

The Neglect of Priorities

A Recognition of Criteria

The Neglect of Priorities and Its Impact on Organizing Our Hierarchy of Love

Certainly, various factors can play a role in changing the course of our lives, but surely the one that does it most quietly is the most dangerous because we lose control of our lives without noticing it. Now the question is, what can be more reckless than negligence itself? Where does negligence come from, and how does it affect our lives? How can the neglect of priorities lead to our downfall, and how can we know we have fallen into negligence?

We usually refer to negligence as anything that diverts our attention from our main goal. Since our most important goal in life as a human being is to reach Absolute Perfection and become similar to Allah, negligence is anything that keeps us away from Allah. These attractions and temptations can be either positive or negative; that is, sometimes positive perfections engage and captivate us, for example, we seek knowledge and scholarly achievements, we want to become diligent scholars and professors, or we involve ourselves so much in serving others that we forget why we have come to this world. Sometimes, worldly attractions and delights so easily distract us that we neglect our true self.

The Impact of the Neglect of Priorities

As mentioned earlier, the framework of priorities and the hierarchy of love is quite clear. Our journey has a clear path and purpose, and there is no other way to fulfill the purpose of our creation. However, our attachment to worldly matters often leads us astray. Have you noticed that when we want to break out of our routines, we often have to repeatedly remind ourselves? It is the same with our true self. Due to our attachment and tendency towards the world, we easily forget our infinite dimension. We forget which aspect of our existence will enter the hereafter, and this results in the neglect of priorities, and by neglecting the supra-rational aspect, we invest in the inanimate, vegetative, and other dimensions of our being.

None of us would want to experience the feeling of being deceived, yet negligence does this for us. It distracts us from our true self and its needs, drawing our attention to our other selves. This process gradually progresses, and little by little, with the neglect of priorities, it disrupts the hierarchy of love from its state of equilibrium. As a result, due to attachment and attention to lower perfections, our true self weakens, and we deviate from the path toward perfection. We may seem successful to others or appear to have attained significant perfections, but in reality, we have strayed from the purpose of our creation. At the time when we suppose everything has gone well, we realize that we have chosen the wrong path, just like a driver who is captivated by the beauties of the road and momentarily gets distracted, so he takes the wrong path. Precisely at the time when he expects to reach his destination, he finds himself kilometers away from it.

Negligence Is Loss

If you have experienced mountaineering or practiced a sensitive profession, you know that the key to achieving our goal is to avoid negligence; in such activities, negligence is equivalent to loss and can lead to our downfall. For example, a moment of negligence during surgery can be fatal for the patient, and negligence on the road can claim multiple lives. This rule applies not only to our material and worldly affairs but also to any other sensitive matter, even spiritual affairs. It means that not only do we need to elevate ourselves to the state of human balance and equilibrium by placing our supra-rational faculty in the forefront, but we must also, through avoiding the neglect of priorities and organizing the hierarchy of love, maintain this balance and prevent our human dimension from falling. The neglect of priorities in different types of love throws us off balance, causing us to fall from our true human state. This imbalance is what we call sin or transgression. Essentially, the neglect of priorities can lead us to a state of sinfulness and disconnect us from our true self.

The extent of damage that negligence inflicts upon us varies depending on what we are dealing with. Typically, the impact of neglecting a minor issue, such as forgetting to stir food while it is cooking, is not the same as the neglect of priorities in health. The effect of the first is short-term and fleeting, while the impact of the latter is long-term and far-reaching. Imagine that this carelessness extends to our life's priorities, not just affecting our happiness and peace in this world, but also impacting our eternal destiny. This neglect can turn us into a bewildered person, chasing illusions of happiness and success, while becoming

increasingly disconnected from the true purpose of our creation and the human dignity God has planned for us.

How Can We Tell If We Have Fallen into Negligence?

Naturally, by understanding the dangerous consequences of negligence, the next step is the recognition of the neglect of priorities. As mentioned above, one of the factors that complicates negligence is that it is subtle and hidden, but fortunately, our insightful Creator has provided criteria and standards for us to recognize negligence. These criteria are as follows:

The first criterion for recognizing negligence is to look into our inclinations. If our inclination towards God, the *Ahl al-Bayt* (PBUT), the Beloved of the supra-rational dimension, and generally anything that is related to God has faded, then we have indeed fallen into negligence. Of course, the point here is that our hearts never remain empty, and if our love for the true Beloved weakens, it is immediately replaced by the beloveds of the lower dimensions of our existence. In other words, the neglect of priorities in love pulls us away from the matters related to Allah and towards the beloveds of the lower dimensions of our existence.

The second criterion for recognizing negligence is to examine the level of our faith. Since faith stands in opposition to negligence, someone with strong faith is not neglectful. Now, how do we recognize the extent of our faith? The indicator of faith is love. When our faith increases, it means we are striving to become like Allah. And the greatest and the most common attribute of Allah is the Most Beneficent. So the criterion for not being neglectful is that day by day, more

beneficence manifests itself within us. The more our faith increases or the less we become neglectful, the more we become similar to Allah and our love and affection for His creations increase.

Getting closer to God increases our inner peace, love, and happiness. On the other hand, the neglect of priorities makes our supra-rational aspect weaker day by day, and our love for Allah, the *Ahl al-Bayt*, and *jihad* in the way of Allah decreases. Negligence changes the arrangement of our hierarchy of love. Not only does it take away our inner peace, but it also distances us from the purpose of our creation and our human perfections.

In this lesson, we defined negligence and the dangers that are followed by the neglect of priorities. We stated that negligence gradually distracts us from our true self and the Beloved of our human dimension, and it diverts our attention to the lower dimensions of our existence. This is when our hierarchy of love has become disorganized, and while we think everything is going well, we are undergoing a decline in our human dimension. Negligence not only affects our worldly life, but it also destroys our hereafter by distancing us from the purpose of creation. However, there are criteria for identifying the neglect of priorities, including consideration of our inclinations, tendencies, and the level of our love and beneficence.

Based on the information presented in this article, to what extent are you immersed in neglect? Has the neglect of priorities impacted the arrangement of your hierarchy of love?