

*REDEEMING THE TIME.*

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

— *Eph. v. 16.*

Time, that one precious talent entrusted by God to each one of us, is too often thought lightly of, or acknowledged only in a kind of grumbling way as an excuse for non-performance of many obvious duties. "I ought to do so and so, but I really have not the time." "I will do so and so, if I can find time." "There is so much to do, and time flies so quickly." These are remarks frequently heard, and the latter especially is only too true; for truly there is a vast amount to be done, and by far the most important work is that for which there is, alas! too often found—"no time."

There are some things for which we sometimes say, "I will make time for that. We should, perhaps, more appropriately say, "I will make the opportunity," as it is not in our power to lengthen one moment of time any more than we can add one of time any more than we can add one cubic to our stature, but by a simple readjustment and division of our time we can frequently make opportunities for carrying out any plans on which we have set our minds.

It should be our aim, then, to understand fully what the things are for which we should make time and opportunity. God has given our life as it is with its varied needs and requirements, and, in His wonderful and perfect economy, has provided the times and seasons which we may legitimately use for the full satisfaction of those needs. Solomon says, "there is a time for everything under the sun," and, after enumerating the various acts and conditions

of men for which it is granted, he is struck with wonder and admiration at the perfect arrangements of the Creator and exclaims, "He hath made everything beautiful in His time."

Now although Solomon says "there is a time for everything," it does not follow that one individual has time to do everything he wishes to; too often we make mistakes, and undertake duties we should not, to the exclusion of others which we might do better and which would be more in accordance with our time and circumstances. We should first of all understand thoroughly what are the duties God demands of us, and then set ourselves resolutely to redeem every moment for our work. And surely our first duty is to our Maker—our Master—our first duty as Christians—Morning Prayer. Invidious as it may appear, the question will arise, will obtrude itself, Is morning prayer a joyful, blessed privilege, or is the time from it unredeemed from sleep, from business, from household cares? Will the excuse, "I was so late," "I was in such a hurry," be accepted by our Master? He has the prior claim to our best, our first. What would a merchant or tradesman think of an employe who deliberately went about his own business or pleasure in the morning, and towards evening made his appearance at his master's office or workshop? Yet how often do we Christians serve thus our Master, Christ the Lord? What else is the meaning of our empty churches on Sunday mornings? Oh! to think of church after church in our large towns being allowed to remain—not half filled! the bright, fresh morning hours of the Lord's day unredeemed for His service!