

Introduction:

- We are in a series of messages in the month of January on the Word of God.
 - My goal for you is to: Recognizing the Word, Receiving the Word, Releasing the Word
 - The Word Works for those who work the Word...how to.
 - The Integrity of the Word. The Faith is essential to the Christian life. The Word is essential to faith. And Integrity is essential to the Word.
 - The Word Works! So what does it do? Luke 11:5,8,11 The Word is like seed, has life in it.
- Illustration: How many of you have ever been asked the question, "Did you get my text?" Are people actually asking because they want to know if you go it? Or are they really asking if you took the time to read it and give it the necessary attention required? That is God's question to us today... "Did you get My text?"
- *"So we must listen very carefully to the truth we have heard, or we may drift away from it. For the message God delivered through angels has always stood firm, and every violation of the law and every act of disobedience was punished. So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak? And God confirmed the message by giving signs and wonders and various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose."* (Hebrews 2:1-4, NLT)

I. The Last And Greatest Message Hebrews 1

- A. Jesus the Greatest of all God's messages. Hebrews 1 is all about the Son. *"Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven. This shows that the Son is far greater than the angels, just as the name God gave him is greater than their names."* (Hebrews 1:1-4, NLT)
- B. In chapter one of Hebrews there are no commands for the church. We are not told to do a single thing. This whole chapter is a declaration and celebration of God's final and greatest Word to the world...Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is the message and the embodiment of it.
 1. The point of chapter one is this: **something so magnificent and so amazing and so astonishing happened in the coming of the Son of God.**
 2. This is the Hebrew writers way of saying, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God...and the Word became flesh and lived among us!* John 1:1-4" God the Son clothed himself in human flesh as God's final, decisive Word to the world. Not final, in that God would never talk again, but final in that all He has to say is rooted in Jesus, points to Jesus and will be fulfilled in Jesus!
- C. Listen church: *"All the fullness of God is in Jesus (Colossians 2:9). All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Jesus (Colossians 2:3). Beyond what the Old Testament told us, whatever we need to know about God and how he relates to our lives we learn from what we hear and see in God's final, decisive Word, Jesus Christ."* John Piper sermon, April 1996.
- D. Here is what Hebrews 1 is all about, chapter one says that the Son of God:

1. is the heir of all things (v. 2)
 2. made the world (v. 2)
 3. is the radiance of God's glory (v.3)
 4. is the exact representation of God's nature/character (v. 3)
 5. upholds all things by the word (rhema) of his power (v. 3)
 6. made purification for sins (v. 3)
 7. sat down at the right hand of God's majesty (v. 3)
 8. is greater than any angel (v. 4) because angels worship him (v. 6).
 9. is the mighty God (v. 8).
 10. That's the message of chapter one: God has spoken by his Son and His Son is Creator and Sustainer and Owner and Ruler and Redeemer of the world. There are no commands for us here! Only declaration and celebration of the greatness of Jesus, the final Word of God. Jesus the Greatest message ever given!
- E. You can trust Him! from a sermon by Dr. S.M. Lockeridge

II. The Most Important Exhortation and Warning

- A. Chapter 2 begins with "therefore". Or In light of what we have just heard, or in what has just been presented the Hebrew writer says, "Listen or else...we may drift away."
1. The Hebrew writer give us an exhortation followed by a warning.
 2. The warning is the first of five warnings that are given in the book of Hebrews. 2:1-4–The Warning to Pay Attention; 3:7-4:13–The Warning Against Unbelief; 6:4-8–The Warning Against Falling Away; 10:26–31–The Warning Against Deserting Christian Assembly; 12:25-29–The Warning Against Refusing the Lord. Those five warnings in themselves look like the "process of drifting."
- B. The Exhortation: This is the first thing that we are asked to do in the Book of Hebrews. It is a command and not a suggestion. It is a call to live in response to the Greatest Message ever given! What is that command? What is that exhortation?
1. We must "listen very carefully." Listen - Gr. *prosecho* - to hold firmly to a particular belief. To hold firmly to, to attend to, to continue to believe.
 2. The word does not just mean to listen, but to listen to very carefully, to pay attention to what you have hear so that it affects how you live. Ie. Dads instruction to stay clear of the corn rollers on the corn picker. "Listen! Stay clear of these rollers always! One moment of not paying attention can cost you your life!" I have been telling us all along that we would be running daily to this book if we actually believed it to be God's Word to us.
 3. So, with this command to listen to the Son, what are you listening to? How does your listening to the Son of God compare to your listening to other things? We listen to lots of things these days...after all we are a 'wireless' generation. We are set up to not miss a program, a text, an email, an episode or a FB post. We are plugged in, High Definition, and satellite connected but are we...connected to God?
 - a) IE. as a teenager I was always listening to a radio, record, 8 track or cassette. And that really puzzled my parents,...who could not figure out why I could not rememberto just do..... a few simple chores.. around the house.... correctly. The Truth is I wasn't all that

interestedin doing chores. I did not listen.... I tuned..... it out. Are you interested in Him/Jesus? or tuning Him out?

- b) When we really want to listen to something we do it. When we really want to hear something we pay close attention. So how does that compare with your listening to God or... are you drifting? This is the point the Hebrew writer is making: It is exceedingly necessary that you pay careful attention to the Message...The Word. Listen to him. Consider him. Focus on him. Spend timewith him.
- c) IE. In the 1960s John Lennon was quoted as saying the Beatles were more popular than Jesus. I can remember a child my parents talking about it. Lennon was demonized for it. If I have my facts right, he was being asked about the state of the church in England. Beatles concerts were sold out every night...the church had lots of empty seats. The Brits could tell you all about John, Paul, George and Ringo but little about Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. People were not interested. They had drifted. Things of the world had become more important. The text is telling us that if we choose not to listen to Jesus then we are neglecting 'such a great salvation.'" Heb 12:1-2 "*Let us fix our eyes on Jesus!/The Word.*" The exhortation: Listen!
- C. The Warning: if you do not listen, you may drift away. The price of drifting?
1. Drift- To flow by, slip away, to move aimlessly. What does it mean to drift? It means to neglect the message in our passage. It means to be moving without being unaware of your movement or where you are going. Ie. Fishing and drifting in boat while fixing lure...end up in mangrove. Ie. Drift into oncoming traffic while texting. Ie. While cultivating beans drift to one side and plow out a section of a row...actually several rows. My dad would tease me and say, "Lightning struck there, huh son?"
 2. How can I know if I am drifting? It is easy: There is no urgency. No vigilance. No focused listening or considering or fixing the eyes on Jesus. And the result has not been a standing still, but a drifting away. How can I know if I am drifting?
 - a) My sense of wonder in God begins to wane.
 - b) My intimacy with God has become ancient history.
 - c) My love for the Word of God has become less and less.
 - d) I am less and less aware of the downward pull of the world and the devil.
 - e) I no longer do the basics of the faith with joy.
 - f) I am no longer stirred by Christ and the cross.
 3. Why do we drift?
 - a) We drift because of neglect. We neglect because we no longer consider something of value.
 - b) We lose our first love. Our hearts slowly grow cold.
 - c) Something else captures our attention.
 - d) We do not remain focused. We let up. And soon follow our flesh. Deceitfulness of riches and lust of other things. Ie. Parable of soil-seed fell on good soil, sprang up but was choked out by weeds.
 4. Drifting/neglect of The Message puts us in danger of two things
 - a) Judgment - Ignoring God never goes well for anyone.

b) Destruction -Drifting long enough can eventually lead to destruction.

III. **The Call to Hold On To the Word**

- A. The call to listen carefully is a call to pay attention. *"It's crucial that we **keep a firm grip on what we've heard so that we don't drift off.**"* (Hebrews 2:1, The Message)
1. Keep a firm grip. Drifting is so easy. I.e. Fishing...fixing lure on windy day...drifted into a mangrove got rods tangles, spiders in the boat...I never knew I was drifting. I.E. Around the corn pickers and power take offs, I had to pay attention to what my dad had said if I wanted to live long.
 2. The call is not to let this message...The Word...Jesus... out of my sight! Cling to the message of God's Son like it's the most important thing in your life...because it is!
- B. Do the basics: Consider what God is saying.
1. Be in church on Sunday unless you're sick or out of town. Position yourself to receive from God.
 2. Get connected. Accountable. It's about being disciplined...may I suggest a small group.
 3. Get your nose in the Bible.
 4. Spending that time in prayer.

Conclusion:

- We have been given the best message ever! Jesus!
- That message demands a response. To do nothing is a response. To drift is a response. To pursue with all our heart is a response.
- Fix your eyes on Jesus. Her. 12:1-3. All about finishing the race.
 - Strip off the weight - the sin, and sinful attitudes that so easily entangle.
 - Run with endurance - prepare for the long haul. This will take time.
 - Fix your eyes on Jesus - he is our example of one who finished
 - Think of what He endured...for you! Let His love motivate you.