

Hebrews 2:1-4

As we come into **Ch. 2**, I feel we need to tackle this a little differently than normal. There is so much we can take hold of that if we just went for the deep dive, we could make this something you likely couldn't easily share with others. And when we read the bible, we are hearing from God, and it is transforming us. But **then you are to share it with those God gives you a platform with**. So here's what we are going to do. **1)** I'm going to divide this chapter into two parts (maybe three- I'll let you know next week 😊). The portion we will cover today is **verses 1-4**. **2)** At the beginning of each I'm going to give a real basic outline. **3)** Then we're going to go through the verses and pick out some of the depth they contain (I say some because there is no way to pick it all out). But before we get to today's section, let me give some recap and set the stage a bit.

Last week we heard God the Father say **Jesus was greater than the angels**, but it went much further than that. For in **Ch. 1** we also heard **God the Father call Jesus God (1:8)**. And we were given 7 Old Testament passages to prove Jesus' superiority to anything God had delivered before (I hope you caught the first two studies or take them in).

- And we found because Jesus is God, when He purged our sins by going to the cross, **He was able to do what no priest or angel could ever do, which was to be seated** (1:3 [see also 8:1, 10:11-12 & 12:2]). That's because what He did on the cross was **the final sacrifice** (7:27, 9:26-28, 10:10 & 14), not having to be done ever again.
- But in **last week's study in Ch. 1**, which revealed Jesus as being greater than the angel's, **1)** Jesus was displayed as the **Son of God, highlighting His deity**. Today there is a shift, for in **Ch. 2** we will see **2)** Jesus being made lower than the angels, revealing Him as the **Son of Man, highlighting His humanity**.

Section 1 verses 1-4

Here are the basics. **1)** Because God the Father has sent God the Son (Jesus) to speak the gospel to us (and not one of the created beings) we should give the utmost attention to what He said **so we don't drift away from the gospel and Jesus**. **2)** If angels spoke on behalf of God and people didn't listen, therefore facing severe consequences, **what will the consequences be when you ignore God coming into the world to speak directly to His creation**. And finally, **3)** that God has not called us to believe in Jesus without giving **evidence** that Jesus was God who came into the world to speak to mankind. That is a very brief understanding. So **now, let's go treasure hunting**.

As we jump into **verse 1**, we start with the first of 5 or 6 warning in **Hebrews** (depending on if you count the ones in **Ch. 5 & Ch. 6** as being together of two separate ones [2:1-4, 3:7-4:13, 5:11-6:12, 10:19-39, 12:14-29]).

¹Therefore (since God has chosen to come in the flesh in order to speak directly to us, instead of sending an angel [or anyone else] to deliver His message) ***we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.***

Back in **1:2** he started this letter in telling us God use to speak about the coming salvation He had for the Jews (and all humanity) **through prophecy and angels**. But then made it very clear that **what has superseded all of that is when He sent Jesus into the world to be the final voice on this matter**. But what might not be obvious to the casual reader is **he's speaking to believers in this letter**, and his warning is about once having received the words of Jesus so seriously that you were willing to **1)** die to your old self, **2)** your old life, **3)** your old comforts **4)** and connections, that you begin to let a gap develop between you and Jesus. Which results in you beginning to **drift away** from Him and the truths He has spoken to us.

- As I was considering this piece, it reminded me of some of the visions and encounters we hear about in the bible regarding angels. I pictured **1)** the four living creatures around the throne of God in **Rev. 4:6-9**, **2)** and the angelic beings described for us in **Ezek. 1:12-20**, **3)** or something which is (might I say) more what most imagine when they think of angels, **like when Gabriel came to Mary to tell her she was carrying the Savior of the world (Luke 1:26-38)**. And I think, if we were to see an angel today (which is completely possible), what would our response be? To say the least, I believe it would be powerful.
- But when it comes to Jesus, who was seen by everyone who encountered Him while He was walking on the earth in the flesh, **especially when He was born into the world as a baby, it is possible to underestimate His glory and power**. We can be in danger of relating so much more with His humanity, that we can diminish His deity! And if we allow that to occur, we (like the Hebrew Christians being addressed here) can begin to **drift away** from Him and the truths that are to be transforming us. **That is the warning here**. And as we continue into the next verses you will see this is not small thing.

So, I want to give a refresher for all of us on what the bible reveals of Jesus glory. Because if we keep a grasp of this, I believe our potential for drifting is nullified. **Once you lose the awe of Him, like many have done, you would be more likely to stand in awe of an angel instead of Him (John 5:43).** That's an eternally fatal mistake! So let's take a moment and hear of His glory. And **as we do, try to picture Jesus as He is being described.** And you will hear some of the same descriptive language we have already covered in **Heb. 1** being used in these verses, but I will let you dig those out later. **Right now, just try to visualize Jesus as described in these four sections.**

- **Isa. 6:1-5** *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" ⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke. ⁵ So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts (which John 12:37-41 verifies is speaking of Jesus)."*
- **Rev. 1:13-17** *When John sees, One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire: ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.*
- **Rev. 5:6-14** *When Jesus comes, appearing as a Lamb as though it had been slain having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne, being the only one who can open it. And before He even opened the first seal, all the saints who had died or been raptured fall on their faces and begin to worship Him, and are proceeded by the angels and the four living creatures joining in. And finally every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and as such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, begin to worship Him.*
- **Rev. 19:11-16** *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

Folks, **be careful not to diminish Jesus' glory, might, and power.** If you do, you will give less than *earnest heed* to the things He has spoken. And you will *drift away*. I want to read a section found in the David Jeremiah study bible that I thought was so powerful on this point. The first is a quote from **D. A. Carson**; "**1**) We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; **2**) we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; **3**) we drift towards superstition and call it faith. **4**) We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; **5**) we slouch towards prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; **6**) we slide towards godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated." Then follows up by quoting **C. S. Lewis** in saying "As a matter of fact, if you examined a hundred people who had lost their faith in Christianity, I wonder how many of them would turn out to have been reasoned out of it by honest argument? Do not most people simply drift away?"

- Folks, **if you diminish the person of Jesus, you will drift away, because you will not take as serious as you should, the things which He has spoken.** And those very words are **1**) of the one way to be saved, **2**) the life that you have now been given, **3**) the gift of the Holy Spirit to enable you to live that life, **4**) the way that life is to mirror Jesus life **until you are taken up from here to spend eternal life with Him (and so much more).**
- **Do not diminish the person of Jesus! He is God who took on flesh to save you from sin and death!!!**

² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast (and it did), and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward (and it did), ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord (in person while He walked on the earth), and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him (see also John 17:18 & 20),...

We advance here from drifting to *neglect*. How far the difference is between the two is likely irrelevant because if there is a progression (and there appears to be), both spell big trouble in the life of the one who once put their faith in Jesus. That goes for Jew or gentile. And again, he is speaking to believers here. Those who *reject* Jesus will be addressed in 10:28-31. And that section concludes “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”.

- But for clarity, the word *neglect* means “to treat carelessly”, or “to disregard”, or “to make light of”. So how great is the distance between neglect and to reject? Well, I’m afraid it’s probably similar to the distance between drifting and neglect.
- You see, all of these are danger zones with incredible consequences. To *neglect* this great salvation is to neglect the great God and Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13, 2 Pet. 1:1) who purchased that salvation with His own life.
- And we are still working from the same foundational point, that if the Old testament people of God suffered so quickly based on 1) an inferior covenant, 2) with inferior sacrifices, 3) that came through the death of animals, 4) brought by inferior messengers (angels), how much worse would it be for those who neglect the salvation Jesus has spoken of from His own mouth and made available to us?

What is the *just reward* for neglecting God stepping down from heaven to come in the flesh to die for sinful humanity, by the hands of sinful humanity? Having His message and life then confirmed by His disciples, who willingly were tortured and died for their commitment to what (more like “Who”) they knew to be true?

- And its at this point that some who have drifted and/or neglected their faith **in**, and relationship **with**, Jesus, begin to bring up all the crazy things they allowed themselves to pick up along the way that again somehow serve to try and diminish the person of Jesus so they can attempt to weaken their connection, conviction, and obedience to His words.
- We see it in individuals and entire denominations around the world. Now I can only speak to the individuals I’ve known over the course of my time following Jesus who have done so. But the denominations which once had some differences in the way they performed church services and interpreted various passages which were open for discussion, **started drifting, and then went to neglecting, and now have simply gone apostate. I can guarantee you they all have diminished the person and teachings of Jesus!**
- Now this letter was written to those who were under intense persecution, so their motive was different. But the result was the same. And knowing this would be the case for some from the first century, through until the time that Jesus calls us home, he continues to remove excuses as we advance to verse 4 by again trying to draw their attention back to the superiority of Jesus as God, over everything in their past. And what was attempting to pull them away now.

⁴ God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? (BTW- if you’re wondering why this ends with a question mark, you have to start back at verse 2 because this is all one long sentence, again asking what the just reward is for those who neglect what Jesus has delivered).

Now this certainly speaks of the signs, wonders and miracles the Holy Spirit worked **through** Jesus to show He was who He said He was (he could have done them on His own, but He was establishing a pattern for us in obedience to the Father and dependence upon the Holy Spirit- He is God).

- Miracles in showing control over the natural world (calming the sea [Matt. 8:23-27], walking on the water [Matt. 14:22-33], causing so many fish to enter the disciples next it was breaking [John 21:1-14], turning water to wine [John 2:1-11])...
- Healings (Lepers [Luke 17:11-19], Paralytics [Matt. 9:1-8], Deaf and mute [Mark 7:31-37], the blind [John 9:1-41])...

The healing of one blind from birth had never been done before. And even the man who was healed in this last account proclaimed, “*Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind (John 9:32)*”. Jesus did!

- Casting out demons (the man in the synagogue [Mark 1:21-28], the man in the Gadarene cemetery [Matt. 8:28-34], the boy with seizures [Matt. 17:14-21], the man with a mute demon [Matt. 9:32-34])...

BTW- there is not one Old Testament account of someone casting out demons. Yet after Jesus cast the demon out of a mute man, as recorded in John 9:32, it tells us in the next verse, “*And all the multitudes marveled, saying, “It was never seen like this in Israel!”*”

- Raising the dead (Jairus’ daughter [Mark 5:21-43], the son of the widow of Nain [Luke 7:11-17], Lazarus [John 11:1-44])...

Folks, these Hebrews would have known passages like Isa. 35:5-6 that foretold of what Messiah would do when He came. So when John the Baptist was in prison and sent word to Jesus asking, “*Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?*” Jesus answered and said to them, “*Go and tell John the things which you hear and see. The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me* (Matt. 11:5-6).”

- Jesus fulfilled this Messianic prophecy of Isa. 35:5-6 completely (and so many others). And verse 6 now seems to speak the message these Hebrew believers needed to hear, based on what they knew to be true of Jesus, while being pressured by their own countrymen to return to the Law. Listen to the commentary from Biblehub.com on this verse “Matt. 11:6 promises God’s lasting favor to anyone who refuses to let disappointment, pressure, or cultural scorn drive them from Christ. The blessed person takes Jesus at His word, stands firm when following Him is costly...”
- Isn’t it so great to find this piece right after all of the miracles and signs Jesus did, and just drew their attention to? It tells us Jesus knew that 1) if they let the trials or desires of life creep in, 2) causing them to drift away and neglect their faith in Him, 3) they would diminish who they knew Him to be, 4) even after all they had experienced.
- Is it possible some of us here today have done the same?

But there were also things God the Father did to authenticate Jesus being the long-awaited Messiah.

- The angels heralding Jesus’ birth (Luke 2:8-14) and God illuminating and presenting the star of Bethlehem (Matt. 2:2 & 9-11).
- The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus like a dove as He came out of the waters of baptism. And the voice of the Father came down from heaven declaring, “*This is My beloved Son*”. (Matt. 3:16-17).
- We again have the voice of God from heaven at the mount of transfiguration, after He had remove Moses and Elijah so that only Jesus was left when God said “*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him*” (Matt. 17:5) (see also Heb. 12:25).
- And we have the sun turning dark for three hours and the veil of the temple being torn from top to bottom when Jesus gave up His spirit on the cross (Luke 23:44-45)...

Folks, you who have believed in Jesus, if you diminish the person of Jesus through apathy or neglect, it’s not because of the evidence of Him being who He said He is, and doing what the Father foretold of the Messiah doing is somehow insufficient. That same evidence at one time captivated your heart (at least I hope it did). The problem is not with the proof. **It’s because, for whatever reason, you’ve allowed yourself to believe Jesus can be less to you than everything.**

- And when you came to that point, you started drifting away. 1) You didn’t show up like you used to when you opened your bible to hear from God. 2) You likely loosened some of the reign of God in your life. 3) For some, maybe you stopped talking to God unless you were in real trouble.
- Folks, this warning was for the Jewish believers in that day, but it still applies to everyone who has ever called on the name of Jesus. And a warning serves to keep people from going where they shouldn’t go. But also, as a call to those who have already started the journey away from Jesus.
- So what do you do now? 1) Never let anything diminish your view of Jesus! If you keep Him in His right place in your life, you have nothing to worry about. 2) *Give the more earnest heed to the things you have heard* by staying in the bible and in conversation with Him. 3) And, like those who were privileged to see Him in His glory, fall down and worship Him regularly. One day we will see Him as they have described for us. **Hold fast until you make it to that day!** The world is going to keep trying to get you to drift. But Heb. 6:19 reminds us that **Jesus is the anchor of our soul.**