

Neglect

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[0:00] By way of introduction, I'm going to relive an experience that I had just in recent days, actually.

! It'll become clearer what I'm saying in due course.! I saw the broken glass in the window and the grass on the lawn was all sparse.

It looked like it hadn't been watered for a very long time. The garden was a big mess, lots of weeds. I walked up onto the porch and then I could see as I opened the front door, I was greeted by all this clutter and mess.

The place was in a terrible state. The skirting boards were dirty, they looked like they'd never been cleaned. There's cobwebs hanging. There was some...

Later we found as we pulled the carpet away, termites had invaded the front bedroom. And the termites, as we pulled the carpet away, we saw the floorboards were eaten.

[1:19] And then we had to pull the wall off and we saw that the various framework had termites right through. We had to totally redo that wall.

And then we went into the... I went into the kitchen and saw that the... You know, the state of the place, there was... There was prawns left in the sink and you could smell the places.

It was just an awful state. And then the bathroom, the toilet, the backyard. It's just unbelievable. The place had really been let go.

Really let go. Now I'm going to challenge you to think what I'm talking about here. Can you name me? I'm quoting this.

Can you name me? I never was guilty of wrong action, but on my account lives have been lost. Trains have been wrecked. Ships have gone down at sea.

[2:15] Cities have burnt. Battles have been lost and governments have failed. I never struck a blow, nor spoke an unkind word. But because of me, homes have been broken up.

Friends have grown cold. The laughter of children has ceased. Wives have shed bitter tears. Brothers and sisters have forgotten. And the fathers and mothers have gone brokenhearted to their graves.

I have intended no evil. But because of me, talent and genius have come to naught. Courtesy and kindness have failed. And the promise of success and happiness has yielded sorrow and disaster. I produce nothing but grief and disaster. You may not recognise who I am, but surely you are personally acquainted with me. I am neglect.

Neglect. Webster's Dictionary says of neglect, it means to disregard. To omit to notice. To slight. To be remiss in attending to.

[3:13] To fail to do. To fail to care for. So when we overlook something, it's a failure to act. When you neglect something, it can cause great loss and disappointment. People can neglect a plant.

You know, I can identify with that, can't you? I've planted these lovely fruit trees in my garden. And most of them have died. You know, there's still a picture of a lovely apple or pear or, you know, some beautiful flower.

But the plant is just a stick in the ground. People can neglect a plant and fail to water and nourish it. It's not like a pet dog who will nudge and get our attention.

A neglected plant can just die. It's neglect. Neglect. It's everywhere. People neglect the welfare of children. It's called child abuse, really.

They're malnourished. And even die, just to be neglected. People can neglect elders. I know there was something we were saying and had a show of a documentary of really people living in old folks homes and, you know, aged care homes and just left there.

[4:23] Really in loneliness and neglect. And they just waste away, uncared for. Neglect. It's a horrible thing, isn't it? People can neglect their car.

You know, just don't drive it for a while. Leave it in the garage and before long it starts to rust away, doesn't it? Corrodes away until it never starts again.

It just is stationary forever. People can neglect their spouses and they can lose a marriage. People can neglect their friendships and they can end up alone.

Some people neglect because they are too busy. What about spiritually now? Spiritually now.

Neglect. Some people get too busy for God. Too busy.

People can neglect to pray. They can neglect their relationship with God. It just fades. It gets dim and cold. People can let their Bibles gather dust such that they lose hope.

[5:26] And they can neglect to put that truth into action as well. Can't we? If we neglect the Bible, we will be spiritually malnourished.

Neglect. It's a horrible thing.

What does the Word say in James 1.22? Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only. We're going to get to Hebrews 2 shortly. This book is not meant to sit on the shelf.

Closed. Unheeded. And neglected. Rather, let's heed it. And feed our soul with it. Let it nourish our soul and our spiritual life.

Hebrews 2 verse 1. If you've got your Bibles there. Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?

[6:38] How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Now we can let things slip spiritually, can't we? I can. I can. I have done. We can let things slip. And we can drift like a boat without an anchor.

What of salvation? How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Some people neglect salvation in the sense they disregard it. They never receive it.

Of course, they neglect it such that they never receive it. They disregard it. They pay no attention to it. They miss eternal life because of neglect. Other things crowd in and crowd out the voice of God.

The beckoning of the Saviour. Come unto me. For some, they do not come to the realisation in time. What a tragic state of affairs to neglect salvation such that we pay disregard to it.

[7:50] We do not regard it. It's as if they would gain the whole world yet lose their own soul. What a tragic neglect that is. Consider the consequences of neglect.

Neglect. Neglect. There is a story about a man, a white haired man in a certain asylum. He is an inmate there for 25 years.

And he spends his day repeating these words. Too late. Too late. During one of the visiting days to the institution, these strange words attracted the attention of one of the visitors.

And when the attendant of the ward was asked about the history of the man, this was his story.

Years ago, the poor fellow had been a keeper of a signal station, a railway station, one of the great railroads.

And one day, as he had been the keeper, he had responsibility. He forgot to give the right of way to one of the fast trains. And one day, he was just distracted by some beautiful flowers along the side of the highway.

[8:59] And he went there nearby to pick them. And while engaged in this pleasant task, the train was heard. You could hear that train getting closer, closer, closer.

And on and on. It was coming closer so rapidly. And then suddenly, he realised the train did not have the right of way.

He had not shifted the tracks. And he tried in vain to get there to correct his mistake. But it was too late. Too late. Too late. Too late, he cried in anguish still.

Too late. As he covered his eyes as the helpless passengers were carried to a speedy death. Neglect can cause destruction.

Neglect is powerful really, isn't it? How little we realise the destruction caused by human neglect. You know, really, neglect is powerful.

[9:57] When I walked into that house, and I came, and I opened that door, and I was greeted by the smell of neglect. You ever had that in a home?

You come to a home, and you know it's been neglected. They haven't cared for it. There's dirt everywhere. You know, it's just piles of things that should have been put in the bin.

Neglect. It's an awful thing. It's powerful. Neglect is powerful. Powerfully destructive. And neglect is costly, isn't it? It's costly. The termites, if that had been seen, it could have been fixed.

It could have been less costly. Thankfully, neglect is reversible. It's reversible. Neglect is damaging. And neglect is gradual. That place didn't get like that in that condition overnight. Neglect doesn't happen in just a short space of time.

[11:02] It's a gradual, gradual erosion, a gradual decline. As those signs of neglect, they took time to gather the dust, cobwebs, the cracks, the smell.

Now, neglect. Let's think about this spiritually. Think about what it means. The tragedy of neglect. It's a tragic thing to neglect something that's important, isn't it?

To neglect something that's important. What more important? Truth. What more important reality than salvation? The salvation of your soul. It can be so easy to take things for granted and neglect them.

That's why good churches close down. Isn't it? People take them for granted. Meetings close down because people are haphazard and neglect a fellowship.

Now, maybe there's reasons why we can't get to a certain meeting that are valid. But there's times when we could get there and we're not there. And that's a vote to close that meeting down, isn't it?

[12:13] When we see, I'm speaking of my own church. I'd like to shake some people sometimes. You know, I can speak a bit more with liberty there.

Because if I offend you, you're not coming to my church so you can't get offended and leave. I can say what maybe the pastor wants to say. Maybe not. But, you know.

When the Sunday night meeting is poorly attended. When the Wednesday night or, you know, the different Bible study times or prayer times. When we're not there. It's a neglect, isn't it?

It's a neglect of what's important. How should we escape if we neglect so great salvation? we know we can't lose our salvation but there's that sense where our salvation can be such that maybe we don't count it as important as what it truly is and our church our pastor you know it's important spiritual things are vital and to neglect salvation means peril of course for those who are lost it means eternal loss so great salvation so great how great is salvation our great and glorious savior the great work of the cross the finished work nothing could be greater than that can there nothing greater than our lord great provision has been made for you a great sacrifice has been made for you and it's available for you at great price it's been paid for so great salvation the precious blood of our lord jesus so great isn't it a great pardon is extended the captain of our salvation is truly great he's the author and he's the finisher of it in contrast to it we face great judgment to neglect so great salvation is to face great judgment to neglect it is not to realize the true value of it salvation is so great because it is the gift of god salvation is the one thing that everyone needs more and more more than anything else it's so great salvation that we want to share it don't we we want to tell as many as we can to share that message to offer it that message is clear and for us we ought to give the more earnest heed more the more earnest heed this truth is too important to neglect seek the lord while he may be found call ye upon him while he is near is i 55 verse 6 for some people they pay a passing interest to things religious and then they forget god other things crowd in and how does it happen bit by bit just like the neglect of that house the dust and the cobwebs and the the gathering smell didn't happen straight away it took time just oh i'll let that go i won't clean that windowsill i won't care about that cobweb or the dust on the uh skirting boards or or that that floorboard that seems to be giving way could that be termites what's the difference between complacency and apathy i don't care it's that attitude isn't it i i i i you know and and the sense of i don't care that the floorboards are getting loose someone else will worry about that and before long the termites are taken over the house and it's fit for the bulldozer you know it's like that with our

forgetting of god it can happen bit by bit incrementally gradually now there was a woman cleaning a house uh there's a story of a woman cleaning a house where she had some few bees buzzing around in the attic of the house and it was just a view so she made no attempt to deal with it oh just a few bees big deal and over the summer the bees continued to fly in and out of this vent in their attic and the woman remained unconcerned unaware of the growing city of bees and the whole attic became a hive and the ceiling of the second floor bedroom finally caved in caved in under the weight of the hundreds of pounds of honey and the thousands of angry bees this woman escaped serious injury but she was unable to repair the damage of her accumulated neglect we can get like that can't we i can get like that with things around the home i'll get around to it you know neglect it can creep up on us you