

Ourselves

by Thomas a Kempis

To achieve true peace of mind and unity of purpose, one must cast aside all temporal concerns and focus solely on God and self.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 6:4, Philippians 2:3, Colossians 3:2

Topics: "Self Reflection", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Thomas a Kempis emphasizes the importance of not relying too much on ourselves, as grace and understanding are often lacking within us. He highlights the tendency to be blind in heart, excusing our wrongdoings and being quick to judge others while overlooking our own faults. Kempis stresses the need for self-reflection, silence regarding others' affairs, and focusing on God and oneself to achieve true peace and unity of purpose. He encourages prioritizing the eternal and infinite God over temporal concerns, finding satisfaction and joy solely in Him.

Transcript

WE MUST not rely too much upon ourselves, for grace and understanding are often lacking in us. We have but little inborn light, and this we quickly lose through negligence. Often we are not aware that we are so blind in heart. Meanwhile we do wrong, and then do worse in excusing it. At times we are moved by passion, and we think it zeal. We take others to task for small mistakes, and overlook greater ones in ourselves. We are quick enough to feel and brood over the things we suffer from others, but we think nothing of how much others suffer from us. If a man would weigh his own deeds fully and rightly, he would find little cause to pass severe judgment on others.

The interior man puts the care of himself before all other concerns, and he who attends to himself carefully does not find it hard to hold his tongue about others. You will never be devout of heart unless you are thus silent about the affairs of others and pay particular attention to yourself. If you attend wholly to God and yourself, you will be little disturbed by what you see about you.

Where are your thoughts when they are not upon yourself? And after attending to various things, what have you gained if you have neglected self? If you wish to have true peace of mind and unity of purpose, you must cast all else aside and keep only yourself before your eyes.

You will make great progress if you keep yourself free from all temporal cares, for to value anything that is temporal is a great mistake. Consider nothing great, nothing high, nothing pleasing, nothing acceptable,

except God Himself or that which is of God. Consider the consolations of creatures as vanity, for the soul that loves God scorns all things that are inferior to Him. God alone, the eternal and infinite, satisfies all, bringing comfort to the soul and true joy to the body.

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