

How Shall We Escape, If We Neglect So Great Salvation?

Thesis: Exhort the hearers not to become lax and neglect the great salvation given to us through Christ.

- I. Introduction:
 - a. Today's popular perception of Christianity compared to the Law of Moses is that God was more strict in times past because the law of Moses was just that a law – now, it is perceived and claimed, we are under the law of Grace, where we are saved by faith in Christ and not by works. Therefore, God is not worried about the strict keeping of the doctrine of Christ, but the disposition of the heart and the acceptance of Christ as your savior!
 - i. A proof text that they like to use:
 1. **(Rom 2:28-29)** “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.”
 - a. “Letter” – does not mean strict observance of the law of Moses. – The Jew was made a Jew, not because of strict observance but by being born in the family – Physical birth
 - b. The true child of God is born of the spirit – Jesus taught in **(John 3:3; 3:5)**
 - ii. Many things are wrong with this idea – many will be lost because of this popular false doctrine
 1. Can we accept Christ and not do what He says?
 - a. **(Luke 6:46)** “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”
 - iii. God is even stricter than he was in times past – We see this in the second chapter of Hebrews.
 - b. **(Heb 2:1-4)** 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; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?
 - c. Background: Question given for the purpose of Exhortation to the Jewish Christians of the time to continue in the ‘better’ system
 - i. Do not Neglect the Great Salvation Given to Us through Jesus Christ. – For how can we escape damnation?
 - d. This shows the greater condemnation to those under the gospel dispensation than with any other dispensation:

- a. **(Deut 27:26)** “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.”
- ii. **(Gal 6:7)** “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”
- iii. Example:
 - 1. An entire generation perished in the wilderness because of their murmuring and disbelief. **(Num 14:29)**
 - 2. The Sabbath breaker was put to death **(Num 15:32-36)**
 - 3. Moses was kept from entering the promised land because of his disobedience in striking the rock. **(Numbers 20:12)**
 - 4. Nadab and Abihu was consumed **(Lev 10:1-2)**
 - 5. Saul was rejected from being king **(1 Sam 15:23)**
 - 6. The prophet who did not obey was slain by a lion **(1 Kings 13:24)**

IV. The Greater Danger of Neglecting the Gospel

- a. **(Heb 2:3)** “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”
 - i. If those truths be so, how much greater is the word spoken by the Lord – Son of God – We are given the great significance of the doctrine of Christ – How truly precious is this word?
 - 1. Straight from Christ himself – Proclaimer of His Doctrine
 - a. Defines Christianity as the word brought by Christ
 - 2. Christ has the words of life **(John 6:67-68)**
 - 3. His Words are the Basis of Christianity **(Matt 7:24-26)**
(Matt 28:18-20)
 - ii. If His word is not followed – Not follower of Christ – Need not to look to Christ for the Reward must look to Man for Reward! – Cannot deliver
- b. Neglecting the Gospel
 - i. Not only are horrible criminals in danger of condemnation, but all that neglect the Gospel – Salvation
 - ii. What can neglect do in the natural world?
 - 1. Neglect your yard
 - 2. Neglect your hygiene
 - 3. Neglect your health
 - 4. Neglect your friends, brothers, and sisters
 - iii. The same results happen when you neglect this great salvation!
 - iv. Examples:
 - 1. Negligent person built on the sand – House Fell **(Matt 7:24-26)**
 - 2. Negligence condemned the one-talent man **(Matt 25:24-30)**
 - 3. Negligence will condemn many on the day of Judgment
 - a. **(Matt 25:41-46)**

- v. Peter asks the question of will be the destiny of those who neglect obedience to the gospel
 - 1. **(1 Peter 4:17-18)** “For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”
 - 2. Paul Answers
 - a. **(2 Thess 1:7-9)** “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power”

V. Give Heed

- a. **(Heb 2:1)** “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.”
 - i. “Heed” – to apply oneself to – point the head towards
 - ii. “Let them slip” – flow past us
 - 1. Used in a nautical sense – It is the picture of a ship "slipping" past its dock because the captain has not paid "attention" to the course
- b. There is a possibility for us to drift pass the salvation that Christ gives
 - i. Backsliding does not happen quickly – it happens gradual and before we know it we are slipping past where we need to be.
- c. There are many things that can cause this to happen
 - i. Parable of the Sower (**Matt 13:18-23**)
 - 1. Lack of Understanding (**vs. 19**)
 - 2. Outside Forces – Persecution (**vs. 21**)
 - 3. Inside Forces – Materialism (**vs. 22**)
 - ii. Religious Prejudices
 - 1. **(Matt 13:15)** “For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
 - 2. Derogatory stigma of being a legalist – influences prejudices
 - iii. Compromise and a desire to please men
 - 1. **(Gal 1:10)** “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”
 - iv. Lack of Love

1. (**2 Thess 2:10-12**) “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
- d. All these can cause us to slip because it takes our mind off of Christ – Take Heed lest this Great Salvation Slips by You!

VI. Conclusion

- a. God is Serious About His Commands
 - i. Under the Old Law – given by angels – Sin received punishment – Physical punishments
 - ii. Under the New Law – given by Christ – Sin receives everlasting punishment
- b. Take Heed and Do Not Neglect this Salvation
 - i. (**Heb 4:7**) “To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.”
 - ii. (**2 Cor 6:2**) “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”