

This Is the Day to Rejoice

Psalms 118:19-29 As I looked through my mother's things after her death, I found a beautiful writing she clipped from a church paper. I do not know who wrote it, but I made copies of it and passed it out at Mother's memorial service. The title of it is "The Gift of a Day." I have included it at the end of today's devotional. It expresses what this psalm says: "This is the day the Lord has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it" (v. 24). The following poem is included in the reading:

Build a little fence of trust, just around today;

Fill the space with loving work, and therein stay.

Look not through the sheltering bars upon tomorrow.

God will help thee bear whatever comes of joy or sorrow.

As we arise in the morning we never know what will be facing us during the day. The good news is that God knows, and I believe if we will take time in His presence every morning He will prepare us to bear whatever we face, whether it be joy or sorrow. I especially remember the Lord preparing me in the morning for the day I hit a little eight-year-old boy with my car. It was an accident, and thanks to much prayer, the boy was spared. I even had the opportunity later to lead him to the Lord. On the morning of this accident, however, the Lord kept drawing me to spend more time with Him. As I was praying, there was a bird singing the most beautiful song just outside the window. It seemed as if the joy of the Lord came from that bird's song right into my soul and I was strengthened. I needed that extra measure of strength for what I faced that day. Each day is truly a gift from God, and whether it be joy or sorrow that we face, we can trust the Lord to see us through the day. One of my favorite phrases in the Bible is, "It came to pass." Whatever we are enduring on this earth, it too will pass.

The author of "The Gift of the Day" writes, "The gift of a day being what it is, surely we cannot maintain an indifferent attitude toward the Giver of it." What we receive each morning indeed is a sacred and solemn trust. How base were it then to abase it and abuse it, to spend any part of our day in ways from which He who gives it must avert His face! Let's ask Him to help us to use it as He wills.

It has been my custom to give the day to the Lord the first thing in the morning. I pray the following prayer; maybe you would like to join me this morning:

Father, I thank You for this day. It is truly a gift, so I give it into Your hands. Use me in any way You see fit today, and put me in the right place at the right time. I commit my words to You so that You may establish my thoughts. I commit myself and all I have planned for the day to You. Order it Your way.

**READ: 2 Samuel 1:1-2:11; John 12:20-50; Psalm 118:19-29;
Proverbs 15:27-28**

THE GIFT OF A DAY

The burden of the day is often enough in our thoughts, and the duty of the day is not likely to lie forgotten. But what we constantly overlook is the much happier, and equally true idea, of the gift of a day. We receive a valuable present every morning—for the most part, thanklessly. We ask God to give us this day our daily bread, and we return thanks for that when it is set before us. But which of us remembers that He gives, not only the bread, but the day as well?

Stevenson declares that when a man who has got well beyond seventy lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Even for the most youthful, however, sleep is a hazardous adventure. Our personality dies every twenty-four hours. Yet the spirit returns to its tabernacle; we wake again exactly to

what we left last night, with never a gap in the seam to show the joining. What brings me back? Perfectly sure am I that I had nothing to do with it. I received a precious gift this morning. Someone has given me this day. Moreover, it is not yesterday that we get back, but a new day. You went to bed last night tired and worn. And when God brought you His gift this morning, behold, He had smoothed out all the weariness and had added strength and energy.

When we think of what a day brings, we are compelled to recognize the pure unmerited grace of giving. When our eyes open on a spring morning, how boundless are the riches within the reach of the poorest of us. The air, the sky, the song of the birds, the colors—all priceless things, and your entire very own, if you can only take them. There's nobody so poor that he cannot afford a spring day. Each morning we rise to a clean sheet on which we may write what we please. We have a chance to work, be kind, learn and pray. This morning was a blank check, valid for just as much as we liked to take.

And while we look with shame upon the time that we have wasted, every morning God in His mercy lets us begin again. Yesterday you were sad and gloomy. Today is your chance to prove yourself an unconquerable soul. Yesterday you spoke unkindly to a friend. Today you can go and tell him you are sorry. Every morning, God in His mercy lets us begin again.

Perhaps there is a hidden blessing in the fact that God's gift is only a day, that we are tenants of life only between sleeps. Around His gift God built a fence of night and unconsciousness as if each day were meant to stand by itself.

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Author unknown

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