

Warning to Pay Attention - Are You Drifting?

Hebrews 2:1-3 – NIV - Warning to Pay Attention

1 We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, **so that we do not drift away.**

2 For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment,

3 how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.

Billy Norris writes of a tragic event that resulted from "drifting":

"Two young men were fishing above a low dam on a river near their hometown. As they were concentrating on catching fish, they were **unaware that they had drifted** until they were not far from the water flowing over the dam. When they realized their situation, **the current near the dam had become too powerful for them to keep their boat from going over.** Below the dam the water was dashing with strong force over great boulders and through crevices in the rocks.

Caught by the swirling waters under the rocks, they never came to the surface. After days of relentless searching, the divers finally found one body, and then, two or three days later, the other." (**Gospel Guide**)

The danger of drifting is not limited to the physical realm.

Hebrews 2:1- We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard.... **We find a warning against drifting**

Sadly, it is **not uncommon** for Christians to drift toward destruction!

"Are You Drifting?" Would you know it if you were?

In this lesson I hope to **warn us about the danger of drifting away** from the Lord.

THINGS WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT DRIFTING

DRIFTING REQUIRES NO EFFORT

Just stop oaring or against the wind, and a boater will begin to drift

The same is true for the Christian, which is why we are told:

We must pay the most careful attention - Hebrews 2:1

IT IS AN UNCONSCIOUS PROCESS

It is possible to drift unaware.

- In a boat, the undercurrents are often unnoticeable from the surface
- In a plane, the wind forces move the plane without you realizing it.

The same is true in the spiritual realm

- Many individual Christians have slowly drifted away.
- Many churches have gradually drifted into error
-- Only one day to find themselves far removed from the Scriptures.

WE NEVER DRIFT UPSTREAM OR AGAINST THE TIDE

Faithfulness to the Lord is like oaring upstream. You must constantly be "adding to your faith..."

2 Peter 1:5 - ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to **add to your faith** goodness; and to goodness, **knowledge**.

You must continue to grow –

2 Peter 3:18 - ¹⁸ But **grow in** the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

-- ***The moment you stop growing, you start going backwards or downwards!***

THE SPEED DOWNSTREAM INCREASES

The dangers increase with the speed of the drift.

When we can hear the noise of the waterfall, it is already too late.

When we lose sight of land, it is more difficult to discern that **we are drifting**.

As we move farther & farther from God, we care less & less about what we do!

IT IS DANGEROUS TO OTHERS

A ship, just drifting, is a hazard to all other vessels at sea

Parents who are just drifting, will soon lose golden opportunities to teach their children –

Ephesians 6:4 - ⁴ Parents, don't be hard on your children. Raise them properly. Teach them and instruct them about the Lord.

Many are tossed to and from and carried about by every wind.

IT ENDS IN SHIPWRECK

A boat adrift will crash on the rocks or go over the falls.

For those who drift spiritually through their own neglect, there shall be no escape from a just punishment - Hebrews 2:1-3

The danger of drifting is real, or there would be no need to warn against it.

So again, I ask, "Are You Drifting?"

To help answer the question, here are some...

COMMON SIGNS OF DRIFTING

DIMINISHING DESIRE TO STUDY GOD'S WORD AND PRAY

The Bible is a unique book - a source of information not found anywhere else.

- Without God's revelation, how could we truly know our origin, purpose, and destiny?

- It tells us of sin's dreadful consequences, and how God saves us from sin.
- It provides direction for living happy, useful lives - Psalm 1:1-3
 -- *When one loses their desire to study God's word, they are drifting!*

Prayer is a wonderful blessing - an avenue to communicate with God!

- Jesus, who loved His Father, often prayed - Mark 1:35; 6:46
- He expressed concern that His disciples not grow weary to pray - Luke 18:1
 -- When the Christian prays less and less, he is drifting more and more!

DIMINISHING DESIRE TO BE WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

This includes attending services to worship God.

- One should always **have the attitude of the Psalmist** –

Psalm 122:1 I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.”

- If we no longer rejoice in the worship of God in the presence of others, ***we are drifting!***

Fellowship with God's people **extends beyond the services** of the church.

- We are to be concerned with **edifying one another** –

Romans 14:19 - ¹⁹ We should try to live at peace and help each other have a strong faith.

- **Such edification should occur even daily** –

Hebrews 3:13 - ¹³ But **encourage one another** daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

- For the right kind of friendship **strengthens us**, while the wrong kind **leads us to sin** –

1 Corinthians 15:33 - Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”
 -- When a Christian prefers the companionship of people of the world, rather than fellow Christians, he is **drifting toward the rocks of spiritual destruction!**

DIMINISHING DESIRE TO SHARE THE GOSPEL

When one obeys the gospel, he knows God has blotted out his sins, made him a new creature in Christ, and **he wants to tell the world about Jesus** -

Acts 8:4 - Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

When a Christian **no longer has the desire** to take the message of salvation to others, ***they are drifting!***

INCREASING THRILL OVER THINGS OF THE WORLD...

Such as greater thrill over worldly honors; for example:

- Parents of one young man were excited beyond measure over a worldly honor he had received.
- They had never demonstrated such emotion over spiritual matters.
- Within the passing time, ***the entire family had drifted*** beyond the point of no return.

John warns us against the love of the world and the things in the world –

1 John 2:15-17 - On Not Loving the World

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Such as increasing enjoyment in worldly pleasures

- Paul described some who were "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" - **2Timothy 3:4**
- If we reach the point when we find more pleasure in some worldly activity than meeting with others to worship God, ***we are spiritually adrift!***

Such are some of the signs of drifting away from God!!!!!!

If we are to remain close to God, it will not be easy. Here are...

REMEDIES AGAINST DRIFTING

KEEP ROWING

- Spiritually speaking, this **involves diligence** -
- It also means to **keep abounding in** our Christian graces -
- There is no place for "retirement" in ***living the life of a Christian!***

WATCH OUT FOR UNDERCURRENTS

- We must **always** be on guard against the undercurrent of temptation.
- For we have **a fleshly nature** which wages war against the soul.

1 Peter 2:11 - Living Godly Lives in a Pagan Society

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to **abstain from sinful desires**, which wage war against your soul.

EXPECT TO GO AGAINST THE TIDE

There are **many tides to sweep us away**.

- **Popularity**, peer pressure, the praise of others
- **Modernism**, skepticism, humanism
- **Denominationalism** - false doctrines of all kinds
- **Liberalism** and worldliness in the church - probably the greatest enemies of the church in our lifetime
- **Neglect**, indifference, apathy, lack of interest and concern

If one drifts along with the majority, they certainty will be lost.

Matthew 7:13-14 - The Narrow and Wide Gates

13 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

WE MUST HAVE STRONG ANCHORAGE

Rooted and grounded in Christ - Minds must be **anchored to the truth** -
Possessing an **unshakable hope** - **Rooted and grounded in the love of Christ** -

CLOSE: Are we drifting? - The danger is real; we would be foolish to say otherwise!

- **Many have drifted away from the Lord; we would be arrogant to say it could not happen to us!**

Are there **signs of drifting in your life?**

Honestly ask yourself:

- Is my desire to study God's word and pray **diminishing?**
- Is my desire to be with God's people **not what it has been in the past?**
- Have I lost my desire **to save those who are lost?**
- Am I too much enamored **by the things of the world? IF SO.....**

If in any way we must confess that we are drifting, give earnest heed as warned by the writer to the Hebrews: Hebrews 2:1-3 - Warning to Pay Attention –

We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

Our salvation in Christ is simply too great for us to neglect!