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# Ignite

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*“ Dear God, we proclaim blessing all those who feel that they are beyond the reach of Your grace. For those who feel they are so far gone, so unclean and defiled, that they could never enter Your presence. Reach out Your hand. Touch them. May they hear Your voice say to them, “I am willing - be clean.” May we too be reminded of the path You have called us to journey, to obey and to claim victory in Your name, Amen.”*





# SERMON SUMMARY

**Note to Word Facilitator:** The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

## Forward 3: Spiritual Drifting

**Senior Pastor Chris Kam**

**Hebrews 2:1-4**

*We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

### **Introduction**

We have heard stories of swimmers and sailors who have been drifted by the undercurrents. Pastor Chris had a similar experience when he was snorkeling in the Philippines 35 years ago. He was distracted by the beautiful corals until all he saw were dark waters. There is an enforced distancing during the MCO. There are less avenues for serving and one is not missed if one does not tune into church online. Nobody will notice one's absence online. It is a perfect recipe for drifting. As the writer of Hebrews warns us, we are in danger of spiritual drifting; which is worse than drifting in the sea.

## **Five danger warnings in Hebrews**

### **#1 Neglect *Heb 2:1-4***

This reflects on the basics that we neglect to do during our daily routine. It creeps in little by little due to the sin of omission.

### **#2 Unbelief *Heb 3:7,8***

There are doubts about what God said. And we only believe partially in God's word.

### **#3 Falling away *Heb 6:4,5***

This applies to believers who have fallen away where they have tasted the goodness of God before.

### **#4 Willful Sin *Heb 10:26,27***

This is a warning for those who continue to sin even though they know that it is wrong.

### **#5 Falling Short of the Grace of God *Heb 12:15***

With willful sin, we will eventually fall from God's grace where this bitter root will hurt both us and others.

People start strong but can eventually drift away during tough times. We live by grace every day. Learn from it. We live our lives like a yoyo chart , we may fall occasionally but with discipline and God's grace we see ourselves moving up and up.

## **The five setbacks that cause us to drift are**

### **#1 Misplaced schedule**

It is not just about being busy. We are busy with the wrong things. We are to look back to the Ancient Path: Stop , Look, Ask and Walk. We must have a stop doing list.

### **#2 Misplaced Affections *1 John 2:15***

Do not set your heart on things that do not matter at the end of the day.

### **#3 Discouragement or Disappointments**

Pastor Chris has seen people become disappointed when God did not answer their prayers. This has caused them to move away from God. In times of storms, we should move towards God and not from him.

#### **#4 Abundance *Prov 30:8,9***

This is a strange reason. When we do well in life , we move from dependence to God to self and we drift away.

#### **#5 Parasitic Sins *Heb 12:1***

We see that we cannot get away with sin. It causes us to be disconnected from the church community because of our guilt. There are strong bible characters who have drifted away too. Examples such as Samson, King David, Solomon and Judas come to mind. Others such as Ananias and Sapphira were struck down by God because they were not truthful in their declaration to God in their giving.

### **BIG IDEA: Spiritual drifting toward destruction**

Our focus is to pay careful attention to what we have heard, as mentioned in Hebrews 2:1. How many of you have drifted away? Can you see yourself having one of the setbacks above? The more important question is this, "Are you drifting now? How would you know?"

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#### **What is drifting like?**

##### **#1 It requires no effort.**

You do not need to do anything for drifting to happen. Stop rowing and the current will carry you.

##### **#2 It is done unconsciously.**

Undercurrents are not noticeable. By the time you realize it, it is too late.

##### **#3 You never drift upstream or against the tide.**

You drift downstream with the tide. You must be disciplined, constantly making an effort to move towards the direction that God wants you to.

##### **#4 Downstream speed increases.**

When you move further and further away from God, you care less and less until you fall.

#### **#5 Danger to others.**

A drifting Christian will be of danger to the people around them. If a ship drifts, it will hit, injure and destroy many others.

#### **#6 Ends in a shipwreck.**

The ship will hit against the rock or fall at the waterfall if nothing is done about it..

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After so many months of the MCO, are you drifting? What are the signs of drifting?

#### **Below are the four main signs of drifting**

##### **#1 No desire for God's Word and prayer.**

Reading God's Word and prayer are the signs that we are dependent on God. The more you drift, the less dependent you are on Him.

##### **#2 No desire to be with God's people.**

You lose the desire of fellowship due to your guilty conscience of the sin you have. You will begin to say that Christians are hypocritical and you do not want to meet anyone. That is why cell group attendance is an important way to know whether members of DUMC are in fellowship with each other.

##### **#3 No desire to share the Gospel.**

The gospel is the greatest story ever told and the greatest rescue mission ever carried out. It is the story of one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. When you drift, you are no longer excited about your faith and are not bothered to tell people about the Gospel.

Pray for 3 to 5 people for you to talk to about Christ. God will create divine appointments. Pastor Chris recently met a lawyer who believed in the existence of a Creator but when she prayed, she did not hear from God. After he shared the gospel with her, she believed in Christ.

##### **#4 Increased desire for the things of the world**

What fills our minds are worldly pleasures. These pleasures will make you obsessed with them, thus moving you away from God.

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## **How do we stop drifting?**

### **#1 Keep rowing in a specific direction *Phil 3:12-14***

What keeps us on course? It is the reading of God's Word, prayer, being connected to a church, serving, and giving to those in need, e.g. via our *Anniversary Gift Weekend*. It is not the activity in itself but our return to a fellowship with God. Greet the Holy Spirit each morning. Have a friend or spouse to keep you accountable. Join a cell group.

### **#2 Watch out for undercurrents. *Jer 17:9, Prov 4:23***

The 5-day fast and prayer was an amazing time with God. We cannot blame temptations when they come our way. We must not succumb nor compromise.

### **#3 Expect to go against the tide.**

There are many damaging tides in the world. Spiritual consumerism, modernism, skepticism, humanism and worldliness just to name a few. Jesus says that His path is a narrow path and not many will follow it.

### **#4 We must have a strong anchor.**

Previously, Pastor Chris talked about a firm foundation and the below points relate to the message as well:

- **Being rooted and grounded in Christ *Col 2:6-7***

It does not come automatically but you need to wake up each day to reaffirm your walk daily..

- **Our minds must be anchored to the truth (FAITH) *Eph 4:14***

There is no shortcut but to read the bible and find out about God's truth for yourself.

- **Possessing an unshakable hope (HOPE) *Heb 6:18-19***

We must not forget our final destination.

- **Rooted and grounded in the love of Christ (LOVE) *Eph 3:16,18, Heb 12:2***

We must not just know about Him but know and experience Him personally. Christ is more than enough.

## **Conclusion**

Pastor Chris concluded his sermon with this powerful story of Stevens and Kaye Chan.

Stevens and Kaye Chan attended DUMC over 10 years ago. Lashaun is Malaysia's first guide dog which died last May due to a blood infection. Stevens was diagnosed with glaucoma at the age of 40 and lost his sight at 45. He has been living in blindness for almost 10 years. They founded the Glaucoma Society KL and Selangor in 2009 (it was later called the Malaysia Glaucoma Society). Pastor Chris got to know them through one of his cell members. Stevens has written two books: *I Was Blind Now I See* and *My Resilience Recipe*. The first book is a very colourful book with a lot of stories. Pastor Chris was invited to write the forward for the second book. Stevens shared the irony that when he could see, he was blind to God, but when he was struck with blindness, he began to see the grace of God in his life.

Stevens was struggling with blindness and bankruptcy. He found peace when He accepted Christ and he was forgiven. He had peace and started to sleep well. Stevens is now able to love others as Christ loved him.

In Stevens' darkest moments, he could have drifted further but he accepted Christ and began to accept the grace of God in his life.

May we examine our hearts and come back to God regardless of how far we have drifted away. God will continuously pursue us.

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# SERMON REFLECTION

Below is a summary of Stevens Chan's testimony taken from *Asian Beacon Online*. The full article can be found in the following link <https://asianbeacon.org/i-was-blind-now-i-see/>

Stevens Chan lost his eyesight at the age of 45 in 2007 due to glaucoma and Diabetic Retinopathy after conducting 8 surgeries and countless laser treatments. Prior to his blindness, he was a busy entrepreneur, chasing a RM 2.5 million supply contract in 2002. He was interested only in attaining wealth and power and did not spend enough time with his wife.

A friend once asked Stevens, "How is it for you now, being blind?" He described that it was like taking a bungee jump and the rope did not seem like it would stop. The endless rope into the abyss was stopped suddenly one day by Christ. Slowly but surely, Christ was pulling Stevens up again, from darkness to light. Stevens accepted Christ as his personal Savior during Easter 2018.

Since then, Stevens and Kaye have been serving as social workers to the Impaired and Eye Patients, social activists advocating for the accessibilities rights of the Impaired in our nation by initiating a movement to start the first Guide Dog School for the blind, and social entrepreneurs empowering and sustaining our communities through collaborations with the world-renowned Dialogue in the Dark experience programmes. Stevens never imagined that God would bless him abundantly and his works continued to gain support from both the Malaysian and overseas media.

While everything seemed to be going well, he suffered two strokes that has left him walking with a limp. He will always remember the night in November 2019, where he was rushed to a renowned world class hospital in Korea. He could see the hand of God with him. The doctors treated him way before his insurances were cleared. The insurance paid a whopping 90% the RM400,000.00 while the balance was loaned to



him by a generous person in his organization. Only God could have carried him in such a tumultuous time.

Just like it was with Stevens and Kaye Chan; Christ saved us from darkness into His Light. May Christ be seen in our Words and Deeds.

*Contributed by Abbey and the Ignite Team*

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# APPLICATION

## **Note to Word facilitator:**

*As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.*

## **Suggested Icebreaker Questions / Activities**

*(You may choose to have CG members type in their answers in the Zoom chatbox)*

- What comes to mind when you think of the word 'drift'? [For example: *Shipwreck, boat headed towards waterfall, Shipwreck, Getting lost during vacation, going up the wrong ladder, Tokyo Drift, etc*]]
- The movie *Titanic* has a good example of a shipwreck. How would you equate the scenes of the movie to the 6 stages of a shipwreck as mentioned?

## **Suggested Word Introductory Questions**

- Where do you think you are now in terms of spiritual drifting? Given a scale of 1 (backslided badly) to 10 (on the right track), what number would you pick for your current state?
- Do you remember the yoyo graph during the sermon? Take a paper and a pen and plot the good and the bad and the moments you drifted away from God. What does your graph look like?

### **Suggested Questions linked to main point:**

- Have you ever back-slided from your faith before? Describe what happened. Was it due to any of the five setbacks described above? How did you recover?
- Were you able to spot the five signs of drifting that happened to you? Describe your experience.
- Are we more easily influenced by things of the world than things of God these days?
- Can we identify the tendencies we have towards things of the world? Are we holding on to Him to move upstream against the tide?
- Are you rooted in knowing Christ and are focused on Him?
- Based on your current state, what can you do to prevent yourself from spiritual drifting? Set some practical steps for yourself.
- Are we being judgmental when we notice others drifting? How can we help people who have drifted too far off and in a strong current without us going in their direction?
- Discuss in your CG how you can hold each other accountable, to pray for 5 people with the hope of seeing them come to know Christ. What can the CG do to help you in this?

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**Question Bank** *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

1. What will you pledge this year in helping the younger Christians build strong foundations for their lives?
  2. Are there drifters that we have to let go and let drift so that we do not endanger ourselves along the way? Do we trust God to rescue them anyway, even if it is only after they hit a shipwreck?
  3. Do you view the COVID-19 pandemic as a shipwreck?
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# WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Photo by Judit Peter from Pexels

## Story of the week...

*"My CG has decided to take up the "Bless a Community" project for IMPACT Now. The two areas that we considered were Taman Melawati and Setapak. We decided to do a "reconnaissance" prayer walk in each area before we delve deeper. We started off with a prayer walk in Taman Melawati on 31st July 2020 followed by another prayer walk in Setapak on 16th August 2020..."*

- Lim Beng Kiat, KL Zone

*\*Read the rest of Beng Kiat's story on [impactdumc.online](https://impactdumc.online) !*

*"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."*

- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today's Word or any other story that speaks of His goodness or of IMPACTNow, **share their/your story** [\[HERE\]](#)



# PRAYER

**Note to CGL:** You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Continue to be vigilant and uphold everyone and everything to prayer.

Pray:

- that God's presence will be tangible in the homes of every Malaysian especially His followers. May His people cling to His words in John 14:27 that says "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid".
  - that God's favor, peace and comfort be upon those who call upon His name.
  - for greater discernment, wisdom and guidance for our Church leadership in managing and supporting pastorally those affected by the pandemic.
  - for those sick with viruses to receive divine healing and the peace of God.
  - for all health care and frontline workers that they will receive sustenance from the Lord in their line of work and stressful environments
  - that DUMC members will stop drifting, recalibrate and reach out to the least and the lost by His divine appointments.
  - that God will provide sufficient funds in AGW giving through His people in order to continue support of the ministries in need across the world.
  - for greater zeal and passion from CG members in reaching out and sharing the gospel with at least 4-5 people this year.
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# OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resources for you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

## FEATURED

*In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!*



### The impossible task for a single grain of salt

saltandlight.sg

One grain of salt can hardly make a difference in the stew...

Lee Soo Tian

Society Work Vocation

Article



### Life before the Pandemic

christianitytoday.com

Let's not return to our old way of life

Kelly Edmiston

Suffering Society Christian Living

Article



### Why is Prayer So Hard?

christianitytoday.com

Amy Julia Becker

Prayer & Spirituality

Article



### Practicing the Presence of God

39 pages

ccel.org

Lawrence is known for his devotion and ability to bring G...

Brother Lawrence

Prayer & Spirituality

E-Book (Free)

## OTHER RESOURCES

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## DUMC STORIES

*Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!*

