

Don't Drift Away From the Truth: Hebrews 2:1-4

Scriptures for Today:

Hebrews 2:1-4 *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?*

Introduction

The title of the lesson is "Don't Drift Away from the Truth."

- We are beginning Hebrews Chapter 2.
- The first four verses contain a serious warning about becoming careless with truth that we have already heard.
- Most people don't wake up one morning and suddenly decide to abandon everything they believe.
- Moving away from the truth usually starts with a slow drift.

[ILLUSTRATION — A BOAT THAT DRIFTS]

- Imagine that you are sitting in a small boat near the shore. You're enjoying the sunshine, sitting back and relaxing. Your mind becomes occupied with lots of different thoughts, but after a while you look up and realize that you're no longer where you started out.
- You didn't start the motor, you didn't deliberately steer the boat away, but you forgot to let down the anchor and you didn't realize it.
- The current moved you little by little until you unknowingly drifted far away from where you were supposed to be.
- It doesn't take much effort to drift. You simply stop paying attention to where you are going, and before long you won't know where you're at. And the consequences could be severe.
- That is what makes drifting dangerous.
- It's usually slow enough that you do not notice it while it is happening.

- It's the same way in our personal lives as believers in Jesus Christ.
- Spiritual drifting doesn't begin when someone suddenly rejects the truth. It usually begins a lot earlier when that person stops giving earnest attention to the truth.
- You don't have to make a deliberate decision to drift. All it takes is for your mind to slowly become occupied with other things beside God. Little by little, day by day, your attention begins to move toward something or someone besides the Creator and Saviour of the World.
- That's why this is a great warning that we are about to see in Hebrews 2.

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:1 *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

- We previously studied Hebrews chapter 1. That chapter establishes the greatness and authority of Jesus Christ.

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Hebrews 1:1-2 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

- In the past, God spoke to the fathers through the prophets.
- But now God has spoken to us through His Son.
- Chapter 1 tells us that Jesus created the worlds, upholds all things by the word of His power, purged our sins, and sat down at the right hand of God.
- The rest of the chapter establishes that Jesus Christ is far greater than the angels.
- So when chapter 2 says, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed," the point is very simple:
- Because of who Jesus is, we must take what He has spoken seriously.
- We need to make sure our attention doesn't begin to drift away from the only one that matters.
- God's Word doesn't move, but we can begin moving away from it.
- That's why the title is "Don't Drift Away From the Truth"

Let's begin in verse 1 and look closely at this warning.

1. GIVE EARNEST HEED TO THE TRUTH (V. 1)

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

- Verse 1 says, "We ought to give...heed."
- To give heed means to listen carefully, pay attention, and take seriously what has been said.
- There is a difference between hearing something and giving heed to it.

[EXAMPLE] I will hear or see a tornado warning during a storm, but I'm usually not quick to take heed to that warning. Milana on the other hand is trying to get everyone into the shower or the safest place in the house as fast as possible. Milana is doing a better job at heeding that warning.

- You can hear the Word of God without heeding or allowing it to change anything in your life.

[EXAMPLE]

- Think about a warning light appearing on the dashboard of your car.
- You see it. You know it's there. But seeing the warning is not the same as giving heed to it.
- If you keep driving and ignore it, the warning doesn't disappear. The problem might continue to get worse while you act like everything is fine.

- There are a lot of different types of warnings in life. In all areas.
- There are warnings when marriages are going in the wrong direction.
- There are warnings when your children are going in the wrong direction.
- The warnings can only help you if you take them seriously and respond.

- Notice that the verse does not simply tell us to give heed. It says to give the more earnest heed.
- Earnest means serious, sincere, and deliberate.
- God's Word deserves more than casual attention.
- We shouldn't approach the Bible like it's just background noise. Something to fill a few minutes of our day.
- We are hearing the words of the Almighty God who created us and knows everything about us.
- People give earnest attention to many things. I can think of two that affect billions of people.
- Phones, and TV. Those are two of the biggest things that people will devote a large majority of their lives toward.

- If we give those things our attention which have zero eternal value, how much more attention should we give to God when He speaks to us.
- Hebrews 1 established that God has spoken to us through His Son.
- Because the message came through Jesus Christ, it deserves the greatest possible attention.

[Reread]

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard...

- This warning was given to people who had already heard the truth.
- They're not being corrected for something they didn't know.
- They were being warned about becoming careless with something they already knew.
- Sometimes the more we hear something, the more familiar we become with those things, we can pay less attention to those things the more we hear them.

[EXAMPLE] Here at this church we constantly talk about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The more you hear it there is risk that you might give it less attention.

There are times when Josh will talk about the gospel during the announcements. Then he will talk about it during the soul winning testimony. Then he'll talk about it more during the preaching.

- Some people might think, "Didn't we just hear this 5 minutes ago. Isn't this the same thing we just heard?"
- The same thing could be said about you, "Didn't you just look at tik tok 5 minutes ago, or instagram, or the news, or facebook? Has anything changed since the last time you looked at it 30 seconds ago?"
- Those things are absolutely vain and meaningless, yet we give our full attention to them and repeat those things.
- How much more should we repeat and give our attention to the greatest message of all time.
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is nothing greater, nothing superior, nothing higher than that message. It's impossible to repeat it too many times...
- But it's not impossible to forget it or for it to lose our attention. That is why we are being warned...

[Reread]

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.

- The warning applies "**at any time.**"
- There is never a time when we no longer need to pay attention.
- It doesn't matter how long you've been saved, how much Bible you know, how many sermons you've heard.
- None of us are beyond the danger of slipping and drifting away.

[Reference]

1 Corinthians 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

- The person in the greatest danger is the one who thinks they could never drift from the truth.
- It's good to have confidence in God's Word, but it's very dangerous to have confidence in yourself.
- That's why it says, "We. Ought." The writer is placing himself under the same warning.
- **[REMEMBER]** This is not teaching that a believer can lose their salvation in any way.
- But a saved person can forget important truth, believe something false, and begin living contrary to what God has said.
- Look at Peter's mindset toward Biblical truths...

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2 Peter 1:12-13 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, **though ye know them**, and be established in the present truth. **13** Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

- That's the attitude we should have. We should never want to forget, slip, or drift away from the truth.
- Verse 1 warns us to give earnest heed because truth can slip from our attention.
- Verse 2 explains why this is so serious...

2. TAKE GOD'S WARNINGS SERIOUSLY (V. 2-3)

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:2-3 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; **3** How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

- The “**word spoken by angels**” is referring to the law given to Israel at Mount Sinai.
- God was the source and author of the law.
- But the Bible also tells us that angels participated in its delivery.

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Galatians 3:19 Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

- The mediator was Moses.
- God gave the law, angels were involved in delivering it, and Moses communicated it to the people.
- The Bible does not explain every detail of what the angels did, so there is no reason for us to speculate.
- The main point is that this message carried the full authority of Almighty God.
- The law or the word that was spoken was stedfast. Stedfast means firmly fixed and established.
- Man's law is not stedfast. It's actually the complete opposite. It's always changing.
- Man's law allows murderers and kidnappers back into society. God's law says they shall surely be put to death.

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:2 ...and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;

- The word “reward” here does not mean something good.
- A recompence is a repayment—receiving the result or consequence of an action.
- Their disobedience received the consequence God had declared.
- Notice it says they received a “**just**” recompence.
- God is never unfair. He never overreacts. His judgement is completely righteous.

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:2-3 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; **3** How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;

- If disobedience under the law brought a just consequence, how could someone expect to escape after neglecting the salvation proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Who is the mediator of a far better covenant which is established on better promises.

- If an unsaved person neglects Jesus. Has no regard for what He has done. There is no other person who can save them.
- There is no other sacrifice that can pay for sins.
- But this verse specifically says if “we neglect so great salvation.”
- The writer does not stand at a distance and say, “How shall **they** escape, if **they** neglect so great salvation?”
- He says, “**How shall we escape, if we neglect...**”
- The same language runs through the entire passage...
- “**We** ought to give the more earnest heed.”
- “The things which **we** have heard.”
- “Lest **we** should let them slip.”
- “How shall **we** escape?”
- “If **we** neglect.”
- The writer places himself under the same warning as everyone receiving the letter.
- This is not only a warning for an unsaved person who has never believed the gospel.
- It’s a warning to believers who have already heard and received the truth.
- How shall we as believers escape, if we neglect so great salvation? We will not escape.

[Lose salvation?]

- This is not teaching that we can lose our salvation.
- Our salvation is secure because Jesus Christ keeps us.
- But being eternally secure does not stop us from becoming careless, disobedient, or spiritually distant from God.
- Salvation makes us children of God, but it does not force us to pay attention, obey His Word, or live for Him.

[EXAMPLE — A CHILD WHO NEGLECTS INSTRUCTION]

- A son or daughter can neglect the instruction of their father and mother.
- Their disobedience does not cause them to stop being a son or a daughter.
- But being a son or a daughter does not allow them to escape correction.
- In fact, the correction happens because they belong to their parents and their parents love them.

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Hebrews 12:6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

- A saved person will never face the eternal punishment of hell, because Jesus paid for all of our sins.
 - But we can experience the chastening of God and the earthly consequences of neglecting God’s Word.

[HOW BELIEVERS NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION]

- We neglect salvation when we stop giving attention to the Word that tells us how we ought to live.
- We neglect salvation when we possess the greatest message in the world but never think about sharing it with anyone else.
- We neglect salvation when the things of this world receive our time, energy, and affection while the things of God are pushed aside.
- We neglect so great a salvation when we know what Jesus saved us from, but willingly drift back to the same sin that nailed Him to the cross.
- We as believers can neglect the great salvation that Jesus Christ obtained for us when we do not give earnest heed to the things which we have heard. When we let those things slip away.
- That does not mean we have lost salvation.
- It means we are failing to live in light of the salvation we already possess.

- **[REMINDER]**
- If you think, “that will never be me. I will never let those things slip. I will never neglect salvation.”
- If that’s you, then you’re already slipping. You’re already drifting. You are in great danger.
- Take heed lest ye fall.
- I’ve seen it happen to others. I’ve seen it happen to myself.
- The moment you start giving other things a higher priority than God, the drift begins.
- Sometimes you can wake up and realize what’s happening before you get far.
- But there might come a day when you drift a little too far. We invite severe consequences into our life. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation” the answer is we will not.
- **[APPLICATION]**
- That should cause us all to stop and consider: Am I giving earnest attention to the salvation God has given me? Or have I slowly began drifting from truth?
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3. GOD CONFIRMED THE MESSAGE (VV. 3–4)

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:3-4 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; 4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- At the end of verse 3 and into verse 4, we are shown why this message deserves our complete attention.
- This was not a message invented by men.
- It was spoken by the Lord, confirmed by those who heard Him, and witnessed by God Himself.
- Jesus Christ personally proclaimed the message of salvation.
- The apostles did not come along later and invent a new religion.
- They received this message directly from the Lord.

[NEXT SLIDE]

- **1 John 1:1-3** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; **2** (For the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) **3** That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

- If an important event takes place and several witnesses independently testify that they saw and heard the same thing, their testimony confirms what happened.
- But in this case, there was something far greater than human testimony.
- God Himself bore witness that their message was true.

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- The word “**them**” refers to those who heard the Lord and carried His message to others.
- As they preached, God bore witness to their testimony. He confirmed that these men were speaking the truth. How did God bear them witness?
- “Both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost...”
- God enabled them to perform supernatural works that could not be explained by ordinary human ability.

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Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

- Notice what the signs confirmed: **"the word."**
- The focus was not the greatness of the men performing the miracle.
- The purpose was to establish that the message they preached had come from God.
- We see this throughout the book of Acts.
- The apostles preached Jesus Christ, and God performed undeniable miracles through them.
- The miracles gave visible confirmation that God was bearing witness to their message.

[ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL]

Look at how verse 4 ends...

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Hebrews 2:4 God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, **according to his own will?**

- God decided which gifts were given, who received them, and how they were used.
- These gifts were not controlled by men or produced whenever someone wanted to put on a show.
- They operated according to the will and purpose of God.

- The message we are warned not to neglect was spoken by the Lord, confirmed by eyewitnesses, and authenticated by God Himself.
- And now we have that testimony preserved for us in the Word of God.

Conclusion

- So the question is whether we will give heed to it, or allow it to slip.
- Maybe there was a time when you gave God's Word greater attention than you do today.
- But somewhere along the way, your attention began moving toward other things.
- Do not ignore that drift.
- Maybe you've never given God's Word the attention that it so greatly deserves. Let today be the start.
- Do not convince yourself that everything is fine simply because you are in church.
- Ask God to show you what you have given your attention to and be ready to change.
- We all have to do it. We must return our attention to God.
- The best time to stop drifting is the moment you realize that you have moved.
- If you are not sure you're going to heaven, do not neglect the salvation Jesus Christ purchased for you.

- For those of us who are saved, remember how great your salvation is.
- Don't let the things that we have heard slip away.
- Do not allow the truth to become background noise while the world receives your full attention.

[NEXT SLIDE]

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

God has spoken. Give heed to what He said. Hold firmly to the truth. Don't drift away. Let's Pray