



The Book of Hebrews 2:1-4_Neglecting a Great Salvation?

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Holy Text: Hebrews 2:1-4

There are two warnings given in this Text. In verse one, we are warned to hold tightly to what Word of God (“things we have heard”) lest at any time we should let them slip (NLT: “drift away from it”). In verse three, we are warned not to “neglect” so great a salvation. I submit that the pressure to do so is manifold in our day. There are abundant spiritual, relational, and cultural pressures to loosen our grip on not just the Gospel, but upon the Word of God itself!

Have you ever heard anything like this?

- “You're too saved.”
- “It doesn't take all that.”
- “That's too much teaching and doctrine.”
- “Ya'll to serious about God and church.”
- “Uh oh, here comes the holy rollers.”
- “Ya'll so heavenly minded, you are no earthly good.”
- “Come out the Bible and get into real life for a minute.”

Have you ever felt pressure to disbelieve Essential Christian Doctrine?

- The Nature of of the Triune God
- The Deity and Humanity of Christ
- The Personhood and Ministry of the Holy Spirit
- The Inspiration, Inerrancy, Infallibility, an of Sufficiency of Scripture
- The Doctrines of Man's Depravity and Salvation by Grace through Faith in Christ alone
- The Essential Nature of and Mission of the Local Church
- The One-Day Return of Christ¹

Have you ever received pushback over CRC Distinctives?

- Finding contentment and peace in Christ alone. Jesus is Enough! (Php 4:11-13)
- Preaching whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27)
- Holding to expository preaching where the Holy Text drives the message (2 Tim 4:2)
- Living out a loving holiness (John 14:15; 1 Pet 1:16)
- Building according to the Pattern, obeying New Testament ordinances and instructions for the Church (2 Tim 1:13)
- Holding to biblical view of men's/women's roles in the home and church (Eph 5; Col 3; 1 Tim 2-3; Titus 2)
- Seeing the pattern of worshipping with our children as something beautiful (2 Chr 20:13; Ezra 10:1; Lk 18:16)
- Believing the primary discipler of children are parents (Deut 6; Eph 6)
- Pursuing biblical Hospitality and Community (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9)
- Living with as little debt as possible (Prov 22:7; Rom 13:8)
- Biblical generosity (Prov 3:9-10; Lk 6:38; 1 Cor 16:1-2; 2 Cor 9:6-7)²

CRC, Be encouraged! Be courageous! Be loving! Be strong! Trust God and hold fast!

¹ <https://calvaryreformationchurch.org/sermons/2020/8/a-renewed-mind-pt-2-a-review-of-basic-christian-doctrine>

² <https://calvaryreformationchurch.org/sermons/2022/7/who-is-calvary-reformation-church-2022>

Through the Text:

Hebrews 2:1 (KJV) 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 “Therefore” connects the hearer to the truths laid out in chapter one and says essentially, “Because of these things...”
- Because God is who He is, because God spoke through the prophets, because in these last days God spoke through His Son, and because His Son is so much greater than the angelic hosts, “being 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...” **the hearer is exhorted to hold fast to what they have been taught!**
- Beloved this is a very strong encouragement. It has an urgent, command-to-the-church feel.
- One of the Greek words used in the phrase “earnest heed” is *perissoterōs*. It carries of the idea of “greater degree.” Strong’s says it means, “more superabundantly!”³
- In words, don’t just casually “take heed.” Take a “more earnest heed,” a “more superabundant” heed! Don’t just “pay attention”...lock in hard and hold!
- MacDonald says,

*The writer has just completed his argument that Christ is supremely better than the angels because He is the Son of God. Before showing that He is also superior as Son of Man, he pauses to inject the first of several solemn warnings that are found in the Epistle. This is a warning against drifting **away** from the message of the gospel.*

*Because of the greatness of the Giver and because of the greatness of His gift, those who hear the gospel must **give more** serious attention to it. There is always the danger of drifting **away** from the Person and slipping back into a religion of pictures.*

- The outcome being warned against is letting the Word of God, and particularly the Gospel of Christ, slip.
- The LSB, NASB95, and NLT use language similar to “that we do not drift away from it.”
- The image here is almost nautical: a believer, floating in the ocean of life, being held up by God’s Word, and shockingly, loosening his hold upon the Word of life (Php 2:16), simply drifting away!
- The writer cautions the hearer against a “lukewarm, tepid, casual, half-hearted, unenthusiastic, indifferent, apathetic, cool, disinterested, or moderate” kind of faith!⁴

Hebrews 2:2 (KJV) For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

- This is a very interesting verse. The writer refers his audience back to their propensity to over-emphasize the ministry of angels. At the same time, he acknowledges that the ministry of angels was in fact, significant.
- He refers to “the word spoken by angels.” By this, the writer isn’t referring to personal instructions given to individuals, but rather that type of “Word” that laid out God’s commandments and His holy and just punishments (“recompense of reward”) for transgressions and disobedience. This sound a lot like the giving of the Law in the Old Testament.

³ Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries

⁴ <https://calvaryreformationchurch.org/sermons/2023/9/growing-into-church-discipline-pt-9-i-i-have-a-few-things-against-thee>

- And indeed, angels were somehow involved in the giving of the Law:

Psalms 68:17 (KJV) *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.*

Acts 7:51-53 (KJV) *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. **52** Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: **53** Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.*

Galatians 3:19 (KJV) *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.*

- And as is very common in Hebrews, the “lesser to greater” argument makes an appearance here and in the next verse as well.
- Essentially, he’s saying, “These angels you loved so much were used by God in the giving of the Law, and that is great! But One who is greater than the angels came and spoke to us!”

Hebrews 2:3 (KJV) ***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 Son has come! After Him, there is no sacrifice for sins left! (Heb 10:26) No one greater can speak and nothing greater can be given to man!
- Therefore, if the Son is rejected, “How shall we escape?” Remember the exhortation in chapter 10?

Hebrews 10:28-31 (KJV) *He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: **29** Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. **31** It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

- **Think with me: how great a salvation we have in Jesus Christ! The Son of God took our sins upon Himself. He bled, suffered, and died for us!**

Romans 5:6-8 (KJV) *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. **8** But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (KJV) *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; **4** And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*

1 Peter 2:21-25 (KJV) *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: **22** Who did no sin, neither*

was guile found in his mouth: **23** Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: **24** Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. **25** For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

1 Timothy 3:16 (KJV) And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

- **There is salvation in no other!**

John 14:6 (KJV) Jesus saith unto him, *I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Acts 4:12 (KJV) Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- **How can we “neglect” Him and what He has done? Why do we take the Word of God and the salvation of Christ lightly? Why does our LORD rarely have our full attention and passionate devotion? How great is our shame when we neglect Him?**
- According to this verse, we must also not neglect the apostles’ doctrine (“them that heard him”), through whom the Words and will of Christ was confirmed. In truth...

Ephesians 2:19-22 (KJV) Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; **20** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; **21** In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: **22** In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

2 Timothy 1:13 (KJV) Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 4:16 (KJV) Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV) Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Philippians 3:17 (KJV) Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

2 Thessalonians 3:7 (KJV) For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

- William MacDonald again:

*But now the argument moves from the lesser to the greater. If those who broke the law were punished, what will be the fate of those who **neglect** the gospel? The law tells men what they must do; the gospel tells men what God has done. By the law is the knowledge of sin; by the gospel is the knowledge of **salvation**.*

To **neglect so great a salvation** is more serious than to transgress the law. The law was given by God through angels, to Moses and then to the people. But the gospel was spoken directly by the Lord Jesus Himself. Not only so, it **was confirmed** to the early Christians by the apostles and by others **who heard** the Savior.⁵

Hebrews 2:4 (KJV) 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 Himself confirmed the ministry of the apostles:

Mark 16:19-20 (KJV) So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. **20** And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Romans 15:18-19 (KJV) For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, **19** Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

The whole book of Acts!

- Often in our day, we hear from those who have disdain for apostolic doctrine: “I follow Jesus, not Paul,” etc. This is a false comparison and is contrary the Bible and the will of God.
- I believe chiefly this is because of the unpopular nature of the apostle’s applied theology, particularly in areas that conflict with cultural norms: gender roles and sexuality, ecclesiology, church discipline, warnings against sin, etc.
- **Nevertheless, the apostles’ words preserved for us are the Words of Scripture:**

1 Thessalonians 2:10-13 (KJV) Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe: **11** As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, **12** That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. **13** For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

2 Peter 1:16-21 (KJV) For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. **17** For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **18** And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. **19** We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **20** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. **21** For the prophecy came not

⁵ Believer’s Bible Commentary

in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

2 Peter 3:14-16 (KJV) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. **15** And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Closing Questions:

1. To the believer: Are you neglecting the great salvation you have been given in Jesus Christ?
 - Are you passionate about prayer?
 - Are you consistent in your study of Scripture?
 - Do you faithfully attend and serve in the local church?
 - Do you love to praise and worship Christ?
 - Do you share the Gospel?
 - Are you making any disciples?
 - Are you committed to obedience?
 - Do you consistently repent of you sins and forgive other of theirs?
 - Are you generous?
2. To the seeker/unbeliever: Have you received the great salvation of Jesus Christ? Have you repented of your sins and believed in Jesus unto eternal life?

Romans 3:23 (KJV) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 6:23 (KJV) For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8 (KJV) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:9-10 (KJV) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Mark 1:15 (KJV) And saying, *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Solus Christus!
Amen!