

20240929 Don't Drift Away – Jesus Never Fails

2 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, ⁴ God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? (Hebrews 2:1-4, NKJV).

Let's pray.

V. 1 Note that this begins with the word “therefore.” The writer will now deal with an application of what was presented in the second half of the first chapter. The writer is telling us that since Jesus is superior to angels, WE MUST PAY CLOSER ATTENTION TO WHAT WE HAVE HEARD LEST WE DRIFT AWAY. We need to hold tighter and closer to Him.

The writer urges the reader to persevere in the faith. He cautions that we must be more earnest in the things we have heard. Living the Christian life is work. We can't work for our salvation in any way, but we must work “at” our salvation, holding fast to what we've heard and learned. It takes effort. It is not automatic. We are told repeatedly in scripture that we must “strive” to live out this Christian faith. Last week we spoke about endurance being directly related to our adherence to the faith. I had a pastor one time that talked about this as the need “to keep on keeping on.” It is HARD sometimes to just keep on keeping on. We get so weary of the challenges that come our way. We are continually assaulted by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

To be earnest about something means to be serious about it. It means to be focused about it. The writer is telling us to be serious, focused, and intent in the doctrines we have heard, “lest we drift away.” He is not talking about drifting away from being saved, but rather from drifting slowly and steadily without even knowing that it is happening. When I was a little boy, I would go into the water at Galveston, and after a while, I'd look up to spot my mother - who was nowhere to be found. I had drifted sometimes a half a mile or so from where she was. It was often quite a struggle just to find her and get back to where I was when I went into the water. The same thing can happen spiritually when we take our eyes off of Jesus and the WORD OF GOD. We are no longer intent. We are no longer focused. We are no longer working to stay near to the heart of God, and we look up, and we've ended up so far from where we started.

We need to hold on to sound doctrine “lest we drift.” The Greek word here deals with the kind of drifting that happens when a boat is cut loose from its moorings or when it just misses the port that it intends to reach. It aimlessly bounces on the waves and drifts far, way too far from the shore. This reminds me of the song “Drifting too Far from the Shore.” Let's don't be drifters. Drifting away is a real possibility when we are Christ-followers if we don't pay close attention to our spiritual health. So what do you need to

do to “drift away?” You do nothing. You stop reading your Bible. You stop praying. You stop focusing on Jesus and how He desires to direct your life. Your walk with Him requires work.

Before we leave this thought, I want to remind you of the Parable of the Sower and it's third example. If we don't cultivate and pull out the weeds, **THEY WILL CHOKER OUT THE WORD OF GOD**. An untended garden will become a mess in no time. You'll end up not even being able to tell there was a garden there to begin with. It's exactly the same way with an untended heart and an untended life. It ends up full of weeds that choke out our love, our peace, and our joy. An untended heart will end up leading to an unproductive spiritual life.

Hear the words of Jesus:

²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. (Matthew 13:22, NKJV).

Be diligent about your faith. Be focused on Jesus. Give closer attention to your spiritual condition lest you drift away!

Vv. 2-4 Why should we be so diligent? Because the message is so important. The writer reminds the reader that the angels facilitated and were present when the Law was being passed down to Moses. We also read of this event in Acts 7:53 and Galatians 3:19. The writer essentially says that the word brought by the angels was so significant, how much more should the believer regard the words of the Lord Jesus Himself? All of what Jesus said was confirmed by signs, wonders, and various miracles. Not only that, but we also received the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit. As we learned recently in Pastor Larry's teachings, Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the answer. He is the path to the Father. On top of that, when Jesus left us here on the earth, the Holy Spirit was given to us permanently to comfort, help, guide, and empower us. So, if the Law was so important, and it was brought by the angels, how much more important is what Jesus has taught us? The writer is saying “how will we escape if we neglect this message?” The fact of the matter is that we **WON'T ESCAPE IT WITHOUT JESUS**.

The Son Made Lower than Angels

⁵ For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. ⁶ But one testified in a certain place, saying:

*“What is man that You are mindful of him, [Psalm 8 about man, not Messiah]
Or the son of man that You take care of him?*

*⁷ You have made him a little lower than the angels; [“for a little while” ESV]
You have crowned him with glory and honor, [the original intention for man at creation]
And set him over the works of Your hands.*

*⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” [nothing outside of His control]
For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him.
But now we do not yet see all things put under him. ⁹ But we see Jesus, who was*

made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. [Jesus paid it all.] (Hebrews 2:5-9, NKJV with author's notes in brackets).

Vv. 5-9 In chapter one the writer presented the deity of Christ. Now, the writer speaks to the humanity of Jesus. He makes the point that even as a human, Jesus is superior to angels. This logic is based on the role of mankind in the world. These Jewish readers were no doubt confused about both the deity and the humanity of Jesus. We know He was ALL GOD and yet He was ALL MAN. The Jewish mind would find this very hard to comprehend. But it's important for us to remember that Jesus not only WAS human, but that He is still human, bearing the marks of His crucifixion. He still bears the marks of the Lamb that was slain. He is now just in His glorified eternal body.

God did not put the world under the authority of the angels either in the present world or the world to come. He put the world under the authority of human beings. We were given dominion over all of the earth. Adam and Eve were set in the garden to rule the world. This authority was interrupted, so to speak, by sin. Angels have no authority over human beings.

The statement that man was made "a little lower than the angels" does not mean that God put angels in authority over men. He never did. God didn't put the angels in place to rule the world. This phrase of being made "a little lower than the angels" speaks of our mortality. The writer explains that in being made a human that could die, Jesus was put in this place of mortality which is "below the angels." Jesus experienced the pain and suffering of death itself, yet like all of mankind, He was crowned with glory and honor and ruled over the earth. Humans were given all dominion over all of the earth. We don't see all under man at present because of sin. We had dominion, and we lost it. It was given over to the enemy and for a time he was made the prince of this world.

As mentioned, it was sin which interrupted the rule of mankind. I like that word "interrupted." The original plan got off course because of the choices of Adam and Eve. And as a result of sin, death came into the world. Mankind has feared death ever since. The hopelessness and fear of death was overcome when Jesus went to the cross, and He rose from the dead! Eventually, the rule of "Mankind," so to speak, will return in the form of King Jesus. We were never intended to die. The book of Revelation told us that death will be the last enemy to be destroyed. So, Jesus became a man like us, and He was made to suffer for us.

Revelation 5 says that the redeemed will rest, rule, and reign in the Kingdom to come.

Bringing Many Sons to Glory

So now he answers the question as to how Jesus' sufferings were of any benefit for humanity.

¹⁰For it was fitting [appropriate] for Him [the Father], for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain [Gk: pioneer] of

their salvation perfect [Gk: this means completed or finished] through sufferings. [there was something about the suffering of Jesus that made things complete] ¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹² saying:

*"I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You."*

¹³ And again:

"I will put My trust in Him."

And again:

"Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. (Hebrews 2:10-18, NKJV with author's notes in brackets).

Vv. 10-11 This phrase "bringing many sons to glory" involves you, me, and all other believers. We are all brought to glory through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus made complete through His sufferings. It is through Him that we are now sanctified. Remember what we learned in the book of Romans. In our being sanctified we are justified in such a way that through His work on the cross it is "just as if" we had never sinned. This happens by grace alone.

This brings us into a "kinship" or a "brotherhood" with Jesus Himself. We are fellow humans who have been sanctified and will ultimately be brought to glory through Him who now calls us His "brethren." He can understand us in every way because He became a human like us.

The writer then talks about how His suffering brought about the completion of Jesus' work, and it is through that suffering that we benefit. Through his suffering, we receive the following benefits:

- i. **Vv. 12-13 Through His suffering, we are made family.** You and I have been made brothers and sisters to Jesus and children of God. *"¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* (John 1:11-13, NKJV).
- ii. **V. 14 He destroyed Satan and the power that he has.** Jesus now has the keys to death. Physical death still occurs in the world, but to the believer,

spiritual death is no more. And some day, physical death itself will be no more.

- iii. **V. 15 Jesus freed mankind from the fear of death.** We don't have to live in fear any longer. We are no longer slaves to our fear of death. None of us want to go through physical death, but we can have an assurance of an eternity to come in our glorified bodies. I love the following quote by Billy Graham concerning fear about death. ***“Fear can paralyze us and keep us from believing God and stepping out in faith. The devil loves a fearful Christian!” – Billy Graham*** Let's just remember that there is no room for fear in the heart of the believer.
- iv. **V.16 Because of His suffering, Jesus gives aid to us in our own troubles and our suffering. He can empathize and sympathize with us now in every way.** With the promised Holy Spirit, we are promised a comfort beyond belief and a peace that surpasses all understanding. That is our spiritual inheritance.
- v. **V.17 He was made in human form to be able to “know by experiencing” [Hebrew Yada] our own suffering and hence he is a merciful and faithful High Priest. He can relate to us in every way.**
- vi. **V.17 His suffering provided a propitiation (an offering that brought us back into a peaceful relationship with God) for you and for me! He provides us reconciliation with God.**
- vii. **V.18 His suffering made Him to be able to aid us in every way!** This is sort of a repeat of point iv above. I am just outlining the benefits as they are presented in the text.

And how did this all come about? ¹⁸*For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18, NKJV).*

Jesus is our perfect High Priest because He represents us faithfully and mercifully, understanding everything about us and everything we go through.

Be encouraged! Get focused! Don't drift! He died for you and me. We will indeed rest, rule, and reign with Him in the world to come. We can be at peace with God through Him NOW and ALWAYS. I urge you today to thank Him and praise Him for that privilege today! Hold fast to Him. Like the little camp song says, “Jesus never fails, He never never fails. I'm glad so glad - Jesus never fails.”

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by

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