

Jesus: Our Great High Priest Forever
Hebrews 2:1-4
“Don’t Be a Drifter”

Introduction

Good preaching will always have a twofold purpose: 1) To proclaim God’s truth, and 2) To trigger a response from the people. If the writer of *Hebrews* is anything, he is an excellent preacher! He begins in **Chapter One** by giving a very compelling argument that Jesus is better than any other messenger who had spoken on behalf of God in the past, for Jesus is God in the flesh, bringing His very own message. He is also better than all the prophets, better than all the priests, and even better than all the angels of heaven. The author of *Hebrews* bases his arguments of these facts upon an irrefutable foundation: *The Word of God*. He doesn’t give an emotional argument based of his own personal “feelings”, but rather a factual argument based upon the truths found in scripture. By expounding upon these truths, he proves without a shadow of doubt that Jesus is The Christ and the very incarnation (embodiment) of God.

When we come to **Chapter Two**, the writer of *Hebrews* pauses to give the first of five warnings in the book. This is intended to be the “response portion” of his sermon, as it were. After making his case for just who Jesus is, he stops as any good preacher would to give an “invitation”. He warns his readers that based upon what they have just been given, that they should be very careful not to “drift away” from the truth and thereby, miss this great opportunity for salvation. Jesus is the ONLY way to God, and to lose Him, is to be forever lost. *The Bible* tells us that to whom much is given, much will be required (**Luke 12:48**). This is an absolute truth. Once The Spirit of God has illuminated to us to the truth of the gospel, we are required to make a wise decision with that truth. Many people hear the gospel, and although they claim to believe, they continue to live in sin. True belief will require a response. To whom much is given, much shall be required! No one will be able to stand before God and claim that He was unfair. He has given us ample opportunity to repent of our sins and turn to Christ. Sadly, many will stand before The Great White Throne of Judgment (**Revelation 20:11-15**) and hear the words of Jesus say, **“Depart from me, I never knew you.” (Matthew 7:23).**

The writer of *Hebrews* must have known a thing or two about boating. The reason being is that he uses two nautical terms to make his point about not missing out on Jesus. Listen to how he begins his warning.

“We must pay careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.” **Hebrews 2:1**

The word he uses here for “pay attention” (*prosecho* in the Greek) actually means “to be tied up to”, much like you would secure a ship to the dock. He is warning his readers to “dock themselves” (permanently affix) to Jesus, and to believe in the truths that they have been told, so that they do not drift away (*pararrhueso*), like a ship that was not properly tied to the dock would be carried away by the currents and lost at sea. This is exactly what will happen to those who do not take the message of Christ seriously! They may stop by the “dock” and hear the message of Christ, but never actually secure themselves to it, and subsequently, the inevitable will happen. The tides of life will sweep them away, and they like a drifting ship will be lost in a sea of sin and unbelief. We must take the message that we have heard SERIOUSLY, for it is a matter of life and death!

In **verse two** he goes on to say that The Law of Moses was given upon Mt. Sinai by the angels of God. The Law was perfect and to transgress against it was punishable by death. Sadly, if we are completely honest with ourselves, **none of us** have been able to live in accordance with the perfection that The Law requires. Therefore, we desperately need someone to save us from the certain death that awaits us all. Jesus IS that someone. To neglect Him is to throw away our only hope of escaping the wrath of God that will one day come upon this world of sin. Or, as the writer of *Hebrews* so eloquently says it, **“How shall we escape, if we ignore so great a salvation (vs. 3) ?”**

By Jewish Law, no testimony was valid unless it was offered by at least two credible eyewitnesses. The writer of *Hebrews*, in an effort to prove that the testimony of Jesus Christ is absolutely trustworthy, offers us an impressive list of credible witnesses to the message of the gospel. We have The Testimony of Jesus Himself, The Testimony of The Apostles, The Testimony of God The Father, and finally, The Testimony of The Holy Spirit. Now THOSE are some pretty credible witnesses don’t you think?

The Testimony of The Son

"I AM the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to The Father, except through Me." John 14:6

The testimony of Jesus is both plain and powerful. He is the only way to God, and therefore, forgiveness for our sins can only be obtained through Him. He is The Great High Priest that made sacrifice for our sins "once and for all" (**Hebrews 10:10**). All that remains for us is to believe and accept the offer of salvation that He has provided to us. Every where that Jesus went when he walked upon this earth, His invitation given to all people could be simply stated, "**Who do YOU say that I AM?**" (**Matthew 16:15**). You see, each of us must listen to the testimony of Jesus and decide for ourselves what we will do with it. Many simply refuse to believe. Others "say" that they believe, but there is no evidence of change in their lives. And finally some (quite few in fact), actually BELIEVE the testimony of Jesus with such certainty that they repent of their sins and follow Him for the rest of their days. These few, are called "Believers" in the scriptures and will share in the inheritance of Christ when He comes again to this earth. They have securely "tied themselves" to the dock, as it were. Their future is secure, their sins are forgiven, and they have been filled by His Holy Spirit, as a guarantee of their salvation.

How can we truly hear the message of Christ, and then just let it slip away? Sadly, week after week and year after year, many will come to church, listen to the praise of God, hear *The Word of God* and simply drift away unaffected by its truth. How disastrous it will be for those who have been given such a clear opportunity to make things right, but allow the things of this world to distract them from the one thing that they need the most. That being said... allow me to repeat the question once more:

"Who do YOU say the HE IS?"

If you truly believe that He is the sinless Son of God, who died to pay for your sins once and for all, then DO something about it! Don't play games with your eternity. I'm reminded here of the soldiers that were at the foot of the cross casting lots (playing dice) for the clothes of Jesus, while He hung just a few feet in the air above them. Just think about that for a moment... Here were these lost Roman soldiers, playing games at the foot of the cross, when the very one they needed to save them was only a few feet away! How tragic is that?! Sadly, many people who attend church are in a very similar predicament. They are so close to the very One who could give them salvation, but instead, they are playing games at the foot of the cross. Make a decision to truly believe the testimony of Jesus, and then commit your life to Him today. His testimony is plain enough. It needs little explanation. He stands at the door and knocks, longing for you let Him come in (**Revelation 3:20**). He wants to be your God, not just someone you've heard about, someone that you know of, but don't really KNOW. There is no such thing as a "peripheral Christian". You can't just "float around" the things of Christ and be born again, you need to tie yourself to the dock, give yourself fully to Christ, and allow Him to direct your every step. Believe in the Testimony of The Son.

The Testimony of The Apostles

One of the reasons that I personally do not believe that Paul is the writer of *Hebrews* is because of the second part of **verse three**, where the author says "**Jesus message was confirmed to 'us' by those who heard Him.**" The Apostle Paul made a very emphatic statement in his letter to the Galatians that no other apostle taught him his message of the gospel, and that he had received it directly from Christ (**Galatians 1:12**). Therefore, I find it hard to conceive that he would credit the other Apostles with handing their message down to him. The writer of *Hebrews*, however, claims to have relied upon The Testimony of The Apostles in order to know the gospel of Christ. This of course is of very little consequence to us. Suffice to say that not only do we have the testimony of Jesus Himself, but in addition, we have the conformation from those who actually walked with Christ when He was upon the earth.

Have you ever wondered whatever happened to the people who wrote the New Testament? Church tradition that has been handed down for some two thousand years now, tell us exactly what happened to them. They were all executed for their faith, except for John, who was exiled to the Isle of

Patmos (Church tradition says that The Emperor Domitian tried to kill him by having him boiled in oil, but he would not die). Think about that for a moment. This entire group of men were willing to lay down their lives for the gospel message of Jesus. Not one of them ever recounted his testimony, even if it meant saving his own life. Many people in this world have died for something that they believe to be true, but were mistaken, but only a fool would die for something he knows to be a lie! What was it that convinced each of these men that the message of Christ was worth sacrificing their very lives for? The resurrection, that's what! They ALL saw him die, and they ALL saw Him rise again! That is why they were all willing to die for their testimony.

There were others whose beliefs were changed after Jesus' resurrection as well. Have you ever read the *Book of James* in your *Bible*? Well, James was the half brother of Jesus, and according to John's gospel, James didn't always believe the whole "Son of God" thing about his big brother (**John 7:5**)! There actually was a time when Jesus' brothers actually thought He was crazy (**Mark 3:21**). What exactly changed their minds? The resurrection, that's what! *The Bible* tells us, when Jesus rose from the dead he appeared just to his disciples, and then to His brother James (**1 Corinthians 5:7**). Because of this appearing to his brothers, we have the addition of James and Jude (another brother of Jesus) to *The New Testament*. Both men went from being serious doubters, to unwavering believers!

All of these men have stood firmly and have given us their own confirming witness regarding Who Jesus was. We can read their individual testimonies, inspired by The Holy Spirit, in *The New Testament*. They each have confirmed the testimony of The Son of God. So, if The Word of Jesus Himself is not enough for you to believe, consider the testimonies of these men, who were also willing to lay down their lives to give to you the message of the gospel. You can trust in their witness, for they had no earthly reason to lie, but they certainly had a heavenly reason to tell the truth. His Name is Jesus, and He is the only way to God! Anchor yourself to Christ and be careful not to drift away.

The Testimony of The Father

God The Father also confirmed the testimony of Jesus with miraculous signs and wonders. When Jesus walked the earth, He healed the sick, caused the blind to see, and fed the multitudes with scraps of food. Every where He went amazing wonders accompanied His presence. He even tamed mighty storms and stilled the raging waves of the sea. He turned water into wine and even walked upon the water. Each of these wondrous signs were God The Father's confirmation of the Testimony of Christ. If Jesus was not God, then He could not have possibly performed even one of these mighty works! You see, the miracles themselves were God The Father's Testimony about The Son. And The greatest sign of them all... was the RESURRECTION!

Not only by signs and wonders did God give Testimony of His Son, but by the many prophecies that were given about Jesus in The Old Testament. The writer of *Hebrews* relies heavily upon this particular "testimony" to convince his readers that Jesus is, in fact, God. Over three hundred specific prophecies regarding the Messiah are given in *The Old Testament* by the prophets, and Jesus fulfilled them ALL. These fulfilled prophecies are also God The Father's testimony to the message of Christ.

In addition to the miraculous signs and *The Old Testament* prophecies, God also gives us "types and shadows" throughout *The Old Testament* as a kind of "advertisement" of what Jesus would be like. These advertisements were designed to make The Messiah seem familiar and recognizable when He came, even though He had never been seen before! In every story of *The Old Testament*, if you look close enough, you can see Jesus hidden in the text. Take for example Joseph. He was despised by his own brothers, who tore his garments and put him in a pit. He came out of that pit to live among foreigners, who made him second in command, and as such, he eventually saved his people from the great famine. Jesus was despised and rejected by his own people, the Jews, who tore his clothes, crucified Him, and placed Him in a tomb. He came out of the tomb and was widely accepted as Lord by the Gentiles, and *The Bible* tells us that one day He will save His own people (The nation of Israel), as well! I could show you example after example like this from *The Old Testament*, but suffice to say, God The Father has CERTAINLY confirmed the testimony of His Son! So, Anchor yourself to these truths and do not drift away!

The Testimony of The Spirit

If you are truly a child of God this morning, then you have something in common with ALL other believers. That something my friends is The Holy Spirit. When you heard The Word of God and realized you were a sinner, it was The Holy Spirit that revealed this truth to you. When you were convicted of your sins, it was The Holy Spirit who convicted you (**John 16:8**). When you first heard the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ and believed that it was truth, it was The Holy Spirit who led you to believe and convinced you to place your trust in Jesus. Simply put, you would have never come to saving faith apart from the Testimony of The Holy Spirit. Jesus explained this reality to His disciples in **John 16**:

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when He, The Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify Me, because it is from Me that He will receive what He will make known to you. All that belongs to The Father is mine. That is why I said The Spirit will receive from Me what He will make known to you." **John 16:12-15**

You see, it is the Testimony of The Holy Spirit that brings us to Christ in the first place, but that is not all that He does. Once we surrender our lives to Christ, The Spirit indwells every believer and guides them into truth. Do you ever wonder why I am always asking you to say "truth" when I am teaching various points of scripture? It is because I know that The Holy Spirit within you will allow you to recognize spiritual truth when you hear it. To the lost person, *The Bible* is the most difficult of readings and impossible to understand, but to the mind that has been transformed by The Spirit of God, *The Bible* becomes crystal clear (**1 Corinthians 2:14**)! It is The Spirit that enables you to understand The Word of God.

Another part of The Testimony of The Spirit is His giving of "Spiritual Gifts" to EVERY believer in Christ. When you were "born again" of The Spirit, you were given these gifts to enable you to serve in the kingdom of God and to be effective in the ministry of The Church to make disciples. To remain idle and on the sidelines, refusing to use the spiritual gifts with which you were endowed is a sin against God. SO... it is incumbent upon every believer to discover their gifts and to put them to use in The Body of Christ (The Church).

Yet another component of The Spirit's Testimony is His constant reassurance to the believer that they are a Child of God (**Romans 8:16**). Whenever doubt begins to creep into our minds, The Holy Spirit is there acting as a deposit or guarantee (**Ephesians 1:4**) that we are indeed kept safe by Christ Himself! Wow! Come to think of it, The Holy Spirit sure does a lot, doesn't He?! It is His Testimony that BROUGHT us to Christ, and His Testimony that KEEPS us in Christ. So how do we make sure that we are securely tied to and will never drift away from Christ? Keep listening to the voice of The Holy Spirit, that's how! There are many people who "think" that they are right with God, but are only fooling themselves. The person who is right with God will have the indwelling of The Holy Spirit to guide them. Can you hear His voice and feel His presence? If you cannot my friend, then your soul is in grave danger. Listen to the Testimony of Christ, the Testimony of His Apostles, The Testimony of The Father, and The Holy Spirit. Believe, and be tied safely in the harbor that is Christ Jesus, and never let ANYTHING cause you to drift away from His presence! Put your complete faith and trust in Jesus, for **"how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?"**

And ALL of God's people said... TRUTH!!!