

Hebrews 2:1-4; "Danger: Beware of Drifting" September 08, 2024

I. Welcome

A. Good morning! Ohayogozaimasu! Welcome to Calvary Chapel Iwakuni.

1. *Welcome any new faces and those streaming online.*

B. Before we continue any further, let's go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School class.

1. And the Bible English class as well. (2<sup>nd</sup> Service)

C. As the kids make their way out, will the rest of you please make your way Hebrews chapter 2?

1. Last week we began a section of Hebrews that looks to compare Jesus, by whom God has chosen to speak in these last days, to the angels of God; messengers whom God used to bring the OT Law to Moses.

2. And this section actually continues into chapter 2.

3. In chapter 1, the author highlighted from the OT Scriptures how Jesus was better than the angels.

a. Jesus is better than the angels because He has a more excellent name than they do. Because He is not only the Son of God, but is also God in the flesh. He is better than the angels because God has called the angels to both worship and serve Jesus.

b. He is better because of the anointing God had put upon Him. He is better because He is the creator of all things, including the angels.

c. He is better because of His eternal reign over God's kingdom which the angels are part of. He is better because He is unchanging throughout all of eternity, He is better because unlike the angels who continue to minister and serve, Jesus has completed the mission God sent Him upon and now sits at the right hand of God.

4. So many things show the superiority of Jesus over the angels. And the author isn't done. As I mentioned, he will continue to build this case through to the end of chapter 2.

D. But, before he continues to build his case of Jesus' superiority over the angels, the author pauses and gives to us a very stern warning.

1. This is something the author does repeatedly throughout this book. He will be in the midst of presenting an *argument* and then pause to make an *application*. He will be in the midst of great *exposition* and then all of a sudden, as if spurred by the Holy Spirit stop to give great *exhortation*.

2. And many of these applications and exhortations the author has for his audience come in the form of great warnings.

3. You may recall that when we did the overview of the book of Hebrews, I mentioned how there are some today who really don't like to read the book of Hebrews because it shakes their systematic theologies, their man-made theological systems, it makes them feel a little too uncomfortable, it throws a wrench into some of their well thought out beliefs. Beliefs they hold near and dear to their hearts.

4. These warnings the author brings up are the areas where people feel the most uncomfortable. And I wonder if that isn't the objective of the author. To shake the reader up a bit and get them to pay attention to what he is saying.

5. In the book of Hebrews there are five such warnings that the author gives while in the midst of his arguments towards the superiority and supremacy of Christ.

6. Some of them are short and simple, others are a bit longer and complex. The warnings seem to get stronger and stronger as you make your way through the book.

7. This morning, we come to the first of the author's warnings.

E. Our text this morning is going to be Hebrews chapter 2 verses 1-4. And the title of our study is going to be "**Danger: Beware of Drifting!**"

1. Hopefully you've opened up your Bible to Hebrews by now and are ready to get into His Word. I'd like to invite you to rise to your feet in honor of God and His word.

2. I'm going to read through our text from my Bible, I'm reading from the NKJV of the Bible, if you have a different translation I want to encourage you to do your best to follow along in your Bible as I read from mine.

3. Again, our text is Hebrews chapter 2 verses 1-4. The author pauses his argument regarding the superiority of Jesus over the angels to give us this important application beginning in verse 1. He writes... (*R & P*)

II. Intro & Outline

A. As some of you know, my family and I lived in Okinawa, Japan for 10 years prior to moving here to Iwakuni.

1. And if anyone has spent any good amount of time in Okinawa, you should know all too well about the infamous habu snake.

2. The habu snake is extremely dangerous and a bite from one can even be life threatening.

3. When we lived in Okinawa we lived right next to this huge park called Comprehensive Park. And it has all sorts of different activities to do there; the park has basketball courts, tennis courts, soccer fields, baseball fields, a water park, and various jungle gyms.

4. The park is huge. It is over 700,000m<sup>2</sup> and it has paved trails throughout it; a 3k trail, a 4k trail, and a 5k trail that would lead you throughout the park. But alongside those paved trails were small signs everywhere that read "WARNING: HABU". (**see photo**)

5. These signs were everywhere. And don't let the cute little caricature fool you. These guys were scary.

6. Throughout the park these signs lined the paved track ways and other areas next to trees, bushes and various foliage.

7. And no one dared step off the paved paths in fear of encountering a habu. My kids would play at the park for hours on end, but they would

never go into the foliage that was throughout the park. They knew better. If their ball or something went into the bushes it was gone, there was no way we were going to go fetch it.

8. Habus are no joke. You don't want to come across one. They are aggressive and their venom can be deadly. And if you saw signs telling you to beware, you listened, you heeded that warning and stayed as far away as possible.
- B. In our text this morning, the author is presenting a warning sign of his own.
1. A warning sign that we would be wise to heed. Because if we don't heed the warning, we may end up paying a very costly price.
- C. Now, as I mentioned, many people struggle with the warnings that are found in this book, mainly because these warnings often deal with the thought or idea of apostasy.
1. Apostasy is the word used in the bible to describe people who abandon or renounce their religious faith; those who fall away from the faith, or turn from the truth. It would seem to suggest that someone could willfully turn from their faith in Christ and His gospel message of grace.
  2. The idea of apostasy is challenged by some Christian denominational groups and many who hold certain backgrounds and who adhere to certain systematic theologies. They will assert that apostasy is not possible for a believer in Jesus Christ.
  3. Often they will try to change what the Bible means by apostasy, stating something to the effect of an apostate is essentially a false believer, or a false convert. They looked and acted like a believer, but they never really were a true believer in Christ and so it only *appears* that they are apostate when they seemingly depart or fall away from the faith.
  4. But that isn't what apostasy means. Apostasy means a forsaking of the truth. It isn't a description of someone who pretended to believe, it is a description of someone who did believe something and then turned from that belief. That is what apostasy means.
  5. And the Bible has multiple warnings about apostasy, and not just in the book of Hebrews.
    - a. 1 Timothy 4:1 states, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons," (1 Tim. 4:1)
    - b. Jesus said at the beginning of His Olivet Discourse that His disciples "will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and" [how they] "will be hated by all nations because of Christ". He continued saying that "at that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other" (Mt. 24:9-10; NIV)
    - c. Peter writes in 2 Peter, "You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;" (2 Pt. 3:17)
  - d. Paul rebukes the Galatians when he writes "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace." (Gal. 5:4)
6. Why would the NT writers warn us over and over about falling away, or turning from the faith, or departing from the faith if that isn't a real possibility? It would seem to be a waste, or worse an empty threat, if indeed it is impossible to turn from the faith.
  7. And this thought is difficult for many to wrap their minds around and accept. And for good reason. The Bible seems to give us an assurance that when we come to faith in Christ that the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us, abides in us if you will, and seals us until the day we enter into eternity before the Lord.
    - a. And I would agree. It seems the Bible does teach that. The idea that we are eternally secure in Christ is something that Bible does teach. So how do we deal with this?
  8. I like to turn to what Jesus has to say in John chapter 15.
    - a. Jesus said, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned." (Jn. 15:4-6)
    - b. It would seem that the major key for us to understand is this idea of abiding; abiding in Christ. Jesus makes it very clear, that as long as we abide in Him, we will be just fine.
      - i. If we stick close to Jesus, connected to Him, abiding in Him, He will be with us and we need not worry about anything.
      - ii. However, as verse 6 states, if anyone does not abide in Christ, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.
    - c. Abiding in Jesus doesn't mean we're perfect, we'll still fall short, we'll still sin. What it means is that we stay connected with Him even when we do blow it. We confess our sin, we repent from our sin, we seek to live a life free from sin.
    - d. Sin separates us from God, it drives us away from Him, and so I won't want to have anything to do with something that tries to separate me from God. Abiding in Christ makes me want to be close to Him, plugged into Him, growing in and through Him.
  9. I don't know how to reconcile these seemingly parallel truths about our security in Christ and the possibility of falling away from Christ.
    - a. But what I do know is that if I simply stick close to Jesus and desire to honor Him with my life, I won't have to worry about a thing.

- b. Jesus will be with me, He won't leave me nor forsake me and He will see me through whatever comes my way. I am secure in Christ and I don't need to worry about losing that security in Him.

D. Now, back to the warning we have here in Hebrews chapter 2. Read with me again our opening verse.

### III. Hebrews 2:1; The Need to Keep the Course

A. The verse begins with the word "therefore" and any time we come across this word we know that it is about to make a point that is connected to the preceding material.

1. Chapter 1 built the case that God in these final days has chosen to speak to us through the Son. He has chosen to reveal Himself and His will through Jesus.
2. Previously, God used prophets, and He used angels as His messengers, but Jesus is greater than the prophets and the angels. *Therefore...* we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

B. The author uses some very descriptive and firm language here.

1. He says "we must". This wasn't optional. This wasn't just a mere suggestion of something the Jewish believers could do. It was something they must do. And notice that the author includes himself in this exhortation. It's "we must", not "you must".
2. He says "we must give the more earnest heed". He doesn't say that we must "give heed", but that we must give "the more earnest heed".
  - a. The phrase "the more earnest" is one word in the Greek. It is an adverb of comparative degree. It is greater than the word "abundantly". It is exceedingly, much more; it is more superabundantly. The author couldn't have used a greater word to describe the urgency of this call to give heed.
3. Speaking of which, that term "give heed" is another interesting word. It is actually a nautical term. It means to hold a ship in a certain direction, to sail towards a specific heading and not to turn from it. It means to stay the course; to not deviate from the plan.
4. Understanding the author's use of this nautical term, allows us to better understand the warning he gives about drifting away. This too is a nautical term.
  - a. It means to float by or drift past as a ship, or to flow past as a river. Figuratively it means to slip away, suggesting a gradual and almost unnoticed movement past a certain point.
  - b. Have you ever been out in a boat on a lake or a river before? On a river it's more noticeable because of the current, but on a lake, it can be very subtle. If your boat is just sitting in the water and it isn't secured to anything, nor being propelled by the motor, it will inevitably start drifting, it'll start floating away without you even noticing it. That's the idea here.

5. Putting it all together we understand the weight and magnitude of what the author is saying. We must with great urgency keep the course and not allow ourselves to slowly drift away.

- a. For the recipients of this letter, we understand that this warning about drifting away is connected to the idea of them continuing in the faith they had received through Christ.
- b. They needed to stay the course, to continue in the grace of God, to continue pursuing Christ despite the persecution they were experiencing.
- c. Perhaps some of them were thinking that with this new wave of persecution that was coming down from the Roman empire that maybe it would be best to just sit back for a while. You know put it in neutral, to just sit idly by in hopes that the waves would roll past them without any harm.
- d. The author urges them, do not do that. Now is not the time to sit idly by and simply drift along with the flow of things. They need to continue following after the Lord, to keep the heading, to stay the course, to not turn away from their pursuit of Christ.

6. And this is something that applies to us as well. Just as the Hebrews needed to keep the course and continue pursuing Christ **we too must do the same.**

- a. We can't put it in neutral and just slowly, aimlessly drift on by. We need to keep it in gear, to continue following after Christ all of our days, lest we drift away.
- b. Paul the apostle challenges us when he says "Not that I have attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (**Phil. 3:12-14**)
- c. If anyone could have ever slowed down a bit and put it in neutral and just coasted for a little while we would think it would be someone like Paul, but no. He pushes forward. He knows God still has more for him and he isn't going to stop pressing forward until he reaches the prize of the upward call. Until He meets His savior face to face.
- d. We need to have that same determination. We can't afford to take it easy and simply drift or coast along. We need to kick it in to gear and press forward to that which God has called each of us to do.
- e. If we're not moving forward in our walk with the Lord and what He has called us to, then we run the risk of drifting away.
- f. Drifting away from what you may wonder? Well, let's just say, drifting away from what God has called you to, drifting further and further away from what God wants for your life.

g. Is there a limit to how far one could drift? Frankly, I don't know, and I don't want to find out. And hopefully you feel the same.

C. Let's continue in our text and see what else the Lord has for us. Take a look at verse 2 and the first part of verse 3.

#### IV. Hebrews 2:2-3a; Repercussions for Neglecting our Salvation

A. Verse 2 starts "For if", and this sentence is what is considered a first class conditional sentence in the Greek. Which means that the statement being made is assumed to be true from the author's perspective. So the word "if" could just as easily be written as "since" or "because"

1. Since the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward [or punishment, retribution, or penalty your translation may read], how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation.
2. Do you see what the author is doing here? He's building a case.
3. If and since the word spoken through angels [which refers to the Old Testament Law that was given to Moses], if it proved to be steadfast, reliable, trustworthy, and dependable is the sense of the word used here. And everyone who disobeyed it and transgressed it were held accountable and disciplined or punished for it, how much more will we be held accountable and potentially disciplined seeing as how we have received a greater message and a greater spokesman than those who received the OT.
4. In chapter 1 the author made the point that Jesus is better than the prophets and better than the angels. And how God has chosen to speak and reveal Himself through His Son.
  - a. And since that is true, the Son's message carries more weight and more authority than the message of angels and prophets. It is more substantial.
5. Therefore there stands a reasonable expectation of discipline and judgment for those who neglect the message of salvation that has been brought to us through Christ. **We will be held accountable** for what we do with the gospel message we've received.
6. Jesus speaks a parable in the gospel of Matthew we commonly refer to as "the parable of the talents". In this parable a man is traveling to a far country but before he leaves, he gives to his servants various amounts of money, talents; to one he gave five talents, to another he gave two talents, and to one he gave one talent.
  - a. And the first two went and traded and invested the talents given to them so that they doubled what the master gave them initially. The guy with five made it into ten, the one with two made it into four. But the one servant who was given one talent went a buried that talent doing nothing with it.
  - b. When the master returned, he settled accounts with them. He praised the first two for their faithful stewardship of what was given to

them, but the third one he rebuked harshly because he did not do anything at all with his master's talent. He simply hid it away and then returned it to the master. The master rebuked him sharply, removed the talent from his servant and gave it to the first servant who had a total of ten talents.

- c. And these were the concluding words of the master, "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (**Mt. 25:29-30**)
  - d. Now in that parable the talent is representative of a measure of faith. God gives to each of us a measure of faith. Those who exercise their faith and put their faith into action are rewarded. Those who do nothing with the measure of faith God has given to them and simply give it back to God will end up being cast from the presence of the master into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, a clear reference to hell.
  - e. God expects us to do something with our faith. He expects us to invest in His Kingdom, to build up His church, to minister to one another, to reach out to the lost, to share with the world around us.
  - f. How are you actively investing your faith in Christ? How are you being busy about the Lord's business in developing His Kingdom? Are you doing anything with your faith? Are you putting it into practice at all?
- B. If not, you may be guilty of what the author writes about here. You may be neglecting this great message of salvation we've received.
1. And note here that it says "neglect" and not "reject". The author isn't talking about a rejection of the message of Christ, he isn't talking about apostasy necessarily, but rather a form of neglect that can be done regarding the message of the gospel.
  2. The word "neglect" in the Greek is the word "ameleo" [am-el-eh-o]. It comes from the word "ameles" which is the combination of the Greek prefix "a" which means without and "melei" which means to show concern or care. Putting them together we understand that this word means without care or concern.
    - a. In this context the idea is that one does not care about, nor is he concerned at all, with the gospel message. He ignores it or disregards it simply because he doesn't care about it anymore.
    - b. This isn't to say that he didn't care about it at one time. The author is indeed writing to Jewish believers after all. These people have expressed an interest in the gospel message and presumably have made a profession of faith. But for whatever reason their care and interest for the gospel has faded to the point where they care little at all about it.

3. The author is warning against such thoughts and attitudes towards the message of salvation that has come to us and is assuring the readers that if they do neglect it, there is a certain expectation of punishment.
  - a. When he asks, "how shall we escape?" it is a rhetorical question. The implied answer is that we won't. It is an impossibility. If the message that came through the angels resulted in punishment and people being held accountable, then this message that comes through Christ will also carry with it a certain expectation of punishment and accountability.
4. It is my belief that more spiritual problems are caused by neglect than perhaps by any other failure on our part. People don't struggle with their faith because they all of a sudden fall off a cliff and dive headlong into sin. It usually can all be traced back to this idea of neglect that leads to a slow drifting away from where we once were in our relationship with the Lord.
5. So, how does this happen? How can one neglect this great message of salvation that we have received? Well, it isn't all that hard to figure out.
  - a. It happens when we neglect God's Word and no longer spend any time with the Lord in personal devotions. We just stop reading the Bible, or don't have a hunger for it at all.
  - b. It happens when we neglect prayer. We don't communicate with the Lord anymore. Our prayer life becomes less and less of a discipline and more and more of some heartless routine.
  - c. It happens when we neglect gathering together for worship with other believers in fellowship with one another. Gathering for church just becomes less and less of a priority for you.
  - d. It happens when we ignore any opportunities for spiritual growth. We no longer volunteer to serve at church, to minister to others, to bring edification and encouragement to the body of Christ. We don't allow ourselves to be stretched at all.
  - e. These are all things that will lead to neglect and result in a slow drifting away from the Lord and His great salvation.
6. And the crazy thing is that it isn't that you will deny those things are important. You'll still affirm that reading your bible is important, you'll still encourage others to pray, and gather for church. You'll still talk about how important it is to serve and be used by the Lord. You just won't do it yourself. And why is that?
  - a. Well, it's possible that you've simply allowed yourself to get too busy. You've filled your calendar with things that, at the time, seemed more important.
  - b. Or maybe it is a problem with carnality and a certain sin in your life. You've allowed yourself to get tangled into some habits you know are not pleasing to the Lord.
    - c. It could be those things. But more often than not, the primary reason why people neglect their faith and slowly start to drift is not because of busyness or carnality, it is because of familiarity.
    - d. We don't read the Bible anymore because we think "*Well, I've already read it before. I know what it says.*" We don't study the Bible because "*I've done that before, I used to lead a small Bible study group myself. I'm good. I don't need to study*"
    - e. We don't pray because we think "*Well, God knows my heart, He knows the words I'm going to pray before I even speak them. What's the need? Why waste the time? I know God will work things out.*"
    - f. We stop going to church because we feel like we know what the pastor's going to say. "*I've heard so many sermons from him already I probably won't miss much. Besides, I can just stream it later on when I'm thumbing through Facebook.*"
    - g. We don't serve because we think "*Man I've done my fair share of serving in the church. I've done children's ministry before, I've done ushering and greeting people before. It's time for other people to step up and do their part.*"
7. Familiarity is the problem. Once you've done something enough times it can start to feel less and less important, less and less a priority. The desire to engage in those things begins to wane.
  - a. My family and I have lived here in Iwakuni for 11 years now. We're beginning our 12<sup>th</sup> year this month. And I can't tell you how many times I've gone to Miyajima, or Hiroshima Peace Park.
  - b. They are the must see places you go see when visiting this area in addition to going to the Kintai Bridge. When family or friends come visit us, inevitably we will be taking them to those three places. No trip to Iwakuni is complete without visiting them.
  - c. And I'm sure you all can attest. Those places are great places to go see and visit. The history and the culture and the beauty you get to see, and witness is a wonderful thing.
  - d. But after going through those places over and over again, they begin to lose some of their appeal. I will tell people how important it is to go see those places and to visit those places, but I myself will usually take a pass if possible. Not because I don't think those places are great, but because of familiarity. I've been there and done that so many times. It just doesn't interest me as much as it once did.
  - e. Familiarity is the problem. And the problem of familiarity is causing many people to neglect their salvation and is leading to a slow, steady, but somewhat imperceptible drift away from the message of salvation they once clung to and loved with all of their heart.
8. We need to **guard our hearts against familiarity**. We need to guard against allowing this great message of salvation to become mundane. But how do we do that?

- C. I think the answer lies in what the author says in the remainder of our text. Let's read it and then I'll do my best to explain. Read verse 3 & 4 with me.
- V. Hebrews 2:3b-4; The Greatness of our Salvation
- A. The emphasis in these last verses of our text has to do with the greatness of our salvation.
1. The author describes how this message of salvation was first proclaimed by our Lord, Jesus Christ.
    - a. In Mark chapter 1 we read, "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'" (**Mk. 1:14-15**)
  2. Not only was it first preached by Jesus, but afterwards, His followers, the apostles and other disciples went out and proclaimed the message to the world around them.
    - a. In the book of Acts Peter, in speaking to Cornelius and his household spoke of how he and the rest of the disciples were witnesses of all things which He [Christ] did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead." (**Acts 10:39-42**)
    - b. John writes in the opening of his first epistle, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." (**1 Jn. 1:1-3**)
  3. Not only was it proclaimed by Jesus and His disciples who shared it with others, it was also confirmed and testified by God the Father who bore witness to the greatness of the salvation message with accompanying signs, wonders, and miracles.
    - a. Mark's gospel ends attesting to this very fact. He writes, "And they [referring to the disciples] went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen." (**Mk. 16:20**)
    - b. In the book of Acts we are told of how the early church "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." And how "fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles." (**Acts 2:42-43**)
  - c. On Paul's very first missionary journey when he and Barnabas made their way into Iconium a great many of people turned to the faith. Acts 14:3 reads, "Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands." (**Acts 14:3**)
4. And if that were not enough, the third member of the triune Godhead was also there. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all testified of the greatness of this salvation.
- a. The Holy Spirit empowered people with gifts of the Holy Spirit as He willed that they may minister to the body of Christ.
  - b. These gifts were given, according to 1 Corinthians 12, to every believer for the profit of all. (**1 Co. 12:7**)
  - c. We all don't have the same gifts and we don't have any control over which gift we get. The Bible tells us that "one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to teach one individually as He wills." (**1 Co. 12:11**)
5. All three persons of the Godhead testifying of the greatness of this salvation.
- B. Which brings me back to the question I proposed. How do we guard our hearts against familiarity which leads to neglect and which leads to slowly drifting away? By constantly reminding ourselves of the greatness of our salvation.
1. When we recognize something as great, we will pay more attention to it, and we won't neglect it. If we do not consider something great, we leave it to convenience rather than to commitment.
- C. The **key is understanding the greatness of our salvation**. Our salvation is so great for a number of reasons.
1. One, our salvation is great because we are saved by a great Savior.
    - a. Jesus Christ, the very Son of God, left His throne in heaven to come and dwell amongst us as a man.
      - i. Philippians 2 explains how Jesus being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men." (**Phil. 2:6-7**)
    - b. Jesus Christ came and made Himself a man. God took on flesh and emptied Himself of His privileges as God and made Himself like us.
    - c. We can't even begin to fathom the greatness of the difference and separation there is between God and man. It is an immeasurable distance. Yet Jesus Christ came and erased that distance, coming as one of us.

- d. He was born as a babe and walked this earth for over 30 years. And not once did He ever sin. He was perfect in everything He did.
  - e. And how did this perfect man live His life? He lived to serve others, to minister to others.
    - i. Mark 10:45 states, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (**Mk. 10:45**)
2. Which leads to a second reason why our salvation is so great. Our salvation is so great because we are saved at a great cost.
- a. Jesus lived a sinless life and then willingly laid down that life to pay a debt He did not owe. He was ridiculed and jeered, spat upon and beaten. A crown of thorns was embedded into His head and nails were driven into His hands and feet.
  - b. He did not deserve one bit of it. But yet He willingly took it all for you and me. He gave His life in exchange for ours. A price we can't even begin to imagine.
3. Three, our salvation is so great because we are saved from a great penalty.
- a. Jesus didn't die upon the cross and pay such a high price just so you and I could live happily ever after. He died upon the cross to save us from the penalty of our sins.
  - b. In order to realize the greatness of our salvation, we must understand the greatness of the penalty we were facing.
  - c. The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death. But not just death, along with that comes eternal separation from God because of our sin. Without the sacrifice of Christ, we would be faced with having to deal with our own sin problem.
  - d. And the sad thing about that is that there is nothing we can do about it. We are sinful and God is just. He must judge sin. We are all guilty before God, guilty of not living up to His perfect standard.
  - e. And the penalty for our sins is death and eternal separation from God in a place He created for the devil and his angels, a place the Bible calls hell.
  - f. When we realize the magnitude of the penalty we owe and what it is that Christ saved us from, there is no way we could ever look upon our salvation as anything other than great. It is the greatest thing we could ever imagine.
  - g. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (**Rom. 6:23**)
  - h. When we take the time to remember the greatness of our Savior, the greatness of the cost He paid, and the greatness of the penalty we owed; there is no way we could ever look upon our salvation as anything other than the greatest thing that has ever happened to us.

- 4. We will never grow old of reading about Him and His love for us, we will never grow tired of praying and speaking to Him. We'll never grow tired of gathering together with other people who have experienced that same great deliverance and worshipping Him together with one voice. We'll never grow tired of serving Him and His people when we understand just how great our salvation truly is.
- 5. If we are to take heed to this warning, and keep the course and not drift away, the key is understanding the greatness of the salvation we've been given. Amen? Let's pray.

VI. Conclusion;

A. .