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A WORD IN SEASON.

(REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER, D.D.)

"A word in due season, how good is it?" The wise man tells us that it is like apples of gold in a basket of silver. Eternity only can disclose all the good that has been done by a word or two uttered at the right time, and often, too, by the direct suggestion of the Holy Spirit.

A sentence or two spoken to me in a little village prayer-meeting decided me to enter the Gospel ministry, when I was strongly inclined to choose the legal profession. Those few words turned the scale. But perhaps behind it all a beloved mother's prayers were moving the mysterious hand that touched the poised balance, and made souls outweigh silver and eternity outweigh time. From that early experience I learned the value of a word in season; and there were several cases of hopeful conversion which could be traced directly to a sentence or two spoken to certain persons just when their hearts were open to a good impression. Many of my readers will recall the famous tract written by the late Rev. Thomas S. Maloom, in which he tells us that his conversion was due (under God) to the remark of his college professor: "Make one honest effort for the salvation of your soul!"

A great deal depends upon how such words in season are spoken, and by whom. When they come from noisy, self-seeking people, and are uttered impertinently, or in a perfunctory way, they may do little good, and perhaps some harm. But when they are spoken kindly, and out of a full heart, they may become a source of infinite

blessing. "He that is wise winneth souls." That is the right reading of an often misquoted passage; and the Revised Version gives it accurately.

Fellow-Christians, you certainly have some influence over somebody. If not, then your religion must be down to zero. Have you never spoken even one word to any impenitent friend about the most momentous of all subjects? Then I fear that if you get to heaven you will not find any one there whom you have guided or have even helped thitherward. Your crown will be rather "starless"; perhaps there will be no crown for thee at all. For every idle word we must give account in the day of judgment; but the "word in season," spoken in love, may find an echo up there in some saved sinner's song of rejoicing.

Published by Authority of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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EDITOR: REV. E. SCOTT.
Office, Y.M.C.A. Building, Montreal.