

A Warning to Drifters *By James Moriello*

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“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.” (Hebrews 2:1)

“Therefore” refers us back to Hebrews Chapter One. Since Jesus Christ is preeminent, being God Himself, He is worthy of all glory, honor, and praise. For that reason, we are accountable to Him and had better listen to what He tells us. In short, Jesus the preeminent One has the preeminent message, beginning with the way to salvation. *“For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation”* (Hebrews 2:2-3a)? Clearly there can be no other escape from the punishment of sin other than the way God provides. If you have never taken notice, you had better take notice now. Call upon Christ today while you can, for tomorrow is not guaranteed. Accept His terms of peace, which are quite favorable. Believe that Jesus died for you—a sinner—and that by His sacrifice you have been made clean and acceptable to God. Believe that He rose again, and that He has gone to prepare a place for you. Your Creator cries out to you today to take His hand and enjoy the relationship for which He created you. Maybe you have taken that step already, but you struggle to keep moving forward in your Christian life. Take heart, friend. We have all been there in one way or another. This teaching is for you. It is a warning to spiritual drifters, and how you who are standing strong in the faith now might avoid spiritual drifting. Be honest with yourself before God. You are not alone. Jesus stands at the ready to help you overcome the things that serve as barriers to your relationship with Him. We will now look at the **symptoms of spiritual drifting**, the **root causes of spiritual drifting**, and the **remedies for spiritual drifting**.

First, we will look at symptoms of spiritual drifting. A symptom is something that can be seen on the outside that is a result of what is going on—or not going on—on the inside. Symptoms of spiritual drifting include lack of prayer life, lack of

interest in God's Word, lack of interest in public worship, indifference about the spiritual state of other people, and despair over a perceived lack of purpose in life. There are other symptoms of spiritual drifting as well, but we have selected five common ones. Just because you do not have all these symptoms at once, do not deceive yourself into thinking you are honoring God. For instance, many people attend public worship at the local church but do not bother to pray or pick up the Bible the other six days.

Let us now proceed to look at some common root causes of spiritual drifting. The root cause is the underlying reason why we do or do not do certain things. These are the real reasons why we do not pray, read the Bible, regularly attend church, fail to share peace and hope with others, or give up participation in God's plan for our lives. Here are eight of the root causes of spiritual drifting with the Scripture to back them up:

- 1) Selfishness: *"The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied from above"* (Proverbs 14:14). "Backslider" is simply another word for spiritual drifter. Is it all about the 'great I think I am' or is about the 'Great I Am' for you?
- 2) Indifference: *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love"* (Revelation 2:4). Do you just not care? Examine yourself.
- 3) Rebellious Spirit: *"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 21:25). The reason people reject godly leadership and a Bible-based local church is because they do not want to be accountable. This rebellion is really against God, who is The Spiritual Leader.
- 4) Evil Associations: *"Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits"* (1 Corinthians 15:33). Your mom was right. The company you keep really does affect you whether you realize it or not. Keep godly company.
- 5) Love of Worldly Things: *"for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world"* (2 Timothy 4:10a-b). Many times the things of the world

look appealing to us. In the end, they will lead to destruction if we put our faith in them. Learn from your past mistakes and repent, changing mind and focus upwards instead.

- 6) Shallow Faith: *“But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away”* (Luke 8:13). Perhaps the commitment to Christ was never sincere and salvation never occurred, or there was an expectation that there would be no trouble upon accepting Jesus. Maybe what is being held back is trust because of a fear of losing control.
- 7) Lack of Spiritual Discernment: *“To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding”* (Proverbs 1:2). How do we learn to discern God’s will? By reading the Good Book for ourselves, thereby learning to discern truth from error.
- 8) Laziness: *“But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (Hebrews 5:14). The point here is that those who are too lazy to look into spiritual things and make the effort will go without blessings.

We have defined the disease of spiritual drifting. Let us now look at some remedies for spiritual drifting. Begin with an honest self examination, identifying and admitting to your need for help from the Lord in addressing any issues. You and God are the ones who really know what symptoms and causes exist in you that need addressing if you are going to take your relationship with Jesus Christ to the next level. I will offer up five remedies from the pages of Scripture:

- 1) Resolve to grow up spiritually: *“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things”* (1 Corinthians 13:11). No more games.

- 2) Seek and hold fast to the truth: *“Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding”* (Proverbs 23:23). Will you continue to trust in and live in lies? There is a better way.
- 3) Follow Christ’s example: *“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked”* (1 John 2:6). Talk the talk and walk the walk.
- 4) Participate in the local church: *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”* (Hebrews 10:24-25a). Resolve to make public worship a priority. Then participate in it. You have much to offer.
- 5) Make God’s Word a priority: *“But His delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night”* (Psalm 1:2). You have many bad habits. Here is a good one. It’s hard to drift when we are holding God’s truth with us wherever we go.

There are day and night seasons in our Christian walk. Whatever season you are in, Jesus Christ is calling out your name, for He earnestly desires for you to have a closer walk with Him. God has given you today to begin making the necessary changes, and He has given you the tools to do it. You do not need to do it alone. God will help you.