

WHITE WATER

LESSON 84 → Psalm 121:1-2; Matthew 14:22-33; Luke 11:34-36

Letting his eyes wander in the wrong direction brought disaster.



Down . . . down . . . down . . . The bow of our raft nosed deeper into the foaming water. A moment's lapse on my part had brought Tucker and me to the brink of disaster. Why had I allowed my attention to wander even for a second? The sight of a rare golden eagle gliding down the canyon had held me spellbound. I had never seen one in the

wild before. His wing span was incredible, and I could hardly tear my eyes away. Unfortunately, my concentration had been distracted just at the crucial moment when the river plunged into the narrowing gorge. What a drastic mistake!

Now the current raged around us with the roar of an angry lion. The sound in my ears



I'LL KEEP MY EYES ON JESUS.

*Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity;
and quicken thou me in thy way. — Psalm 119:37*



heightened to a terrific intensity. The raft's slamming into the trough of a wave caused a wall of spray to cascade over us.

The next few seconds seemed to last forever. I struggled to keep the bow heading into the waves, fighting for control. But the onward thrust of water rushed us unrelentingly toward certain disaster. The moment I saw that cresting wave loom ahead of us, I wondered why I had ever started out on this rafting trip. I knew just what the rafting manual said—a wave of this type should be hit head-on with strong forward speed. Well, I had the strong forward speed all right, but my raft hadn't read the manual and it headed into the wave broadside. Try as I would, I could not persuade it to do otherwise!

We flipped! I had the fleeting impression of Tucker, arms and legs askew, sailing into the turbulent water. His hoarse shout was the last thing I heard as I clutched madly for the oars and went under.

I guess we only spent a few minutes in the water. When I came up, I spotted Tucker grabbing at the raft, trying to guide it over to the bank. I grabbed an oar as it sailed past me, and I found the gear bag. Tucker and I were cold and wet by the time we finally pulled our raft in, righted it, and located all our loose gear.

I knew I'd have to answer to Tucker. Sure enough, as soon as things started to settle down a little, the question came. "What on earth got into you, Danny?" he sputtered as he wrung the water out of his cowboy hat. "When I saw that white water ahead of us, I glanced back and there you were, staring up at the sky like a moonstruck clown. What in the world were you looking at?"

"An eagle," I admitted sheepishly. "I saw a golden eagle glide over the edge of the canyon and for a second I forgot to keep my eyes on those waves."

"Well, some of you guys have to learn the hard way," said Tucker with a wry look. He fished in his duffle bag for a dry sweatshirt. "But why did I have to pick an amateur like you for a partner?"

* * * * *

Danny learned a lesson that day. He should have kept his eyes on the river! When his attention was diverted by the eagle for a few seconds, his ride through the rapids almost became a disaster.

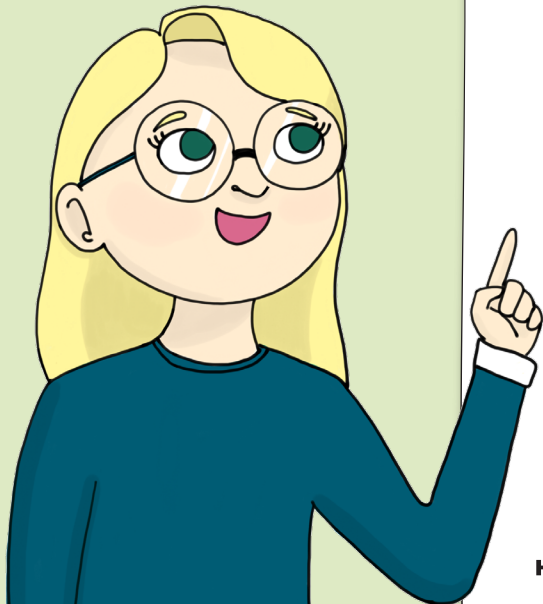
We can learn a lesson from this too. We might compare our lives as Christians with a ride on white water. If we pay attention, the river of life can be navigated successfully. But we have to keep our eyes on the course. If we shift our eyes for a second, we could have a disaster.

Our Bible text for this week tells how Peter let his attention wander from the Lord as he walked on the water toward Him. Just a moment's glance down at the waves and he found himself sinking. His attention was diverted by the things around him.

In Psalm 119:37 we read, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." That means we shouldn't look at things which might draw us away from God. We can be sure the devil will try to distract us. He will attempt to show us things which—like the eagle in our story—may not be bad or sinful in themselves, but if they take our attention away from God, they could be the very things which would spell disaster for our Christian experience. If we really want to be all-out for God, we must be willing to ignore those things which might sidetrack our concentration from a successful Christian life.

You'll see some "rapids" and "white water" in life, but you can make it through!

**LOOKING THE
RIGHT WAY**



To find out where we should look for help, use the eye chart and fill in the blanks below. The numbers under each blank space are coordinates for the letters on the chart. For example, the first blank says 8-5, which means 8 lines down and 5 letters from the left.

8-5 7-3 2-1 3-3 10-3 5-3 6-2 8-6 10-8 6-6 7-7 9-7 5-4 9-1 6-1

1-1 9-4 3-1 9-8 8-3 7-6 7-1 10-4 3-2 8-4 4-3 2-2 10-6 9-3 7-5 6-5 ,

5-5 9-9 7-4 7-2 8-7 6-3 8-1 4-2 9-2 9-6 4-4 4-1 6-4 10-5 10-2 8-2

10-9 5-2 5-1 8-8 9-5 10-7 . - Psalm 121:1

“IT’S ALL YOURS, LORD”