

Truth

*Jesus said: I am the Way; I am the Truth and Life.
No one can come to the Father except through me.¹*

O God, *send out your light and your truth; they shall be our guide, to lead us to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell.²* Our way thinking often misdirects us as we do not see the complete picture of things as they are.

Of what use are those things that are esoteric and unnecessary if we neglect those that are necessary. The twelve disciples were close to Jesus and yet he would often say to them: *Why do you not understand what I say?³*

Of what use is knowledge of trifling niceties? If we hear Jesus, the Eternal Word, we are freed from many distractions. From that Word all things proceed and they give testimony to Him. *Through him all things came into being, not one thing came into being except through him.⁴* This knowing brings us into a oneness where serenity prevails and the heart is resolute.

O God, you are Truth, make me one with you in Love, the kind of Love that flows between Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Things disturb me when I see, hear, or read them and they exclude You. Let all the learned be still, all the creatures serene while You speak to my heart in silence. Elijah recognized your voice in *a light silent sound.⁵*

When we are single-minded in your Way, *we leave foolishness behind and we will live, go forwards in the ways of perception.⁶* Even subtle things will be understood because *as your word unfolds it gives light, and even the simple understand.⁷*

Persons of pure, simple, firm, and steadfast hearts are not easily distracted by the many things they are called to do because they have been freed from self interests. Misguided affections can hinder us more than anything else. Good and devout persons organize their outward works according to inward priorities, i.e., by the dictates of their reason and obedience to the Father's will. To overcome the attractions of worldly things is indeed a difficult struggle, but our daily efforts help us to grow strong spiritually. This effort needs be our main concern

¹ John 14:6

² Psalm 43:3

³ John 8:43a

⁴ John 1:3

⁵ 1Kings 19:12

⁶ Proverbs 9:6

⁷ Psalm 119:130

and as Paul *notes* you are fighting the same battle which you saw me fighting for him and which you hear I am fighting still.⁸

Knowledge in this life will always entail obscurities. *Now I can know only imperfectly; but then I shall know just as fully as I am myself known.*⁹

*The heart of the wise seeks knowledge*¹⁰ and this is good, however, a clear conscience and a virtuous life is of higher priority; if only knowledge is emphasized it is easy to make mistakes and not bear the fruit we are capable of. If only people would make as much an effort to nourish virtues and avoid sin as they do in probing hypothetical abstractions there would be less evil in the world, less differences among those who profess to be true believers. On judgment day the concern will be on what we have done, not on what we have read; on how well we practiced what we preached.

Many who were considered great in worldly eyes simply faded away and such is the way for vain teachings that do not place values where they belong. *For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths.*¹¹

Love God and love neighbor and you will be truly great. *Whoever humbles himself is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*¹² *Whoever is truly wise considers everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*¹³

We have wisdom when we follow the will of our heavenly Father just as Jesus did: *The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him.*¹⁴

This article is based on Book 1, Chapter 3 of Thomas of Kempis' writing, "Imitation of Christ." It is not a translation, and there are many of those, but a personal reflection on his writing; if any of it helps give credit to Thomas of Kempis; if any of it fails the responsibility is mine. (rfm)

⁸ Phil 1:30

⁹ 1 Cor 13:12b

¹⁰ Prov 15:14

¹¹ 2 Tim 4:3-4

¹² Matt 18:4

¹³ Philippians 3:8

¹⁴ John 8:29