

"It's Not My Way."

"It's not my way,"
How often is this heard,
"It's not my way, to speak the kindly word,"
I feel enough, but 'tis not well to speak,
To tell my loving out it seems so weak."

"It's not my way,"
How often hearts have broken
Because the loving word has been
unspoken;
Because the smile we looked for was a
frown
The hand that should uplift, but held us
down.

"It's not my way,"
To speak the word that craving love
requires,
To voice approval, foster vain desires,
Hearts often faint and fall out by the
way,
Because to speak is not your way.

"It's not my way,"
Ah well, when Death shall come,
And touch the best-loved lips and make
them dumb
Sad will it be for you, if grim Regret
And stern Remorse upon your heart
strings set

Their fingers firm;
Because it is their way, to torture and to
wring,
Then you'll remember every little thing,
The smile you did not give, the word
unspoken
Which might have gilded life and kept
a heart unbroken.

Aye, then you will remember;
And in blood sweat and agony will say,
"Would it had been my way
To love, approve, and tell it out so meek
For it was you that made my life
complete."

The Demon of Discouragement.

BY REV. THEODORE CUYLER, D. D.

A hinge is a very small part of a door, yet it is a very important part; or on it turns the question whether the door be opened or shut. So the little word "but" is a very important hinge in that Bible text which tells us that "David was greatly distressed, but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." On the hinge of that word turns a door of hope to God's people in the darkest hour of trouble. David was not the only good man who has been distressed; his experience has been a universal one. Our Heavenly Father has never promised to the best man or woman that their voyage of life shall be over smooth seas without a "cupful" of head winds. He so orders it that the precious things shall be costly things, and that the noblest life shall be one of conflicts, oppositions, trials, and often of severe discipline.

Observe that there is a mighty difference between being distressed and being discouraged. The King of Israel had good reason to be distressed; for a band of marauding Amalekites had attacked and burned down his town of Ziklag, and had carried off his wife Abigail as a captive. He goes right to God and asks what he shall do; and the prompt answer is to "pursue them." Whereupon he musters his gallant six hundred, pushes after the enemy and routs them, and recovers his wife and all his plundered goods. Disaster did not discourage him; it drove him to God. Such experiences in the Psalmist's life taught him to ring out the words of good cheer, "Why are thou cast down, O my soul? hope thou in God! Trust in the Lord, and be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart."

Just in proportion as any life is a thoroughly conscientious as Christian life must it encounter enemies without and within. There is no lack of "Amalekites" in any track we may take, and some of them start up in our own hearts. Conversion does not end the battle with besetting sins; it rather intensifies the conflict. Paul might have had a more quiet time if he had let the old Adam have his way; instead of that he exclaims, "So fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep my body under and bring it into subjection." One of the best men I ever knew has a constant fight with a naturally unruly temper, and there is more than one good woman who has hard work to restrain an unruly tongue. There is enough animal lust in the constitution of some Christians to keep them watching as travelers in Africa watch for tigers in the jungles. Pride is the besetting sin of Brother A—, and love of popularity is the snare of Brother B—, and a pinching covetousness makes it no easy thing for Brother C—to open his purse wide when the collection basket comes along. The Master's constant command is, "I lay unto you all, watch!" The Christian who gives up fighting his Amalekites, and tries to find peace by surrendering to them, is disgraced in the sight of God; such discouragement means death to all healthy and happy religion.

Another command of our Lord is, "Keep thy heart with all diligence." Heart-keeping is very much like house-keeping. There must be a continual

sweeping out of dirt and clearing out of rubbish—a daily washing of dishes and a perpetual battle with all sorts of vermin. If heart cleaning could be done up once for all, then the Christian might discharge all his graces, and have an easy time of it. And just because the assaults of subtle temptations are so constant, and the uprisings of sinful passions are so frequent, and the task of keeping the inward man what it ought to be is so difficult many a one who begins a religious life gets discouraged, and makes a wretched failure. The question with every Christian is, Shall these accursed Amalekites of temptation burn up all my spiritual possessions, and overturn my soul? Shall outward assaults or inward weaknesses drive me to discouragement, and disgrace me before my Master and before the world? Or shall they drive me to Jesus Christ, who will give me the victory?

Another frequent temptation to discouragement arises from the apparent failure of our best efforts and undertakings. How often we ministers prepare a Gospel message, and season the sermon with prayer, and we persuade ourselves that such truths must convert some sinners, and must conquer some hard hearts! No echo seems to follow our strokes; no response is made to our appeals; sermons seem to rebound like shot flung against a wall of adamant. Satan whispers in our ears the taunt, "Where is thy God? The demon of discouragement lays his icy paw on us, and sneers in our faces, "Didn't I tell you so?" These are some of the hardest trials that a faithful minister or devoted Sunday-school teacher has to face. Under such circumstances discouragement is just what a bottle of brandy is to an inebriate, or what a roulette table is to a gambler—it is an assailing sin. When thus assaulted, we must encourage ourselves in God as David did; we must remember that it was his message we were uttering, and his children we were preaching to, and for his honor and glory. We were using his weapons, and he is responsible for results. All that you and I are responsible for is doing our whole duty. Ours is the seeding, and God alone beholds the end of what is sown. How do we know how much good we accomplish, when we do any good thing, or utter any timely truth in love? Our measuring lines do not reach into distant years—much less into the other world. Eternity may have many surprises for us. Wait and see.

One of the worst evils wrought by the sin of discouragement is that we are tempted to stop when we are just on the eve of realized success, and almost in sight of the richest blessings. Up near the summit of Mount Washington, I once saw a cairn of stones to mark the spot where a poor girl perished from exposure and heart failure on a cold night. Her father and she had rashly attempted to ascend the mountain without a guide (it was many years ago), and they had become lost, and had at last down bewildered when the chilling darkness of the autumnal night came on. The next morning the distracted father discovered that a very short distance more would have brought him in sight of the lights from the windows of the "Tip-top" cabin! Here is a bit of a parable to illustrate how those who are doing not rash things but wise things, may be tempted to lose heart, and to relax their efforts when they were almost in sight of success. During my early ministry in a certain difficult field I became not only distressed but discouraged, and began to think of fleeing away to Tarshish like wilful Jonah. The Lord most mercifully headed me off by a wonderful outpouring of His Spirit on that little church. The precious revival taught me many lessons; one was that God puts dark hours before daydawn to test faith; another was that hard fields are the very ones that ought not to be abandoned.

When George Muller made his first appeal to a public meeting in Bristol for money to start an Orphan House, he waited three or four days, and only one shilling was given him, and that by a poor missionary. He laid hold on God with prayer and within a fortnight money and goods poured in. Grand old Adoniram Judson—prince of American missionaries—preached in Burmah for six years without any converts; then came a great harvest. The forty-second Psalm was written as a weapon to kill the demon of discouragement. In these days, when the Amalekites of skepticism are abroad, and worldliness abounds more than conversions, all preachers and godly people may well imitate David, and "encourage themselves in the Lord God." David's distress sent him straight to God, and God sent him straight after the enemy. A majority of all the failures in this world come from the want of courage—in the next world it will be found that the same sin has robbed many souls of

their salvation and many Christians of their crowns. If these plain words shall help to cast out the demon of discouragement from any heart, they will have served their purpose.—North and West.

God Calling Men.

In the Bible we find an interesting account of the distinct and definite call which certain men received from God. Abraham was called to separate himself from his kindred and go forth to found a new nation. Moses was called to go down into Egypt and lead the children of Israel out of bondage. Samuel and Isaiah and Jeremiah were called to be prophets, and Saul of Tarsus was called to go far hence to the Gentiles and proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

The call of God was not limited to these ancient leaders. Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Charles Spurgeon were called of God as distinctly as were Moses and Samuel. It is generally conceded among Christians that God calls men to preach the Gospel; but does He really call men to engage in any other work? Why not? Was not Charles Wesley called to sing as certainly as John Wesley was called to preach? Is it not reasonable to suppose that God calls men to be authors, teachers, reformers, and even soldiers? The Almighty called Gideon to fight as distinctly and imperatively as He called Jeremiah to preach.

This doctrine must not be trifled with. We must step carefully when we tread on this ground, lest we err. Believing that the Lord speaks to men with authority in this day, some have abused the doctrine and claimed that they hear the voice of God in reference to every work. There are men among us who boldly profess to do all things, great and small, religious and secular, under explicit, divine direction. It will be found upon careful examination that these persons are for the most part guided, not by divine inspiration, but by their own selfish whims and desires. God does not communicate to men His will concerning each particular act to be performed. He gives us general principles from which we must discover our duty in particular cases. The abuse of a great truth results in fatal fanaticism.

Nevertheless, God is evermore calling men into the ministry and into other important missions. He produces in the mind by His Spirit a conviction of duty more or less clear and strong. He raises up men for special emergencies, and endows them with qualities of mind and heart which serve to qualify them for the work required. He opens the way before them, and by providential interposition leads them in the field where they are needed. He helps them to perform the task assigned them. Samuel F. B. Morse, who labored long upon that great invention which has made his name illustrious, believed that God gave him light and aided him in the accomplishment of his work. Did not the Lord raise him up for that mission, and call him to that work?

His call is not limited to good men. He can speak to those who know Him not. To maintain that Jehovah uttered His voice to Abraham and Moses and Paul, who knew Him, but was altogether silent to Socrates and Cicero, who knew Him not, is to hold a narrow view of His character and operations among the children of men. Pagan philosophers did not hear His voice so distinctly and clearly as Hebrew prophets and Christian apostles, but they did hear it indistinctly. He left no Himself without witnesses.

He speaks to sinners. Men who fight against Him are not left without a call. What mean those strange convictions of sin and righteousness and judgment which steal upon the heart of the sinner when he hears the Scriptures read or expounded, when he passes through the valley of affliction, when he witnesses the life and character of some Christian neighbor, and sometimes even when in the midst of revelry and sin? What mean those strange aspirations after a better and nobler life, which rise unbidden in his soul from day to day? It is the voice of God.

If men should hear the call of God and obey, what a mighty change would take place? As the eye traces these lines the voice of the Lord is echoing in the heart. It may be a call to a new life. It may be a call to the ministry. It may be a call to some needed reform movement. Such a call was heard by Howard, by Florence Nightingale, by Clara Barton. They obeyed the voice, and now hear the same voice saying, "Well done!" It is not for all to do great things and win a place in history. But He that calleth is mindful of each one of us. He that raised up Moses and called him, raised up thee also, and calls thee. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh."—Chris. Advocate.

Troubled Pastors.

We know not a few pastors who are troubled about the lack of spirituality among their churches. Some are despondent and turn weary eyes to green-seeming fields beyond. Others are disposed to be fretful, sleeping poorly, having a tinge of reproach in conversation and sermon, hinting that things in general are going to pieces. Others are planning extra meetings, seeking to secure this famous man or that great awakener.

Perhaps every live pastor, especially every young pastor, goes through all of these and many other such experiences. The sad thing is that some keep on in this way without end. But even that is far better than to drop into an unfeeling, unthinking routine of work, expecting that the relation of pastor and people, like a clock will of course run down in a year or two or more, and hoping then to secure another winding up somewhere else.

Because of unattained ideals for their churches, ideals which seem not to be on the way to becoming attained, not a few pastors are actually suffering. Into a sympathetic ear they will sometimes pour out their sorrow. To such we have a word to say. No outside man can relieve the situation. There is little hope in sending for such men and it hardly pays to run away to be with them in their movements. To seek another pastorate on this account would be to do what a soldier would be shot for doing. The consciousness of the need of a congregation, the suffering caused by the congregation's lapse into worldliness, are sure commissions from heaven to a pastor to overcome it all in Christ's power. His suffering for his wayward flock indicates that God is counting him his Moses to lead them into better ways. With God that can be done with any congregation. But let no one think that a new lot of extra sermons will bring it about. Extra sermons will come, there is no doubt of that, but the movement for a new condition of things will not start with sermons. Moses spent years learning and struggling with little avail until he stood before the burning bush. We say it in love, but we say it, the restless, change-deering, troubled disheartened pastor, needs a burning bush in his study. That will correct everything. All problems will be solved by it. No need then of great evangelists. No disposition will come to fret or run away. The hopeless pastorate, wherever it is, will seem to be the very place where God wants his perfected kingdom to begin. And joy, full of peace, will fill the being of the endued pastor and cause him to courageously face the work he then will feel angels would be glad to have, but which he would not surrender for heaven itself.—Baptist Argus.

The Unpardonable Sin.

Our Saviour has warned us against a sin that shall never be forgiven. Men call it "the unpardonable sin," and such it is. It is not unpardonable, however, because of any unwillingness on God's part to pardon it, nor yet because of any lack of amplitude in the divine mercy, but rather because it so hardens the heart that no moral influences will ever awaken in it the sensibility necessary to the production of repentance. This unpardonable sin is not some enormous transgression which rises out of one's past like a mountain above the mists; but it is rather a state of fixed or permanent evil character reached as the culmination of a series of deliberate resistances against the Holy Spirit in his solicitations of the soul to reconciliation with God. In other words, the unpardonable sin is a deliberate, persistent, and final refusal of the pardon God has provided for all men in Christ. Every refusal of proffered mercy, every resistance of the Holy Spirit's drawing, every turning away from gospel light and grace, is a step tending to the formation of a changeless evil character—an approach to that invisible line of destiny the crossing of which, though unattended by any particular sense of horror, fixes the doom of the soul and consigns it to the blackness of darkness forever.

There is a time, we know not when, a point, we know not where, that marks the destiny of men for glory or despair.
—The Free Methodist.

Try Personal Work.

The duty of winning souls rests upon every disciple of Him who came to seek and save the lost. The success and the joy that come with it will be according to our faith and effort. In all our congregations, Sabbath after Sabbath, are souls unsaved. For years they have been listening to the gospel faithfully preached. They are a good, thoughtful, moral class of people, more or less interested in the work and success of church, but

they are unconverted. Some of them, perhaps, have been tarrying at the door of the kingdom; for some reason or other they hesitate to enter and become open disciples of Christ. What can we do for them? Try personal work. This has won in hundreds of cases where other means have failed. But before undertaking such work be sure your life is consistent before them, that what you say will have an influence. Then, with the divine energy impelling within, at a fitting season, approach them definitely, and deal with them honestly, earnestly, lovingly, on the question of personal salvation. Try it.—California Advocate.

Something Better than Endless Life.

Eternal life is something more than endless life. A life after death, however prolonged, would be worth no more than a tale of years equally numerous in this world, unless it brought us into truer and closer relations with God. It would be to us not a joy, but a weariness, to look forward to. It is the prospect of living more truly to God and with God that makes the hereafter a satisfying prospect. It is the sense of having something within us, which this life never has given scope to, but which will come to fruition in the sunshine of God's presence, that makes the ground of our hope in this direction. Endless life without God would be a dreadful prospect. Endless life, which involves a sharing of the life of the eternal One, is the Christian's hope. And he has the earnest and foretaste of it already in this life when he comes into right relations with God in Jesus Christ. "He that hath the Son hath the life" which is eternal. He has a drop. He looks forward to the ocean.—S. S. Times.

Repeating Jesus.

There is taking larger, fuller possession of the Christian Church, it seems to us, this thought: that if we are properly to claim the name of Christian, if we are to count ourselves Christ's men, we must make it our one absorbing aim to do, not precisely the very things which He did when here on earth—for His closer disciples did not do that, and no two persons, however similar in their circumstances or temperaments, were ever meant to be exactly alike or to do exactly the same things—but the things, so far as we can ascertain them, which He would do now if He were here in our place. We must try to repeat Jesus for the benefit of the present generation, to repeat Him with such modifications and adaptations as our day demands and as our different callings make necessary. We are "to walk even as He walked," copying His example, following His steps, and being, in the words of St. Paul, imitators of God, as beloved children."—Zion's Herald.

Oh, Bridget! I told you to notice when the apples boiled over! Sure I did, mum. It was a quarter past eleven when they boiled over.

Difference of Opinion regarding the popular internal and external remedy, Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil—do not, so far as known, exist. The testimony is positive and concurrent that the article relieves physical pain, cures lameness, checks a cough, is an excellent remedy for pains and rheumatic complaints, and it has no nauseating or other unpleasant effect when taken internally.

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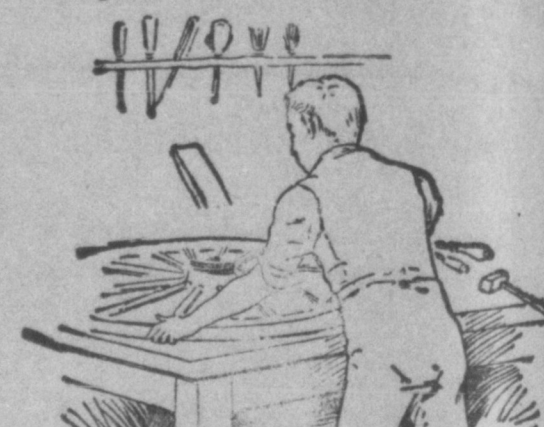
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