
Dear son Edson: I fear that you do not always wisely regulate your labor. You sometimes do too much, and then allow precious hours to pass unimproved, thus creating a necessity for extra exertion. Temperate, persevering, steady labor will achieve far more than can be accomplished by spasmodic efforts....

Labor was appointed to man by his Creator. God provided employment for our first parents in holy Eden. And since the Fall, man has been a toiler, eating his bread by the sweat of his brow. Every bone of his body, every feature of his countenance, every muscle of his limbs, evinces the fact that he was made for activity, not for idleness....

The faithful discharge of life's duties, whatever your position, calls for a wise improvement of all the talents and abilities that God has given you. Guard against being always hurried, yet accomplishing nothing worthy of the effort. These fruitless efforts are often caused by a failure to do the work at the proper time. Whatever is neglected at the time when it should be performed, whether in secular or in religious things, is rarely done well. Many appear to labor diligently every hour in the day, and yet produce no results to correspond with their efforts....

Be careful not to fritter away your time upon trifles, and then fail to carry out your undertakings that are of real account. The church and the world need calm, well-balanced men. To run well for a
season is not enough. A steadfast adherence to a purpose is necessary in order to secure the end. A distinguished man was once asked how it was possible for him to accomplish such a vast amount of business. His answer was, "I do one thing at a time."...

Henry Martyn, both as a man and a missionary, depended not a little upon his habits of regularity. To such an extent did he carry these, that he was known in the university as the student who never wasted an hour.... How many youth who might have become men of usefulness and power have failed because in early life they contracted habits of indecision which followed them through life to cripple all their efforts. Now and then they are filled with sudden zeal to do some great thing, but they leave their work half finished and it comes to nothing. Patient continuance in well doing is indispensable to success.

My dear son, be thorough in all you undertake. Rely constantly upon your Saviour; go to Him for wisdom, for courage, for strength of purpose, for everything you need. May the Lord bless you is the prayer of your mother.—Letter 3, May 12, 1877, to her 27-year-old son Edson.

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