

HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE?

March 16, 2008.

Introduction.

If I had a choice in the matter, I would have chosen to not preach this morning. The last three weeks of hectic travel and work took its toll and when **Pastor Dunn** left on Friday morning I felt as if I was barely alive. Couple this with a virus that wouldn't let go and you would get an idea of my physical state on Friday morning. But as I told my wife, my conscience is pressed with preaching to you the sermon before us today. Despite every attempt I made to rationalize asking someone else to preach, the Spirit of God refused to allow me to do this. The Spirit of God riveted **Heb.2:1-4** on my mind with the clear mandate to preach it. Meditating on this passage to preach on it was not easy because of the emotions it was working in my own heart. So, with the Lord's help, here I am standing before you and I want to ask you to open your Bible to **Heb.2:1-4**. (**read**).

The Background.

Let us begin with a little background to place this book and our passage in its context. The book of Hebrews was written to second generation Jewish Christians. Neither the author nor the recipients of this letter had heard Jesus or His apostles preach. **Heb.13:7** points to the fact that the first generation of leaders in their church had also died. These Christians were facing difficult times. It would seem that the greatest difficulty they were facing was persecution. They were suffering for their faith. But unlike the first generation of believers, they had not shed their blood for the faith. (cf. **Heb.12:4**). At the same time they had grown cold in their faith and deteriorated in their knowledge to the level of the ABCs of the faith. (**Heb.5:11-14**).

When the letter came to them, they were already actively considering the prospect of returning to their obsolete old covenant Jewish faith. To return to their obsolete old covenant Jewish faith would mean they had defected from Christ. This return would have placed them in grave spiritual danger, the gravest danger being apostasy. So let us get it clear in our minds that the primary message of this book is for Christians. The many warnings are directed to Christians. Note the repetition of the word “**we**” in the passage I read. Also, there are four instances in which the author would tenderly address the recipients as “**brethren**”. (*Heb.3:1, 12; 10:19; 13:22*). But as we shall see, this primary focus does not rule out applications to those who are not Christians.

Exposition Of Hebrews 2 : 1 – 4.

Let us turn our attention now to the passage before us and seek to understand what the writer is saying. The writer began with the words, “For this reason” or more literally, “**on account of this**”. These words introduce us to an application the writer is about to make. But these opening words tell us that the application is based upon what was said previously in *chapter.1*. The great emphasis in the book of Hebrews is on the absolute and incomparable greatness, superiority, preeminence and supremacy of Christ over angels, over Moses, over Joshua, over Aaron and over all the high priests who ever descended from Aaron. We can also say that the new covenant faith, later called Christianity, which was established by Jesus, is preeminent over the old covenant faith which was made obsolete by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. (cf. *Heb.8:13*).

Chapter 1 emphasizes Christ’s superiority over the angels. Our writer proved Christ’s superiority over the angels by setting before us the following facts. The Lord Jesus is the Son of God (*vs.5*). The Father calls His Son “God” (*vss.8-9*). The Lord Jesus is eternal (*vs.12*). The Father created all things through His Son (*vs.2*). The angels, who are created beings, are commanded worship the Lord Jesus Christ (*vs.6*). The Lord Jesus

is seated at the Father's right hand (*vs.13*), that is, the place of absolute power and authority. The Lord Jesus is the Father's final messenger (*vs.2*).

Our writer is saying, "On account of the fact that Christ is divinely superior to the angels, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it." The message they received was delivered by the Son of God. The primary point here is that the Father's revelation delivered to us through the Son must be regarded with utmost seriousness. The verb "pay attention" was used to describe the care and attention a captain would display in bringing his ship into harbor. The implication in the verb is that the attention the captain pays is comparable to the worth he has placed on his ship. Let me change the illustration. This verb would be used to describe the care and attention you would take in driving to bring your family home safely. The implication in the verb is that the care and attention you pay is comparable to the worth you have placed on your family.

The exhortation the writer gave is, "we must pay much closer attention." In the Greek the writer's emphasis is not in the comparative but in the superlative. The literal emphasis is : "we must pay the closest attention" or "we must pay the greatest attention". The verb "pay attention" actually means "to pay continual attention". So you are not simply exhorted to pay the closest or greatest attention. You are exhorted to continually pay the closest or greatest attention. You are not allowed to stop paying the closest or greatest attention because *"eternal issues are at stake and the gospel by its very nature demands to be treated with the fullest seriousness."* (Hughes).

"On account of this we must pay the closest attention to what we have heard." Note the verb "**heard**". Our writer has already established that the speaker is the eternal Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus' theme is salvation and all the issues connected to this salvation. In other words there is far more to Christianity than simply believing in Jesus in order to go to heaven. The Greek verb translated "**heard**" calls for more than simple hearing. It calls for submissive acceptance to what is heard. It is hearing that must work itself into obedience.

An intensified form of this same Greek verb is found in *Heb.5:9* & *11:8* and it is translated “obey.” *Heb.5:9* says with a positive emphasis, “He (**the Son**) became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.” *Heb.11:8* says, “By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed....” The idea is that if we are paying the closest attention to what we hear from the Son of God, we will obey Him. And those who are not obeying Him are not paying attention.

“On account of this we must pay the closest attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it.” A more literal translation is “lest we drift away from it.” The word “**lest**” expresses the writer anxiety for these Hebrew Christians. He is deeply concerned about their spiritual welfare. The verb “**drift away**” pictures for us a ship that is not properly anchored and the currents or tide quietly carrying it away from its safe harbor. The word also pictures for us a leaky container. You are using this container to store much needed water. But you are not aware that it has a very small leak. You fill the container and leave it, fully confident that there is no leak. But later, while you are in the shower with soap all over your body, you discover to your great dismay that the container is empty.

“Lest we drift away.” Note the clear emphasis is on “**we**”, on the members of the church, on you drifting away from the truth of the gospel brought to you by Christ. To apply the imagery, the writer is saying to these Christians, you are the ship drifting away from the safe harbor of truth. Truth is the container and you are the water leaking out from the container one drop at a time. “**Drifting away**” has in it the ideas of unconcern and carelessness. Those who drift away do so because they are unconcerned and careless about their own spiritual and eternal welfare.

In *vs.2* the writer builds the argument in his application by setting before us a contrast that argues from the lesser to the greater. He is also arguing from the lesser to the greater because he wants to emphasize the threat in the warning he is about to give. Arguing from the lesser to the greater makes the application of the warning to both Christian and non-Christian very potent and utterly serious. Let us read verse *vs.2* again. (**read**).

The word “**if**” does not mean that the writer is using a hypothetical argument. The word “**if**” could be translated “**since**” because it assumes the reality of what is being stated. The first part of the contrast is on how under the Old Covenant the message of the Law was given to Moses at Sinai. When God gave the message of the Law to Moses at Sinai, God spoke through angels. That word God spoke through the angels was “**unalterable**”, that is, it was valid, binding, unchallengeable.

By contrast, under the New Covenant, God spoke the message of salvation through His eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who is worshipped by the angels. The argument from the lesser to the greater is this : if God’s message spoken through created creatures proved to be unalterable, how much more unalterable, how much more binding and unchallengeable is the message God gave to us through His eternal Son!

The second part of the contrast is between how God dealt with the Israelites who disobeyed His message spoken through angels and how He will deal with those who neglect His message spoken through His Son. What happened to those who disobeyed the Law God gave to Moses? The answer is, “every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty.” The word “transgression” also means “**infringement**”. It pictures one as stepping out of line from what is required. “Disobedience” sets before us a two-fold picture that goes hand in hand : (1) it describes those who are unwilling to listen to the voice of God and, (2) it emphasizes a conscious and deliberate rejection of God’s revealed will. This is the attitude that says, “*I do not even want to hear.*” And if hearing is unavoidable, then the attitude is, “*do not waste your time because I will not obey.*”

It would seem that we have here a picture of what people like to call “**small sin**” and “**big sin.**” Well, what happened? We are told that under the Old Covenant “every transgression”, that is, every small sin, and “every disobedience”, that is, every big sin, “received a just penalty.” Every sin, whether small or big, received or was rewarded with the just or right or deserving penalty or punishment. What is the lesson that was learned by the Israelites who lived under the Old Covenant? God does not deal

lightly with sin. Every sin, without exception, will receive its just punishment. Call sin whatever you want, describe however you want, God will deal with it and deal with it justly. Sin brings a divine penalty and that penalty will be meted out without fail. No one will escape. No one will be able to mock God on that final day and boast that they escaped. (cf. *Gal.6:7*).

Philip Hughes wrote, *“if under Moses the law stood firm and its penalties were stringently enforced on those who deliberately or through negligence broke its precepts, it cannot but be that the direst consequences await those who are careless and unconcerned about the gospel, which is here described as such great salvation – it is so wonderful that no language is adequate to do it justice.”*

Now I want you to note with me very carefully the heart of the second contrast. Arguing from the lesser to the greater, the writer is saying : if no Israelite escaped the appropriate and just reward of punishment for transgressing and disobeying the Law of Moses, the terrifying question that has faced Christians from the early church to this day is, “how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” (*vs.3*). The implication in the question is that the salvation message we have received from the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than the message of the Law given to Moses through angels. And the consequences for neglecting it are infinitely greater. Let us examine this question.

The words “so great” emphasizes both the greatness and the vast importance of this salvation the Lord Jesus Christ came to bring. The verb “neglect” is used in contrast to “pay much closer attention” in *vs.1*. But at the same time it is used synonymously with the word “disobedience” in *vs.2*. Neglect and disobedience go hand in hand because neglect unavoidably leads to disobedience. The verb “neglect” means *“to pay no attention to; to be unconcerned about; to become indifferent to; to lose interest in; to make light of; to be unwilling to put oneself out for something.”* This verb is found in *Matt.22:5* where we are told that the guests “paid no attention” to the invitation given to them by the king to attend the wedding feast of his son.

“How shall we escape” is an emphatic negative expression that conveys the idea – “**still less shall we escape**”. Using a paraphrase, the point is this : if no Israelite escaped the appropriate and just reward of punishment for transgressing and disobeying the Law of Moses, the terrifying question that has faced Christians from the early church to this day is, “What less hope do we have of escaping if we neglect a salvation as great and as important as this?” If the disobedient Israelites did not escape, how much less are our chances of escaping! The writer’s question points to the impossibility of escaping God’s certain and just reward of punishment if we neglect such a great and vastly important salvation as this that was first preached to us by Christ and that we profess to have received in Christ. Consider now the comments from the following writers.

John Brown wrote, *“To neglect the great salvation is a peculiarly aggravated sin”*. **John Owen** spoke of the *“inexpressible greatness”* of this evil of neglect. **Philip Hughes** wrote, *“if, as the history of Israel shows, neglect of the law produced dire consequences, neglect of the gospel must inevitably be disastrous. If the breakers of the law did not go unpunished, certainly despisers of the gospel cannot expect to do so. Our author is pressing on his readers the extreme seriousness of carelessness and unconcern.”*

Lastly, **William Lane** warned that if this message of salvation is ignored, it can only be ignored with catastrophic consequences. **Lane** added, *“A lack of concern for God’s word invites an appropriate punishment. The experience of Israel in this regard provided a sobering model for those who were prone to become apathetic and unresponsive to God’s revelation in His Son. Already under the old covenant carelessness toward the revealed will of God incurred appropriate punishment. No less can be anticipated by the people of God now that He has declared His ultimate word through the Son. In this sense the distinction between the old and the new people of God was only relative; both were the privileged heirs to revelation. The greater degree of privilege enjoyed by the new people of God, which finds ample expression in the phrase, “a salvation as great as this”,*

simply means that they are faced with greater responsibility and greater peril.... The rhetorical question in vs.3 (“how shall we escape...?”) calls for the reply that no escape is possible.”

In the verses before us there are many facts that are clear. The various writers have rightly noted that the Christian’s responsibility is greater and the peril faced by the sin of neglect is greater. They have rightly noted that a professed Christian will face far more disastrous consequences for the sin of neglect. But there is one fact that God has left unclear, and that is, the nature and the extent of the just and right punishment that will be received by those who neglect so great and vastly important a salvation brought to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. This point is left open-ended. From the book of Hebrews we see that God can use any one of four punishments : discipline, scourging, apostasy and hell.

General Applications.

In making applications from our study, I want to begin with a few general ones. The *first* is : do you recognize the infinite importance of the Messenger who has spoken to us in these last days. *Heb.1:1-2* says, “God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son.” The Messenger whom God sent to speak to us in these last days was not the angels. The Messenger whom God sent to speak to us in these last days was not the prophets. The Messenger was the Son of God Himself. How important is this Messenger to you? What kind of honor and respect are you giving to this Messenger? Are you paying attention to this Messenger? Are you ignoring this Messenger?

Secondly, this Messenger has brought to you from His Father the message of “so great salvation”. What is your view of this message? Jesus’ view is clearly, unmistakably and unambiguously expressed. In *Jn.17:17* Jesus declared, “Your word is truth.” The message the Father sent Him to bring to you is nothing less than the truth. In *Jn.8:45*

Jesus said to the Jews, “I speak the truth [and] you do not believe Me.” And then He asked in *vs.46*, “If I speak the truth, why do you not believe Me?”

The apostolic view is also clear, unmistakable and unambiguous. In *Acts 26:25* the gospel is described as “words of sober truth” or more literally, “*words that are true and rational.*” In *Eph.1:13* the gospel is described as, “the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation.” In *Col.1:5* we find this description, “the word of truth, the gospel.”

Now get this fact clear : the message Christ came to bring is **THE** truth. Let us not play games here. The message Christ came to bring is not one point of truth in a larger body of truth. The message Christ came to bring is **THE** truth, the exclusive truth. Take a piece of paper and make two columns. Label one column with the word “**the lies**”. Label the other column “**the truth**”. Take all the religions in this world and all their religious teachings, without exception, and put them in the column you have labeled “**the lies**”. And then put Jesus’ message alone in the other column you have labeled “**the truth**”. Jesus’ message and the world’s religious teachings are as different and unmixable as oil and water. As a matter of fact, Jesus described the other religious leaders and teachers in our world as thieves and robbers. (*Jn.10:8*).

The Bible makes it clear that the world has exchanged the truth of God for lies. (*Rom.1:25*). In *2Thess.2:10* we are told that sinners “did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.” *2Tim.3:8* describes the non-Christian religious teachers of the world as men who “oppose the truth, men of depraved mind.” *2Tim.2:18* describes apostates from Christianity as men “who have gone astray from the truth”. Some of these apostates who remain on and have started their own churches are described as “men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain”, that is, they see Christianity as a means of making money and enriching themselves. (*1Tim.6:5*). Finally we are told that there will come a time in the last days when churches will turn away from the truth and turn to myths. (*2Tim.4:4*).

Now here are my questions : where do you fit in? Are you seeing Christ's message through the eyes of the world? Are you seeing Christ's message through the eyes of confused sinners? Are you seeing Christ's message through the eyes of apostates and false teachers? Are you seeing Christ's message through the eyes of professed Christians who are in the process of turning away from the truth?

Or are you seeing Christ's message through the eyes of the apostles? Or are you seeing Christ message through the eyes of Christ Himself? Is Christ's message **THE** truth? Did Christ speak to us **THE** truth? There can be no ands, ifs or buts here. If Christ's message is not **THE** truth then it is **THE** lie. What Christ's message is to you will determine how you will respond to it.

Thirdly, I want you to note that the One who was sent to bring you the message of "so great salvation" is the very One who has been appointed to be your Judge on the final day. *Acts 17:31* tells us that God has fixed the day of final judgment and God has appointed the Judge. The Judge is the Lord Jesus Christ. *Matt.25:31ff* says the Lord Jesus will come in His glory and He will sit on His glorious throne. And the nations will appear before Him for final judgment. Now note : Jesus said in *Jn.12:48*, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings (or My message), has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." God sent His Son to bring to you the message of "so great salvation." God's Son will use that very message to judge every human being on that last day.

My question is very simple : are you paying the closest attention to the message God has sent to us by His Son? The attention you are paying to the message God has sent to us by His Son reveals the comparative worth you have place on your soul. I ask you, what is your soul worth to you? Your soul will live for all eternity in heaven or in hell. What is your soul worth to you? The attention you are paying to the gospel message is revealing right now the worth you are placing on your soul. How careful or careless are you with your soul? Are you playing Russian roulette with your soul? Do not ever

forget that the gun is not in your hands but in God's hands. It is God who determines whether you live or die and when you will die.

I want to repeat : the message God has sent to us by His Son is the message that will be used to judge you. Note carefully what Jesus said : there are those who will reject Him and reject His message. But in the final analysis your rejection of His message will mean absolutely nothing in the final judgment. Your rejection will come back to haunt you because that which was designed to bring you salvation will be used to judge you in the final judgment.

Applications To Christians.

I speak now to those who say they are Christians. Who is Christ to you? Is He the eternal Son of God? Is He God revealed to us in the flesh? Is He the Creator of all things? Is He seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high? In other words, do all power and authority belong to Him? Is He the Father's final Messenger to you? I am not asking you these questions at a theoretical level. I am asking you these questions at a practical level.

Who Christ is to you must have practical application in your life. If there is no practical application in your life, your theoretical beliefs are nothing more than a bad joke. What does it mean to you at a practical level that Christ is the eternal Son of God, the second member of the Triune God-Head? What does it mean to you at a practical level that Christ has all power and authority in heaven and on earth? What does it mean to you at a practical level that Christ has all power and authority over you?

What does it mean to you at a practical level that Christ is the Father's final Messenger to you? What does it mean to you at a practical level that Christ came to bring you the message of "so great salvation"? By "**salvation**" we do not simply mean : believe in Jesus and be saved. The book of Hebrews makes it very clear that there is far more to

salvation than simply believing in Jesus to be saved and the entire message carries equal weight and importance.

Christ's message is not a large banquet table that you can come to with your empty plate, survey and the pick and choose what you want, what you will believe and what you will obey. Those who come to Christ's banquet table to pick and choose are not submitting themselves to Christ's sovereign and majestic authority. They are coming to His banquet table with a heart of rebellion. And rebels, regardless of how they dress themselves, are not Christians. Are you a picker and chooser when you come before the banquet table of Christ's message? In other words, are you a rebel?

If your theoretical beliefs lack practical application and practice then you are already drifting away from Christ's message and ultimately from Christ Himself. My question to you is : are you drifting? What are the currents at work in your life that are causing you to drift away from Christ's message and ultimately from Christ Himself?

I am one of your pastors in this church. I am one of the shepherds Christ has placed in this church to watch over your souls. My earnest desire and prayer is to be faithful to Christ and to your souls. I am not preaching this message because I want to. I am preaching this message out of sheer compulsion by the Spirit of Christ. If you have a drifting heart this morning, He knows. If you are a picker and a chooser, He knows. If you are resisting His word, He knows. If you ought to be a mature Christian by now, or a teacher or a leader, as He makes clear in **Heb.5:11-14**, but you have chosen to remain a spiritual baby, He knows. If you ought to be a better example to be followed and you are not becoming that better example because you are choosing to live at a level where you can still enjoy the pleasures of sin and yet not have your conscience bothered, He knows. (cf. **Heb.11:23-26**).

I say to you, beware! I say to you, examine your soul. I say to you, stop being a drifter. I say to you to stop allowing the currents of this world to rule your hearts and draw you away from Christ. To drift is to put your soul in great peril. To drift is to put your soul

under the threat of just divine punishment. How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation? What hope do you have of escaping if you neglect so great a salvation? None! If God did not spare the Israelites who had the lesser light, He certainly will not spare you who have the greater light. I ask you : what value are you putting on your own soul?

I want you to clearly understand that when you reject Christ's message you are rejecting Christ Himself. And this Christ whom you are rejecting will judge you on the basis of the very message you are rejecting. By God's grace I do not preach to you my personal opinions. I do not require of you my personal wishes. I do not put any command on you that I have devised. I continue to resist all legalists, regardless of who they are, even if they despise me and slander me. I continue to stand guard against the wolves even if protecting you means I must bear the injuries. And so I plead with you and warn you : beware of neglecting, rejecting and disobeying Christ's message to you from His Father.

And so, Brethren, I am calling you this morning to repentance and a fresh personal commitment to Christ. I am calling you this morning to repentance and a fresh personal commitment to Christ's message. I am calling you this morning to repentance and a fresh personal commitment to Christ's church.

Applications To The Unsaved.

Lastly, I want to speak to those present here today who are not saved. Once again I want to remind you that the argument is from the lesser to the greater. The lesser, the Israelites, did not escape God's wrath when they disobeyed the message sent to them via angels. Their continued disobedience would result in the nation being divided into the northern and southern kingdoms. *2Chron.36:15-16* says, "The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His

prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, until there was no remedy.”

The final result was that the Lord sent the Assyrian army against the northern kingdom. They were captured and deported to Assyria where they gradually became the Samaritan race. Later the Lord sent the Babylonian army against the southern kingdom. They were captured and deported to Babylon. The Lord preserved them and they returned to re-establish the nation. But in the end, when they rejected the Lord Jesus and crucified Him, the Lord would send the Romans against them.

The Israelites did not escape when they neglected the word of the Lord. Christians and churches, professed or genuine, have not escaped when they neglected the word of the Lord. During the period of the early church, the gospel spread throughout the Roman world and beyond. Look at those nations today. Where are their churches? **Rev.2 & 3** warned the churches of Asia Minor about drifting away from Christ and His message. They didn't give heed to Christ's warning and they perished.

Africa had gospel long before the gospel came west toward England. Look at Africa today. Where are their churches? India, Pakistan and China received the gospel very early. Look at them today. Where are their churches? England has had the richest heritage of Biblical truth. Yet today churches are closing on an ongoing basis in England and the buildings are being bought up by businessmen and other pagan religious groups. Look at America, once a bastion of Biblical truth at every level of its society. Now America leads the world in over-turning the truths of the Bible at every level of society.

If you are not a Christian, I want you to clearly understand that you are living in the category of the greater. All I need to set before you is one proof : you have God's final and complete message in written form. You have the Bible. If you are neglecting, rejecting and disobeying God's word, why should you escape? What hope can you have of escaping the wrath of God? None!

Heb.5:9 says Jesus “became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.” But *Jn.3:36* says, “he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him.” *2Thess.1:8* says retribution will be dealt out to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. *Vs.9* says that retribution is the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord.

How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation? You have no hope of escaping. If you die without this salvation Christ came to bring you have only one thing waiting for you, God’s eternal wrath in the lake of fire. Yesterday, over **150,000** people died in the world. How many of them died neglecting the so great salvation Christ came to bring? All who died without salvation did not escape God’s eternal wrath in the lake of fire. You were not one in that **150,000** only because of the sheer mercy and grace of God. But one of these days you will become a statistic in that **150,000**. What kind of statistic will you be? Will you be numbered with those who neglected and rejected Christ and the salvation He brought?

This so great salvation is free but its cost was infinite. It cost God the Father His only begotten and beloved Son. It cost Christ far more than we can ever understand. It cost Him, who created man, to become a man. It cost Him, the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth to submit to the rule of wicked men. It cost Him to lay aside His glory. But the greatest cost for the holy sinless Son of God who knew no sin was taking our sin upon Himself, becoming sin on our behalf, bearing in His body the Father’s full wrath for our sins as He died on the cross.

What horror for the Father than He had to punish His Son unsparingly for our sins! What horror for the Father whose eyes are too holy to behold sin to see His Beloved Son becoming sin on our behalf! The horror was so great it caused the Father to turn away from His Son and it caused the Son to cry out in utter desolation, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Let me ask you, how shall you escape when God's Son did not escape when He chose to take our sins upon Himself and die on our behalf? You reject Christ and you will not escape. You will come to know for all eternity what it means to be forsaken by God. I believe there will be no punishment in hell that is greater than the reality of knowing that you are utterly and hopelessly forsaken by God for all eternity.

If you are not a Christian this morning, I am calling on you right now to stop, to repent, to cry to the Lord for mercy and salvation. I am calling on you right now to join with the tax-collector in *Lk.18:13* and plead with God, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner." Let today be your day of salvation. Stop the neglecting of so great salvation in Christ. Stop the rejecting of Christ's message of salvation. Stop the life of disobeying Christ. Let Him save you and let Him save you today. Tomorrow may be forever too late. Tomorrow you may be one of that **150,000**.