

# THE DECEPTION OF NEGLECTING GOD

How Spiritual Drift Quietly Diminishes Everything That Matters

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## HEBREWS 2:1 KJV

**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.**

This text does not describe open rebellion. It describes spiritual drift.

Most believers who become distant from God do not consciously decide to abandon Him. They simply stop giving Him earnest attention. Prayer becomes occasional. Worship becomes routine. Scripture becomes neglected. Fellowship becomes optional. The danger of neglect is that it happens quietly.

No one notices a ship drifting one inch at a time. Yet after enough time, that ship can be miles from its intended destination.

The same thing is true spiritually. Satan understands that if he cannot persuade a believer to deny God, he may persuade them to neglect God.

And when God is neglected, everything else in life either begins to deteriorate or loses its true value.

## THE GARDEN THAT SLOWLY DIED

A man named Daniel owned the most beautiful garden in his neighborhood. Every morning before work he watered it. He cultivated the soil. He removed weeds. He nurtured every flower and every plant. People frequently stopped to admire its beauty. One year Daniel's career expanded. New opportunities arrived. Additional responsibilities demanded his attention. He never consciously decided to abandon the garden. He simply became distracted. One missed day became three. Three days became a week. A week became

a month. Soon weeds appeared. Flowers began to wilt. Fruit stopped growing. Months later the garden that once attracted admiration had become almost unrecognizable. When someone asked what happened,

Daniel gave a simple answer: "I never intended for the garden to die. I just neglected it." That is how spiritual decline often occurs.

Most believers do not lose intimacy with God because of dramatic rebellion. They lose intimacy through gradual neglect.

The tragedy is that while many things can survive temporary neglect, fellowship with God cannot flourish without intentional cultivation.

Just as a garden cannot remain beautiful without attention, neither can a soul remain vibrant without devotion.

Neglect is one of Satan's greatest deceptions because it allows decline to happen without resistance.

## **#1 WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO NEGLECT GOD?**

Neglecting God is rarely a dramatic event. More often it is a series of small decisions that gradually weaken intimacy with Him.

### **A. NEGLECTING PRAYER**

Prayer is often the first casualty of spiritual drift. Instead of seeking God daily, we seek Him only when problems arise. Prayer moves from being a relationship to becoming an emergency response system. A believer who once talked with God throughout the day begins going days without meaningful communion.

#### **LUKE 18:1 KJV**

**And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;**

**Quote: "To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." — Martin Luther**

### **B. NEGLECTING GOD'S WORD**

When God's Word loses priority, spiritual nourishment declines.

Many believers consume hours of entertainment, social media, news, and commentary while spending only minutes in Scripture. The soul becomes spiritually malnourished.

**MATTHEW 4:4 KJV**

**But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**

**Quote: "A Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn't." — Charles Spurgeon**

## **C. NEGLECTING WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP**

Worship becomes routine. The presence of God becomes familiar. Church attendance becomes optional. Spiritual community becomes unnecessary. Isolation often accelerates spiritual decline.

**HEBREWS 10:25 KJV**

**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**

## **D. NEGLECTING OBEDIENCE**

One of the most dangerous forms of neglect occurs when believers hear God's voice but fail to respond. Delayed obedience eventually becomes disobedience. The conscience becomes less sensitive with every ignored conviction.

**JAMES 1:22 KJV**

**But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**

## **#2 THE CONSEQUENCES OF NEGLECTING GOD**

When Everything Else Begins Losing Its Value

The greatest deception of spiritual neglect is the belief that we can neglect God while preserving the quality of everything else.

Scripture repeatedly teaches the opposite. When God is removed from the center of life, every other area eventually suffers. The consequences may not appear immediately, but they are inevitable. The human soul was designed around fellowship with God.

When that fellowship is weakened, every other part of life begins to experience the effects.

### **A. WE LOSE SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY**

Consequence: Conviction weakens and discernment becomes cloudy.

What once troubled the conscience begins to feel normal. What once seemed dangerous begins to appear harmless. The believer has not necessarily stopped loving God, but his spiritual senses have become dulled. Every ignored conviction weakens sensitivity to God's voice. The danger is not merely sin. The danger is becoming comfortable with what once grieved the Spirit.

**EPHESIANS 4:18-19 KJV**

**Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.**

**Quote: "Sin will keep you from this Book, and this Book will keep you from sin." — D. L. Moody**

## **B. WE LOSE PEACE**

Consequence: Anxiety increases as intimacy decreases.

The soul was never designed to find rest apart from God. Consequently, when intimacy with God declines, anxiety often increases. Many people attempt to solve spiritual emptiness with material solutions. More money. More success. More recognition. More relationships.

Yet none of these things can replace God's presence. Peace is not found in possessions. Peace is found in communion with God.

### **ISAIAH 26:3 KJV**

**Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.**

### **PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7 KJV**

**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

## **C. WE LOSE PERSPECTIVE**

Consequence: Priorities become distorted.

Without God's perspective, temporary things begin appearing eternal. Comfort becomes more important than calling. Popularity becomes more important than obedience. Success becomes more important than significance. Achievement becomes more important than character.

One of the clearest signs of spiritual drift is when earthly concerns consistently outweigh eternal concerns.

**COLOSSIANS 3:2 KJV**

**Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**

**Quote: "What you are is God's gift to you. What you become is your gift to God." — Warren Wiersbe**

## **D. WE LOSE STRENGTH FOR BATTLE**

Consequence: Temptation becomes stronger because spiritual resistance becomes weaker.

Neglect weakens spiritual endurance. Trials become harder to navigate. Discouragement becomes easier to embrace. Compromise becomes easier to justify.

A disconnected believer eventually discovers how dependent he truly is upon God.

**JOHN 15:5 KJV**

**I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**

Jesus did not say we could do a few things without Him. He said we could do nothing.

**Quote: "The greatest enemy of the life of faith may be not sin, but the good things which are not quite the best." — Oswald Chambers**

But the consequences go even deeper.

## **E. WE LOSE THE JOY OF SALVATION**

Consequence: Duty remains while delight disappears. A believer may continue attending church.

Continue serving. Continue giving. Continue functioning. Yet inwardly the joy has vanished.

The relationship has become mechanical. Duty remains. Passion disappears.

David understood this loss better than most.

### **PSALM 51:12 KJV**

**Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.**

David did not ask God to restore his kingdom. He asked God to restore his joy. Why?

Because he understood that no earthly accomplishment could compensate for spiritual emptiness.

**Quote: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." — John Piper**

Perhaps the most devastating consequence is this.

## **F. WE LOSE THE VALUE OF EVERYTHING ELSE**

Consequence: Life continues, but meaning diminishes.

Success without God eventually feels empty. Wealth without God feels insecure. Relationships without God become burdensome. Achievements without God fail to satisfy.

Many people spend years chasing things they believe will fulfill them only to discover that fulfillment was never found in those things. It was found in God.

#### **Ecclesiastes 2:11 KJV**

**Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun.**

After achieving what most people spend their lives pursuing, Solomon concluded that everything apart from God was vanity.

#### **PSALM 73:25-26 KJV**

**Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."**

The soul was created with a capacity that only God can fill. When He is neglected, everything else eventually loses its proper value.

**Quote: "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." — Augustine**

## **#3 THE PATH TO REDEMPTION**

The good news of the Gospel is that neglect does not have to be permanent. God specializes in restoring what neglect has damaged

### **A. RECOGNIZE THE DRIFT**

Restoration begins with honesty.

The prodigal son could not return home until he first acknowledged how far he had wandered.

**Luke 15:17 KJV**

**And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"**

## **B. REPENT AND RETURN**

God does not require perfection before restoration. He requires repentance. The remedy for drift is return.

**REVELATION 2:4-5 KJV**

**Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works..."**

Christ's prescription is simple:  
Remember. Repent. Return.

## **C. REBUILD THE ALTAR**

Restore prayer. Restore Scripture. Restore worship. Restore fellowship.  
Restore obedience.

Small daily acts of devotion produce profound spiritual transformation over time.

**JEREMIAH 29:13 KJV**

**And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.**

**Quote: "The secret of your future is hidden in your daily routine." — Mike Murdock**

## CONCLUSION

The greatest danger in neglecting God is not that we lose God. God remains who He has always been.

The danger is that we lose the life. The peace. The clarity. The strength. The purpose. The joy. The branch does not suffer because the vine changes. The branch suffers because it disconnects.

The beautiful truth of the Gospel is that every believer who has drifted can return. The door is still open. The altar can still be rebuilt. The fellowship can still be restored.

And what neglect has diminished, the presence of God can revive. Because the greatest blessing God can ever give us is not His gifts. The greatest blessing God can give us is Himself.