

To Despise the World and Serve God Is Sweet

by Thomas a Kempis

Serving God and despising the world is a great honor and glory, and brings great joy and freedom.

Scripture: Psalm 86:15, Matthew 20:28, Ephesians 2:8, Philippians 2:5, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Serving God", "Spiritual Devotion"

Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the great honor and glory of serving God wholeheartedly, forsaking worldly desires, and embracing a life of religious devotion. He reflects on the multitude of God's mercies, the sweetness of His charity, and the undeserved grace and friendship bestowed upon His servants. Kempis acknowledges the privilege of serving a God who condescends to receive even the poor and unworthy into His service, offering Himself to them. He emphasizes the joy, freedom, and holiness found in serving God, and the eternal rewards awaiting those who dedicate their lives to Him.

Transcript

THE DISCIPLE

NOW again I will speak, Lord, and will not be silent. I will speak to the hearing of my God, my Lord, and my King Who is in heaven. How great, O Lord, is the multitude of Your mercies which You have stored up for those who love You. But what are You to those who love You? What are You to those who serve You with their whole heart?

Truly beyond the power of words is the sweetness of contemplation You give to those who love You. To me You have shown the sweetness of Your charity, especially in having made me when I did not exist, in having brought me back to serve You when I had gone far astray from You, in having commanded me to love You.

O Fountain of unceasing love, what shall I say of You? How can I forget You, Who have been pleased to remember me even after I had wasted away and perished? You have shown mercy to Your servant beyond all hope, and have exhibited grace and friendship beyond his deserving.

What return shall I make to You for this grace? For it is not given every man to forsake all things, to renounce the world, and undertake the religious life. Is it anything great that I should serve You Whom every creature is bound to serve? It should not seem much to me; instead it should appear great and wonderful that You condescend to receive into Your service one who is so poor and unworthy. Behold, all

things are Yours, even those which I have and by which I serve You. Behold, heaven and earth which You created for the service of man, stand ready, and each day they do whatever You command. But even this is little, for You have appointed angels also to minister to man -- yea more than all this -- You Yourself have condescended to serve man and have promised to give him Yourself.

What return shall I make for all these thousands of benefits? Would that I could serve You all the days of my life! Would that for but one day I could serve You worthily! Truly You are worthy of all service, all honor, and everlasting praise. Truly You are my Lord, and I am Your poor servant, bound to serve You with all my powers, praising You without ever becoming weary. I wish to do this -- this is my desire. Do You supply whatever is wanting in me.

It is a great honor, a great glory to serve You and to despise all things for Your sake. They who give themselves gladly to Your most holy service will possess great grace. They who cast aside all carnal delights for Your love will find the most sweet consolation of the Holy Ghost. They who enter upon the narrow way for Your name and cast aside all worldly care will attain great freedom of mind.

O sweet and joyful service of God, which makes man truly free and holy! O sacred state of religious bondage which makes man equal to the angels, pleasing to God, terrible to the demons, and worthy of the commendation of all the faithful! O service to be embraced and always desired, in which the highest good is offered and joy is won which shall remain forever!

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/thomas-a-kempis/to-despise-the-world-and-serve-god-is-sweet/>

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