

# Man Has No Good in Himself and Can Glory in Nothing

by Thomas a Kempis

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*The sermon teaches that true glory and joy can only be found in seeking God's glory and not our own, and that human praise and glory are fleeting and vain.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 8:4, Psalm 115:1, Psalm 146:3, 1 Corinthians 1:31, Hebrews 13:8, James 4:6

**Topics:** "Human Humility", "Divine Grace"

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## Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the humility and dependence of man on God, acknowledging human insignificance and the need for divine grace and strength. He contrasts the unchanging nature of God with the ever-changing state of man, emphasizing the importance of seeking God's help for true conversion and steadfastness. Kempis highlights the vanity of self-glory and the true glory found in praising God and delighting in His name, rather than seeking human praise or worldly recognition.

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## Transcript

### THE DISCIPLE

LORD, what is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You visit him? What has man deserved that You should give him Your grace? What cause have I, Lord, to complain if You desert me, or what objection can I have if You do not do what I ask? This I may think and say in all truth: "Lord, I am nothing, of myself I have nothing that is good; I am lacking in all things, and I am ever tending toward nothing. And unless I have Your help and am inwardly strengthened by You, I become quite lukewarm and lax."

But You, Lord, are always the same. You remain forever, always good, just, and holy; doing all things rightly, justly, and holily, disposing them wisely. I, however, who am more ready to go backward than forward, do not remain always in one state, for I change with the seasons. Yet my condition quickly improves when it pleases You and when You reach forth Your helping hand. For You alone, without human aid, can help me and strengthen me so greatly that my heart shall no more change but be converted and rest solely in You. Hence, if I knew well how to cast aside all earthly consolation, either to attain devotion or because of the necessity which, in the absence of human solace, compels me to seek You alone, then I could deservedly hope for Your grace and rejoice in the gift of new consolation.

Thanks be to You from Whom all things come, whenever it is well with me. In Your sight I am vanity and nothingness, a weak, unstable man. In what, therefore, can I glory, and how can I wish to be highly regarded? Is it because I am nothing? This, too, is utterly vain. Indeed, the greatest vanity is the evil plague of empty self-glory, because it draws one away from true glory and robs one of heavenly grace. For when a man is pleased with himself he displeases You, when he pants after human praise he is deprived of true virtue. But it is true glory and holy exultation to glory in You and not in self, to rejoice in Your name rather than in one's own virtue, and not to delight in any creature except for Your sake.

Let Your name, not mine, be praised. Let Your work, not mine, be magnified. Let Your holy name be blessed, but let no human praise be given to me. You are my glory. You are the joy of my heart. In You I will glory and rejoice all the day, and for myself I will glory in nothing but my infirmities.

Let the Jews seek the glory that comes from another. I will seek that which comes from God alone. All human glory, all temporal honor, all worldly position is truly vanity and foolishness compared to Your everlasting glory. O my Truth, my Mercy, my God, O Blessed Trinity, to You alone be praise and honor, power and glory, throughout all the endless ages of ages.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-a-kempis/man-has-no-good-in-himself-and-can-glory-in-nothing/>

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