

Acquiring Patience in the Fight Against Concupiscence

by Thomas a Kempis

True peace and comfort come from enduring trials and tribulations, and finding pleasure in the Lord.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 5:11, Romans 5:3, James 1:2

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Perseverance"

Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the necessity of patience in the face of life's adversities, emphasizing that true peace is found in enduring tribulations and adversities for the sake of God. He warns against seeking fleeting worldly pleasures, highlighting the emptiness and bitterness that often accompany them, and encourages turning away from selfish desires to find true delight and comfort in the Lord. Although the journey may be filled with sadness, toil, and conflict, the ultimate reward of deep spiritual blessings and consolation from God awaits those who persevere.

Transcript

THE DISCIPLE

PATIENCE, O Lord God, is very necessary for me, I see, because there are many adversities in this life. No matter what plans I make for my own peace, my life cannot be free from struggle and sorrow.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST

My child, you are right, yet My wish is not that you seek that peace which is free from temptations or meets with no opposition, but rather that you consider yourself as having found peace when you have been tormented with many tribulations and tried with many adversities.

If you say that you cannot suffer much, how will you endure the fire of purgatory? Of two evils, the lesser is always to be chosen. Therefore, in order that you may escape the everlasting punishments to come, try to bear present evils patiently for the sake of God.

Do you think that men of the world have no suffering, or perhaps but little? Ask even those who enjoy the most delights and you will learn otherwise. "But," you will say, "they enjoy many pleasures and follow their own wishes; therefore they do not feel their troubles very much." Granted that they do have whatever they wish, how long do you think it will last? Behold, they who prosper in the world shall perish as smoke, and

there shall be no memory of their past joys. Even in this life they do not find rest in these pleasures without bitterness, weariness, and fear. For they often receive the penalty of sorrow from the very thing whence they believe their happiness comes. And it is just. Since they seek and follow after pleasures without reason, they should not enjoy them without shame and bitterness.

How brief, how false, how unreasonable and shameful all these pleasures are! Yet in their drunken blindness men do not understand this, but like brute beasts incur death of soul for the miserly enjoyment of a corruptible life.

Therefore, My child, do not pursue your lusts, but turn away from your own will. "Seek thy pleasure in the Lord and He will give thee thy heart's desires." [33] If you wish to be truly delighted and more abundantly comforted by Me, behold, in contempt of all worldly things and in the cutting off of all base pleasures shall your blessing be, and great consolation shall be given you. Further, the more you withdraw yourself from any solace of creatures, the sweeter and stronger comfort will you find in Me.

At first you will not gain these blessings without sadness and toil and conflict. Habit already formed will resist you, but it shall be overcome by a better habit. The flesh will murmur against you, but it will be bridled by fervor of spirit. The old serpent will sting and trouble you, but prayer will put him to flight and by steadfast, useful toil the way will be closed to him.

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