

## Thomas A Kempis on Peace

WHEN a man desires a thing too much, he at once becomes ill at ease. A proud and avaricious man never rests, whereas he who is poor and humble of heart lives in a world of peace. An unmortified man is quickly tempted and overcome in small, trifling evils; his spirit is weak, in a measure carnal and inclined to sensual things; he can hardly abstain from earthly desires. Hence it makes him sad to forego them; he is quick to anger if reproved. Yet if he satisfies his desires, remorse of conscience overwhelms him because he followed his passions and they did not lead to the peace he sought.

True peace of heart, then, is found in resisting passions, not in satisfying them. There is no peace in the carnal man, in the man given to vain attractions, but there is peace in the fervent and spiritual man.

THE VOICE OF CHRIST: MY CHILD, if you place your peace in any creature because of your own feeling or for the sake of his company, you will be unsettled and entangled. But if you have recourse to the ever-living and abiding Truth, you will not grieve if a friend should die or forsake you. Your love for your friend should be grounded in Me, and for My sake you should love whoever seems to be good and is very dear to you in this life. Without Me friendship has no strength and cannot endure. Love which I do not bind is neither true nor pure.

You ought, therefore, to be so dead to such human affections as to wish as far as lies within you to be without the fellowship of men. Man draws nearer to God in proportion as he withdraws farther from all earthly comfort. And he ascends higher to God as he descends lower into himself and grows more vile in his own eyes. He who attributes any good to himself hinders God's grace from coming into his heart, for the grace of the Holy Spirit seeks always the humble heart.

If you knew how to annihilate yourself completely and empty yourself of all created love, then I should overflow in you with great grace. When you look to creatures, the sight of the Creator is taken from you. Learn, therefore, to conquer yourself in all things for the sake of your Maker. Then will you be able to attain to divine knowledge. But anything, no matter how small, that is loved and regarded inordinately keeps you back from the highest good and corrupts the soul.