

(1) Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 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? 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.

(5) Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere,

“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.”

(8b) Now in putting everything in subjection to Him, He left nothing outside His control. At present, we do not see everything in subjection to Him. But we see Him who, for a little while, was made lower than 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.

Think on these things:

- 1) “Therefore” in v.1 points us back to what we learned in chapter one. We are directed to “pay much closer attention to what we have heard.” Why are we to pay closer attention now? Consider Hebrews 1:2-4 and 13-14.

God's previous messages to mankind came from prophets and angels, but the message of salvation comes directly from God the Son, Jesus. His message and work is FAR superior to that of angels.

- 2) According to v.1b, what is a possibility for people who have heard and responded to God's word?

There is the possibility that we will “drift away” from God's salvation.

- 3) In v.3 it asks, “How shall we escape...?” What --- in the human experience --- do you think we are trying to escape anyway?

People who are disillusioned, who feel life is ‘meaningless’, seek to end existence altogether. Most everyone grapples with dying and the life beyond (eternal life [heaven] or death [hell]).

- 4) Do you consider your personal salvation “great”? What kinds of things make it this special to you?

Personal responses. Perhaps something like this – Yes. Who am I? Nobody. When I'm dead and gone, no one beyond my immediate grandchildren will even remember me. But for all my shortcomings and sins, Jesus loves ME and gave Himself to pay for my sins. I have a hope and a blessed future awaiting me. Therefore, I have no reluctance to worship and serve my Creator.

- 5) An important truth about being saved is that only Jesus can do this for you. This statement is met with rejection by people of other faiths and of no faith. Essentially, why do Christians think they only are correct about the meaning of life, and life after death?! What did Jesus say about Himself in John 14:6, and have you any advice for helping others accept this statement?

Jesus says He is the ONLY way to God; no one comes to God except through Him (John 14). Jesus is also truth and life. Personal response (advice) like - My goal is to introduce others to Jesus so they can decide for themselves.

- 6) The message proclaimed by Jesus has been passed down to us by those who directly heard Him (v.3, primarily the disciples, but also the people from the crowds who heard Him). What further testimony is identified in v.4 regarding how God authenticated Jesus' message through others?

God worked signs, wonders and miracles through those who believed Jesus and carried His message to the world. And in the Church community, the Holy Spirit gifts believers for service to the body of believers in that fellowship (my own church).

- 7) God the Father has subjected "the world to come" to Jesus' authority (see Philippians 2:9-11). Is that also true today in our present world (v.8b)? Explain. Consider Matthew 7:13-14.

No, this is not yet fulfilled. Many --- most --- do not accept the authority of Jesus. The path of destruction is wide, but "narrow" is the road to salvation → and "few" will find it!

- 8) How is the "grace of God" explained in v.9?

Jesus took on human flesh, and then suffered death as all humans do. God did not die; but Jesus, in human form, did so that He could experience what we all fear and go through.

- 9) What's your opinion? Why do you think so many people neglect and reject the Great Salvation offered through Jesus Christ? What did it take for you to come to a point of acceptance?

Why? Personal opinion. Some ideas are: Some have not heard the Gospel, though maybe they have heard about Christianity. Others raised in a Christian world rejected faith because they were harmed by other peoples' sins. Many grew up without any real exposure to or training in this faith. Not much thought has been given to life's purpose and meaning; they focus on themselves and what suits their needs and wants.

What did it take for me? Personal testimony. Author's note: I've always had a keen sense of right and wrong. I found when learning the truth about my sinful self that it created a burden and crisis within me. I became desperate to find a way out of sin and this crushing burden --- a better way! Jesus showed me that way.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: