

Consider the Hidden Judgments of God Lest You Become Proud of Your Own Good Deeds

by Thomas a Kempis

This sermon emphasizes the importance of considering God's judgments and the vanity of human virtue, encouraging listeners to cultivate humility and submission.

Scripture: Job 4:14, Psalm 8:4, Proverbs 3:5, 1 Corinthians 1:28, James 4:10

Topics: "Divine Judgment", "Human Humility"

Description

Thomas a Kempis, in 'The Disciple' sermon, reflects on the awe-inspiring holiness and judgment of the Lord, emphasizing the insignificance of humanity in comparison. He acknowledges the need for God's guidance, defense, and protection in all aspects of life, highlighting the frailty and instability of human nature without divine intervention. Kempis humbly submits to the unfathomable judgments of God, recognizing the vanity of human glory and the eternal truth of the Lord's sovereignty.

Transcript

THE DISCIPLE

YOU thunder forth Your judgments over me, Lord. You shake all my bones with fear and trembling, and my soul is very much afraid. I stand in awe as I consider that the heavens are not pure in Your sight. If You found wickedness in the angels and did not spare them, what will become of me? Stars have fallen from heaven, and I -- I who am but dust -- how can I be presumptuous? They whose deeds seemed worthy of praise have fallen into the depths, and I have seen those who ate the bread of angels delighting themselves with the husks of swine.

There is no holiness, then, if You withdraw Your hand, Lord. There is no wisdom if You cease to guide, no courage if You cease to defend. No chastity is secure if You do not guard it. Our vigilance avails nothing if Your holy watchfulness does not protect us. Left to ourselves we sink and perish, but visited by You we are lifted up and live. We are truly unstable, but You make us strong. We grow lukewarm, but You inflame us. Oh, how humbly and lowly should I consider myself! How very little should I esteem anything that seems good in me! How profoundly should I submit to Your unfathomable judgments, Lord, where I find myself to be but nothing!

O immeasurable weight! O impassable sea, where I find myself to be nothing but bare nothingness! Where, then, is glory's hiding place? Where can there be any trust in my own virtue? All vainglory is swallowed up in the depths of Your judgments upon me.

What is all flesh in Your sight? Shall the clay glory against Him that formed it? How can he whose heart is truly subject to God be lifted up by vainglory? The whole world will not make him proud whom truth has subjected to itself. Nor shall he who has placed all his hope in God be moved by the tongues of flatterers. For behold, even they who speak are nothing; they will pass away with the sound of their words, but the truth of the Lord remains forever.

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