

## Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Jan 15th 2015

As I write this, it is a couple of days before Christmas...A beautiful time of preparation to celebrate the birth of our Lord. It can also be a time of great distraction due to the potential for getting lost in the 'hustle and bustle' of the season. One of our favorite Christmas shows is A Charlie Brown Christmas. We have watched it several times this season. It's a great story about Charlie Brown's search for the true meaning of Christmas. Fortunately, the birth of Christ ends up being the meaning that Charlie Brown was looking for.

As I reflect upon today's readings, if today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts, I can't help but think of the teacher voice in the Charlie Brown shows. Wah, Wah, Wah, Wah, Wah...In the hustle and bustle of our lives, it's very easy to become distracted, and to not be very present to those around us. It's easy to 'tune out.' I think the writer in Hebrews is telling us to listen.

Listening is a great skill. It's pretty easy to tell if somebody isn't listening to you. How often do we really listen actively? Do we consistently listen for God? When He is trying to communicate with us, does he get our undivided attention? The writer alludes to the experiences of the Israelites who didn't exactly listen to God. They thought they were just fine on their own. Their hearts were hardened. It took some time for them to figure out that they needed to listen to God in order to reach the Promised Land.

Mark's gospel also relates the story of the healed leper. He didn't quite 'hear' Jesus tell him "See that you tell no one anything."

Let us take some time to think about really being present, and listening to those who are speaking to us. Let us make it a practice to find some quiet time each day to listen. Let's be open to what you hear. Let us not be afraid to pray for direction.

If today you hear His voice, harden not your heart.

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