

(3.4) Walk Before God in Truth and Humility

My son, walk before Me in truth, and seek Me always in the simplicity of your heart; as I told Abram, *I am God the Almighty. Walk in my presence and be blameless.*¹ He that walks before Me in truth shall be secure against the assaults of evil. The truth shall deliver you from seducers and from the distraction of the wicked. *The truth shall have made you free*², you shall be free indeed and shall make no account of the vain words of worldly men.

Your word, O Lord, is true; I beseech You to let it be done to me according to Your will. Let the Spirit of Truth teach me, let it guard me and preserve me in the final salvation. Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love, and I shall walk with You in great freedom of heart.

I will teach you, says the Spirit of Truth, those things that are right and pleasing in My sight. Then *You receive whatever you ask, when you keep My commandments.*³ On the other hand, think on your sins with great displeasure and sorrow and never esteem yourself be anything on account of your good works. It is a simple truth that you are a sinner, subject to, and entangled with many worldly passions.

On your own, you accomplish very little, soon do you fail, quickly are you overcome, rapidly disturbed and fleetingly lose direction. You have little or nothing of which you can boast, but many shameful things to acknowledge and are much weaker in many ways than you can fathom.

Let nothing of what you do be overvalued. Let nothing seem great, nothing valuable or admirable, nothing worthy of admiration, nothing high, nothing truly praiseworthy or desirable, but that which is eternal. Let the eternal Truth please you above all things, and your own shortcomings ever displease you. Fear nothing so much, blame and flee nothing so much as your own vices and sins; these ought to displease you more than the loss of anything else.

Some persons do not walk sincerely before Me, but led by inquisitiveness and self-importance, they desire to know My secrets and to understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation. When I refuse to go along with them, they often fall into great temptation and sin because of their arrogance and curiosity.

¹ Genesis 17:1

² John 8:32

³ 1John 3:22

Fear the judgments of God and dread the anger of the Almighty; we understand that *the flesh shudders with dread of You; we fear your judgments.*⁴ Yet presume not to scrutinize the works of the Most High but search conscientiously your own iniquities, in how often you have offended and neglected doing good.

Some carry their devotions in their writings, some in pictures, and some in outward signs and symbols. Some have Me in their mouths but there is little of Me in their hearts. The Prophet identifies these as *the people who draws near Me with their lips alone though their hearts are far from Me.*⁵ In turn Jesus reminds us, *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven,* but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you.* Depart from me, you evildoers.*⁶



Others, there are, who, enlightened in mind and purified in affection, yearn always after things eternal. They are unwilling to value earthly things, and lament to be subject to the necessities of nature. Such as these perceive what the Spirit of Truth speaks within them for He teaches them to spurn the things of earth and to love heavenly things, i.e., to discount worldly things while day and night hunger for heavenly ones.

This article is based on Book 3, Chapter 4 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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⁴ Psalm 119:120

⁵ Isaiah 29:13

⁶ Matthew 7:21-23