

The Danger of Drifting

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[0:00] We're going to go into the book of Hebrews, if you want to start turning there in chapter 2. We're going to be looking at some things here. And the book of Hebrews, interesting book, written to Hebrew Christians, first century Christians.

What a change that must have been for them. Coming out of Judaism and all of a sudden trusting Christ as Savior, being born again, that's a whole different, it's a whole different economy, basically a whole different thing.

And they had problems with it. So before we get into Hebrews chapter 2, let's pray. Father, we just thank you so much for your word. Thank you for this time that we can come together and pray.

We thank you so much, Father, for your word tonight that we can study. Father, I ask that your word would open hearts and minds and help me present it as you would have it done.

Father, we again praise you for the great God that you are. Father, we love you and thank you for your love. In Jesus' name, amen. Chapter 2 of Hebrews.

[1:09] Now, Hebrews is a book itself written in the first century. What a changeover for some of those who knew Christ as Savior. But what the book of Hebrews did for the Hebrew converts, the Hebrew born-again believers, is it was reinforcing to them that Jesus fulfilled the law.

He did all the points and fulfilled the law. But there was a danger also that the Jewish Christians would start reverting back to the rituals and the rites and all those extra little things that the Pharisees were putting on it.

Imagine going through a field on a Sunday, on a Sabbath day, and picking ears of corn, picking the ears of the grain to eat as you're going through, and somebody criticizing, oh, you can't do that.

That's work. Is it? So all those little things, those rituals, they could have fallen back into those rules and rituals of Judaism.

So there was a danger of lapsing back. When you look at Hebrews itself, it tells us that God's law is good, but Jesus is better.

[2:34] And as you go through the book of Hebrews, you'll see that again. He's better. Better covenant, better promises, better hope, better sacrifice.

The law is good, but Jesus is better. Over and over and over, the Bible tells us that. Throughout the book, it says that Jesus Christ is better than the prophets, prophets, than angels, than Aaron, than the priests, than Moses.

Jesus is better. Better, better, better. Some, if I recall, some commentators, when you look, they say Jesus is superior in the book.

Well, superior, yes, indeed. But I like the word better because the Bible uses the word better. The word superior is not there. Anyway, let's look here in Hebrews chapter 2, and we'll take those first four verses once I get there.

I printed them out because a lot of times my Bible, I mean, golly, I'm 72. I'm getting to a point where my type in my Bible is a little small.

[3:51] So I'm going to try it through my Bible here. If I'm not, if I get messed up, I'm going to have to go back over there. Hebrews chapter 2, we're going to do the first four verses.

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.

For if the word given by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received the just recompense of reward, 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. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.

Salvation message? Is it? How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? I mean, we've heard salvation messages.

[5:07] Salvation message? Yeah. Applicable for us today. Can we apply it to our lives today? Yes.

And that's where we're going today. That's where we're going today. Right here in the very first word, in chapter 2, it says, therefore. How many times, maybe you haven't thought of this.

This is how my mind works. When I see a therefore there, I always think, what's a therefore? Why is a therefore therefore? You ever thought about that?

Yeah, I see some smiles. Yeah. You ever think about that? There's a reason why it's there.

Because something before had context to relate to what's being said here.

In order to understand a little bit more of this, let's go back to chapter 1. In chapter 1, we read right in the very beginning, God. Now, these are the Hebrew people.

[6:05] You're not going to have to prove God to them at all, are you? God, who in sundry times and in diverse manner, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 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, who being in the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.

And the writer, under God's authority and inspiration, the writer continues to use Old Testament Scripture to compare angels to Jesus Christ our Lord.

And Jesus, as it's said in the one verse, is better. He's better than any of the angels. Those first verses say that God spoke, spoke by the prophets, now by his Son Jesus Christ, is so much better than the angels.

He purged our sins. He's now with the Father. He even said that he's the Creator. So all those things there, but the entire first chapter, the Old Testament Scriptures are brought forth and comparing the angels with Jesus Christ.

[8:10] I'm not going to get into the angel part of it. That's a whole other story. God spoke, now by his Son Jesus Christ, is so much better than the angels. Purged our sins.

He's the Creator. Now with the Father. Let's go back to chapter 2. Chapter 2, therefore. Oh, I thought it was going to be up.

Be easier for some folks, right? Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time...

I'm sorry, let me start all over again. Let me go back to here. My print's too small, folks. 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.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

[9:17] Right in the very beginning there, therefore, we ought to give more earnest heed. Now, that in itself says something.

We ought to give more earnest heed. You don't hear that word heed said too often, do you? Not anymore. I remember as a kid, you would hear it. Heed my words, stuff like that.

You might, older folks might have heard that expression. Yeah. Heed my words. Yeah, I remember that. But it's not a word that we use today, but heed, meaning to give attendance to.

Listen up. Take it seriously. Apply it to your mind. So, when it says we ought to give more earnest heed, it's an eagerness to grab hold of the truth of Jesus.

Do we have that eagerness today? Now, they were talking about a salvation message. There's a salvation message here. But applying it today, are we giving the heed that needs to be done to our salvation?

[10:22] We ought to give more earnest heed to the things that we have heard. What things? To the Hebrew first century Christians, it was the words of Jesus.

It was the testimony of the disciples and the apostles. Can we apply that today to us? We ought to give more earnest heed to the things that we have heard.

That gospel message, but also to our salvation. To the things we have heard. Heard meaning we perceive it. Just like we perceive something with our eyes, we understand it.

We recognize it. We note it. It's more than just listening. Listening is hearing the sound. But hearing stuff. We perceive it.

We note it. We understood it. We ought to give more earnest heed to the things we have heard. Lest at any time we should let them slip. Hear.

[11:28] Any time that we should let them slip. Literally to flow past. To glide by. That's what the meaning means here. When you break it down.

We ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. Lest at any time we should let them slip. Now as a salvation message, it's someone hearing the gospel message in the first century, the Hebrews, and just saying, okay, I heard that.

I reject it. What about us today? Today we ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. Lest at any time we should let them slip. Slip.

That word slip. To flow past it means. To glide by. Here it is to drift away from what was heard or what is heard. Salvation message, yes.

Application, yes. For us today. Lest at any time we should let them slip. Or to drift away. What comes to your mind when you think about drifting? Boating, yeah.

[12:28] Of course. Boating. You might think of, you know, getting out on a peaceful lake and taking in God's creation.

God, why does the sky blue? Why are the trees green? You ever think that stuff? Why did you decide to have this color? Nice and peaceful spot.

You guys that are fishermen, you're out there, you like being on the lake. Man, I want to catch a good one. Yep. And you spend all that time peaceful, quiet. Right?

Peaceful, quiet things. I think also when I think about drifting is, you know, a lot of times we have friendships and they kind of drift away. I miss my brother Felix back in the Denver area because he was my partner going into nursing homes.

And we did the ministry together. So after, you know, a year and a half being here, well, we talked to him about three times. Well, we used to talk to each other three, four times a week.

[13:32] Go have coffee, have a good time. But we used to go out and we used to do the nursing home ministries every Sunday and I miss them. And he drifts away.

You know, there's other people that I knew down in Florida, in Georgia. I haven't talked to those folks in I don't know how long. You just, they drift away. They drift away.

Drifting. Drifting. Drifting. There's a story that you might have heard. There was two young men that were out fishing and they were above a dam on a river near their home.

And as they were concentrating on catching fish, they were unaware that they had drifted until they were not far from the water going over the top of the dam. When they realized their situation, the current became too powerful for them to overcome it.

And they were not far and the boat went over the dam and they crashed on the rocks below.

Drifting. Drifting. Like a boater drifting unawares, believers can drift away from their first love.

[14:45] We've all been there. Some of us multiple times. Some of us have gone over. Some believers, they get stuck on the rocks.

I've been there. How many times? And the Lord's, you know, He's so gracious and so loving. How many times?

How many times I've gone over the edge? Drifting. Drifting. Drifting takes no effort, does it?

When you're out on that boat, it's an unconscious process sometimes. Slow slip. You never go upstream when you're drifting. There's currents.

Get moved into currents and some go over the edge. Things that cause drifting. Oh, it could be social media. I'm guilty of that, getting pulled away.

[15:46] Games. Phone. Young people are more on the phone. I don't use my phone much. It's a phone. I'm an old guy. Give me a break.

I don't use it like my laptop. Politics. Some of you may know, I was involved with politics in the past. That was one of the things that got me over the dam.

We won't go there. The Lord brought me back. It affects others when you're drifting. You ever thought about your family, your kids, your testimony, your witness, your job?

People are watching. People are watching. And your drift affects others. How many remember a year and a half ago, March of 2024?

The Port of Baltimore. There's a cargo shift coming into the Port of Baltimore and it loses power. And it's drifting. And it drifts.

[16:48] And it drifts. And it hits the bridge. The Francis Scott Key Bridge. Collapsing the bridge. Killing six workers on the bridge.

And closing the port for months. When we drift, it affects others. Sometimes harsh.

Sometimes not. But it affects others. Believers have some common signs of drifting. A decreasing desire to study God's Word and to pray.

It's the main two things. We've all been there. Those are signs. Brother Scott here on Sunday was giving some statistics about people who don't open their Bible.

He's using statistics from 15 years ago. And I checked on some statistics more current. They're not any better. But he said that professed Christians, one-third of them, basically 34%, never opened their Bible.

[17:59] I got saved when I was 22 years old. I gave my testimony here. I was a professed Christian. I professed I was a Christian. I was Catholic. When the gentleman that led me to the Lord, Savior, Jesus Christ, when he said to me, you believe the Bible is the Word of God?

I said, yes, I do. I was a Christian. I was a professed Christian. I said, yeah, I believe the Bible is the Word of God. He said, do you know what it says?

No. No. I mean, we never open up the Bible. You catch a piece of some translation at a service every once in a while, but it was all church things and church law and church rituals and this and that, but we never did.

But the fact that it matters, I believed it was the Word of God, although I didn't know nothing about it. That gave that gentleman, Charlie Snyder, the opportunity to open the Bible and he said, look at this.

For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. And I got saved.

[19:13] Common signs of drifting, drifting, decreasing desire to study God's Word and pray. How about the decreasing desire to be with God's people in church?

My dear sister who's gone on to be with the Lord, I had the opportunity to lead her to the Lord back in the early 80s, probably about 1980, 81. She started going to the church in her town.

I lived in a different town. It's a Baptist church. She was going there. I said, this is where you need to go here. She was going for a while and then, you know, you get talking to her and how was church?

Well, I didn't go. What's going on? Well, I haven't been going for a while. Well, what's going on?

Well, so-and-so's there and I don't like her. So I'm not going to, how many have heard it?

You've heard these stories, right? So-and-so's there and I don't get along with her. So I don't, well, listen, you know, I mean, if you can't get along with her and, you know, you get talking with them, go across the river, Riverside Bible Church, you're going to get the gospel message there.

[20:20] You'll get teaching there. It's good. Okay, we'll try it out. A few weeks later, did you go over and check it? No, but I'll get around to it. Okay, so weeks go by, check it out.

Did you get over there? No. Well, okay, so-and-so's over there and I don't like them. All right, go four or five miles up the road to Bloomsburg the Baptist Church up there is a great church. Nice size. You'll go up there. Well, we'll get around to it. Well, my sister never got there and she drifted, drifted, drifted, common signs of drifting.

How about a decreasing desire to share the gospel? Do you have that desire to share the gospel tonight? Do you?

Can you give out a gospel tract? Can you drop one off at the gas station or in a grocery store? Or Walmart? Russ's?

[21:30] Do you still have the desire for the gospel? A common sign of drifting and increasing thrill over the things of the world.

I had a dear friend, a brother. We were going to church for some time and he was a manager at a store but hadn't seen him for a couple weeks.

Summertime. Hadn't seen him for a couple weeks. Hey, brother Greg, what's going on? Well, my son and I, we like dirt bike riding.

You know that. So, we decided we're going to go dirt bike riding. Okay, well, can't you do it on Saturday? Well, I got this to do, that to do, that to do, that to do. No, wait a minute, brother.

You're saying that you want to go out dirt bike riding with your son on Sunday rather than going to church. What message are you showing to your son by doing it?

[22:30] Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. Well, you didn't see him for a while. Didn't see him for a while. Then he shows up one or two times. Everything all right, Greg?

Everything okay? Yeah, everything's okay. Next thing you know, he's missing again. What's going on? Oh, my son and I, we want to go do this and that. He was more interested in doing things with his son than things of the Lord and eventually stopped seeing him.

I used to go to his work. I used to bug him all the time. He'd go, yeah, yeah, yeah, I'll get back into church. It never came. Never came. Never came. You get to a point where you just throw up your hands and say, Lord, it's in your hands.

It's in your hands. And you drift away from him because he's drifted away from the Lord. How about the fellow, you might know somebody like this that says, oh, I'm not going to make it to church, brother, because the Broncos and the Chiefs are going to be on.

Sports becomes more important. A game because you're a fanatic. And I don't know about you, but some of the things going on in the NFL, I'm starting to say, I may not be watching the NFL too much longer.

[23:48] Anyway, I like watching football. Don't you? I mean, I like watching football. Don't like the Broncos. Never did. Anyway, common signs of drifting.

How about some remedies against drifting? How about keep rowing? You're in the boat. You're drifting. You got to work.

You got to row. It requires some effort. Are we making time every day to read God's Word? I don't know about you, but when I, years ago, when I changed and said, you know what, Lord, I'm going to get up early and I'm going to read the Word of God.

And I purposely got up early. And you know what changed my day? My days got so much better because I took the time to get into God's Word.

Making the time to read God's Word. 2 Peter tells us, but grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us, study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that need not be ashamed.

[25:04] It takes work. We got to plan it. Same with our prayer time. We got to talk to God. You know, there was a survey, I can't remember where I seen it or read about it, that 90% of our days we're on autopilot.

We get up there and we get up in the morning and we make our coffee. We wash up. We get dressed. We get in the car at a certain time of day. We go drive to work. We hit the same red lights every time we go, how far ever you go.

We have lunch at the same time. You know, when we are at, you get into a routine. When I was a technician at FedEx, we did our pass down when we came in from the other shift.

First thing you do, you go out there and you run the dimensioning tests on the scan tunnels. You run the packages through and you make sure the measurements were okay. You went down to where the scales were and you did SWAC tests where you're scanning and the weighing, matching up the weight on the scale to be accurate.

Those were routines we did. Can't we do that with our prayers? Yes. Think of the examples, all the examples that we have in the Bible for prayer. I believe it was just Sunday Brother Scott was here and he was talking about Daniel.

[26:28] Three times a day and everybody knew it. Three times a day those windows came open and he prayed. You know we prayed more than three times a day. Are we praying three times a day?

You're taking the time lunch maybe or we're told to pray without ceasing. I mean, that's a lot, isn't it? It's not that much when the Lord's right there with you.

We think about other. David said in Psalm 55, evening and morning and at noon, I will pray and cry out loud and he will, shall hear my voice.

and we look at Jesus. Didn't he always take the time to get away and talk to his father? What an example we have every time we look and go through the Gospels.

He sought a place of solitude. I think about the time he went, and it's in Mark and it's in Luke and in Matthew and in Mark 1, went to Peter's house and the mother-in-law is sick with a fever and Jesus heals the mother-in-law and she comes and serves and as evening came, Jesus is out there in the front lawn healing folks.

[27:48] Next morning, before the sun's even up, before it's daylight, Jesus is off in a solitary place praying to his father.

And Pete gets up and is wondering where Jesus is and goes looking for him and finally says, hey, everybody's looking for you. That's the halfy version. But you get it. Jesus, our example, God alone to talk to God set times to go and do it.

He took the break from dealing with the people and healing the people and preaching the gospel and preaching the kingdom of heaven and he took the time to pray.

Get alone with God. Put it in your autopilot. Set it up. Make it routine. If you're not doing it, try it. It'll change.

It'll change your day. It'll change your life. Remedies against drifting. Watch out for the undercurrents and the overcurrents.

[28:54] Know your undercurrents. The things that draw us away from our prayer, from our Bible time. Things that get us to drift away.

Normal, everyday things can do it. It's taking a little bit longer to do X, Y, and Z. And all of a sudden, it's kicking into my prayer time. Don't let it happen, folks.

Know your undercurrents. Know those things that draw you away. The Bible tells us, love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but it is of the world.

It's those things of the world that are going to cause you to drift. And we'll all do it. We'll all do it.

[29:54] Remedies against drifting. How about a strong anchor that holds fast in every storm? Hebrews, later on, chapter 6, tells us, we have an anchor both sure and steadfast.

And that's our hope and our security in Jesus Christ, knowing Christ the Savior. And the song goes, we have an anchor that keeps the soul steadfast and sure while the billows roll.

There it is. Fastened on the rock that cannot move, grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love.

There's a story I read not long ago about a couple other ships.

Cargo ships are parked outside the port because they're waiting their turn to get in to be unloaded. So their anchor's down and they're resting there. And a storm comes up.

As the storm came up, it got really powerful winds. And that started causing the boats to move around a bit. They're both anchored. But the one ship, container ship, the wind got a hold of it and started moving it.

[31:12] And it was dragging anchor. Dragging anchor. And finally, it collided with another ship that was alongside that was secure.

Anchor down. There's another song. There it is. In times like these. Thank you. In times like these, you need a Savior.

I'm on the wrong one. Be very sure. Be very sure. Be very sure. Your anchor holds and grips the solid rock.

We have these songs because they have messages. Those songs. Making sure that anchor is down there. Strong anchor that holds in every storm. Therefore, we ought to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

[32:35] How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Salvation message? Absolutely. Applied to us today?

Think about it, folks. Neglect means to admit by carelessness or design. How shall we, applying it to us as believers, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

Admit it by carelessness, by design? Neglect something. If you neglect something, you probably don't consider it great. Just let it go. It don't matter. We'll just drift along.

There's something. I don't know. The Lord just wasn't going to bring this out. It's funny the things you pick up on the internet.

Some crazy stuff. We got an anchor. This is some new age. I still call it new age. Things that you see on online about drifting.

[33:46] You know, according to people, drifting's a good thing. It's a good thing. This is what they said. Drifting is not just a lack of direction, but a profound journey of letting go and trusting the universe.

Really? I trust my Savior, Jesus Christ. How about this one? Uncovering inner peace and new perspectives that challenge our understanding of control.

Surrender to the natural flow of life. Embracing uncertainty for personal growth.

You've got to be kidding me, folks. You've got to be kidding me. If we're drifting as born-again believers, we're in trouble. We're in trouble.

How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? If we neglect it, it's not considered that great. Bible study slips. Prayer slips.

[34:49] Next thing you know, and here comes the Word. I didn't even mention. Backslide. We've all been there. Got to make sure that we're strong in the Word, strong in our prayer.

What's your relationship to the Lord tonight? Is it good? Are you drifting? Is there things happening in your life that you're drifting? You may not even realize it until right now.

Are you drifting? 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.

It's nice to know that when we do drift and slip and even when we go over the edge if we do and crash on the rocks that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We have a Savior and a loving God and a merciful God and we can always get back. We can get back.

[36:04] Not only to get back but to move forward because when you're drifting you're not going upstream not just get back but moving forward for the Lord.

Let's pray. Let's pray.