

LIVING DAY BY DAY.

BOAST NOT THYSELF OF TOMORROW, FOR THOU KNOWEST
NOT WHAT A DAY WILL BRING FORTH. Prov. 27.1.

THE GRAVE AND DESTRUCTION ARE NEVER SATISFIED:
AND THE EYES OF MEN ARE NEVER SATISFIED. Prov. 27.20

WHOSO KEEPETH THE FIG TREE SHALL EAT THE FRUIT
THEREOF, SO HE THAT WAITS ON HIS LORD EATS OF
THE HONOUR. Prov. 27: 18.

Here is a wholesome lesson for us. We are to trust no future, however pleasant; we are to dwell in no past, however honourable. Life consist of a present, given to us day by day; this is our whole wealth; souandered, it cannot be recovered; neglected, it withers as a leaf. Titus, the Roman Emperor. would say ~~in~~ the evening; when he had ommitted his duties or failed in his purposes: " I have lost a day;" yes, that lost day is lost for ever; other days may come, but not that one; the duties of that day may be performed afterwards or by other hands, but still the day is lost, because it passed away empty. The thief which cheats us of our days, and beggers us of our wealth, is the specious thought that to-morrow belongs to us. The illusion is as old as the world but is to-day as fresh and powerful as ever. We have to shake ourselves free of a spell, and awake out of a dream, to see that when to-morrow comes it is already to-day.

We only begin to live in any true and satisfact-ory sense when we have learned to take each day by itself, and to use it as if it were our last, and indeed as if it were our all; dismissing the thought of to-morrow as a mere phantom which for ever evades our grasp. Life is a mosaic, a large work shaping on the wall or in the dome of some vast cathedral which eye hath not yet see; and it can only be effectually wrought if, with minute and concentrated care, the little pieces of coloured glass which we call To-day is duly fixed into its bedding and fitted exactly to its immediate neighbours. ...

The greatness of the mosaic is determined by the intensity of each days work. And that is why each day is of such importance; that is why each day demands all our thought and care: eternity is made up of days, and the present day is all of eternity that we can ever possess.

It is well for us then each morning to take the day fresh from God's hands, and at once to throw our whole soul into it, and to live it with a pure intensity, a sense of solemn and joyful responsibility. ~~For~~ Some might consider living day by day as a contradiction. The contradiction being that most worthy works as the labour of years; an architect lays his plans for a great building which he can hardly hope to see finished in his own lifetime; an author spends days and months and years in the preparation of materials and must depend on the uncertainty future for a time to shape them into a book; a statesman, in proportion as he is wise, avoids what is called a hand-to-mouth policy, and lays his plans with his eye on distant possibilities, well knowing that his immediate actions are liable to misunderstanding, and may prove to be a complete failure unless the opportunity is accorded him of realising his far-reaching schemes. And, in the same way, youth is spent in education which derives all its value from the expected years of manhood, and all the days of a good life are necessary a preparation for that which is to come after: we must study in order that we may teach; we must train ourselves for duties which will come upon us, as we may reasonable suppose, in some distant future. Yet our tomorrow is unknown; we are not to boast ourselves of it; we cannot tell what a day may bring forth, and must therefore live only to bring forth, and must therefore live only in to-day.

Now the solution of this difficulty leads us to one of the profoundest of all spiritual truths. It is this: No life can be worth anything at all apart from the Eternal God, and faith in Him. Life cannot be really lived if it is merely a measure of sliding sand taken from under the feet of years. Our swift days cannot be effectually and wisely used unless we are linked to Him who embraces in Himself the past, the present and the future. Our work, whatever it may be, cannot be rightly done unless we are, and know ourselves to be, in the great Taskmaster's sight. The proper use of each day can only be made if we are confident that our times are in His hands; only in this quiet assurance can we have composure and detachment of spiritual strength enough to give our whole strength to the duty in hand. We must be sure that the master Artist knows the whole mosaic, and is ordering all the parts, before we can surrender ourselves to the task of putting to-day's piece into place. We must have complete faith in the Architect who is designing the whole structure, before we can have our mind stilled from itself to chip our block of stone or to carve our tiny part.

Examine the condition of these restless human hearts all around us without God. They are toiling for to-morrow. Here is one making money, as it is called; he is looking forward to laying aside so many thousands of dollars this year; in a few more years he hopes to realise a round sum which will relieve him from the necessity of toil and of further money-making. At last he reaches his proposed goal. He discovers that he cannot stay there overnight at the desired goal; he is off before morning all the strain and the fret must be faced over again.

But, on the other hand, here is one who boasts himself in God. "Lord, it belongs not to my care." In the language of the spirit, "Whether I die or live; To love and serve Thee is my share, And that Thy grace must give."

The first thing that strikes you in him is his perfect peace. His mind is stayed on God. The future has no terrors for him, nor has its joys. God is all in all to Him, and God is his now. His treasure is in possession, and moth and rust do not corrupt it, nor can thieves break through or steal. - like the words of Job when he became convinced - "The Lord given, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

The Second thing which strikes us in those who have learned to make their ~~best~~ in God. rather than in the morrow is the service which they render to their fellows. This is ~~only~~ not only because they are able to turn their undivided attention to the duty which lies nearest, and to do with all their hearts what their hand finds to do, but the very spirit of serenity in which they live is a constant help and blessing to all who are around them. It may have been given to you to come into contact with such a soul; in his presence your restlessness dies away, it seems as if your burning brow had been touched with a soothing hand; perhaps "with half-open eyes you were treading the borderland dim - twixt vice and virtue" and that quiet spirit seemed like a clear shaft of the dawn revealing where you trod; perhaps you were heartbroken with a great sorrow, and the resfulness and confidence of that strong soul gave you consolation, hope broke into your heart and joy gave you actual and conscious contact with God..

The last feature of this true spiritual life. It has the honour of its own, though it is not an earthly honour; it has a reward, though it is not a material reward. "Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof, and he that waiteth on his master eats of the honour." Think of the Christian life under this simple figure; it is like the careful cultivation of the fruit tree.. Jesus said - he is the vine. Our sole concern is to keep in touch with Him. to sit at His feet to watch for His fruit. to see that no other concern distrubs the quiet relation of perfect

loyalty and devotion to Him. All we have to do is to keep the fig tree. We have no responsibility for the fruit, for no fruit bearing power lies in us. Now when we abide in this concentrated and whole hearted devotion to our master-- when for us to live is Christ,- then honour comes to us unsought, but not unwelcomed. When our hearts have learned to hanker only after God's will, to desire only Christ's victory, they may boast themselves even of to-morrow; for to-morrow holds in its bosom as assurance of blessing and joy.

Now in order to have a mind of perfect peace, - Give comfort to mankind, lift up Christ to God - so He can produce fruits - The Christian must live with positive convictions - ~~One~~ Difference - is two people can be in trouble but the Christian knows that he has a way out. -