

February 23, 2014 Women's Meeting, as read by Fr. Tom Lindsay

The Spiritual Life: and how to be attuned to it

by St. Theophan the Recluse

49. THE BURDENS OF LIFE

How one should regard life's burdens so that they do not distract him but coincide with the service of God.

"I shall continue addressing your complaint concerning the disorderliness of thought that is the result of life's everyday occupations.

What if there were nothing to do? There would be sinful idleness. You need to work, and to do things around the household. It is your duty. External considerations should not interfere. You must keep doing them, and do them in a fitting manner. It is the duty of human society. All work of this kind and all occupations, however, may be performed and must be performed in such a way so as not to disrupt thoughts about God. How may this be accomplished?

We have a popular belief, fairly widespread, that holds that as soon as you occupy yourself with work around the house or at your place of business, you have already left the sphere of Godly things and things pleasing to God. Thinking this, when you get the desire to live in a God-pleasing way or begin to talk about it, there is usually a thought that accompanies it that says you must run away from society, leave home, and go to the desert or the forest. This is not the case at all. Life's everyday affairs, upon which the foundation of the home and society depend, are appointed by God, and carrying them out is not a desertion to the sphere of the ungodly, but a continuation of Godly affairs".