

SERMON  
SERIESAND WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE  
TO PLEASE HIM, FOR WHOEVER  
WOULD DRAW NEAR TO GOD  
MUST BELIEVE THAT HE EXISTS  
AND THAT HE REWARDS THOSE  
WHO SEEK HIM.

## HEBREW'S



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HEBREW'S  
VERSE BY  
VERSE STUDYLET US DRAW NEAR IN  
*Faith***SESSION OBJECTIVE: HEBREWS 2:1-4**

To understand the importance of remaining anchored in the message of Christ.

**Read the Text:**

*"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." (Hebrews 2:1-4, ESV)*

**Study the Text:****Pay Attention**

Hebrews 2:1-4 builds off of everything chapter 1 establishes, as indicated by the first word: "therefore." One great interpretive question to ask whenever you see the word "therefore" is: "What's the therefore there for?" In this case, it harkens back to everything laid out in an "if/then" argument. "If" everything that chapter 1 said is true, "then" we "must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it" (Heb. 2:1). That is the central idea of these four verses, and it is supported by some additional propositions. Below is a breakdown of the passage with special attention given to key words and ideas.

**THE MESSAGE WAS DECLARED BY ANGELS**

Verse 2 claims that "the message" we should pay attention to was "declared by angels." But when? This is likely an allusion to Deuteronomy 33. Moses, before he dies, gives a "blessing" to the people of Israel (Deut. 32:1). He says in verse 2: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned from Seir upon us; he shone forth from Mount Paran; he came afrom the ten thousands of holy ones, with flaming fire at his right hand." The Jewish belief was that Moses received the Law from the LORD on Mt. Sinai through an angel. And this "message" is further verified by the fact that everyone who "transgressed" or "disobeyed" it "received a just retribution" (Heb. 2:2). This message clearly had authority, there would be no consequences for such transgressions.

**THE MESSAGE WAS DECLARED BY THE LORD**

Verse 3 turns away from the former message we received through angels and returns back to the present (and superior) message we have received that was “declared by the Lord” (Heb. 2:3). This harkens back to the opening prologue of Hebrews 1:1-2: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.” The revelation of Jesus Christ comes by way of both His words and His very Being. Jesus announces the kingdom of God in the fullest sense. He is truly the final Word.

**THE MESSAGE WAS DECLARED BY EYEWITNESSES**

Beyond that, there were those who actually heard the message of Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:1-3 begins by telling us: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us— 3 that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Additionally, Luke claims that his Gospel account is the testimony of many “eyewitnesses” (Lk. 1:1-4). The message of Jesus Christ is not merely a myth or a legend, nor is it some contrived story of a select few individuals. Jesus was seen, heard, and touched by hundreds of people both before and after His resurrection. The message is trustworthy.

**THE MESSAGE WAS CONFIRMED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD**

Finally, the warrant to “pay attention” to this message is that the Spirit Himself has given signs to confirm its authenticity. Verse 4 says: “God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.” This is similar to the language of the apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost, when the disciples received the indwelling Holy Spirit and went to preach to the masses: “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know” (Acts 2:22).

This was also the experience of the early church as well. Paul says in Galatians 3:5: “Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?” “Signs and wonders” is also the traditional phrase that recalls the works of Moses in the midst of Pharaoh, as well as the court magicians in Exodus 7:3 and 11:9-10. God shows His power in order to confirm His prophetic witness. The various signs, wonders, and miracles performed by the Lord and the apostles, as well as by the early church, were intended to confirm the authenticity of the resurrection. The “sign” gifts affirm that Christ indeed is alive and that His Spirit is working powerfully through His people in this new covenant age. They are meant to edify the church and bear witness to the world.

## What About Now?

The primary takeaway for us is the passage's primary takeaway for its earliest readers. The message of Moses was proclaimed by angels and held as a standard for the people of Israel; many transgressed it and faced swift judgment. The people of Israel serve as a warning to us, according to the apostle Paul: “Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come” (1 Cor. 10:11).

And that is the point of this text. *If this message was already clearly declared by angels, such that the people of Israel who disobeyed it were thoroughly punished for it, how much greater will our judgment be if we, who have received an even clearer message from God, Christ, eyewitnesses, and the signs of the Spirit, disobey it?* We must, therefore, “pay closer attention” to it, “lest we drift away from it.” For, “how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation” (Heb. 2:3)? The term “drift” is also a nautical term in the ancient world, referring to a boat slowly drifting off course due to the tossing waves. That’s the word picture - we must do everything in our power to constantly remind ourselves of the truthfulness of Jesus Christ’s claims, lest we drift off course. We must do everything we can to “fight the good fight” and hold fast to the “good confession” we have received (1 Tim. 6:12).

If I could offer a pastoral word to you in light of this text, it would be to echo the author and say: we are not immune to drift. And drift happens slowly, over time, in a manner that most people don’t recognize until you are way off course. So pay attention. Stay the course. Throw the anchor of your soul down into the seabed of the Gospel. Don’t drift.

## Study Questions

### Day One

1. Read Hebrews 2:1. What’s the “therefore” there for? What is the point of verse 1?

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2. Read Hebrews 2:2. Who proclaimed the message in the former days?

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### Day Two

1. Read Deuteronomy 33:1-2. Who proclaimed the message to Moses on Sinai?

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2. Read Hebrews 2:2. What was the result of disobedience to the message in the former days?

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### Day Three

1. Read Hebrews 2:3. What question is asked? What does this mean?

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2. Read Hebrews 2:3. Who proclaimed this message in its fullest sense?

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### Day Four

1. Read Hebrews 2:3, Luke 1:1-4, and 1 John 1:1-3. Who else attested to this message?
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2. Read Hebrews 2:4. What purpose did the “signs” serve according to this verse?
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#### Discuss the Text!

### Session 3 Discussion: Stay Anchored

The central warning of this text is the real and present threat of “drifting” from the message of Jesus Christ. Talk as a group about what you need to do to “anchor” yourself in the Lord to prevent drift.

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever been on a large boat? Could you tell which direction you were headed when you were in the cabin? Do you think it would have been easy to drift without realizing it?
2. What things grab your attention and take your focus off of your walk with Christ?
3. What do you need to *add* to your life to help prevent you from drifting? What do you need to *subtract*?
4. What are the signs for you personally that indicate you’ve started to drift?
5. How should Christians help each other from drifting, practically speaking?
6. How important is consistent Bible study and church attendance for preventing drift?
7. Kid Talk (For Home): Start a conversation with your child while they are in the middle of a game and see if you can distract them away from what they are doing. Once you’ve gotten them away, point out that the distraction caused them to stop focusing on what they were doing, which led them away from it. Now, talk about how this happens with our faith as well, which is why we need to be reminded to pay attention.

### Takeaways:

1. The former message was reliable because it was proclaimed by angels and enforced by God.
2. The current message is even more reliable because it was proclaimed by Christ and His witnesses and confirmed by the signs of the Holy Spirit.
3. If people were punished for neglecting the former message, how much more will we be who have a superior message?