

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

- Week of October 16, 2022 -

Sunday Morning Service	-----43
Sunday Evening Service	-----27
Wednesday Eve., 10/19/22 Service	-----23

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

- Week of October 16, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	----- \$ 910.00
Love Offering, Bro. Meier	----- \$ 504.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/16/22:	\$ 1,414.00

- Week of October 9, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	----- \$ 1,099.11
Lighting for church street sign	----- \$ 50.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/09/22:	\$ 1,149.11

- Week of October 2, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	----- \$ 1,385.00
Lighting for church street sign	----- \$ 50.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 10/02/22:	\$ 1,435.00

- Week of September 25, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	----- \$ 1,385.00
Lighting for church street sign	----- \$ 50.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/25/22:	\$ 1,435.00

- Week of September 18, 2022 -

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings	----- \$ 1,160.00
Lighting for church street sign	----- \$ 40.00
TOTAL RECEIVED FOR WEEK OF 09/18/22:	\$ 1,200.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed for church operating expenses EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00



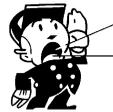
LISTEN TO -



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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, Who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.



THANK YOU For Your Continued Faithfulness In Giving!

During the early part this pandemic, we were unable to meet in the church-house. But - that did not mean that the expenses of having a church-house were suspended. We still had bills to pay - electricity, gas, water, trash pickup, phone, internet, facility insurance, copier lease, office supplies, etc., and, praise the Lord, His people kept praying, watching online, & supporting their church with their giving.

Sadly, some people only give when they are in attendance at church - sort of like paying for "services rendered" - but the truth is that they are robbing THEMSELVES of God's blessings when they withhold their tithes and offerings and only give when they are here (see Malachi 3:10). Thankfully, most of our people have remained faithful, in so many ways, during this crisis, including financially.

WE HAVE 3 WAYS YOU CAN GIVE:

1. By mail - 23 East Wells Blvd., Sapulpa, OK 74066
2. Drop it off - call the Church Office to arrange it. 224-1924
3. Online - Go to the link below and give electronically:

<https://tithe.ly/give?c=433047>

WE ARE GLAD WE CAN NOW GATHER TOGETHER TO PRAISE GOD & STUDY HIS WORD TOGETHER IN THE CHURCH-HOUSE! YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS GIFTS WILL HELP US KEEP UP WITH THE BILLS AND CONTINUE OUR RENEWED OUTREACH EFFORTS!

Church Directory

Todd W. White	----- Pastor
Lois Mae Floyd	----- Pianist/ Organist
Mickie Shatwell	----- Evening Pianist
Derek Quinnelly	----- Greeter
Larry & Mary Byars	----- Outreach
Bertha Segebart	----- Custodian
GinaMarie Shufelt	----- Flowers
Seth White	----- Sound/Video

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY REMINDER

Volume XXVIII

October 23, 2022

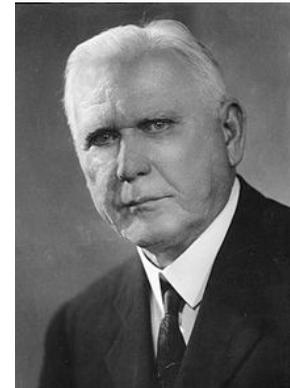
Number 42

THE TRAGEDY OF NEGLECT

by Dr. George W. Truett, Pastor
First Baptist Church of Dallas, Texas
1987-1944

Preached June 15, 1917 in Ft. Worth, Texas

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3)



The Bible calls our attention always to the big questions of life, to the immense questions, to the eternally important questions. For example: "If a man die, shall he live again?" Millions are asking that question afresh in this time of world war and world crisis.

Or take this question: "Is thine heart right?"

Or take this question: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

Or take this question: "What is your life?"

The Bible asks the big questions, the transcendently momentous questions.

Let us take one of these big questions out of the Bible to-night for our text, a question intensely personal for us all and each: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

There is one word in the text that points the reason why men and women are finally lost, and you have guessed that word, as I quoted the text, or you will guess it now, when I quote it again: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Now you know the word that points the reason why men and women are finally lost. In this Christian land of ours men and women are finally lost, not because they intend it. Do you suppose anybody really intends, deliberately intends, to be lost, deliberately intends to miss Heaven, with all that it has and shall ever be? Do you suppose that any human being deliberately plans, definitely plans, to miss the upward way? Why, then, do they miss it?

One little word in our text points the answer: "Neglect."

"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

The whole world is a battle-field covered over with the wrecks occasioned by neglect. You may behold such wrecks constantly in the world temporal all about you. How many a time is the sight vouchsafed unto us of young people, with prospect and promise, who in life's morning neglect proper habits, proper training, proper discipline, and go out unprepared for the big battle of life.

Oh, if in life's morning, the time for preparation, the time for discipline and the forming of right habits, they would only study and give themselves to those habits that belong so properly and so vitally to youth, how different their life story and battle would be! Often when it is too late, the remorseful memory of neglect burns like some coal of fire!

Or look into the realm of health. The kindly doctor is summoned some day to the loved one under our roof, and he makes his careful diagnosis, and his face is serious, and he makes the suggestion, tactfully but earnestly: "This case calls for a complete change, a change in climate. Conditions here are alarming. Make the change without delay."

The skillful scientist advises, but we presume, and the suffering patient presumes. We hope against hope. We wonder if the doctor is not mistaken. And the weeks drag on, and the case suddenly plunges downward for the worse, and the doctor is summoned again, and again makes his careful diagnosis, and his face is now terribly beclouded. Full-fledged tuberculosis holds the patient in its grasp.

Oh, neglect, neglect, what mischiefs thou dost work in the realm of health!

And now, when we pass the subject up to the higher realm, the supreme realm, the realm of religion, how tragically and how horribly true it is that neglect there, in that highest realm, gets in its most undoing work.

(continued inside)

Even we Christians must all along bewail ourselves that our neglect has been so serious. I daresay there is not a Christian listening to me, certainly not one of any extended experience, but whose heart is touched with a twinge of deepest sorrow as you give yourself for a little while to memory, to recollection, and have come trooping back to you the memories of duties neglected, of opportunities forfeited, of privileges that have been all owed to slip away unimproved, which privileges are gone now and shall be returnless forever.

Even we Christians must all along bewail ourselves that in this manner and that and the other we have so sadly neglected in the great matters of religion. We have neglected people. We have forgotten people. We have overlooked people. We have passed by people. We have given attention to the smaller things, the slighter things, the less consequential things; and the vast things, the supremely worthwhile things, have often gotten by us, and through neglect they have gone, and gone to come back no more.

Have you ever had a religious census taken of this city? I daresay you have had such from time to time, even as I have seen such from time to time in my own city. During the last one had in my city there came back into my hands some six thousand cards. Oh, what revelations were on those cards! Hundreds of names were on those cards of men and women who elsewhere had been members of the church, but who had turned away from their home back yonder in some other community, the city or the village or the country place; who had come up to the city and had got involved. *“How shall we escape,”* our text asks us, *“if we neglect so great salvation?”*

Your salvation is involved. **Your salvation!** Oh, what can compare with that? CHRIST JESUS came down from Heaven, and He comes yet, in the power of His gospel, to give us His great salvation. CHRIST comes to save us in our totality.

- *He would save not only our souls, our spirits*
- *He would save our lives.*
- *He would save our bodies.*
- *He would save our brains.*
- *He would save our influence.*
- *He would save our personality.*
- *He would save us completely, entirely, leaving nothing out.*

CHRIST came to save us from sin unto righteousness, from selfishness unto magnanimity and largeness and nobleness. CHRIST came to save us from littleness unto greatness. CHRIST came to save us from the small to the large. CHRIST came to save us from defeat to triumph. CHRIST came to save us from night unto day. CHRIST came to save us from hell unto Heaven. CHRIST came to save us in our whole life, in our service, in our business, in our daily task, completely. CHRIST came thus to save us. Surely, His is a great salvation.

Oh, my friend, getting to Heaven is a very, very important matter, but CHRIST means a great deal more than that by His great salvation. CHRIST comes to fit you to live here and now, to fit you for your task, whatever your task is.

Are you a toiler at this or that, a man of business, in the

professional world - a man of leadership? CHRIST comes and proffers you His own grace and forgiveness and mercy and divine re-enforcement, that, whatever your sphere, your lot, your post, your task, life may be conserved and saved. Tell me, what is a human life for? What is that hand for? What is the eye for? What is human life for? CHRIST would save your life to all that is highest and truest and noblest and best.

CHRIST comes to give a completed life. CHRIST does not come to crib and coffin and confine you in some little, ignoble, superficial, unworthy life. CHRIST comes proffering to take out of your life not a solitary thing except that which poisons and maims and kills. The sanest thing on the face of this earth is to be a friend of JESUS CHRIST. He came to give His great salvation; and no matter how much a man may rise, how high he may climb, how great may be his achievements, man’s life is vitiated and the true end of life is defeated and lost, if a man lives counter to the will of CHRIST JESUS, the one rightful Master of mankind.

Napoleon came with his soldiers to cross the desert on one of his long marches, and in that early morning when they started across the desert, the historian tells us that the hot sun came down on the white sands, and the light and heat reflected made the men pant for water, as they marched across that terrible desert. In their fierce thirst, they looked everywhere for water, but the wells were dry, and no water could be found. Then they looked out there a little distance ahead and saw a beautiful lake of water, right out in the desert before them, and they lifted up a shout of joy, and started in a run toward the water, but as they ran toward that lake, the lake ran. As they got nearer, the lake receded and got farther away. It was not a lake of water at all. It was a mirage of the desert, such as you and I have seen many a time in this great West. It was a cheat. It was a delusion. It was a snare.

Oh, my fellow-man, traveling with me through time to an eternity endless, that picture of the mirage in the desert is the picture of human life at its best, without GOD. Without GOD, life is defeated, and its true aim vitiated and missed and lost - without GOD. And that awful expression is that in the Bible:

“Having no hope, and without GOD in the world.”

JESUS comes with His great salvation to save us from our past. Oh, that would be wonderful, wonderful, wonderful! If some power could come into my life and take my life, with its chapters that I regret to think about, with its remorseful memories, with its evil hours, with its mistaken words and deeds, wonderful would be that power, to come into my life and say: “I will forgive it all, and I will blot out every evil thing in your past, every one, so that the record shall be white like the snow.” What a wonderful power that would be! CHRIST is that power. This is His promise: *“I will blot out your sins, and put them as far from you as the East is from the West, oh, sinner, if you will come and honestly surrender to me.”*

But that is not all.

CHRIST saves us in our stressful, eventful, important present. CHRIST saves us and would save us in the big battle that we are fighting here and now, at the daily task, with the responsibilities

Standout social media app TikTok has gotten pretty good at keeping its users on its platform, and indulgers are having a hard time kicking the habit, as has been widely reported. ... TikTok’s main feed called the ‘For You’ page provides short videos that are circulated based on each user’s specific interactions with the app and its content.

... ‘The real secret sauce is the algorithm,’ Open Influence CEO and social media expert Eric Dahan told Fox News. ‘It’s layering in a really solid content recommendation algorithm and the content format is really bite-sized,’ he added. ‘And so, the algorithm can quickly learn.’

... Fox News Digital sat down with author Celeste Headlee recently at the Library of Congress National Book Festival in Washington, D.C. She explained that, in her view, TikTok is ‘designed to be addictive.’ The author said that the social media app actually ‘tricks your brain’ by ‘shooting in dopamine.’ ‘It’s called the addiction hormone for a very good reason. It’s the exact same hormone that’s triggered by pulling a slot machine,’ she added.

... Dahan said that TikTok’s short-form video format specifically aligns with the interests of Gen Z [born 1997 to 2012, the first smartphone generation]--the primary user age group--such as mobile video creation and staying up-to-date on the latest trends. ‘That makes it a lot more engaging than just really good content recommendation,’ he said. ‘That’s why it’s addictive.’ Dahan mentioned that, compared to other social media apps, TikTok’s format is skewed against social connection, since users can scroll for hours and hours and never interact with a single person. ... Instead, the app seemingly ‘reads your brain,’ Dahan described--based on personal thoughts and interests.

... While the app has the intention of entertaining, TikTok is most often used to leverage brands. ... Dahan mapped out the powerful scale of how TikTok moves markets and consumer interest, as more people hop on the trend of ‘TikTok made me buy it.’ ... ‘It’s becoming, increasingly, a key platform for engaging consumers,’ he said. ‘TikTok has a massive amount of influence.’ ... TikTok continues to drive other media sectors such as music--as today’s top-streamed songs are commonly used and discovered first as TikTok sounds. It also has been known for driving the news cycle, since the app is a growing news source for many.”

☛ **PARENTS WIN IN COURT AFTER 6-YEAR-OLD SON LABELED “TRANSPHOBIC”** - The following is excerpted from “Christian Parents Win,” Fox News, Sept. 28, 2022:

“Two Christian parents in the United Kingdom have prompted the government to revise its gender-related guidance for children after they took legal action when a school labeled their 6-year-old son as potentially ‘transphobic.’

... Nigel and Sally Rowe explained to Fox News Digital how they first raised concerns with their son’s Isle of Wight primary school after he came home ‘confused’ by the school’s transgender-affirming policies toward his male classmates who identified as girls. ... Nigel said of his case, ‘To cut a long story

short, in the school, when our boys were six years of age, in the classroom one of their friends decided to transition from being a boy to a girl. It was just announced to the kids. And therefore, when we heard, we objected to that.’

... The Rowes, who have since taken to homeschooling their children, met with their son’s teachers at the time about the issue and sent a letter to the school laying out their concerns about its gender policies. They reportedly were met with a ‘cold’ response. Instead of listening to their concerns, they said the school sent them a letter that accused both them and their young son of potential ‘transphobic behavior.’ ... After seeking legal counsel regarding whether the school’s behavior was legal, the London-based Christian Legal Centre (CLC) told them it was not.

... The government agreed to settle the case last week after the Rowes won permission for a full judicial review hearing before the High Court in February. They intended to present international expert evidence exposing how transgender-affirming policies have led to ‘catastrophic outcomes’ for children struggling with gender dysphoria. They were awarded £22,000 in legal costs, which they are donating to CLC, and the government also committed to reform.

... Given their son’s primary school was affiliated with the Church of England, they said they also went to the leaders of their local diocese about their ordeal. ‘They weren’t supportive at all,’ Sally remembered. ... Nigel said the Church of England representatives were against them then and remain opposed. ‘They still don’t support us,’ he said. ‘It’s a bizarre world we live in.’”

☛ **RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION INCREASES IN TURKEY** - The following is excerpted from “Victims of religious oppression in Turkey,” Christian Post, Oct. 14, 2022:

“Victims of religious oppression in Turkey shared their stories at an event on religious freedom at the European Parliament where the speakers suggested that political and social atrocities in that country were behind the Christian population’s decline from 20% to a mere 0.2% over the last century. The victims highlighted atrocities against Christian minorities committed by the Turkish government and parts of society, according to the human rights group ADF International, which held the event this week in partnership with the group European Conservatives and Reformists. Among those who testified at Wednesday’s event in Brussels, ‘Freedom of Religion in Türkiye,’ was Mark Smith, a Christian missionary who was expelled from the country in 2020 after living there for over a decade. ... The Turkish government has expelled at least 60 foreign Christian missionaries and their families since 2020, according to the religious freedom group Open Doors, which says Christians in Turkey experience ‘incredible pressure from very strong--and increasing--religious nationalism’ in the country. ... Turkey has a long history of Christian persecution, and its government still refuses to admit that the Ottoman Turks committed genocide of Christian Armenians in 1915. Turkey is 99% Muslim, according to its own statistics.” ■

The mother met me at the door and said: “Why, didn’t you know? He came home from the meeting the other night, and before the night was gone, he was stricken with dreadful pneumonia. Oh, he is sick, sir; too sick to see you. He cannot see anybody but the doctor and the nurse and his mother and father.” I went around the fifth day, and he was worse. I went around the sixth day, and the mother’s eyes were red from weeping, and she said: “We have little hope, sir.” I went around the seventh day, and I said: “Let me stay. Maybe I have not done my duty. I have just been a Christian myself a few weeks. Maybe I have not done my duty. Let me stay with him. Maybe he will know me. Let me be near him. Maybe he will be conscious and know me.”

She let me stay, and the doctors stayed, and the nurse stayed, and the parents stayed, and I stayed. Oh, that long drawn out and never to be forgotten night! Midnight came, and he stirred uneasily there in his bed, and pulled nervously at the coverings that wrapped his bed. Then he began to talk, and we all bent our ears to catch what he said. With his hoarse whispers, and staring wildly, this is what he said: “Not to-night, George! Let me off to-night. I promise if you will let me off to-night I will settle this to-morrow night. I will settle it to-morrow night, if you will let me off tonight, but not to-night. I am not going to-night. I am not going to-night, and you needn’t talk further. I will settle it to-morrow night, if I feel like this, but I am not going to-night.”

In another hour or two the spirit took its flight. Oh, the tragedy, the tragedy, of a man’s dying like that! My brother men, I tell you, men ought not to die like that!

What is the issue to which I am summoning your immediate and best consideration?

- It is a choice between two masters. One is your friend, and the other is your foe. Which should it be?

- It is a choice between one of two lives. One is a life of ever-increasing usefulness, and the other is a life of ever-increasing waste and hurt.

- It is a choice between two deaths, the one unafraid and in peace, and the other without preparation and without GOD.

- It is a choice between one of two worlds in the great beyond - the world of peace and bliss and hope and life forever, or the world of waste and loss and defeat forever.

Which should your choice be?

Oh, I beg you to remember, it is your soul that is at stake, and it is your soul that I am pleading for.

If, as I came to-night to the tent, I had passed on the outskirts of this fair city some little woman driving a vegetable wagon, and she had driven it off into some deep ravine, and could not extricate her team there in the deep ditch below, if I had come and stood on this platform and said: “Out yonder at a certain place a little helpless woman, selling her vegetables to support her fatherless children, has had trouble with her team, and the team is at the bottom of the ditch, and she cannot get the team up;” and if I had said: “Aren’t there men here who will hurry to that little woman, and give her relief?” - men, chivalrous and many, would have been on their feet as soon as I had stated the case.

And yet tonight I am talking about your soul, your soul, that will soon be in an eternal world - your soul. Give it a chance! Give it a chance, before it is forever too late!

We are going to pray in a moment, but before we pray I would ask:

Are there men and women here who say: “Sir, we are wrong with GOD and know it and confess it to-night, and wish you to pray for us?” In the church or out, once in the church, or never, once professing religion and drifting, or never having made any profession of religion at all, are there those who say: “We are wrong with GOD to-night and know it? We would have you and these men and women who pray, to pray that we may be right with GOD before it is too late?”

Do you say: “Yes, I would lift my hand on such call?” Quietly and without any singing now, you will let us see, by your uplifted hands, if you are interested, if GOD has spoken to you tonight, if you wish to be saved. I am looking now and seeing, and so are these hundreds of Christians around you. Gladly now will we pray for you.

THE CLOSING PRAYER -

We make our appeal, O GOD, to Thee. Great is our joy that so many in this place are for CHRIST. We would serve Him better henceforth, far better, than we have served Him heretofore. But now we join in one prayer. It is for the men and women about us who say to us:

“We wish you to pray for us that we may be saved”

Lord, as best we can we bring them right now to Thee. Oh, teach thou each seeking one that CHRIST does the forgiving, that He does the saving, but that the soul is to give up to Him, that He may save in His own divine and gracious way. Let that blessed invitation, when Thou sayest:

“Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,” now take deep hold of every one, and let each one say: “I will not wait, I will not presume, I will not delay, I will not further neglect to yield myself to CHRIST.”

Whatever the doubts, whatever the difficulties, whatever the sins, whatever the fears, whatever the questions, whatever the temptations in the life, teach Thou each interested soul, O CHRIST, that Thou wilt surely forgive and save, if only such soul will surrender to Thee. We pray that that surrender may be made now, because now is GOD’s time, the wise time, the safe time, and because now might be the only time. Grant, O gracious Lord, that those whom Thou hast called to-night, saying **“Come unto me,”** may now by thy grace be given to say: “We will come to-day, even as GOD bids us come to-day and accept CHRIST as our Saviour forever.”

We pray it in the great Master’s name.

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

• **TIKTOK ADDICTION AND INFLUENCE** - The following is excerpted from “TikTok addiction,” Fox News, Oct. 4, 2022:

“Scrolling ... scrolling ... gone. (Hours gone, that is.)

thick and many that come to confront us. CHRIST is man’s supreme need now. More than he needs human support, more than he needs bread and meat, more than he needs good health, more than he needs fame, more than he needs money, a human being needs CHRIST to be the guide and re-enforcement of his daily earthly life. CHRIST offers to be that for those that will be His friends.

Nor is that all. CHRIST comes to the one who will honestly be His friend and says to Him: “You need not be afraid of what is coming next. You need not be afraid of the evil tidings that you shall hear. You need not be afraid of some black Friday in the future. You need not be afraid of that grim sarcasm of human life, which you shall face at the close, the name of which is Death.”

- You need not be afraid of what is coming after death.

- You need not be afraid to face CHRIST at His judgment bar.

- You need not be afraid of what is coming during GOD’s great beyond forever.

- You need not be afraid of anything at all, now or hereafter, if you will only be the friend of CHRIST.

Oh, my brother men, isn’t that a salvation worth having? Can you afford for any consideration to leave it out, and pass it by, and do without it?

Now I am coming, in view of all that is involved, to ask you who are neglecting your own highest welfare, your soul’s welfare, if you won’t cease your neglect, and cease it from this hour?

What arguments shall I marshal to help you, to persuade you, to encourage you, if I may, to cease your neglect of your own highest welfare? What arguments shalt I summon?

Let me name three.

There are many to be named, but at this time let me briefly name three, with a passing word of amplification in each case.

First of all, I am coming to say that you should give up your neglect of your own salvation because such neglect is unreasonable. Now, when the preacher comes and make his appeal to reason, what a great appeal it is! That is CHRIST’s first appeal to the children of men. He makes the appeal to reason.

“Come now, and let us reason together,” saith the Lord.

“Come now, oh, men and women, and let us reason together - sharpen your wits now and enter into a conversation with GOD.”

“Come now and let us reason together.”

So, then, the first appeal to you to cease your neglect is that your neglect of your spiritual welfare is utterly unreasonable. When the preacher makes the appeal to reason, every sentient, reasonable man ought to open wide the avenue to his mind and say: “I will listen to that appeal.” Your neglect of your soul is unreasonable. Can it be reasonable for a human being to neglect GOD, who made him? Can that be reasonable? Can it be reasonable for me, the creature of a day, with my life utterly contingent on the will of GOD - can it be reasonable for me to turn my back and turn my heart away from GOD? Can that be

reasonable? Do I not owe to my Maker certain inescapable obligations, and can it be reasonable for me to ignore them and forget them?

And more, can it be reasonable for me, a creature who must face the future, to ignore that future, and fail to make provision for that inescapable future - can that be reasonable?

Why, that little squirrel there in the autumn time would teach us. You can see it gathering the nuts and gathering the corn, and storing them away in the hollow tree, so that it shall have provision when the winter day comes and the day of need shall call. The little squirrel teaches us.

And the little ant, which we trample all unknowingly beneath our feet, if we would pause and look carefully, we should see it carrying its provisions out there to a common storehouse, that it may have supplies when the day of need and rigorous demand shall call for supplies.

And shall a creature made in the image of GOD - shall a human being, upon whom GOD hath set the eternal stamp, shall a creature made to live when those stars by night, and the sun by day shall be blotted out forever, and when we live on in a world to come, eternal in its duration, can there be any reason for such a being failing to provide for that great and endless future?

Then I ask your consideration to another argument why you should cease your neglect of yourself, and cease it now, and that is that our neglect of our soul’s welfare is not right. Now, when the preacher makes the appeal to right, what a challenging appeal he makes!

Oh, what a great word is that word “right!” “Right” is the word that makes history. “Right” is the word that thrills through the ages. This is ever the big question of all: Is this thing right? When the preacher comes and makes the appeal to right, what a commanding appeal he makes to the children of men! I am coming, then, to say that your neglect of your soul’s salvation is not right to any creature in GOD’s vast universe. It is not right toward anybody.

First of all, I have already hinted at it, it is not right toward GOD. Surely, you will not contend that it can be right for the creature to ignore and to neglect his Creator. You will not say that that can be right. Some obligations to GOD are inexorable and inescapable. You will not say that they may be mocked, and that to mock them would be right.

Surely, gratitude - what a praiseworthy quality that is in human life! - gratitude should spur every right-thinking man in the world to turn to GOD, from whom comes every blessing, and say to GOD:

“What wouldst thou have at my hands? After thy mercy and grace and benediction and goodness, gratitude inspires me to respond to whatever thou askest.”

There is another argument. Your neglect is not right to yourself. Men owe some duties to themselves. Men owe it to themselves to make the most and the best of themselves. No human being should fling life away, and debauch it, and prostitute it, and trifle with it. Every human being owes an

inescapable obligation to himself to make the most and the best of himself.

Then would you tell me that a man has the right to-night, while we are worshiping here quietly, such man yonder in the city somewhere, wearied out by sin, or disappointed, no matter what the occasion, to put the deadly gun to his temple and end his mortal life? No, no! It cannot be right.

Suicide cannot be justified, and by as much as the human soul outranks the human body in worth, is suicide of soul utterly indefensible and unjustifiable. Every soul rational that shall miss the upward way and go the downward way shall be a spiritual suicide. GOD is never at fault and never will be, that a rational soul misses the upward way.

But that is not all the argument about being and doing right. I have said that your neglect of your soul is not right toward GOD, and that it is not right toward yourself. Now I am coming to add this other word: Your neglect of your soul is not right toward anybody else on the face of this earth.

We have inescapable relations to one another, and these relations should not be broken and ignored. Our lives are bound up with one another, and we will help or hurt one another every day we live. I tell you, gentlemen, that is an argument to take deep hold upon every normal man and upon every sensitive conscience. You and I are daily helping people upward by our personal influence, or daily we are dragging them downward by our same personal influence. And I speak to you the sober truth when I declare that no human being has the moral right to occupy a position anywhere, in the occupancy of which position he may hurt somebody else. No human being has that right.

In a city where I preached in other years, two young lawyers often were seen in the congregation. They had come from some smaller community to the larger city, there to build their business and to live their lives. Interesting young men they were, partners in the high realm of law. One of earth's most honorable callings is that of the worthy lawyer! I became interested in the young men profoundly. They came time and again to the series of meetings such as these. Night after night I spoke to the people, and those two young lawyers, inseparable young fellows, came night after night to the services. One morning I called upon them at their office to confer with them about personal religion. Happily, I found them alone, and as carefully as I could I felt my way into their lives, and they were talking after a moment or two rather freely, and when at last I asked them: "Why are you not openly and positively on the side of CHRIST?" They said: "We will give you a reason. Perhaps you won't think it a good one."

I said: "I should certainly like to know it, whatever it is, because I am deeply interested in you."

Then they pointed me to Judge So-and-so, one of the most successful lawyers of the community, and they said: "He is not a Christian. He is not a church man, and we have taken him for our model." I said: "You have indeed chosen a splendid man, but no man in the world should be any man's model. He is one of the most interesting men I know. I delight to call him my personal

friend."

They said: "Well, he rarely goes to church, he is a first-class lawyer and a very useful citizen, and we have concluded that if he can afford to pass personal religion by, with his intellectuality and success and standing, so can we pass it by.

"That," they said, "is about all the plea we can give for not being publicly for CHRIST." I told them other things which were in my mind, which I need not relate here, but my own mind was made up as to what I should do, as I left them, and I went straight to the Judge's office, and fortunately found him alone. He greeted me cordially, for he was everything that goes to make the superb gentleman. I said: "I need not sit down, Judge. You are busy, and so am I. I have come to ask you a question in ethics." His eyes twinkled with merriment, as he said: "This is a question for you preachers and teachers - this question in ethics."

I said: "Yes, and a question it is for the lawyer and the doctor and the farmer and the merchant and the banker and the editor, and everybody else." "All right," he said, "what is your question in ethics?" I said: "would you say that a man had the moral right to occupy some position, in the occupancy of which position he will hurt somebody else? Does he have that moral right?" And he turned upon me, with his strong, clear eyes and manly face, and with conviction surpassing in his voice, said: "No, no! No man has the moral right to occupy any position in the occupancy of which he will hurt somebody else. What is the application of your question in ethics?"

And then I told my story to him of my visit to the two young men, and what they said to me, and how they were even then sheltering behind him. I can never forget his agitation. He went over to the window in the large building, and lifted it on that wintry day, and looked out on the crowds that surged in the streets below. Then he came back, and said: "I cannot answer that question, can I?" I said: "Only in one way, sir. You might be given a thousand years to find the way to answer that question, but there is just one right way to answer it."

After a moment or two more of conversation, he said: "I will be at the services to-night," and I bade him good-morning without another word.

Day wore to nightfall, and I stood up to preach. I looked everywhere, and yonder were the two young men. I looked carefully again, and there was the Judge coming in, and the young usher gave him a chair to my left. That evening I preached to one man, for if I may win him there is no telling what may be the result upon others.

When the sermon was ended, I asked: "Who, for his own sake, first of all, and then for the sake of somebody else who may be sheltering behind him, perhaps all unknown to himself, will make his surrender to CHRIST? Who will come down the aisle and say: 'That is my case, and that is my decision?'"

Down the long aisle came the noble Judge and took my hand, with a seriousness one would never forget, and as he held my hand and talked for a moment, he said: "That question in ethics got me this morning. You had not reached the street, this

morning, until I shut the door and locked it, and fell on my knees, and said: 'Great GOD, has it come to this, that I am staying out of the kingdom of GOD myself, and by the power of my personal influence, taking others in the downward way? Help me, that my influence may be saved, as well as my soul.'"

He had just finished saying all this when I said: "Look, Judge, behind you," and turning, he saw behind him the two young lawyers, waiting until he had finished, to take my hand and to take his, and with a sob in each one of their throats they said: "When we saw you start, Judge, the thing was decided with us."

Oh, my men, my brother men! My brother men! You for your own sake should take the step supreme for your soul. But the issue is infinitely bigger than that. You should take the step for the sake of everybody else. A man's unconscious influence has the largest power of all - a man's unconscious influence - the influence he does not know anything about. It goes out from every man like the fragrance from the flower, and it goes wider and deeper and farther than any human being can even comprehend.

It is that unconscious influence that often gets in its deadliest and most undoing work over others. You are positioned. The measure of everyone of us is taken in our community. People discuss us, and they think about us. And in that deepest, highest realm of all, in the realm of religion, they take our measure, all of us, in the communities where we live. Our unconscious influence is the most serious of all.

The papers told us awhile ago of a brave little wife who waited through the weeks on her sick husband. She would be awakened by the clock in the night, to get up and give him his medicine. At last she was worn almost to desperation, and scarcely knew what she did, as she got up, hour after hour to give him the medicine. At last, the hour came when, half-awake, she reached up for the vial and poured out the medicine, and put it to his mouth, and no sooner had he swallowed it than he made an outcry to her: "Oh, Mary, dear, you have killed your John! You have given the wrong medicine." And then, as he saw her agony, he said: "Oh, I know, dear, that you did not mean to do it, but this is all. I am finished." And he was finished, before another hour had passed.

My men and women, I am pleading to-night not simply for your soul. I am pleading that for that life, that influence, that personality, that manhood, that womanhood, that example, that self, your whole earthly lifetime forty or sixty or seventy years, or more or less - that your all shall be put on the side where you will not hurt your fellow-men, but where you will help them every day.

But I have still another argument to which I would summon your attention, to constrain you thereby to give up your neglect. I have already said two things. I have said your neglect is not reasonable, from any viewpoint, and I have said your neglect is not right - not right toward GOD, nor toward yourself, nor toward anybody else. I would now say, from my deepest heart, this other word:

Your neglect is not safe.

Oh, my heart is heavy here - your neglect is not safe! And why is your neglect not safe? I have already said that you cannot live like life ought to be lived, if you live it neglecting GOD. It is impossible. Life is maimed and crippled, no matter whose the life, if you presume to live it without GOD. Your neglect, therefore, is not safe.

Moreover, your neglect is not safe because this life is not all. Your neglect is not safe because this little earthly life must have an end. Your neglect is not safe because you must die. Oh, if I could say that so that you would believe it! YOU must die! You MUST die! You must DIE! Will you believe it? And will you address yourself to proper preparation for that solemn event? There are a thousand gates to death, and the easiest thing on this earth is for death to snap the cord of life and send us into the great beyond.

May I tell you the saddest memory out of my young manhood? It comes to me now, on the wings of recollection. It has come to me a thousand times. I had just found CHRIST, as I was turning into young manhood. I knew very little about Him. About all that I knew was that I had decided for Him. I did not know how to talk to anybody else. The earnest, faithful preacher, genuine to the depths of his heart and sincere as the sunlight, true as truth itself, as every preacher ought to be, spoke to the boys in the school, and groups of them made their decision for CHRIST. Next to the last night of the meeting had come. I sat beside my desk-mate. He had not yet decided for CHRIST. I could not any longer be silent, and so I bent over beside Jim and said: "Jim, you go. All is at stake, Jim. You make your surrender. I don't know how to talk to you, Jim, only I would have you go."

He looked earnestly into my face and said: "Let me off to-night, George, and if you will let me off to-night, I promise you that, if I feel like this to-morrow night, I will certainly go. Let me off for to-night." I said: "Jim, your issue is not with me, nor is your issue with that preacher who is preaching. Your issue is with CHRIST, who died for you. He has spoken to you. He has made you serious. He calls you. Make your surrender to Him, and make it now, while you can." He put his face down in his hands, and was moved with deepest emotion, and I bent over him again, and made a second effort. I said: "Jim, if you will make your surrender to CHRIST, and go down the aisle to that minister, I will walk with you. I will take your arm, if you like, or you can take mine. Won't you do it to-night?" And then resolutely he summoned himself and looked into my face, with purpose in his eye and in his words, and said: "Not to-night. If I feel like this to-morrow night, I will go, but I will not go to-night."

Oh, I wish I could leave the rest untold, but the story would not be done. When the next night came he was not there. The next day in school he was not there. We asked about him, but nobody seemed to know where he was. And then the meeting ended, and the second day came, and the school, but he was not there. Nobody knew why. And the third day, and nobody knew why, and the fourth day; and I said: "I will go by his home to find out why."