

North Summit Church
Hebrews 2:1-18
September 21, 2025

Read Hebrews 2:1-18

[Prayer]

Introduction:

- **Here we find ourselves at the author's first of five warnings.**
 - Each warning comes with pastoral encouragement.
 - A reminder to us that warnings are not to shame, but to encourage.
 - When we love people we challenge them because we love them.

Jesus secures us from spiritual drift and pioneers our path to glory through his perfect identification with humanity through the incarnation.

- It feels like it happens every Summer here in Sandpoint, we get a nasty wind storm in the middle of the night, and a boat that the owner thought was anchored sufficiently to the dock, they discover in the morning is nowhere to be found and it has been pulled from its mooring.
- This image captures the spiritual reality the writer of Hebrews addresses in chapter 2. After establishing Christ's supreme revelation in chapter 1, he immediately shifts to an urgent pastoral concern: **spiritual drift**.
 - There we some who were turning back to their Hebrew roots, and the author is concerned that others will follow in their foot steps.
- This morning we will see that this same Jesus who towers above angels in chapter 1, stoops down to become **the author and perfecter of our faith**. This is the beautiful mystery of the incarnation.

The Drift That Destroys (2:1-4)

Hebrews 2:1

"Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it."

- The phrase "pay much closer attention" uses a Greek nautical term that means to anchor securely or moor tightly. Like a ship captain in dangerous waters, knowing that casual attention to the anchor rope could mean disaster.
- **Why such urgency?** Because spiritual drift is subtle and deadly. Unlike dramatic spiritual rebellion, drift happens gradually. We don't wake up one morning and decide to abandon our faith. Instead, we slowly allow other voices to compete with God's voice.

This is a reminder that we have to be ever vigilant to spiritual drift.

- This is a call to constant, ongoing, honest self-examination.
 - Am I reading Scripture with the same hunger I once had?
 - Do I find myself making excuses to skip church?
 - Are worldly values increasingly influencing my decisions?
- Satan wants nothing more than to render us ineffective. He not only hates our souls and wants to see us suffer with Him forever, but he doesn't want us to experience the life that is available to us in Christ.
 - He wants to keep us trapped in cycles of sin. Unforgiveness, Anger, Rage, Self interest, Self-gratification, Mindless searching for meaning in an unending doom scroll. Anything that keeps us from looking more like Christ.

Hebrews 2:2-3a

"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?"

- Here's the logic: If God held people accountable for violating the law given through angels (referring to the Old Testament revelation), how much more serious is it to neglect the salvation revealed through his Son?
- The word "neglect" doesn't mean active rejection - it simply means failing to care for something properly. You can neglect your salvation not through dramatic rebellion, but through simple inattention.

This reminds us of the importance of leaning into the practices of Christian discipleship and community.

- **Who is your circle?** We are masters of self-deception. The first thing that often falls off when we begin drifting are those relationships that will be honest with us and challenge us.

- God has given us everything we need through His Church to prevent the slow leak that leads to spiritual shipwreck.

Hebrews 2:3b-4

"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 gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will."

- This reminds us that our faith isn't based on human speculation or wishful thinking. Christ is the ultimate revelation of God to us, and this revelation was confirmed through supernatural miracles.
 - The early church witnessed signs, wonders, miracles, and spiritual gifts that validated the message about Christ.
- **But notice something important:** these confirmations weren't the foundation of faith; they were the confirmation of it.
- **The foundation remains Christ himself and the gospel message about him.**
 - This protects us from both skepticism that demands constant miraculous proof and from experience-based faith that makes feelings or supernatural encounters the foundation of our relationship with God.
- While we may not witness the same miraculous signs the early church experienced, we have something they didn't: **the complete written revelation of God in Scripture.**

Humanity's Original Design (2:5-9)

Hebrews 2:6-8 (quoting Psalm 8)

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

- These passages reveal that man was created in the image of Christ. God's original design was for humans to rule creation under his authority as wise stewards.

But there's a problem: **"At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him."**

- Human sin has disrupted this original design. The chaos in our world is because of human sin, and we need to be healed from the effects of that sin.

- And while Christ has been exalted to the right hand of the father and all dominion and power has been given to him, and the Kingdom is inaugurated, it is not yet consummated.
- This is because God in his great wisdom and mercy is still allowing the gospel to heal hearts and bring them into relationship with Christ.
- We have a mission and a message that a lost and dying world desperately needs. And God wants to heal his creation.

****This reminds us of a central truth of being created in the Image of God:** we are not our sins. Sin is a sickness, a disease that we need to be healed from. Our true nature is found in reflecting God's image through love, creativity, stewardship, and relationship. And we have work to do. We live in a culture that is sick with sin and we have the cure.

- And just like the author is calling the Jewish believer to not turn back and in so doing neglect the very thing that can bring healing to our world. It is, likewise, a calling to us to remain diligent. Not to get distracted by things that only distract us and in which there is no saving power.

Hebrews 2:9

"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."

- Jesus accomplished what we failed to achieve. Through his death, he addressed the fundamental problem that prevents us from living as we were created to live: **our separation from God due to sin.**
- **Jesus not only dealt with our sin problem on the Cross, but he also made a way for us to be healed from the bondage of sin in our lives through the Resurrection.**
- **Salvation is not suppressing our humanity; it's about discovering our true humanity in the image of Christ.** When we follow Christ, we're becoming more fully what God created us to be. Jesus restores our image bearing identity.

Being Made Perfect Through Suffering (2:10-13)

Hebrews 2:10

"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."

- The word "perfect" here means Jesus was made complete or fully equipped for his role as our great High Priest. Through suffering, Jesus gained experiential knowledge of human struggle that qualified him to lead us through it.
- **Think of it this way:** a guide who has traversed every steep climb, dangerous passage, and challenging obstacle is uniquely qualified to lead others through safely. Jesus doesn't just know about human suffering theoretically; he experienced it fully.

Hebrews 2:11

"For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers."

- Jesus isn't ashamed to **call them brothers** because the family connection is real. This reminds us that we no longer have to be controlled by cycles of shame and guilt, because Jesus identifies with our struggle.
- **He is the good and righteous and merciful older brother who welcomes you back home.**
 - John 3:17 - Jesus didn't come to condemn, we were already condemned, he came to heal us and bring salvation to the world.

Our Death-Defeating Brother (2:14-18)

Hebrews 2:14-15

"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, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery."

- Notice the logic: to defeat death, Jesus had to experience death. The result is that because of Christ we no longer have to fear death. It cannot separate us from God's love, destroy our identity, or end our story.
- Living without fear of death because of Christ's victory changes everything. It affects how we make decisions, handle conflict, use money, and serve others.
- When we are afraid we are in bondage, we are slaves to sin, we can easily be controlled and manipulated. Fear makes us turn inwards and become self-focused and self-preserving.

- But in Christ, we find freedom through the hope of Resurrection life. This empowers and emboldens us to willingly lay down our lives for what is good and true and beautiful, and push back against the darkness and sin that enslaves our world.
- **Call to the next generation:** It's time to live bold and dangerous lives for Christ.

Hebrews 2:17-18

"For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. 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. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."

- Jesus, having endured temptation to its full extent without breaking, is uniquely qualified to help us in our moments of weakness.

Conclusion

- The chapter ends with implications for our calling in the world. Through faith we are the offspring of Abraham, part of God's plan to bless all nations. The world isn't transformed because we give up on the mission when it gets hard.
- We began with the image of a ship drifting from its moorings. Hebrews 2 provides us with both the anchor we need and the navigator we can trust. Christ is our anchor, holding us secure against the currents that would carry us away from truth. But he's also our brother, having walked the path we must travel.
- The beauty of this chapter is that it holds together two truths: the infinite transcendence of Christ and his intimate identification with us.
- We needed both. We needed someone who was fully God to address the infinite problem of our separation from God. But we also needed someone who was fully human to understand our struggles and pioneer our path to glory.
- Today, we are reminded that we have both. We have an anchor strong enough to hold you secure against any storm, and you have a brother who understands every challenge you face.

Benediction Prayer

Father, we thank You that in Christ we have both security and guidance. Forgive us for the ways we've allowed our attention to drift from the great salvation You've provided. Help us this week to anchor ourselves firmly to Your truth while following closely the path our brother Jesus has pioneered. When we face temptation, remind us that our high priest understands. When we encounter suffering, help us remember that our pioneer has gone before us. Make us faithful anchored followers who help others find the same security and hope we've discovered in Christ.

In Jesus's name, Amen.