

Self-Denial and the Renunciation of Evil Appetites

by Thomas a Kempis

True freedom and perfection can only be achieved through self-denial and a lifelong pursuit of giving up one's desires and interests for the sake of Christ.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Matthew 16:24, Philippians 3:7, James 3:17, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Self Denial", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the necessity of renouncing self and seeking the things of Christ in order to find true freedom and rest. He emphasizes the importance of giving up earthly desires and embracing heavenly wisdom, even though it may seem contemptible to the world. Kempis encourages his listeners to progress towards perfection by surrendering completely to God and awaiting His guidance, which leads to a life of peace and joy.

Transcript

THE VOICE OF CHRIST

MY CHILD, you can never be perfectly free unless you completely renounce self, for all who seek their own interest and who love themselves are bound in fetters. They are unsettled by covetousness and curiosity, always searching for ease and not for the things of Christ, often devising and framing that which will not last, for anything that is not of God will fail completely.

Hold to this short and perfect advice, therefore: give up your desires and you will find rest. Think upon it in your heart, and when you have put it into practice you will understand all things.

THE DISCIPLE

But this, Lord, is not the work of one day, nor is it mere child's play; indeed, in this brief sentence is included all the perfection of holy persons.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST

My child, you should not turn away or be downcast when you hear the way of the perfect. Rather you ought to be spurred on the more toward their sublime heights, or at least be moved to seek perfection.

I would this were the case with you -- that you had progressed to the point where you no longer loved self but simply awaited My bidding and his whom I have placed as father over you. Then you would please Me very much, and your whole life would pass in peace and joy. But you have yet many things which you must give up, and unless you resign them entirely to Me you will not obtain that which you ask.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold, fire-tried, that thou mayest be made rich"[36] -- rich in heavenly wisdom which treads underfoot all that is low. Put aside earthly wisdom, all human self-complacency.

I have said: exchange what is precious and valued among men for that which is considered contemptible. For true heavenly wisdom -- not to think highly of self and not to seek glory on earth -- does indeed seem mean and small and is well-nigh forgotten, as many men praise it with their mouths but shy far away from it in their lives. Yet this heavenly wisdom is a pearl of great price, which is hidden from many.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-a-kempis/self-denial-and-the-renunciation-of-evil-appetites/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net