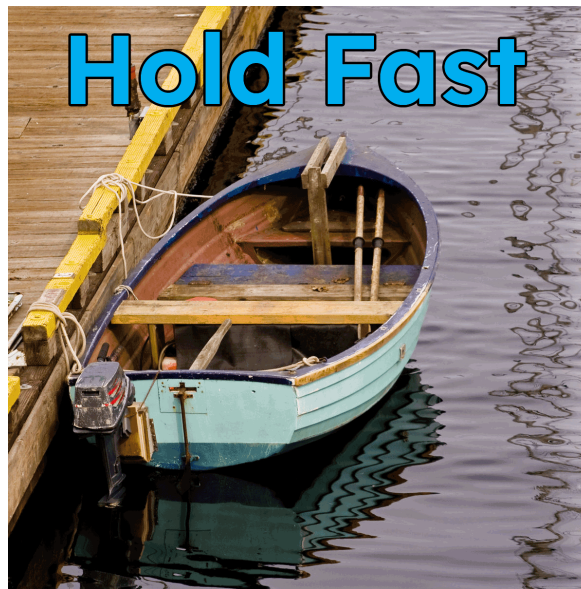


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Hold Fast

(Hebrews 2:1)



- I. The Search & Rescue Story Behind Hebrews
 - A. Hebrew Christians straddling two systems
 - 1. Kicked out synagogue
 - 2. Displaced when Temple was destroyed

James 1:6-9 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

- B. Help them go beyond enlightenment to full acceptance of Christ through **faith**.
 - 1. Faith is a Gift

Ephesians 2:8 "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,"

- 2. Faith is a human response which allows salvation to become operative

C. Christian Jews agreed in theory but didn't fully entrust themselves to Christ.

1. Divided between Judaism & Christianity

2. Like an untethered boat "driven & tossed by the wind"

II. Faith is our rope securing us (the boat) secure to the dock (Christ)

A. Focus of Hebrews: Watch that which weakens our faith (rope)

Hebrews 2:1 "Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it."

1. Brittle rope will not bend, tie & eventually snaps

Hebrews 3:8 "do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness."

2. We avoid a hardening of the heart by encouraging one another.

Hebrews 3:13 "But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today', that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

3. Dangers of Social Media

a. We no longer spectate, we commentate (out of context)

b. Devil uses the confusion & chaos to spread destruction

c. Hearts become callous & cynical, deceived into sin, set adrift

B. Hebrews was a rescue manual for Hebrews

1. God has a personal plan for us

2. Christ' humanity helps him relate to our weaknesses

Hebrews 5:7-8 "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered."

3. His obedience helped him complete the Father's work

Hebrews 5:9 "And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,"

C. We grow dull of hearing about salvation

1. Why? We're not experiencing salvation...(it is yet unseen).

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

2. We are experiencing suffering

Hebrews 5:14 “But solid food is for the mature, those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”

D. This our point of connection where we hold fast (in faith) to Christ

1. Christ learned obedience through suffering

2. We gain discernment by constant practice (trials)

III. Christ gives us what we need to succeed (specific to us)

A. Using heroes from the OT familiar to the Hebrew Christians

1. God speaks in a way we understand so that we trust in him

Hebrews 11:39 “And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised,”

2. The destination is irrelevant

B. Faith is not a power we possess to create our own future.

1. It's not him believing and trusting in our plans, but us believing and trusting in his ways.

2. Faith is giving ourselves over to God confidently trusting in all that he has purposed for us.

Conclusion: Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

D. We don't always know what we are hoping for, but we know who we are trusting in,