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[0 : 00] Seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn back to the chapter that we read in the letter to the Hebrews and chapter 2. And we'll read again from the beginning of the chapter.

Therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, 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, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles.

And by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed according to his will. So on. This letter, written in the first century of the Christian age, is referred to as the letter to the Hebrews.

Now, who were these Hebrews? Well, they were Jews, God's ancient people, who were the recipients of the truth of God.

[1 : 25] It was necessary to write this letter to them because they had declined in their religion. Many of those who were converted and embraced the Christian faith had to suffer much persecution from other Jews, so that Christian Jews in those years were tempted to turn back to their former religion of Judaism, to turn back to the priesthood and to sacrifices and so on.

The writer of this letter doesn't give his name, but it is generally accepted that it was written by the apostle Paul.

And in chapter 1, the writer is showing how Jesus Christ is superior to the angels. And then as we come to chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, he digresses, and there is an interruption to the writer's discussion of Christ's relation to angels, which he resumes here again in chapter 2, verse 5.

He begins this digression by an exhortation to us and to his readers to give good heed to the gospel.

Then he writes of the danger. We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

[3 : 09] And then he writes of the vengeance, which is certain to follow the neglect of the gospel, which is hinted in the question, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

He begins the chapter by emphasizing the great duty that is laid upon us as those who hear the gospel.

It is a great privilege, a great honour to be able to hear the gospel. But it also carries a responsibility.

Therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard. The word, therefore, could be translated, for this cause or since, pointing us back to what we are told in chapter 1.

And what are we told in chapter 1? Well, long ago, at many times, and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

[4 : 24] 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.

Without ourselves digressing too much from our text, let us note that the coming of Jesus Christ into this world is the final revelation of God to man.

He spoke and made his revelation in times past through the prophets. But now the final prophet has come. The person to whom the prophets pointed has arrived.

And with his arrival has come God's last revelation to man. Paul, writing about preachers and the preaching of the gospel, he says, Therefore, he says, regarding the preachers of the gospel, we are ambassadors for Christ.

God making a special appeal through us. We implore you, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

[5 : 41] God. The gospel is God's final voice to mankind. God was in Christ, speaking to men and women, boys and girls, in the gospel.

The gospel is not the word of a man, nor the word of an angel, but it is the word of God.

How sombre it is to, therefore, to give heed to the gospel. How important and solemn it is to give attention to the gospel, to give attention to the preaching of the gospel.

Paul writes to the Galatians, and hear what he says. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

[7 : 05] Paul is here addressing himself to the responsibility that is upon all those who hear the gospel.

upon me and you. This is not a matter that is left to the whim of the hearer to do or not to do.

It says, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard. Notice here that he includes himself with the Hebrews to whom he was writing.

He says, we, we must, you and I, must pay much closer attention to what we have heard. This exhortation is to all.

we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. When the apostle writes closer attention, he is saying to us that we should apply our minds to it, that we should consider it well, that we should meditate upon it, that we should think upon it.

[8 : 28] How often we sit under the gospel and we allow it to pass over us without giving it any due attention, without focusing on what has been preached and said by the preacher, but of all, what has been said by God.

How easy it is for us to let our minds drift away, thinking of tomorrow or other things during, that we might be doing during the week or perhaps even dozing off to sleep.

How easy it is for us under the gospel to drift away. But here we are told to give our attention to what we have heard and what has been said.

We are to give closer attention to the message of the gospel. And we ought to give the closer attention to the gospel because the gospel has come to us absolutely and exclusively by the grace of God.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, he calls it the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The apostle says, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard.

[10 : 06] To hear is not enough. There must be a personal embracing of what we have heard.

it is not enough to hear the gospel. But there must be a personal embracing of the gospel. That is, a personal application of the gospel to oneself.

We must hear, but hearing is not enough. We must apply that gospel to ourselves. ourselves. The danger is that unless we give close attention to what we have heard, that we will drift away from it. To allow the things of the gospel to slip away, out of our mind. We are not just to be satisfied with coming to church, sitting in the chair, hearing the gospel, then go back home, and have our lunch until it's nearly six o'clock and come back again to the same chair to sit there to hear the gospel, then go home and go to bed.

No, we should take the gospel with us as we leave this building. We should take what we have heard with us when we leave this building and we should think about it and we should meditate upon it and we must apply it to ourselves.

[11 : 43] and ask what has the message today to say to me? We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard lest we let it drift away.

so we should give closer attention to the gospel because of the glory and majesty that belongs to the gospel.

And that glorious and majesty belongs to the gospel because of who the gospel is speaking about. What is the gospel?

The gospel is Jesus Christ. He is the good news. It is the final message of God to sinners like me and you.

And we should give it the more earnest heed or the most closer attention because of the awful destination and destiny awaiting those who reject or let it drift away.

[12 : 51] the gospel is the testimony of God's wonderful grace, of God's wonderful salvation to sinners like me and you.

In verse 2 the apostle advances another reason why we ought to give closer attention to the gospel. What he says, for since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

It is generally accepted that the message declared by angels is a reference to the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. The origin of the law and of the gospel is of God.

He is the author of both the law and the gospel. But here the apostle is contrasting not the origin but the medium of the two revelations.

In giving the law to Moses he made known his will by the ministry of angels. They were engaged in some way in some manner at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai to Moses.

[14:17] But his son Jesus Christ God has made known his will to us in the revelation of mercy. Jesus Christ is the last revelation from God and that last revelation is through his son Jesus Christ.

The gospel the good news is the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? I think what the apostle is drawing out our attention to here is that there will be decrees of punishment on the basis that every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward.

In other words we can say that punishment will be graded according to the light and the opportunity that was given to us.

In the gospel of Luke chapter 12 we read these words that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will will receive a severe beating but the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a light beating everyone to whom much was given of him much will be required and from him to whom they entrusted much they will demand the more.

[16:03] In chapter 10 of this very letter itself we read how much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the one who has trampled under foot the son of God and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified and has outraged the spirit of grace.

In other words if they received just punishment in the Old Testament for despising or snubbing the law of God then we will receive just punishment in the New Testament for neglecting or drifting away from the only salvation that is offered to us in the Lord Jesus Christ and declared to us in the gospel.

That brings us to that great question salvation. How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

What is this salvation? It is the deliverance from sin and the punishment that is due to us for our sin. The salvation is having eternal life through Jesus Christ. This salvation was declared at first by the Lord.

[17:31] It was attested to us by those who heard. God also bore witnesses by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

The gospel first spoken by the Lord then reported to us by the apostles. God conferring the message of the apostles by signs wonders miracles and gifts.

Surely all these things brings before us the preciousness the value of the gospel that proclaims and declares to us the salvation that is offered to sinners by God by his grace through his son the Lord Jesus Christ.

Surely that brings before us not only the preciousness and the value of the gospel but also the solemnity that is attached to us hearing this gospel being declared to us by those whom God has called equipped and sent forth.

This salvation is the greatest work that God has ever done. He brought the universe into being by his word.

[18:59] God said that there'd be light and there was light and so on. But salvation was worked by God becoming Emmanuel God with us.

Sharing our nature without sin and going and going to the cross of Golgotha to suffer and die for sin that was not his own.

The person of God the Son who though he was in the form of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form.

he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death even death on the cross. He became the curse the cursed one in order to work out salvation for sinners like me and you. And there was no other way by which salvation could be offered to sinners like me and you but that God would become Emmanuel God with us.

[20 : 21] How great is the salvation that is declared in the gospel. God planned it before the world began. This salvation is not an afterthought in the mind of God after man sinned.

God purposed this salvation before man sinned. He planned it in the covenant of redemption. What is that? The covenant of redemption is something that was agreed upon by the three persons of the Godhead.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit before the foundation of the world was set. The three persons of the Godhead made an agreement among themselves regarding this salvation.

The Father gave a people to the Son, the Son agreed to redeem them, and the Spirit agreed to apply the benefits of redemption to them. This salvation is great, great because of the price that was paid, great in its origin, and great because of the price that was paid.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, took our human nature into union with himself, not for 33 years, but forever. Jesus will retain his human nature throughout the ages of eternity.

[21 : 42] He is now having ascended and in glory. He still is there in his human nature. He will never cast away his human nature.

And in order to redeem and work salvation for sinners, Jesus in our nature, in that human nature, had to undergo unspeakable agonies in mind, in body, and in soul.

God the Father had to lay upon him the curse and the damnation that I and you deserve, that sinners deserve. Our sins were imputed and reckoned to Christ.

He made him who knew no sin to be sin for us. Christ has paid the debt that we owed to the justice of God because of our sin.

What we couldn't do, the Father sent his son to do it. The fourth cry from the cross brings before us the apex of his sufferings when he cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

[22 : 55] What kind of cry was this that Jesus made? Indeed, it is the most appalling sound that ever pierced the atmosphere of this earth. In the entire Bible, there is no other sentence so difficult to explain than that fourth cry from the cross.

Spurgeon says this, he did not think that the records of time or even of eternity contain a sentence fuller of anguish.

here you may look as into a vast abyss, and though you strain your eyes and gaze till sight fails you, yet you perceive no bottom, it is measureless, unfathomable, inconceivable.

We adore where we cannot comprehend. We adore where we cannot comprehend. the cross of Golgotha and Christ on the cross, the Son of God in human nature upon the cross of Golgotha.

We adore what we cannot comprehend, the greatness of salvation and the price that was paid.

[24 : 24] Jesus has entered the presence of the judge of all who cannot look upon sin with pleasure, even when carried by his sinless son.

Jesus as a sin bearer is now made sin and so he enters the place of judgment and he discovered that it was a terrible location to be found in. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And if you go down in Psalm 22 and let us remember Jesus on the cross didn't just think of that verse of Psalm 22, he was thinking of the whole chapter of 22. And later on, I think it's verse 3 or 4, because thou art holy.

Why have you forsaken me? Because you are holy. so holy that he cannot look upon iniquity.

Perhaps we should pause here for a moment and see how great the love of God for us was and how great was the price that Jesus was willing to pay to save us from our deserved damnation.

[25 : 43] The greatness of salvation is to be found in the price that was paid. Paul in another of his letters writing about those who trusted in Jesus says, in whom you also trusted after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.

The gospel of your salvation. Oh how we must put and pay closer attention to what we have heard lest we drift away from it.

Paul puts it like this, such a great salvation which indicates that there is nothing else like this, nothing in the whole world like this.

Today you are the most privileged people in the whole world in that you are here under the gospel of God declaring to you the only way of salvation, the only way to heaven.

salvation is through Jesus Christ. The only way to be saved for what your sins deserve is through Jesus Christ. The only way by which we can be reconciled to God is through Jesus Christ.

[27 : 01] The only way that we can have peace with God is through Jesus Christ. By his grace he has made a way possible whereby that fellowship and communion with him that was broken by sin can be restored.

And he didn't make that provision outside of himself. He wasn't an angel he sent but he sent his own son. He provided that within himself.

Not outside of himself but within himself. He sent his son. God's what a great salvation this is. It is a message that is unique. There is only one gospel. Great here means the greatness of decree. How great a salvation. It is great because it centers around one person and that person is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ is called the salvation of God. As we recall the words of Simeon at the temple as he took the little child Jesus in his arms.

[28 : 15] He blessed God and said Lord now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word for mine eyes have seen your salvation that you are prepared in the presence of all people a light for the revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory of your people Israel.

Mine eyes have seen your salvation and his eyes was fixed on the child on the baby that was in his arms the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everything about salvation is wrapped up in Jesus Christ. God's salvation is not only unique but it is exclusive because salvation from sin is not to be found anywhere else but in Jesus Christ.

if we are going to be saved from what our sins deserve, we are going to be saved from hell than it is only exclusively through the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is no other road, there is no other way but Jesus Christ. We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard lest we drift away from it.

[29 : 29] When the gospel is proclaimed in the hearing of sinners it addresses itself to the moral responsibility to those to whom it comes. You're hearing it but it also gives or grants a responsibility upon you and upon me.

The gospel comes along to you with a responsibility and our moral responsibility is to accept the message that the gospel proclaims.

The gospel is not to be rejected because it has within it the inherent command to be believed or accepted or to be received. It is a gospel in which God commands men everywhere to repent.

The gospel is for the sinners acceptance Paul could say to young Timothy the saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the foremost or whom I am the chief.

This exhortation was given to the apostle as one who wrote to us as he was led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to reveal to us the things of Christ.

[30 : 58] And what this exhortation reveals to us is the mind of Jesus and his concern for me and you that we ought to give the more earnest heed or attention to the gospel, to his gospel, to his good news.

However, verse 3 indicates to us that there are those who do neglect God's salvation, for Paul would not have said it unless it was a fact that there are people who do neglect the gospel.

Are you one of them? Are you one of those who neglect the gospel of salvation? Well, the gospel is more than an announcement. It is an invitation, but it is more than an invitation.

It is a command for the sinner to come in repentance and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation. it is an announcement, it is an invitation, it is also a command.

It carries the same authority as the ten commandments that we have given to us by God. In the Old Testament, we all know the ten commandments.

[32 : 12] Well, this is a commandment that carries the same authority as the ten commandments. The authority to believe the gospel, to believe the announcement, to accept the invitation, to obey the command, to believe the gospel.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Paul, in another of his letters in regards to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, I'm not sure it's at 1st or 2nd Thessalonians, but one of those letters, he writes this, for the Lord Jesus is revealed from

heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

we may think that vengeance only applies to the heathen who have never heard about God, but here Paul makes it quite clear, the same vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus, because the command to believe what the gospel declares, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, carries the same authority as all the other commandments, the same vengeance upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might. How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

[34 : 13] salvation. He doesn't say how shall we escape if we oppose this salvation or if we resist this great salvation, despise it, but if we neglect it, you know, to be lost forever can be effortless.

To go to hell can be effortless. To be lost forever can be so effortless. All it requires is that you neglect the gospel.

All it requires is that you don't obey the command to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You don't have to work to be lost.

You don't have to work in order to go to hell. All it needs is just stay where you are. Sit where you are, stay where you are. It's effortless. All you need to do is neglect the gospel.

To make light of the salvation that is offered to you in the gospel. all that is required is for you is not to give close attention to the gospel that you hear.

[35 : 21] The great salvation that you are neglecting is something that you profoundly need. You need this salvation. Many in hell today will say, well, I didn't want to come here.

But I didn't hate God. I was in church every Sunday. How I landed here. I had no intention to go to hell.

But then they shall realize that they gave no close attention to the gospel that they heard. That they neglected the salvation that was offered to them.

that they neglected the gospel, neglected their own soul, neglected the only way of salvation to save them from what their sins deserved.

Oh, how shall we escape? there is no way of escape. There is nothing in the world so important as the salvation spoken of by God in his word.

[36 : 30] Make sure that you don't neglect it, but embrace the salvation in Jesus Christ that is offered to you this morning. Be drawn more and more to Christ or else drift away from him more and more.

Well, what is it? Are you drawing to him or are you drifting away from him? I cannot save you. No one can.

But I can point you to the one who can save and who delights to save sinners like me and you, Jesus Christ. In the gospel we have offered what no other has ever offered to us.

Deliverance from our burden of guilt and reconciliation with God we are of that which was not offered to the angels that fell from their first estate.

They were not there offered salvation. He passed by the angels and took hold of the offspring of Abraham. We are to give close attention to what we have heard and not let it slip or neglect it or let it drift away because of the greatness of salvation it brings before us and offers to us.

[37 : 46] that salvation that meant for Jesus Christ to humble himself and become obedient to the curse of death of the cross. So that this gospel of salvation could be communicated to sinners like me and you today.

Surely it calls for me and you to give it the more earnest heat to give it the closer attention and not to let it pass over us and slip away or drift away.

when the son speaks to us in such love and tenderness and says come unto me all ye that labor and heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Think for a moment what you will lose if you follow not the gospel or obey not the gospel. What destruction awaits you at the last if you do not give heed to the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Think of the consequences that awaits those who let the gospel drift away. Those who neglect and make light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. How shall we escape? There is no way of escape.

[38 : 59] I once heard the greatest definition that I ever heard regarding hell and that definition was truth realized too late.

Truth realized too late. Too late in hell to think well I neglected the gospel.

It's too late then. Too late then to realize that truth. Too late. The book of Revelation tells us that on the day of the Lord return there will be those who will cry out to the mountains to fall on them.

To hide them from the face of the one who is coming from the wrath of the Lamb because they realize it's too late.

Too late. to or make sure that you do not neglect or make light of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You know I think that the body of angels that they are amazed astonished astonished at you today who is neglecting the gospel at you today who is disobedient to the command of the gospel.

[40 : 27] Why are they amazed and astonished? Because it was never offered to them. Those angels who fell from their first day say salvation was never offered to them.

But to you it has been offered. In his grace and his love and mercy from within himself God provided a way of salvation for me and you that was never offered to the angels.

no wonder they are astonished amazed when they see the body of sinners neglecting neglecting drifting away from the salvation that is offered to them.

Well how is it with you today? What relationship have you got with the gospel of Jesus Christ? How shall we escape there is no way of escaping?

For the Lord bless to us our thoughts this morning. Let us pray. Eternal and ever blessed Lord we pray that through thy spirit thou would impress upon us the solemnity of being found under the word of God under the preaching of the word.

[41 : 47] And we pray oh Lord that we would indeed give close attention to what we have heard lest he let it drift away. We pray Lord thy blessing upon the congregation here in the days that lie ahead and thy blessing upon ourselves as individuals in the days that lie ahead.

Thou would prepare us for the evening and for hearing thy word once again. And we pray oh Lord that thou would forgive us for all our sins in Jesus name.

Amen. We shall close our service at this time by singing to the Lord's praise from Psalm 98 on page 360.

At the beginning O sing a new song to the Lord for wonder she hath done. His right hand and his holy arm and victory hath won. The Lord God his salvation hath caused it to be known.

His justice in the heathen sight he openly hath shown. We shall sing to you the verse 4 to the Lord's praise. O sing a new song to the Lord for wonders he hath done.

[43 : 02] O sing a new song to to the Lord for wonders he hath done.

This fight hath had his holy arm in victory hath won.

the Lord called his salvation hath caused it to be known.

His justice in the heathen sight his only had j spoke have had per his And the salvation of our God, O the lands of the earth unseen.

Let all the earth unto the Lord send forth a joyful noise.

[45 : 02] Lift up your voice, our love to hear, say praises and rejoice.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore. Amen.