

(2.7) Love of Jesus

Blessed is he who understands what it is to love Jesus, and to humble himself for the honor of our Savior. We must let go of what we find so attractive in this world and anyone that clings to creaturely things shall fall with their eventual failing; understand that our love of Jesus, our Beloved, is our guide. The love of created things is untrustworthy and changeable whereas the love of Jesus is true to life and lasting. *God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*¹

He that stands strong with Jesus shall stand firm forever; *for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ.*² Love him and keep him for your friend, who, when all else fades away, will not forsake you, nor allow you to perish at the end; *for, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*³ Sooner or later you must leave all created things and in that there is no choice.

In life and in approaching death keep yourself close to Jesus, entrust yourself to His faithfulness; he alone will help you when all else fails. *Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*⁴ The nature of our Savior is such that he will not accept a divided heart; He will have your heart for Himself alone; invite Him there to reign as King.

If you could empty your heart of every creature Jesus would willingly make His dwelling with you. He says, *Remain in me, as I remain in you.*⁵ Whatever dependence you place in men apart from the Lord, you will find to be immanently lost. Seek the words of one like John the Baptist *who was not a reed swayed by the wind;*⁶ otherwise trust not nor lean upon those who are reeds shaken by the wind. *All flesh is grass, and all their loyalty like the flower of the field.*⁷



You will soon be deceived if you regard only the outward appearance of men; follow Jesus *so that you may have something to say to those who boast of external appearance rather*

¹ 1 Corinthians 1:9

² 1 Corinthians 3:11

³ Romans 10:9

⁴ Philippians 4:7

⁵ John 15:4

⁶ Matt 11:7, Luke 7:24

⁷ Isaiah 40:6, Jb 8:12, 14:2, Ps. 37:2, Sir 14:18, Jas 1:10, 1Pt 1:24

*than of the heart.*⁸ Indeed, if you seek your comfort and your profit in others, you will too often meet with disappointment.

If in all things you seek Jesus, truly you will find Jesus; if you seek yourself, you shall find yourself also, but to your own eventual disappointment. If a man does not seek Jesus, the harm he will face is greater than what all his enemies can do to him. Therefore continue your pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus.⁹

This article is based on Book 2, Chapter 7 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)

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⁸ 2Corinthians 5:12

⁹ Philippians 3:14