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HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE.

ON this winged hour eternity depends. Both the kind and degree of eternal retribution will be determined by present conduct: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." How then shall a man *make the most of life*?

KNOW YOURSELF. Self-knowledge is first in order. The prodigal first "came to himself," and then to his father. The royal Psalmist says, "I thought on *my* ways, and turned my feet unto *thy* testimonies." If you would gain correct knowledge of yourself, you must receive the Scriptural account of human nature as true of *you*.

KNOW GOD. He maintains your life. From him all goodness flows. To know him as revealed in Christ Jesus, is eternal life begun on earth. "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." Honor the Son, even as you honor the Father. Receive the Holy Ghost. To the sacred Three in One consecrate all you have, and are, and hope for.

DEVOTE YOUR LIFE TO DOING GOOD. Your obligations to usefulness are perpetual, indissoluble, and mighty. Nothing can remit them. They result from your nature, and your relations to God and man. In doing good,

DISCERN THE NATURE OF THINGS. Make a careful selection. Squander nothing on unworthy objects, or in unworthy pursuits. Learn to judge of both men and things.

WATCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES. Henry Martyn, with all his zeal, says he lost, through inattention, the best opportunity of usefulness which he had for many months in India. "Oh that our heads were waters," exclaims Cotton Mather, "because they have been so dry of all thoughts to do good. Oh that our eyes were a fountain of tears, because they have looked so little for occasions to do good." "As we have therefore *opportunity*, let us do good unto all men."

LET YOUR ABILITY BE THE RULE OF YOUR EFFORTS. "Get all you can, save all you can, give all you can," do all you can. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted ac-

ording to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it."

NEVER QUIT CERTAINTY FOR HOPE. Never abandon a sure way of doing good for some doubtful scheme. Conform your plans to the rules of God's providence, and the dictates of a sober mind. Beware of the habit of originating devices which you do not intend to execute.

PERSEVERE. When you have made a good beginning, do not think the work done. Call not a commencement the completion. "Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." Have "long patience," and you shall have "precious fruits."

BE IMPARTIAL. Never favor one good cause or object of charity to the prejudice of another. It was a shame for the early Christians to wrangle about the comparative merits of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. They all had excellent gifts and more excellent graces. 'Tis a mark of folly, yea, it is a sin to undervalue objects merely because we are not engaged in promoting them. Therefore encourage whatever promises substantial good.

DEFER NOT. To assign to the future what God assigns to the present, is very hazardous. One would not give any until he could give a large sum: when he had a large part of the desired sum, he lost it by fire. Another deferred, for one hour, a warning which he intended to give an unconverted friend: at the end of the hour, the unconverted man was in eternity. "Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee." To-morrow is not thine.

ACT FROM PRINCIPLE. What you do, do not from persuasion, or fancy, or ostentation, or to avoid importunity. You have a rational soul. Make use of it. Be fully persuaded and firmly established in good *principles*.

LIVE BY RULE. Be systematic in your charities and efforts. If there be irregularity in your life, let it come from the overflowings of your benevolence breaking over a well-constructed system of usefulness.

BE HEARTY IN ALL YOUR LABORS. Let not your head, and hands, and tongue be busy, and your heart idle. Results by their greatness will surprise the truly engaged, while the double-minded will wonder that so little good is

done. When the walls of Jerusalem went up rapidly, it was because "the people had a mind to build." "The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing."

ENLIST OTHERS. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "Two are better than one." "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth." "A threefold cord is not quickly broken." "One shall chase a thousand, and *two* shall put *ten thousand* to flight." Despise not the services of any *in their appropriate sphere*. A little captive maid knew more about the man of God in Palestine, than did the king of Israel, and was the means of saving her master Naaman.

ESPECIALLY ENLIST GOD. His foolishness is wiser than men, and his weakness is stronger than men. He charges his angels with folly. His word is power. His will is victory. He makes the feeble like David, and David like the angel of God. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." He who prays aright, wins the heart that wields the arm that moves the world.

BE DETERMINED. Timidity awakens opposition from the cowardly. Men will not rally around him whose heart is not fixed. But let a man himself be intrepid and unwavering, and his friends will be; and difficulty will vanish.

AIM HIGH. Desire great things, meditate great things, attempt great things; then let your efforts correspond, and, with God's blessing, you will accomplish great things. *Yet undertake not too much*. Be not grasping after things beyond your reach, or above your strength.

BE MINDFUL OF LITTLE THINGS. Nothing is of little importance which possesses, even in its results, the attribute of eternity. Despise not the day of small things. "Sands form the mountains, minutes make the year."

SPARE NOT THYSELF. The greatest good is only accomplished by the greatest pains. "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully."

MAINTAIN CHEERFULNESS. The demon of melancholy unnerves religious effort. Be joyful in the Lord; for the joy of the Lord is strength. Rarely will you find a better motto than this: "*Serve God, and be cheerful.*"

BE OF GOOD COURAGE. In the Christian course, cowardice alone is the loss of nearly every victory. It is needless,

it is wicked. "The voice that rolls the stars along, spake all the promises."

BE NOT FAITHLESS. Have faith in God. The greatest good is generally done in the face of the greatest discouragements. It was a saying of Andrew Fuller, "Only let us have faith in God, and we shall not lack the means of doing good." "Lord, increase our faith," is perhaps the best prayer the disciples offered during Christ's ministry on earth.

HOPE AGAINST HOPE. Nothing is too hard for God. Eliot used to say, "Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, can accomplish any purpose." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

LET YOUR CHARITY ABOUND. Be it your meat and your drink to do good.

"Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?
 Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?
 Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief?
 Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold.
 'Tis when the rose is wrapt in many a fold,
 Close to its heart the worm is wasting there
 Its life and beauty: not when all unrolled,
 Leaf after leaf, its blossom rich and fair
 Breathes freely its perfumes throughout the ambient air."

BE HUMBLE. "When you have done all, acknowledge that you are nothing, that you deserve nothing, and that God has a right to do with you as seems good to him." If you attain or accomplish any thing, say, "It was not I, but the grace of God."

NEVER FORGET THE JUDGMENT-DAY. Keep it always in view. Frame every action in reference to its unchanging decisions.

And now may you be blessed of God, who "is able to make all grace abound towards you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work; being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth," through the saints, "thanksgiving to God."
THUS SHALL YOU MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE.