**Slowly Drifting – Signs of Apostasy**

*Hebrews 2:1-4*

**Introduction**

1. Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians who were turning away from Christ.
   1. They were influenced by Judaizers.
   2. They were persecuted.
2. The epistle is filled with comparisons between the Old Law and New Law. The theme is essentially, “Christ is Better!”
   1. Superior to the prophets **(cf. 1:1-4)**.
   2. Superior to the angels **(cf. 1:5-6)**.
3. The writer then begins the second chapter with an exhortation to avoid drifting away **(cf. 2:1-4)**.
   1. The word spoken through angels and prophets proved steadfast **(v. 2)**.
   2. The Salvation was spoken of by Jesus Himself, the inspired apostles, and was backed with miracles **(v. 3-4)**.
   3. They had better get their lives straight!
4. Drifting away – to flow by, i.e. carelessly pass (Strong)
   1. Is often used to describe a ship drifting off course by a subtle current or wind.
   2. It is not something that happens quickly, but gradually.
   3. **It can occur when anyone fails to pay attention for a time. It is the product of neglect and/or indifference.**
5. The following are four gradually progressive steps that lead to an ultimate and absolute apostasy.
6. Desire for a Positive Message
7. The effect of gospel preaching – offense.
   1. **Acts 2:36-39** – Peter preached Christ crucified to those who crucified Christ.
      1. The gospel is meant to point out the wrong so there can be a change **(cf. 2 Timothy 3:16-17)**.
      2. Sorrow is a must **(cf. 2 Corinthians 7:10)!**
   2. **Acts 7:51-54, 57** – The same message was preached – they had crucified Christ.
      1. The effect was essentially the same – offense.
      2. However, the heart of the people differed 🡪
8. What most people want – positive preaching.
   1. **2 Timothy 4:2-4** – **The ultimate desire is not for legitimate security (which only God can provide), but for bliss in ignorance and temporary pleasure.**
   2. **1 Kings 22:7-8** – Ahab, king of Israel, speaking of the true prophet Micaiah.
      1. Wishing to fight at Ramoth Gilead.
      2. Jehoshaphat (king of Judah) wanted to see what God said on the matter.
   3. God will tell us truth that will ultimately be the best for us. However, that is not what men want to hear the majority of the time, so they allow themselves to be deceived (**cf. Isaiah 30:8-11**).
9. Deficiency in Bible Knowledge
10. God’s word is historically consistently negative.
    1. **Jeremiah 1:9-10** – GOD spoke through Jeremiah. The words were from GOD!
       1. The mission God set Jeremiah on was primarily negative.
       2. 4/6 general descriptions are negative.
    2. **People need to know what they are doing wrong so they can eradicate it and do right instead.**
11. This continues in the New Testament.
    1. **2 Corinthians 10:3-6** – There is an opposition we face that must be combatted. This requires negative measures.
    2. **Acts 20:27** – Paul preached the WHOLE counsel of God. You cannot do so with purely positive preaching **(v. 29-31)**.
12. Misdirected Moral Compass
13. Lack of bible knowledge results in an inability to discern both good and evil.
    1. **Hebrews 5:12-14** – Due to a lack of diligence these Christians did not know good from evil.
    2. **If attention is not given to what is wrong, we won’t know it is wrong!**
14. The Devil needs identifying!
    1. **1 Peter 5:8-9** – we must be actively watching.
    2. **The whole concept of vigilance requires giving time to negatives (what is wrong, what to avoid, what happens when we don’t avoid).**
15. Total Rejection of Truth
16. The transcendent danger of apostasy is in its finality.
    1. Whenever an individual rejects that which saved him, there is nothing left!
    2. **2 Peter 2:20-22** – There is only one good news, one way to salvation, one savior. When we are saved by those things, and then reject them, there is nothing left (other than those things we already know) that can help us.
17. Impossibility for someone to renew another who has rejected Christ after having been saved by Him – **Hebrews 6:4-6**
    1. He can still repent, but there is nothing new we can tell that person. He has already known the things we can tell him that can save him.
    2. **10:26-31** – We cannot be saved if we hold that which God has given for salvation in contempt.

**Conclusion**

1. Apostasy is very dangerous, and very possible!
2. We must ever be on alert!
3. ***“Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God” (Hebrews 3:12)***.