

3/ The Kiss: Symbol of Peace & Friendship

A. False Peace

a. From Friendship w/ the devil

Ch. 2, 1-6

Meditations on the Song of Songs
by Teresa of Avila

Treats of **Nine kinds of false peace** presented to the soul by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Explains the holiness of the religious state. This holiness leads to the true peace desired by the bride in the Song of Songs.

God deliver you from the peace of many kinds that **worldly people** have. It is in fact a peace that brings only **perpetual war**. When the worldly remain quiet while in serious sin and tranquil about their vices, their consciences do not feel remorseful about anything, their peace is a sign they are **friends with the devil ...**

Bad as they are, they attempt to return to God, not out of love for Him, but rather to **escape the war...**

The devil understands this and so gives them delight in their pleasure. They return to their friendship with him. He then shows them how false their peace was ... The devil could begin to offer another peace in small things ... this daughters, we must fear.

2. When a Sister begins to grow lax in things that seem small, persisting in them over time with no remorse, the resulting peace is bad. Consequently, the devil can draw her into a thousand evils ...

In sum, there are faults that should be felt when committed. If the soul doesn't feel them, the devil can rejoice making the soul insensible to little things ...

For love of God be very careful. There must be **war** in this life. Faced with so many enemies it is not possible for us to sit with our hands folded. We need always care about our interior and exterior progress.

3. Though in prayer the Lord grants you **favours** ... when you leave prayer you will meet with a thousand little **obstacles, interior disturbances and temptations.**

This war doesn't have to be going on all the time but it is a favor from the Lord. By this means, the soul advances.

It is impossible for us to be angels here below; it is not our nature. I am not disturb seeing a soul with great temptations. The soul does gain much however, if **love** and **fear** of the Lord are present.

On the other hand, a soul who is always **quiet** and **without a war**, concerns me. I try to tempt such persons, that they may know themselves. To be without a war is possible, once the Lord has brought the soul to an **abundance of contemplation.**

4. There is a variety of ways to proceed in prayer. The soul I am referring to, remains in an habitual and interior **happiness**. Yet, I do not think they understand themselves.

After a careful look, I can see they occasionally have their **little wars**.

I do not envy these souls because it seems that those who have to **fight the war advance** further in the things of **perfection** without experiencing abundant prayer...

Let us **exclude advanced and mortified souls** who have endured this war for many years. They are already dead to the world. Ordinarily our Lord gives them **peace** but not in such a way that they don't deplore a fault they commit and experience deep sorrow over it.

5. Thus, daughters, the Lord leads souls along **many paths**. But always **fear** when some fault you commit does not grieve you. For in regard to **sin**, even venial, you already know that the soul must feel **deep sorrow**, and, glory to God ...

... If a person is alive, doesn't he feel a tiny pinprick or a thorn however small? If our souls are not dead but alive in the love of God, isn't it a great favor to feel any little thing we do against our obligations or what we have professed?

His Majesty is making a **bed of roses and flowers** for Himself in the soul to whom He gives this care, and it is impossible that He fail to come and favor it, even though late. God help me, what are we religious doing in the monastery? Why did we leave the world? ... Well, in what better way could we be occupied than to prepare rooms within our souls for our Spouse and reach the stage in which we can ask Him to give us the **kiss of His mouth**?

Happy will be the soul that makes this request and whose **lamp will not be out** when the Lord comes, otherwise the Lord will grow **tired of knocking**, and turn away...

6. Let scrupulous souls understand me, I am speaking of souls who commit faults **habitually** without paying any attention to them, thinking they are trifles. They have no **remorse**, and do not strive to make **amends**. **Peace** of this sort is **dangerous** and you should be **warned** about it.

What will be the peace of those lax about the observance of their rule? In many ways, the devil will give them peace. God permits it on account of our sins...

Let us go on to the **peace and friendship** the Lord begins to show us in **prayer** and I will tell what His Majesty has made known to me ... Amen