Ears That Cannot Hear — Delivery Transcript

Hebrews 2:1–4 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, March 2, 2025 · *Neglecting Salvation*

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We're actually going to be looking at a series of passages in a New Testament book called Hebrews. And so if you want to take your Bibles and turn there to the book of Hebrews, we Typically in our church preach through books of the Bible and we go verse by verse, line by line, until the whole book's finished. And sometimes that takes a long time. Like in Genesis, it took several years. In Luke, it took several years this last series we did we did something different in that we did a s a selection of Psalms and this series is going to be somewhat like that in that we're going to look at a certain type of passage in the book of Hebrews called the warning passages.

And as we make our way to that, I want you to think about a time. If you are your if you think of yourself as a Christian person, I want you to try to think to the time in your Christian life when you are most on fire for God. And what I mean by that is just you had a zeal to read the scriptures. You were super vocal and bold about your faith you were always sharing with people like some of your old friends maybe got a little uncomfortable around you because you started acting like one of those Jesus freaks and you didn't care.

You were like immediately confessing sin and sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and you just had this incredible joy in the Lord. Does anybody know what I'm talking about? Being on fire for God. You guys remember this? Some of you are like, well, I'm on fire right now, brother. I'm glad you are. Hallelujah. Amen. But if you're like most Christians That intensity and that zeal and that kind of amazing communion with God can begin to fade and it can get exchanged with something more apathetic, a little more casual, a little more indifferent.

Maybe you still pray, you maybe even still read the Bible, but just does you just don't really sense God's presence and you find yourself drifting in your relationship with God to the degree that you're doing things you didn't used to do. You really stopped going to church and maybe every now and then you no longer can Confess sin, you don't really even think of yourself as a very bad person because you just stopped taking your faith very seriously. How

how does that happen? It usually doesn't happen intentionally, right? It doesn't happen overnight, usually a slow spread, but it happens.

And it's a, I think, a powerful evidence of something the Bible teaches us as it rel relates to the Christian life, which is the Christian life is in constant need of recalibration. A lot of people don't like the language of recommitting your life to Jesus or getting rededicated. I rededicated my life to Jesus. Sometimes we use this language. I've used that language in the past. There have been seasons where You know, kind of felt like I was rededicating my life to Jesus, but some somebody would probably say, well, you know, salvation is once for all.

Once you get saved, you're always saved. You don't get resaved and I agree with that theologically. You are once and for all saved. Nothing can take you from the hands of God. But my experience has been, even though I may be eternally secure in my salvation, that salvation is not always hitting on all cylinders and there can be a need from time to time, maybe I would say even on the regular, where there needs to be a recalibration. Just like a marriage, if any of you have ever been married, even if you think of yourself as having the very best marriage in all the world, even the best of marriages require a recalibration every now and then.

And if you're not recalibrating on the regular, then things may end up going off the wheels because you're in a relationship with a person who is a sinner, living in a sinful world. And sometimes things just kind of grow cold and they're in need of revisitation. And that's what we're going to be doing over the next six to eight weeks in these warning passages because God has given us these warning passages to kind of recalibrate our hearts because He knows even better than we know, that our hearts are prone to wonder.

One of the old hymns, here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it. Prone to wonder, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above. This has been true of Christians since the very inception of the Christian faith our hearts are prone to drift. And drifting's a funny thing because you never really see it happening. It's gradual and slow. Like if we right now we're in 2500 South 27th street. Latitude and longitude 5938. 763. I'm totally joking.

I don't know what it is. But let's say we go right here, 2500 South 27th street, and we go sixty miles true north as the bird flies. I calculated that this week. It's somewhere between Haskell and Monday. Due north but if we took a one degree shift we would end up one roughly one mile to the west one degree shift to the west, we'd end up one mile to the west. You'd think that's not that big a deal. It's west Texas. I can still see the landmarks. But if we did that same trip and we shifted one degree to the west every thirty miles.

And traveled not 60 miles but a thousand miles, it would be the difference between landing in central Minnesota versus north Dakota. There would be a 200-mile spread between where

we were intending to go and where we actually ended up. And that's how drifting works in the Christian life. It seems subtle, it doesn't even really seem that big a deal early on, but the longer you persist in a season of drifting, the further the spread between you and the Lord until eventually one day you wake up months, years down the road and think to yourself, man, who am I?

How did I get here? I'm not the person that I used to be. And you have a heavenly father who would spare you that suffering and that hardship. And so what he has done, I believe is he has inspired certain passages in scripture to wake us up and kind of jar us from our sleep. And really force us to examine ourselves to ensure that we are who we say we are. Because anybody can profess to be a Christian. Jesus said there'd be a lot of people at the end at the judgment day who said, Lord.

They said it with their lips. They did things. They went to church. They even worked in ministry. But Jesus would say, I don't know you guys because they weren't really in the faith. And so God in his grace has given warning passages to bring our hearts into alignment. And it just so happens in the book of Hebrews, there's five of those warning passages, because Hebrews is a sermon. And one of the reasons God gives churches preachers is just so they can take the truth of God and confront our daily experience with that truth so that we can ensure we're walking in the way of Jesus.

And so this week's warning passage is in Hebrews chapter 2, verses 1 to 4. And what that's where we're going to spend our time today. Hebrews chapter 2 starting in verse 1. Quick context if you're unfamiliar with this book. It was written by only God knows who. I don't know who wrote the book of Hebrews. Some say it was Luke. That's kind of where I lean. Some say it was Paul. Some say it was Apollos. Some say it was somebody I'm not going to get in the debate. Nobody knows who wrote it, but they do know who it was written to.

It was written to a second generation of Christians. And what I mean by that is these were Christians who became Christians because of other Christians who saw Jesus The eyewitnesses, the apostles, they became Christians because they saw it with their eyes. The people in Hebrews became Christians because the people who saw it with their eyes preached the message to them. They never saw Jesus. They never saw the resurrection. They weren't eyewitnesses. They were second generation. And they had a tendency to do what a lot of us tend to do because we weren't eyewitnesses.

We kind of slip back into our previous ways of thinking and religion and they were slipping back into Judaism and so the author of Hebrews writes this letter to say, cut it out, stop it, wake up, Jesus is better. The word that Jesus has spoken is greater than anything you may be tempted to drift back into. So do not drift away. And so he begins this warning in chapter 2, verse 1, with the phrase, therefore, or for this reason. That's a very important Word that you want to get context from.

For this reason, we must pay attention all the more to what we have heard so that we will not drift away. For if the message spoken through angels was legally binding, and every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment, how will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? This salvation had its beginning when it was spoken of by the Lord. It was confirmed to us by those who heard him, and at the same time God also testified by signs and wonders, various miracles, and distributions of gifts. And so he opens up with this phrase that for this reason, and as I said, when you see a phrase like that or even the word therefore, the old saying is, when you see a therefore, see what it's there for.

In this case, the therefore is pulling in all of this information from Hebrews chapter 1. And we're not going to preach through the entire book of Hebrews. We wouldn't have time to even do it this morning. But the main idea of Hebrews chapter 1 is that Jesus is greater. And the word that Jesus speaks is greater than the word Moses spoke in the Old Testament. Moses didn't speak it. It was spoken by angels, given to Moses, but the point is, Jesus is superior. In other words, God's warning in Hebrews 2 and all the other warning passages are rooted in this idea that Jesus is God's Son, and as the Son of God, he is superior.

To anyone else in all creation and when he speaks a word his word is a greater word which is why you've got to pay greater attention pay greater attention because Jesus speaks a greater word. Now, we could go back in chapter one and look at all the ways that Jesus is revealed to be greater. I'll give you a couple of examples in chapter 1, verses 2 to 4. This is one of the classic passages that prove the deity of Jesus. Hebrews chapter 1 talks about Jesus as being appointed as heir of all things.

He's the creator of the universe He's the radiance of God's glory, the exact expression or icon of God's nature. If you want to know what God is like, then just look at Jesus because the fullness of God dwells in him bodily. Jesus is sustaining all things right now by his word, he made purification for sins. He's seated at the right hand of God. He has a name that is superior to even the angels, because to which of the angels did God ever say, sit at my right hand, to which of the angels did God ever say, You are my son, with whom I'm well pleased, to which of the angels did God ever say you can see you can sit on David's throne forever and ever.

The angels are great, don't get me wrong, and even Jewish people in the first century Obsessed with angels, but the author of Hebrews is saying, as big and bad as the angels are, they're nothing compared to Jesus, because Jesus is the Son. And as the Son of God He is God in the flesh, and when he speaks a word, God himself is speaking a word. Therefore, you better pay attention. Pay attention all the more. So that's why he says verse one again. Let's just look at it. For this reason, we must pay attention.

All the more. It's actually three Greek words. The first is this word in red, must. It's the Greek word D-E-I. It's how it's spelt. Of course, DEI in our culture is a political talking point,

unfortunately. But in the Greek New Testament, it just meant to bind. It meant absolutely necessary. Cannot go without, must do, without fail. If it's not done, it won't happen. We must the second word is this word pay attention, which doesn't just mean to listen. It means to listen and hear. We all know you can be talking to somebody and they say, are you listening?

And you go, and you don't you don't know ex anything what they just said because you weren't hearing what they were saying. Some of you wives know what I'm talking about I know mine does. It means active listening. It means to hold fast. It means to guard. It means to put into practice. So it's very absolutely necessary that you both hear what God is saying, but not passively, actively to actually do what he's saying. And then he uses this adverb all the more. It's a single Greek word the idea is exceedingly above, beyond, and it implies the idea of a competition because if you're going to do something greater than, then there's got to be a s a something against which you're competing.

And so Essentially the author of Hebrews is saying there are going to be all kinds of words spoken to you in your world. There's going to be words from Judaism, there's going to be words from a sick and dying culture, there's going to be words from your own passions and lust and impulses there's going to be all sorts of words that are vying for your attention to say, listen to me, listen to me. And what I'm saying as a Christian is you've got to pay greater heed. You've got to give greater attention to the word that Jesus is speaking because his word is a greater word.

Because he is the greatest of all. So pay attention. Pay attention. Otherwise, you're going to end up drifting. Now it's not surprising that this would be the command. I think it's really fascinating if you're taking notes, Jesus' word is a greater word and if you want to abide in that word you it requires greater attention. Just thinking about that for a moment, I think, reveals the fact that God is very gracious because He's not requiring something of us that none of us can't do. If he if he said, if you want to abide in my word, you've got to grow a big church or you've got to you know s you've got to pff raise perfect children or make a certain amount of money.

Some of us would be like, man, I just can't be, I can't be with Jesus. I'm not big enough. I'm not strong enough. I'm not holy enough. But that's not what he says. He says, if you want to be with me, if you want to keep my faith, if you want to abide in my word, there's only one thing I need you to do. And it's really not anything that anyone couldn't do. I just need you to pay attention to what I say. Just listen. I just want you to pay attention when I say something, for it to matter more to you than anybody else's words at any other time in your life.

Abiding in Jesus' words requires greater attention. This is not surprising if you think about Jesus in the Gospels when he was teaching and preaching and doing this thing. He would

often preface his teaching with the phrase, let anyone who has ears to hear what? Listen he says the same thing in the book of Revelation, let him who has ears to hear listen to what the Spirit of God is saying to the churches. He told parables like the parable of the sower and the soils. Do you guys remember this parable where God's word was the seed and the seed was cast out?

In other words Jesus was preaching, but even though the word was being heard, it wasn't always being received. In other words, you can listen but not hear. Some of it was rocky soil, some of it was thorny soil, some of it was I can't remember all the soils, but three bad ones, one good one. And you need to have ears to hear the question for us this morning is, do I have ears to hear? And the problem with answering that question is it's kind of hard to say. Because your capacity to hear as a Christian is 100% correlated with the habits in your life.

Jesus talked about this again, the parable of the sower and the soils, but you can see it right here in Hebrews 2. The logic is if you don't want to drift, you must pay greater attention. Therefore, if you are drifting, it's a sign you haven't been listening. So if you look at your life and you begin to see habits which indicate I've probably been drifting, that implies you haven't been listening. So if you ask the question, do I have ears to hear? What you really need to ask is, are the habits in my life conducive to me hearing what God has to say?

And the reality is some of us have developed habits that are undermining our ability to hear the Lord speak. And it's so hard to notice because here's what drifting does. It's so it's so insidious because drifting is in one way natural. The natural inclination of our heart is to drift away from God as the as I just said in the hymn writer, my heart is prone, prone to wonder, Lord. Why? Because I have a sin nature. Default mode, if I'm not applying pressure in the opposite direction, my default mode is to drift.

It's kind of like when you're driving a car and if you don't keep correcting the steering wheel, what happens? Especially if you don't have good steering wheel alignment, your car goes off of the ditch. So what if you're not always course correcting, it's probably drifting because that's your natural state. The other thing about drifting is it's subtle. And what I mean by that is it's really hard to see in the mirror. For any of us that are living in sin or we have idolatry in our heart, it's almost impossible to see it in the mirror.

We very rarely see our own problems. But when you add to our own inability to see the idea that we have an enemy and the devil who is the master of deception, he is the father of lies, he takes the sins that cause our drifting and he hides them even more so. So it's already natural to drift. It's very subtle in that you probably won't see it or know it when it's happening. And the worst thing about drifting is it's corrosive. And what I mean by that is the longer you drift, the more damage it begins to do to your sensitivities and faculties for knowing something is wrong.

It's corrosive in that the longer you go hardening your heart against God, the harder your heart becomes against God. And so you won't realize something is wrong until way later down the road. And by then for many of us it's too late. So when I asked the question, are you drifting? Most of us in the room would say, I don't know. So I tried to think of some habits in my life that when these things are absent for an extended period of time, it's usually an indication that I'm that I've been drifting.

I'm going to put them in the terms of negative, the absence of. These are true for me. I'm sure they're true for you. In the absence of God's word. I'm probably drifting. And what I mean by that is if your only engagement with the Word of God is Sunday morning, you're drifting. If the only time you open up the Bible is when I open the Bible and said, please turn to your Bibles and turn to whatever, then you're probably drifting. Because that is not anywhere close to enough interaction with the revelation of God given to us.

If prayer is absent in your life. If you only pray at meals, or you only pray at bedtime, and that only when someone kind of brings it up, or if you're only eating with someone else, otherwise you don't ever really pray, you're probably drifting. And that probably gets 50% of the room, right? Because you just kind of develop patterns where I'm not engaging with the scripture and I'm not praying. That means you're drifting. And the longer you persist in that type of behavior, the worse it's going to become. Not in that you're going to go to hell necessarily.

That's not what I'm saying. I'm saying you won't be able to hear. You will not be able to hear what you need to hear when God speaks because you're drifting and drifting is corrosive. The other one is a lack of awe in my life. What I mean by that is that my schedule is so busy I'm here and there and everywhere. I go to bed with stress on my heart, I wake up with stress on my mind, and I never stop, I never slow down, I never look at nature, I never watch the sunset, I never go to church, I don't sing, I don't let the sun presence of God and the beauty of God capture my heart.

Say like David, there's only one thing I seek. That thing is absent from my life, then I'm drifting. And then the last one is repentance. If there is no repentance in your life, you're drifting. And this was what gets most Christians, because most Christians think of repentance as the big bad thing I shouldn't have to do very often because repentance is like turning away from terrible, terrible sins. That's not what rep it that is what repentance is, but that's not all that repentance is. Repentance just means changing your mind to agree with God about the facts.

And for a lot of us, we are persisting in known sins over a long period of time because we're not willing to repent. And some of the most common examples of this are things like hatred. You'd say, well, I don't hate anybody. Well, the way the Bible talks about hatred is if you have a grievance against somebody and you are harboring that grievance and you are not willing

to do what's necessary on your end to try to clean your side of the street. That amounts to hatred. So if you know there's a brokenness in a relationship and you have a way for you to try to do something to make the peace and you refuse the longer you go in that type of mindset, the harder your heart will become because you're drifting.

And the longer you drift, the more corrosive it is. Or take something like anxiety or jealousy. Jealousy just means looking at what other people have and thinking they don't deserve it and you do. We can do jealousy on Instagram. Oh, they sh they no way they afford that house. No way they afford that car. Or or anxiety, again, not just to be fearful. The Bible some you know sometimes fear is good, but when you're crippled by fear or when fear is dictating your decisions, or when f anxiety is causing you to question if God is good or God cares you're drifting.

And the longer you stay in that state of mind, the long the further away you're going to go. And you may say, well, that's just the way I'm wired. I'm just an anxious person. Maybe so, but you don't have to be sinfully anxious because you have the Holy Spirit of God living in you, and so you don't have to worry about your life, Jesus says. Don't worry about what you're going to eat and drink. And look at the birds, look at the lilies. Stop. You are not able to hear what God wants you to hear if you're always anxious all the time.

You're drifting. Or greed, that's a big one. Spending money in a way that violates God's design. The easy one is generosity to the kingdom of God. I'm not going to use the word tithing because maybe tithing is an Old Testament practice for Jewish people, but giving in the New Testament is mandated for believers. And if you say to yourself, I can't give to God because I got to pay all my bills, you're probably drifting. Because you've allowed a desire for a certain standard of living to matter more to you than being generous towards the kingdom of God Most of us do it.

For a vast majority of Christians, they don't honor the Lord with their wealth. And my point is, is that's become an acceptable sin in your life. And you've kind of tolerated it and your every day you persist in that behavior, your capacity to hear is getting less and less and less because you're drifting. We could this is getting really uncomfortable. Porneia, that's the Greek word for any kind of sexual immorality. So it can include pornography, literally pornography. It can include any kind of sex outside of God's boundary line. That means Premarital sex, that means adulterous sex, that means homosexual sex, that means transgenderism, that means all of the things in our culture that says it's okay be true to yourself.

God says actually that's a violation of my design. It's not going to help you flourish. It's actually going to hurt you. When you say I don't care what God says, I'm going to do what the culture says, you're drifting and the longer you drift the worse it's going to get. The most common acceptable sin in our culture right now, I'm a pastor, I know that, I see it all the

time, is cohabitation. I'm probably going to get an email just by mentioning it. But almost everybody these days lives together before they get married.

And they may say, well, we're not having sex, but I seriously doubt it. The vast majority of them are having sex outside of marriage. And they love the Lord. That's the thing. They love the Lord. They go to church. Maybe you come to church every single Sunday and say, Wes, you better watch it. I'm not saying you're going to hell. And I'm not saying you don't have valid reasons. And listen. But you are drifting. And your ability to hear the Lord speak is diminishing. Every day you persist. And it's dangerous.

That's what I'm saying to you. It's dangerous. And your heavenly father would spare you the danger of that pain if you would just pay attention. Debauchery, excessive indulgence for pleasure. Some of you, nothing wrong with drinking. Drink is not a sin, you know. Drink. Don't get drunk, but drink. Some of us You let that toleration of maybe a little bit too much happen a little too often before you know it, you're hiding things, you're justifying excess, and now you're drifting. It's dangerous and it's hurting your ability to hear. And when you drift, you can't pay attention.

And if you don't pay attention, the warning is you're going to get a punishment. And that's what the second half of the warning talks about. Verse 2 and 3. For if the message spoken through angels was legally binding, other translations say steadfast or enduring, it just means if what God did in the Old Testament was punishable by law. And every transgression and disobedience received a just punishment. How will we escape if we neglect such a great salvation. This is kind of an interesting argument. It's called a qal wahomer. In the Hebrew, it means light and heavy.

It's called an argument from the lesser to the greater. In Latin, it's called the a fortiori argument. Appeal to the stronger. All he's saying is in the Old Testament, if you think about it, and them those guys were familiar with the Old Testament because they were Jewish He said, you guys know when God revealed the law to Moses through these mediators called angels, when people violated God's law in the Old Testament, they got punished, correct? It was legally binding, and their answer was yes. By the way, did y'all know that the law, the Old Testament, was mediated by angels?

That was not in the Charlton Heston movie. Where'd that come from? If you're interested in that rabbit trail, if you go to the next verse. Deuteronomy 33. 2. No, no, no. One more one more back. Deuteronomy 33. 2 in the Septuagint actually translates this as myriads of angels at his right hand. So when God was revealing the Old Testament, the Greek Old Testament says God had angels, ten thousand of angels. That's what David talks about in Psalm 68, 17. There was 10,000 holy ones. Again, some translations say angels. Stephen talked about this in his sermon in the book of Acts.

Right before he died, he said God mediated the Old Testament through angels and angel of the Lord in verse 53. And Paul says it in Galatians 3. 18, the old covenant was mediated by through angels. And the new covenant is mediated by God Himself and God the Son. So it's a greater word, which means if you violate that greater word, it's a greater punishment. Well, what was the punishment like in the Old Testament? You know, some of the examples are really fascinating. Some of the most severe that I kind of personally struggle with, if you go to the next slide, is things like the story of the sons of Korah, or not sons of Korah.

Korah himself decided that he wanted to rebel against Moses, and so he enlisted some of his people, and then he got two hundred and fifty four friendlies to kind of take his side and when God found out and God was going to punish him he let the ground open up and swallowed him whole and then they fire from heaven came down and burned the two hundred and fifty other people who were friendlies. Wow. That's crazy. You should read your old testament. Achan and Joshua 7, they had just gone through the walls of Jericho.

They defeated Jericho and God said, some of these some of this last service I said booty. Some of the bounty is not permissible for you to take. I guess some of the booty wasn't permissible. I But the Lord was saying, this is holy to the Lord, do not take this. And Achan looked at that bounty and was like, yeah, but it's so pretty, you know, so nice. That's a big old fat cow. I got to have that cow. And so he took it. And it was a sin against the Lord.

And so what the Lord did is he took his hand off the Israelite army. They went the next battle, the battle of Ai, and it was a considerably smaller army, and they got torched. They got totally a sh you know just a beating and they run for their lives and Joshua prays to the Lord why did you do that? I mean I thought you were with us, not against us, and these little people these little people beat us down. What's going on? And the Lord said, Joshua, there's sin in the camp.

And until you get it out, I'm not with you. And so they do a little investigation. Achan's like, yeah, it was me. I took it. Such a pretty such a pretty cow. And they said, well, stone him. They stoned him to death. There he is right there in the valley. They burn him alive with the cows. Uzzah that's a fun name. God said, don't touch the Ark of the covenant. The Ark of the covenant was where the glory of the Lord was housed. It was holy unto the Lord. And Uzzah saw the Ark of the covenant.

He was being tipped over because they hit a rock or something. And so he tries to touch the Ark of the covenant so it wouldn't hit the dirt, not aware of the fact that he himself was the sinful thing, not the dirt on which it fell, and the Lord struck him dead as soon as he touched it. Y'all looking shocked. Y'all, do y'all read the Old Testament? It's a crazy stuff. Or David When he made a census because he was kind of leaning in the flesh and not trusting the Lord, he said, I got to see how strong I am, I got to see how much my army could be I could see how much money I could get.

So he calls the census and it says the Lord sent a plague and 10,000, was it 10,000 or 70,000? Thousands and thousands of people died by the plague because of David's defiance against the Lord. And that doesn't even count the forty years in the wilderness or all the other times when God when God's law was violated, there was a penalty. There was a punishment. Why? Because God is holy. He isn't mocked. It's the law of the harvest. You reap what you sow. You think you can violate God's design without consequence?

You're wrong. And if that was the and if that was true in the old covenant mediated by angels. How much more so will that be true in the new covenant mediated by the Son? If you violate that word, if you neglect that word, you invite an even greater punishment. And so on your notes, the way I talk about it is that penalties are correlated with the gravity of an offense. If you went and slapped your brother in the face, if he's a good brother, he'll slap you right back. If it.

If he well maybe he doesn't slap you back, but if you slap your brother, not that big a deal. You go up and slap a homeless person or some stranger, you better get ready, right? Or you're going to get charges filed against you it could be bad. If you go up and you slap the president of the United States, let's say that you even get close enough to do so, you'll probably die before you do. But you are going to be in big bad trouble for the rest of your life.

But if you go up and you slap the daughter, the only daughter of the president, who just happened to save your life, and you say, how dare you! You slapped her. You will be going to Guantanamo Bay for cruel and unusual punishment for the rest of your days. If I was president, that's what I would do. I'm just joking. I wouldn't do that. But you would hurt. Because you hurt my little girl. And she means more to me than you can even imagine. Now what's different? The slap is the slap, right?

You slapped the slap was the same in all four examples, but the penalty is not the same. Why? Because the person against whom you've offended. It's the who, not the what. And what Hebrews is saying is the sin is the sin, even the tiniest of sins against God Himself, against Jesus, who's God in the flesh. That is an infinitely bad deal. It is a serious thing to neglect this word because this word is such a great salvation. And so if you neglect an object of infinite value, you're going to invite a judgment of eternal significance.

And some of us do that like it's going out of style. How can we neglect so easily love and salvation that was so costly. For Jesus to produce our salvation, for Jesus to speak the better word, what had to happen Jesus existed eternally in the triune Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, enjoyment of love and harmony from everlasting to everlasting, and the Father Seeing our predicament, sends the Son into the world. He takes on human flesh so that he can experience death. Not only does he take on flesh, he lives a sinless life of love and obedience to God the Father.

He was perfectly obedient to the law. He did what none of us do. He never once sinned. He never once violated God's standard. He was perfect. And then he took his perfect life and he said, since they can't measure up, and since I have measured up, I'll lay my life down as an atoning sacrifice so that their sins can be forgiven. Just like the bulls and goats in the Old Testament were sacrificed, so God would postpone his judgment. Jesus is saying, I ain't no bull and I'm not any goat. I'm God in the flesh.

The infinite become finite, and I'm willing to suffer death on a cross, a brutal physical torment. Not just so people could see how much God loves them, but so that God's wrath could be absorbed by my perfect life. And instead of God's wrath consuming you, which it perfectly should, he has every right to consume us because we neglect him so often, he allowed Jesus to be consumed. And Jesus said, God, why have you forsaken me? So that we could be able to say God, how could you love me? I'm so unworthy.

He says that I don't love you because of you. I love you because of him. And because of him, we have access. The veil has been removed. We can enjoy the presence of God without fear because of what Jesus Christ has done. In other words, if you're taking notes, Jesus lived a better life so that he could die a better death. He lived a greater life so that he could die a greater death, and that's what enables him to speak the better word. That's what the book of Hebrews is about Jesus is not like the bulls and the goats.

In fact, all the Old Testament prophets were preparing us for Jesus. All the Old Testament sacrifices were preparing for preparing us for Jesus and the cross. All the Old Testament kings, David, Solomon, the good ones, the bad ones, they were preparing us for his kingdom come and his will being done, and the kingdom of heaven swallowing up the kingdom of this world. It's all always and only ever been about Jesus. He's the greater word. And that you would neglect that salvation is a terrible thing because of whom you're neglecting. And when you put it in that way, it puts all of our tolerable sins in a totally different light, does it not?

How could we neglect such great love? And so what I'm pleading with you as a pastor, I know this is a very uncomfortable sermon. I'm very uncomfortable giving it. And listen, I'm preaching to myself. I'm just like you guys. I sense the Lord Wanting to use this season as we prepare for Easter to wake us up. God has Empowered his church with the Holy Spirit. The church of God is meant to be a light in the nation. It's meant to be a light in the darkness. And instead of influencing our culture towards godliness, the church has been corrupted by the culture.

And we live the same kind of lives, we talk the same kind of way. There is no visible difference between someone who says, I'm bought by the blood of the Lamb and someone who says, Jesus, who? And it's not okay. And it's hurting us. It's hurting our ability to hear the Lord and respond to the Lord. And it's hurting the witness that God has put us in this

world to do. And if it doesn't stop now, it's not going to stop. And so what better time than now? What better place than here?

What better person than you and me to say, Lord, we want to let these warning passages wake us up so that we stop drifting. Because I don't know about you, but I don't want to drift. I want to pay attention to a salvation that that is that good. You notice how he ends. In fact, the only reason I think we don't listen is because we don't believe it. I think a lot of us say we believe the gospel, but we don't. Just like a lot of those Christians said they believed in Jesus, but they weren't living like it.

And so he closes, and with this will be done. He closes with all of these evidences that Jesus and this word is true. It's not only great, it's true. He says, this salvation had its beginning when it was spoken of by the Lord. It was confirmed to us by those who heard him. And at the same time, God also testified by signs and wonders, various miracles, and distributions of gifts from the Holy Spirit according to his will. In other words, Jesus Himself spoke it, so this message wasn't mediated through angels, it was spoken by God Himself.

Face-to-face messages are the most important. Then it was verified or confirmed by the apostles. How did they verify it? Well, one, it was verified to them by the resurrection. They saw it with their own eyes. But then they preached the message of the resurrection in the face of brutal martyrs' deaths. People say martyrs make poor liars. That's very true. Muslim bombers die all the time for what they believe. That's true. But they die for what they hope to be true. These apostles would have died for what they knew to be true or false.

And if they knew it to be a lie and they still went to incredibly torturous deaths, it doesn't make much sense. It's much more likely that they believed. Jesus to have been risen from the dead and not one person recanted until the very end. It's one of the most powerful evidences for the resurrection of Jesus. And if Jesus rised f if Jesus was raised from the dead, that means the death of Jesus was sufficient and you and I can be forgiven and have access to God. Because Jesus spoke it, because the apostles confirmed it, and then God confirmed it with miracles in the New Testament, in the Gospels, in the book of Acts, might even say today, the miracles that happened.

And then the Holy Spirit has gifted the church. This church with gifts of various different kinds. One of the greatest is the gift of a transformed life that is itself evidence that the word of Jesus is true. And so if you're struggling to believe that the word of Jesus is true, that's one thing. Ask the Lord, help me to see that it's true. If you believe it to be true and you've just been neglecting it. Today you need to decide to stop. Receiving Jesus' word requires a personal decision. And so that's how we're going to end.

I'm going to ask Scholar to come up and lead us in a time of response. This is the most important time of any service because it's where you let the message that Jesus speaks not

just becomes something that informs your mind but actually changes your life. And so I don't know what that looks like for you. For some of you, maybe you've never believed the word that Jesus spoke. You believed that Jesus died, but you didn't believe he died for you. You believed that he could forgive some people of sin, but he can't forgive me of sin.

My sin's too big. And this morning it may be that the Holy Spirit is saying, you fool, it is God in the flesh. If he's not big enough, you're certainly not big enough. He can do anything you can't do, and he has accomplished it on the cross and his resurrection is the evidence you need to know it's true. And so if today the Holy Spirit would say it's time for you to stop hardening your heart, it's time for you to stop resisting, it's time for you to surrender to Jesus I want to invite you to come down and give your life to Christ in front of all these people.

I know it's a bold ask, but He allowed himself to be stripped, beaten, and crucified so he could demonstrate his love for you. What a little thing to ask for you to show your love for him. And if you have questions or concerns, you can indicate it in those connection cards. You can say, listen, I want to give my life to Jesus, but I've got some things I got to talk about. Fill that card out. The point is do something now. Do something today. Do not walk out of this room without acting on what the Lord is speaking, because if you do that, you're drifting.

And if you make a habit of doing that, week after week after week, your ability to hear will diminish less and less and less until you sit in these seats every single Sunday and you feel nothing. And that is a dangerous place to be. And your Heavenly Father would not want that for you because He loves you. And I love you. This church loves you. And so let today be the day where you cut it out. And you let the Lord Have his way. Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for this time.

Holy Spirit, we thank you for being in this place. It's one thing for a preacher to say things that gets up in our business. It's a totally separate thing for the Holy Spirit to say he's not lying. Why are you mad? What are you defending? Lord, we don't want to be people who cling to a life that was being destroyed by sin, a life that was hopeless and helpless. We want eternal life. We want the life that Jesus died to give us. But our hearts are prone to wonder. We're prone to leave the God we love, and some of us we got in the place we are, not on purpose, but we can't see our way back.

We think we're too far gone. And so would you speak in power the greater word that Jesus has made possible through his death on the cross. Would you open our eyes afresh and anew to that great salvation that was inaugurated through the shed blood of Jesus? And that that great love would overwhelm any doubts, any fears, any skepticism, any shame. And you would bring us back home. You would open our ears back up so that we could begin to listen and recover. The abundant and blessed life that you so eagerly desire to give us.

And so do that now in this time we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.