

Oaks-West Church of Christ

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November 15, 2020

Danger Ahead: Neglect

by Dee Bowman

Neglect is dangerous. The farmer can lose his crop by neglect, the businessman his business, the scholar his education. And a man can lose his soul simply because he neglected to care for it properly. Our word "neglect" is from the Latin *neglegere*, which meant "to not pick up." The concept, then, is an attitude that chooses not to heed some warning, to pay little attention to, to fail to carry out or follow through because of simple carelessness, or maybe even sluggardness.

Neglect is especially dangerous because of the difficulty in recognizing it. It is very subtle. It is pervasive, simply because it operates so slowly. Sadly, all of us—at some time or the other—have a problem with neglect, mainly out of a failure to pay careful attention or to simply put off til later things that actually need present

attention.

I have chosen to call this problem Put-off-ism. It fits.

Neglect is difficult to diagnose because it seldom takes the form of outright rejection. In almost all instances, neglect is very gradual.

Look at the warning issued by the Hebrew writer in chapter 2, verse 1: "Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we let them slip." This verse actually comes from a nautical viewpoint and is a figurative expression that would be used to describe a ship that has been neglected and so runs past the harbor of safety. We tend to excuse ourselves by saying, "I'll get around to it soon enough." Neglect is a kind of "slow leak." I aver that almost

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every kind of apostasy can be traced to some form of neglect, and we would do well to watch carefully for this very subtle form of debilitation.

No person is immune to neglect. The world seems to be saying, "just lean back, relax, and enjoy life—there's no hurry, don't fight it." But that won't work, folks ('scuse the pun). The Bible says there's work to be done—work for me personally, work that needs my immediate and concentrated attention. "Work out your own salvation," we are told in Philippians 2:12. It's every man's responsibility to work out his own salvation and just because that responsibility is ignored or neglected doesn't mean it goes away. Every person is enjoined to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (II Peter 1:10). Giving diligence does not allow for procrastination, neglect, indifference, or unconcern.

One of the more subtle forms of this put-off-ism might properly be called "negative holiness." Far too many brethren tend to base their faithfulness on what they haven't done wrong. Because they have not participated in some sexual impropriety, or stolen anything from anybody, or haven't slandered their neighbor, they judge themselves to be faithful. Negative holiness is the devil's way of making us feel good just because we haven't done some things that are wrong. But "to him that knoweth to

do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). There's more to it than not doing; you have to do, too.

There are several things we can do to combat the problem of neglect.

First, we can make sure that our aims and purposes are kept in good, polished focus. The person who has high goals and dedicated purposes is far less likely to neglect than is the person whose goals are not well defined, and not kept in focus at all times.

Second, we can be very careful to remember our personal devotions to God. Personal worship is a deterrent to neglect. It's hard to neglect God when you're regularly praying to Him, when you're giving periodic times of meditation to His Highness. Keeping in touch with God keeps neglect away from us.

Thirdly, we can make sure that our hope shines brightly, that we are firmly fixed in our desire to go to heaven, as well as our expectation that our faithfulness, coupled with His grace, will insure for us a home in heaven when this life is concluded. Hope deters neglect.

A person who wants heaven as his home, who worships regularly, and who has his hope securely fastened to his faith in God, is not likely to be neglectful, putting off what is necessary for his eternal salvation. Maybe it's time to wake up!

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.



Upcoming Ladies' Bible Classes - Tuesday, November 24 at the building.

Services for rest of 2020 - The elders have decided to continue with the current service times of 10:45 am Sundays and 7:00 pm Wednesdays for the remainder of the year. We will reevaluate in December. Thank you for your support and encouragement as we make these difficult decisions! --DT for the elders

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.



Please remember the following individuals in your daily prayers:

June Owens
Jack Wilson
Jerry & Nancy Richardson
Karen Hallmark
Shirley Perkins' brother, Leon
Morgan O'Hair
Dinah Williams
Kevin Barth
Tyler Hairston
Anna Urquhart
Dot's son, Hank

And continue to pray for each other

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

We have many that face challenges on a daily basis and need your prayers as well.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

NOTES

ABOUT US

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization – we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

Evangelist

Darrell Trammel
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Elders

George Gresham
Jim Johnson
Darrell Trammel

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:45 A.M.
Worship 10:45 A.M.
Worship 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 P.M.