



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Hebrews 2: 1-4

Summer 2026

"Lest We Drift"

TRANSCRIPT

Well, good morning. We are continuing our studies in the Book of Hebrews, and this morning, we're in chapter 2, and we're going to look at verses 1 through 4. Hebrews chapter 2, beginning with verse 1;

2 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*. **2** For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, **3** how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, **4** God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

Hebrews 2: 1-4

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time of study in it together. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, what a privilege it is to be with You...with Your people this Sunday morning and fellowshiping with You through the Word of God and in prayer—and LORD this is fellowship; we come at this moment to the throne of grace as a congregation, and

we seek Your help in time of need. We seek Your help in this hour, that the Spirit of God would minister to us and open our hearts to receive the ministry that's given...help us to understand the text that we will consider...and which is difficult in some ways. But LORD, we pray that You would guide us through it and make the proper application; and may we receive the exhortation and admonition of it.

And so that we will remember that all we are...and that all we have is a gift from You, we're reminded of that by the ministry of the Spirit in the fourth verse that we read...for all that we have is by Your sovereign grace. And we're reminded of that in 1 John 4:10, *(the verse that's in our bulletin)*, "In this is love, not that we love God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins." *(ibid.)*.

You loved us first; and we should remember that as we come to this text and we consider it. So bless us LORD; spiritually build us up in the faith; bring conviction where we need it, and bring encouragement where we need it.

And we pray for encouragement that You would give it to the saints this morning in the various conditions we are in. Some are in very difficult circumstances...dealing with chronic illness and difficulties that are not easily resolved, and circumstances we have to live with. They're not mentioned on the Calendar of Concern, or the Prayer Request, but You know who they are and I pray You would bless them and encourage them. Some will be facing surgery and we pray that You would bless the surgeons, and we pray that You would bring good resolution through it.

Whatever the circumstances, Father, we pray You'd bless Your people, those who are sick, those who are struggling with various ailments, give them encouragement in the midst of that. And those of us who aren't, give us the encouragement that we are in the pleasant place we are...only by Your grace. That You are a good God in whatever circumstance we're in—You are faithful and You are bringing a good result through it.

So LORD, bless us we pray; prepare our hearts for a time of study...may it be not only a time of study, but a time of worship as we consider how great You are.

We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

(Message) In the early days Christians had secret ways of identifying themselves. They had symbols for the church and many of these are found in the catacombs near Rome. Some are familiar to us, like 'the fish', and the Greek letters 'Χρ', (*Chi Rho*), which are the first letters of the Greek word *Christos*, Christ. Others are an 'anchor', a 'shepherd', and a 'ship'.

The ship was an especially appropriate symbol in those days of persecution because it represented, 'The church sailing across rough seas to a safe harbor'.

But there is another truth about ships; sometimes they don't sail, they drift...sometimes due to neglect or carelessness. And when they do, they can drift to their destruction.

William Newell, a Bible teacher in the early 20th century, told of driving out of Buffalo by Niagara Falls, where he noticed a large, beautiful yacht stuck on the brink of the falls. He asked a guard about it and was told how the owner and some friends were sailing down the river below Buffalo, and they decided to stop and go ashore for some refreshments. When they came back, the vessel was gone.

The employee responsible admitted that he had tied up the ship in haste, (and insecurely), not reckoning the strength of the current—and the result was the ship was lost and couldn't be recovered.

Well that was the danger of a church in Rome, drifting spiritually...and the author of Hebrews paused at the beginning of chapter 2 to warn its people. It's worth remembering that these weren't 'young believers'...they were 'seasoned Christians'. In chapter 10, verse 32, the author of Hebrews reminds them of "the former days" when they suffered for the faith. But it seems that they have lapsed into spiritual dullness and were questioning the truth about Christ and the Gospel.

They hadn't given up, but they were doubting and they needed a fresh glimpse at the greatness of the Lord. And the author has given that in chapter 1:

Christ is greater than the angels;

‘He has a better name than they.’ (vs4),

‘He is God’. (vs3a),

‘He is God the Son’, (vs2),

‘and He is our Savior’. (vs3b).

We always need to be reminded of that.

We always need to be reminded of the greatness of Christ:

The greatness of His person,

The greatness of His work,

The greatness of His love for His people,

And His utter faithfulness to us.

Regardless of the circumstance, He is faithful.

Because even when we are advanced in the faith, even when we are ‘seasoned Christians’, we can grow cold...and we can drift if we're not careful.

So the warning here in chapter 2 is for all of us as well—for the church down through the ages, ‘Beware of neglect lest we drift away.’

The chapter begins, "For this reason..."; that is, ‘Because Christ has spoken and He is greater than the angels’, "...we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard...". (vs1a).

And what they had “heard” is the Gospel of Salvation...and the fact that Christ had revealed it, is reason, **to pay very careful attention**. The Gospel is God's revelation.

But also, (and more to the point of this book), ‘Those who don't will suffer eternal consequences’ ...that's the warning that is given here.

And it was needed because, (as the author tells them), they were in great danger of drifting. ‘Pay attention!’ he says, "...so that we do not drift away *from it*."

Or, ‘Lest we drift from it.’

The word “*drift*” is used of a boat ‘slipping its moorings’, (as we've seen in that illustration), and being carried away by the current...drifting past the dock, and drifting past safety, due to neglect.

It's also used of, ‘something slipping from a person's memory’. It's used of a ring ‘slipping from a person's finger’ due to carelessness.

[I can attest to both, ‘slipping from memory’, and ‘a ring from my finger’. This is not the original ring that I had at our marriage ceremony, some almost 50 years ago—so I have personal experience with that.]

I'll tell you a story. When my wife and I were living in Israel, which is almost half a century ago, I looked out the window from where our room was, and I could see the northern rim of the Dead Sea—and so I thought, ‘Let's go down there and swim.’

We hadn't been down there, and so we had access to a car at that time, and we got in the car, we drove down there, about a 30-minute drive. [I think I've told this story before, but if not, you're in for a treat.]

Well, I got in, (*the water*), before she did, (and it was the first time I had been in it), and realized the danger...it's full of chemicals. They're not harmful, in fact, they're beneficial in many ways, but because of that the water is very slippery. (In fact, it almost seems to have the consistency of olive oil...I've never swam in olive oil, but that's the closest thing to it.) So I warned her to be careful for her ring...so that it didn't slip off. In fact, I gave her a demonstration, ‘Don't do this’...yeah, and mine slipped off like a bullet, and into the sea...and out of my sight forever.

I did try to recover it, but it's so dense that you would just immediately bob back up! And so I can recount that it was a brief day at the beach...and she was not happy with me. Well, that's really not an unusual kind of thing. It's not unusual to lose the ring, (because I think this is my third one, but not unusual).

We can be careful about a lot of things. I was careful about her; I wasn't careful about myself. We can be careful about our finances, (we often are, hopefully). We can be careful about our health—but careless...careless about one thing—about our soul.

And that was happening in this group of Hebrew Christians. They were being careful about some things. They were being careful about their safety, (they were under difficulty physically), and they were careful about the Law of Moses. They were Jews—they'd been born under that. And I'm sure that being Jews in Rome and having Jewish friends who were not Christians, they tried to honor the Law with what they ate and how they behaved.

But they were now, at this point, thinking of returning to that which they had left—going back to the synagogue, back into Judaism: 'Times were difficult; maybe they could find relief there.'

So, the author talks about 'the Law' in verse 2 in a way that ties in with the previous chapter and what he had said about angels, (because they had a part in the giving of the Law). There is evidence of that from Deuteronomy 33, verses 1 and 2, and also Psalm 68, verse 17. The angels were present at Sinai when God gave the Law, and they, in fact, had a part in that. Stephen spoke of that in his sermon in the synagogue in Acts chapter 7, verse 53. He said, "...the law as ordained by angels...", meaning, 'God gave the Law through the mediation of angels'. And Paul mentions that also in Galatians chapter 3, and verse 19, where he says the Law was, "ordained through angels". 'It is God's Law, but it came through them.'

The author of Hebrews says the same thing. And here he states that the penalties of the Law given by God "through angels"...those penalties were severe and they were inescapable. "...every transgression and disobedience...", he said, "...received a just penalty...". (vs2). And there are numerous examples of that all through Israel's history.

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, priests of God, were men privileged and highly positioned...but they were instantly incinerated, "when they offered strange fire before the LORD". (Num 26:61).

On another occasion, a man in the Book of Numbers 15, (vs33f), was stoned to death for breaking the Sabbath when he was caught gathering wood on that day instead of resting...instead of worshipping.

Korah's rebellion ended when the group was swallowed up. They were rebels, and God demonstrated His displeasure with them when the ground opened up and swallowed them and their families and their possessions. (Num 16:28f).

At other times, God sent snakes and plagues against the people.

A whole generation died in the wilderness over a 40-year period because of their disobedience.

The Law is fair...but the Law is strict and unyielding.

Now the author asks in verse 3, that if the Law, "...spoken through angels proved unalterable and severe...**how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?**"

In other words, 'If the penalty is severe for violating revelation given by angels, how much more severe will it be for violating revelation given by Christ, who is far greater than the angels?'

If we neglect the revelation, the final revelation from the Son, the Gospel of Salvation, there is no "escape"!

No 'escape' from what? —That's really the crucial question for understanding this book, the Book of Hebrews... 'What will we not escape if we neglect the Gospel of Christ?'

Eternal judgment; it's that serious.

The concern of this Book, and the reason the author wrote it, is the threat of **apostasy**—the abandonment of the faith by those who at one time professed it...(they didn't possess it, but did profess it).

There is no hope for such people because they have denied the only 'Gospel of Salvation' and have turned away from Christ, the only Savior.

Now these Hebrews had not done that...but they were in danger of doing it. So later, in chapter 3, verse 12, he writes, "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God."

The Greek word for "*falls away*" is the word from which we get the word *apostatize*. It is "falling away" from the truth...it is turning from it, it is rejecting it altogether.

Does that mean that a Christian can lose his or her salvation? No! That is impossible. Nor is apostasy denying the faith in a moment of weakness, (as Peter did), and then reaffirming one's faith at a later point...and Peter did that.

Examples of Apostasy in the Old Testament are seen in Israel and their kings—like Ahaz, the king of Judah, when he turned from the LORD to worship idols. He went into that headlong, and he never turned away from it.

Judas is another example in the New Testament of one who confessed faith in Christ, he followed the Lord for three years—he was very close to the Lord only to turn away and leave the Light and fall back into the darkness.

Such people don't lose salvation—they never had it. They had, 'a *profession* of faith', but not the reality of it. It's what the Lord warns against in His 'Parable of the Sower' or 'The Parable of the Soils', (it's been given both titles). But just as a farmer throws seed on a field and there are different results, so it is with evangelism. In the case of the farmer, his seed falls on all kinds of ground. Some of it is 'hard ground'. Some of it is 'rocky ground', and the seed doesn't penetrate and the seed doesn't germinate...it just sits on the ground, and the birds come and they snatch it up.

Other ground is 'shallow'. A plant grows up, but it has no firm root, doesn't grow deeply enough, and so the sun comes out and it burns it up—or the thorns grow around it and they choke it off.

Only that which falls on 'good ground' is fruitful. So it is with the Gospel.

Some reject it outright...they're like that hard, stony ground, and as the birds come and take the seed away, the Devil, or whatever circumstances, remove it from a person's mind and they never give another thought to it.

Others receive it joyfully at the beginning only to, at a later time due to some difficulty, some issue, "fall away". Their faith is temporary...not real, not genuine, and the trials of life prove that. The trials of life, or 'the things of the world' test faith—and when it fails, it fails because it's not genuine.

Where the Gospel 'takes', is where the heart is 'prepared'...'regenerated'. That faith withstands the trials and the temptations of the world. It is real, and it is fruitful. That is the idea here in this warning.

And rather than give it in agricultural terms, the author uses nautical imagery—'a ship slipping anchor, drifting and being carried off to destruction'. There are lots of 'currents' in this world that carry people away:

Satanic deception.

The deception of the world and all that it offers;

its enticements,

money,

pleasure,

possessions,

materialism,

secularism.

If you live long enough, you will see this happen. People who profess faith at some point slip away...sometimes suddenly—and sometimes just gradually.

Something comes into their life, maybe it is a new relationship, or new friends who think differently. Or a career that becomes a new affection or a new love...it begins to occupy a person's thinking and time.

Or perhaps it's the comments of a skeptic, like a college professor, who sows seeds of doubt in the mind of a young person—and they begin to think about it, and they begin to drift off because of that.

Well, it's various things, from physical ailments to those kinds of challenges. It happens, as I say, in various ways, and it is a real danger for a *vital* church...for Believers Chapel!

And it was for this ancient fellowship in Rome...and there, it was 'trials'. There, it was 'hardship' and it was 'social pressure'. Not only were they feeling it from the Roman authorities, evidently, but also from their Jewish families and friends. They were being worn down. They had not capitulated, but they were worn down—so the author gives warnings to these Hebrews. There are five warning passages in this book, this is the first one, (*trials*), and these warnings are a *means* of grace for preventing apostasy.

We are kept by the sovereign grace of God; it is His work. We don't keep ourselves by strengthening our faith by our will or our work. Ultimately, we are "in Him", (*1Jn 5:20*). And we are 'kept by Him'...the Father and Son hold us 'in their hand firmly'. Christ tells us that—and it's like a definitive statement on all of this in John chapter 10, verse 29.

The Holy Spirit has "sealed" our hearts "...for the day of redemption."—Paul tells us that in Ephesians chapter 4, verse 30. No one, nothing is so strong that it can break the seal of the Holy Spirit.

God's children are eternally secure, and all will persevere in the faith to the very end because of the Father's unchangeable love, the Son's prayers for us, (which we will see later in chapters 2 and 4), and the grace of the Holy Spirit...the power of the Spirit.

But God uses instruction, exhortations, and warnings/admonitions, to keep us persevering and prevent drifting. These are the *means* of grace for our faith. Just as God used His Word, the Gospel, in evangelism to bring us to faith, He uses His Word and exhortations to keep us persevering in the faith...to stimulate perseverance.

These 'elect' have "ears to hear". 'God's sheep know the shepherd's voice, and they respond, they follow'. (*Jhn 10:4*). And true believers respond to the warnings of Scripture and persevere...continue going forward in the faith.

The author had confidence in the salvation of these Jewish Christians. Later in chapter 6, after another one of the warning passages, (it's probably the best known in the book, in chapter 6), but at the end of that, (which can be a very disturbing passage for people), he said, "But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you...", (*Heb 6:9a*). He was convinced of their salvation—but still, there were things going on that raised concern. They showed signs of drifting, so he gave instruction and warning:

Neglect is dangerous.

The solution is giving attention to the things of God;

Getting a clear vision of Christ,

Who He is, What He has done.

It is thinking on the Gospel;

Thinking on the Word of God;

For it is a completely credible, believable message...it came from credible messengers.

The author writes in verse 3b that, "...After it was at first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard."

So evidently, the writer was not one of those originals that heard. He heard it, and these believers in Rome heard it, from those who were there seeing all of these things and could testify from personal experience. So again, the message of the Gospel, of this "so great salvation", is the message of God. By calling Christ, "the Lord", (*vs3b*), he links Jesus with the Old Testament and the name for God...Yahweh, or Jehovah; and that is Jesus. He is God's Son, and the Gospel is His revelation. That alone is reason to believe it...Christ's person and His character. But there is more.

What Jesus spoke and did... 'Didn't happen in a corner', to use Paul's expression. (Acts 26:26). It happened in plain view, publicly. It was a very public ministry, with lots of eyewitnesses. They confirmed all of this. (vs3c). 'They confirmed it all', he says...and the believers in Rome heard their testimony about Christ. We're not told who those individuals were, (maybe Priscilla and Aquila, they had a ministry there), but they had heard this testimony about Christ.

Eyewitness testimony about His person,
about His work,
about His miracles,
about all that He taught,
all that He said about Himself,
and all of the miracles that confirmed what He said and what He did.

And then of course the miracles of the apostles, as well.

That's what the author says in verse 4,

"God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will."

Those days of mighty miracles, I will say, 'Are past'. I think that's indicated here by the grammar...the word "*testifying*" in verse 4 is a participle, and it gets its time of action, (its *tense*), from the verb in verse 3, "*confirmed*". So he wasn't saying that, 'They were still testifying, that they were still occurring.' (I think that he would have mentioned the present reality of miracles if there were any.).

But the time of "signs and wonders" is past. (vs4). That doesn't mean that God can't do miracles today, He certainly can—we pray for these kinds of things, and God does them, He has the power to do it...and He will when it's the best thing to do.

But 'the age of miracles', when the Gospel was confirmed, is over; the foundation is laid.

These Hebrews may not have personally witnessed miracles, but they knew about these things, they heard about these things, and they heard about them from eyewitnesses. And there had been an abundance of miracles, and mighty miracles... 'giving sight to the blind', 'giving strength to the lame so that the lame could walk', 'cleansing lepers', 'raising the dead'!

John ends his Gospel, The Fourth Gospel, by telling us that, 'He guessed that all the books in the world could not contain all the things that Jesus did, all the miracles that He did'. (*Jhn 21:25*). So we just get a glimpse of what the Lord did.

All of this, the author says, is the work of the Holy Spirit, who gave miraculous gifts sovereignly, "...according to His own will". (*vs4c*). Everything was and is dependent on Him and His will. The reception of the testimony of miracles, the belief in them ultimately is due to the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit.

Miracles, of themselves, will never convince a person of the truth of the Gospel. Men can always explain them away and find ways to, "suppress the truth in unrighteousness", which Paul says in Romans chapter 1, verse 18*b*...it's what the natural man does. Specifically, there he is talking about the Gentiles. But we all have within us a testimony of God; we're created in His image. But men can suppress that, and they spend their time doing that very thing.

After all, if you think about this, it was when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead; when He does the climatic miracle of the five miracles recorded in the first half of the Book of John, it's when He did that that the leaders, the Sanhedrin, set its mind to, 'putting Him to death'. (*Jhn 11:39f*). The miracles didn't produce faith, it antagonized opposition. They said, 'What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. He is raising the dead!'

He had already raised the dead, but He had raised the dead...and the answer wasn't, 'Well obviously, we must believe in Him, He has raised the dead!'

No, their answer was, 'He must die.'

‘Signs and wonders’, and ‘miracles’ won't produce faith...they don't give life to dead souls. The Spirit of God must work sovereignly in the minds of people and bring them to a knowledge of Christ. And that's what happened when Paul was preaching in Philippi.

We have a great illustration of that. A beautiful illustration...he goes down by the riverside, and there is a group of women, a small group of women, (they didn't have enough to form a synagogue...and there were no men there), and they began to speak. Paul didn't say, ‘Well, this group is too small...let's go somewhere else!’ Rather he found a group that were meeting, and he began to preach...and Luke wrote about one of those women, Lydia, "...the Lord opened her heart to respond to things spoken by Paul." (*Acts 16:14b*).

It wasn't miracles that did that, it was the Word of God. He works through the Gospel; He works through the preaching of God's Word to bring people to a saving knowledge of Christ.

Salvation is supernatural; it's all of grace...sovereign, free, grace. God can use ‘signs and wonders’ for that...but miracles, they don't save. But what they can do is this; they can confirm the truth of the Gospel and strengthen the faith of believers. And the Christians in Rome knew all of this; their faith had been confirmed and strengthened by the things they had heard.

So there are three reasons for not neglecting the Gospel:

The Messenger; that is, the person of Christ, knowing Him, who He is, and His character.

The certainty of *judgment*, ‘if we depart from it’

And the *confirmation* that God gives of the truth of it.

These Hebrews had eyewitness reports which left them without excuse for wavering in their faith. They had great Light...that's a blessing. The danger is where there is greater Light, there is greater condemnation if we ignore it.

Look, if the people of the Old Testament didn't escape judgment when they rejected God's truth, how will we, after we have learned so much more than they, and we reject it?

If Noah's generation didn't escape, if Sodom and Gomorrah didn't escape, if Israel didn't escape, "...how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (vs3).

I say, "We won't!"

Because, as I said earlier, it is a danger today as it was then in every generation. This is not simply 'an academic thing' we study as we go through this book...something that is 'To be studied in regard to the ancient church.'

It's a message for the ages; it's a message for us. The Word of God, (as the author will say in chapter 4, (vs12)), '... is alive and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.' It's as alive today as it was then.

We're always in danger of drifting. There are currents that can draw us away—and they're very subtle, they can carry us away before we realize it. If you've been to the coast, (and I guess this would apply wherever, from New England down to the Gulf Coast), you see the tides and how the tide works. The tide comes in, and it goes out. It happens like clockwork, and you can chart it. In fact, there are charts that tell you when 'high tide' is and when 'low tide' is. But you don't see it happening while it's happening. And so a person can bring a boat to shore and pull it up on a rocky beach and think it's safe...but if he doesn't know when the tide comes in he may return to find his boat has been carried out to sea.

To prevent that from happening, boatmen, (who know about these things, who understand the sea), will tie up their vessel to the dock or they'll anchor it firmly to the shore.

It's the same for us spiritually. The tides or currents of this world are regular; they're always there. Day and night, they are there—and they are strong and subtle. It can be a lot of things, as we've already suggested – pressure from work, persecution,

sickness...maybe a hobby that really becomes very important in a person's life and so important that that grows in importance and the faith diminishes in importance.

One of the exhortations the author will give later in the book, (*Heb 10:25*), is 'Don't forsake the gathering together of the saints, as is the practice of some.' —And that can be the problem that we face... 'Well, we stop going to church and stop fellowshiping with the saints...and that becomes a habit and pretty soon a person is drifting.'

There are all kinds of things that can cause our faith to diminish, and so over time a person's commitment to Christ and to eternal things can weaken and other things can take their place. And very often the reason is simply neglect. We get busy with other things...they become more interesting...and we drift.

So what do we do to avoid that? Because a believer who hears this is disturbed by it—must be...we don't want that.

Well first of all, what we can do is beware of neglect. But I think, more importantly, what we do is what the author tells us to do, pay much closer attention to what we *heard*:

Think about the Gospel.

Consider why our salvation is so great.

Consider first, who our Savior is,

who He is as God's son,

who He is as our Creator,

who became one of us,

humbled Himself to become one of us,

and gave up His life on the cross to deliver us from judgment.

And He succeeded!

He bought our salvation at the cross at terrible cost to Himself.

And now He is seated at the right hand of the Father praying for us, taking care of us constantly.

He is our sustainer and provider even through hard times—through the hardest of times.

Consider that,

Consider Him,

Consider our salvation and how great it is—for it is from the power of sin.

It is deliverance from slavery to deadly habits, and from eternal damnation.

It is free to us, and it is forever!

It is for everyone who has believed, [that is, not just believed that this happened or that He is true], but have put our faith into Him,

resting in Him,

trusting in Him.

It is for everyone who has done that.

Therefore, we will triumph in the end and be brought ultimately into the presence of God and into His glory. We are like those sailors in Psalm 107;

"Those who go down to the sea in ships ..." (vs 23a).

"They have seen the works of the LORD..." the psalmist said,

"And His wonders in the deep." (vs24).

The storms, the winds, the waves, they caused them despair of life, being caught in a storm on the sea and,

"They cried out to the LORD", (vs28)...and He heard them;

"He caused the storm to be still...", (vs29a), and the psalmist says,

"He guided them to their desired haven." (vs30b).

And He is doing that for us. 'The ship of the church' is always on rough seas, but it will arrive at its safe harbor of heaven. He will bring it through every storm and not lose one of us.

The question is: 'Are you in the ship?'

You are if you have believed. You are if you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ...if you have turned from the unbelief and you've trusted in Him.

God's people are those who have believed in Jesus Christ with a faith that by God's grace, continues on, and by God's grace, does persevere. (And 'perseverance', as Mark, *(Newman)*, pointed out in his lesson today, is the *proof* of saving faith.)

We who are His sheep, who are saved, will listen to the warnings. We will heed them and follow them, (not perfectly, we don't do anything perfectly in this life, we may even have doubts, and they come up in our life and we doubt our assurance – that happens to genuine believers, all of us) – but we will continue to believe, continue to trust in Christ.

But there may be some here who have not yet believed.

So, 'the reality' of your profession of faith is not in question, because you haven't made a profession of faith, you have not believed; you are in unbelief. So the message to you is:

'Look to Christ. Confess that you are a sinner in need of a Savior, and believe in Christ who is the only Savior.' And if you do that, when you do that, the moment you do that, you are received by Him.

May God help you to do that, and then not only do that, (as we have done), but then live carefully and earnestly.

May God help all of us to do that...and as we study this great book of Hebrews that's what we'll be encouraged to do.

(Closing prayer) Father, we give You praise and thanks that You have sealed the hearts of every believer in Jesus Christ—and we are secure. But LORD, we do drift. We "wander", as the hymn writer put it, 'so prone to do that'. LORD, keep us from

wandering, keep us certainly, from drifting. Help us to focus upon Christ, to think deeply upon Him and His work.

We have been sealed for Your courts above.

We have a glorious future.

This brief life will end in eternal glory, Heaven.

Then the Resurrection to come,

The Kingdom to come,

The eternal state,

A new heavens and a new earth.

What a great, glorious future we have!

Strengthen us in the present, strengthen our faith we pray, that we would be faithful to You to the end.

Now,

The LORD bless you and keep you,

The LORD make His face shine on you,

And be gracious to you;

The LORD lift up His countenance on you;

And give you peace.

In Christ's name.

Amen.

(End of Audio)