

Hello Orange Cove Church Family & Friends of Orange Cove,

Pastor's Weekly Letter: March 27, 2014 – Neglect

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Happy Thursday, March 27, 2014! This past Sabbath was communion. I don't think I've ever been to a communion where I wasn't blessed and re-energized spiritually. Thank you so much to all those who came together to prepare, setup and take down for the communion service.

On the afternoon of May 11, 1996, ValuJet Flight 592 pushed back from gate G2 in Miami after a delay of 1 hour and 4 minutes due to mechanical problems. There were 105 passengers, mainly from Florida and Georgia, on board, as well as a crew of two pilots and three flight attendants, bringing the total number of people on board to 110. At 2:04 pm, the DC-9 took off from runway 9L and began a normal climb. At 2:13:42 pm, Flight 592 disappeared from radar. It rolled onto its side and crashed to the ground nose-first in the Francis S. Taylor Wildlife Management Area in the Everglades, a few miles west of Miami, at a speed in excess of 507 miles per hour (816 km/h). Everyone on board was killed.

What was the bottom-line cause of this horrific catastrophe? Neglect. Yes, neglect. Maintenance workers at SabreTech, a company that serviced and replaced automated oxygen systems in airplanes in the event of decompression, neglected to insert the 19 cent nylon spacer between the hammer and detonation pin on the oxygen canisters they had loaded in the hold of the Flight 592. While taxiing down the runway, Flight 592 hit a bump, which caused one of the hammers to strike a detonation pin. The release of oxygen from the canister causes heat of up to 500 degrees, which set off a chain reaction of oxygen canisters exploding. Combustible materials soon caught on fire, which began burning an airplane tire—the rest is history. See [wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com) for the full story.

What does this story have to do with us? Well, just as the neglect of inserting a 19 cent nylon spacer caused the death the 110 people, so the neglect of seemingly simple decisions in our walk with God can cause our eternal death. Are we relying on our tradition of church attendance, habitually paying tithe and offerings and doing good works to save us, but neglecting to daily submit to the infilling of God's Spirit and yielding our wills to His guidance? Are we neglecting to respond to the Spirit of God's invitation to submit, surrender and not be self-sufficient?

Jesus' warning to the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23:23 should be studied by each of us. We distance ourselves from the scribes and Pharisees, but they had the same sinful natures as we do and consequently, we often do exactly what they did: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone." We often also neglect the seemingly unimportant things.

Note this provocative statement linking neglect to our eternal salvation: “It is not only by resistance but by neglect that the soul is destroyed . . . unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. “The Desire of Ages,” Ellen White, p. 323.

Are we willing to be completely tuned into God’s Spirit, irrespective of what He prompts us to do or where He guides us to go? Or are we neglecting those discrete, subtle prompts? Ephesians 4:30 says, “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” Our first waking thought every day should be to tune-in and listen. There is so much static and noise causing interference between us and God’s Spirit--- the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things. (See Mark 4:19).

Prayer for this week: “Father, clear away the static and noise from my life and lead me to “be still, and know that you are God.” Psalm 46:10. Give me the strength to never neglect the discrete, subtle prompts by Your Spirit.

Sincerely and prayerfully

Pastor André Van Heerden