

Text: Heb. 2:5-10

Title: "Some more reasons not to neglect so great salvation"

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Introduction: Kids often like to know why. Have you ever heard, "But Dad, why do we have to do that?" or "Mom, why must we do it that way?"

God's children wonder that from time to time as well. It is evident from the Book of Hebrews that the recipients of this letter were beginning to ask the question "why." Why give the more earnest heed to what we have been taught? Why not drift away? Why not neglect our salvation? It turns out that we can find some pretty good reasons at times for not giving heed, for drifting away, and for neglecting our salvation. So we need some better reasons not to do these things.

We saw some reasons last time we were in Hebrews from the first four verses of this chapter: Why give heed? (1) because Christ is the one speaking ("Therefore" (v. 1) brings in all the claims of chapter 1), and (2) because what God says is reliable (v. 2, "permanent"; v. 3, "confirmed"; v. 4, "testified"); why not neglect our salvation? (3) because there are negative consequences for this neglect (v. 3, "how shall we escape?").

When we get to verse 5 of our passage, the author begins to give us another set of reasons not to neglect our salvation. He starts with the word *for*. When it comes to the command not to neglect our salvation, God is willing to tell us why, and given the difficult nature of the life of faith, it makes sense that we should need to be reminded from time to time about why it is that we must live this way.

I have titled tonight's message, "Some more reasons not to neglect so great salvation," and I want us to notice two more tonight from verses 5-10.

I. Do not neglect your salvation because God has some tremendous plans for our future that depend on our diligence now (vv. 5-8).

Illustration: Some of our college kids are beginning to make decisions that will impact their future for some time to come. As parents, we want our kids to consider carefully their responsibilities now, because we know the consequential nature of those responsibilities. It is more important that Brandon get a good grade in his college course than in his first grade math class, because the college grade impacts his future more.

Application: This is the nature of our author's first answer to the question – why not neglect my salvation? The answer is that God has some tremendous plans for our future that depend upon our diligence now. Notice four things about this plan with me.

1. The plan involves a world to come (v. 5).

The salvation that we are in danger of neglecting (v. 3) is actually a salvation inheritance (1:14). The author is focused in this context on the future aspect of our salvation. What we do presently will have an effect upon what our future salvation inheritance will be like.

Notice the emphasis on living for the future in what we have read thus far in this epistle: v. 2, "heir of all things"; v. 8, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever"; vv. 10-12, the

earth is an old garment that will be changed; v. 13, the enemies of Christ will be a footstool for His feet.

When the author mentions a world to come, he uses a term from which we get our word *economy*, and it refers to *an empire* or *a human civilization*. The world to come is not just another planet, but it is a civilization or economy of human beings. God has a plan for our lives today, and that plan affects how we fit into this future civilization, the world to come. Therefore, we must not now neglect so great salvation.

2. The plan is not something we deserve (vv. 5-6).

I mentioned that we often want to ask the question, “Why live for God?” The real question we ought to ask is the one we find here, “What is man that thou art mindful of him?” God has a plan for us that we do not deserve.

What we deserve is that God would not give us another thought. How sad it is that we rarely give Him a thought. Perhaps the angels could deserve to be a part of this plan, but not puny man. But this is the whole point – the plan is designed to glorify and magnify the kindness of God (Eph. 2:7, “That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus”). God’s kindness is measured by our unworthiness.

3. The plan is magnificently glorious (vv. 7-8).

Illustration: Sin, sickness, and death have robbed man of a God-intended glory. I am reminded of that when we minister at Rose Meadow Garden each month. We normally have a chance to sing to some patients who are completely disabled. All they can do is lay still and breathe.

One of these patients, a man named Chris, is twisted and riddled with his paralysis, and yet there are pictures on his wall of a former glory. He was evidently quite a musician before he was smitten with this disease.

One of the sad truths of my mom's condition with dementia symptoms is that there is a former glory that is gone now. I hear it on her answering machine when I call – that is the old mom. But when I talk to her on the phone, I know that some kind of chronic condition has robbed Mom of a former glory.

Application: The plan God has for those whom He saves involves the crowing of honor and glory and the subjection of all things under their feet. What glory has been taken from us in this life will be restored again in the next for believers.

But this being set over the works of God's hands is not going to be the same for every believer. Jesus told a parable about this time when all things are subjected under saved mankind's feet again, which speaks of this difference (Luke 19:11-27). We should not neglect our salvation now, because that neglect will cost us something of the glory and honor that God's plan of salvation is designed to include for us when all things are subjected under our feet.

The word for *crownest* here is a verbal form of the *stephanos*, the wreath the athlete would receive for winning a race. The Scripture is clear, that if we neglect our salvation now, the way we are crowned with glory and honor in the future world to come will be impacted. Because God's plan for us is magnificently glorious, we must not neglect our salvation now.

4. The plan is yet future (v. 8b).

That is the problem that causes us to ask the question – why not neglect our salvation? The problem is that the plan is yet future. We do not get crowned with glory and honor now. Nothing is in subjection to us now. All things seem to be in rebellion against those who try to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling now.

The life of not neglecting salvation can be a difficult life. But our author is encouraging us that it will be worth it all, when we see Jesus. Bob Jones Sr. said, “He is no fool to lose what he cannot keep to keep what he cannot lose” and “Never sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate.” Do not neglect your salvation because God has some tremendous plans for our future that depend on our diligence now.

II. Do not neglect your salvation because God never did (vv. 9-10).

Illustration: Have you ever had someone tell you a story about someone you know, and you find it very much in character with that person and say – “Yes, that is just like him. Some things never change.” My dad found an old picture of Brandon struggling with his cousin for a basketball when he was just a toddler. Both Brandon and his cousin are getting upset in the picture as they both grab this ball together, and my dad’s comment on the picture was something like – looks like a jump ball to me, but neither player seems to like the call. Well, when I saw that picture, I had to say, “Some things never change.” That is just like them.

Application: Our author says the same thing about our God in verse 10. *It was fitting for Him* means *it was just like Him*. You want to know what your God is like, look at what happened at the cross.

Adolf Saphir is a former Jew who wrote a commentary on Hebrews, and he put it this way: “What a marvelous declaration! ‘It became Him.’ It is in accordance with the divine perfections. All divine attributes are harmonized here – His wisdom and His mercy, His justice and His holiness, His power and His truth. ‘It became Him because of His love, it became His justice, it became His wisdom that thus it should be.’”

We sing that song – “It’s just like His great love” (#333). That is the meaning here. What is it just like God to do? Note 2 things from the passage:

1. It is just like God to make His own Son taste death for every sinful man (v. 9). The word *taste* indicates at least three things about the death and suffering of Christ for us:

a. Death was foreign to His nature. When we taste a dish, we normally do so because we want to see what it is like. It is usually something that we are not familiar with, something foreign to us.

Jesus tasted death for us, and in doing so He was trying something very foreign to Him. Saphir: “Let us remember that between Jesus, as He was in Himself, and death there subsisted no connection. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. He was without sin, without spot and blemish. He had never transgressed the law. In Him Satan could find nothing. Death had no personal or direct relation to Him.”

b. Death was a voluntary act of His will. When we taste something, we do so willingly, not because we have been forced. The Lord Jesus confessed, “No man taketh my life from me; but I lay it down myself.”

Saphir: "The Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Life, of His own power and will, laid down His life. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ in this respect is different from the death of any human being; it was the free, voluntary, spontaneous act and energy of His will. When the Lord Jesus Christ died He put forth a great energy. He willed to die. And so in one sense we may say that His death was a great manifestation of His power."

c. Death was something He could sense. When I was a kid, I found a way to eat peas without tasting them. I would wash them down whole with some milk, or if you put enough butter and brown sugar on something, you can almost eat anything without tasting what you are eating.

Jesus tasted His death. His suffering was enormous and real. Saphir: "He tasted death; all that was in death was concentrated in that cup which the Lord Jesus Christ emptied on the cross. During His lifetime He felt a burden, sorrow, grief; He saw the sins and sorrows of the people; He had compassion, and wept. In the garden of Gethsemane, He realized what was the cup, which He would have to drink upon Golgotha. . . .

"But what was it that He tasted in death? Death is the curse which sin brings, the penalty of the broken law, the manifestation of the power of the devil, the expression of the wrath of God; and in all these aspects the Lord Jesus Christ came into contact with death, and tasted it to the very last."

2. It is just like God to completely defeat death and bring many sons to glory (vv. 9-10).

Application: The word *captain* in v. 10 is the word translated *author* in 12:2. Jesus is the author and finisher of our

faith, and He is able to be that because God completed making Him that by crowning Him with glory and honor after the suffering of death.

Conclusion: So why not neglect so great salvation? 2 reasons: (1) because God has some tremendous plans for our future that depend on our diligence now; and (2) because God never did. So now we know, "Why not?"

"A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, 'Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.' That is the distinction – the sermon, and the 'lightning and the thunder.' To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters."

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*