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DAILY WALK

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DAILY WALK.

EPHESIANS iv. 22-32.

You will remark, beloved, that in Paul's Epistle to the Colossian saints, the Apostle writes thus:—“Seeing that *ye have put off* the old man;” whilst here, in these verses, he exhorts them thus:—“*That ye put off* the old man.” In the one epistle he speaks of this putting off of the old man as a thing already done, whilst in the other as a thing to be done.

Now, though there is an apparent contradiction in the words he employs, yet in truth they agree. Most blessedly true it is that the old man on the cross *has been* put off; and it is equally true that now, in our lives, we must put it off.

How is this? Why thus:—In the Epistle to the Colossians, Paul is speaking of the old man in its judicial relation to the death of Christ—looking at it in the light of the doom which befel it on the cross; and viewed as having died *there*, he declares that it has been put off. It was laid upon Jesus; He bore it on the tree; and having, by His own

death, atoned for its sin, He put it off. Ah, beloved, this is the Gospel; and how blessed to the soul that knows and believes it! *His* death is reckoned by God as *my* death. In a blessedly true sense, I, who deserved death, have had my desert in Him; the "old man," *self*, has been put off. Its sin, condemnation, and doom, have all been met on the cross.

But though the old man is crucified judicially, yet *morally* it is not dead—not yet put off. Hence the exhortation of the Holy Ghost here in Ephesians: "That ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

It is as if the Apostle had said, "See what God has done with the old man; see Him in righteousness manifesting His full judgment upon it at the cross, there, in holiness and righteousness, putting it away. Now, do you, Ephesians, deal with yourselves according to the same. Let your life be according to what was done at the cross; let your walk, daily and hourly, correspond with *that*." Do you understand? God saw our nature, the old man—*one's-self*—corrupt, dead. And without any attempt at altering, amending, or changing it, He brings it to a doom corresponding to its condition.

He brings it to an end at the cross. He has given His own beloved Son, that He may taste death in all its misery, as God's judgment upon our utterly corrupt selves. It was sin that led us into death. The wages of sin is death. It was to take our death that Christ died. His soul was made an offering for sin. On the cross, the cords which bound the Lord of Life and Glory to our sin, were loosed by death; for having died for sin, no more was required. Therefore, seeing I died with Him, let me henceforth be loosed from the chains of sin practically. The cords which bound the sacrifice in Aaronic times, bound to the victim the whole load of Israel's sin and transgressions. So was it with our Divine Victim. "The Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all;" and when He put away sin, He put off the old man—our old self—with all its inbred corruption and its outward transgressions; and when Christ died, having put away sin, it was according to Divine equity and justice that God should raise Him from the dead, and that we also who were dead, and for whom He died, should be saved. Hence God can now be just, and yet "the justifier of him *that believeth in Jesus.*"

And now, beloved, you who are quickened, and have been raised up together with Christ, and made to sit in heavenly places in Him, see to it that your

life, your walk here below, corresponds to your blessed position of holiness, rest, and acceptance *there*; see to it that you put off all those things which belong to the old man. This, in few words, is the Apostle's argument. And now, if I am to speak here of the walk of Christians, I would say there are many, alas! who do not hesitate to take the putting off of self, the old man, by Christ on the cross *for salvation*, who seem sadly to fail in taking the putting off of the same for *separation*. They seem careless of evil. There is an urgent need of a solemn practical word on this. May the Lord help and teach us.

Some never seem to have judged the evil that is within them, or the evil that is in the world, in the light of God. [It is in that light, through the Divine nature that is in us, that we can judge both good and evil. For true holiness is not ignorance of evil, or innocence of it even, as was the case at the first with Adam; but *separation from it*. But to separate from evil, it must be known to be such. And having judged it to be such, the soul born of God inwardly dislikes it. It is blessed where it is judged without reserve, and the whole will goes against it. Self and all its ways are evil. That which received its doom upon the cross is now judged by conscience before God to *be* evil, and is morally and practically condemned.

But if there be no self-judgment of evil, the Divine nature within us is denied, communion becomes a mere name, worship before God hindered, and weakness of soul in service, will, sooner or later, be evident. Hence the failure of so many.

It is as dead and risen with Christ that we can best judge of evil. We have put off the old man; that is, we have been dead together with Christ. We have put on the new man; that is, we are risen together with Christ—freed, judicially, from sin, holy, righteous together with Him, and are as He is, in heavenly places. It is in such scenes that God sees us in Christ; and we are to walk in the light of what He sees. That is a solemn word, “if.” If we walk in the light, we have fellowship with the Father and His Son Christ Jesus. Hence we may be saved, justified, accepted before God, yet we may not walk in the light, may not have fellowship. Such is the condition of those who have no exercised souls as to evil, or who trifle with their consciences when exercised.

A saint's ways should be according to his standing before God. And our standing is one of perfectness, completeness, before God, through the precious blood of Christ. Is Christ there? He is there for us, and we are made nigh to God even as He is nigh—holy, righteous, accepted in the Beloved. What a life, then, should be ours!

B

And so, mark, the Apostle argues:—"Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another," "Putting away *lying*," for lying belongs to the old man, and is no characteristic of that new nature which is created after God. And remember, beloved, it is not unconverted sinners whom I am addressing, but I am speaking to you, believers; to you the Apostle writes, "Put away lying, and speak every man truth." In Colossians the same injunction is repeated—"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off, the old man with his deeds." Ah! when tempted to give a false statement, or not *the whole statement*, think and say, "Oh! no; that is the offspring to the old man which was put off at the cross. It has no place before God, and it must have no place in me. Like Joshua, who put his foot on the necks of the kings of Canaan, you must put your foot upon the neck of this evil. But the Apostle goes on to say, that not only is *direct* lying not to be allowed, but—"Speak every man truth with his neighbour." Not only is it not to be a lie which you speak, but what you say is to be exact *truth*. For example, if you know a certain report to be false, but if, in repeating it, you only say that you *heard* the statement, without adding that you know it to be untrue,—then you are not speaking the truth.

Alas! all character becomes quite ruined when given up to any such unregenerate influences. But oh! what a knife to the flesh, as to untruthfulness in Christians, are all these inspired admonitions!

The Apostle adds—"Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." I know there are Christians who think far too lightly of anger as well as truth. They are impatient of contradiction, peevish under denial, fretful, and sometimes scornful of others. They suffer the sun to go down upon their wrath. How little are such the epistles of Christ. Oh! beloved, when your servant never sees God's mind, or your wife refuses to read Christ, in His word, believe me, they may and ought to read Him in the page of your daily life; they cannot *help* reading *you*; and so, too, your children—they daily read your walk. Says one—"There must be something in my father that is quite different to what I have got; there must be something that I do not understand; it makes him so calm and forbearing. When brother comes home in a passion enough to move an angel, he is sad but so calm. Oh! if it be Christ that makes his life so lovely, then I should like to be Christ's." O ye who are the opposite of this, do not *talk* of Christ if you do not *live* Christ; it will come out soon whether yours has been hollow profession, or whether truly you are Christ's. Let me say to you, save yourselves

and the friend, the child, whom you have injured. But there may be anger and not sin. God, we are told, is angry. We may well feel and act in our measure according to God. But an evil disposition is not of God, it is not of the new nature, but belongs to the old man. Is railing or revenge Christ-like? Oh! beloved, for the answer to that, look in again at that room where the ten disciples of Jesus are gathered. Peter was one of the number—Peter, who had cursed and had sworn—Peter, who, in a moment of cowardice, had basely betrayed his Lord. The others, too, had cruelly left Him all alone in His hour of bitter agony. We have seen how graciously the blessed Lord deals with them as He gets alone with them on that resurrection day. How sparing of reproach. Did He turn to Peter and the rest and say—

“I have no word for you until I have had an understanding with you?” Oh! no, indeed; not a word of the kind, but “Peace, peace.” You see, beloved, not yet had the sun risen when He stands beside His own empty tomb, and there appears to and comforts the weeping Mary; and scarcely had the sun set on that same day, when He appears to Peter and the other disciples, and breathes “Peace, peace.” Now, Paul exhorts us to walk as He walked. Says the Apostle—“Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” Better,

indeed, that it should never have risen upon it; but, since it may have risen on it, let it not go down upon it; for wrath is of the evil one, and belongs to the old man, and must be put away. Oh! what sight more sad than that of the sun going along all day, shining on the evil tempers of a Christian, and finally going down upon the same! There is only one person on whom I feel at liberty to bestow my anger, and that is *myself*, because of the evil I know to be in me—the plague of the sin that besets, and the evil that is present. But as to saints, yea, all saints, how can I speak an irascible word, or look with coldness or contempt upon them, when I know that soon I shall stand, eye to eye and foot to foot, with them in that yonder glorious scene. Ah! then the ocean of the glory will swallow up all the pebbles and pools of our differences. They will be all forgotten there; every eye centred on *Him*, every thought occupied with *Him*. Oh! beloved, this is no surface religion. Of what avail is it that you make profession of love, if, all the while, the sun is going on and on, till it go *down* upon your wrath. You are professing but not manifesting the mind that was in Christ.

Shall I go on with this daily walk of the Christian, which is here so blessedly connected with Christ? Well, says the Apostle—“Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour,

working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Is this impossible, that a Christian should be ensnared by the devil into such an evil? Nay, not with such a heart as he has, and such an enemy. But this reminds you of more than that you are not to rob your neighbour's *goods*. By misrepresentation, by exaggeration, or tale-bearing, you may steal the good character, or the good name of one whom you call your brother or friend—alas! many do.

But, now, what a word is this—"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Let your eye drop on the fourth verse of the next chapter. There you will find an injunction which bears upon what we have here. "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks." This is most important; and you will notice that these words are addressed to you and to me as saints; the Apostle is not writing to the unconverted; no; but to *saints*. He says—"nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient." Bad words, foolish words, like bad fruit, have rottenness in them. They are corrupt. And oh, what a penalty to pay to be obliged to listen to them! A Christian, whose converse bears the stamp of levity, of frivolity—a Christian,

whose daily intercourse breathes the tone of flippancy—what sight more sad? A trifling Christian, what a melancholy contradiction! To find an aged Christian, who professes to have long known the solid joy of the love of God, indulging in the empty joke and the hollow laugh, is indeed, one of the saddest sights. But do I denounce cheerfulness, or forbid that a Christian should be joyous? Oh! no, indeed, for surely, of all persons, the Christian alone possesses the key to true lasting joy. I do not believe in a melancholy, morose Christian; but give me cheerfulness without levity, and joyousness without frivolity. Religion, Christ, was never designed to deprive us of, but to sanctify and deepen every true delight. But I repeat it—to find a Christian, whose lips have been consecrated with the blood of Jesus, and thereby set apart for *Him* alone—to find such an one employing his speech in foolish and unworthy conversation, how lamentable! Oh! beloved, remember that now the Lord has no lips to speak for Him here below but yours.

“Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” In the Aaronic arrangement, you remember, that not only was the hand tipped with blood, to teach the Israelite that he must touch nothing that was contrary to that blood, but his ear was also sprinkled with blood, to show that he might *listen* to nothing

that was contrary to God; his feet, too, bore traces of the blood, enjoining him that he must ever walk according to the mind of God. So, too, in principle, it is true of the saints, now; of them, it is true, that their ear, their foot, their hand, and, we may add, their lip, is marked with covenant blood; the blood is upon their whole person, to show that the whole man, body, soul and spirit, should be consecrated to the Lord. So, beloved, when the idle word rises upon the lip, put your finger upon it, and repress it; and because of Christ, put all jesting and foolish talking away. But this does not forbid divine joyousness. No, indeed. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, making melody in your hearts unto the Lord. What! Are we to be always singing? and singing hymns? We would if we could. And if any tire of singing the praises of Jesus, they are wanting in one of the elements needful for heaven. There it will be always praise; always singing; always praising the Lamb; always singing unto Him that loved us. Oh! how sweet the hymn in which we have the beginning of this now—the rehearsal of heaven's employ now; the joy of heaven now. But no one can really sing but the believer. If Israel had not seen the horse and rider of Egypt's host sink as lead to the bottom of the sea, do you think they could have raised the victorious song of triumph

which rose from their six hundred thousand lips on the Canaan side of the Red Sea? No, indeed. And so, too, you and I cannot really sing until we see the Red Sea of Death open, and ourselves passed right through, on to the Canaan side,—sin, death, and corruption swallowed up. All my sins were laid upon *Him*; but he entered the billowy deep, and there left all the load of transgression buried beneath its waves, and, passing through, He came out on the other side, in resurrection-life and power. And as I see *Him* freed from death, I see *myself*; I, too, am on the other side of the Red Sea of death and hell. It is by the cross I know it. But unless I *know* it—know that I am saved—I cannot sing! If I am not certain that all my doom and destruction are past and gone, I cannot sing. But if I have been planted on the Canaan side of the Red Sea and Jordan,—I may, I ought to rejoice. Some of you are, perhaps, still sighing about Jordan's stream rolling between you and Canaan. But, oh! beloved, death—death—death—is all behind, past, and gone! and now, all who are in Christ cannot go back to pass through its flood again. They cannot, because He cannot. Behind us is that flood. Before us is Heaven. In spirit we are there. In fact, there is nothing between our inheritance and us save a little strip of the wilderness; and, journeying along down here, we are pilgrims, strangers,

not citizens, not at home, but in the desert, in which God Himself is our portion, as we sing:—

“God, thine everlasting portion,
Feeds thee with the mighty’s meat,
Price of Egypt’s hard extortion,
Egypt’s food no more to eat.”

And with such a portion, all of grace, what of sin, or self?

“Thou art weaned from Egypt’s pleasures
God, in secret, thee shall keep,
There unfold His hidden treasures,
There His love’s exhaustless deep.”

“Ah!” say some of such *grace*, “but will not this lead to Antinomianism?” Antinomianism! If any of you are thinking thus, it shows very clearly that you know but little experimentally of what it is to have *God* as your portion, “to eat the mighty’s meat,” to have unfolded to the soul “God’s hidden treasures,” “love’s exhaustless deep.” Christ’s own delight is that He feeds on God. We have the very life of Christ in us, which binds all who possess it to *live practically the life of Christ before men*. Besides which, being members together of *His* body, of His flesh, and of His bones, we must in all things walk in a manner becoming this exalted, this glorious relationship. This is not Antinomianism. This is no half-and-half religion, as some would like. Antinomians say—“We will

be religious, if we may keep *some* of our sins and pleasures; we should like to have so much of religion as would keep us out of hell, and there is no law to hinder us from enjoying the pleasures of the world for a season." Ah! all that is very very different from *this* of which I have been speaking; *that* is not this, neither is *this that*; and in vain will you know God, or Christ, or have peace or true rest, so long as you seek for it in such a way.

Well, beloved, we have been wandering away to the 5th chapter; now let us come back to the 29th verse of the 4th chapter. You see, immediately upon this follows the inspired precept, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Why this? Because nothing grieves the Holy Ghost like that spirit of levity, of unregenerate feeling, of carnal passion, of which we have been speaking. And then, another thing which grieves Him is, that some of us do not even recognise His presence within us: for how many believers are there who do not know the truth, even in the letter of it, of this blessed, life-long indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Hence they are constantly asking *for* Him, as if He were not already *in* them. They do not see that when Christ, the Head, was taken up, He fulfilled His promise, and sent down the Comforter to take His place, not only *amongst* us, but *in* us—

to be our guide, our Divine Paraclete—to abide in us, to *remain in us*, until, as Paul shows, we shall be all caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Just imagine, beloved, a father returned to his home, and his children, instead of enjoying the pleasure of his presence among them, constantly deploring his absence, and expressing a wish for his presence! How strange would all this be to the father! And where would be the fellowship between parent and children? Just so is it, beloved, in regard to the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church. Said the blessed Lord to His disciples, just before He went away, “I will pray the Father, and He shall send you another Comforter, that He may ABIDE WITH YOU FOR EVER.” Do you notice that word, “for ever,” “that He may *abide with you for ever?*” Not that you may ask Him to come down, or to descend from heaven, as if He were not here; that were to deny the truth, which says, “He shall be *in you*, and *abide with you for ever.*” Thus, when I fail to apprehend the Holy Ghost in my soul, I must grieve Him; He, beloved, is the true Guest of the saints; and more, He is their Divine Leader. He is likewise the Divine Witnesser to a risen Christ. Moreover, says the Apostle, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” And forasmuch as I am conscious of His witness

to my soul, I know that I am Christ's; therefore when His indwelling or His work is denied, you understand how it must grieve Him.

And He is grieved not so much on His own account, for the Holy Ghost cannot be dissociated from His work, which is to reveal God, to speak of Jesus; hence, He is grieved that we should know so little of the things of Jesus—that we should have such a low idea of the dignity which attaches to a believer in Jesus—that we should know so little of Divine love, of God's heart, and of what we are in Him. Oh, beloved, when we get a right understanding of what God is, how it turns everything upside down! And how different from all that the sinner is at, trying to work on with *himself*, in order that he *may* be saved. The believer in *God* sees, that whereas before he had been standing in self—in the old Adam—he now sees himself to be standing in the eternal love of God, risen and seated in Christ in the heavens; that whereas he in fact is here, he now sees himself in spirit to be risen, and “in the light.” He knew that he had to die for sin, but now he finds that in the person of his substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ, he *has* died; and that, now, being born of God, he is a son or daughter of the Lord God Almighty. Oh, what a name! How vast, how solemn to be this—“sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty!” Do you understand, be-

loved, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, who delights to witness to the truth of this accomplished redemption wrought for us, and to our position in that redemption, in Christ Jesus.

But adds the Apostle—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, *whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*" A seal, we know, is the sign of possession; for instance, I wrap up this book in an envelope, and upon that cover I put my seal. If any one finds the book, and inquires to whom it belongs, I immediately reply, "It belongs to me, for it bears my seal." Do you understand? The presence of the Holy Ghost in your souls is a blessed and additional proof that you belong to God—that you are His, not your own. And you are *eternally* sealed; not sealed to-day, and to-morrow unsealed (so to speak)—for no soul is fast and loose thus—in the hands of Christ this morning, and in the hands of Satan this evening; no, but sealed *until the day of redemption*—until the day when the Sons of God will be manifested. And yet we hear people praying *to be sealed!* when all the while, if they have the Holy Ghost in communion in them, and witnessing in them, they have the seal. For the Holy Ghost not only seals, but He dwells, Himself the Divine Sealer, in us. This is said of all saints, who have truly believed. "In whom also, after ye believed (or, as in the margin,

in whom, *on believing*), ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 13.)

But do you ask how you may know that you are sealed? Why, the very fact that you have the Spirit—have Divine assurance—have deeper longings after Jesus—blessed desires to know more of Him now, and to see Him shortly face to face; the very fact that you are looking for His appearing, and are crying, "Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!" All this is a proof that you *are* sealed—that you *have* the Holy Ghost. Blessed, precious proof! Beloved, if you will look *within*, look now for real purpose, and see what it is that God hath wrought in you. And be thankful, and happy, and *holy*, according to Him who is in you, who is the HOLY Spirit of promise.

And then, further, we are sealed to the day of redemption. Not for a decade or a million of years, but like the life within, which is eternal, we are sealed for an eternity. Very well, beloved, then there comes the question—*When* does this sealing take place? When we really believe. The moment I find out that I am a sinner, I may be simply quickened—made alive. This may be without much intelligence, but the moment that I look to Jesus as a Saviour, and rest in His precious blood, and know my place in the love and grace of God, that very instant I become possessed of the Holy Ghost

—I am assured of my acceptance through the Spirit
—I am sealed.

And now, dear friends, see how very sweetly this chapter closes—"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." Be much with Jesus, and like creates like; and all bitterness, and wrath, and anger *will* be put away. Whenever the harsh word would be uttered, as we have said, let Christ put His finger on your lip. Kind, sweet, faithful, gracious words carry a mighty influence. "Ah," says one, "I do not know or understand anything about *religion*, but I do know that that man's religion is worth something; that man!—I never see him but I wish that I were like him; I never find other people or myself like that man." Let us seek to have thus the mind of Christ. Never failing to live in the highest place which *He* gives you; it is there with Him, where He is before God. And oh! there, through the truth, you get His mind, know His ineffable life, and grace, and love, and perfectness. And the more you realize *that*, the kinder, the holier, will you be.

"Tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, in Christ, hath forgiven you." "*Hath forgiven you.*" Mark that little word HATH. No

uncertainty was there about the matter here ; no question raised as to the acceptance and pardon of these Ephesian converts. And why should *you* raise the unbelieving question, "Are my sins forgiven?" This they are in Christ. "You hath God quickened, *having* forgiven you all trespasses!" What grace! "*Hath* quickened," and "*hath* forgiven," "even as God, in Christ, HATH FORGIVEN YOU." Let that settle every doubting, burdened soul in this assembly, this morning, and so free you for your heavenly walk. But the way to be kept is, as the Lord hath enjoined, to *abide in Him*. Sweet way! beloved, by the exercise of His grace within us, in spite of all trials, temptations, and sins, to have the heart kept fixed upon Him. Occupied with Him, the affections will be filled with heavenly things, and the walk, accordingly, will be heavenly. And prayer and service will be blessed; and our words and ways be blessed. We shall, in fact, be holy. But we must *consciously* abide in Him; then His life will be seen in ours. His fruit appears in us. For the fruit of the branch is the fruit of the vine.

The vine, it bears its fruit,
Through living branches fair;
Abiding in their living root,
Those branches faithful are.

The *feeblest* life, that is
 Mere tendril of the tree,
 Can show the self-same holiness
 That dwells, dear Lord, in Thee.

The branch that beareth fruit
 With pruning oft doth bleed,
 That from Thyself, the living root
 May come forth fruit indeed.

Of all the fruits that spring
 In walk or life divine,
 None are so scant as those I bring,
 Yet, Jesus, they are Thine.

Oh, I would ask thee, Lord,
 To prune each sickly part ;
 Cut, but to heal with Thine own Word,
 Though painful is the smart.

Then shall my life abound
 With what is all from Thee ;
 No more so much of self be found,
 But more of Christ in me.

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