**The Imitation of Christ by Thomas A. Kempis**

**BOOK TWO:** THE INTERIOR LIFE

**Chapter 3 Part 2:** Goodness and Peace in Man

**Quote:**

"The man who is at perfect ease is never suspicious, but the disturbed and discontented spirit is upset by many a suspicion. He neither rests himself nor permits others to do so. He often says what ought not to be said and leaves undone what ought to be done. He is concerned with the duties of others but neglects his own. Direct your zeal, therefore, first upon yourself; then you may with justice exercise it upon those about you. You are well versed in coloring your own actions with excuses which you will not accept from others, though it would be more just to accuse yourself and excuse your brother. If you wish men to bear with you, you must bear with them."

**Concept and Scripture:**

If you are not fluid and adaptive in your thinking, you will isolate yourself from God and other people.

Proverbs 18:1

A man who isolates himself seeks his own desires; he rages against all wise judgment.

Philippians 2:3

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Hebrews 13:1-2

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

**Discussion:**

How does isolation open us up to spiritual attack, sin, depression, selfishness, anger, etc.?

How does arrogance isolate us from God and other people?

**Concept and Scripture:**

Idolatry results in discontent which makes itself known when people point out the faults of others while excusing their own.

 1 Timothy 6:6-19 (ESV)

Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

**Discussion:**

What is the difference between a reputation built on Christ verses a reputation built on affluency?

Why is affluency insatiable?

**Concept and Scripture:**

People respond better to the changes that God has made in you than they will through any academic teachings.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

**Discussion:**

How does God work through curriculum?

What is the difference between answering a person asking you a question vs. answering a question out of a textbook?

**Concept and Scripture:**

If you want to have friends, be a friend to others

## Proverbs 17:17

## Friends love through all kinds of weather,    and families stick together in all kinds of trouble.

**Discussion:**

## What’s the difference between developing your own personality vs. maintaining your family’s reputation?

## What’s the difference between personal responsibility and family obligations?