

DAY BY DAY

Bible Texts and Topics, With Comments,
For Personal Study and Use at Family Worship.

3.10: WISDOM

1. FEAR NOT

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded: they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shall not find them, even them that contended with thee: they that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of naught. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and you men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 41:10-14.

“Let us be hopeful and courageous. Despondency in God's service is sinful and unreasonable. He knows our every necessity. He has all power. He can bestow upon His servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands. His infinite love and compassion never weary. With the majesty of omnipotence He unites the gentleness and care of a tender shepherd. We need have no fear that He will not fulfill His promises. He is eternal truth. Never will He change the covenant that He has made with those that love Him. His promises to His church stand fast forever. He will make her an eternal excellence, a joy of many generations.” Testimonies 8, 38, 39.

“I ask not, Lord, for courage bold to stand before the kings of earth,
Nor yet to face, 'mid armed foes, strong, the heathen giant's sword alone;
Not lions' den, nor furnace heat, not warrior's zeal for fight so strong
That I would need day's time to stretch to half again its length or more.
But I do ask, dear Lord, for love from Thee, from which all courage grows;
That if perchance today I wrong some loved one, neighbor, friend, or foes,
I courage have to go to him, before declining sun shall set,
And with heartfelt contrition beg his full forgiveness while I may.
When appetite shall tempt me sore, or lustful passion all but floor;
When willful temper does control, ruin spread throughout my soul;
When haughty pride and costly, too, makes me to think of naught but self,
Oh, then, my God, give courage, pray, to let Thee have in me Thy way.
Oh, give me courage, then, to see what Thy great love would do for me.
And courage give to calmly look at the sad wreck that sin has wrought;
Courage to go down on my knees and be washed clean from all of these;
Courage to walk and trust Thee too, to lead me all life's journey through.” Robert Hare.

2. THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

“The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

“For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are. That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, he that glories, let him glory in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

“Christ was hated by the world because He was not of the world. Can His followers expect to fare better than their Master? If we pass along without receiving censure or frowns from the world, we may be alarmed, for it is our conformity to the world which makes us so much like them that there is nothing to arouse their envy or malice; there is no collision of spirits. The world despise the cross. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." 1 Corinthians 1:18. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14. Testimonies 1, 525.

“If those who today are teaching the word of God, would uplift the cross of Christ higher and still higher, their ministry would be far more successful. If sinners can be led to give one earnest look at the cross, if they can obtain a full view of the crucified Savior, they will realize the depth of God's compassion and the sinfulness of sin.

“Christ's death proves God's great love for man. It is our pledge of salvation. To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting the sun from the sky. The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. With the relenting compassion of a father's love, Jehovah looks upon the suffering that His Son endured in order to save the race from eternal death, and accepts us in the Beloved.

“Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope. From it shines the light of the Savior's love; and when at the foot of the cross the sinner looks up to the one who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling in faith at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain.” Acts of the Apostles, 209, 210.

3. THE TWO HOUSES

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” Matthew 7:24-27.

“You are God's husbandry; you are God's building.” 1 Corinthians 3:9. This figure represents human character, which is to be wrought upon, point by point. Each day God works with His building, stroke upon stroke, to perfect the structure, that it may become a holy temple for Him. Man is to cooperate with God. Each worker is to become just what God designs him to be, building his life with pure, noble deeds, that in the end his character may be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by God and

man. There is to be no flaw in the building, for it is the Lord's. Every stone must be perfectly laid, that it may endure the pressure placed upon it. One stone laid wrong will affect the whole building.

"To you and to every other worker God gives the warning: "Take heed how you build, that your building may stand the test of storm and tempest, because it is founded on the eternal Rock. Place the stone on the sure foundation, that you may make ready for the day of test and trial, when all will be seen just as they are." Testimonies 8, 173.

"Christ set forth the principles of His kingdom, and showed them to be the great rule of life. To impress the lesson He adds an illustration. It is not enough, He says, for you to hear My words. By obedience you must make them the foundation of your character. Self is but shifting sand. If you build upon human theories and inventions, your house will fall. By the winds of temptation, the tempests of trial, it will be swept away. But these principles that I have given will endure. Receive Me, build on My words." The Desire of Ages, 314.

"But a better than earthly reward awaits those who, basing their work on the solid Rock, build up symmetrical characters, in accordance with the living word. For them is prepared "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Hebrews 11:10. Its streets are paved with gold. In it is the Paradise of God, watered by the river of life, which proceeds from the throne. In the midst of the street, and on either side of the river, is the tree of life, which yields its fruit every month, "and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."

"Parents, teachers, students, remember that you are building for eternity. See that your foundation is sure; then build firmly, and with persistent effort, but in gentleness, meekness, and love. So shall your house stand unshaken, not only when the storms of temptation come, but when the overwhelming flood of God's wrath shall sweep over the world." Special Testimonies on Education, pages 76, 77.

4. A WARNING AGAINST WORLDLINESS

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." I John 2:15-17.

"The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself; this consecration to God and separation from the world is plainly and positively enjoined in both the Old and the New Testament. There is a wall of separation which the Lord Himself has established between the things of the world and the things He has chosen out of the world and sanctified unto Himself. The calling and character of God's people are peculiar, their prospects are peculiar, and these peculiarities distinguish them from all other people.

"All of God's people upon the earth are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. They have one Head that directs and governs the body. The same injunctions that rested upon ancient Israel, rest upon God's people now, to be separate from the world. The great Head of the church has not changed. The experience of Christians in these days is much like the travels of ancient Israel." Testimonies 1, 283, 284.

"Christ does not say that man will not or shall not serve two masters, but that he cannot. The interests of God and the interests of mammon have no union or sympathy just where the conscience of the Christian warns him to forbear, to deny himself, to stop, just there the worldling steps over the line, to indulge his selfish propensities. On one side of the line is the self-denying follower of Christ; on the other side is the self-indulgent world lover, pandering to fashion, engaging in frivolity, and pampering himself in forbidden pleasure. On that side of the line the Christian cannot go.

“No one can occupy a neutral position; there is no middle class, who neither love God nor serve the enemy of righteousness. Christ is to live in His human agents, and work through their faculties, and act through their capabilities. Their will must be submitted to His will; they must act with His Spirit. Then it is no more they that live, but Christ that lives in them.

“He who does not give himself wholly to God, is under the control of another power, listening to another voice, whose suggestions are of an entirely different character. Half-and-half service places the human agent on the side of the enemy, as a successful ally of the hosts of darkness. When men who claim to be soldiers of Christ engage with the confederacy of Satan, and help along his side, they prove themselves enemies of Christ. They betray sacred trusts. They form a link between Satan and the true soldiers, so that through these agencies the enemy is constantly working to steal away the hearts of Christ's soldiers.” Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, 139, 140.

5. THE ARMOR OF GOD

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Ephesians 6:10-18.

“If there is ever one time above another when men need to preserve their connection with God, it is when they are called to bear special responsibility. It is not safe for us, when going into battle, to cast away our weapons. It is then that we need to be equipped with the whole armor of God. Every piece is essential.” Testimonies 7, 190.

“Let truth telling be held with no loose hand or uncertain grasp. Let it become a part of the life. Playing fast and loose with truth, and dissembling to suit one's own selfish plans, means shipwreck of faith “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.” He who utters untruths, sells his soul in a cheap market. His falsehoods may seem to serve in emergencies; he may thus seem to make business advancement that he could not gain by fair dealing; but he finally reaches the place where he can trust no one....

“In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the sin of fraud against God was speedily punished. The same sin was often repeated in the after history of the church, and is committed by many in our time. But though it may not be attended by the visible manifestation of God's displeasure, it is no less heinous in His sight now than in the apostles' time. The warning has been given; God has clearly manifested His abhorrence of this sin; and all who give themselves up to hypocrisy and covetousness may be sure that they are destroying their own souls.” Acts of the Apostles, 76.

“Let those who hold the truth in righteousness arouse, and go forth, shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, to proclaim the truth to those who know it not. Let them make straight paths for their feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way.” Testimonies 8, 211, 212.

“Said the angel, “Gird the armor about thee, and above all take the shield of faith; for that will guard the heart, the very life, from the fiery darts of the wicked.” If the enemy can lead the desponding to take their eyes off from Jesus, and look to themselves, and dwell upon their own unworthiness, instead of

dwelling upon the worthiness of Jesus, His love, His merits, and His great mercy, he will get away their shield of faith, and gain his object. They will be exposed to his fiery temptations. The weak should therefore look to Jesus, and believe in Him; they then exercise faith." Early Writings, 73.

6. THE CROSS BEFORE THE CROWN

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." 2 Timothy 2:8-13.

"He whose heart is fixed to serve God will find opportunity to witness for Him. Difficulties will be powerless to hinder him who is determined to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. In the strength gained by prayer and a study of the word, he will seek virtue and forsake vice. Looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of the faith, who endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself, the believer will willingly brave contempt and derision. And help and grace sufficient for every circumstance are promised by Him whose word is truth. His everlasting arms encircle the soul that turns to Him for aid. In His care we may rest safely, saying, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." To all who put their trust in Him, God will fulfill His promise.

"By His own example the Savior has shown that His followers can be in the world, and yet not of the world. He came not to partake of its delusive pleasures, to be swayed by its customs, and to follow its practices, but to do His Father's will, to seek and save the lost. With this object before him, the Christian may stand uncontaminated in any surroundings. Whatever his station or circumstances, exalted or humble, he will manifest the power of true religion in the faithful performance of duty.

"Not in freedom from trial, but in the midst of it is Christian character developed. Exposure to rebuffs and opposition leads the follower of Christ to greater watchfulness, and more earnest prayer to the mighty, Helper. Severe trial endured by the grace of God develops patience, vigilance, fortitude, and a deep and abiding trust in God. It is the triumph of the Christian faith that it enables its follower to suffer and be strong; to submit, and thus to conquer; to be killed all the day long, and yet to live. To bear the cross, and thus to win the crown of glory." Acts of the Apostles, 467, 468.

"Not a good time, but a Godlike character, is the only true aim for a life. Hence, while God never fails us in need, He loves us too well to relieve us of weights which are essential to our best growth and to the largest fruitfulness of our life. . . . He puts strength in us to enable us to carry the burden, and thus grow strong." J. R. Miller.

7. THE "WHATSOEVER THINGS"

"Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which you have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians 4:4-9.

“Those who would not fall a prey to Satan's devices must guard well the avenues of the soul; they must avoid reading, seeing, or hearing that which will suggest impure thoughts. The mind should not be left to wander at random upon every subject that the adversary of souls may suggest. “Girding up the loins of your mind,” says the apostle Peter, “be sober. . . . not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in your ignorance; but like as He which called you is holy, be you yourselves also holy in all manner of living.” I Peter 1:13-15, R.V.

“Says Paul, “Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Philipians 4:8. This will require earnest prayer and unceasing watchfulness.

“We must be aided by the abiding influence of the Holy Spirit, which will attract the mind upward, and habituate it to dwell on pure and holy things. And we must give diligent study to the word of God. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word.” “Thy word,” says the psalmist, “have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” Psalm 119:9, 11. Patriarchs and Prophets, 460.

“The apostle's exhortation should be explicitly followed. There is often a great temptation to talk of things which do not profit the speaker or the hearer, but which bring evil and barrenness to both. Our probationary time is too brief to be spent in dwelling upon the shortcomings of others. We have a work before us which requires the closest diligence and the strictest watchfulness, united with unceasing prayer, or we shall be unable to overcome the defects in our characters, and to copy the divine Pattern. We should all study to imitate the life of Christ. Then we shall have a sanctifying influence upon those with whom we associate. It is a wonderful thing to be a Christian, truly Christ like, peaceable, pure, and undefiled.” Testimonies 4, 135.

“Heavenly Father, I implore Your aid and protection through the ensuing day. Make me to walk in Thy ways, and so I shall be blessed. Give me the strength to do that which is righteous in Thy sight, and may no allurements of pleasure wile my heart away from Thee.” Hannah More.

"It All Comes By Chance." An English lady who had forsaken her God and the Bible, for the gloom and darkness of infidelity, was crossing the Atlantic, and asked a pious sailor one morning, how long they should be out. "In fourteen days, if it is God's will, we shall be in Liverpool," answered the sailor. "If it is God's will!" said the lady scornfully, "what a senseless expression! Don't you know that it all comes by chance?"

In a few days a terrible storm arose, and the lady stood clinging to the side of her cabin door in an agony of terror, when the same sailor passed her. "What do you think?" said she, "will the storm soon be over?"

"It seems likely to last for some time, madam."

"Oh!" she cried, "pray that we may not be lost."

His only and calm reply was, "Shall I pray to chance?"