listening to other voices...or are you listening to the word of God?
- ▶ Are you loving the world...or are you crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires?

**Are you “almost”...or are you “altogether”?**

