

Hey, how are we? Mmm, fired up also. We can do it. Hebrews chapter 2, let's get going. Hey, I missed you last week. I mean, I really did, I think I might be codependent on you. Then, we go to take part in celebrate recovery. I was speaking down in Waco last week and I was sitting there on Sunday morning about to take the stage and really my mind was kind of here and what was going on here, and how everything here was. And so I think we have an unhealthy relationship. I hate to do this right here in front of everybody but, um, Hebrews chapter 2.

So we get through Hebrews chapter one and there is not one command in all of Hebrews chapter one. We've preached through it now line by line, verse by verse, and there is not one command, there's not one "you should do this, you should not do this, you should start doing this, you should try to do this". There's not one, there is simply that God has spoken to us and that Jesus, and that Jesus is greater than all that is. He is enough. And so what we've read so far, what we've said so far, what this sacred literature of ours has said is that Jesus has made a way for us to walk in wholeness. Jesus has made a way for the forgiveness of sins and for you and I to be made whole. So that's what we've said so far. And that's all chapter one says. Now let's look at chapter two.

"For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard so we don't drift away from it. For if the word spoken by angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we reject so great a salvation. After it was first spoken through the Lord it was confirmed to us by those who heard. 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." Now, I think that the writer of Hebrews is a preacher or a teacher and I think that because he's got this angst about how he's going to communicate. Right now, he's going, "Ok, pay attention to this. Don't miss this. Hey, listen carefully to this." And in chapter three he's going to say, "Consider this, don't miss what I'm saying." And in Hebrews chapter twelve he's going to say, "Hey, fix your eyes on Jesus." There's this angst to get across this point and he's not sure if his hearers, if his readers, are following him.

And I tell seminary guys all the time that what we do and what flight attendants do aren't really that far away from each other. Like, we're trying to give you safety and how to make it out alive and no one cares, alright. I mean, like, you need to buckle up and here's the exit rows, and no one cares. I mean, everybody's got their i-pod on, they are reading their magazine, they are talking. I mean, honestly, no one pays attention to the stewardess and the video tape they play for you now. Nobody listens to them and she's just trying to get you out alive, that's all she's trying to do. She's trying to get you out of the plane alive. And in a lot of ways that's what I'm trying to do here. I'm trying to get you out of here alive. I'm trying to get you out unhurt, unscathed. I'm trying to get you out alive and any one who's ever tried to teach Jesus and His way knows that a great deal of the crowd is simply listening to their i-pods.

So he's going to say, "Pay attention here. Don't miss this." So the writer of Hebrews, he's got some angst about what he's about to say here. He's got some angst about what he's saying. He's going, "Hey, pay attention to this Jesus. Pay attention to this salvation you've been offered. Don't skip over it. Don't take it lightly. Don't neglect it. Pay attention to Jesus and His salvation." Why? Why should we pay attention to Jesus and His salvation? Why so much weight on Jesus and His salvation?

Well, I don't have to make anything up here. The text is going to just take us there. So there's several things, so look back in the text with me. "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through the angels proved unalterable..." now listen to this next part, "...and every transgression and disobedience receives a just penalty..." Now there's something big happening here that doesn't look like it's big on the surface. What just happened here is that this writer who is very Hebrew, alright, is writing this little line to point back to the law. So he's saying, "Ok, listen, if you break the law then you are punished. Every breaking of the law carries with it a justice, a punishment." So he's referencing the law. So why, why is he saying here, "Ok pay attention to Jesus because of the law"? Well, let's check it out. Keep your fingers here because we're coming right back.

Go to Deuteronomy chapter six, let me show you the giving of the law. There's two things in particular about the law that I want you to see. Deuteronomy chapter six, we'll go one through nine. Why pay attention to Jesus? Why pay attention to this salvation that our sins can be removed both past, present, and future, that wholeness can be had, that healing can be had? Why pay attention to it? Why pay attention to it? Six starting in verse one. "Now this is the commandment and the statutes and the judgements which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you so that you might do them in the lands where you are going over to possess.

So that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God and keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you all the days of your life. And that your days may be prolonged. Oh, Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you in a land flowing with milk and honey. Hear, oh Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One, you shall love the Lord your God with all you heart and all your soul and with all your might. These words which I am commanding to you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorpost of your house and on your gates."

Ok, now, why pay attention to Jesus? Why give Jesus any kind of attention at all? Why pay attention to His salvation? Why do that? Well, he's going to reference in Hebrews two the law. Now, at the giving of the law, here's the two things that I want you to see. Notice, that the giving of the law is there so that God might lead us to life. He says here, "Hey, listen, if you'll do these things, if you'll do these things, if you'll walk my ways, I'm going to bless you. If you follow me, if you do the things I'm going to tell you, if you live the way I'm commanding you to live, I'm going to bless you. And if you don't, it's going to go bad for you. It's going to go bad for you."

Now, listen, the entire Old Testament, all of this back here, is just the testimony that if you follow Jesus, you are blessed. If you follow the way of Jesus, you are blessed. And if you don't, things go bad for you. Now, I'm not talking about prosperity. Don't mishear me today. Don't go, "Ok, if I follow Jesus then I'm going to be wealthy and I'll never struggle and I'll never..." That's absurd, that's absurd. The best way I've ever heard this thing kind of play out actually comes... actually, I saw a pastor do it in San Diego. He basically had all this cooking stuff up on the stage and he was like, "Hey, who wants flour? Anybody want any flour? Anybody hungry? You want to eat some flour?" Well, the answer to that's no. Always. Alright?

And then he cracked open some raw eggs and he was like, "Does anybody want any raw eggs? Anybody want any raw eggs?" Well, again, unless you're a freak show muscle head who thinks that swallowing eggs works, then the answer's probably no right? Then, "How about yeast? Anybody want any yeast? How about vanilla extract? Anybody want any vanilla extract?" Well, no, no, no, no, no...it just kept going. Then, finally, he pulls out of this easy bake oven or something on stage cake. "Cake. Who wants cake?" I want cake, I want some cake, cake that has flour, that has yeast,

vanilla extract, that has eggs. Yea, I'm not promising you, and neither is scripture, that you won't have to eat some flour. I'm just telling you that in the end we get cake.

So, why pay attention to Jesus? Because He is not your enemy. Because He says, "Hey, I want to bless you. Follow me because I want to bless you." Alright, let's keep looking. "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we reject so great a salvation after it was first spoken through the Lord." Now this is a pretty huge piece here because here's what it just said: that your salvation, you being forgiven of your sins, you being made whole, you healing, was God's idea. Now that's a pretty huge piece right there, specifically because in our culture God, Jesus, Christianity sits apart from culture and is our enemy – doesn't want us smiling, doesn't want us to have a real life, doesn't want a lot of joy in us, He's cranky and mean. But according to scripture salvation, healing, wholeness, that's God's idea. It was Jesus who knew all your sin, past, present, and future, who came to you and said, "I offer you salvation. I offer the forgiveness of your sins. I offer wholeness. I offer healing." This thing is Jesus' idea. Why pay attention? Because the offer doesn't come from mere man, the offer doesn't come from some prophet, some apostle, the offer comes from God himself.

God Himself says come be healed, come be made whole, come be forgiven, come be made right before me. And it says that Jesus spoke it first and that He spoke it to this great crowd of witnesses. And He's speaking just to the fact that there were all these people who saw and watched the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who followed Him up until their death and not one of them never recanted. Which means you can find outside of scripture secular, historical documents that talk about the death of some of the apostles and none of them recant. I think it's pretty significant because most of them died badly, like, boiled alive badly. And not one of them goes "we were kidding". Not one of them. Now, come on, even if you've got no religious background, you've got to do something with Jesus, man. I mean, you've got to. He's the most popular man that ever walked the face of the earth. There's been more written about Him than any man that's ever lived. There have been more philosophies and systems of governments spun off. He's been on the cover of more magazines than any man in the history of the world. Then there's even the weird stuff like people stubbing their toes and screaming out His name. That's a weird deal, man. I mean, it really is.

Nobody's ever like, "Oh, Benjamin Franklin. I hate you." I mean, why is Jesus' name so automatically fired out. Has anybody thought about that. It's a weird deal, man. It is, it's strange, why do we do that? Have you ever thought about how strange, how odd that is. You've got to do something with Him. And listen, can we be just straight up with each other, say the tired "he was a good man" thing. I mean, you're going to have to do better than that, I mean, just as a thinker, please don't. That's a tired, lame, really tired... "he's a good man and a good philosopher. Now, I don't believe a thing he said because he called himself the son of God and he said that he's the way the truth the life and that no man can know God except through him, but...I mean, I don't believe anything he said but he was a good man and a good teacher, good philosopher." Now, He's got to be looney, He's got to be an absolute loon or you've got to believe He's the Son of God. I don't know what your other option is. But you can't say that He's a good man and a good teacher and then say that you don't believe anything that He said or taught. That's a weird deal there, man. You've got to do something with Jesus because there are all these men and women who saw what happened and they gave their lives for it when all they had to do was go, "No, we made it up. No." So why pay attention to this Gospel? Well, because God painted on the canvas of creation that if you follow Him He'll bless you with the nation of Israel. Why follow Him? Because the invitation and healing comes from God. Why follow Him? Because there's all this history, all these eye witnesses that gave witness to the fact that He occurred. And then look at this last line and we'll chat some.

Look at 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." Last week I was at First Baptist Church Woodway in Waco, TX. And for an old

school revival, like they called it a revival. And I don't really know how to be anything but me. I mean, I just went as me. It was a tough deal on me, man. I mean, it was old school, like Gaither's song specials and it was a tough deal, man, a lot of mic's out here and out here. And it was a tough deal on me. And I'm not saying there's something wrong with that, I'm just saying philosophically for me, I'm just different. It's just a different place, it's a different style. I just don't, it's hard for me to worship in that venue.

And that's cool, because I know some of you are like, "It's hard for me to worship with all the lights out." I get it, alright. I get it. I'm not saying one's better or one's worse. I've found myself in this room on the first couple of nights going, "What am I doing here, man? What am I doing here?" I mean, just the majority of that room of 1500 were well into their late 50's, and 60's and 70's and I felt like it was hard to connect. And so on Tuesday night I went to the senior adult banquet... and...why is that funny?

I went and this guy, his name was Bill Lane, who was a former coach of Baylor in the Grant Taft years, in the glory years of Baylor, both of them, they... what, I'm kidding, sick 'em, Bears. He comes up to me, he's probably mid 70's and he says, "Hey, man, I need to apologize to you." And I was like, "You need to apologize to me?" And he was like, "Yea. I need to apologize to you. I got here on Sunday and I saw you up front with your shirt all out and your hair all messed up, loud, saying 'jacked up' and 'alright' and I judged you. I judged you wrongly, and I judged you by appearance and by youth and I'm just here to say I'm sorry." And I was like, "Me too. Me too. Hug." It's horrible, convicting, horrible.

And you know I tell you guys all the time, I mean, I say this all the time, that the line between all that we want to be and all that we hate is thinner and smaller, and closer than any one ever wants to talk about right? I mean, you know, I'm the first one to go, "Oh, I see, you'll judge us because of how we dress and you'll judge us because of the style we prefer?" but then I was the first one doing it on Sunday. So I'd ask this question, I mean the whole week I was there I've been asking this question, what am I doing here? What do we have in common? For me it's all about the mission man. Always. It's just where my mind always is, my heart always is. Let's go share the love of Christ. Let's go be the love of Christ. Let's go. It's just always about the mission. So I was like, "What do we have in common?" And just after that I was sitting there and they were singing that, the special that night, I think it was "I bow my knees and cried holy, I clapped my hands and cried holy" or something like that.

And you know, I'm just still thinking through, "What am I doing here? What do we have in common? What do we have in common, Lord?" And I just felt the Lord finally go "Me. You've got Me in common, dummy." And it was a pretty huge moment for me. Like the one, the most compelling thing about Jesus to me is there seems to be no fingerprint for who follows Him. Like, it doesn't matter the language, and it doesn't matter the socioeconomic status. It doesn't matter if you're talented or untalented, pretty or ugly. It just seems across all lines there are people who love Him deeply. That's compelling to me. Like, if it was just rich white folks, that's one thing. If it was just uneducated people, that's one thing. But it's not, it's across every line you can think of. I mean honestly, what do we have in common? Are you looking around tonight? I mean, what do we have in common? Some of us got saved when we were 6, some when we were 40.

Some of us have lived life very hard, it has kicked the trash out of us; and some of us, man, besides a scrape on the knee or two, it's been pretty clean sailing. Some of us grew up in homes that taught us the goodness of Jesus, a lot of us didn't. And yet, here we are tonight. The transforming power of Jesus, the miraculous wonder of Jesus continuing to shape and mold and shape, it's compelling. Why pay attention to Jesus? Because God wanted you to know that if you follow Him He'll bless you, so He painted a portrait with Israel. Because God is the one who has invited you into this salvation, He is not your enemy, and He continues to this day to transform and save. There's this question here, and we're not going to go long tonight, I really am almost done. There's this question here that the author just puts and then lets it linger, man. And he doesn't do anything with it. It's a really hard question but look at it with me.

Look in verse two again. "For if the words spoken through angels proved unalterable and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" Ok, let's be straight with each other. You and I are guilty. Bottom line. You're guilty, I'm guilty, all of us have sinned, all of us have blown it. And if you're, "I don't think...I don't know, I don't think I'm that bad." Well, let's just lay your life against, like, basic kindergarten Sunday school, alright? Let's pull off Ten Commandments, lay them down, grab your life and lay them on top of them. Alright, have you lied? Yes. If you said no right now, that's at least your second lie. So you are a liar, right? You are a liar. "No, I'm not a liar." Have you lied? Do you lie? Yes. Have you put things before God? Have you found other things more valuable than God? You absolutely have. Have you coveted? You absolutely have. Have you murdered? Everybody's relieved.

But one guy in the back, you know, is like, "So what?!" You know, you're like, "You're cool." But you can say "I haven't murdered" but Jesus is going to change the rules and He's going to go back to heart, back to heart over action. Jesus is going to change the rules and go, "If you don't do an action but your heart's there, you're no better off." Jesus is going to say "you've seen that it's written do not murder, I say if you have hate in your heart you've committed the sin." So are you a murderer? Yea. Uh-oh, you and I are guilty. Ain't no way around it. And listen, you can buy into the...let me be real straight here, because what a lot of people want to do is "Ok, I'm going to do some good things, and I'm going to do some good things also because I know, I know I've done some bad things so I'm going to do some good things. If the good outweigh the bad then everything will work out for me."

But ok, listen, you've got no scripture that supports that. You've got no sacred literature to get into that. The only thing that's telling you that will work is the same sinful mind that's made you a liar and a thief and a killer. You might want to not trust him anymore. I mean, it's just between me and you, you might want to not trust the lying murderer anymore and maybe trust some other outside truth that may be able to help. So here's the question he asks. It's a heavy question, it's not a threat, it's a question. Since we're guilty, what are we going to do if we neglect this offer, this offer of forgiveness, this offer of wholeness, this offer of healing? What are you going to do, what other venue are you going to go, what other route are you going to take? I mean this is the offer from the one who is behind all things. He is behind all things. All things were created by Him, for Him, He is greater than all that is. This is the offer from Him. "Let me bless you. Let me heal you. Let me bring wholeness to you. Let me wipe away your sin." This is the offer that goes out.

Now, what are you going to do if you say no to that? And why would you say no to that? What are you going to do? How are you going to fix yourself? How are you going to fill that half empty tank called your soul? What are you going to do? What step are you going to take? What do you do if you neglect this great offer from Christ? What are you going to do? I mean, come on now. It's not like he's saying, "Don't neglect your lawn. Don't neglect your Raman Noodle soup tonight, it's good for you. Don't neglect your trip to the desert." That's not what he's saying. It'd be more like he's saying, "Hey, don't neglect, don't neglect your filet. Don't neglect your baby's smile." Like, my son, he's eleven weeks old and he'll smile now if you poke his nose and make a weird noise. And so we're jacking his nose all the time now because he'll smile and he'll giggle a little bit. And man, I don't want to neglect that, I want to do that as often as I can. He's got like a nose bleed now, I mean, we want to poke that thing as much as we can to get him to smile because it's this really beautiful moment. Don't neglect that. He's saying, "Ok, don't neglect the filet. Don't neglect your son's, your daughter's, smiles. Don't neglect your sunrise. Don't neglect your sunset. Don't neglect your trip to the mountains, your trip to the ocean. Don't neglect what is beautiful and right and blast. Don't neglect these things, don't neglect being loved by God? Why would you neglect that? Don't neglect being loved by God. Don't neglect having sins wiped clean. Don't neglect having the wrath of God removed from your life and replace by a reconciling smile of Jesus Himself."

Why would you neglect that? Why would you neglect it? And that's the angst that's in the writer of Hebrews because these people are falling away. And he's like, "What are you doing? Where else are you going to go? What other option do

you have? Where are you going to go to get salvation like this? The free gift of salvation that not only covers your present reality but your future screw ups. Where are you going to get a better deal than this? Where are you going to get a better opportunity from the God of the universe who's already said, 'I've given the law to bless you.' Who invited you with His own mouth. From the God who knows you, who knows your shortcomings, who knows your failures and says, 'I want to bless you, yea, you. I want to bless you. Come on, follow me. Come on, follow.' 'Do I have to eat flour?' 'Yea, probably, but there's cake at the end. Come on. Come on.'" Why? Why would you neglect it? What's gotten screwed up there? I mean, do you think that He hates? Do you think that you're not good enough? What is it? Why are you neglecting such a great salvation? And I'm wondering how many of you, your life just parallels Israel. I'm wondering how many of you, your lives, you've had this moment where you're so close and so beautifully aligned with the inner reality of Jesus that things were moving and stirring, but somewhere along the way you walked away from that. Why are you neglecting that? Why would you walk away from that? For what? For what? Why would you walk away from that? Don't neglect it is what the author of Hebrews is saying. Don't neglect this, it's too big, it's too beautiful, it's too great of a salvation. Don't neglect it. And I'm wondering how many of you in here, you've never tried it. I mean, maybe you've been coming for a year or so, maybe six weeks, maybe eight weeks, and you're really intrigued by what we say here and the things we do here. And maybe when I talk about Jesus something stirs in you, you know? And you're like, "Man, I want that." I know because I sat out there and thought that, I thought that myself at one time. You know, I sat out there and I heard some guy yell just like I am tonight, and I was like, "Man, I need that, I want that. I don't want to be like these freaks, but I want that. I want to be that. I want to know that." And maybe tonight that's you.

So I don't know what we've got here tonight. You know, maybe you've neglected it. Maybe you know Him but you just neglected it, man. Maybe you had like, some friend you had a fallout with and you're not giving Him honor and you're not pursuing Him any more and you're neglecting the great salvation that's extended to you. The question is what are you doing, man? What in the world are you doing? He's saying, "Hey, follow me so I can bless you." But now you're floundering and you don't even...come on. So here's what we're going to do, we're just going to pray some tonight. So we're not just going to rush out of here to our Chili's and our movie. We're going to just take two or three minutes and pray some. And here's what I want to say, maybe you need to repent, man. My brothers and sisters, my family in here, maybe you need to repent. Maybe you've been neglecting this great salvation. Maybe you've been taking advantage of it. Maybe you've been...I think the book of Romans says it like this, "You have taken lightly the grace and mercy of Christ." Or maybe, maybe if you're in here tonight and you're saying, "I want that Matt. I have no clue what to do. I'm living with my, this person. I'm doing this on the weekends. I've got all these issues. I want that, but man I just think I'm too broken." It just so happens – this is the greatest part of the deal – God prefers broken, jacked up people. It's just who He seems to like. So there's great news there on that front. And if you want to know where you begin, listen, you don't begin by changing this, this, this, this, and this. That's not the Gospel. The Gospel tonight is you begin by saying, "Hey, I need some help, Jesus. Jesus will you help me? I've made a mess of my life. I've sinned. Help me." And then we can start there. So I'm going to give us just a couple of minutes to maybe think and pray and maybe journal. I don't know, I don't know what you need to do tonight. I don't know what you need to do tonight. But listen, if you're here tonight and you say that little prayer and you just go, "Ok, I need some help with my life. I've made a mess here Jesus. I need some help. I need you to forgive me. I need some help." Will you tell the friend who invited you here? On the way home tonight, your coworker, your classmate, however you got here would you just go, "Hey, man, I prayed a little prayer in there tonight. What do I do now?" You've got this great offer man, it's called the Good News. I pray that it'd be alive in you tonight. Ok, so I joined my boy in Hebrews now, and go, "Oh, please pay attention." Please pay attention. Why don't you bow your heads and close your eyes. Let's pray a little bit. Just maybe we need to repent, maybe we need to ask Jesus for help, maybe we need to ask forgiveness for neglecting such a great salvation. Maybe we've been abusing missional living, abusing the banner of missional living to live our own way.

Father, for my brothers and sisters I thank you tonight. And I feel the angst tonight just for wanting so much for them and knowing the sin and the secrets that must be in this room tonight, and the pride. I thank you that you love us and that you extend to us this chance for salvation, for healing, for wholeness, for right standing, for... I pray we not neglect tonight. I pray my brothers and sisters, I pray that you would give the a spirit of desire to know you and walk with you deeply and that we might return to those things that we did at first. And I pray for those in here tonight who are just kind of flirting with you and just kind of checking you out. And I pray that you would bring clarity to them tonight and to your invitation to them, invitation to them to such a great and beautiful salvation. I thank you for all that you are and all that you are in us. Help us surrender to you and help us to believe in the deep parts of our soul that you really long to bless us and to get us to the table where we can eat some cake. And it's for your beautiful name I pray. Amen.

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