

The Most Dangerous Sin?

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If you were asked to name the most dangerous sin, would it be murder, lying, adultery, slander, or perhaps some other? All of these are dangerous, both to the victim and the perpetrator. However, consider an often-overlooked behavior that one might not at first think is so dangerous, but nonetheless is: **Neglect**. The Bible calls attention to its danger:

Neglect not the gift that is in thee... (1 Tim. 4:14a).

How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? (Heb. 2:3a).

To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (Jam. 4:17).

Why neglect is so dangerous:

- **It is deceptive.** It is easy to see the ugliness and danger of drunkenness, fornication, murder, and such like. “Sins of omission” (i.e., **not** visiting the sick, **not** helping the helpless, failing to study God’s Word, et al.) are easily overlooked. There is no reason to believe God distinguishes between neglect and sins requiring action (Mat. 25:45).
- **It requires no effort.** One must **act** to commit murder, robbery, adultery, or even to lie. Neglect, by definition, requires no action or exertion. Failure to believe the Gospel and be baptized (Mark 16:16) or to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38) involves no effort whatsoever.
- **It is at the root of other sins.** Just as weeds will overtake the slothful man’s vineyard because of his neglect (Pro. 24:30–34), so one invites the “weeds” of life to overtake him when he becomes idle. Thus, the Bible instructs, “...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” and “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Eph. 2:10a; Phi. 2:12b).
- **It is contrary to the spirit and purpose of the Gospel.** A *thou-shalt-not* view alone of Christianity is deficient. While character may be judged in part by the things one does **not** do (i.e., drink, gamble, lie, steal, commit fornication, etc.), accurate and full judgment must also assess what one does. Jesus asked, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and **do not** the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). He also declared, “Ye are my friends, if ye **do** the things which I command you” (John 15:14). Jesus will not bless the one who hears only, but also **does not obey** what He Commands (Jam. 1:22–25).
- **It will cause one to be lost.** In Jesus’ parable of the talents, the one-talent man was not lost because of what he **did**, but because of what he **neglected to do** (Mat. 25:14–30). Neglect of salvation will rob one of it (Heb. 2:3).

One is wise who recognizes the great danger of neglect.

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