



Thoughts ♦ Words ♦ Deeds

From a treatise on *Christian Perfection*
by Saint Gregory of Nyssa, bishop,

Office of Readings for Tuesday of the 12th week of Ordinary Time, Second Reading

The life of the Christian has three distinguishing aspects: deeds, words and thought. Thought comes first, then words, since our words express openly the interior conclusions of the mind. Finally, after thoughts and words, comes action, for our deeds carry out what the mind has conceived. So when one of these results in our acting or speaking or thinking, we must make sure that all our thoughts, words and deeds are controlled by the divine ideal, the revelation of Christ. For then our thoughts, words and deeds will not fall short of the nobility of their implications.

“What then must we do, we who have been found worthy of the name of Christ? Each of us must examine his thoughts, words and deeds, to see whether they are directed toward Christ or are turned away from him....”