

It's a Slow Fade by Casting Crowns (2007) - Be careful little eyes what you see. It's the second glance that ties your hands. As darkness pulls the strings. Be careful little feet where you go. For it's the little feet behind you. That are sure to follow. Be careful little ears what you hear. When flattery leads to compromise. The end is always near. Be careful little lips what you say. For empty words and promises. Lead broken hearts astray. It's a slow fade - When you give yourself away. It's a slow fade - When black and white have turned to grey. And thoughts invade, choices made. A price will be paid. When you give yourself away. People never crumble in a day. It's a slow fade

FAMOUS: Young man grew up in the church with desire to be a pastor went to Christ's College in Cambridge, with the intention of becoming an Anglican clergyman. "I had gradually come...to see that the Old Testament...was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindus, or the beliefs of any barbarian. Disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress...I can indeed hardly see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true..." - Charles Darwin

PERSONALLY - slow fade, gradual, over time, years even. Most people don't just wake up and decide to walk away from God. Most people don't just outright reject Jesus but rather the simply begin to neglect Jesus. They just get busy, had a hard season, something else began to pull at the affections of their heart.

YOU? Are you more like Jesus than this time last year? Than 10 years ago?

What if you're drifting and don't even know it - so slow you don't even see, notice it or feel it.

"We are well acquainted with the danger of drift; we seem less acquainted with our own susceptibility to it. And while we are accustomed to noticing the drift of others, we are woefully blind about noticing it among ourselves." - Jared Wilson

GOAL: How do I get someone who is drifting away to realize they are drifting away and to want to come back to the Lord and show them how they can

Heb 2:1-3 has the potential to do just that. 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

Therefore, (What is it there, for? / Because of that, then this... / If...then)

Ch 1 - No command, simply celebration of who the Jesus is: Jesus is the ultimate revelation and final authority. Jesus is The Heir of All Things. Jesus is The Creator through whom God made the universe. Jesus is The Radiance of God's Glory. Jesus is The Sustainer who upholds all things by His powerful word. Jesus is The Purifier of Sins. Jesus is The Exalted One who sat down at the right hand of the Majesty. Jesus is The Superior to angels. Jesus is worshipped by angels. Jesus is The Eternal King whose throne is everlasting. Jesus is The Anointed of God. Jesus is The One who laid the foundations of the earth. Jesus is The Unchanging One. Jesus is The Victorious Ruler, awaiting the subjugation of His enemies.

Jesus' superiority has life-changing application.

Ch 1 meant to buttress the first command in 2:1 / because that is who Jesus is, we must...

Must - lit "it is necessary"

Pay much closer attention / most careful attention / must LISTEN very carefully

To what he have heard...The message of the Kingdom of God / the Gospel / The revelation of God in Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ.

Sometimes, we don't pay close attention to what we have heard because of...

Temptation - too many other things vying for our time attentions and affections.

Persecution - too hard, life is too difficult, I just can't even...

Prosperity - is a season which slays the foolish. People are filled, and forget the Lord.

lest we drift away from it

We see two incentives - positive & negative.

1st reason to listen is the supremacy of Christ (Ch 1 written to make command in 2 easy)

2nd reason to listen is a warning – if not pay attention we will "drift away"

Drift - slow, silent, subtle, almost imperceptible at times.

Literally, "to flow/float by," – an unanchored boat effortlessly slipping past

If we are not securely set in the truth of the supremacy of Jesus, we will drift into danger. Not primarily doing something bad, so much as failing to take positive action and merely allowing things to slide. Faith cannot coast indefinitely; it must be cultivated.

"People do not drift toward holiness. Apart from grace-driven effort, people do not gravitate toward godliness, prayer, obedience to Scripture, faith, and delight in the Lord. We drift toward compromise and call it tolerance; we drift toward disobedience and call it freedom; we drift toward superstition and call it faith. We cherish the indiscipline of lost self-control and call it relaxation; we slouch toward prayerlessness and delude ourselves into thinking we have escaped legalism; we slide toward godlessness and convince ourselves we have been liberated." – Carson

The Philippian jailer asked Paul, "What must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus." The question, "What must I do to be lost?" also has an answer: nothing.

That's how you are born, and apart from Jesus, that's how you will stay!

"Life is a river...flowing toward hell - you don't have to do anything to get there.

You don't have to work hard to go to hell - you just have to drift." – Piper

Ways I'm seeing drift (slow / silent / subtly / almost imperceptible)

1. Busyness - constant activity chokes out time for God - Overcommitted, over-scheduled and begin to drift from daily connection with God through His Word and prayer.

2. Career-Idolatry - Prioritizing success or security over Jesus.

3. Inconsistent Worship - sporadic attendance, when I feel like it
4. Isolation - Withdrawing from Christian accountability
5. Unresolved Bitterness - harboring un-forgiveness or church hurt from believer/leaders
6. Tolerating Sin – trying to manage sin vs putting it to death can callous your conscience
7. Worldliness – Desire for the things of the world – status, pleasure, or possessions
8. Sexual Compromise – online chats, flirtatious office, porn, massage parlors, swinging
9. Pride - intellectual arrogance resists God's lordship.
10. Disappointment - Grief or trauma can show up as disappointment with God
11. Deconstructing w/o Rebuilding – Questioning is okay, but seeking truth.
12. Ideology - political agendas or social justice movements supersede the gospel.
13. People-Pleasing -caring more about what other's think about us than what God thinks
14. Social Media - algorithms black hole / doom scrolling / echo chambers
15. Escapism - too tough, stressful, hard just need a break, let loose, numb the pain.

Alcohol is the only thing that brings me comfort. How deceived, the thing that is killing you and ruining your life is the only thing you claim to bring you comfort?

So what if I drift? (There's a CONSEQUENCE) 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?

A ratcheting up argument - If that was dangerous, now much more is this?

If that was important, how much more serious is it to ignore this. This reference to angels being involved in the mediation of the old covenant. OT God spoke through prophets and angels. Now, he spoke through his son / himself. If breaking the words of the old covenant were punished justly. This is a far greater, far superior, far more direct revelation - The greater the revelation the more responsible we are to it.

Just =earned / deserved / right Retribution - lit "reward"

"Your just reward" / this what you get / your earned waged / deserved payment for

What is this just retribution? At minimum it is NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

Like Rm 1 "God gave them over" passive judgement - just let them keep drifting away.

"how shall we escape" is a rhetorical question / meaning "we shall in no way escape."

If we NEGLECT - "to be careless of, disregard, pay no attention to."

"Neglecting salvation is not the same as rejecting it. The Author of Hebrews is speaking to Christians, warning them that careless neglect of one's salvation has consequences."

A reason many neglect their salvation is because they see it merely as RECEIVING something, not as being RESCUED from something. Illustration – Salvation is not like being gifted something like a boat and neglect is not using/enjoying/taking care of. More like having Type 1 diabetes and being rescued by insulin. You neglect, ignore, pay no attention to, become indifferent to your levels, what you eat – there will be disastrous consequences.

To neglect so great a salvation is to “become spiritually dull and indifferent.” This happens when we get too comfortable, self-satisfied, careless and complacent. It’s not one big rejection, but 1000 apathetic ones – drifting away, little by little.

What makes the neglect such egregious act is because of the greatness of the salvation:

We are saved by a great SAVIOR, at a great COST, from a great PENALTY

How do we keep from drifting?

Primary & secondary way. What we are going to see in the text, in the book of Hebrews, what I’m about to tell you, is primary - but that doesn’t mean it’s the only thing you do, it just means it is the first and the most important thing you must do.

Secondary Things you could to keep from fading, drifting, neglecting...Change some people you hang out with, delete some online accounts, reengage and spiritual practices, go to counseling or therapy, take your prescribed medication, confess in the confines of your spiritual community and get accountable - just employ natural wisdom like Ron talked about last week. (If you only do these things, you can improve and change for a time but you won’t ultimately succeed unless you do what the text says is primary)

Hebrews 6:19-20 We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

“Our hope (sure/steadfast anchor for our soul) is based on the finished work of Christ. As our high priest, Jesus “has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven. . . . With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever.”

1. LISTEN TO JESUS (2:1 Pay close, careful attention / listen to Jesus)

What do you pay close and careful attention to?

Stock market, health, sports team - yes and amen, but more than Jesus?

Who or what are you listening to more than Jesus?

Peer, social, influencer, podcaster, spouse?

You make provisions, take steps to listen to people you want to listen to.

Spotify, tv, tickets to concerts, books, podcast, at church today

What provisions are you making, what steps are you taking to listen to Jesus?

2. CONSIDER JESUS (3:1 Therefore, holy brothers (and sisters) you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession) Think about Jesus...

Do you consider Jesus? Do you consider Jesus when you...? Go to work, when you have free time, when you spend money, when you're online, when your parenting, when you watching tv, when you're messaging or texting we consider ourselves, what we want, what good and best for us, what we think we deserve. We consider what other people think, what they will think of us, what this will do for our career or reunion

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

3. FIX YOUR EYES ON JESUS (Look to Jesus - look away from one thing to something else)

Like gymnasts keeping their eyes focused on the end of the beam so not to fall off

You don't know you're drifting unless you have a fixed reference point – Jesus!

TRUTH - If you're drifting, you're in danger,

GRACE - but good news you don't have to stay drifting!!!

You don't have to fix yourself. You just have to fix your eyes on Jesus...

The author and perfecter of your faith, He is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

For the unbeliever: Don't REJECT this great salvation.

Life is a river...flowing straight toward hell – and you don't have to do anything to get there.

What must you do to be saved? Look and live. Look to Jesus as your great savior and live!

Spurgeon's Conversion - At last, a very thin-looking man, a shoemaker, of tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. Now, it is well that preachers should be instructed; but this man was really stupid. He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was, Is 45:22 "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth" He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. I thought there was, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began:—"My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, 'Look'. Now lookin' don't take a deal of pains. It ain't liftin' your foot or your finger; it is just, 'Look.' Well, a man needn't go to college to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn't be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, 'Look unto Me.' "Many are lookin' to yourselves, but it's no use lookin' there. You'll never find any comfort in yourselves. Jesus Christ says, 'Look unto Me'. Then the good man followed up his text in this way:—"Look unto Me; I am sweatin' great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin' on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin' at the Father's right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! look unto Me!"

When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so, he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I daresay, with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he knew all my heart, he said, “Young man, you look very miserable.” Well, I did; but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, “and you always will be miserable—miserable in life, and miserable in death,—if you don’t obey this text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.” Then, lifting up his hands, he shouted... “Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin’ to do but to look and live.” I saw at once the way of salvation. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, “Look!” what a charming word it seemed to me! There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. Oh, that somebody had told me this before, “Trust Christ, and you shall be saved.”

For the believer: Don’t NEGLECT such a great salvation and drift away.

Don’t ignore, become indifferent to or pay no attention to your great salvation / rescue!

Listen to Jesus / Consider Jesus / Fix Your Eyes on Jesus

Keller - in 2:1 “pay much / closer attention” lit = FURIOUS OBSESSION

Only a furious obsession of Jesus can keep you from drifting away

Only a furious obsession of Jesus can keep you from neglecting such a great salvation.

Spurgeon’s Accomplishments:

Preached over 3,600 sermons in his lifetime. Regularly preached to audiences of 10,000+,

Baptized more than 15,000 converts during his ministry. Wrote over 150 books. Founded the Pastor’s College which trained thousands of ministers worldwide. Established the Stockwell Orphanage. Founded a Book Fund to give theological books to poor pastors. Oversaw 66 ministries connected to his church, including homes for single mothers... Wrote thousands of letters to hurting people. Visited sick and dying church members regularly, despite his large congregation. Suffered chronic illness (gout, depression, kidney disease) remained faithfully active in ministry. Looked to Jesus & never took his eyes off!!!

My friends the amount of talent, resources, influence, capacity, skill in this little church could rock the world - If we became FURIOUSLY OBSESSED with Jesus. If we looked to Jesus and never took our eyes off of him – could not the a of us accomplish more than one man in the 1800s who only lived to 57.

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

In what aspect or area of your life are you drifting, slowly fading away (small, subtle)???

In that area of your life...listen to Jesus, consider Jesus and fix your eyes on Jesus

In that area of your life...become furiously obsessed with Jesus

He is your hope, a sure and steadfast anchor for your soul.

**Sermon Discussion Questions I Have you drifted away? by Destin Garner**

**Hebrews 2:1-4, Hebrews 3:1-2, Hebrews 6:19-20, Hebrews 12:1-2**

**Have a few people read the scriptures above aloud, prior to beginning your group discussion time**

1. What is something you learned from these scriptures or sermon about the character of God?
2. What directives and/or warnings do you see given in Hebrews 2:1-4?
3. What is the difference between transgression and an act of disobedience in Hebrews 2:2?
4. Why is drifting from and/or neglecting our salvation so dangerous? Why is it sometimes more difficult to come back from a period of drifting away as opposed to not drifting in the first place?
5. Destin listed 15 ways he sees people drift at RPC (including busyness, career idolatry, sporadic worship attendance, unresolved bitterness/disappointment, materialism, minimizing sin, sexual compromise, social media and escapism, etc). What are some of the "currents/riptides" or influences that pull you away from your faith?
6. Who or what is our sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, our hope? And what are some key practices that help us hold fast in our faith i.e. reading God's Word, prayer, engaging in Christian community, serving others, and regular self-examination. (Hebrews 6:19-20)
7. How can the small group be more intentional to encourage and support each other in fixing our eyes on Jesus and avoiding spiritual drift? (Hebrews 12:1-2)
8. What are some "warning signs" that might indicate a person is spiritually drifting? And how can we as a small group lovingly respond when we someone in our community that might be drifting?
9. In light of this message, let's take a few minutes to stop and pray and ask the Holy Spirit to search our hearts. Let's consider where we may be neglecting our salvation, time in the word, confessing areas where we have minimized our sin, allowed our hearts to be lulled away by busyness, sought the pleasures of this world, or to escape in social media...
10. Destin suggested we ask ourselves to consider Jesus at work, during free time, when scrolling/posting, when shopping, when parenting, when watching TV.. What's one practical step each of us can take this week to strengthen our spiritual walk and prevent drifting? (Hebrews 3:1)

**For next steps to prevent drifting and stay anchored in our faith:**

1. Read/Memorize God's Word: Psalm 119:11 says, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Regular Bible study and meditation on Scripture keeps us grounded and provides a defense against temptation.
2. Maintain Active Prayer: James 4:8 encourages us to "Come near to God and he will come near to you." Prayer is our lifeline of communication with God, keeping us connected to His heart and will.
3. Engage in Christian Community: Hebrews 10:24-25 emphasizes the importance of fellowship: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another."

4. Serve Others: Focusing outward and serving others in Jesus' name helps keep our faith active and vibrant.
5. Regular Self-Examination: 2 Corinthians 13:5 urges us to "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves." Regular spiritual check-ups can help us catch any drift early.

Look up the scriptures below in blue to hear the full message of Hebrews...

- Don't drift (neglect) but **draw near** [Heb 4:16](#), [Heb 10:22](#)
- Don't drift (neglect) but **hold fast** [Heb 3:6,14](#)
- Don't drift (neglect) but **press on** [Heb 6:1](#)
- Don't drift (neglect) but **fix your eyes on Jesus** [Heb 12:2](#)
- Don't drift (neglect) but **run** [Heb 12:1,2](#)