

The Quiet Hour

To-day

Why fear to-morrow, timid heart?
Why tread the future's way?
We only need to do our part
To-day, dear child, to-day.

The past is written! Close the book
On pages sad and gay;
Within the future do look,
But live to-day—to-day.

'Tis this one hour that God has given;
His now we must obey;
And it will make our earth his heaven
To live to-day—to-day.

How It Is Done

A delightful writer has many charming thoughts on making others happy. He finds that "it isn't by great things that you make others happy; it is not by extraordinary kindnesses and sacrifices. It is by the common, by the simple, by the universal, by what is in your power from week to week." He finds that our Father in heaven makes us happy by the common and simple things. There are rare gifts of God, genius, high talent, the power of embodying thought in poetry, and exquisite beauty. We know that these gifts do not make their possessors happy, or are the source of happiness to others. "Genius is notoriously unhappy; poets are sensitive to misery; the tragedies of beautiful women are, perhaps, the saddest stories of all history." No, rare gifts do not make men happy. "It is the common and simple and universal gifts; it is health, and the glance of sunshine in the morning; it is fresh air; it is the friend, the lover; it is the kindness that meets us on the journey; it may be only a word, a smile, a look—it is these common and everyday and simple things, all coming to us from God according to my gospel—it is these, and not any rarity of blessing, that are God's gentle art of making happy."

And so we see that it is possible for us to make others happy, with the everyday kindness, thoughtfulness, and love. It is all in our power. We shall be like our Father in heaven when we make "minute denials, infinitesimal sacrifices, little courtesies" to others. And I very much doubt whether this can be thoroughly done save by those who have learned from Jesus Christ how to live.

Out-and-Out Christians

The average person needs an infusion of strength. He is tempted to weakness. His temptation is to be a part of a conglomerate crowd, when he should be an independent, individual personality. Instead of standing out, in sun-crowned manliness, against ignoble tendencies, he becomes a craven follower of them. It is easier for him to be good-natured and compliant than to be right and peculiar. Yet whoever would acquit himself as a man must be strong; for strength is the supreme seal of manhood.

Even God despises the lukewarm. The shiftless servant of policy who is always fearful of offending one side or the other, who wants to keep on the good side of the Lord and at the same time be neighborly with Satan and his followers, is even more odious in the eyes of God than he is in the eyes of right-thinking men. Only they are respected who are out-and-out for something.

The times cry for men and women of honesty and steadfastness—men and women who can be tied to as friends; men and women who are loyal to all their obligations; men and women of clear-cut convictions and constancy. Such are at once the joy and hope of the race.

The Church seriously needs to-day Christians who know how "to stand." It is full of wabbling and weak-kneed saints; its call is for disciples who change not, but who in their devotion to Christ and His kingdom are decided and constant. The victory of the Church is to come through the divinely-given strength of its members, by which it will best demonstrate the truth of the Gospel of the strong Son of God.

Dependence on God

The Christian in the world is like a diver who goes down into the sea. His life-work is in a world where the forces are alien, and tend to destroy his life. He is in that world, and yet not of it. His life is drawn from above, where his native air is supplied by a constant connection with the sources of supply. So long as that supply of life-giving air continues unbroken he is able to accomplish his task, notwithstanding the adverse conditions, and to realize his victory over opposing forces, because of his vital connection with the power and life from above. It is a life of constant faith, of constant dependence, of constant activity, while the time is given to work, for the night will soon come.—H. A. Johnston

God Giveth Us the Victory

"God . . . giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Soldier of the cross, the hour is coming when the note of victory shall be proclaimed throughout the world. The battlements of the enemy must soon succumb; the words of the mighty must soon be given up to the Lord of lords. What! soldier of the cross, in the day of victory wouldst thou have it said that thou didst turn thy back in the day of battle? Dost thou not wish to have a share in the conflict, that thou mayst have a share in the victory? If thou hast even the hottest part of the battle, wilt thou flinch and fly? Thou shalt have the brightest part of the victory if thou art in the fiercest of the conflict. Wilt thou turn, and lose thy laurels? Wilt thou throw down thy sword? Shall it be with thee as when a standard-bearer fainteth? Nay, man, up to arms again! for the victory is certain. Though the conflict be severe, I beseech you, on to it again! On, ye lion-hearted men of God, to the battle once more! for ye shall yet be crowned with immortal glory.—C. H. Spurgeon.

Character

It is a very curious and interesting fact that the word "character," which comes over into our English speech directly and without change of sound from the Greek, signifies first the sharp tool with which a seal or a die is engraved, and then the inscription or the object which is cut in the seal or in the die. Our character, then, is the image and the super-scription which we cut upon our life; I say which we cut, for, however much happens to us and bears upon us from outside causes beyond our control, it is true, in the last analysis, that we determine our own character. We hold the tools which cut the legends on our life, we grave the die, we incise the seal. What are the tools with which we cut character upon ourselves? The tools are thoughts. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. The style and the subject of the engraved character depend on the choice of tools and on the manner of their use. The legend on the seal shows what was in the mind of the engraver as he cut it in with his tools. Here is a seal with a cross cut in it. That cross was the leading idea in the engraver's mind for that seal, and his busy tool translated that invisible thought of his mind into this fixed and visible sign. Character is invisible thought translated into visible, and, fixed before the eye, cut on the life.—Charles Cuthbert Hall, D.D.

Sunday Rest

They rest most happily on Sunday who carry an element of rest into the experiences of every day—that rare blossom of heart's ease which helps to make every burden light. It is often inevitable that we should work all the week till Saturday night up to the limit of our capacity; but the wisest of us keep, even in our busiest and most interrupted hours, a little reservoir of peace in our heart's shrine. The noise and tumult beat at the doors, but they never enter there. One of the offices of a well-spent Sunday is to replenish this inner, central reservoir of peace for the use of all the other busy days. These other days drain and exhaust it. Then the merciful rest day comes around and fills it full again. Those who allow themselves no real day of rest and quietness of heart are making too wearing and dreary work of life. The wear and tear of the machinery goes on too fast. Those who