

“Catching the Drift” Hebrews 2:1-4

Context: The author of Hebrews continues his exhortation from where he first began; the incomparable excellence of Jesus Christ as initiator and perfecter of our faith. Transitioning from Christ’s superiority to the angels as mediators of God’s revelation, the writer now shows Jesus’ superiority as God’s final revelation by being the ultimate high priest. In doing so, the writer calls us to his main focus, to remain faithful to Jesus and avoid apostasy. This was necessary, as the Jewish worship with all its pomp and ritual wooed fledglings in the Christian faith back to the old covenant. The book calls the reader to cast off any weight or entangling sin and to fix our eyes upon Jesus, who initiated our faith. Jesus empowers us to run the race with faith until the day of our souls’ perfected transformation in eternity (cf. Hebrews 12:1-3).

Life Principle: We must catch ourselves if we drift lest we be caught in the currents toward Hell (cf. Hebrews 2:2-3).

1. Warning against drift lines – Hebrews 2:1

The writer of Hebrews makes it clear that because Jesus is the ultimate revelation of the salvation that God communicates, there is a great need to face and lay hold of that which we have heard. The reason is that our lives are surrounded by urgencies that compete for our allegiance to Jesus and can sweep those constantly distracted away from Jesus’ safe harbor of faith.

2. Avoiding the drift – Hebrews 2:2-4

Legal language is used to direct the reader to consider the dire consequences for those who drift away from Jesus’ salvation, either by outright rebellion or by flippant neglect. The Law from Mt. Sinai exacted punishment for the slightest of these infractions. Rejection of Jesus’ perfect atonement from the punishment for rebellion or neglect exacts a greater punishment. Any doubt of punishment or Jesus’ writ of release can find confirmation by witnesses, signs, and miracles. Beyond these is confirmation through the operation of spiritual gifting given by the Holy Spirit to each believer.

For Further Study:

- The writer changes his style from a catena of Bible proof texts to exhortation and explanation for his warning. As a **Bible study method**, look up the word “exhortation” or “paranesis” in a dictionary. Describe what the exhortation in Hebrews 2:1 asks you to avoid. How does that exhortation relate to Hebrews 1:1-4? What do the verses that follow Hebrews 2:1 have to do with that verse?
- Hebrews 2:1 exhorts us not to “drift away.” As a **Bible study method**, look up the word “*pararreô*,” translated “drift away” in *Robertson’s Word Pictures* <http://www.searchgodsword.org/com/rwp/>. List five ways of drifting as described in *Barnes New Testament Notes on Hebrews* pages 53-54 in <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/barnes/hebrews/formats/hebrews.pdf>. Compare these with three currents in your personal life that might cause you to drift past the safe anchorage found in Jesus’ salvation message.
- Our doctrinal statement declares that salvation comes freely only by God’s grace and yet has an aspect of our volition in repentance through faith as part of it (see our **doctrinal statement ‘On Salvation’** under **what we believe**, footnotes 11-12 at http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/Doc_Stmnt.pdf). What do repentance and “fixing our eyes upon Jesus” have in common (i.e. Matthew 4:17; cp. Hebrews 12:1-2)? How would “neglecting so great a salvation” apply in the area of repentance (cf. Hebrews 2:3)?

Transformation exercise:

Are there any penchants to drift that the Holy Spirit is asking you to correct (e.g. James 1:23-25; Luke 8:11-15)? What would “fixing your eyes on Jesus” to change just one of these look like?