

ploughs, looks behind him and not before.

The cares for the joys of the life of the flesh, which seem so important to men are really but a dream. The only real business of life is the announcement of the will of the Father, attention to it and fulfillment of it. To the reproach of Martha, that she was left alone to look after the supper, while her sister Mary, instead of helping her, cared only to listen to his teaching, Jesus replied, "In vain dost thou reproach her; trouble thyself with these things if they are necessary for thee, but let alone those who need not bodily pleasures; let them do the one thing needful in order to live.

Jesus said that he who wishes to obtain the true life, which consists in the fulfillment of the will of the Father, must before all things give up his own personal desires. Such an one must not only refrain from fashioning his life according to his own wishes, but be ready at any hour to endure all kinds of privation and suffering.

He who wishes to fashion his bodily life after his own will, will ruin the true life which fulfills the will of the Father.

And there is no advantage in the accumulation of necessity for the life of the body, if such should ruin the Life of the spirit. The Life of the spirit is destroyed by nothing so surely as by the love of gain, the acquirement of wealth. Men forget that whatever riches and property they may acquire, they may die at any moment, and that property is not needed for their life. Death hangs over each of us. Illness, the murderous violence of men, accident at any moment, may put an end to life. The death of the body is the unavoidable condition of every instant of life. While a man lives he should look upon each hour of his life as a respite granted him by favor. We should remember this, and not say that we do not know it. We know and foresee all that happiness on earth and in heaven, but we forget the death which we know awaits us every moment. If we did

not forget this we could not give ourselves up to the life of the body; we could not depend on it.

Christ went on to say "In order to follow my teaching, you must weigh well the advantages of serving the flesh and your own will against those of fulfilling the will of the Father. He alone who has carefully calculated this can become my pupil, but he who has done so will not prefer a pretended good, and a pretended life to a true good and a true life. The true life is given to men, and men know it, and listen to its call, but are led away by the cares of the moment. They lose this life.

The true life is like the feast given by a rich man, to which he invited guests. He called to them, as the voice of the Father spirit calls unto all. But some of the guests were occupied with their trade, others with their household affairs, others again with their family, and these came not to the feast. The poor, however, who had no earthly cares, went to the feast and were happy. And thus men, led away by their care for the life of the body, deprive themselves of the true life.

Whoever shall not utterly renounce all the cares and advantages of the life of the body, cannot fulfil the will of the Father, for it is not possible partly to serve ourselves and partly the Father. We must calculate whether it profits us to serve the flesh, whether we are able to fashion our lives as we will. We must do as a man does who would build a house, or who prepares for war. He calculates beforehand whether he will be able to finish his house, whether he can hope for victory. If he sees that both are impossible he will throw away in vain neither his trouble nor his troops, to be ruined for nothing and to become the laughing stock of others. Were it possible to regulate the life of the body according to our own wishes, it might be worth while to serve the flesh; but as that is impossible it is better to renounce all that belongs to the flesh and serve only the spirit.