

THE FIRST WARNING
Chap. 2.1-4
To Take Heed to What the Son speaks (1-4)

CHAPTER X.

**THE DANGER OF NEGLECTING
SO GREAT SALVATION**

2.1. Therefore we ought to give more earnest (Abundant) heed to the things that were heard lest haply we drift away.

2. For if the word, spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed, unto us by them that heard;

4. God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and, by manifold powers, and by gifts (Marg., Distributions) of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.

THE first chapter has set before us the divine glory of Christ the Son, in whom God hath spoken to us in these days. In the second the humanity and the humiliation of Jesus are to be unfolded. Ere the writer proceeds to this, he pauses to sound a note of warning. He reminds his readers of the greater responsibility and greater danger in case of neglect, which greater privileges bring, and to urge them to take more earnest, more abundant heed to what God is speaking in His Son.

Therefore, this is the link between the teaching of chap. 1. with regard to the Godhead and glory of the Son, and the warning that now comes. The everlasting God speaks to us in His Son; we surely ought to **give more abundant heed**.

More abundant heed, it is the same word as is used in chap. 6. 17. “God being minded to shew *more abundantly* unto the heirs of the promise, the immutability of His counsel.” In what God speaks and does, it is all with the desire to show to us *more abundantly*, in full and overflowing measure, what the purpose of His heart is. It is for this He speaks in none less than His own Son. He has a right to claim that we meet Him with a corresponding whole-heartedness, and give *more abundant* heed to what He speaks. Nothing less will satisfy Him; nothing less, in the very nature of things, will satisfy us, because nothing less than man’s more abundant heed is capable of receiving God’s more abundant grace. It is the lack of this taking more earnest heed, the lack of intense earnestness, giving God and religion the first place and the best powers of our life, which is at the root of the feebleness and sickness of the Christian life. *God is speaking to us in His Son*, therefore we *ought* to take more abundant heed.

Lest haply we drift away – and perish more surely and more terribly than those who sinned under the Old Testament. There the word spoken, with its threatening, was stedfast, and every transgression was punished. **How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?** The gospel does not, as so many think, lessen – it increases our danger. It does not diminish, but will terribly intensify, the soreness of the punishment in those who neglect it. Oh, let us sound out the warning: it is not only positive enmity or open sin that will be punished. No, simply “not taking earnest heed,” just “drifting

away” unconsciously with the current of worldliness and half-hearted religion, “neglecting” to give the great salvation that supremacy, that entire devotion which it claims,— it is this which will render escape impossible.

And why? How can we show men that it is right and meet that it should be so? And what is the motive that will stir men to take heed? The answer is in the one word: **So great salvation**. The insight into the more abundant glory, the divine, the all-surpassing greatness of this salvation, is what will compel men willingly and joyfully to give up all and buy this pearl of great price.

And wherein does the greatness of this salvation consist? In this that it comes to us from and through THE TRIUNE GOD; the Holy Trinity is revealed as combining to work out this salvation for us. Listen. “**So great salvation, *which having at the first been spoken by the Lord,*** was confirmed unto us by them that heard.” Christ the Son, the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of His substance, it was He in whom God spoke to us; it was He, the Redeemer, God and King, who Himself first preached the kingdom which He established when He effected the cleansing of our sins, and sat down on the right hand of the throne.

So great salvation! First spoken by the Lord, *God also bearing witness* both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers. God the Father Himself set His seal from heaven on the preaching of the word. The existence of His church is His standing sign and wonder, the proof of His divine power. Not to take heed, to neglect the great salvation, is nothing less than despising God Himself.

God also bearing witness, *by distributions of’ the Holy Ghost,* according to His own will. Not only did God bear witness

to the great salvation by signs and wonders and powers, but above all by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The Holy Spirit is God come to dwell on earth, to strive and plead and testify in the hearts of men. There is no fellowship with the Father but through the Son, and *no fellowship with His Son and His salvation, but through the Holy Spirit in us*. Let us enter the study of Christ's person and work in the Epistle in this faith. Yes, this is the greatness of the great salvation – in its offer THE THREE-ONE God comes to us. The Lord preached, the Father bore witness, the Holy Spirit came as the power of God to work. What a salvation! What sin to neglect it! May God reveal to us, as we study this Epistle, the glory of the so great salvation, that we may indeed more abundantly take heed to it.

1. To know the Son who speaks and reveals the Father; to know the Father to whom, and whose love, the Son brings us in; to know the Holy Spirit with His wonderful gifts of grace and power; to be restored to the image and fellowship of the Holy Trinity: this is salvation.

2. Let every thought of the glory of Christ, and of God, and of the Spirit, and of the great salvation leave this one impression: Take more abundant heed to what you hear! meet God's abounding grace with abounding desire to listen and believe.

3. To the preaching of Christ and the apostles God bore witness. If this was needful then, how much more now, at this long distance from those days of heavenly joy and power. Ask, for the study of the Word in the Epistle, that God bear witness of the Holy Ghost. Claim and expect it. Without this, even the teaching of the apostles by Christ Himself availed little.

4. Once again. This is the greatness of salvation; the everlasting Father in His love speaks to me Himself in the Son. The Son shows and brings and gives me all the Father speaks; and I have the Holy Spirit in me, fitting me to hear and know and possess and enjoy all that the Father in the Son speaks and gives. Let us, above all, hold this fast that there is no divine witness, or assurance, or experience of the salvation Christ effected, except as the Holy Spirit, which came from heaven, communicates and maintains it within us. Let us, therefore, take more abundant heed to the Holy Spirit in us, in whom the Father and the Son come to us.