



The Good News

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The Power of Neglect

By John Evans (preacher at University Oaks church of Christ, SA, TX-orig. 08-22-2010)

I would ask us to think about the subject of *neglect* for a little bit. At first **Neglect** may not seem like such a terrible word. After all, we can't pay equal attention to all subjects at all times. Some parts of our lives receive special care, while other parts are ignored—at least for a little while. The bottom line is that we end up neglecting some things.

According to my old *Random House Dictionary*, *neglect* means “to pay no attention or too little attention; disregard or slight.” Well, we might be tempted to ask, **So what?** So what if a person forgets to pay sufficient attention to one or another aspect of life? We're all busy; we're swamped by so many details. We just don't get around to some things. A certain amount of neglect just seems natural.

And yet neglect has great power to ruin or destroy over time. What makes neglect so dangerous is that we may not recognize the harm being done until it's too late to do much about it—or at least the solution to a problem becomes much harder.

Think about examples from everyday life:

Neglect a proper diet for months and years, and you'll soon be embarrassed to step onto the scales. . . .

Neglect your home, and it soon deteriorates. . . .

Neglect earthly relationships, and friendships crumble. . . .

Neglect your car, and you soon have a bucket of bolts sitting in the driveway. . . .

Neglect a garden, and it soon becomes an unruly patch of weeds. . . .

Neglect children, and they'll just “come up” instead of being “raised up” properly. . . .

Of course, the worst kind of neglect is that which places souls in jeopardy. The inspired writer of Hebrews put it this way: “. . . *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 to us by those who heard Him . . . ?*” (2:3). **Neglect of the soul and its salvation is the worst kind of carelessness!**

What's the antidote to this kind of spiritual neglect? It's found in such passages as Hebrews 2:1, where we're told to “give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.” That phrase *earnest heed* carries with it the ideas of *due diligence* and *special concern*. The original Greek literally means “to hold the more toward.” We would say, “Hold on and don't let go!” It's an act of will where we absolutely remember what's most important in our lives.

Neglect salvation? Never! Instead, let us focus on serving God.