

- The book of Hebrews is full of deep spiritual meat for the Christian to dig his or her teeth into. We had 3 weeks back in February and the beginning of March where we were reading through that book and some of us were color marking through it. Through our study, it should have become very evident that the theme of the book is the superiority of Christ and His covenant with people beginning with his resurrection from the grave and the teachings of Pentecost.
- Chapter one really sets the tone with the writer emphasizing that Christ has become so much better than even the angels of God (**v.1-4**). Chapter 2 starts out with the word therefore, and that should immediately alert us that because of what we have just read, that Jesus is the best and superior to all things, we should be aware or do something. That “something” of **2:1** is be aware and pay attention that we do not drift away from the truths we know about Jesus and what He has done for us, that is offering His grace that forgives us of our sins.
- Did you see as you read through this book that this is a pretty common idea written of by the writer of Hebrews? This idea of drifting away from Christ or Christians leaving the faith is fairly common. You might ask, well how do you know that the writer is speaking to Christians in this letter? I’d direct you to **3:1**. Up to this point the writer has used a lot of collective pronouns to include himself and the original recipients of this letter. That together with **3:1** leads us to easily understand that these recipients are Christians and members of the Body of Christ. The issue of Christians leaving the faith or falling from grace is hotly contested in the religious world, so I’d like for us to consider it for a few moments this evening. This is an important topic for us to study and consider and we need to be ready to discuss this topic with our friends who might buy into this type of theological thinking.

### **I. Some teach that Christians cannot fall from a saved condition.**

- A. Generally speaking, those who hold to Calvinistic beliefs would teach and believe that a Christian is saved forever once they are added to Christ.
  1. This stems from the fact that man has no part in their salvation, God won’t let them go according to **Romans 8**, therefore they will always be saved.
  2. This is often known was the belief of once saved, always saved.
- B. A believer of this doctrine would have to explain Biblical teachings that contradict this idea. Some would say that a “Christian” who loses their faith wasn't a Christian to begin with. It must either be that or they would need to say that sin will not separate a person from God. Those are the only 2 explanations to be consistent.

### **II. The Apostles seem to have believed differently based upon their writings.**

- A. Paul warned 4 different group of Christians concerning the danger of falling from the faith.
  1. **Romans 11:17-22**, “...continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.”
  2. **I Corinthians 9:24-27**, “I myself will not be disqualified.”
  3. **Galatians 5:1-7**, “you have been severed from Christ...you have fallen from grace...you were running well.”
  4. **Colossians 1:18-23**, “..in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach- if you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast...”
- B. Peter paints a very graphic picture for us concerning one who comes to know Jesus but then falls away. (**II Peter 2:20-22**)
  1. Peter is talking about people who have been saved. “having known it” (**v.21**)
  2. These people have known Jesus Christ, but they have left the faith and they are just as bad as the nasty dog and the dirty pig.

### **III. The letter to the Hebrews is full of warnings concerning drifting away from Christ.**

- A. The writer of the book of Hebrews was in line with the teachings of Peter and Paul and wrote multiple times as a manner of warning to keep them from drifting from Christ and leaving the faith.
  1. **2:1**, “so that we do not drift away from it.”
  2. **3:6-14**, “take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God...so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin...we have become parters of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.”
  3. **6:4-6**, “those who have once been enlightened...tasted the heavenly gift...been made partakers of the Holy Spirit...tasted the good word of God...then have fallen away...they again crucify to themselves the son of God an put Him to open shame.”

4. **10:29**, “How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace.”
  5. **12:12-16, 25**, “See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God...much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.”
  6. **13:9**, “Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings.”
- B. It should seem apparent that we need to be on alert and on guard that we do not fall short of the goal of heaven.
1. We face a powerful enemy in Satan and he is constantly look for someone to devour. We must stand firm against him. (**I Peter 5:8,9**)
  2. It would be so sad to dedicate so many years to the Lord and then just let them be for nothing by not finishing the race of faith and winning the crown. (**I Corinthians 9:24-27**)
  3. We must do everything we can to stand firm and not forfeit the crown of life.

#### **IV. There are steps we can take to no drift away from and leave Christ.**

##### **A. Continue Growing in Faith (Hebrews 5:11-14)**

1. Continue to read, study, and pray to gain a better knowledge of God’s will.
2. In doing so we will be able to know what is good and what is evil. In knowing this, we can keep ourselves from sin and say on the straight and narrow for the Lord.

##### **B. Continue Coming Together (Hebrews 10:24,25)**

1. When we come together we are reminded of God’s love for us, and we are encouraged to continue being strong for the Lord.
2. Our worship to the Lord is the smallest glimpse of heaven and should encourage us to to live in such a way that we will be able to realize the perfection of heaven.

##### **C. Fix Our Eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-3)**

1. We can persevere through anything we suffer for Jesus because He first suffered from us.
2. The temporary sufferings of this world do not compare with the glory of heaven (**II Corinthians 4:16-18**).

##### **D. Let Love Continue (Hebrews 13:1)**

1. We must continue to love one another and keep a look out for one another.
2. That love may mean that we help point out a weakness or help another with their struggles.

As Christians, we must stand on guard and be careful to not drift away from our Lord. Yes it is true that the Lord will never push us away from Him, but we can through our actions leave the presence and fellowship of the Lord. May God help us to do everything we can to do to not separate ourselves from God through our sinful actions.