

Appreciating God's Grace

by Thomas a Kempis

Thomas a Kempis emphasizes the importance of humility and gratitude in appreciating God's grace and maintaining a relationship with Him.

Scripture: Psalm 138:6, Proverbs 3:34, Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 16:24, Philippians 2:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, James 1:17, James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5

Topics: "Gods Grace", "Christian Humility"

Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the importance of embracing patience and carrying our crosses instead of seeking constant comfort and enjoyment. He emphasizes the superiority of spiritual joy and consolation over earthly pleasures, highlighting the need for humility and gratitude in receiving God's grace. Kempis warns against false freedom of mind and overconfidence, stating that grace is given to the humble and grateful, while the proud risk losing it. He encourages a mindset of humility, contrition, and gratitude towards God, attributing all good to Him and willingly accepting both His gifts and corrections.

Transcript

WHY do you look for rest when you were born to work? Resign yourself to patience rather than to comfort, to carrying your cross rather than to enjoyment.

What man in the world, if he could always have them, would not readily accept consolation and spiritual joy, benefits which excel all earthly delights and pleasures of the body? The latter, indeed, are either vain or base, while spiritual joys, born of virtue and infused by God into pure minds, are alone truly pleasant and noble.

Now, since the moment of temptation is always nigh, since false freedom of mind and overconfidence in self are serious obstacles to these visitations from heaven, a man can never enjoy them just as he wishes.

God does well in giving the grace of consolation, but man does evil in not returning everything gratefully to God. Thus, the gifts of grace cannot flow in us when we are ungrateful to the Giver, when we do not return them to the Fountainhead. Grace is always given to him who is duly grateful, and what is wont to be given the humble will be taken away from the proud.

I do not desire consolation that robs me of contrition, nor do I care for contemplation that leads to pride, for not all that is high is holy, nor is all that is sweet good, nor every desire pure, nor all that is dear to us

pleasing to God. I accept willingly the grace whereby I become more humble and contrite, more willing to renounce self.

The man who has been taught by the gift of grace, and who learns by the lash of its withdrawal, will never dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather admit his poverty and emptiness. Give to God what is God's and ascribe to yourself what is yours. Give Him thanks, then, for His grace, but place upon yourself alone the blame and the punishment your fault deserves.

Always take the lowest place and the highest will be given you, for the highest cannot exist apart from the lowest. The saints who are greatest before God are those who consider themselves the least, and the more humble they are within themselves, so much the more glorious they are. Since they do not desire vainglory, they are full of truth and heavenly glory. Being established and strengthened in God, they can by no means be proud. They attribute to God whatever good they have received; they seek no glory from one another but only that which comes from God alone. They desire above all things that He be praised in themselves and in all His saints -- this is their constant purpose.

Be grateful, therefore, for the least gift and you will be worthy to receive a greater. Consider the least gift as the greatest, the most contemptible as something special. And, if you but look to the dignity of the Giver, no gift will appear too small or worthless. Even though He give punishments and scourges, accept them, because He acts for our welfare in whatever He allows to befall us.

He who desires to keep the grace of God ought to be grateful when it is given and patient when it is withdrawn. Let him pray that it return; let him be cautious and humble lest he lose it.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-a-kempis/appreciating-gods-grace/>

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