

The Danger of the Gospel

“How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him?” – Hebrews 2:3 We may think the best thing for unbelievers is to be in church week after week, hearing the gospel again and again. For committed Christians, I think that is absolutely the best place to be. But I don’t think the same is necessarily true for unbelievers. If they are choosing to live in sin and have no intention of responding to the gospel, then their hearts are becoming more hardened as they listen to it yet again. That is the danger of the gospel. It is actually dangerous to be exposed to the gospel and not respond to it. The first time we hear the gospel, we enter into what could be called a spiritual danger zone because we are, from that point on, held accountable for what we know. A similar thing happened to Pharaoh in the Old Testament. He saw miracle after miracle. But remember the Bible says that Pharaoh’s heart grew harder (Exodus 8:15, 19). And then we also read that “the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh” (Exodus 9:12). Some people have a hard time with that, but a better translation of that phrase would be “the LORD strengthened the heart of Pharaoh.” Pharaoh made his choice, and God strengthened him in it. It’s frightening that someone can be exposed to so much truth, yet remain in, and even be strengthened in, unbelief. If a person chooses to believe, then God will strengthen him or her in that commitment. If someone chooses to harden his or her heart, then, in a sense, God will strengthen him or her in that as well. We make our choice, and then we reap the results of it. That is what happened with Pharaoh, that is what happened with Judas, and that is what can happen with us.

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