

Phil. 1:3

"So soon as I shall see how it will go with me."

2:23.

Many persons are in the habit of supposing that
the apostles, ^{being inspired,} knew everything. | But, if you could
have questioned them upon a hundred subjects
of interest that lay beyond the circle of ^{Saving} ~~Christian~~
doctrine, the probability is that the very wisest, or
the most learned, of their number, ^{would have been able} ~~would~~ to give
you either ~~no~~ ^{no} answer at all, or answers that were
quite imperfect if not wholly wrong. | Of much im-
portant history they were no doubt ignorant - or of
large departments of Greek & Roman ^{& Persian} ^(and history) philosophy - or of
Egyptian science and Chaldean astronomy and Chinese
literature - or of the thousand varieties of a world-
wide ^{heathen} idolatry. | But whatever they may have
known as to the events of the past, or however
well-informed they might have kept themselves as
to the happenings of ^{each passing day} ~~the present~~ - it is certain that

"So soon as I shall see how it will
go with me"

Wilm^m Sunday before 1st Jan 1854

Richmond, 2nd de Jan 9, 1898

Wilmington, March 27, 1898

the issues ^{immediate future,} the impending ^{to-morrow}
~~the possible occurrences of the future~~ were hidden from
 their view: ~~that future, I mean, which is included within~~
~~the limits of time; - its impending to-morrow, its ^{on-stretching} ~~un-stretching~~~~
 henceforth of good or ill. / "Now, behold," says Paul,
 I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing
the things that shall befall me there. / So, when he ap-
 -pealed to Caesar, and was carried to Rome; he went without,
 in the least, foreseeing the imprisonment and the mar-
 -tyrdom which ^{there} awaited him, ~~in the gathering of that~~ ^{organization}
~~in the imperial city.~~ ^{in the imperial city.}
 Church, which, nevertheless, he was permitted to found
~~in the imperial city.~~ ^{period set for the} Even as to the, 2nd coming of X^c;
^{that very} ~~the~~ largest of future objects that interested them, ~~and~~
 towards which the apostles looked forward with eyes of
 fond and ^{were not} eager expectation, ~~was~~ ^{they} any better off than
~~some thinking that it might occur within a year or two others~~
 are we, to-day. / "For," if that day and hour knoweth no
 man, - no, not the angels of heaven, ^{(regarded in his} ^{human nature)} but ~~any~~ Father
 only."

Well, it is this ^{ignorance of futurity} ~~uncertainty~~ as to the future which appears

in my text. / Paul ^{would, he says,} ~~desired to send Timothy to~~ ^{comfort} ~~express~~
^{the Phillipian} ~~into Church matters at Philippi,~~ "So soon as I shall
^{and would}

~~I cannot foresee.~~ ^{even one day ahead,}
 See how it will go with me: / I cannot tell, ^{what}
 may be the ^{my affairs:} ~~condition of things,~~ ^{whether such as shall} ~~ever one day ahead~~

enable me to spare him, or such as shall compel me

to retain him: I must, ∴, await events. / And, as it

turned out, he did not, ^{So far as we know -} ~~send Timothy,~~ ^{to Philippi} at all, notwith-

standing his strong desire to do so: - ^{meanwhile, found} for he, ~~had,~~ other

and more pressing work for this man to do.

Now, it ^{does} ~~seem~~ strange that the apostle could not
^{arrange} ~~calculate~~ beforehand for such a case as this: and,

stranger still, that whilst divine revelation made

^{to him} known the ^{the gospel's} ~~very~~ greatest truths, ^{to its chosen heralds, him} it left ^{as to} ~~in~~ doubt, ^{them} ~~their~~

^{his} ^{very} next day's ^{circumstances} ~~things,~~ ^{whether} ~~they~~ ^{these} ~~should~~ ^{be} ~~favorable~~
^{or adverse} to their ^{mission:} ~~herald of those truths.~~ ^{nothing being sure}

and even that liable to many a sudden change.
 except the present hour: } They ^{he} could weigh probabilities,
 like ^{a man} men of sense,
 and, ^{fall out} plan according to what would, in all likelihood,
 be, for the best: - but, plan as ^{he} they might, on what ap-
 -peared the safest grounds, ^{he} they still had no assurance
 of being able to execute ^{most sagacious} their purposes: ^{however sagacious,} and, indeed,
 And indeed ^{his} something unforeseen did, again and again, occur
 to frustrate ^{some of his} their most ^{reasonable} wily and schemes. } All going
 to confirm ^{his} their Lord's words: "it is not for you to know the times & the seasons"
 to ^{show} that God had determined to retain in his ^{the having} own
^{wisely} directing hand the personal future ^{even} of those
 whom ^{they themselves knew} he was expressly using for a service to which
 they were indispensable, and which was the highest
 ever committed to man. [One step at a time, (in
 the light they, ^{at the moment,} ~~then~~ had,) they were expected to
 take - with no visible provision for any following
 step, which might, ^{for aught they knew,} indeed, be a step off the stage
 of action altogether.

^{or this state of}
 From ~~these~~ facts, let us infer, for our use, ^{to} ~~of~~ the thought,
 that, of all uncertainties, the uncertainty of what shall
 be to us, is, so far as this life is concerned, the greatest.
 - an old lesson with ever new and various readings
~~For~~ if an apostle, charged with a stupendous ^{mission} work
 which, besides being the most important that can be
 conceived, was also the most dependent upon the ^{missionary's} ~~work-~~
~~man's~~ ^{own} clearness of foresight; - if an apostle, ^{well,} ^{endowed}
 with a wisdom that was truly divine, ^{had his vision so limited that he} ^{inspired} could not see
 one day ahead, how must it be with us, who, in
 comparison with them, are but darkened common
 folk? Shall it be supposed that we have been,
^{or can be,} possessed with a faculty ^{which} ~~they~~ were not permitted to
~~possess~~ employ: the faculty of taking the time before
us into our secure calculations, as if it were ^{certain} ~~as sure~~
 in what it will bring, as the time now passing
 is in what it has already brought?

But what if we cannot count upon to-morrow, some
 are ready to object: } Does this make any difference,
 practically? } ~~to-morrow~~ ^{to-day}, at any rate, ^{reckon} ~~is~~ ours, and we do not see
 that things ~~will~~ ^{shall} ~~not~~ ^{are to} go on ^{after} to-day,
 gone. } This ^{my old} world which has lasted so long will
 no doubt last much longer, - with its sunsets and
 its sunrises, its seasons and its sceneries, its chances
 and its charms: - new every ^{hour} morning to run its tireless
 race among the stars. } Christmas goes, but leaving
 the promise it has ^{hitherto} never broken, to come again. } The
 year is just like the ~~one like it~~ ^{one} that dawned
 fresh, ~~is at hand, just as it~~ ^{is at hand, just as it} was, 12 months ago, and
 just as ~~it~~ ^{another of the same sort} will be 12 mo's hence. } Business, too, main-
 -tains its rounds, under the same laws, and calling
 for the same labors, and promising the same re-
 -wards. } "All things continue as they were from
 the beginning of the creation."

What, then, if we are denied the privilege of forecasting each one his own future? It is not probable, that, by reason of this, we shall be any the ^{worse} ~~worse~~ in the days to come than ^{we were} in the days that have flown. [Set us, *i.e.*, just ^{continue to} cast ourselves and our fortunes upon the current of time as we have ^{hitherto} always done - and ^{all} things will, ^{as a matter of fact} continue to turn out reasonably well: - or, if not, - well, ^{who needs to care?} ~~well, who cares?~~ - we can - not help it!

But, does this ^{easy} mode of treating the subject, ^{always} answer the purpose? Is anxiety gotten ~~rid~~ rid of in this off-hand manner: the anxiety which, with all ^{such} ~~our~~ ^{its peace} soothing of useless trouble, still clings to every heart, ^{when the future is supposed to ~~threaten~~ ^{throb}} ~~throbbing~~ ^{throbbing} ~~we are~~ ^{we not} evermore in the condition of those who, traversing a ^{sleeping} ~~desert~~ ^{darkening} ~~cloud~~ ^{immense} ~~cloud~~ ^{cloud} should portend a storm - no telling how destructive it may prove until it come -

storm
a cloud

- which invisible hands ^{would} are preparing, ^{that we give a great deal to see} & unmeasured
forces, ^{that we could give a great deal to hold,} are about to hurl upon the treacherous, ^{unfathomable} waters.

Or, we are in the case of those travellers, who, off ^{upon} for a jour-

-ney through a strange country, ^{Despite their courage, in the face of ^{what is} known,} are alarmed at difficulties

grow pale at ^{for} and dangers, ^{because} which, ^{unforeseen,} they ^{may} could have made

no provision? / Ah, that thick ~~solid~~ high wall, ^{+ be-}

- and which no eye can pierce, ^{yet} and ^{behind} whose im-

-penetrable mass of ^{crumbling} masonry an insensible provi-

-dence is busily at work, ready to burst through

we ^{know} not where nor when, in calamity ⁱⁿ or blessing, we know

not which: - is not the presence of this ^{mysterious} dark wall, a con-

-stant source of apprehension even though it be also

a possible source of hopefulness? / Who does not feel

that, as to his daily affairs, he is within the grasp

of a power which shapes his life as it ^{pleases} - and

which he can no more shake off than he could

Is there not a power controlling us which we can't apprehend
 any more than we can detain a whirlwind or delay a sunbeam (for it may
^{as} be either, or a mixture of both) ^{every one} a power ~~to~~ ^{is} bound
 to fear, lest, at any instant, it may wholly cast him
² down, ~~even though, through many a previous instant,~~
 it may have been engaged in giving him a higher and
 higher set up? | ^I ^{thus} ^{all} ^{events,}
~~Yes,~~ all things, ^{here} are uncertain,
 wherever they touch upon ^{the wide circle of what may be - and} ~~what~~
^{is not made to feel} who ~~does not know~~ it? [^{bracing} The ^{health} of yesterday melts
 away under the ^{burning} fever of to-day. | The boom of last year's
 trade, succumbs to the ^{blows} beatings of next year's depressing
 hand. | The fond unbroken family of one month is all
 scattered before the moon of that which immediately follows
^{way and wane} has begun to ~~shine~~. | The honors that were worn when
 reputation was at the top of the wave, ^{are likely to} sink beneath
 it after a while. | The pendulum of every clock of
 human life is liable to swing away - or to stop.

altogether - when least looked for - so that what was all right when 12 o'clock rang its bell has gone all wrong before the stroke of one.

But you yourselves will know how many illustrations there are to the same effect - as often in ^{the question} ~~discussing~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~asked~~, what, then, it may be asked, ^{what} is life worth, taken at this gloomy rate? - Nothing certain in it except its uncertainty; - nothing sure except ~~its~~ that it is all unsure - no ^{fixed} ~~secure~~ foothold - no safe anchorage anywhere; ^{amid its slipping quicksands} // Well, to tell the truth, this life is a

poor possession - miserably poor - and every day ^{becomes} ~~becoming~~ poorer - when valued ^{and not for that which is greater than itself} for itself alone.

A ^{pile} ~~stick~~ of wood, or a bin of coal, when ~~one~~ is ~~staring~~ with cold is of very small account, ^{when considered} ^{(in cold weather,} ~~in itself~~; but ^{may be in the way, even} build and

feed a good warming fire from it, - then its ^{beneficent} ~~value~~ ^{importance} is both seen and felt. | A room ^{filled} full of gold ^{could be} is of little worth except as just so many lbs. of ~~glittering~~ metal, unless it be ^{is} used for

the purchase of food and clothing, and ^{for purposes} other needed
 of beneficence; ~~of~~ comforts: i.e., for things beyond, and better than, the
 gold itself. / Otherwise, it might as well be that much
^{granite} sandstone rock. / So, a flitting hour is hardly anything
 when weighed by ~~it~~ itself - yet, great battles have been won and lost
 by the right or wrong employment of its sixty minutes.
 Everything depends upon ~~the~~ ^{knowing} how to use what
 we have: ^{how to make the best of it.} It is only, \therefore , a wasted life that is of
 no ^{substantial} consequence - and ^{his} life is wasted who prizes
 it alone for ~~its~~ ^{that} meagre income of ^{it} uncertain good
^{trifling} as this is, which ^{he} can no more rely upon than he can build
 upon ^a house upon ^{with} a foundation of mountain vapors.
 // It is not, then, because we are unable to forecast our
 to-morrows ~~that~~ ^{not} because we are not ⁱⁿ competent to
 lay ^{a hand} ^{times} ^{awaiting} ^{future} hold upon the ~~future~~ ^{future} which ~~yet~~ ^{awaits} us
 on this side of death, and to weave ~~all our~~ ^{our} allotted

The threads of ^{our} experience ^{and united substance} that will not tear
~~them~~ into ~~one~~ firm and consistent ~~whole~~ ^{entity} where we ^{have not}
 stand and rest secure - it is not ^{because we cannot} ~~on this account~~
~~the power to~~ ^{and reduce its elements to fixed assurances} ~~remove~~ from life its uncertainties - that we are
 to regard it as unsatisfactory. | Did the apostle complain
 of life on this account? | Was he at all troubled ^{when} ~~by~~
~~reason of the fact~~ that, now and again, he was brought to a
 stand-still by reason of the fact that he could not tell
 how it would go with him the following day or the ^{approaching} ~~coming~~
 week? | There is no proof that his mind was in the least
 disturbed. | And why? | Because he had ^{that he ~~was~~ himself, more than his life} ~~learned~~, ^{was} ~~to~~
^{and looking past it had learned to} ~~trust~~ where it was not possible to see. | Accordingly,
 that which he has ^{to bring to his soul his Master's smile} ~~now~~ to do, he confidently & cheerfully
~~thus enjoying his Master's smile -~~
 does, ^{serenely leaving the afterwards to him to whom}
^{it can be learned.} ~~it belongs~~. | To-morrow is as nothing to him until
 to-morrow ^{is present,} ~~becomes~~ ^{has} ~~and~~ ~~becomes~~ to-day: - acting upon
 his Lord's injunction: "take no thought for the morrow"

- no anxious thought: "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." / Indeed, who that has a well-balanced brain would, if he could, know beforehand, what shall happen to him? / Is this not, mercifully, concealed from the view? For thus is he spared many a needless heartache from anticipated bereavings; or, on the other hand, is made the more joyous by many a glad surprise in unexpected blessings. / ^{the} right use of life, then, is, at each successive moment - of which alone ^{can be said to be assured} we are sure - to fulfil the duties that belong to it, ^{that moment} ~~and all the more because~~ ^{it is so soon to fly} ~~and all the more because~~.

But, even thus, ^{as they say,} perplexities will ^{press} arise and disappointments will pursue. ^{For} ~~for~~, ^{the wisest} ~~not amount~~ diligence ^{always} can ^{word} ~~word~~ ^{these} ~~them~~ ^{off}, nor the ^{always} ~~variest~~ discretion ^{prevent}, ^{nor even prayer} ~~avert~~ ^{their} ~~approach~~. / The apostle himself could not do so, as the record of his eventful career abundantly shows. / Yet, whilst he could not, ^{this or the other} ~~at each~~ ^{turn}

turn ^{winding way,} of his ^{life}, distinguish the end from the beginning, and
 was therefore ^{occasionally} ~~for a time~~ "cast down"; - again I ask -
 he ^{is heard to utter} ~~made~~ no complaint, but, ^{still goes} ~~went~~ steadily on, ^{accepting} ~~looking~~
 with an equal mind, his share of the ^{ever-} shifting bur-
 -den of life?) ^{How was it that} Why, amid the changeful uncertain-
 -ties that fell to his lot the same as to other men, could
 he, over all the ^{sinking} ~~slipping~~ sands ^{often-doubtful} of his ^{course}, "so run
 as not uncertainly"; or "so fight not as one that beateth
 the air"? // ^{Oh, listen! it} It ^{was} because there was ^{at least} one future he
 was ^{Certain} ~~sure~~ of: ^{(the most important, the most influential, of all -} the vast future of eternity. ^{This earth}
^{This earth} might be all a scene of chasing shadows - but,
^{what matter!} he stood not on it; ^{where his latest being was} ^{bidden to seek for an abode} ^{except as a vantage ground from wh. to see beyond & above} "The word of the Lord abideth
forever" - and, standing on this word, he ^{with composure,} saw the
 earth itself pass away, - ^{for it should} ~~and~~ pass away only to
 make the great word of God's promised salvation
 appear the brighter and the surer ^{as unfolded} ~~unfolding~~ in the world that

was built ^{built} to endure; of ^{that} ~~materials~~ ^{eternal} ~~of Ages~~ which
no storm ^{strikes} ~~shakes~~, no change ^{strikes} ~~expresses~~, no convulsion
~~shakes~~,

subverts: "the same yesterday, to-day, forever." | So that
being enabled to say, "we know that if our earthly house
of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building

of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in
the heavens" - here, ^{if this were the only certainty,} was certainty enough for him

^{not only} to live by, ^{enough for him rapturously} and to die by - and enough ^{the while} to ^{impart} ~~make~~ his

tread, ^{amid} through all ^{the} fluctuations and ^{through all the} fragilities of

this ^{uncertain} world, ^{as firm} as ^{and as undaunted as} was that of Christ ^{when} ~~over~~

he walked ^{threatening} the waves of Galilee. | He could not tell ^{how it} ~~was~~

^{Silenced} might go with him on the morrow, - but knowing
how it ^{shall} ~~would~~ go with him when all time's little

to-morrows are merged in the great to-morrow of

eternity - he is far more than content - he ^{feels his right} ~~is ever~~

to be even exultant. | ~~And here, too, only here, is our security & strength.~~

~~Live for the next world, & the present world is peaceful,~~

with all its changes. ^{with God to believe in - with talent to serve - with religion}
^{to keep the spirits up - all else is comparatively insignificant.}

I do not know whether, ^{during the} ~~men are more~~ ^{Seriously} thoughtful ^{during} the
 closing hours of a dying year, men are more seri-
 -ously thoughtful ^{about themselves} than at other times. | Perhaps, how-
 -ever, they ought to be. | Why, it is almost like it
 is at the bedside of a great ^{King} ~~man~~ who is breathing
 his last, all too soon for the welfare of his people - the
 emotion that stirs at the heart, when a year, more
 royal than any earthly majesty, and upon whom
 an entire world has waited for favours which only he
 could bestow, - lays down his sceptre and his crown
 never again to resume them. | And if we have abused
 his gifts - those days which were more precious than
 pearls, and which he brought in his hand as both
 a legacy from the past and a bequest for the fu-
 -ture - if we have ^{striven to kill in the time} ~~killed away~~ of his hours failed to
 employ these aright - if we have ^{or frittered} ~~thrown~~ them away -

16-17

it can hardly be possible for us to meet the re-
proaches of his ^{this monarch's} expiring looks, without sensations
of regret and at our loss, ^{or} without ~~weaving~~ ^{weeping out the resolve} ~~to~~
^{this loss if we can,} repair it ~~at~~ under the reign of his successor. [Each
~~year~~ going and coming ^{day} ^{thus} is, as a handfinger to
point us ~~to~~ onwards to the period when ^{time itself} ~~years~~ shall
be no more; or as a ~~voice~~ ^{tongue} that is always preaching from
the text: "Prepare to meet thy God"; or as a foot which,
~~whilst it~~ forbidden to stay where every step ^{falls upon} ~~strikes~~
shattered hopes which itself ^{may have} ~~has~~ overturned, hastens to
plant it upon that which is everlasting; or as an eye,
^{which} seeing more than ~~it~~ can be told to earth, ^{admits} ~~accumulates~~ ^{is appointed}
^{to give in} witness to add its swift witness at the bar of a final
judgment, where, by and by, all the ^{days} ~~years~~ shall meet
to ^{combine} ~~write~~ their mighty testimonies in in one overwhelm-
ing recital. Oh, ^{now} behold this ^{before the of the yet living year} finger, and whither
it directs - list to this ^{that yet is strong,} tongue, and ^{to} what it teaches -

As he walked or wearied, ran or rested, he had
 was to endure. ~~He had,~~ underneath his feet, ~~as he~~
~~walked or wearied, ran or rested,~~ the Rock of Ages,
 which no storm, ^{the fiercest,} ever has shaken, ~~and~~ ^{which} no change
 the most violent, ^{which} has ever severed, ^{not even those} and no overturnings, ~~have ever~~
~~of the last that shall attend the dissolution of the now~~
 visible universe, can subvert.

- attend this foot whilst yet it moves, and leads towards
 the prospects of
 a new earth, - be awed under this eye which yet looks
 upon your hearts, and brighten it with the witness of your
 faith in the Lord's all-gracious Christ.

Then -

His adorable will

Set us gladly fulfil,

And our talents improve,

By the patience of hope and the labor of love.

Our life is a dream;

Our time, as a stream

Glides swiftly away;

And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.

The arrow is flown;

The moment is gone;

The millennial year

Rushes to our view, and eternity's here.

O that each in the day
Of his coming may say,

"I have found my way through,
I have finished the work Thou gavest me to do."

O that each from his Lord
May receive the glad word:

"Well and faithfully done,
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne."