

"Only one Day at a Time."

"'Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
Farther I would not see.
"Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
This is enough for me.

"'Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
Farther I would not go,
"Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
This is enough to know.

"'Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
Although it be burdened with care;
"Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
And thou wilt give strength to bear.

For only one day at a time, dear Lord,
Give us strength we pray;
Not for the morrow do we plead,
"Tis only for to-day.

"'Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
To watch, and work, and pray;
"Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
Till we enter the perfect day.

"'Tis only one day at a time, dear Lord';
We'd walk by faith, not sight;
Till out of the darkness, out of the gloom;
We enter the glorious light.
—Kate McLeod.

Lukewarm Christians.

REV. T. Y. CUYLER.

A Christian is one who professes to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. I do not believe that among professed Christians there is any large number of wilful hypocrites who enter the Church of Christ with a lie in their right hands and a deliberate intent to deceive others. But, at the same time, I am certainly believe that there are a vast many within the pale of the church who give no evidence of a genuine conversion.

Some came in through the unwise persuasions of others. It is as dangerous to urge people to join a church as it is to urge people to marry. Both of these great steps in life should be taken from the spontaneous promptings of the heart. Give a man the reasons for making a profession of faith; point out the happy influence of a sincere "stand up for Jesus," and then let him decide for himself.

Some came into the church through a lamentable self-deception. They were the victims of a spurious religious excitement. They were alarmed by pungent preaching or a view of their own sin, and mistook fright for contrition; they afterward fell into the hands of false comforters, and then mistook the reaction of their excited feelings for true conversion. They were indiscreetly announced as "new converts"; they felt committed to a certain course of conduct; and, before time was given them to put their hearts to a severe trial, or to see how their religion would wear, they hurried into the church with the most solemn oaths before God or man upon their consciences. Alas, how soon have such rootless professors withered away! How can such self-deceived souls be anything else than lukewarm—"neither cold nor hot"—neither of the church nor yet honestly within it? From our inmost heart we pity those unhappy persons who are thus chained to a church with which they have no sympathy—professing to love what they regard with utter indifference or else secret disgust. The true course of such is to burn up the stubble of false hope, and seek at once a genuine hope in Christ before it is too late. If it is a kindness to point out the first symptoms of fatal disease on a friend, how much more is it a kindness to shake down a rotten hope of a self-deceived or lukewarm professor. Reader! if you do not believe that your professed piety is a true piety, then lose not an hour in fleeing to Jesus. Do not flee out of the church; but flee to the Saviour. Thousands have been converted within the pale of the church.

A second portion of the lukewarm in every church—perhaps the larger portion—are so from a culpable declension of heart religion. They were once converted but are now downright backsliders from God and from duty. They have lost their first love. Jesus Christ has ceased to be the supreme object of their thoughts and affections. This strikes at once to the vitals. For love to Christ is essential Christianity. It is the marrow of true religion. It is this which links the soul to God; which keeps the passions down and the graces up; which vanquishes temptations; which puts the world under our feet; and which turns duty into a delight. Love to Jesus makes the duldest heart to glow, and quickens a slow tongue to eloquence. Love of Jesus sent Henry Martyn to the sand-plains of Persia, Samuel Mills to the booms of Africa; it made stout old Latimer sing at the burning stake, and it irradiated the seraphic countenance of Payson as he passed through the river of death. It is the very pith of every good man's piety.

When love to Jesus ceases to be the master-affection of the soul, the spiritual decline has commenced, and the sad effects soon strike outward into the life. As the inward fire burns low,

lukewarmness begins. If Christ is not allowed to keep a Christians pure, selfishness will soon steal it. If a Christian is not conformed to Christ, he will very speedily become conformed to the world. His moral sense becomes blunted. He gets used to neglecting his closet; used to shirking his duties; he gets used to sinning! A small excuse is enough to satisfy him. Instead of giving Christ "the casting vote" in every decision, he gives it to selfishness. Instead of growing in grace, he dwindles every day. Having a name to live, he is dying in the root; I have seen such Christians gasping away like a poor animal under the exhausted glass "receiver" of an air-pump.

Put a score of such professors of religion into a prayer-meeting, and it becomes an ice-house. Put a church-full of such professors into a community, and it does as much good as a monster snow-bank in a fence-corner does to fertilize a field. I would not exchange the prayers and the power of a single servant-girl that I have in my church for five hundred of these petrified professors sitting around the communion-table in meaningless mockery of a crucified Master.

O, it is terrible to think how low a Christian's religion may sink, and yet the breath of life be still left in him! It is terrible to think how far a backslider may go who is yet not an open apostate. Terrible is it, too, to contemplate the mischief which these lukewarm professors make in the church and in society. Over such as they, sinners stumble into perdition. Every backslider commonly has one or more clinging to his skirts. In the terse words of the old Liturgy, such professors "do those things which they ought not to do, and leave undone those things which they ought to do; and there is no spiritual health" in them.

What did the Holy Spirit say unto a lukewarm church at Laodicea? "Be zealous, therefore, and repent!" And the best way to repent of sin is to quit it. If sin has "grown into a horrid ulcer, cut it out!" It is better to enter into life maimed and bleeding than to be cast into hell.

The most effectual repentance for neglected duty is to resume that duty. Do not stop, my friend, to mourn outside a bolted closet-door. Open again the place of secret devotion, and, as thou enterest there, bathe with tears the feet of thy deserted Saviour! Rear again thy household altar. Go back to your post of labor. Implore the grieving Holy Spirit to aid you. And do it betimes. The Judge standeth at the door! To-morrow you may be in your shroud, and your soul be summoned to the bar of God.—*Evangelical Messenger.*

Sparks from my Anvil.

BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

Whoever slanders the world, slanders God. It is a grand world, a splendid world—so beautiful, that after the painter has done his best there is an autumnal color that flies his touch, and there is a stag's antler that he cannot reach. Grand old mountains! scarred with battle-gash of tempest, and forehead turbaned with folds of white cloud, and feet slipped in green grass diamonded with dew. Grand old seas! through which God rides in the chariot of his Omnipotence—the phosphorescence of the night dripping from the wheels, the shout of the storm but the halloo of the charioteers. Yet the world will die. The hills will stagger in death and fall into their graves. The pulses of the mountain-brook will cease to throb; the main artery of the river will stop. Over the bright eyes of the stars will come the film of the last hour, and the thunders heave the dying groan of the world.

There are a good many ways of comforting. Your father dies. Your neighbor comes in, and he says: "It is only a natural law that your father should die. The machinery is nearly worn out;" and before he leaves you he makes some other excellent remarks about the coagulation of blood, and the difference between respiratory and nitrogenized food. Your child dies, and your philosophic neighbor comes, and for your soothing tells you that it was impossible the child should live with such a state of mucous membrane! Out with your chemistry and physiology when I have trouble, and give me a plain New Testament! I would rather have an illiterate man from the backwoods who knows Christ talk with me when I am in trouble than the profoundest worldling who does not know him. The Gospel, without telling you anything about mucous membrane or gastric juice or hydrochloric acid, comes and says, "All things together work for good to those who love God," and that if your child is gone, it is only because Jesus has folded it in his arms, and the judgment day will explain things that are

now inexplicable. Oh! let us dig out, this Gospel-well of comfort. Take away the stoicism and fatality with which you have been trying to fill it. Drive up the great herd of your cares and anxieties, and stop their bleating in this cool fountain.

The world comes to the child when it is in the April of life, and sows tares. The world comes along again when the child is in the May of life and sows thistles. Again in the fair June it comes and sows *maïs romica*. The Church meanwhile folds its hands and waits until the April has gone, and May has gone, and June and July have gone, and then at the close of August gets in earnest and says: "Now, now, we have got a bag of good wheat here, and we must sow it in this fresh young soil, and we shall have a glorious harvest." Will it? No, no! It is too late. Everlastingly too late. You should have sowed in April and in May the good seed of the Kingdom.

Take care of your health now, and trust God for the future. Be not guilty of the blasphemy of asking him to take care of you while you sleep with your windows tight down, or eat chicken salad at eleven o'clock at night, or sit down on a cake of ice to cool off. Some of the sickliest people have been the most useful. It was so with Payson, who died deaths daily; and Robert Hall, who was often the subject of intense pain before entering the pulpit. Theodore Frelinghuysen had a great horror of dying till the time came, and then went peacefully. Take care of the present, and let the future look out for itself. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Next to the evil of living beyond one's means is that of spending all one's income. There are multitudes who are sailing so near shore that a slight wind in the wrong direction founders them. They get on well while the times are usual and the wages promptly paid; but a panic or a short period of sickness, and they drop helpless. Many a father has gone with his family in a fine carriage drawn by a spanking team till he came up to his grave; then he lay down, and his children have got out of the carriage, and not only been compelled to walk, but to go barefoot. Against parsimony and niggardliness I proclaim war; but with the same sentence I condemn those who make a grand splash while they live, leaving their families in destitution when they die.

Some men were born backward, and have been going that way ever since. Opposition to everything has become chronic. The only way they feel comfortable is when harnessed with the face toward the whiffletree and their back to the end of the shafts. They may set down their names in the hotel register as living in Boston, Chicago, Savannah or Brooklyn, but they really have been spending all their lives on the plain O-n-o. There let them be buried with their face toward the west, for in that way they will lie more comfortably, as other people are buried with their face to the east. Do not impose upon them by putting them in the majority. O no!—*New York Observer.*

Your Covenant, Christians.

That was a happy day, believer, when you gave your heart to God in an everlasting covenant. Having been brought to some sense of his goodness and of your own selfishness, with patience and trust, you submitted to God without reserve. He received you and gave you peace. That was also a happy day when you joined the church, pledging yourself to obedience and holiness, to seek the highest welfare of your fellow-Christians, to love and help them, to unite with them in worship, to seek with them to extend the Gospel to the impenitent here and everywhere, and to exemplify true religion in heart and life. Such a body of believers is a spiritual temple in the Lord, composed of living stones, with Christ the foundation and all-sufficient helper. Every such believer is a child of God; and every such church is part of the instrumentality which he has chosen to convert men and save the world.

Are such the Christians of the present day, and such the Christian churches? Thanks be to God that there is a goodly number of such, and has been from the first, even in the darkest periods. The apostolic and primitive churches were eminently so, and thus the mass of the civilized world soon became Christians. Then errors came in, divisions, heresies, envy, worldliness, and unbelief. There was little progress and much backsliding. Whole communities and nations relapsed into superstition, bigotry and sin. But God was not discouraged; he did not forsake the dark ages, but worked with the faithful and preserved a church and people. The great

principles are ever the same. God is true to the covenant, and will own and save every one who conforms to it and continued faithful to the end. The true Church of God, composed of his faithful followers, is blessed abundantly and made a blessing to the world. But he cannot fellowship backsliders; he cannot be in harmony with churches professedly Christian, yet dishonoring their professions and reproaching God.

Who is on the Lord's side? Not those who acknowledge him with their lips, but in their works deny him. Not those who neglect his precepts, violate their covenant obligations, plunge into frivolity and sensuality. They become obstacles in the way, are no longer on his side, but against him. They must repent and do their first works, or perish. Those only are on the Lord's side who stand firmly by the covenant they had made with him and with his people. They love it, they conform to it in all its pledges and conditions, and their chief regret is that they can do no more in the struggle with temptation in all its forms. Christians, on this great question, how do you stand to-day? How is it with your own experience? Do you stand true to the covenant you made with God, when you gave your heart to him, and are enjoying its rich fruition? How are you observing your covenant obligations in the church? Do you love and cherish one another, giving no place to gossip, suspicion, fault-finding, ambition, self-seeking, and self-perfection? Are you prompt in bearing burdens, in self-denials, and in uniting in every practicable measure to strengthen the church and extend its blessings to "the regions beyond"? When unable to comply literally, are you careful to have the "willing mind"?

The monthly covenant meeting is one of the most precious and useful in the church. It is a good time to review our pledges, and commit ourselves anew to keeping them. Let no one neglect this important means of grace. We should examine ourselves, not only on this occasion, but frequently, to see if we are making progress in the Divine life of "faith, hope and charity."—*Morning Star.*

Silent Forces.

The late Dr. Alexander Clark thus beautifully illustrates the efficacy of silent forces:—
Workmen in stone quarries sometimes find a very hard kind of rock. They pick little grooves for the iron wedges into the flinty rocks. And yet, once in a while, they fail to divide the solid mass. The iron wedges and sledges prove useless, and the workmen wonder at the stubborn rock.

There is another way. The iron wedges are removed from the narrow grooves. Then little wooden wedges of a very hard fibre are selected. Now you begin to shake your heads and think, "Well, if iron wedges will not do, how is it possible for wooden wedges to be used successfully?" Just wait until we explain. The sharp, well-made wooden wedges are first put into water. They are then inserted in the grooves tightly while wet, and water is kept in the grooves, and no sledge is needed to drive them. They would break under the severe blows of the hammer. But the workmen just let the wedges alone. They will do what the iron failed to do. How so? The damp wood swells. The particles must have room enough to enlarge; and the granite heart of the rock cannot resist this silent influence. In a little while the solid rock parts from top to bottom, and the workman's will is accomplished.

It is so, often, in other things; what noise and visible effort fail to do, some quiet power when applied, will surely achieve. Teachers may remember this fact in mechanics, and manage some stubborn natures by the application of the silent forces. The iron and sledge hammers often fail, but tears, prayers and a patient example under God never fail.

Don't Meddle with God's Plans.

Many men wreck their lives by determinedly carrying out their plans without reference to the plans of God. In an army, every part, every brigade and regiment, must wait the commander's orders. If any battalion moves independently, though ever so heroically, it not only confuses the whole plan of battle, but brings disaster to itself as well, in the end. So each individual must always wait for God's command to move. Keep your eye on the pillar of cloud and fire that leads. Rest when the pillar rests, move when it moves. Never lag behind, but be sure you never run ahead. You may make the clock strike before the hour by putting your hands to it, but it will stand wrong. You can hurry the unfolding of God's providence, but you will mar the divine plan unless you wait for him.

You can tear the rose-bud open before the time it would naturally open, but you destroy the beauty of the rose. So we spoil many a gift or a blessing which God is preparing for us, by our own eager haste. He would weave all our lives into patterns of loveliness. He has a perfect plan for each. It is only when we refuse to work according to his plan that we mar the web. Stop meddling with the threads of your life as they come from the Lord's hands. Every time you interfere you make a flaw. Keep your hands off, and let God weave as he pleases.

RANDOM READINGS.

Justifying faith is simple faith in Christ for salvation and all that it implies.

Having by the golden gift of God this glorious lot of living once for all, let us endeavor to live nobly.

Gravitation in the moral universe is upward. You may delay it, but you cannot prevent it having its way.

As the principle of love is the main principle in the heart of the real Christian so the labor of love is the main business of the Christian life.—*Jonathan Edwards.*

Employment which Galen calls "nature's physician," is so essential to human happiness that indolence is justly considered the mother of misery.—*Robert Barton.*

It has been forcibly said that "God hears the heart without words, but never hears the words without the heart." Very true. It is not the tongue but the heart that prays.

The thought that our friends are praying for us is strengthening and comforting. But more precious still is the thought that our ascended and exalted Lord is interceding for us.

I will answer for it, the longer you read the Bible the more you will like it; it will grow sweeter and sweeter, and the more you get into the spirit of it, the more you will get into the spirit of Christ.—*Romaine.*

Reflections upon the blessings we enjoy, or that are within our reach, ought to awaken in us heart-felt thanksgiving to God, the kind and loving bestower of all good. Let us not forget him in the festivities of the day.

Let a man breathe out but one hour of the charity of God, and feel but one true emotion of the reconciled heart, and then he knows forever what is meant by immortality, and he can understand the reality of his own.—*Robertson.*

The love of Christ is like the blue sky, into which you may see clearly, but the real vastness of which you cannot measure. It is like the sea, into whose bosom you can look a little way, but the depths are unfathomable.—*McCheyne.*

Kind words produce their own image in men's souls, and a beautiful image it is. They soothe and quiet and comfort the hearer.

Courage, Mother!

Bear up, brave heart! Let peace get hold of thy heart-strings. Your boy is not yet saved, but give him over to God as guardia for you: then keep on praying. It took twenty-four years of prayer to get me to the Cross, but I got there. Mother prayed me, the prodigal, in. I met a young man in Atlanta whose mother had been praying for him for thirty years—since the day of his birth. She was put in her coffin without seeing her son saved; but one day, from the other side, she looked down on a scene that broke my heart for joy. He took my hand, held tight while he prayed for forgiveness and salvation, then said: "Mr. Yattman, I'll meet my mother in heaven."

Don't get discouraged, mother. He whom you love may get away from you, but he cannot get away from your prayers or your God.

Just the other day another boy, for whom a mother has been praying for nineteen years, yielded to the Spirit's call. I asked him why he did it then. Said he: "I can't stand it to fight against mother's prayers."

Don't get your eye on evangelists, pastors, meetings, or anything else to reach him. Look straight to Jesus. He is the "mighty to save."—*New York Observer.*

A WISE COUPLE.—A man and his wife were, on a certain occasion, enlisted in a dispute, which of them had committed the fault in some trifling occurrence. At length the husband, perceiving that it might amount to something unpleasant, kindly and sweetly remarked, "Well, my dear, I had as lief it would be I as you that committed the fault, for we have but one interest, and but one character." "Yes, my dear," replied the wife, "and I would as lief it would be myself as you." Of course the quarrel was healed in a moment.

1888 UNIVERSITY 1888

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