

## IF WE NEGLECT

After setting forth the superiority of Christ in chapter one, the writer of Hebrews begins the second chapter with this admonition: "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 salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. ..." Hebrews 2:1-3

Your attention is directed especially to the words, "if we neglect. " He asks, "How shall we escape *if we neglect* so great salvation? " The answer, of course, is that there is no escape if we neglect the salvation that is through Jesus Christ.

The requirements of God are such that it is not necessary for one to take bold action against God in order to be lost. A person is lost if he merely neglects to do God's will. Murderers, thieves, liars, and such are not the only ones who will be in hell. There will also be a host of those who simply neglected to do anything about their salvation. Jesus said, "He that is not with me is against me." Matthew 12:30

When someone asks, "Are you going to heaven?", often the answer is a cautious, "I hope so." This is indeed the Christian's hope; but the way these words are often used implies that the person thinks it is a matter of how lucky he may be. He seems to have no real assurance. He is leaving it to chance. But, my friends, going to heaven is *not* accidental. Those who are there will not be there because their luck was better than others. It is not a destiny of chance. Indeed, those who inherit eternal life will be those who make that the supreme goal of their lives. They leave nothing to chance; but build their hope on Jesus Christ by faithful service. If we neglect this salvation, good luck will not save us.

Consider how obviously neglect is the cause of ruin. A businessman does not have to commit a crime to ruin his business. He has only to neglect it. A sick person need not take poison to die. He must only neglect the means of getting well. A man floating in a boat toward a dangerous falls will certainly go over them if he neglects to stop his drift. A farmer doesn't have to plant weeds. If he neglects the land, the weeds will take it. How can souls be so deceived as to believe they can be saved while neglecting their salvation?

In the 12th chapter of Luke, the Master told of a very successful farmer. His fields were so productive that he had to build bigger barns in which to store his fruits and his goods. In fact, he was so prosperous that he felt secure, saying to his soul, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou has provided?" He neglected what was most important. When he died, all the things he had made and saved were of no use to him. The only thing that mattered then was whether he was prepared to meet God. But he had neglected that.

Remember, it is not always the bad things which are done that make religion a failure. It can be the good things that are neglected. James 4: 17