

Hebrews 2

Warning Against Neglecting Salvation

2 Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. **2** For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, **3** how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, **4** while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

The Founder of Salvation

5 For it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. **6** It has been testified somewhere,

“What is man, that you are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?

7

You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and honor,

8

putting everything in subjection under his feet.”

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. **9** But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

10 For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. **11** For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, **12** saying,

“I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

13 And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, **15** and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. **16** For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. **17** Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

We're in the second chapter in the book of Hebrews, and there's two main sections to look at today. So jumping right in, the first four verses are as summarized by the heading, a “warning against neglecting salvation.” This builds off of the first chapter, which established Jesus as superior to angels. Verse 1 starts w/ “therefore,” so the exhortation in this section is all based on Jesus’ being superior to angels. To summarize, the author is exhorting the recipients, pay even more attention to the message of salvation you’ve received b/c there will be a great punishment for those who ignore it. If there is retribution for neglecting the message from angels, how much more will there be retribution for neglecting the message from Jesus himself of this great salvation that comes through him. God declared this message and also provided witnesses through signs, wonders, miracles and spiritual gifts. Again, this first section of verses 1-4 is about paying close attention to this message of great salvation from Jesus and not drifting from it.

Pausing here for a moment, let me ask, are we paying close attention to this message of great salvation? What does paying close attention look like in your life? How can you do that so you do not drift? A couple things that come to mind for me are reading the Bible regularly and also worshiping regularly in our church community. These both help me center my life on Jesus.

Continuing on w/ the second part of this chapter, the author elaborates on Jesus, the founder of our salvation. In verses 7-8, the author quotes Scripture, “You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.” Once again, building off of how Jesus is superior to angels, we see that for a little while, Jesus was made lower than angels when he came to earth as a man. The son of God, so much higher than all angels and everything else, was made inferior to angels for a bit, before his exaltation when he’s crowned w/ glory and honor. Why did he do this? Verse 9 says, “so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.”

The verses keep building off of each other, w/ connecting words like “for” and “therefore.” Each verse is amazing the more we dwell on it. For example, verse 10: “For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the

founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.” Think about how much humility Jesus showed by choosing to suffer, although everything was created for him and by him. He did this to bring many sons to glory. He did this to be “made perfect” the verse says. He was always perfect, but I think this means that his act of salvation for us would not be complete w/o going through the suffering. From the verses after too, he did this to identify w/ us, to be able to call us his brothers and sisters. He is not ashamed to call us his brothers and sisters.

Verses 17 and 18 say, “Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **18** For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” There are a lot of big words and themes here that we’ll get into more throughout the book of Hebrews, but for today, let’s thank Jesus that he went through suffering and temptation, and therefore we can receive his help in our suffering and temptation. He identifies w/ us in every way.

What temptations are you facing? What suffering are you going through? No matter how big or small, Jesus continually invites us to surrender them to him and receive his help. If it’s physical sickness or pain, he endured that on earth and wants to give us his healing. If it’s emotional burdens, he went through the lowest of lows so that he could walk w/ us and help us to have strength. And any other kind of suffering or temptation, in relationships or just in our own hearts and minds, Jesus desires to help us as our merciful and faithful high priest. Praise God. Let’s pray.