

The Fire Fighter

by Ray Comfort

The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's will and a determined devotion to do His work, particularly in evangelism and outreach, and warns of the consequences of neglecting this duty.

Scripture: Proverbs 24:11, Acts 20:26, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 13:15

Topics: "Evangelism", "Obedient Worship"

Description

Ray Comfort delivers a powerful sermon drawing a parallel between the neglect of duty by a fire fighter leading to tragic deaths and the neglect of duty by Christians in sharing their faith, emphasizing that true worship is evidenced by obedience to God's will, particularly in seeking the lost. He challenges believers to evaluate their priorities, move beyond passive worship, and actively engage in rescuing those who are perishing, highlighting the urgency of the task at hand before it's too late.

Transcript

Consider this scenario, a certain big-city fire fighter was charged this week with grave neglect of duty. Prosecutors maintained that he abandoned his responsibility and betrayed the people of New York when he failed to release rescue equipment. This resulted in the needless and tragic deaths of a family of five.

Eye-witnesses were sickened when they discovered that the reason the fire fighter remained in the locked emergency vehicle was simply to test a new high tech CD player, which he maintained that he had purchased as a gift for the Fire Chief.

The Fire Chief immediately distanced himself from the defendant, and dishonorably discharged him from the Department. In a prepared statement he said that there were no words to describe such a betrayal of those he was sworn to protect.

The lead prosecuting attorney argued that for more than three minutes after arriving at the scene, the fire fighter wore earphones and listened to a CD while a family of five screamed to be rescued from the sixth floor of a building. Horrified bystanders related that, as flames licked her clothing, a mother cried out in terror and fell to her death while still clutching an infant child in her arms. The distraught onlookers also said that the father held onto two terrified children as he was engulfed by the massive flames. This terrifying drama took place in full view of the fire fighter as he remained seated in the vehicle listening to the CD.

The defense pleaded No Contest, but added that the defendant had gone to great personal sacrifice to purchase the expensive gift for the Chief, and that he hoped that the judge would take that into account when passing sentence.

A Fitting Sentence

Here now are some questions in reference to this case. The first is, What is a fitting punishment for this serious crime? Should he receive a strong reprimand, two years in prison, twenty years, a life sentence, or perhaps capital punishment? Please make a choice.

The second question is, Do you enjoy worshipping God? Most of the modern Church does. All across the country auditoriums are full of hand-raising, God-loving Christians. That's understandable, because when the Holy Spirit dwells within the believer it's not hard to worship our glorious and worthy Creator. It is as natural for the godly to worship the Lord as it is for flowers to open in the warmth of sunlight. The sunshine of His great love opens the sweet-smelling petals of praise. Yet, the "sacrifice of praise" (Hebrews 13:15) isn't so great a sacrifice, in the light of the sacrifice of the cross.

Rather, our love for Him is more evidenced by obedience to do His will, and that doesn't come so naturally. It takes a concerted effort to obey the Great Commission and follow in the footsteps of Jesus to seek the lost. Our professed love and worship of God should evidence a determined devotion to do His will.

When then did you last do His will and share your faith with an unsaved person? When did you last meditate on the fact that all who die in their sins will be cast into the Lake of Fire? In his book, *The Coming Revival* Dr. Bill Bright said that only 2% of the American Church share their faith with others. Most are so locked into worship (with the volume turned high) that they have little or no thought for the fate of the ungodly.

Here now is the point. If you are not seeking to "save [the lost] with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh" (Jude 23), then you are the fire fighter. If you call Jesus "Lord," but refuse to do the things He has commanded you to do, then He is not your "Lord," and He will distance Himself from you on the Day of Judgment, despite your professed sacrifice of praise. When you cry out "Lord, Lord!" He will say, "Depart from me...I never knew you."

What Was Your Judgment?

What sentence did you give the New York fire fighter? Are you honest enough to judge yourself with the same standard? Think of the terrifying fate of that poor family. Think of his dreadful neglect of duty. He was no fire fighter. He was a Judas...a contemptible traitor. Their blood was on his hands.

Now, think of the terrible fate of the lost. They will be cast into a Lake of Fire. Think of your neglect of duty. Is Jesus your Lord? What then will be your defense if you do nothing to reach the lost, on the Day that you stand before His Judgment throne (2 Corinthians 5:10)?

Read these sobering verses of warning from God's Word:

"Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, 'Surely we did not know this,' does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?" Proverbs 24:11-12

"When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand." Ezekiel 3:18

The Apostle Paul said, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27). If we refuse to follow in his steps, if we are like the wicked and slothful servant who knew His Lord's will but didn't do it (see Matthew 25), then we are not free from the blood of those who perish.

Oswald J. Smith said, "Oh my friends we are loaded down with countless church activities, while the real work of the Church, that of evangelizing and winning the lost is almost entirely neglected." We have been gazing to the heavens while sinners are sinking into Hell.

The Highest Calling

Worship is the highest calling of the Christian, and we can see in the Book of Revelation that in the future the Church will one day be consumed in worship before the Throne of the Almighty. But when we look back at the Book of Acts, we don't find that the Church was consumed with worship. Instead we find that they were devoted to reaching the lost, to a point where they willingly gave their lives to preach the gospel.

Devotion is nothing but a surrendered human will to the will of God. Gethsemane was a sweat and blood-stained altar of worship, and I believe that when Jesus whispered "Not My will but Yours be done," it was more pleasing to the Father than the adulation of myriads of angels.

Perhaps the very thought of preaching or witnessing to the lost makes you sweat your own great drops of blood, and your soul may become exceedingly sorrowful to a point of death, but when you determine to be true and faithful to your calling, you are proving the reality of your devotion.

Time is short. Are we going to passively sit during these precious moments of time, and muffle the cries of dying humanity with the sweet sounds of worship? Let's re-evaluate our priorities, take off the earphones, unlock the doors, become equipped, and prove the depth of our love for our God by rescuing those who are about to perish.

Don't put it off any longer. Every moment sinners are falling headlong into the terrors of death and a fiery Hell. Don't neglect your duty. Right now, bow your head in worship and whisper "Not my will but Yours be done," then do what you know you should. Do His will...seek and save that which is lost.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ray-comfort/the-fire-fighter/>

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