

Truth Speaks Inwardly Without the Sound of Words

by Thomas a Kempis

The sermon emphasizes the importance of God speaking directly to us, as human intermediaries can only deliver words, but God alone can impart understanding and enlightenment.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:9, Psalm 119:27, Proverbs 3:5, Isaiah 55:10, John 6:68

Topics: "Personal Prayer", "Spiritual Guidance"

Description

Thomas a Kempis emphasizes the importance of seeking direct communication with God, rather than relying solely on the words of prophets or messengers. He urges for a personal connection with God, asking for His guidance, understanding, and enlightenment. Kempis highlights the transformative power of God's words in contrast to human teachings, emphasizing the need for God's direct instruction to inflame the heart, unlock mysteries, and provide strength for the journey of faith.

Transcript

THE DISCIPLE

SPEAK, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."^[25] "I am Thy servant. Give me understanding that I may know Thine ordinances^[26] . . . Incline my heart to Thine ordinances^[27] . . . Let Thy speech distil as the dew."^[28]

The children of Israel once said to Moses: "Speak thou to us and we will hear thee: let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die."^[29]

Not so, Lord, not so do I pray. Rather with Samuel the prophet I entreat humbly and earnestly: "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." Do not let Moses or any of the prophets speak to me; but You speak, O Lord God, Who inspired and enlightened all the prophets; for You alone, without them, can instruct me perfectly, whereas they, without You, can do nothing. They, indeed, utter fine words, but they cannot impart the spirit. They do indeed speak beautifully, but if You remain silent they cannot inflame the heart. They deliver the message; You lay bare the sense. They place before us mysteries, but You unlock their meaning. They proclaim commandments; You help us to keep them. They point out the way; You give strength for the journey. They work only outwardly; You instruct and enlighten our hearts. They water on the outside; You give the increase.

They cry out words; You give understanding to the hearer.

Let not Moses speak to me, therefore, but You, the Lord my God, everlasting truth, speak lest I die and prove barren if I am merely given outward advice and am not inflamed within; lest the word heard and not kept, known and not loved, believed and not obeyed, rise up in judgment against me.

Speak, therefore, Lord, for Your servant listens. "Thou hast the words of eternal life."^[30] Speak to me for the comfort of my soul and for the amendment of my life, for Your praise, Your glory, and Your everlasting honor.

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