

A Superior Revelation Demands a Superior Allegiance

a sermon in the series
Hebrews: An Epistle of Encouragement

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by S. Michael Durham
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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. 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; 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 divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

As a minister of God's Word, I often feel that I am a redundant recording, a scratched album, repeating the same words. If you boil my task down to its most fundamental and rudimentary purpose, it would be nothing more than "thus saith the Lord" and "hear ye the Word of the Lord". It is my message to remind us of our diligent task of hearing and heeding God's Word. It's mine to remind us over and over of the duty to attend to the Word of the Lord, to capture it, to study it, to get the fatness and the richness of it into our hearts. And, of course, it is mine to remind us of the consequences of failing to obey the Word. You would think sooner or later that I would work myself out of a job. But as our text gives evidence, the Adamic nature which we are sentenced to carry with us until our death will not concede, although it is a defeated foe. And thus we become careless and need to be reminded often and exhorted much, "hear ye the Word of the Lord". Simply put, we need to be reminded, and that often, of what the Bible says and encouraged to obey it.

The servant of the Lord who wrote the book of Hebrews sees his purpose much the same as mine as he deals with these Jewish Christians. Basically he serves them best by reminding them of what they already knew. He brings them nothing new. In fact, he tells them in the fifth chapter of the book of Hebrews he cannot teach something new, but must remind them of fundamental truths again. He must repeat the same message.

It's not my task to bring you a new word. Let me say that again . . . it is not my task to bring you a new word. Besides, what could I possibly say that hasn't already been said before, and even if I could, it would not help you but rather harm you, because it would not be a Word from the Lord. There will be times you will hear me say things that will be new to you, but the truth really is they are ancient teachings.

Often sermons are considered boring because they do not tickle the ears or engage the mind with new and fanciful thoughts. Sermons are more conducive to sleep than to service, and I recognize that as a preacher. You might as well just get used to that fact if you should ever think that God has called you to preach.

A recent cartoon depicted the modern sermonic plight when a fellow leaving the church congratulated the pastor and said “Good sermon, Pastor, you actually kept me on the verge of consciousness this morning”. More and more preachers are engaged by their congregations to cease with the same old truths that they have heard since the early days of Sunday School and instead motivate them with unfamiliar words, words that are not too heavy or too deep, words that will not tax their minds or their sins. The modern churchgoer craves, as the fox craves chickens in the hen house, soft, superficial, sensational words that lift the emotions and entertain the heart. But as the writer of Hebrews shows us, the ministry and task of the Gospel preacher is nothing more than repeating the old truths over, and over, and over again. It is the job and duty of any preacher to preach not his own message but one that has already been proclaimed, one that was proclaimed by God’s superior revelation, Jesus Himself.

So dear friends, I will not say anything to you today that you probably have not heard already. I can only ask that the Lord God, who is gracious, help me say it in such a way that will captivate your mind, grab your heart, seize your attention and create within your heart a desire to follow it and attend to it very carefully.

The author has established in chapter one that Jesus Christ is superior in revelation. In other words, Jesus was superior to any prophet before Him in revealing who God is. As great and as true a word that the prophets spoke, the messengers of the Old Testament were inferior to the messenger known as Christ. He’s a far superior revelation than even the prophets’ words, and as we saw last week, He is also superior to the angels.

Can you imagine what it must be like to have an angel appear before you and address you with the word of the Lord? Yet the writer in chapter one says that Christ is a far superior messenger than even an angel. So having said that, and will continue to say that in the latter portion of chapter two, the writer inserts this parenthetical warning in verses one through four. He establishes the fact that Christ is a superior revelation, and therefore, His revelation demands a superior allegiance.

If the words of the prophets and angels in the Old Testament brought swift and just punishment, how much more certain is judgment if we do not heed the words of Jesus Christ? Now this is one of many passages in the book of Hebrews that creates consternation in the church. Many will look at these four verses and begin to establish theology and doctrines haphazardly, for many derive from these four verses that the writer is teaching that one can lose salvation. The book of Hebrews has several of these types of passages; this is the first of many that we are going to be looking at as we go through the entire book of Hebrews, so let me this morning begin by establishing some foundational principles which we will apply to all of these “controversial” passages.

To be frank and perhaps anti-climatic, I don't find any of these passages controversial. I actually find them great proof that you cannot lose your salvation if, and I do as the writer of Hebrews does insert this condition, if, if you truly belong to the Lord.

TO WHOM IS THIS WARNING ADDRESSED?

Now first let's see to whom this warning is addressed. To whom is the author giving this warning? Well, we can see that he is giving this warning or this admonition to professing Christians. Notice the terminology in verse one with me, "Therefore we." "We" is a first person plural, which would include the writer as well as the audience to whom he was writing.

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

Three times in verse one he uses the first person plural and in verse three he again uses the first person plural three times.

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 (Hebrews 2:3).

It is obvious that the writer is addressing professing Christians and he includes himself in this audience.

WHAT DOES "LET THEM SLIP" MEAN?

Now we must ask a second question, what do the words, "let them slip mean"?

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at anytime we should let [them] slip (Hebrews 2:1).

Is it possible he is saying that a Christian can slip or fall from grace? Well, the word "slip" here comes from a nautical word dealing with sailing. I'm not a sailor, but I can understand this term by a little bit of study, and I have discovered from this word that it is more easily understood as "drifting away". In other words, the concept is a ship out at sea drifting because of the neglect of the steersman, who allows the ship to drift or to slip off course and to miss the ship's destination. The author, under divine inspiration, is warning very clearly---be careful lest you miss your destination. Now what does that mean? Again the word "slip" has the connotation of drifting or allowing a ring to slip off the finger and be lost. The concept is losing something, to miss something. In fact, the New King James Version, the New American Standard and the New International Version all three have translated this word slip as meaning to "drift away" and that is the general idea of the Greek word used by the author. It would also appear that the writer is talking about letting the words that they had heard drift away, but that is not faithful to the Greek, because the word "them" is italicized meaning it is not in the original Greek but it was added by the translators.

The word “slip” or “drift away” is not referring to the words that they had heard, but is actually referring to them. Now how do we know that? Because in the Greek the word here “slip” is also in the first person plural, which means “we slip”. So it is not dealing with the word of God slipping but rather us slipping or drifting away from the words that we have heard. Friends, the Word of God cannot slip away nor drift, it is eternally fixed, but we can certainly drift from it.

The Bible is an anchor and Christ is a sure word that is steady. When you attach yourself to Him you can be eternally confident and sure that He is able to keep you. These words are addressed to we who profess faith in Christ, and he is warning us of the danger of drifting. So now our question would be, what does it mean to drift away from the words that we have heard? How does a Christian drift if we are eternally secure?

Friends, it is true that we can neglect the truth of Christ and grow cold in our hearts toward the Lord. We all know too well that is true, don't we? There have been times in our Christian experience that instead of attending to the words of the Lord and keeping our hearts focused on Christ, we have grown dull and lax and we have not pursued Him as we had earlier. We can drift in our devotion to Him, but aren't those kinds of drifting away only temporary? If you are really God's child you cannot keep drifting. The Bible specifies that a Christian cannot totally and permanently drift away from Christ. Get a picture in your mind of a ship at sea trying to find a harbor destination. The ship's pilot knows his port is at certain degrees latitude and longitude on his map. He's gone this way before, but out of carelessness he does not keep the helm of the ship on course, and they drift and therefore miss their destination.

Isn't it true that at times in your Christian experience you have drifted off course, that you've gotten your eyes off the Lord Jesus and focused on something of this world and missed what God was wanting in your life at that time? But my question is, isn't that only temporary? Is it possible for a Christian to continually, without any change, continue to drift? I don't think so; in fact I'm adamant in my thinking that the Bible teaches quite the contrary. First, let me give you some examples. David drifted away from the Lord, but in all of his drifting and his embarrassing sins God finally brought him back to Himself. And what about the disciples of our Lord Jesus? The night of the betrayal can you not say that they drifted and drifted hard? Peter denied Him, the others forsook Him. I think they all would acknowledge that on that night they drifted, they did not keep steady on the course of faith, and yet the Lord retrieved every one of them from their drifting.

Look at Hebrews chapter twelve and verse five. We need to be very certain here whether or not the Bible says those who are genuinely saved cannot permanently and totally drift away from Christ.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him (Hebrews 12:5).

What is the result of this chastening? The result he says,

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Hebrews 12:11).

The writer speaks very emphatically. No “if,” no “maybe,” no “perhaps,” it is very conclusive that those who receive the chastening of the Lord are restored and actually are exercised to a fruit of righteousness in their life, a fruit that they would not have had, had they not received the discipline of the Lord.

We may wander, we may drift, but we cannot permanently and totally keep drifting. In First John chapter three and verse nine we read, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God.” The same apostle John stated in his first chapter of the same epistle, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). It is obvious that John cannot be meaning the same thing when he uses the word “sin” in these two very different verses. In chapter one and verse eight the word “sin” is referring to our state of being, “we have no sin.” He is not talking about committing acts of sins, but rather he is talking about inner corruption. No Christian this side of heaven has attained perfection. Within our being there yet remains sin.

In First John chapter three, John has a different thought in mind about sin. Here John is not talking about our natures but is dealing with the act of committing sin. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” The Greek tense for the phrase, “commit sin” is a continual tense meaning John is discussing a continual practicing of sin, or in other words, habitual lifestyle of sinning. His meaning is simple. It is impossible for them that are born of God to live permanently, or indefinitely, without any repentance in a life of sin. The text is conclusive. Therefore, in our text of Hebrews chapter two a Christian may drift, but that only temporarily, for the true child of God cannot permanently drift away from God. God will make sure of it. There is a provision that goes beyond my abilities or inabilities and it’s the keeping power of God! That’s His promise.

On a close examination of our text the author is not referring to a temporary declension. Rather he is discussing a once and for all departure from the faith. The context makes it certain that he’s not dealing with a temporary lapse in our walk of faith, but rather he is dealing with salvation altogether. He says in verse three,

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] (Hebrews 2:3).

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?” Friends, this is not about the issue of sanctification, nor is it dealing with how weak your faith is in a momentary lapse of judgment. It is dealing with our final destination, which is the harbor of the Celestial City, a city “whose builder and maker is God.” The writer of Hebrews is dealing with eternal destiny and so therefore, what does he mean by the words, “let them slip”? He’s talking about a total and final apostasy from the truth of Christ which leads us again to our question, is this inspired writer admitting the possibility of the loss of salvation? Is he putting forward the suggestion that it is possible that even he, himself, could lose out in the very end?

CAN ONE LOSE HIS SALVATION?

We must be very, very careful because there are those who are more talented with the Word of God than I who would argue very persuasively that the author is admitting that even he in the end could lose out with God. I want to assert to you that I cannot believe that is what our beloved writer is stating because it would bring the Bible into an issue of disrepute. I say disrepute because it would cause us to have to say that the Bible has some major fundamental contradictions and cannot be relied upon or trusted, if that is so.

Now why do I say this? Because the Scripture unapologetically states the perseverance of the saint and the impossibility that in the end one single believer shall lose out with God. I want to give you several scriptures that teach us this blessed doctrine. Irrespective of what others may call it, I call it blessed. Again, let me be very clear, because often arguments and differences of opinions come from how we use words and it is often a matter of semantics that causes division. We actually may be in agreement with those who say the believer can lose his or her salvation. I find so often that parties who disagree really agree in principle, but disagree with the terminology. The Bible is very clear that if one has been truly converted by God, and I use the terminology “by God” on purpose, because the Bible nowhere teaches that one can convert himself, that no one is a product of his own self reformation or changing. You cannot save yourself, only God can save. If I were to question any person who was on the opposing side of this issue, they would agree with me that no one who has been converted saved themselves.

It is by the grace and the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ that any man is saved from his sins. I know no evangelical that would raise his voice in blasphemy and deny this statement. So then if the sinner’s hand did not save him, what can the sinner’s hand do or not do to take salvation from him? If you have truly experienced the grace of God, I am persuaded that the Bible teaches that God will keep you, and that His power and ability to keep you is greater than your weakness and inability to be faithful to God. Now why do I say this? Because it is the words of our Lord in John chapter ten and verse twenty-eight, “And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish.” Oh, doubting one, how long is never? Is never a duration of time that has a limit, an end? Absolutely not. When Jesus said “and they shall never perish,” He was guaranteeing eternal life. But someone would say to me, “Yes, but Jesus was dealing with someone removing you from the hand and care of God, but Jesus did not address our will refusing to stay within the safe confines of His protective hand. A man can choose to leave Christ.” There is no doubt that this provision for our security is guaranteed. We are safe from every devil in hell that would abduct us from the loving shelter of God’s grace. That is the subject of the next phrase of our Lord’s promise, “Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” But that is not the only enemy to our salvation that He protects us from. Our Lord’s promise deals with one and all enemies of grace. Read again the words and marvel at our Lord’s prescience of all enemies of our soul including our own waywardness. Do you think He could only foresee other’s actions to thwart His grace in your life and not yours? No, my friend, He guaranteed that you would never choose to walk away from Him when He said, “they will never perish.” Is that not a sufficient promise for you? For there to remain a possibility for our final destruction means that the Lord has not issued a promise but

only a wish. If He cannot secure us from all enemies including our own wickedness, then He cannot make such a statement. He should have said something to the effect that He could guarantee that no other hand could remove us from the Father's hand, but He could not safeguard against the believer's will. But He hints at nothing like this. He says, "and they shall never perish." Never means never. It means at no time should He lose any that have been given to His wise and strong care. All that come to Him He never casts out (John 6:37). In the end He will raise all up and lose nothing (John 6:39). With those words, "and they shall never perish" He dealt with your ability to be unfaithful. With the words, "neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" He dealt with any outside force.

Dear Friend, if I had no other verse than this one, I would be more than confident and my rest would still be peaceful, trusting and relying upon the ability of God to keep me. If this verse is not so, and if there is a possibility that there is a crack in the armor of our Captain, then God must be a liar and He cannot keep His promises and you cannot count on His word. But I know that is not possible. He cannot tell a lie and there is no shadow of turning with Him. There is no degree of variableness; there is no vacillation with God. "Never perish" must mean never perish.

Philippians chapter one and verse six, the apostle Paul is very persuasive and assured in God's ability to keep him from drifting away totally and finally. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [it] until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). Now who is doing the work? It's God, and He's going to keep on doing it until Christ appears.

Let me say to you that we do not mean any disrespect by these words and I am not trying to be argumentative, but rather having come from that position myself, I want you to see how I've come to understand the Scriptures and am secure in the ability of God to keep us. It is one of the most blessed truths that gives my heart great assurance. One of the problems of many people who believe that it is possible for a Christian to lose his salvation is how they view salvation. If at any point and time you see salvation as a cooperative work between God and you, you will have difficulty with this blessed assurance we call the security of the believer. If you think somehow you assist God even in the least, and that you must yet assist Him, then I can understand why you would believe that it is possible that you could lose your salvation. But according to the apostle Paul, God began the work in you and it's going to be finished by God, which means that the work of salvation originates and is accomplished through you but not by you. The work is Christ's, and therefore we are saved by grace. It is the marvelous power of God, for only God can save.

The forces that withstand us in reaching our final destination are much too great for us. In Second Thessalonians chapter three and verse three Paul writes "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep [you] from evil (2 Thessalonians 3:3). "But the Lord is faithful"---Paul does not say that he and the Lord were faithful; rather he says the Lord is faithful. Nor could he have said that he himself was faithful, and neither can we. But we can with expectant souls say of our God, He is faithful. It is the Lord who Paul said would "stablish you and keep you from evil." Oh, dear friend, not only is God able to succor you, to aid you, to help you in the hour of temptation, but He is able to keep you from totally and finally falling away.

Does this not excite you, or is it just like the writer of Hebrews and his audience, you want a new word because you already know these words and you find them boring and dry? Do you see the problem? You'll see it more as this message comes to the conclusion.

Allow me yet another verse, Second Timothy first chapter, twelfth verse. "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). Now why would Paul endure the things he suffered in order to tell men the good news of Christ? He was arrested, mobbed, almost pulled apart limb by limb, and finally gave his life for Christ. Why would he be able to suffer these things and not be ashamed? His answer is, "For I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." His persuasion was not in his ability to remain faithful to God. He was not assured of eternal life because of His own labors. His confidence was in the keeping power of one who saves thoroughly.

I cannot stop, please allow me to give you the testimony of yet another of God's apostles. Peter in his first epistle gives a record of God's enduring salvation.

Blessed [be] the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:3-5).

Praise be unto His name who keeps us and delivers us! "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24). Are there not a host of more Scriptures that I could share that stand ready as did David's mighty men? The overwhelming testimony of Scripture is . . . that to those whom God has saved He gives a grace that causes them to persevere. Well, now you can see why I say we cannot state the author of Hebrews is suggesting any believer will totally and finally drift away into eternal destruction.

There are three things that you must know in order to rightly interpret this passage. First, you should know that these Jewish churches to which the letter of Hebrews is addressed had experienced persecution and consequently defections from the church. There were people as there are today, perhaps not as many, but there were people who had not been genuinely converted who nonetheless adhered themselves to the local churches. As today in our churches, they had false professions. The church was being persecuted and some of those who looked on the outside as though they had Jesus, when the crucible came and the vise was squeezing them, defected and went back to Judaism. To escape the persecution they renounced their faith in Christ and returned to their Jewish roots. The writer of Hebrews is warning the entire church, "Wait . . . you may profess Christ and you may have heard the Word, that superior revelation, but unless you attend to the words of Christ and faithfully follow Him you will drift away and your profession in the end will have proven to be false."

There is a second thing we must know in order to rightly understand this text---the writer does include himself in the warning. Up to this point I have spoken to those who perhaps do not agree with us on the security of the believer. Let me now talk to those who are adamant in their belief of the security of the believer to the degree that they advocate the affirmation of salvation even of those who live in prolonged disobedience. There are some who so strongly believe in a security of the believer that go so far as to state that any professing believer who proves himself unfaithful and walks contrary to the commandments of our Lord should be assured of his salvation on the word of the apostle to the Hebrews. This is absolutely not in the mind of this writer or any other New Testament author. You and I must remember that by stating the warning in the first person plural using the words “we” and “us, the author demonstrates that he is not above the capacity to prove unfaithful, although he is confident that will not happen because of the keeping power of God. Yet, the writer does not remove himself from the potential of drifting at any time. If he himself was to demonstrate with his life and actions continual unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness and disobedience, he would not be able to stand up and say, as often we hear today, “Well, you know I’m saved, it doesn’t matter how I live. I’m under grace and am eternally secure.” This was not the understanding of the apostles of the security of the believer and neither should it be ours!

If any of us were to drift from the revelation of Jesus, something is not right. Two possibilities exist. The first possibility is that we are genuinely saved but in a momentary lapse of unbelief, and therefore, not walking in obedience. Is that possible for the Christian? Absolutely. The second possibility is that we have never been genuinely converted. If the author of Hebrews himself continued in disobedience and did not fight the good fight of faith and finish his course, then he would have no hope of eternal life, and neither should you. We will address this more as we journey deeper into this epistle.

The third fact we must know in order to get the message of the writer is that the warning texts that we have in the book of Hebrews are an alarm or security system for us. Drifting away from Christ was then and is today a reason for alarm and these kinds of texts serve as the flashing lights and blaring horns of danger. Friends, if you are genuinely saved, and should you begin to drift, there is a built in alarm system in the Christian---an alarm that we are not paying close attention to the Father’s superior revelation. This warning indicates the danger of drifting so that when we are straying from Christ we should hear these kinds of texts and tremble. They should make us to stop and think that all is not right and now is not the time to feel great assurance.

What’s wrong today is an extremist and perverted teaching on the security of the believer. We have many people believing that when they die they shall stand before God acquitted when the truth is they will fall into hell, and the reason is because they believed a doctrine that was not biblical. They believe in a security of the believer that says as long as you have experienced grace it doesn’t matter how you live thereafter. It matters not if you do not finish your race, you are saved.

Friends, salvation is not so much beginning the race as it is finishing the race. What we have today is a preoccupation with the beginning of salvation that leaves many thinking the beginning is

the sum of the entire Christian life. We should press the heart and soul of men and women to repent and believe, but the act of conversion is as the birth of a person. It is only the beginning. Life is more than being born. Many begin who do not finish, and why should they? We have convinced them that running is for those who are trying to earn their salvation as if running suggests uncertainty about the outcome. Consequently a host of church members live professing Christ but living as if Christ did not exist. Our text says to them “How will you escape if you neglect so great a salvation?” If you are His today and your heart has grown cold towards Him, it ought to be an alarm to you that something is amiss. You ought to be trembling and humbling yourself before Him who is able to save to the uttermost.

I’m not saying that you should doubt or deny real salvation; in fact, the author of Hebrews would not encourage us to do so. When we sin, we must not say, “Well, I must not be saved.” Oh no, rather if you are really saved you acknowledge your sin and seek your Lord and High Priest. If you know that you are not as close to Him as you once were, that you have drifted, there ought to be something in your heart that is troubled by this. But beloved, if there isn’t any consternation over sin, if you can drift and continue to drift and not be overly concerned, feel no alarm over your lack of fellowship with Christ, then, my dear friend, that is a warning to you that it is most likely you have never experienced the grace of Christ. Beware, and if you can continue, as far as I’m concerned, this passage is a warning to you that you are counterfeit professor of faith.

HOW DO WE AVOID DRIFTING?

Rather than teach that a Christian can lose his salvation, I believe that this passage teaches the very opposite. Now the question we should be asking is how do we avoid drifting? The answer is discovered when we understand what it means to “give the more earnest heed.” What does it mean to “give the more earnest heed?” This word occurs only twice in the New Testament. The word is *prosecho*. It means to “apply oneself” or to “attach oneself to,” “to be addicted to.” This word would be used in reference to an alcoholic, or a drug addict. Therefore the author says you and I ought to all the more be addicted to this superior revelation, the words of God through Jesus Christ. That’s how you keep from drifting. “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed (addiction) to the things which we have heard lest at any time we should let them slip.” You must be as devoted to the Word as a drunkard wraps himself around a bottle and gives himself to the drug.

So now do you see why I say I feel like my task more often than not is just simply repeating to you “Here’s what God has said, let’s obey it”. I seem to find myself saying more and more frequently . . . love the word, follow your heart into God’s Word and fatten your soul on its meat. Get into this book today and don’t forsake it, for if you forsake this Book, you forsake your soul. I wouldn’t want you to think that this is a means of earning your salvation, but dear friend, it is a means of salvation. The word of the preacher to the Hebrews is if you don’t want to drift, then you need to pay attention to this Word and not only pay attention to it but be addicted to it. May I ask you, would you call your relationship with God’s Word an addiction? Or would you call it a casual attraction? Do you view the Word of God like you do other things in your life, a necessity

but not a passion? Those who are kept from drifting are those who are passionately addicted to this Word. Is it possible that you might be drifting and not even know that you are drifting? How many of you have been at sea and couldn't see land? When you set the anchor of the boat, did it not appear that you were still moving? Isn't it possible that you think your anchor is secure but the truth could be that you actually ARE drifting? How might you know for sure? Is there in your heart an addictive attraction to the Word of God? If not then you are drifting without an anchor. What is the anchor? Here it is---broken record or not, here it is---tired of hearing me say it or not---here it is---the Word of the Lord.

Finally, I want you to note this last thing. I want you to notice how the author of our text exhorts giving the more earnest heed to the Word. He says, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard." Underscore the word "heard." It is very important because he meant exactly what he said. They did not have a written copy of the Bible. They probably didn't have a copy of the Old Testament in each home. Books were very expensive. Most copies of the Word of God were in the synagogues where the Old Testament Scriptures were committed to memory in their educational process. What is amazing is without having the Word of God in their hands, they heard it and were able to learn it. That is a remarkable thing. You see this as you go through the book of Hebrews. The writer begins to cite Old Testament passages that he expects the members of the congregation to know. He talks about Old Testament characters like Melchisedec. Can anybody here who has a Bible tell me who Melchisedec was? What about Barak or Jephthae? You've a Bible and some of you don't even know who these men are or their relevance to our giving "more earnest heed to the things which we have heard." Most of the recipients of the letter to the Hebrews didn't have a written copy of the Word of God and yet the writer of Hebrews refers to these people and expects them to know who these people are. They must have had a diligent and faithful hunger and desire to know this book.

Oh, dear people of God, we need this Book because this Book is a revelation of who Jesus is. He is the superior revelation of God. I close with an illustration and I warn you that you may find it too close to home. I do not mean to give it to bring any type of intimidation, guilt, or condemnation, but simply to help you to keep from drifting.

I've seen too often a spouse become unfaithful to another spouse, because their husband or their wife did not pay close attention; they did not give the more earnest heed to their spouse. They never intended to be unfaithful. They never started out to be unfaithful, but because week after week, month after month, and year after year of neglect, someone comes along that will give attention, they're off and gone. Now ultimately the responsibility lies with the departing spouse who is unfaithful, but listen, the reason for drifting is because a spouse was not giving earnest attention. If you neglect the Word of God and this great salvation, it will be your heart that will wander off and become the victim of another's flirtation and attention. A rival to the Word will come and seduce your heart. Today, I encourage you---fall in love again with the Word of God, and you will never drift. Amen.