

## THE SIN OF NEGLECT

**How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him**

**(Hebrews 2:3)?**

**Jim Laws**

I believe that most Christians have come to know their duty but they neglect it. The rich man lost his soul because he did not do God's will with his money (Luke 16:19-25). Lazarus was in need and the rich man had the means but not the desire to do his duty toward one who was in need. Lazarus just wanted the crumbs (21). The dogs came and licked his sores and then Jesus tells us he passed away. You will recall the rich man also died and opened up his eyes in torment (23). Neglect of our duty is a serious matter and one that we tend to forget. Take a moment to study with me about a common mistake we all make. Surely, we will be ready to repent of it.

One of the first sins mentioned in the church at Jerusalem was lying (Acts 5:1-11). It had to do with Ananias and his wife Sapphira. They had sold a possession and kept back part of the proceeds bringing only a portion to the apostles. Peter questions him, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" You will remember the rest of the story, God dealt with both Ananias and Sapphira for their sin. The second sin mentioned was neglect. It takes place in Acts 6:1 when the widows were neglected in the daily distribution of food. The apostles called the brethren together and told them that they should spend their time preaching but a program should be organized so that this need would not continue to be neglected. It was a wise way to handle a problem; rather than neglect it, deal with it.

Congregations can neglect important matters. First, some neglect their worship and fail to enter in the song service of the congregation; so few really try to sing. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). Second, some neglect teaching. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain" (Phil. 2:15, 16). To neglect this results in an ignorant church "A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength" (Prov. 24:5). To neglect this is inviting disaster. Third, some neglect to restore the weak. Lambs may be lost because they have drifted away. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1). Fourth, some neglect helping the poor and those who are truly in need. "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Prov. 19:17). God has a special love for the poor and those who help them (Deut. 15:7-11). James tells us to remember the poor; they have been chosen to hear the gospel (James 2:5).

The fact is any business or organization will fail due to the neglect of its members and the church is no different. Remember the sluggard, that is, the negligent, “He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster” (Prov. 18:9).