

or recreation, and keep to them as much as Providence permits. Yet when any higher duty, or providential obstacle alters your arrangements, receive this in a cheerful spirit, as intended for your good in some other way.

Endeavor to do things at the *best time*. A little attention will show you the advantage of this. For example, as I have said before, the morning hours are those when the mind is most clear and active. Give the first and best to God, to prayer and reading of his word; then take such employments as require most attention. Let the times when you are most apt to be tired and dull be given to cheerful family intercourse, needlework, or reading of a lighter kind. Hannah More, that example of useful exertion, suffered much from headaches and other illnesses, and says that in the days when she was fit for nothing else, she could at least look over her papers and *dot the i's*. I was much impressed by this little fact in reading her life, and by the lesson it conveyed. To attempt any special physical or mental effort when illness or fatigue makes us unfit for it, is only to lose our time, and depress our spirits by failure.

Give your real *attention* to whatever you are doing. We have scriptural authority for this: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord." You must often have remarked how quickly one person will do the same thing compared with another, and perhaps you may have sometimes said with a sigh, "Oh, if I could but do that as she does!" No doubt there are natural differences of ability, but much is owing to bad habits and want of energy and perseverance in early life. Guard against dawdling hands and a dreaming head; give your mind and heart to the duty of the time, whatever it may be, and your progress will soon be cheering and satisfactory.

Avoid hurry and bustle. While anxious not to waste time, *take* what is required to do everything you undertake quietly and well. There is no more true proverb than that which says, "More haste worse speed." When you have finished any employment, put things quietly away into their proper places before you go to another, and you will avoid much vexatious loss of time and temper in seeking them afterwards. Ask the blessing and help of the Lord upon every duty. This of itself will promote composure as well as energy.

Have respect to the time of others. Be punctual, be considerate, in regard to this. I have often had my patience greatly tried by the manner in which those who seemed not to value time for themselves were robbing me of mine, either by not keeping appointments, or by prolonging needlessly their visits. When things of this kind occur, consider it as part of your daily discipline, and a lesson of patience, but never be the offending party.

"We are like little children strayed from home; and God is now fetching us home; but we are ready to turn into any house, stay and play with everything in our way, and sit down on every green bank, and much ado there is to get us home."—*Baxter*.