

Jesus is the Redeemer of Mankind

Portrait two of Jesus in Hebrews

Opening Prayer & Introduction:

Welcome back to Small Groups for the Spring term! We are in week two of our Hebrews study. Last week we saw the portrait of Jesus as the Revelation of God. This week we saw Jesus as the Redeemer of Mankind. The writer of Hebrews takes time in the first half of the book to paint eight portraits of Jesus as an apologetic to the Hebrews who originally received his letter. It seems like there were some who were possibly in danger of drifting away from the faith back into their former life in Judaism. We discussed in church how social pressures and family traditions can be big influences on a person's walk with Christ. The big idea this week is that we should guard our faith, paying attention to the things that we have heard/believed, so that we do not drift away from the faith.

Ice Breaker Question: Pastor Joel used the illustration of a boat drifting on the lake when the dock line comes loose. Let's be honest, has there ever been a time when your own rope got a little slack and you started to drift? How did you get back on track?

Key Scripture: *Hebrews 2:1 "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away."*

Discussion Questions:

1. As we "pay attention" to our faith, the idea is to recognize when our rope starts to slip and to address it before we go adrift. What are some practical things to look out for as indicators that our rope may be slipping, and what are some practical ways to take the slack out of the rope?
2. Pastor Joel noted that in these last days, there are many distractions that Satan uses as bait to pull us away from our faith. He said, we are "one Snapchat post away" from seeds of doubt. How have social media, news, or cultural pressures affected your faith recently? In light of our awareness of the daily spiritual battle, how should a Christian interface with these messages?
3. In the message, we discussed the future destiny of believers as a motivator to guard our faith, and not to drift away. As we think about the promises of God that lay ahead for us, how do these promises encourage you to press on in your walk of faith?
4. We learned that it is not a sin to have doubts. In fact, every Christian deals with doubts at one time or another. Even our Pastor mentioned that he has a list of questions to ask

God one day about things that he doesn't yet understand. Nonetheless, we need to remember that there are answers to our doubts. Often, it is our doubts that lead us to deeper seasons of faith. What are some ways that you have navigated doubts in your own walk of faith that might encourage someone in the room who may also be wrestling with doubts right now?

5. The sermon touched on the challenging topic of eternal security and apostasy. What are your thoughts on the statement: "You are eternally secure as long as you abide in Christ"? How would you distinguish between going through a season of spiritual struggle (backsliding) versus completely renouncing Christ (apostasy)?

Practical Applications:

1. We need to be honest with ourselves about areas where the rope of our faith is getting slack. Consider talking to a small group leader about this, or asking for prayer from the group.
2. Take stock of the areas where you are giving Satan an open door to distract, discourage, or create doubts...and decide how to close those doors and renew your mind in Christ.
3. Remember to preach to yourself daily. This means reminding yourself of who you are in Christ, and dreaming a little each day about the future destiny that belongs to you in Heaven.

Key Takeaways:

- **We must actively guard our faith** by paying attention to spiritual disciplines and not allowing ourselves to drift.
- **Our future spiritual destiny is valuable** and worth protecting—don't forfeit heaven and eternal promises through neglect.
- **Jesus became one of us** to save us, defeat death and the devil, and help us when we're tempted or struggling.
- **Doubts and questions are normal**, but we must take them to Jesus rather than allowing them to pull us away from faith.
- **The rope of faith requires maintenance**—tighten it when you see slack forming.

Closing Prayer:

Let's take a few moments to pray about the things that we have studied this week and to make it personal. As God leads you, pray for yourself and for someone else in the group. Perhaps you would like to pick one person to pray for secretly this week.