

## Hebrews 2:1-4

*Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. 2 For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, 4 while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

The writer begins with what must be one of the most practical and timeless warnings in all of Scripture: *“We must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.”* Yes, we’ve paid attention, to some extent, but we must pay closer attention. That is what we do, after all, when we sense something is important, isn’t it? The room gets quiet during the big game when it seems something crucial is about to happen. How much more shouldn’t we be alert and attentive when the Word of life is being delivered unto us! The writer reminds us: *“For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?”*

When the Word is preached and taught, how do you hear it, if you hear it? Do you hang on every word? Do you strive mentally to outline what has been said in your mind? Do you make an effort to file away the main points in your mind? Do you ponder it later to make sure you’ve digested it? This message is nothing to doubt or forget. No, *“It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.”*

It looks like I might have to take a test in the near future that I am not ready to take at the moment. There might be a rather exciting prospect developing in my graduate studies, but in order to take advantage of it, I might have to take a test that includes a section of math questions. Now, what does history have to do with math? Not a lot in many instances, I suppose, but what is required is what is required. I haven’t had a math class in sixteen years, and haven’t taken a test that included math in the recent past. As I’ve started brushing up, I’ve realized two things: I learned a lot of math in school over the years, and I’ve forgotten most of it. I didn’t stay up on it, because it didn’t seem practical, but now it might become very practical indeed.

You have learned and will learn many practical things in life, but sometimes the things that seem least practical in the moment are at some point the most practical of all. And the same is often true of the Word. Sometimes people will fail to see how it could possibly relate to their lives or come in handy, but one day it will be the most practical knowledge of all, because we will stand before the God who attested it with signs and miracles and He will ask if we gladly heard and learned it, if we took it to heart, if we through it came to recognize and treasure its heart and core, meat and kernel: our Lord Christ, our Savior.

Perhaps you’ve paid attention, and decent attention at that. Nevertheless, today we receive a good reminder. When it comes to the Word, we can never pay too much attention, that is, not if we do not want to fall away from the faith, which is easier than we might think, because it comes so naturally to fallen men and women and to our old Adam. *“Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.”* Amen.