

He became familiar with the learning of the Chaldeans, who were the literary and scientific scholars of his day. Besides, he had in his hands the sacred books of his own nation, which are a treasury of political as well as religious knowledge. God had given him, also, the gift of interpreting dreams, which secured him his introduction to the royal favor. Nebuchadnezzar made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the wise men. His duties were discharged with ability and a high sense of honor. From this time, during the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach, Belshazzar, Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian, Daniel was a conspicuous person. He held many positions. For more than sixty years he was the counsellor of kings. Darius and Cyrus, both eminent rulers, held him in high esteem. While Darius was upon the throne, he was the first of three presidents to whom the entire executive management of the kingdom was entrusted; and after the accession of Cyrus, he was permitted to exert a powerful influence on behalf of his exiled countrymen, whose restoration was ordered by that gracious monarch.

Thus Daniel commends the religion of a busy life. He might have excused himself. He had many engagements. His religion was not fashionable in Babylon. It would have been easy for him to have compromised himself. There were many ways of satisfying conscience then, as there are many ways now. But he had not so learned the lessons of religion. He made his daily appeal to God. Each day's work was performed in the fear of God. He carried a conscience void of offence. Religion with him was intensely practical. He proved that it is possible to be very busy, and at the same time to be very religious.

I am speaking to men and women who are acquainted with the cares of a busy life. I often hear them saying that they cannot be religious and continue in a life so busy; and I often observe that they continue in the busy life, even if they let the religion go. Then

they call me to their bedsides when they are dying, and tell me that they have made such a sad mistake; that they have been chasing butterflies; that they have been trying to reach the waters of a mirage; that they have neglected precious opportunities. Such are the lamentations of experience, while the eager pursuit of riches, fame or pleasure seems to be insensible to every divine entreaty. Yet, my friends, the religion of the Bible, as we see it in the case of Daniel, is adapted to a busy life. Indeed, the concerns or occupations of a busy life demand the restraints and encouragements which this religion imposes. We shall be better men and women if we meet a busy life with religious characters. Such a life cannot be an end in itself; it is only a means or an occasion. The end lies outside of it. Now what shall that end be? Who shall name the true standard? What is real greatness? Who are the heroes? There must be some arbiter. Whom shall we select? Who is wiser than the most high God? If He does not know, who can know? Our religion is our recognition of His decision. Do you suppose that if the Son of God should visit the earth He would go down into Wall Street and select as His model man a corrupt speculator, who has exhausted all the resources of cunning in gathering together a great amount of money? or up on the Avenues, and choose, as His model woman, a fashionable girl, whose frivolity is the talk of the streets? The standard of Christ's example is the perpetual rebuke of avarice, worldliness, and dishonesty; and the perpetual commendation of unselfishness, purity and love. Consequently, religion acquaints us with the true way of life, and urges us to walk in it.

Besides, religion places the present life in true relations to another—the future life. I grant that if there is no future life, we may then eat and drink and be merry while we are here. The person who gets the most is the successful person. But add eternity to time, and another estimate must be formed. The words of the parable