

The Excellence of a Free Mind, Gained Through Prayer Rather Than by Study

by Thomas a Kempis

Maintaining a free mind through prayer and moderation is essential for spiritual growth and resisting worldly temptations.

Scripture: Psalm 119:37, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Galatians 5:16, 1 John 2:15

Topics: "Spiritual Freedom", "Prayer Life"

Description

Thomas a Kempis preaches about the importance of maintaining a focused mind on heavenly things amidst the cares of life, avoiding disorderly affections for worldly pleasures. He prays for deliverance from the entanglements of earthly necessities, darkness of mind, and miseries that oppress the soul, seeking instead the liberty of spirit and love of the eternal. Kempis asks God to help resist carnal comforts, worldly temptations, and the deceitfulness of the devil, while seeking the courage, patience, and constancy to persevere in the love of God's name.

Transcript

THE DISCIPLE

IT IS the mark of a perfect man, Lord, never to let his mind relax in attention to heavenly things, and to pass through many cares as though he had none; not as an indolent man does, but having by the certain prerogative of a free mind no disorderly affection for any created being.

Keep me, I beg You, most merciful God, from the cares of this life, lest I be too much entangled in them. Keep me from many necessities of the body, lest I be ensnared by pleasure. Keep me from all darkness of mind, lest I be broken by troubles and overcome. I do not ask deliverance from those things which worldly vanity desires so eagerly, but from those miseries which, by the common curse of humankind, oppress the soul of Your servant in punishment and keep him from entering into the liberty of spirit as often as he would.

My God, Sweetness beyond words, make bitter all the carnal comfort that draws me from love of the eternal and lures me to its evil self by the sight of some delightful good in the present. Let it not overcome me, my God. Let not flesh and blood conquer me. Let not the world and its brief glory deceive me, nor the devil trip me by his craftiness. Give me courage to resist, patience to endure, and constancy to persevere.

Give me the soothing unction of Your spirit rather than all the consolations of the world, and in place of carnal love, infuse into me the love of Your name.

Behold, eating, drinking, clothing, and other necessities that sustain the body are burdensome to the fervent soul. Grant me the grace to use such comforts temperately and not to become entangled in too great a desire for them. It is not lawful to cast them aside completely, for nature must be sustained, but Your holy law forbids us to demand superfluous things and things that are simply for pleasure, else the flesh would rebel against the spirit. In these matters, I beg, let Your hand guide and direct me, so that I may not overstep the law in any way.

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