

Perseverance

3rd of October 2021

Hebrews 2:1-10

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we join our prayer with the Psalmist: Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Now may the words of my lips and the meditations of all our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and Redeemer. Amen.

Introduction:

Have you ever known someone who was so keen a Christian whose enthusiasm was edifying to all? Have you ever known someone equally as enthusiastic for the things of God, but now Christianity seems the least important aspect of their lives?

Sadly, I would suggest that each one of us would know someone who was so keen, but their lives don't reveal that now. In reality they may have drifted away from God.

Why people stop attending Church. Research from NCLS is consistent with experience of Rectors for a very long time. Some people cease attending Church because of frailty. The Church then seeks ways to continue to minister to them. Some people leave Church because they have been hurt, and the hurt is so strong they distance themselves from that environment. Of course when some one relocates to a new area they may be hesitant to restart somewhere else.

All this is about 'church attendance': You may be thinking just because they have stopped attending Church, doesn't equate to turning away from Christ.

In Chapter 10 of the Epistle of Hebrews we read these words:

Do not neglect to meet together,

Meeting as the body of Christ is what the LORD expects of His people. This is for worship of the living God, which also becomes edification through Word and Sacrament, and fellowship for the people of God.

Today's text actually focus is on those who have drifted away. The majority of people who have seemingly ceased attending Church did not

wake up one morning and say “I no longer believe’ – rather the majority slip away. This is not new:

***we must pay greater attention to what we have heard,
so that we do not drift away from it. (2:1)***

Of course, we are all required to obey the Public Health Orders, which require us at the present time not to meet together as the people of God. The Public Health Orders will change, and we will be permitted to come to St John’s as the people of God.

Verses one to four of Chapter two is all about the great salvation which is ours, and the warning of not drifting away.

One of the great issues facing St John’s and all other churches, is the reopening after being in lockdown for a very long period. Even when we first open the flagged Public Health Orders will still be retractive. At St John’s music has enhanced our liturgies and Hymns as we worship the LORD. When we first return we will not permitted to sing, that includes liturgies and hymns.

I say all this, as I believe as Christians we should make corporate worship of the LORD a priority. I will be usrging everyone to start reestablishing a good pattern of attending the worship Services of the LORD.

I look forward with great anticipation of the Body of Christ having the Public Health restrictions modified and teventually removed. During this transition it is essential that good patterns of corporate worship are reestablished in all our lives.

Temptations has always been laid before the followers of Christ. Temptation are to weaken the followers of Christ in their mission and worship of the LORD God. Once we are aware of these subtle temptations, we can actively make a stnce not to yield to them. IAs I have already stated our text makes this very clear:

***we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do
not drift away from it.***

The message of our who Jesus is, (the Messiah) and what He has done (paid the penalty for our transgressions) is clear and well known by us all. When we make attending worship Services a priority – this is also a witness to our neighbours. We are saying – attending Church and worshipping the Risen Saviour has a priority in our lives.

***but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels,
now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death,
so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.***

Verse nine may seem poetic, yet it is an actual description of the work of the Christ. **‘That he might taste death for everyone’**.

This is a very inclusive statement. Jesus dies for all. This tasting death refers to his atoning sacrifice.

A word of caution, albeit Jesus did taste death for everyone on the cross of Golgotha, and he is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world – God in his great love does not force humanity to accept that truth. Every person in his or her right is required to accept that truth for themselves. That truth is what you and I call the gospel, or good news. – Jesus tasted death for everyone.

There is a beautiful verse in the book of Romans chapter 10, verse 13.

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Friends the main aspects to today's Hebrews reading –

- ✓ Followers of Christ can drift away
- ✓ Christ tasted death for everyone

The way we live our lives, attending Church when the Public Health Orders are removed, will assist in our ability to make a stance for Christ.

To God be glory for ever. Amen

Resources

F. F. Bruce; The Epistle to the Hebrews. The New International Commentary on the New Testament.

Dr Peter Adam; The Majestic Son; reading Hebrews today.