

To-morrow

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon warns against the folly of boasting about tomorrow, urging believers to live diligently and repent today, as the future is uncertain and cannot be guaranteed.

Scripture: Proverbs 27:1, Ecclesiastes 3:1, Ecclesiastes 9:12, Ephesians 5:15-16, James 4:13-15, Luke 12:20

Topics: "Stewardship of Time", "Repentance"

Description

In this devotional sermon, C.H. Spurgeon explores the biblical wisdom of Proverbs 27:1, cautioning believers against boasting about the future. He emphasizes the uncertainty of life and the folly of delaying repentance or diligent living. Spurgeon encourages his listeners to embrace the present moment with responsibility and spiritual urgency, reminding them that tomorrow is not guaranteed. This sermon blends practical advice with deep spiritual insight, urging a faithful stewardship of time and readiness for eternity.

Transcript

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

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest 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 light. 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 in 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 also 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 that will instruct us in conducting our affairs whilst we are here amongst 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 out house in order for the grave; and hence 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 endeavour 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 to-morrow forbidden in the text; in the second place, I shall mention the right use of to-morrow.

I. First, then, there is THE ABUSE OF TO-MORROW 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 thyself of to-morrow." Oh! my brethren, whoso'er ye be, whether ye be Christians or no, this passage hath a depth of wisdom in it for you. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," 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 estate either of his body or soul. Let a man brag as he will, he is none the greater for his bragging; nay, 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 is he 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 recollect it; it bears very well upon this text, for to-morrow 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 thee next year when thy seed is sown; but glory not in to-morrow, for thou canst sow no seeds of morrows. Morrows come from God; thou hast no right to glory in them. Glory if thou wilt, O fowler, that the birds have once flown to thy 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 thine, or they may rove far off from thy snare. Though many a day has come to thee, 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. To-day hath no brother, it stands alone, and to-morrow 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 to-morrow, 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 thou wilt, O man, but boast not of to-morrow, for it is too unsubstantial. To-morrow, it is a fleeting thing. Thou hast not seen it; why dost thou boast of it? To-morrow, it is a fleeting thing. Thou hast not seen it; why dost thou boast of it? To-morrow, it is the cup which the idiot dreams lieth at the foot of the rainbow. It is not there, nor hath he found it. To-morrow—it is the floating island of Loch Lomond; many have talked of it, but none have seen it. To-morrow—it is the wrecker's beacon, enticing men to the rock of destruction. Boast not thyself of to-morrow; it is the frailest and most brittle thing thou canst imagine. Not glass were half so easily broken as thy to-morrow's joys and thy to-morrow'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 to-morrow; thou hast it not. Boast not of to-morrow; thou mayest never have it. Boast not of to-morrow; if thou hadst it, it would deceive thee. Boast not of to-morrow, for to-morrow thou mayest where morrows will be dreadful things to tremble at.

Boast not thyself of to-morrow, not only because it is extremely foolish, but because it is exceedingly hurtful. Boasting of to-morrow is hurtful to us 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-bye, who ever saved sixpence a week now. I never knew a man who had a 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 mean time. I have heard of a man going to be rich to-morrow, 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 to-morrow, 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 to-day come in with abundance of fish from the depths of time; but they said of them, "They are nothing; there will be heavier draughts to-morrow; there will be greater abundance then. Go away, little ships; an argosy shall come home to-morrow—a very fleet of wealth;" and so they let to-day's wealth go by because they expected the greater wealth of to-morrow; 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 to-morrow? They have said, "True, I cannot pay for this which I now purchase; but I shall to-morrow, for to-morrow I shall roll in wealth, to-morrow, 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 halt, and lame, and 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 of it. Stay while, lest you wast your strength, for you may work to-morrow." I bid them remember that such is not the teaching of Scripture, for that says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;" and I would count myself worse than a fool, if I should throw away my to-days in the expectation of to-morrows, and rest upon the couch of idleness to-day, because I thought the chariot of to-morrow would make up for all my sloth. No, beloved, if we love our God, we shall find enough to do, if we have all our to-morrows, and use all our to-days 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 handsfull, 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 to-morrow.

And, remember, that if you boast of to-morrow, it will not only hurt you to-day, but hurt you to-morrow also. Do you know why? because, as sure as you are alive, you will be disappointed with to-morrow, if you boast of it before it comes. To-morrows 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 to-morrow; you give him such flattering encomiums; "Oh! he is everything; he is perfection." To-days—they are nothing; they are the very sweepings of the floors; but to-morrows—they are the solid gold. Todays—they are exhausted mines, and we get little from them; but to-morrows—they are the very mines of wealth. We have only to get them, and we are rich, immensely rich. The to-morrows are everything; and then the to-morrows come laden with mercy and big with blessings of God; but, notwithstanding, we are disappointed, because to-morrow is not what we expected it to be, even when to-morrow is marvellously

abundant. But sometimes to-morrow 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 expecteth nothing, for he shall never be disappointed."

If we know how to practise 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 recollect, then, that if we would kill the future, if we would ruin the to-morrows, if we would blast 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 thyself of to-morrow;" for thou spoilest the to-morrow by boasting of it.

And then, remember, what disastrous circumstances have occurred to men in this life after to-morrow had gone, from boasting of to-morrows. Ay, there is many a man that set all his hope upon one single thing; and the to-morrow came which he did not expect—perhaps a black and dark to-morrow, and it crushed his hopes to ashes; and 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 to-morrow by over security, and see him there, 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 to-morrows, 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 to-morrow. Nothingness is his; and what is 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 fulness 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 to-morrow had swept over him, with all its blast and mildew of his expectations. See yonder, another; he is famous, he is great; to-morrow comes a slander, and his fame is gone, and his name disgraced. Oh! had he not set his love on that, 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 to-morrows; and mark how sad he walks the earth, because to-morrow has brought him nothing but grief. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

And I would have you remember just one fact; and that I think to be a very important one; that very often when men boast of to-morrow, and are over confident that they shall live, they not only entail great sorrow upon themselves, but upon others also. 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. 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 Whitfield said he could not lie down in bed of 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 practise it. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow."

II. But now I come to dwell upon this in a spiritual manner, for a moment or two. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow." Oh! my beloved friends, never boast of to-morrow 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 to-morrow than it is to-day. 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-bye it will be. Now, is not that a very string of falsehoods? 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 be not easy for him now, how will it be easier in after 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 be dead now, will he not be corrupt before he reaches to-morrow? And when to-morrow 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, ye say it is easy for ye to repent to-morrow; why, then, not to-day? Ye would find the difficulty of it, if you should try it; yea, 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 be vinegar to your taste now, it shall be so then; and if ye love your sins now, ye 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 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 to-morrow, by a pretence that it will be so much easier to repent to-morrow; whereas, it is one of Satan's lies, for it will only be the more difficult.

He boasts of to-morrow, 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 death-bed, 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 "fou" 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 imprecation; 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, and 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 hour-glass. See! it is running. I marked another grain just then, and then another fell; it fell so noiselessly, yet methought I heard it fall. Yes! there it is! The clock's tick is the fall of that grain of dust down from your hour-glass. 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 thou hast time to spare! thou never hadst; man never had. God says, "Haste thee," when he bids men flee from Sodom. Lot had to haste; and depend upon it, when the Spirit speaks in a man's heart, he doth always bid him haste. Under natural convictions, men are very prone to tarry; but the Spirit of God, when he speaks in the heart of man,

always says, "to-day." I never knew a truly anxious soul yet, who was willing to put off till to-morrow. When God the Holy Ghost 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 every one of you to take this into consideration—that there is never time to spare, and that your thought that there is time to spare, is an insinuation of Satan; for when the Spirit pleads with man, he pleads with him with demands of immediate attention. "To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation."

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow," O sinner, as I doubt not thou art doing in another fashion. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow," 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 outvied Babylon itself, in all its majesty. Says one, "I know I shall be better to-morrow; 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 to-morrow." Fool! thou knowest not that thou shalt see to-morrow. Oh! greater fool! thou oughtest to know, that what thou art not willing to do to-day, thou wilt not be willing to do to-morrow. 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 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 the deeper into sin! But he did not think so, and he went to hell with a choice morsel rolling under his tongue—that he should do better directly, and that meant to amend by-and-bye. 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 have been breaking the Sabbath: but you intend to leave it off when you are in another situation. 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: to-morrow you will renounce it, because to-morrow 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 to-morrow 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 sere 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 for aye. Take care, my dear hearers, that none of you are reckoning on to-morrows. I remember the strong but solemn words of Jonathan Edwards, where he says, "Sinner, remember, thou art at this moment standing over the mouth of hell upon a single plank, and that plank is rotten; thou art hanging over the jaws of perdition by a solitary rope, and lo! the strands of that rope are creaking—breaking now, and yet thou talkest of to-morrows!" If thou wert sick, man, wouldst thou send for thy physician to-morrow? If thine house were on fire, wouldst thou call "fire" to-morrow? If thou wert robbed in the street on thy road home, wouldst thou cry "stop thief" to-morrow? No, surely; but thou art 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

to-morrows, 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 thee, boast of to-morrow thyself. David did it once: he said, "My mountain standeth firm, I shall never be moved." Do not boast of your to-morrows. You have feathered your nest pretty well; ay, 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 hitherto, and you are quite sure you will be preserved from sin to-morrow. Take care of to-morrows. Many Christians go tumbling on without a bit of thought; and then, on a sudden, they tumble down and make a mighty mess of their profession. If they would only look sharp after the to-morrows—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 to-morrow as regards his soul's eternal security, for that is in the hand of Christ and safe for ever; but as far as his profession, and comfort, and happiness are concerned, it will well become him to take care of his feet every day. Do not get boasting; if you get boasting of to-morrow, you know the Lord's rule is always to send a canker where we put our pride. And so if you boast of to-morrow, 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; and as certainly as we boast of to-morrow, the worm will gnaw its root, as it did Jonah's gourd, and the to-morrow under which we rested shall, with dropping leaves, only stand a monument to our disappointment. Let us take care, Christian brethren, that we do not waste the present time with hopes of to-morrow—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 to-morrows are not to be boasted of, are they good for nothing? No, blessed be God! There are great many things we may do with to-morrows. 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 to-morrows, "I do not boast of them, but I am not frightened at 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 doth set my heart at rest,

What my God appoints is best."

We may be very easy and very comfortable about to-morrow; 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 be

"Times of trial and of grief;

Times of triumph and relief;

Times the tempter's power to prove,

Times to taste a Saviour's love:

All must come, and last, and end,

As shall please my heavenly Friend."

And, therefore, we may look upon the to-morrows 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."

Yea, more, a Christian may rightly look forwards to his to-morrows, not simply with resignation, but also with joy. To-morrow to a Christian is a happy thing, it is one stage nearer glory. To-morrow! 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. To-morrow, it is a fresh lamp of fulfilled promise 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. To-morrow, the Christian may rejoice at it; he may say of to-day, "O day, thou mayest be black, but I shall bid thee good-bye, for lo, I see the morrow coming, and I shall mount upon its wings, and shall flee away and leave thee and thy sorrows far behind me."

And, moreover, the Christian may await to-morrow 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 to-morrow his Lord may come. To-morrow Christ may be upon this earth, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." To-morrow, all the glories of millennial splendour may be revealed; to-morrow, the thrones of judgment may be set, and the King may summon the people to judgment. To-morrow, we may be in heaven; to-morrow, we may be on the breast of Christ; to-morrow, ay, before then, this head may wear a crown, this hand may wave the palm, this lip may sing the son, this foot may tread the streets of gold, this heart may be full of bliss, immortal, everlasting, eternal. Be of good cheer, oh, fellow-Christian; to-morrow can have nothing black in it to thee, for it must work for thy good, but 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 mayhap, also, it may have in it the precious jewel of eternity; for wrapt up within to-morrow may be all the glories of immortality. Anoint thine head with fresh oil of gladness at the prospect of each coming day. Boast not of to-morrow, but often comfort thyself with it. Thou hast a right to do so; it cannot be a bad tomorrow to thee; it may be the best day of thy life, for it may be thy last.

And yet, another hint. To-morrow ought to be observed by Christians in the way of providence. Though we may not boast of to-morrow, 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 to-morrow 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 to-morrow. No, how can I do that? How can I put myself into such a position that I can carry out this command 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 after days, if I did not do it, you might preach to me 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 practise it; I should still be at some time or other taking thought for the morrow. But let me go to one of the

many of the excellent institutions which exist, and let me see that all is provided for, I come home and say, "Now, I know how to practise 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 bowels of the commandments to do that? If God has pleased to put into the hearts of wise men to devise something that should in some way ameliorate 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 enable 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 carried 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; but 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 alehouses and pothouses; but wherever there is a Christian society, I must endeavour 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 want 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 do, and that is, he has not to provide salvation, nor 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 to-day's grace, as though it were enough for to-morrow. But you need not be afraid. With to-morrow's difficulties there will be to-morrow's help; with to-morrow's foes, to-morrow's friends; with to-morrow's dangers, to-morrow's preservations. Let us look forward, then, to to-morrow 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 "yea and amen" to us, not only in one to-morrow, but in fifty thousand to-morrows, 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 to-morrow." The worm may be at your cheeks very soon. O strong men, whose bones are full of marrow! O ye mighty men, whose nerves seem of brass, and your sinews of steel! "Boast not of to-morrow." "How, fir tree," for cedars have fallen ere now; and though you think yourselves great, God can pull you down. Above all, ye grey heads, "Boast not yourselves of to-morrow," 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 to-morrow. In truth I do believe that grey heads are not less foolish on this point than very childhood. I remember reading a story of a man who

wanted to buy his neighbour'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 neighbour 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 sward that covers their tomb, but they shall not hear its wailing. Take care of the "to-days." Look not through the glass of futurity; but look at the things of to-day. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

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