

Avoiding Idle Talk

by Thomas a Kempis

We must avoid idle talk and engage in devout conversation to aid in our spiritual progress and avoid vanity.

Scripture: Proverbs 21:23, Ephesians 4:29, Colossians 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, James 1:26

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Guarding Speech"

Description

Thomas a Kempis emphasizes the importance of shunning gossip and worldly discussions, as they often lead to distractions and vanity. He reflects on the regret of engaging in unnecessary conversations that leave a troubled conscience, highlighting the tendency to seek comfort in idle chatter rather than in divine consolation. Kempis encourages the practice of watching, praying, and speaking words that edify, warning against bad habits and indifference that can lead to unguarded speech. He stresses the value of devout conversations on spiritual matters for personal and communal spiritual growth.

Transcript

SHUN the gossip of men as much as possible, for discussion of worldly affairs, even though sincere, is a great distraction inasmuch as we are quickly ensnared and captivated by vanity.

Many a time I wish that I had held my peace and had not associated with men. Why, indeed, do we converse and gossip among ourselves when we so seldom part without a troubled conscience? We do so because we seek comfort from one another's conversation and wish to ease the mind wearied by diverse thoughts. Hence, we talk and think quite fondly of things we like very much or of things we dislike intensely. But, sad to say, we often talk vainly and to no purpose; for this external pleasure effectively bars inward and divine consolation.

Therefore we must watch and pray lest time pass idly.

When the right and opportune moment comes for speaking, say something that will edify.

Bad habits and indifference to spiritual progress do much to remove the guard from the tongue. Devout conversation on spiritual matters, on the contrary, is a great aid to spiritual progress, especially when persons of the same mind and spirit associate together in God.

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