

DAILY USE OF THE BIBLE

Devotional use of the Bible must always take into account the presence of the teaching spirit of God. We look for help in daily needs, we also hope for growth of spiritual knowledge by which all separated parts of the soul move and more it into a perfect and related whole. The daily portion may serve a present need, it may wait to go its office as the seed waits in the ground for the time of springing up and growth. He is a poor usque who has not stored memories and impressions gathered in days gone by which spring up into new meanings in the heat and light of fresh experiences of life. The wonderful variety of the word of God is assurance that it cannot be exhausted in the longest life. Its horizon seems to widen as we go on our way, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit it seems to grow in scope and wisdom with our growth.

The vehemence in which God speaks to men is human experience. The unique value of the Bible is that it is the record of the experience of men who stood in peculiar relations to the unfolding of God's plan which culminated in the human experience of Christ and the building of the Church under the guidance of His Spirit. Cut the humanity out of the Bible and there will be little divinity left. Demote that humanity always remains the sense of the presence of God. The world, too, speaks to us in human tones, but in its greeting, its demands, its grief and laughter, also utters the sense of the presence of God absent or hidden out of sight. We need to read the Bible daily as a corrective for the world's forgetfulness of God, and for the training of our thought is using His presence and His will as a test and measure of proportion for the work and play of life.

That human language which God speaks finds its purest and its clearest utterance in the life and words of Christ. All the Bible is of Him. In its pages all the long preparation is depicted and the story of His life on earth is given. The personal relation to Him, and through Him to the social uses of the world, must always be the central sphere of life for the disciple. The Spirit, we are told, shall take and declare of Christ unto us. But unless we are familiar with the record of His life and words and words, how are we imitating the power of God's Spirit to do this work?

We need to read the pages of the Bible simply, with the childlike spirit which expects a gift; prayerfully, remembering that the teaching comes through the divine Spirit in our hearts; joyfully, as Children of the Father who has given us the word; thoughtfully, remembering that the message comes by way of the intellect to reach the heart; humbly, for our thought is seldom large enough to be a mirror of divinity to others; thankfully, because the we¹ is inexhaustible and we may draw at need. Thus delightful private associations will grow up about Scripture passages, and we shall use it as a garden where we wander at our will and find out food and refreshment because God Himself walks with us in its various ways.—The Congregationalist.

MEEKNESS

Meekness is not, as some have supposed, lifelessness, but the word "meekness," as is used in the Bible, is the same Greek word that is used in Xenophon's "Anabasis" for the training of horses; and the Scripture idea of a meek man is a tamed man. If this be true, it is not discrediting if one has a fiery temper or a miserable disposition.

A fiery temper is a good thing if controlled, instead of controlling us. It is like the steam in an engine. It really serves to send us on to greater victories.—J. Wilbur Chapman.

IMPERFECTION

Heaven does not take perfect beings and make them more perfect. It takes fallible and incomplete ones and glorifies them. It is a paradox of art that our glass-makers can only reproduce now the perfection of the ancient "stained glass" by reproducing its windows, so celebrated as works of artistic genius and skill, of the old cathedrals of England and continental Europe, show that their superiority really consists in the inferiority of the glass, in the poverty of its constituents, in its uneven thickness, in the imperfections of its surface and body, all covered, as they are, by the accumulating dust of ages, the corroding effect of time. Like the facets of a diamond or ruby, each little wave and thread and blister becomes, by interference, refraction and reflection of the light which plays upon it, a new source of the gem-like brilliancy, harmony and beauty which distinguish the painted glass of former centuries." So the inferiorities and insufficiencies of God's children become accessories of beauty when the rays of His heavenly glory play upon them. The culture of eternity must complement the trial and wear of this lifetime to bring out every charm that here lay in disguise.—Sélectes.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, God, who art in heaven,
All hallowed be thy name;
Thy kingdom come; thy will be done
In heaven and earth the same.

Give us this day our daily bread;
—And as we those forgive
Who sin against us, so may we
Forgiving grace receive.

Into temptation lead us not;
From evil set us free;
And thine the kingdom, thine the power
And glory, ever be.

—Adoniram Judson.

PRESSED DOWN UPON CHRIST

"I do feel myself, now, to be more close to Christ than ever I was. My weight of sin helps to press me down on him. My weight of trouble, my weight of care, my weight of anxiety about the souls of my hearers, and even my weight of joy, all help me to press more on my Lord. The way to be coming to Christ, brethren, as long as ever you live, is to lean more on Christ, press more heavily on Christ, and depend more upon Christ than ever you did. In this way, you know, some stones seem, by long abiding and pressing, to cleave to one another and unite together till they appear to be no longer distinct, but one mass. Have you not often noticed in an old Roman wall that you cannot distinguish the mortar from the stone? You cannot tell where the stones were joined; they have grown to be one piece. And blessed is that Christian who, like a living stone, has continued so to come to the foundation till Christ and he have become one, as it were; yea, one in conscious fact, so that nothing can divide them.—C. H. Spurgeon.

DAILY READINGS.

- M., Oct. 20. The new covenant. Heb. 8: 6.
- T., Oct. 31. By a new sacrifice. Ps. 50: 1-15.
- W., Nov. 1. Everlasting. Isa. 61: 6-11.
- T., Nov. 2. By blood. Mark 14: 23-25.
- F., Nov. 3. Transgressed. Hos. 6: 4-7.
- S., Nov. 4. A covenant-keeping God. Ex. 23: 1-7.
- Sun., Nov. 5. Tenth.—Am I keeping my Christian Endeavor covenant? Mal. 2: 5, 6; Ps. 51: 6; 2 Cor. 8: 21. (Consecration meeting.)

Stand up for your rights, by all means; but please remember that others have rights as well as yourself.

MY COVENANT

Some Bible Hints.

Something that is dead, and doing nothing looks peaceful; but the only peace worth having is the "life and peace" that God gives in the way of His commandments (Mal. 2:5).

Truth is not a haphazard thing, to be played with and jested with; it is of law, fixed and certain, pledged and permanent (Mal. 2:6).

If a pledge is not kept with desire it is not kept with deeds (Ps. 51:6).

If our Christian life is not lived in the sight of men, it is not lived in the sight of God (2 Cor. 8:21).

Suggestive Thoughts.

We are not only our brother's keeper, but also his pledge-keeper. Help your comrades to keep their pledges.

We covenant with one another to keep our pledge, but only because first of all we covenant with God.

If you will keep your pledge, your pledge will keep you.

An undated covenant is binding on both parties until both give a release from it.

A Few Illustrations.

The Christian Endeavor pledge is no crutch and you are a cripple.

The pledge is like the gale-ropes of Alpine travelers; it holds us to one another, and binds us all to our Guide.

The pledge will not keep itself any more than a business partnership will accomplish its end through inaction.

Perjury is a serious offence in earthly courts; is it likely to be less serious in the courts of heaven?

To Think About.

Am I keeping my pledge in the spirit as well as in the letter?

What real help is my pledge giving me?

Am I helping others to keep their pledges?

A Cluster of Quotations.

Our promises are definite. We promise not only to be good, but to be good for something; not only to do right, but to do right in some definite direction.—Francis E. Clark.

Never allow yourself to think that the pledge repels; it draws if you keep it; it repels only as you violate it.—A. W. Spooner.

So God delights to teach this lesson ever.

That His success depends on our endeavor.

The world is so corrupt that a reputation for honesty is acquired by not doing wrong.—De Levis.

Keeping the Pledge.

When you take a pledge, see that it takes you—the whole of you.

The great need of the times is training in sincerity, in honesty. That is one reason why it is well to take pledges, and hold to them.

If you are not keeping your pledge, the best thing is—to keep it; the second best is—to leave the society; there is no third best.

Your pledge, remember, was not made to your society, but to God.

Consider, if you were to obtain release from your pledge, from how many of the duties recognized by the pledge would you dare to ask release?

First, a reasonable pledge; then, a reasonable fulfillment.

When any one objects to the pledge, you may generally silence his objections by asking him to which particular portion of the pledge he objects.

If any one is reluctant to take the pledge, he is doubtless reluctant to do the things the pledge calls upon him to do.

In every point, our pledge is simply an agreement to do, in regard to that thing what we deem to be Christ's will.