

The Curse of Negligence

By: Homer Hailey

A very dangerous attitude entering into our thinking today, and one affecting society's entire structure, is that of doing just enough to *get by*. People's efforts are too often half-hearted, with no spirit and fervor for the work. Such an attitude is serious enough, and bad enough, in secular affairs, but when it invades the sacred realm of religious life, it becomes disastrous.

Here, one must deal with God, for it is He who is insulted and robbed by half-hearted efforts, and the *get-by* spirit. In Moab's history, the time finally came when, because of her idolatry and corruption, she was ripe for destruction. Jehovah's word came to the prophet Jeremiah pronouncing Moab's doom, and commanding that she be destroyed. It pronounced a curse upon those who should enter the work of destruction negligently, or refuse to act at all. Hear the prophet: "*Cursed be he that doeth the work of Jehovah negligently; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.*" (Jeremiah 48:10). Here, two words, namely "curse" and "negligently," need defining. The word *curse* is defined, "*to invoke evil upon, anathematize, excommunicate, execrate.*" One needn't get over-excited when the pope curses or damns him as he recently did the Russians; but when God pronounces a curse, disregarding it is tragic. *Negligently*: "*apt to omit what ought to be done.*" About the greatest problem facing the church today is the tendency to "*omit what ought to be done.*"

In *Deuteronomy 11:13* God demanded service with "*all your heart.*" Jesus said the greatest command is to love God "*with all your heart*" (*Matthew 22:37-39*). God commanded, "*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.*" (*Ecclesiastes 9:10*) And also that Christians should be "*in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.*" (*Romans 12:11*) But what if someone should not take the Lord seriously in this matter, and go about his work negligently? The Lord declared His nausea in no uncertain terms against the insipid, indifferent, lukewarm attitude; to the church at Laodicea, He said "*I will spew thee out of my mouth.*" (*Revelation 3:16*) That still exactly expresses God's attitude toward such a disposition.

The general attitude of many congregations today, entirely too many, is to do the Lord's work negligently--in worship, in work, and in spiritual and doctrinal warfare. But note more carefully Jehovah's next curse through the prophet, "***And cursed is he that keepeth back his sword from blood.***" Moab must perish, must be destroyed; God commanded it, and whosoever held back, or shrunk from the task, must perish under His anathema. The Lord's people are still His army, although not now engaged in carnal warfare, yet engaged in warfare none the less terrific and deadly. The Christian fights "*against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*" The exhortation to "*contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints*" (*Jude 3*) was not given exclusively to preachers, but to all Christians. No man, preacher or otherwise, can "*contend earnestly for the faith*" and at the same time "*keep back his sword.*" To contend is to wield the sword, to smite "*hip and thigh,*" as did Samson of old.

The Christian's armor is of a spiritual nature, perfectly adapted to spiritual warfare; and as the apostle said, "*mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God.*" (*2 Corinthians 10:4, 5*) But if the sword is to be felt among those whom God has told us to destroy, we cannot do the work negligently, nor keep the sword back *from blood*. Is it true that in the Lord's army, there are too many camp-followers and not enough actual fighters? Xerxes said, "*I wish I had as many soldiers as men;*" maybe that is what the Lord also wishes. Gideon's army lost no strength when, of the original 32,000 men, 22,000 went back; or later when, through lack of diligence, 9,700 more were rejected. Someone has said, "*A few with God are mightier than a multitude without Him.*" Certainly, the

negligent and those who hold back do not have Him, for He has said, "*My righteous one shall live by faith: and if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him.*"

Now, along with all the other *isms*, such as denominationalism, pre-millennialism, straddle-the-fence ism, etc., the Lord's army has to fight, Catholicism looms more formidable than ever before. For a long time, the blood-stained harlot that rules from the seven-hilled city on the Tiber, has been

casting her lustful eyes toward the United States; and it seems that at last, our President is about to embrace her. I am not appointing myself a critic of the President of the United States; neither did God appoint me such, but rather said that I should pray for him. But every student of history knows what his gesture will ultimately mean to this country's religious life if carried to the full maturity of the Pope's desires.

Without speculating on what might be the outcome, for only God knows that, the vital point is that every Christian must tighten his belt a few notches tighter, whet the sword a few degrees sharper, exercise himself to greater ability, and shake off the spirit of doing the Lord's work negligently. Further, he must strike with all his might this monster of iniquity upon every occasion. Who dares hold back his sword when God says "*Strike!*"