

Dying Alone ... in a Crowd

On June 14, 1999, an unidentified man boarded a New York City subway at rush hour and died in his seat.



In the midst of all the passengers who rode that subway, he simply died, and nobody noticed. Investigators said there was no sign of struggle or foul play; he just died.

His dead body rode the subway for four to five hours while people got on and off the train that runs from the southern tip of Manhattan to the Bronx.

It's hard to imagine somebody dying on a busy subway and nobody noticing for hours, but authorities speculated that "no one noticed him because the train was so crowded, and people were in too much of a hurry." –

Such a description of negligence could define any number of ministries, jobs or situations we may find ourselves in, regardless of how important or noble they may be.

Crowded places and crowded schedules can tragically crowd out compassion and concern. Whether it's in a crowded subway, a crowded office, a crowded health-care facility, a crowded restaurant or a crowded church, we can all easily miss the hurts, the disappointments, or the concerns of those around us.

By taking a few extra minutes each day to more seriously consider the needs of the customers we serve and the people we encounter, we may be able to prevent one of the greatest tragedies of life – negligent oversight of another human being.

The Bible has much to say on the subject, including ...

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body (Hebrews 13:1-3 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter