

Sermon: Hold on to the Truth

Text: Hebrews 2

Introduction:

The first two chapters of Hebrews are meant to prove that Jesus Christ is superior to angels. Rather than seeing Jesus as a created being, or some form of exalted angel—He should be viewed as what He is: the second person of the Godhead (fully God, fully human). These two chapters use extensive Old Testament quotes to prove this point. The first few verses of chapter 2 feature the first of several **warnings** within the book about the dangers of apostasy (falling away from God). Later chapters will demonstrate that Christ is also superior to other prophets, spiritual leaders, and priests.

Hebrews chapter 2 continues the main theme of chapter 1: Distinguishing Jesus from angels. This chapter includes additional Old Testament quotes in order to make these points. In addition, the writer of Hebrews warns against the dangers of ignoring the message of Christ and refers to the way Jesus became human in order to perfectly serve as our ultimate high priest.

This passage opens with a **warning (Hebrews 2:1–4)**. According to the Scriptures, when God delivers a message and it is ignored, there are consequences. This applies to more than just a take-it-or-leave-it approach to God's message; "drifting" from His truth also results in problems. The Greek of this passage includes terms related both to deliberate sin as well as to mistakes (Hebrews 2:1–2). Regardless of how it happens, moving from truth to error **never ends well**. In the case of this particular message, God has gone to great lengths to provide proof (Hebrews 2:3–4), so there are no good excuses for "drifting."

After that caution, the writer of Hebrews returns to the Old Testament. The purpose is to continue proving that Jesus, the Messiah, is not an angel. He is superior to angels both in His divine nature and as a Savior for mankind. The quotations and arguments used in this passage emphasize the **humanity** of the Messiah (Hebrews 2:5–18). An angel could not experience true humanity—they cannot call mankind "brothers" (Hebrews 2:5–13). Christ became a man, in every respect, in order to **completely destroy** the Devil's power of death and sin over man (Hebrews 2:14–17).

The result is a Savior who understands suffering and temptation personally (Hebrews 2:18). When He offers comfort and encouragement, it's sincere. Jesus can honestly look at our circumstances and say, "I know how you feel. I have been there, too." In order for Jesus to really be the perfect substitute for us, He needed to overcome what we could not: human temptation. This is why Satan attempted to short-circuit Jesus' path to the cross (Matthew 4:1–11; Matthew 26:36–46).

This chapter continues the book of Hebrews' extensive use of Old Testament quotations. As a letter written mostly to a Jewish Christian audience, these references would have been well-known and well-respected. This also means, for us, that understanding those Old Testament references is important when interpreting each passage of this book.

Examination:

Read Hebrews 2:1-4

- What did the writer of Hebrews want his readers to pay attention to? (2:1)
- What danger awaits Christians who carelessly forget the truth? (2:1)
- What happened to those who violated the "message spoken by angels" (that is, the Mosaic Law)? (2:2)
- Who played a major role in delivering the Mosaic Law? (2:2)
- What are the consequences for those who pay no attention to the gospel? (2:3)
- Who revealed the message of "great salvation" to the world? How? (2:3)
- Who confirmed the salvation that Jesus announced? How? (2:3-4)
- What did God do to validate the gospel message? (2:4)
- How did God distribute gifts of the Holy Spirit? (2:4)
- What is the role of each member of the Trinity in delivering the gospel message? (2:3-4)

Read Hebrews 2:5-18

- What is our (as humans) God-given place on earth? (2:6-8)
- What is the relationship between Jesus Christ and the rest of the universe? (2:8)
- What is Christ's present heavenly status? (2:9)
- What actions by Christ led to His current exalted position at the right hand of God? (2:9)
- What was unique about the death that Christ suffered? (2:9) 34. What is God's ultimate goal for us? (2:10)
- What does Christ do to qualify a person for membership in the family of God? (2:11)
- What is the relationship between Christ and those who experience the salvation He gives? (2:11-12)
- What effect did the death of Christ have on Satan and his power? (2:14)
- What effect did the death of Christ have on those who were enslaved to the fear of death? (2:15)
- In what ways is Christ like us? (2:14, 17)
- What makes Christ especially qualified to help Christians when they are being tempted? (2:18)

Application:

Think about the signs or symptoms—internally and externally—that might signal that you're **drifting** from God. There are many Old Testament examples where people ignored God's message (think about Jonah)? How do those examples provide **warnings** that urge us to pay attention God's Word today? What are practical ways we can better pay attention to and **respond** to God in our daily lives? How can the church (King Street) help you hold fast to God and His Word rather than drift from it? Jesus endured suffering as one of us. Remember this truth in this coming week—allow it to "stir up" a trust and a desire to turn to Him in your trials.