

Hebrews

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Preacher: Collier, Gilbert (1900-1984)

- [0 : 0 0] I would, as the Lord may enable me this evening, direct your thoughts to the second chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, and words that are found in the third verse.
- Second chapter of the Hebrews, the third verse. 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?
- Third verse of the second chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. This is very clearly a solemn injunction from the word of God.
- And so oft times we may well find ourselves inclined to turn from the solemn warnings, and pursue only those more comfortable, more pleasing parts of God's holy word.
- But I trust in our meditation here this evening we shall see the great significance, importance, and blessedness of this word before us.
- [1 : 5 4] The previous chapter sets forth two great things. The glory of the person of Jesus Christ in his divine nature, and also the glory of his offices into which he entered on behalf of his people.
- These things are distinct, but very important and wondrously glorious.
- It says, and I will just refer to this, and then we will pass on. It says, and there can be no greater declaration of the glory of Christ than in these words, who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.
- So we see the glory of the person of the Son of God. And it is this person who is the author and the giver of this great salvation of which our text speaks.
- And thus in this second chapter, the Holy Spirit enjoins upon those who would seek after this salvation, the great importance that there should be no neglect of it.
- [4 : 0 5] Now let me say at the outset this evening, there is a sense in which for a believer, it would be impossible to neglect salvation, in a sense.
- And in the same sense, it would be impossible for an unbeliever to neglect salvation.
- This is the sense in which I now refer. Salvation is the work of God in the hearts of his people.
- It's a work of infinite wonder, and sacredness, and can never be destroyed.
- What God does is done forever. As the Lord says in his word, we may deny him, and we do deny him.
- [5 : 1 4] Solemnly so, we deny the Lord. Even as Peter denied him. But his love abides. The work of his hand remains.
- Nothing can erase. Neither, neither, the sin of our neglect cannot alter the glorious relationship between Christ and his people.

And then on the other hand, those who never have salvation, those who never have salvation, never really can neglect it.

If you have no treasure, you will never be blamed for the loss of it. Neither will you be charged with the keeping of it.

That is really a very solemn thought, to think, that we might never have this wondrous treasure of salvation.

[6 : 23] And then, of course, we should never neglect it, because we should never possess it. But then, this word is addressed to both believers and unbelievers.

more especially, more especially, I believe, to the believer in the Lord. Because the chapter runs on, and it speaks thus, it says, we see Jesus.

And if it is dealing with those who see Jesus, see him by the eye of faith, then, it is dealing with those who have been brought into that blessed experience of beholding the Lord and knowing the Lord, and receiving a revelation of the Lord.

And it is especially to those that this word is applicable tonight. But it is also applicable to the unbelieving part of the world.

How should we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Now, it is very clear if we look closely into this word, that the meaning of this text is this.

[7 : 53] salvation is set forth gloriously so, completely so, and finally so, by the gospel of God's sovereign grace.

And thus, the gospel is the means. The means appointed by God in his infinite wisdom to bring his people out of darkness into light, to establish them in the truth as it is in Jesus, to furnish them with all needful favors and instructions and gifts that will equip them and furnish them thoroughly even unto all good works.

God's wonderful means, he has never changed them, he has never extended them, they are all embraced in the whole economy of the gospel of divine grace.

and this is the means, the only means, that God has laid down for sinners to discover salvation and to be brought to realize their need of salvation and to see the wondrous realities of that salvation.

salvation it is in the glorious gospel of God. Now you see, our text therefore refers to the neglect of the means.

[9 : 52] How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? Well of course that is what the worldly mind and heart does, quite contented to do and to continue in the doing of it.

For they see no value in the gospel, they see no glory in it, it has no effect upon them, they have never been brought under the solemn realities of the gospel and therefore all their lives and their days are spent in solemn neglect of the one means that God has appointed to show man his guilt, his need and the way of salvation.

How then shall they escape? And what is this word escape? What does it signify? well, for all such, you know, my friends, it signifies the wrath of God.

How shall we escape the wrath of God if we neglect so great salvation? Seeing that salvation is neglected for this reason that God doth not put forth his power in the hearts to bring men to follow and observe and seek and to look into the gospel as the perfect law of liberty and to continue in it, seeing that there is no putting forth of power, there is only one thing and there can be no escape from it, and that is the wrath of God.

It's a very solemn subject, isn't it? the wrath of God. I believe there are two aspects of God's wrath.

[12 : 06] There is a negative side of it, you know. Men are under the wrath of God while they are here in this world. We are children of wrath even as others, says Paul, when he speaks of God's quickening mercy that has brought his own people out of the world.

We were once children of wrath, that is to say we were under the wrath of God. You never felt it perhaps until the Lord began his work of grace in your heart.

And a great many of our fellow men, you know, never realize that they're under the wrath of God. They go on their lives unmolested without any fear, without any consideration of their end, without any realizing of this solemn issue of their sinfulness and their disobedience.

They're under the wrath of God and any sinner that is under the wrath of God, whether it be in this negative way, can never receive a particle of God's favor.

They may seem to do without God, they never seek him, they never look to him, they can make their own way through the world, but there's one thing they will never have and that is one particle of the favor of God.

[13 : 50] God. When God shows the least favor to his people, it shows that they have been removed forever from the wrath of God.

Well, then there's the positive side of the wrath of God, and that will be endured throughout all eternity by all those who have no knowledge of God and are without hope in the world.

It's a very terrible thought. Sometimes it comes and strikes one's mind most solemnly to think of it, eternally enduring the awful realizations of the wrath of God, positive wrath.

There are some solemn characters in the word of God, and they were fitted for this, vessels of wrath, God speaks of them, fitted for them.

You see, the worldling has his day, it's a little day compared with eternity, but the day will come when that worldling who has no fear of God and no desire to know God, who has trampled on everything that is sacred, and done despite to everything that is holy, and have arrogantly pursued their own way, the day will come when they will enter into the wrath of God.

[15 : 38] And there's no escape from it. There's no change, you see. I don't know why I feel so inclined this evening to go lead in this line of things, but it may well be for our good, you know.

But in the book of Revelation, there's a very solemn word there. It says, let him that is unjust be unjust still, let him that is filthy be filthy still, let him that is unholy be unholy still.

No change, no variation, what they were in this world, they will be for ever and ever.

And if they are without God here, they will be without God there forever. And then, coming to the Lord's people, there are many things that we shall not escape if we neglect the means of salvation.

Many things. There are sorrows and weaknesses to lose the sense of the Lord's presence is a very grievous loss indeed to a real believer.

[17 : 13] To feel his absence and to suffer his silence and sometimes the Lord is silent in order to draw his children nearer to himself, to stir them up if they have forgotten that which he hath done for them.

I think you know the silence of the Lord is one of the most profitable things the Lord extends to his people. I would say this tonight, it's only living religion that can bear the silence of the Lord.

A false profession of religion can never bear it and does not need to bear it because a false professor can get just what they want when they want it.

They have no waiting to do for their comforts. they can reach their blessings as easily and they are ever at hand.

There's no need therefore for a false professor to wait and to bear the silence of the Lord. It means nothing to them but to a real believer.

[18 : 46] The Lord's silence is one of the most painful and one of the most profitable experiences of their souls.

Be not thou silent to me. If thou be silent unto me O Lord I become like them that go down into the pit.

But look at that dear woman the woman the Syrophoenician woman who came out of the coast to find the Lord he had hidden himself but he could not be hid not where living faith is concerned.

She had a case it was a relative case but you know sometimes a relative case is even greater than a personal one and relative trouble is it bore down upon that poor dear woman it related in her soul's experience to her own religion her own salvation she must find him and faith is the only power that can find him and her faith did find him and when she came to him she was rebuffed by the disciples who said send her away lord that she crieth after us the very people that ought to have been her greatest friend where indeed her greatest difficulty her presented an obstacle in her progress to the lord and then when she did come to the lord he was silent he answered her never a word and yet did that silence on the part of the lord drive that dear woman away no it made her hasten urge her case all the more although she felt her unfitness it made her urge sue it out spewing doubt the holy ghost her witness so the silence of the lord is a very solemn experience but a profitable one and oft times it is needful when we neglect the means of our great salvation sometimes you may have a friend and there's an estrangement exists between the two there may be no words between them no bitterness but there's silence sometimes that silence speaks volumes

I always remember when I was a child I committed something that was very wrong oft times have I felt grieved on account of it it was wrong against my dear mother and it deserved stern dealings rebukes but all she did was to be most impressively silent and I knew you know I could hardly bear that silence I'd rather speak I'd rather say something even even though it might have been hurtful and condemning and rebuking to me but I would hardly bear that silence seem to be so full of real rebuke love for now the Lord when his people neglect the means he sometimes comes you know and he remains there but he's silent and then of course like the

[23 : 09] Laodicean church who had become so lukewarm and this is a striking reflection upon the church of God generally and today in particular she had she was neither hot nor cold and she at the same time thought that she was well off rich and increased in goods but she was solemnly unaware that she was naked and wretched and poor and the Lord came in his wonderful mercy you see the Lord will never leave his church whatever state his church is in he will never leave it he will chastise it he will rebuke his people and his rebukes are the clearest evidences of his love he said

I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich well you know my friends I feel one great thing which is a solemn feature of today the religion of today is the solemn indifference that appears so solemnly in all places you know when we come to read sometimes the histories of our causes we are almost sure to come face to face with this how those people in those days heard the word of God and what a mighty effect it had upon them when they left the house of the Lord they couldn't speak to one another so much had the truth of

God laid hold upon them that they could not utter words those were the days of great things solemnly today we have a great indifference pervading many places and many people and that indifference is tantamount of a neglect of the great salvation how shall we escape our text though it does not it is not immediately the subject of the text there is this connecting link that I will just mention you know all the people of the Lord are escapees they are and they will escape they will escape the wrath to come they will escape the doom that is sealed for every unbeliever their escape may be seemingly very narrow always is really you know narrow is the escape that a sinner makes when God brings him out of darkness into light when

Joshua the high priest was standing before the Lord Satan was there at his right hand to resist him and the angel of the Lord rebuked Satan and this was the rebuke is not this a brand plucked from the burning you see the very word suggests the narrowness of the escape a brand almost burnt consumed by burning but plucked as it were from the burning I'm sure if you know something of this salvation and the mercies of God revealed to you personally if you look back tonight you may well think along these lines tonight how what a little it may well seem to you that it made all the difference between you going the way of all the world and your feet being turned into the ways of the

Lord sometimes you can trace but a very little slender thing that seems to have decided the great issue God's purposes are settled purposes we know but his dealings with his people are very wonderful and when every one of them and we must remember this every one of these people deserve eternal separation and eternal death it's amazing mercy when any of them are saved snatched as brands from the burning and turned whose whole mind and heart is determined to go in the opposite direction it's wonderful God's mercies are very great they escape we have some very wonderful cases in the

[29 : 04] Bible of those who escaped oh I feel my friends heaven will be a wonderful place to hear the records and the praises of those who escaped when they were here on earth but you know it doesn't mean this the text it doesn't mean that religion is an escapism now a great many people look at religion in that light they only think of it because they hope to find in it an escapism what I mean to say let me take scripture tonight to explain that woman of Samaria that the Lord so wonderfully dealt with before the Lord touched her heart you remember she said this when the

Lord said to her the water that I shall give a man will be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life she immediately said this give me this water that I thirst not and neither come hither to draw do you see she thought that if only she could get his benefits whatever they were it would give her an escape from the toil and dreariness and the weariness of her daily life she needn't go any more to psych our well to draw water religion isn't that you know people do try to think it and believe it to be so religion real religion is not an escape from difficult things it's it's a call by God to face difficult things to enter upon a path of difficulty to meet these things and God gives us grace to do so and boldness to be unflinching in doing it he makes us bold as lions when he is so pleased to grant us faith faith that is the mightiest weapon faith that conquers the world and overcomes the devil how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation now

I want very tenderly looking chiefly at myself I want us to examine one or two things in which we neglect the means of salvation I've already established that we cannot neglect salvation itself in the essence of it but we can and do neglect the means take the chief of all these means the gospel oh you say well I don't neglect the gospel do you not how do you come when you come to hear the gospel you can be there and have been many times under the sound of the gospel but all the while you may be neglecting it one way of neglecting this wonderful means is unpreparedness for it if you come to the house of God and sit under the gospel and you are unprepared for it by considering the ends for which you meet and seeking humbly the help of

God to attend to the things of God if you come without these things there is a solemn disparity between you in the pew and the poor man in the pulpit because with varying degrees you may depend upon it there has been great exercise and much prayer much hanging upon the Lord much seeking help from him and much searching not only one's own heart but the word of truth before one enters into the pulpit and if there is no such preparedness in the pew then there is a great disparity between the two and one of the great things God has designed for his people is a flowing together heart to heart when there is communion between the pulpit and the pew it is beautiful you know it is wonderful there is a transaction going on the

Lord is in the work of it he is the author of it and there is something done then wonderful things are done when there is a flowing together to the goodness of the Lord for the wheat and the wine and for the oil and for the young of the flock and of the herd and then that experience is brought to realization they shall be as a watered garden but if there is unpreparedness there is neglect solemn neglect how can you expect to have anything from the ministry if you never come prepared for it I remember a deacon of one of our chief causes told me once when he was younger one of the supplies that used to come annually he never welcomed and always on previous occasions felt disgruntled at the prospect of his coming and then there seemed to be a voice in his conscience that rebuked him and this was the rebuke have you ever prayed for him and as his coming drew near he felt a spirit of prayer for the man and he did pray tried hard to pray that the

[35 : 59] Lord might bless his ministry and he did bless it he had a most outstanding favor under that man's ministry on that occasion than he had from many other ministers whom he looked upon with more relish and regard so my friends to be prepared for the things of God is very necessary then another thing neglect of the throne of grace that is a means that God has appointed wonderful condescension when we come to think of it that God should appoint a throne of grace and invite his people there to make known their wishes and their wants and to interchange between himself and them wonderful things but he has done it we often despise it we often think that we know better we can manage better than taking our troubles to the

Lord again to refer to that woman of Samaria we say to the Lord this that just what she said to him the well is deep and thou has nothing to draw with there she was you see telling the almighty the savior the maker of all the world that the well was deep he knew everything he knew the depth of Jacob's well and then she told him that he had nothing to draw with limiting his wondrous power and you know my friend we do just the same we tell the Lord sometimes that our troubles are so great that we shall never get through and we tell the Lord that he that in in virtually we tell the Lord that we shall not see this thing like poor dear David did he said I shall perish one day by the hand of

Saul virtually we are telling him who is almighty that he has nothing to draw with and the well is deep but neglect the throne of grace how should we escape the restriction in our spirit the despondency of our hearts how should we escape from discovering the wonders that God wrought out for his people by prayer he leads them by a path of prayer and he makes known his wonders to them in that path again and again and if we neglect it we lose the wondrous value of his mercies and his goodness prayer climbs the ladder

Jacob saw yes my friends it's a wonderful thing to be a praying soul you know you can feel these things I used to go to a cause where there were five sisters godly sisters and they were advanced all of them of course were of advanced age in fact I remember two of them saying to me young man I was very young when I was conversant with them she said they said young man we knew the crimea and the privations and troubles that the Lord's people went through in those days you know as if I had no such experience as they had had but my dear friend what praying souls they were they were the pillars of that place and the Lord took them more or less in a space of a few months all five of them and you know it seemed as if that place was like an empty shell after they were removed and why was it it wasn't numbers they still had a goodly number in the congregation it was prayer that had gone praying souls had gone and that meant a vital measure of strength and life and power had gone from that place then again how should we escape if we neglect the precepts of the gospel oh well we like to think of the promises but we can leave the precepts let somebody else follow the precepts that's the spirit so often we find entrenched in our own minds and hearts the preceptive part of the lord's gospel is equally as important as the promissory part and it is only to the woe and want loss and loss of the believer if that part of god's holy word is neglected it's a very sweet thing to walk in the precepts of the gospel to walk in the precepts is to walk with the lord can two walk together except they be agreed the lord's commandments are not hard nor are they grievous but if there is love in the heart of a believer surely there must be a desire to follow humbly tenderly the precepts so many say well we must have power to do this yes but there are the precepts and then finally there are promises and one way of neglecting the promises is to presume upon the promises you see so many people hide under a promise and they think that they can do this and that which pleases self and the flesh because of the promises well they say god has promised that he will do this and he will never go back upon it therefore i can do the other and please myself for a little season i can enjoy this world i can delve into the affairs of this world i can heap for myself great things because of the promises but my friend that's a presumption it's presuming

on the promises of god and that is one vital way of neglecting the means how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation it's a great salvation great because the author of it is the great eternal god great because it's a salvation for great sinners great because it has such great wonders mercies provisions declarations in it great because it's exclusive there's no other that god has ordained whereby man shall be taught and led and saved with an everlasting salvation and if god has appointed means which the gospel is the greatest solemnly we come short indeed and bear tremendous loss if we neglect it how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation my dear friends may we take these things to heart

[44 : 54] Paul says suffer a word of exhortation I feel we can speak in love and speak chiefly to oneself but oh how important and needful are these words of the lord may the lord commend them to us stir up our hearts and enable us more earnestly tenderly and affectionately to seek after him amen to yes congratulations Thank you.