



- Up Words # 34

"NEGLECTED"



"Neglected," just the mention of the word conjures up all sorts of ugliness. We might think of an old rundown factory on the edge of town; or a dilapidated house with a weed-filled yard and caved in roof; or a sputtering junky car puffing black smoke. These are not a pretty sight.

Are we guilty of neglect? What about that kid down the street who's single-parent mom struggles to keep up? James 1:27 tells us that "Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." We may do pretty good at that unstained part and might even brag at how holy we are as we walk through this world, but is our religion really pure?

Are we guilty of neglect? Consider I Tim. 5:3. Do we honor widows who are widows indeed? What are we doing for those who have no one caring for them and providing for their needs? Shouldn't we, the church, be committed to assisting them? (I Tim. 5:16).

Are we guilty of neglect? What about that cave-dweller in your neighborhood or workplace? In despair and desperation David prayed, "I cry aloud with my voice to the Lord; I make supplication with my voice to the Lord. I pour out my complaint before Him; I declare my trouble before Him. When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, You knew my path. In the way where I walk They have hidden a trap for me. Look to the right and see; For there is no one who regards me; There is no escape for me; No one cares for my soul." (Psalm 142:1-4). The preface to the psalm indicates David wrote those words while hiding from Saul in a cave. He was crushed and no one cared. Are there some like that around us?

Have we neglected the neglected? Read Jeremiah 22:16. "He pled the cause of the afflicted and needy; Then it was well. Is not that what it means to know Me?" Declares the Lord." Doesn't that indicate that knowing the Lord means pleading the cause of the needy?

"Neglected:" a crying baby with no one there to care or console, a hungry child with a haunting stare; a senior citizen alone and unvisited. Neglect is not pretty. Negligence is not godliness.

Who will you care for today?

Looking Up!

Pastor Chuck Circle