

The Diary: Or, Rule to spend each Day religiously.

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Anglican · Post-Reformation · Exegesis

STROMATA 87

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INTRODUCTION

Drawn from the devotional writings of the seventeenth-century Anglican divine who served as chaplain to Charles I and weathered the Interregnum in rural Wales, these instructions translate the contemplative discipline of the monastic hours into a rule fit for laymen with households and trades. Taylor treats the morning, waking, washing, dressing, as a sequence of small occasions for prayer, each ordinary act yoked to an ejaculation or remembrance. The method here, sanctifying time by braiding short prayers through bodily routine, became a template for English Protestant devotional manuals well into the eighteenth century. Read it slowly and in pieces; it is meant to be practiced rather than finished.

Suppose every day to be a day of business: for your whole life is a race, and a battel; a merchandise, and a journey. Every day propound to your self a Rosary or a Chaplet of good Works, to present to God at night.

Rise as soon as your health and other occasions shall permit; but it is good to be as regular as you can, and as early. Remember, he that rises first to Prayer, hath a more early title to a blessing. But he that changes night into day, labour into idleness, watchfulness to sleep, changes his hopes of blessing into a dream.

Never let any one think it an excuse to lie in bed, because he hath nothing to do when he is up: for whoever hath a Soul, and hopes to save that Soul, hath work enough to do to make his calling and election sure, to serve God, and to pray, to reade, and to meditate, to repent and to amend, to do good to others, and to keep evil from themselves. And if thou hast little to do, thou ought'st to imploy the more time in laying up for a greater Crown of Glory.

At your opening your eyes, enter upon the day with some act of piety.

- Of thanksgiving for the preservation of you the night past.
- Of the glorification of God for the works of the Creation, or any thing for the honour of God.

When you first go off from your bed, solemnly and devoutly bow your head, and worship the holy Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

When you are making ready, be as silent as you can, and spend that time in holy thoughts; there being no way left to redeem that time from loss, but by meditation and short mental prayers. If you choose to speak, speak something of Gods praises, of his goodness, his mercies, or his greatness: Ever resolving, that the first fruits of thy reason, and of all thy faculties shall be presented to God, to sanctifie the whole harvest of thy conversation.

Be not curious, nor careless in your habit, but alwayes keep these measures.

- Be not troublesome to thy self, or to others, by unhandsomeness or uncleanness.
- Let it be according to your state and quality.
- Make Religion to be the difference of your habit, so as to be best attired upon Holy or Festival dayes.

In your dressing, let there be ejaculations fitted to the severall actions of dressing: as at washing your hands and face, pray God to cleanse your Soul from sin: In putting on your clothes, pray him to clothe your Soul with the righteousness of your Saviour; and so in all the rest.

For Religion must not onely be the garment of your Soul, to invest it all over; but it must be also as the fringes to every of your actions, that something of Religion appear in every one of them, besides the innocence of all of them.

As soon as you are dressed with the first preparation of your clothes, that you can decently do it, kneel and say the Lords Prayer; then rise from your knees, and do what is necessary for you in order to your further dressing, or affairs of the house, which is speedily to be done; and then finish your dressing according to the foregoing Rules.

When you are dressed, retire your self to your Closet; and go to your usuall devotions, which it is good that at the first prayers they divided were into seven actions of piety.

- An act of Adoration.
- Of Thanksgiving.
- Of Oblation.
- Of Confession.
- Of Petition.
- Of Intercession.
- Of Meditation, or serious, deliberate, useful reading of the holy Scriptures.

I advise that your reading should be governed by these measures.

- Let it be not of the whole Bible in order, but for your devotion use the New Testament, and such portions of the Old as contain the Precepts of holy life.
- The Historical and less useful part, let it be read at such other times which you have of leisure from your domestick employments.

- Those portions of Scripture which you use in your Prayers, let them not be long. A Chapter at once; no more: but then what time you can afford, spend it in thinking and meditating upon the holy Precepts which you read.
- Be sure to meditate so long, till you make some act of piety upon the occasion of what you meditate; either that you get some new arguments against a sin, or some new encouragements to vertue; some spiritual strength and advantage, or else some act of Prayer to God, or glorification of him.
- I advise that you would reade your Chapter in the midst of your Prayers in the Morning, if they be divided according to the number of the former actions; because little interruptions will be apt to make your Prayers less tedious, and your self more attent upon them: But if you finde any other way more agreeing to your spirit and disposition, use your liberty without scruple.

Before you go forth of your Closet, after your Prayers are done, set you self down a little while, and consider who you are to do that day, what matter of business is like to imploy you or to tempt you; and take particular resolution against that, whether it be matter of wrangling, or anger, or covetousness, or vain courtship, or feasting: and when you enter upon it, remember, upon what you resolved in your Closet. If you are likely to have nothing extraordinary that day a general recommendation of the affairs of that day to God in your Prayers will be sufficient: but if there be any thing foreseen that is not usual, be sure to be armed for it, by a hearty though a short Prayer, and an earnest prudent resolution before-hand, and then watch when the thing comes.

Whosoever hath Children or Servants, let him or her take care, that all the Children and Servants of the family say their Prayers before they begin their work; The Lords Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, with the short verse at the end of every Commandment, which the Church uses; and the Creed is a very good office for them, if they be not fitted for more regular offices. And to these also it were good, that some proper Prayer were apportioned, and they taught it. It were well if they would serve themselves of this form set down at the end of this Diary.

Then go about the affairs of your house and proper imployment, ever avoiding idlenes, or too much earnestness of affection upon the things of the world: Do your business prudently, temperately, diligently, humbly, charitably.

Let there be no idle person in or about your family, of beggars, or unemployed Servants, but finde them all work and meat; call upon them carefully; reprove them without reproaches, or fierce railings. Be a master or a mistress, and a friend to them, and exact of them to be faithful and diligent.

In your Servants suffer any offence against your self, rather than against God; endure not that they should swear, or lie, or steal, or be wanton, or curse each other, or be railers, or slanderers, or telltales, and sowers of dissension in the family, or amongst neighbors.

In all your entercourse with your neighbors in the day, let your affairs be wholly matter of business or civility, and alwayes managed with Justice and Charity; never let it be matter of curiosity or inquiry into the actions of others; alwayes without censuring or rash judgement, without backbiting, slandering, or

detractation: Do it not your self, neither converse with them that do. He or she that loves tale-bearers, shall never be beloved, or be innocent.

Before dinner and supper, as often as it is convenient, or can be had, let the publick Prayers of the Church, or some parts of them, be said publickly in the family, and let as many be present as you can. The same rule is also to be observed for Sundays and Holy-dayes for their going to Church. Let no Servant be alwayes detained, but relieved and provided for by changes.

Let your meal be temperate and wholesome, according to your quality, and the season, begun and ended with Prayer; and be sure that in the course of your meal, and before you rise, you recollect your self, and send your heart up to God with some holy and short ejaculation; remembring your duty, fearing to offend, or desiring and sighing after the Eternal Supper of the Lamb.

After meal, use what innocent refreshment you please, to refresh your minde or body, with these measures:

- Let it not be too expensive of time.
- Let it not hinder your devotion, nor your business.
- Let it be alwayes without violence or passion.
- Let it not then wholly take you up when you are at it; but let your heart retire with some holy thoughts, and sober recollections, left your minde be seised upon by it, and your affections carried off from better things: secure your affections for God, and sober and severe employment. Here you may be refreshed, but take heed you neither dwell here, nor sin here. It is better never to use recreation, then at any time to sin by it. But you may use recreation, and avoid sin, and that's the best temper: But if you cannot do both, be more careful of your soul, then of your refreshment, and that's the best security. But then in what you use to sin, carefully avoid it, and change your refreshment for some other instance in which you can be more innocent.

Entertain no long discourses with any, but if you can bring in something to season it with Religion: as God must be in all your thoughts, so if it be possible, let him be in all your discourses, at least let him be at one end of it; and when you cannot speak of him, be sure you forget not to think of him.

Toward the declining of the day, be sure to retire to your private devotions. Reade, meditate, and pray; In which I propound to you this method: On the Lords day meditate of the glories of the Creation, the works of God, and all his benefits to Mankinde, and to you in particular. Then let your devotion be humbly upon your knees, to say over the 8th and 19th Psalms, and sometimes the 104th, with proper Collects which you shall finde or get: Adding the form of thanksgiving which is in the Rule of Holy Living, in the manner as is there directed; or some other of your own choosing.

Meditate on: Munday on 1. Death. Tuesday on 2. Judgement. Wednesday on 3. Heaven. Thursday on 4. Hell.

Saying your usuall Prayers, and adding some ejaculations or short sayings of your own, according to the matter of your devotion.

On Friday, recollect your sins that you have done that week, and all your life time; and let your devotion be to recite humbly and devoutly some penitentiall letanies, whereof you may serve your self in the Rule of Holy Living.

On Saturday at the same time, meditate on the passion of our blessed Saviour and on the mysteries of our Redemption, which you may do and pray together, by using the forms made to that purpose in the Rule of Holy Living. In all your devotions begin and end with the Lords Prayer.

Upon these two dayes and Sunday, you may choose some portions out of the Life of Christ, to reade and help your meditation, proper to the mysteries you are appointed to meditate, or any other devout books.

Reade not much at a time; but meditate as much as your time and capacity and disposition will give you leave ever remembring, that little reading, and much thinking; little speaking, and much hearing; frequent and short prayers, and great devotion, is the best way to be wise, to be holy, to be devout.

Before you go to bed, bethink your self of the day past; if nothing extraordinary hath hapned, your Conscience is the sooner examined; but if you have had any difference or disagreeing with any one, or a great feast, or great company or a great joy, or a great sorrow, then recollect your self with the more diligence to ask pardon for what is amiss; give God thanks for what was good: if you have omitted any duty, make amends next day; and yet if nothing be found that was amiss, be humbled still and thankful, and pray God for pardon if any thing be amiss that you know not of. If all these things be in your offices, for your last prayers, be sure to apply them according to what you finde in your examination: but if they be not, supply them with short ejaculations before you begin your last prayers, or at the end of them. Remember also, and be sure to take notice of all the mercies and deliverances of your self, and your relatives that day.

As you are going to bed, as often as you can conveniently, or that you are not hindred by company, meditate of death, and the preparations to your grave. When you lie down, close your eyes with short Prayer, commit your self into the hands of your faithful Creator; and when you have done, trust him with your self, as you must do when you are dying.

If you awake in the night, fill up the intervals or spaces of your not sleeping by holy thoughts and aspirations, and remember the sins of your youth: and sometimes remember your dead, and that you shall die; and pray to God to send to you and all mankinde a mercy in the day of Judgement.

Upon the Holy-days observe the same Rules; onely let the matter of your meditations be according to the mystery of the day. As upon Christmas day meditate on the birth of our blessed Saviour, and reade that story and Considerations which are in the Life of Christ: and to your ordinary devotions of every day adde the Prayer which is fitted to the mystery which you shall finde in the Life of Christ, or in the Rule of holy Living. Upon the day of the Annunciation or our Lady-day, meditate on the incarnation of our blessed Saviour; and so upon all the Festivals of the year.

Set apart one day for fasting once a week, or once a fortnight, or once a moneth at least, but let it be with these cautions and measures.

- Do not choose a festivall of the Church for your fasting day.
- Eat nothing till your afternoon devotions be done, if the health of your body will permit it: if not, take something, though it be the less.
- When you eat your meal, let it be no more then ordinary, lest your fasting day end in an intemperate evening.
- Let the actions of all the day be proportionable to it, abstain from your usuall recreations on that day, and from greater mirth.
- Be sure to design beforehand the purposes of your fast, either for Repentance, or for Mortification or for the advantages of Prayer; and let your devotions be accordingly. But be sure, not to think fasting or eating fish or eating nothing, of it self to be pleasing to God, but as it serves to one of these purposes.
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Let some part of that day extraordinary be set apart for Prayer, for the actions of Repentance, for confession of sins, and for begging of those graces for whose sake you set apart that day.

- Be sure that on that day you set apart something for the poor; for Fasting and Alms are the wings of Prayer.
- It is best to choose that day for your fast, which is used generally by all Christians, as Friday and Saturday; but do not call it a fasting day, unless also it be a day of extraordinary devotion and of alms.

From observation of all the dayes of your life, gather out the four extraordinaries.

- All the great and shameful sins you have committed.
- All the excellent or greater acts of piety which by Gods grace you have performed.
- All the great blessings you have received.
- All the dangers and great sicknesses you have escaped; and upon all the dayes of your extraordinary devotions, let them be brought forth, and produce their acts of virtue.
- Repentance and Prayers for pardon.
- Resolutions to proceed and increase in good works.
- Thanksgiving to God.
- Fear and watchfulness, lest we fall into worse, as a punishment for our sin.

Keep a little Catalogue of these, and at the foot of them set down what Promises and Vows you have made, and kept or broken, and do according as you are obliged.

Receive the blessed Sacrament as often as you can: endeavour to have it once a moneth, besides the solemn and great Festivalls of the year.

Confess your sins often, hear the Word of God, make Religion the business of your life, your study, and chiefest care, and be sure that in all things a spiritual guide take you by the hand.

Thou shalt alwayes rejoyce in the evening, if thou doest spend thy day virtuously.

Via Pacis.

A short Method of Peace and Holiness.

With a Manual of Daily Prayers: Fitted to the dayes of the Week.

SUNDAY. Decad the first.

- IT is the highest wisdom by despising the world to arrive at heaven: for they are blessed whose daily exercise it is to converse with God by Prayer and Obedience, by Love and Patience.
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It is the extremest folly to labour for that which will bring torment in the end, and no satisfaction in the little enjoyment of it: to be unwearied in the pursuit of the world, and to be soon tir'd of whatsoever we begin to do for Christ.

- Watch over thy self, counsel thy self, prove thy self, censure thy self, and judge thy self impartially: whatever thou dost to others, do not neglect thy self. For every man profits so much as he does violence to himself.
- They that follow their own sensuality, stain their Consciences, and lose the grace of God: but he that endeavours to please God, whatever he suffers, is beloved of God. For it is not a Question, Whether we shall or shall not suffer? but, Whether we shall suffer for God, or for the world? whether we shall take pains in Religion, or in sin, to get heaven, or to get riches?
- What availeth knowledge without the fear of God? A humble ignorant man is better then a proud scholar, who studies natural things, and knows not himself. The more thou knowest, the more grievously thou shalt be judged: Many get no profit by their labour, because they contend for knowledge, rather then for holy life; and the time shall come, when it shall more avail thee to have subdu'd one lust, then to have known all mysteries.
- No man truly knows himself, but he groweth daily more contemptible in his own eyes; desire, not to be known, and to be little esteem'd of by men.
- If all be well within, nothing can hurt us from without: for from inordinate love and vain fear, comes all unquietness of spirit, and distraction of our senses.
- He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit.
- It is not much business that distracts any man, but the want of purity, constancy, and tendency towards God. Who hinders thee more then the unmortified desires of thine own heart? As soon as ever a man desires any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself. He that hath not wholly subdued himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in spirit is he that is in a manner subject to his appetite, and he quickly falls into indignation, and contention, and envy.
- He is truly great, that is great in Charity, and little in himself.

MUNDAY. The second Decad.

- Wee rather often believe and speak evil of others, then good. But they that are truly virtuous, do not easily credit evil that is told them of their neighbors. For if others may do amiss, then may these also speak amiss. Man is frail and prone to evil, and therefore may soon fail in words.
- Be not rash in thy proceedings, nor confident and pertinacious in thy conceits. But consult with him that is wise, and seek to be instructed by a better then thy self.
- The more humble and resign'd we are to God, the more prudent we are in our affairs to men, and peaceable in our selves.
- The proud and the covetous can never rest.

- Be not asham'd to be, or to be esteem'd poor in this world: for he that hears God teaching him, will finde that it is the best wisdome to withdraw all our affections from secular honour, and troublesome riches, and to place them upon eternal treasures, and by patience, by humility, by suffering scorn and contempt, and all the will of God, to get the true riches.
- Be not proud of well-doing; for the judgement of God is farre differing from the judgement of men.
- Lay not thine heart open to every one, but with the wise, and them that fear God. Converse not much with yong people and strangers. Flatter not the rich, neither do thou willingly or lightly appear before great personages. Never be partaker with the persecutors.
- It is easier, and safer, and more pleasant to live in obedience, then to be at our own disposing.
- Alwayes yield to others when there is cause; for that is no shame, but honour: but it is shame to stand stiff in a foolish or weak argument or resolution.
- The talk of worldly affairs hindreth much, although recounted with a fair intention: we speak willingly, but seldome return to silence.

TUESDAY. The third Decad.

- Watch and pray, lest your time pass without profit or fruit. But devout discourses do greatly further our spirituall progress, if persons of one minde and spirit be gathered together in God.
- We should enjoy more peace, if we did not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other men, which appertain not to our charge.
- He that esteems his progress in Religion to consist in exterior Observances, his devotion will quickly be at an end. But to free our selves of passions, is to lay the axe at the root of the tree, and the true way of peace.
- It is good that we sometimes be contradicted, and ill thought of, and that we alwayes bear it well, even when we deserve to be well spoken of: perfect peace and security cannot be had in this world.
- All the Saints have profited by tribulations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobates, and fell from God.
- Think not all is well within, when all is well without; or that thy being pleas'd, is a sign that God is pleas'd: but suspect every thing that is prosperous, unless it promotes Piety, and Charity, and Humility.
- Do no evil, for no interest, and to please no man, for no friendship, and for no fear.
- God regards not how much we do, but from how much it proceeds. He does much that loves much.
- Patiently suffer that from others, which thou canst not mend in them, untill God please to do it for thee; and remember that thou mend thy self, since thou art so willing others should not offend in any thing.
- Every mans virtue is best seen in adversity and temptation.

WEDNESDAY. The fourth Decad.

- Begin every day to repent, not that thou shouldst at all defer it, or stand the door, but because all that is past ought to seem little to thee; because it is so in it self: begin the next day with the same zeal and the same fear, and the same humility, as if thou hadst never begun before.
- A little omission of any usual exercise of piety, cannot happen to thee without some loss and considerable detriment, even though it be upon a considerable cause.
- Be not slow in common and usual acts of Piety and Devotion, and quick and prompt at singularities: but having first done what thou art bound to, proceed to counsels and perfections, and the extraordinaries of Religion, as you see cause.
- He that desires much to hear news, is never void of passions, and secular desires, and adherencies to the world.
- Complain not too much of hindrances of Devotion: if thou let men alone, they will let you alone: and if you desire not to converse with them, let them know it, and they will not desire to converse with thee.
- Draw not to thy self the affairs of others, neither involve thy self in the suits and parties of great personages.

- Know that if any trouble happen to thee, it is what thou hast deserved, and therefore brought upon thy self. But if any comfort come to thee, it is a gift of God, and what thou didst not deserve. And remember, that oftentimes when the body complains of trouble, it is not so much the greatness of trouble, as littleness of thy spirit, that makes thee to complain.
- He that knows how to suffer any thing for God, that desires heartily the will of God may be done in him; that studies to please others rather than himself; to do the will of his superior, not his own; that chooseth the least portions and is not greedy for the biggest; that takes the lowest place, and does not murmur secretly: he is in the best condition and state of things.
- Let no man despair of mercy and success, so long as he hath life and health.
- Every man must pass through fire and water, before he can come to refreshment.

THURSDAY. The fifth Decad.

- Soon may a man lose that by negligence, which hath by much labour, and a long time, and a mighty grace scarcely been obtain'd. And what shall become of us before night, who are weary so early in the morning? Woe be to that man who would be at rest, even when he hath scarcely a footstep of holiness appearing in his conversation.
- So think, and so do, as if thou wert to die to day, and at night to give an account of thy whole life.
- Beg not a long life, but a good one: for length of dayes oftentimes prolongs the evil, and augments the guilt. It were well if that little time we live, we would live well.
- Entertain the same opinions and thoughts of thy sin and of thy present state, as thou wilt in the dayes of sorrow. Thou wilt then think thy self very miserable and very foolish, for neglecting one hour, and one day of thy salvation: Think so now, and thou wilt be more provident of thy time and of thy talent. For there will a time come, when every careless man shall desire the respite of one hour for Prayer and Repentance, and I know not who will grant it. Happy is he that so lives, that in the day of death he rejoyces, and is not amazed.
- He that would die comfortably, may serve his ends by first procuring to himself a contempt of the world, a fervent desire of growing in grace, love of discipline, a laborious repentance, a prompt obedience, self-deniall, and toleration of every cross accident for the love of Christ, and a tender Charity.
- While thou art well, thou mayest do much good, if thou wilt; but when thou art sick, neither thou nor I can tell, what thou shalt be able to do. It is not very much, nor very good: Few men mend with sickness, as there are but few who by travell and a wandring life become devout.
- Be not troubled, nor faint in the hours of mortification, and the austerities of Repentance: for in Hell, one hour is more intolerable then a hundred years in the house of Repentance: and try, for if thou canst not endure God punishing thy follies gently, for a while, to amend thee, how wilt thou endure his vengeance for ever to undo thee?
- In thy Prayers wait for God, and think not every hearty Prayer can procure every thing thou askest. These things which the Saints did not obtain without many Prayers, and much labour, and a shower of tears, and a long protracted watchfulness, and industry, do thou exact also in its own

time, and by its usuall treasures. Do thou valiantly, and hope confidently, and wait patiently, and thou shalt finde thou wilt not be deceived.

- Be careful thou dost not speak a lye in thy Prayers, which though not observed, is frequently practis'd by careless persons, especially in the forms of Confession, affirming things which they have not thought, professing sorrow which is not, making a vow they mean not.
- If thou meanest to be devout, and to enlarge thy Religion, do it rather by increasing thy ordinary devotions, then thy extraordinary. For if they be not regular, but come by chance, they will not last long. But if they be added to your ordinary offices, or made to be daily, thy spirit will by use and custome be made tender, and not willing to go less.

FRIDAY. The sixth Decad.

- HE is a truly charitable and good man, who when he receives injuries, grieves rather for the malice of him that injures him, then for his own suffering; who willingly prays for him that wrongs him, and from his heart forgives all his faults; who stayes not, but quickly asks pardon of others for his errors or mistakes; who sooner shews mercy then anger; who thinks better of others then himself; who offers violence to his appetite, and in all things endeavours to subdue the flesh to the spirit. This is an excellent abbreviature of the whole duty of a Christian.
- No man can have felicity in two states of things; if he takes it in God here, in him he shall have it hereafter, for God will last for ever. But if he takes felicity in things of this world, where will his felicity be when this world is done? Either here alone, or hereafter must be thy portion.
- Avoid those things in thy self, which in others do most displease thee. And remember, that as thine eye observes others, so art thou observed by God, by Angels, and by Men.
- He that puts his confidence in God onely, is neither overjoyed in any great good thing of this life, nor sorrowful for a little thing. Let God be thy love and thy fear, and he also will be thy salvation and thy refuge.
- Do not omit thy Prayers for want of a good oratory or place to pray in, nor thy duty for want of temporal encouragements. For he that does both upon Gods account, cares not how or what he suffers, so he suffer well, and be the friend of Christ; nor where nor when he prays, so he may do it frequently, fervently, and acceptably.
- Very often remember and meditate upon the wound and stripes, the shame and the pain, the death and the burial of our Lord Jesus; for nothing will more enable us to bear our cross patiently injuries charitably, the labour of Religion comfortably, and censuring words and detractions with meekness and quietness.
- Esteem not thy self to have profited in Religion, unless thou thinkest well of others, and meanly of thy self: Therefore never accuse any but thy self, and be that diligently watches himself, will be willing enough to be silent concerning others.
- It is no great matter to live lovingly with good natur'd, with humble, and meek persons: but he that can do so with the froward, with the wilful, and the ignorant, with the peevish and perverse, he onely hath true charity: alwayes remembring, that our true solid peace, the peace of God, consists

rather in complying with others, then in being complied with, in suffering and forbearing, rather then in contention and victory.

- Simplicity in our intentions, and purity of affections, are the two wings of a soul investing it with the robes and resemblances of a Seraphim. Intend the honour of God principally and sincerely, and mingle not thy affections with any creature, but in just subordination to God, and to Religion, and thou shalt have joy, if there be any such thing in this world. For there is no joy but in God, and no sorrow but in an evil Conscience.
- Take not much care what, or who is for thee, or against thee. The judgement of none is to be regarded, if Gods judgement be otherwise. Thou art neither better nor worse in thy self, for any account that is made of thee by any but by God alone: secure that to thee, and he will secure all the rest.

SATURDAY. The seventh Decad.

- Blessed is he that understands what it is to love Jesus, and contends earnestly to be like him. Nothing else can satisfie, or make us perfect. But be thou a bearer of his Cross, as well as a lover of his Kingdome. Suffer tribulation for him, or from him, with the same spirit thou receivest consolation: follow him as well for the bitter Cup of his Passion, as for the Loaves; and remember, that if it be a hard saying, Take up my Cross and follow me, it is a harder saying, Go ye Cursed into Everlasting fire.
- No man can alwayes have the same spirituall pleasure in his Prayers: For the greatest Saints have sometimes suffered the banishment of the heart; sometimes are fervent, sometimes they feel a barrenness of Devotion: for this Spirit comes and goes. Rest therefore onely in God, and in doing thy duty: and know, That if thou beest overjoyed to day, this houre will passe away, and temptation and sadnesse will succeed.
- In all afflictions, seek rather for Patience then for Comfort. If thou preservest that, this will return. Any man would serve God, if he felt pleasure in it alwayes; but the virtuous does it, when his Soul is full of heavinesse, and regards not himselfe, but God, and hates that consolation that lessens his compunction; but loves any thing, whereby he is made more humble.
- That which thou doest not understand when thou readest, thou shalt understand in the day of thy visitation: for there are many secrets of Religion, which are not perceived till they be felt, and are not felt but in the day of a great calamity.
- He that prayes, despaire not. But sad is the condition of him that cannot pray. Happy are they that can and do, and love to do it.
- He that will be blessed in his Prayers, must make his Prayers his Rule. All our duty is there set down, because in all our duty, we beg the Divine Assistance: and remember, that you are bound to do all those duties, for the Divine of which you have prayed for the Divine Assistance.
- Be doing actions of Religion as often as thou canst, and thy worldly pleasures as seldome, that if thou beest surprised by sudden death, it may be oddes but thou mayest be taken at thy Prayers.
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Watch, and resist the Devil in all his Temptations and Snares: His chief designes are these; To hinder thy desire in good; to put thee by from any Spirituall employment, from Prayers especially, from the Meditation of the Passion, from the remembrance of thy sins, from humble Confession of them, from speedy Repentance, from the custody of thy Senses and of thy Heart, from firm purposes of growing in Grace, from reading good Books, and frequent receiving the Holy Sacrament. It is all one to him, if he deceives thee by a lie, or by truth; whether he amaze or trouble thee, by love of the present, or fear of the future: Watch him but in these things, and there will be no part left unarmed, in which he can wound thee.

- Remember how the proud have fallen, and they who have presumed upon their own strength have been disgraced; and that the boldest and greatest talkers in the dayes of peace, have been the most dejected and pusillanimous in the day of temptation.
- No man ought to think he hath found peace, when nothing troubles him; or that God loves him, because he hath no enemy; nor that all is well, because every thing is according to his minde; nor that he is a holy person, because he prayes with great sweetness and comfort: But he is at peace, who is reconciled to God; and God loves him, when he hath overcome himself; and all is well, when nothing pleases him but God, being thankful in the midst of his afflictions; and he is holy, who when he hath lost his comfort, loses nothing of his duty, but is still the same, when God changes his face towards him.

Source: The Golden Grove, Jeremy Taylor. London: Printed by J.F. for R. Royston at the Angel in Ivie-lane, 1655. Text sourced from Project Canterbury (anglicanhistory.org).

Transcribed from the 1655 first edition by Project Canterbury (Anglican History Project, anglicanhistory.org). Taylor composed The Golden Grove during his years of enforced exile in Wales under the Interregnum, when Anglican worship had been suppressed and he was living under the protection of Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, at the estate from which the book takes its name. The text is in the public domain; Taylor died in 1667. No translator is involved; this is Taylor's own English.

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