

TOMORROW NO. 94

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, AUGUST 25, 1856,
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AT MABERLEY CHAPEL, KINGSLAND,

On behalf of the Metropolitan Benefit Societies' Asylum, Ball's Pond Road, Islington.

*“Boast not yourself of tomorrow; for you know
not what a day may bring forth.”
Proverbs 27:1.*

GOD'S most holy Word was principally written to inform us of the way to Heaven and to guide us in our path through this world to the realms of eternal life and the Light of God. But as if to teach us that God is not careless concerning our doings in the present scene, and that our benevolent Father is not inattentive to our happiness even in this state, He has furnished us with some excellent and wise maxims which we may put into practice. Not only in spiritual matters but in temporal affairs, also. I have always looked upon the Book of Proverbs with pleasure, as being a book not only teaching us the highest spiritual wisdom, but as more especially speaking on the “now”—the time that is present with us—giving us maxims that will make us wise for this world and instruct us in conducting our affairs while we are here among our fellow men. We need some temporal wisdom as well as spiritual illumination. It need not always be that the children of the Kingdom should be more foolish than the children of darkness. It is well that we should be wise to order our common affairs aright, as well as to set our house in order for the grave and, therefore, we find in Scripture maxims and teachings for them both. Since God has been pleased, thus, to instruct us in the avocations of life, I shall not, then, be out of place if I use my text, in some degree, in a merely temporal manner and endeavor to give advice to my friends concerning the business of this life. Afterwards, I shall dwell upon it more spiritually. There is, first, the *abuse of tomorrow* forbidden in the text. In the second place, I shall mention the *right use of tomorrow*.

I. First, then, there is THE ABUSE OF TOMORROW mentioned in the text and we shall look upon it, first, in a worldly point of view—and yet, I trust—in a way of wisdom. “Boast not yourself of tomorrow.” Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, whoever you are, whether you are Christians or not, this passage has a depth of wisdom in it for you! “Boast not yourself of tomorrow,” and this, for many very wise reasons.

First of all, *because it is extremely foolish to boast at all*. Boasting never makes a man any the greater in the esteem of others, nor does it improve the real state of his body or soul. Let a man brag as he will, he is none the greater for his bragging, no, he is the less, for men invariably think the worse of him! Let him boast as much as he pleases of anything that he possesses, he shall not increase its value by his glorying. He cannot multiply his wealth by boasting of it, he cannot increase his pleasures by glorying in them. True, to be content with those pleasures and feel a complacency in them, may render them very sweet—but not so with such a treasure as this—for it is a treasure which he has not, yet, and, therefore, how foolish he is to glory in it! There is an old, old proverb, which I dare not quote here. It is something to do with chickens. Perhaps you can remember it. It bears very well upon this text, for tomorrow is a thing that we have not yet obtained, and, therefore, not only if we had it would it be foolish to boast of it, but because we have it not and may never have it, it becomes the very extremity of foolishness to glory in it! Glory, O man, in the harvest that may come to you next year when your seed is sown—but glory not in *tomorrow*—for you can sow no seeds of morrows! Morrows come from God—you have no right to glory in them. Glory if you will, O fowler, that the birds have once flown to your net, for they may come again. But glory not too soon, for they may find another decoy that shall be better to their taste than yours, or they may fly far off from your snare! Though many a day has come to you, think not that

another will certainly arrive. Days are not like links of a chain—one does not ensure the other. We have one, but we may never see its fellow. Each may be the last of its kind. Each springs of a separate birth. There are no twin days! Today has no brother, it stands alone—and tomorrow must come alone—and the next and the next, also, must be born into this world without a brother. We must never look upon two days at once, nor expect that a whole herd of days shall be brought forth at one time.

We need not boast of tomorrow, for *it is one of the frailest things in all creation* and, therefore, the least to be boasted of. Boast of the bubbles on the breaker. Boast of the foam upon the sea. Boast of the clouds that skim the sky. Boast of what you will, O man—but boast not of tomorrow—for it is too unsubstantial! Tomorrow—it is a fleeting thing. You have not seen it. Why do you boast of it? Tomorrow—it is the pot of gold which the idiot dreams lies at the foot of the rainbow. It is not there, nor has he found it. Tomorrow—it is the floating island of Loch Lomond, many have talked of it, but none have seen it. Tomorrow—it is the wrecker's beacon, enticing men to the rock of destruction. Boast not yourself of tomorrow—it is the frailest and most brittle thing you can imagine! No glass were half so easily broken as your tomorrow's joys and your tomorrow's hopes! A puff of wind shall crush them, while yet they seem not to be full blown. He said, good easy man, "Full surely my greatness is a ripening," but there came a frost—a killing frost which nipped his shoot and then he fell. Boast not of tomorrow, you have it not. Boast not of tomorrow—you may never have it! Boast not of tomorrow—if you had it, it would deceive you. Boast not of tomorrow, for tomorrow you may be where morrows will be dreadful things to tremble at!

Boast not yourself of tomorrow, not only because it is extremely foolish but *because it is exceedingly hurtful*. Boasting of tomorrow is hurtful to us in every way. It is hurtful to us now. I never knew a man who was always hoping to do great things in the future, that ever did much in the present. I never knew a man who intended to make a fortune, by-and-by, who ever saved sixpence a week now! I never knew a man who had very great and grand hopes on the death of some old grandmother or the coming-in of some property from chancery, or the falling to him of something because his name was Jenyns. I never saw him very prosperous in the meantime. I have heard of a man going to be rich tomorrow and boasting of it—but I never knew him do much. Such men spend so much time in building castles in the air that they have no stones left wherewith to build so much as a cottage on the ground! They were wasting all their energies on tomorrow—consequently they had no time to reap the fields of the present, for they were waiting for the heavy harvests of the future. The heavily laden boats of today come in with abundance of fish from the depths of time—but they said of them, "They are nothing. There will be heavier draughts tomorrow, there will be greater abundance then. Go away, little ships, an argosy shall come home tomorrow—a very fleet of wealth." And so they let today's wealth go by because they expected the greater wealth of tomorrow—therefore, they were hurt even for the present.

And worse than that. *Some men were led into extraordinary extravagance* from their hopes of the future. They spend what they are going to have, or rather what they never will have! Many have been ruined by the idle dream of speculation—and what is that but boasting of tomorrow? They have said, "True, I cannot pay for this which I now purchase—but I shall tomorrow—for tomorrow I shall roll in wealth. Tomorrow, perhaps, I shall be the richest of men. A lucky turn of business (as they term it) will lift me off this shoal." So they keep still and not only do they refuse to toil, to push themselves off the sand, but worse than that—they are throwing themselves away and wasting what they have—in the hope of better times coming in the future! Many a man has been made lame, blind and dumb, in the present because he hoped to be greater than a man in the future. I always laugh at those who say to me, "Sir, rest a while. You will work all the longer for it. Stay a while, lest you waste your strength, for you may work tomorrow." I bid them remember that such is not the teaching of Scripture, for that says, "Whatever your hand find to do, do it with your might," and I would count myself worse than a fool if I should throw away my todays in the expectation of tomorrows and rest upon the couch of idleness *today*, because I thought the chariot of tomorrow would make up for all my sloth! So, Beloved, if we love our God, we shall find enough to do, if we have all our tomorrows and use all our todays, too! If we serve our God as

we ought to serve Him, considering what He has done for us, we shall find that we shall have more than our hands full. Let our life be spared as long as Methuselah's—enough for every moment, enough for every hour, long as life may be. But hoping to do things in the future takes away our strength in the present, unnerves our resolution and unstrings our diligence. Let us take care that we are not hurt in the present by boasting of tomorrow!

And, remember, that if you boast of tomorrow, it will not only hurt you today, but *hurt you tomorrow*, also. Do you know why? Because, as sure as you are alive, you will be disappointed with tomorrow, if you boast of it before it comes. Tomorrows would be very good things if you did not give them such a very good character. I believe one of the very worst things a minister can possess is to have anybody to recommend him—for the people say, “Here comes a man! How he will preach, how eloquent he will be!” The poor creature cannot come up to their expectations and so they are disappointed. So with tomorrow—you give him such flattering praises—“Oh, he is everything, he is perfection.” Todays—they are nothing—they are the very sweepings of the floors! But tomorrows—they are the solid gold. Todays—they are exhausted mines and we get little from them. Tomorrows—they are the very mines of wealth! We have only to get them, and we are rich, immensely rich! The tomorrows are everything—and then the tomorrows come laden with mercy and big with blessings of God—but, notwithstanding—we are disappointed because tomorrow is not what we expected it to be, even when tomorrow is marvelously abundant! But sometimes tomorrow comes with storms and clouds and darkness, when we expected it to be full of light and sunshine, and oh, how terrible is our feeling, then, from the very reason that we expected something different! It is not at all a bad beatitude, “Blessed is the man that expects nothing, for he shall never be disappointed.”

If we know how to practice that, and expect nothing, we shall not be disappointed! It is certain. And the less we expect and the less we boast of our expectations, the more happy will the future be—because we shall have far less likelihood of being disappointed. Let us remember, then, that if we would kill the future, if we would ruin the tomorrows, if we would boast of their hopes, if we would take away their honey—we must press them in the hand of boasting—and then we shall have done it! “Boast not yourself of tomorrow,” for you spoil the tomorrow by boasting of it.

And then, remember, *what solemnly disastrous circumstances have occurred to men in this life* after tomorrow has gone, from boasting of tomorrows. Yes, there is many a man who set all his hope upon one single thing—and the tomorrow came which he did not expect—perhaps a black and dark tomorrow—and it crushed his hopes to ashes. How sad he felt afterwards! He was in his nest—he said, “Peace, peace, peace,” and sudden destruction came upon his happiness and his joy. He had boasted of his tomorrow by over-security, and look at him now—what a very wreck of a man he is because he had set his hope on that—now his joy is blasted! Oh, my Friends, never boast too much of the tomorrows, because if you do, your disappointment will be tremendous when you shall find your joys have failed you and your hopes have passed away! See there that rich man—he has piled heaps on heaps of gold—but now, for a desperate venture, he is about to have more than he ever possessed before, and he reckons on that tomorrow. Nothingness is his, and why his disappointment? Because he boasted of imagined wealth! See that man? His ambition is to raise his house and perpetuate his name. See that heir of his—his joy, his life, his fullness of happiness? A handful of ashes and a coffin are left to the weeping father! Oh, if he had not boasted too much of the certainty of that son's life, he had not wept so bitterly after the tomorrow had swept over him, with all its boast and mildew of his expectations! See yonder, another—he is famous, he is great. Tomorrow comes a slander and his fame is gone and his name disgraced! Oh, had he not set his love on fame, he had not cared whether men cried, “crucify,” or, “hallelujah”—he had disregarded both alike! But believing that fame was a stable thing, whereas its foot is on the sand, he reckoned on tomorrows. And mark how sad he walks the earth, because tomorrow has brought him nothing but grief. “Boast not yourself of tomorrow.”

And I would have you remember just one more fact and that I think to be a very important one—that very often when men boast of tomorrow and are overconfident that they shall live, *they not only entail*

great sorrow upon themselves, but upon others. I have, when preaching, frequently begged of my friends to be quite sure to make their wills and see to their family affairs. Many are the solemn instances which should urge you to do so. One night a minister happened to say, in the course of his sermon, that he held it to be a Christian duty for every man to have his house set in order, so that if he were taken away, he would know, that as far as possible, everything would be right. And there was one member of his Church, there, who said to himself, “What my minister has said is true. I should not like to see my babes and my wife left with nothing, as they must be if I were to die.” So he went home and that night he made his will and cleared up his accounts. That night he died! It must have been a joyful thing for the widow, in the midst of her sadness, to find herself amply provided for and everything in order for her comfort. Good Whitefield said he could not lie down in bed a night, if he did not know that even his gloves were in their place. For he said he should not like to die with anything in his house out of order. And I would have every Christian very careful to be so living one day, that if he were never to see another, he might feel that he had done the utmost that he could—not only to provide for himself—but also for those who inherit his name and are dear to him. Perhaps you call this only worldly teaching. Very good. You will find it very much like heavenly teaching one of these dark days, if you do not practice it. “Boast not yourself of tomorrow.”

II. But now I come to dwell upon this *in a spiritual manner*, for a moment or two. “Boast not yourself of tomorrow.” Oh, my beloved Friends, never boast of tomorrow with regard to your soul’s salvation!

They do so, in the first place, *who think that it will be easier for them to repent tomorrow than it is today.* Felix said there would be a more convenient season and then he would again send for Paul, that he might hear him seriously. And many a sinner thinks that just now it is not easy to turn and to repent, but that by-and-by it will be. Now, is not that a very string of lies? In the first place, is it ever easy for a sinner to turn to God? Must not that be done, at any time, by *Divine Power*? And again, if that is not easy for him, now, how will it be easier in later life? Will not his sins bind fresh fetters to his soul, so that it will be even more impossible for him to escape from his iron bondage? If he is dead, now, will he not be corrupt before he reaches tomorrow? And when tomorrow comes, to which he looks forward as being easier for a resurrection, will not his soul be yet more corrupt and, therefore, if we may so speak, even further from the possibility of being raised? Oh, Sirs, you say it is easy for you to repent tomorrow, why, then, not today? You would find the difficulty of it, if you would try it—yes, you would find your own helplessness in that matter! Possibly you dream that on a future day, repentance will be more agreeable to your feelings. But how can you suppose that a few hours will make it more pleasant? If it is vinegar to your taste, now, it shall be so, then! And if you love your sins, now, you will love them better, then, for the force of habit will have confirmed you in your course. Every moment of your lives is driving in another rivet to your eternal state. So far as we can see, it becomes less and less likely (speaking after the manner of men) that the sinner should burst his chains of each sin that he commits—for habit has bound him yet faster to his guilt and his iniquity has got another hold upon him. Let us take care, then, that we do not boast of tomorrow, by a pretense that it will be so much easier to repent tomorrow! It is one of Satan’s lies, for it will only be the more difficult.

He boasts of tomorrow, again, *who supposes that he shall have plenty of time to repent and to return to God.* Oh, there are many who say, “When I come to die, I shall be on my deathbed and then I shall say, ‘Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner.’” I remember an aged minister telling me a story of a man whom he often warned, but who always said to him, “Sir, when I am dying, I shall say, ‘Lord, have mercy on me,’ and I shall go to Heaven as well as anybody else.” Returning home from market one night, rather “foul” with liquor, he guided his horse with a leap right over the parapet of a bridge into the river—the last words he was heard to utter were a most fearful curse! And in the bed of the river he was found dead, killed by the fall. So it may be with you. You think you will have space for repentance, but it may be that sudden doom will devour you! Or, perhaps, even while you are sitting there in the pew, your last moment is running out. There is your hourglass. Look! It is running. I marked another grain

just then and then another fell. It fell so noiselessly, yet I thought I heard it fall. Yes! There it is! The clock's tick is the fall of that grain of dust down from your hourglass. Life is getting shorter every moment with all of you—but with some the sand is almost out—there is not a handful left. A few more grains. See, now they are less, two or three. Oh, in a moment it may be said, "There is not one left." Sinner, never think that you have time to spare! You never had, man never had! God said, "Hurry you," when He bid men flee from Sodom. Lot had to hurry. And depend upon it, when the Spirit speaks in a man's heart, He does always bid him hurry! Under natural convictions, men are very prone to tarry. But the Spirit of God, when He speaks in the heart of man, always says, "Today." I never knew a truly anxious soul, yet, who was willing to put off till tomorrow! When God the Holy Spirit has dealings with a man, they are always *immediate* dealings. The sinner is impatient to get deliverance. He must have pardon, *now!* He must have present mercy, or else he fears that mercy will come too late to him! Let me beseech you, then, (and may God the Holy Spirit grant that my entreaty may become successful in your case), let me beseech everyone of you to take this into consideration—there is never time to spare—and that your thought that there is time to spare is an insinuation of Satan! When the Holy Spirit pleads with man, He pleads with him with demands of immediate attention. "*Today*, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

"Boast not yourself of tomorrow," O Sinner, as I doubt not you are doing in another fashion. "Boast not yourself of tomorrow," *in the shape of resolves to do better*. I think I have given up resolutions, now. I have enough of the *debris* and the rubbish of my resolutions to build a cathedral with, if they could but be turned into stone! Oh, the broken resolutions, the broken vows all of us have had! Oh, we have raised castles of resolutions, structures of enormous size, that out vied Babylon, itself, in all its majesty! Says one, "I know I shall be better tomorrow. I shall renounce this vice and the other. I shall forsake this lust. I shall give up that darling sin. True, I shall not do so *now*—a little more sleep and a little more slumber—but I know I shall do it *tomorrow*." Fool! You know not that you shall *see* tomorrow! Oh, greater fool! You ought to know that what you are not willing to do, today, you will not be willing to do, tomorrow! I believe there are many souls that have been lost by good intentions which were never carried out. Resolutions strangled at their birth brought on men the guilt of spiritual infanticide—and they have been lost with resolutions sticking in their mouths! Many a man has gone down to Hell with a good resolution on his lip, with a pious resolve on his tongue. Oh, if he had lived another day, he said he would have been so much better! If he had lived another week, oh, then he thought he would begin to pray! Poor soul! If he had been spared another week, he would only have sunk deeper into sin! But he did not think so and he went to Hell with a choice morsel rolling under his tongue—that he would do better directly and that he meant to amend, by-and-by! There are many of you present, I dare say, who are making good resolutions. You are apprentices—well, you are not going to carry them out till you get to be journeymen! You are journeymen—well, you cannot carry them out till you get to be master! You have been breaking the Sabbath—but you intend to leave it off when you are in another job. You have been accustomed to swear—you say, "I shall not swear any more when I get out of this company, they try my temper so." You have committed this or that petty theft—tomorrow you will renounce it, because tomorrow you will have enough and you can afford to do it. But of all the lying things—and there are many things that are deceptive—resolutions for tomorrow are the worst of all! I would not trust one of them! There is nothing stable in them. You might sooner sail to America across the Atlantic on a withered leaf than float to Heaven on a resolution!

It is the frailest thing in the world, tossed about by every circumstance and wrecked with all its precious freight—wrecked to the dismay of the man who ventured his soul in it—wrecked, and wrecked forever! Take care, my dear Hearers, that none of you are reckoning on tomorrows. I remember the strong but solemn words of Jonathan Edwards where he says, "Sinner, remember, you are at this moment standing over the mouth of Hell upon a single plank and that plank is rotten. You are hanging over the jaws of Perdition by a solitary rope, and lo! the strands of that rope are creaking—breaking, now—and yet you talk of tomorrows?" If you were sick, Man, would you send for your physician tomorrow? If

your house were on fire, would you yell, “Fire,” tomorrow? If you were robbed in the street on your road home, would you cry, “Stop thief,” tomorrow? No, surely. But you are wiser than that in natural concerns. But man is foolish, oh, too foolish in the things that concern his soul! Unless Divine and Infinite Love shall teach him to number his days, that he may apply his heart unto true wisdom, he will still go on boasting of tomorrows until his soul has been destroyed by them!

Just one hint to the child of God. Ah, my beloved Brother or Sister, do not, I beseech you, boast of tomorrow yourself. David did it once—he said, “My mountain stands firm, I shall never be moved.” Do not boast of your tomorrows! You have feathered your nest pretty well, yes, but you may have a thorn in it before the sun has gone down and you will be glad enough to fly aloft. You are very happy and joyful, but do not say you will always have as much faith as you have now—do not be sure you will always be as blessed. The next cloud that sweeps the skies may drive many of your joys away. Do not say you have been kept, up to now, and you are quite sure you will be preserved from sin tomorrow. Take care of tomorrows! Many Christians go tumbling on without a bit of thought, and then, all of a sudden, they tumble down and make a mighty mess of their profession! If they would only look sharp after the tomorrows—if they would only watch their paths instead of star-gazing and boasting about them, their feet would be a great deal surer! True, God’s child need not think of tomorrow as regards his soul’s eternal security, for that is in the hands of Christ and safe, forever, but as far as his profession, comfort, and happiness are concerned, it will well become him to take care of his feet every day! Do not get to boasting! If you get to boasting of tomorrow, you know the Lord’s rule is always to send a canker where we put our pride. And so if you boast of tomorrow, you will have a moth in it before long! As sure as ever we glory in our wealth, it becomes cankered, or it takes to itself wings and flies away! As certainly as we boast of tomorrow, the worm will gnaw its root, as it did Jonah’s gourd—and the tomorrow under which we rested shall, with drooping leaves—only stand a monument of our disappointment! Let us take care, Christian Brothers and Sisters, that we do not waste the present time with hopes of tomorrow—that we do not get proud and so off our guard, by boasting of what we most assuredly shall be, then, as we imagine.

III. And now, in the last place, if tomorrows are not to be boasted of, are they good for nothing? No! Blessed be God! There are a great many things we may do with tomorrows. We may not boast of them, but I will tell you what we may do with them if we are the children of God. We may always look forward to them with *patience and confidence* that they will work together for our good. We may say of the tomorrows, “I do not boast of them, but I am not frightened of them. I would not glory in them, but I will not tremble about them”—

*“What may be my future lot,
Well I know concerns me not!
This does set my heart at rest,
What my God appoints, is best.”*

We may be very easy and very comfortable about tomorrow. We may remember that all our times are in His hands, that all events are at His command. And though we know not all the windings of the path of Providence, yet *He* knows them all. They are all settled in His book, and our times are all ordered by His wisdom. Whether they are—

*“Times of trial and of grief
Times of triumph and relief
Times the tempter’s power to prove,
Times to taste a Savior’s love—
All must come, and last, and end,
As shall please my heavenly Friend.”*

And, therefore, we may look upon the tomorrows as we see them in the rough bullion of time, about to be minted into every day’s expenditure—and we may say of them all—“They shall all be gold, they shall all be stamped with the King’s impress and, therefore, let them come. They will not make me worse—they will work together for my good.”

More, a Christian may rightly look forward to his tomorrows, not simply with resignation, but also with *joy*. Tomorrow to a Christian is a happy thing, it is one stage nearer Glory! Tomorrow! It is one step nearer Heaven to a Believer! It is just one knot more that he has sailed across the dangerous sea of life and he is so much the nearer to his eternal port—his blissful Heaven! Tomorrow—it is a fresh lamp of fulfilled promises that God has placed in His firmament—that the Christian may hail it as a guiding star, in the future, or at least as a light to cheer his path. Tomorrow—the Christian may rejoice at it. He may say of today, “O day, you may be black, but I shall bid you good-by, for lo, I see the morrow coming and I shall mount upon its wings, and shall fly away and leave you and your sorrows far behind me.”

And, moreover the Christian may await tomorrow with even more than simple hope and joy. He may look forward to it with *ecstasy* in some measure, for he does not know but that tomorrow his Lord may come! Tomorrow Christ may be upon this earth, “for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man comes.” Tomorrow all the glories of millennial splendor may be revealed. Tomorrow, the thrones of Judgment may be set and the King may summon the people to judgment! Tomorrow, we may be in Heaven! Tomorrow we may be on the breast of Christ. Tomorrow, yes, before then, this head may wear a crown, this hand may wave the palm, these lips may sing the song, these feet may tread the streets of gold, this heart may be full of bliss, immortal, everlasting, eternal! Be of good cheer, oh, fellow Christian—tomorrow can have nothing black in it for you, for it must work for your good! And it may have in it a precious, precious jewel. It is an earthen pitcher and it may have in it some dark black waters, but their bitterness is taken away by the Cross. But, also, it may have in it the precious jewel of eternity, for wrapt up within tomorrow may be all the glories of immortality! Anoint your head with fresh oil of gladness at the prospect of each coming day! Boast not of tomorrow, but often comfort yourself with it. You have a right to do so. It cannot be a bad tomorrow for you. It may be the best day of your life, for it may be your last!

And yet, another hint. Tomorrow ought to be observed by Christians in the way of Providence. Though we may not boast of tomorrow, yet we may seek to provide for the morrow. On one occasion I pleaded for a benefit society and not knowing a more appropriate text, I selected this, “Take no thought for the morrow, for tomorrow shall take thought for the things of itself.” Some of my hearers, when I announced my text, feared the principle of it was altogether hostile to anything like an insurance, or providing for the future, but I just showed them that it was not, as I looked upon it. It is a positive command that we are to take no anxious thought concerning tomorrow. Now, how can I do that? How can I put myself into such a position that I can carry out this commandment of taking no thought for the morrow? If I were a man struggling in life and had it in my power to insure for something which would take care of wife and family in later days, if I did not do it, you might preach to me to all eternity about not taking thought for the morrow. But I could not help doing it when I saw those I loved, around me, unprovided for! Let it be in God’s Word, I could not practice it! I would still be, at some time or other, taking thought for the morrow. But let me go to one of the many excellent institutions which exist and let me see that all is provided for, I come home and say, “Now, I know how to practice Christ’s command of taking no thought for the morrow. I pay the policy-money once a year, and I take no further thought about it, for I have no occasion to do so now, and have obeyed the very spirit and letter of Christ’s command.” Our Lord meant that we were to get rid of cares—now it is apparent that those distressing cares are removed—and we are able to live above anxiety by that single process!

Now, if that is so, if there is anything that enables us to carry out Christ’s commands, is it not in the very heart of the commandments to do that? If God has pleased to put into the hearts of wise men to devise something that would, in some way, improve the misfortunes of their kind and relieve them from the distresses and casualties of God’s Providence, how can it but be our duty to avail ourselves of that wisdom which, doubtless, God gave to men that we might, thereby, in these times be enabled to carry out in the fullest extent the meaning of that passage, “Take no thought for the morrow”? Why, if a man says, “I shall take no thought for the morrow, I will just spend all I get and not think of doing anything or taking any thought for the morrow,” how is he going to pay his rent? Why, the text could not be car-

ried out if it meant what some people think. It cannot mean that we should carelessly live by the day, or else a man would spend all his money on Monday and have nothing left for the rest of the week! That would be simple folly. It means that we should have no anxious, distressing thought about it. I am preaching about benefit societies—I would not attempt to recommend many of them and I do not believe in the principles of half of them! I believe a great deal of mischief is done by their gatherings in ale-houses and taverns. But wherever there is a *Christian Society*, I must endeavor to promote its welfare, for I look on the principle as the best means of carrying out the command of Christ, “Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for itself.” Allow me to recommend this Asylum to your liberality as a refuge in adversity for those who were careful in prosperity. It is a quiet retreat for decayed members of Benefit Societies and I am sorry to inform you that many of its rooms are vacant, not from lack of candidates, but from a lack of funds. It is a pity that so much public property should lie unemployed. Help the committee, then, to use the houses!

And, now, in concluding, let me remind the Christian that there is one thing he has not to do and that is, he has not to provide salvation, nor Divine Grace, nor sustenance nor promises for the morrow. No, Beloved, but we often talk as if we had. We say, “How shall I persevere through such-and-such a trial?” “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” You must not boast of today’s Grace as though it were enough for tomorrow. But you need not be afraid. With tomorrow’s difficulties, there will be tomorrow’s help! With tomorrow’s foes, there will be tomorrow’s friends! With tomorrow’s dangers, there will be tomorrow’s preservations! Let us look forward, then, to tomorrow as a thing we have not to provide for in spiritual matters, for the Atonement is finished, the Covenant ratified and, therefore, every promise shall be fulfilled and be, “yes and amen” to us, not only in one tomorrow, but in fifty thousand tomorrows, if so many could run over our heads!

And now just let us utter the words of the text again, very solemnly and earnestly. O young men in all your glory! O maidens in all your beauty! “Boast not yourselves of tomorrow.” The worm may be at your cheeks very soon. O strong men, whose bones are full of marrow! O you mighty men, whose nerves seem of brass and your sinews of steel! “Boast not of tomorrow.” “Howl, fir tree,” for cedars have fallen before now—and though you think yourselves great—God can pull you down. Above all, you gray-heads, “Boast not yourselves of tomorrow,” with one foot hanging over the unfathomable gulf of eternity and the other just tottering on the edge of time! I beseech you do not boast yourselves of tomorrow! In truth I do believe that gray-heads are not less foolish on this point than very childhood. I remember reading a story of a man who wanted to buy his neighbor’s farm next to him and he went to him and asked him whether he would sell it. He said, “No, I will not,” so he went home and said, “Never mind, Farmer So-and-So is an old man! When he is dead, I shall buy it.” The man was seventy and his neighbor sixty-eight—he thought the other would be sure to die before him! It is often so with men. They are making schemes that will only walk over their graves when they will not feel them! The winds shall soon howl across the green turf that covers their tomb, but they shall not hear its wailing. Take care of the “todays.” Look not through the glass of futurity but look at the things of today! “Boast not yourself of tomorrow; for you know not what a day may bring forth.”

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