

HE [SAINT ANTHONY] was also mindful of the words spoken by the Prophet Elias, “the Lord liveth before Whose presence I stand today.” For he observed that in saying “today” the prophet did not compute the time that had gone by: but daily as though ever commencing he eagerly endeavoured to make himself fit to appear before God, being pure in heart and ever ready to submit to His counsel, and to Him alone.

Life of Anthony, by St Athanasius,
NPNF, Second Series, Vol. IV, §7, p. 198

ABBA SISOES, THE THEBAN, said to his disciple, “Tell me what you see in me, and then I will tell you what I see in you.” His disciple said to him, “You are a good man, but a little hard.” The old man said to him, “You are good, too, but you are not tough enough.”

The Desert Christian, Benedicta Ward,
Macmillan Publishing, p. 221

WE CANNOT BE SAFE from the storms of temptation and assaults of the devil if we make all the protection for our patience and all our confidence consist not in the strength of our inner man but in the doors of our cell or the recesses of the desert, and companionship of the saints, or the safeguard of anything else outside us. For unless our mind is strengthened by the power of His protection Who says in the Gospel “the kingdom of God is within you,” in vain do we fancy that we can defeat the plots of our aerial foe by the aid of men who are living with us, or that we can avoid them by distance of place, or exclude them by the protection of walls. . . . We need not then seek for our peace in externals, nor fancy that another person’s patience can be of any use to the faults of our impatience. For just as “the kingdom of God is within you,” so “a man’s foes are they of his own household.” For no one is more my enemy than my own heart which is truly the one of my household closest to me. . . . if I am injured, the fault is not owing to the other’s attack, but to my own impatience.

St John Cassian, *Conference of Abbot Piamun*, ch. XVI,
NPNF, Second Series, Vol. XI, p. 487

IF, as Scripture teaches, everything involuntary has its cause in what is voluntary, man has no greater enemy than himself.

St Mark the Ascetic, *Philokalia*,
Faber & Faber, Vol. I, page 133

PEARLS FROM THE HOLY FATHERS

JANUARY 14 – 20, 2013

HOLY TRANSFIGURATION MONASTERY Brookline, MA www.htmp.org