

## Procrastination.

Acts 24: 25; Luke 9: 57-62.

By J. M. SHERWOOD, D. D.

**I**F unbelief has slain its thousands, procrastination has its ten thousands. Where one sinner is frightened into religion, a hundred are deceived to ruin by the Syren's voice crying "To-morrow." The Devil cares not how moral a man is, nor how anxious he is about his soul, so long as he is disposed to wait on a future opportunity. Procrastination is both "the thief of time" and the great harvest-gatherer of lost souls. Indeed there is little hope for a sinner who counts on to-morrow! A few statements will make this clear.

1. *To-morrow has no place in the economy of salvation.* From first to last, with God and His offered mercy, it is *now, to-day!* There is not one promise in the Bible, of mercy and forgiveness to the sinner, if he repents next year, to-morrow, or the next opportunity; God's mercy, God's offer of pardon, is limited to the now, to the present instant. He nowhere binds himself to save any sinner to-morrow, at some future time, *even if he should repent.* I do not say that He will not; but I do say that it is sheer presumption on the delaying sinner's part to assume that He will. God's promises are all limited to the present moment and opportunity.

2. *To-day is the most favourable season any sinner will ever have to seek God in the way of repentance.* A "convenient season" to repent of sin and return to God will never come to any sinner—it has never come to a single child of the apostacy. Repentance is a bitter cup to all. The natural man revolts at the demand to give up all for Christ, to live a life of self-denial, to love what he has always hated, and hate what he has always loved. He will *never* find it easy, convenient to do this. Come to him when it will—if it ever comes—it will be a death, a crucifixion, a going counter to all the strong currents of human nature. And if you have not resolution, strength, for this *to-day*, will you not, by the inexorable laws of natural and moral life, have less inclination and moral strength for the difficult and distasteful service *to-morrow?*

3. *The law of habit comes in here as a tremendous factor.* It cost you a struggle—perhaps a long and fierce struggle—to resist conviction and put off repentance, the *first* time God's Spirit wrought upon you. But how is it *now?* Has it not grown into a *habit*, and under its fell power can you now resist every appeal, ward off conviction, and hold on your impenitent course without an effort?

4. *The means of salvation when resisted, lose more and more of their power to convict and reclaim, till finally they cease to have any saving influence.* The Word of God ceases to alarm. The voice of conscience is

hushed. The tender heart is gone. The striving spirit is grieved away. The Sabbath and the sanctuary lose their charm. Chastisements no longer check the downward trend. Awful monitions of a hastening doom!

5. *Meanwhile the outward obstacles to salvation are continually augmenting both in number and in influence over the sinner.* Evil habits, associations, entanglements, the infirmities of age, and manifold and other hindrances, block up the way of life and draw with the strength of a leviathan towards perdition. Great God! what, who, is to save such an one? Procrastinate another moment in view of such dread realities? "convenient season" to-morrow. O, I see in to-morrow, a sinner's despairing cry refused, a despairing sinner's doom sealed by his own monstrous folly.—*Homiletic Review.*

## PALESTINE.

**P**ALESTINE is as unique in its physical and geographical aspects as it is in its historical point of view. Small in extent, it yet embraces within its narrow limit some type or specimen of almost every possible feature of which physical geography treats. Within that narrow compass we have land and sea, mountain and plain, fertile fields and well watered gardens, with parched and arid desert tracts, and the climate and fauna of the arctic zone, almost side by side with the hot, heavy atmosphere and the luxuriant vegetation of the tropics.

## Preaching the Gospel Backwards.

**T**HEY preach the gospel backwards who say, "Get better before you come;" or "You must feel, before you can believe;" or "You must do, before it can be done," who make works the way of salvation.

Some say men are saved by deeds of the law, but scripture says, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." There is only one way, and that "the new and living way," the Lord Jesus Christ, who says of Himself, "I am the way." Then, after taking Christ, and entering the way, comes obedience and good deeds. But every happiness, arising from so-called good deeds before coming to Christ for salvation, is but a salve of Satan's, for the conscience, and a barrier to keep the soul from Christ.

Remember, Satan will do anything to keep a sinner from Christ. Christ has done everything to bring a sinner to Himself.

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