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

**BOOK THREE:** INTERNAL CONSOLATION

### **Chapter 30:** The Quest of Divine Help and Confidence in Regaining Grace

**Quote:**

"The Voice of Christ

MY CHILD, I am the Lord Who gives strength in the day of trouble. Come to Me when all is not well with you. Your tardiness in turning to prayer is the greatest obstacle to heavenly consolation, for before you pray earnestly to Me you first seek many comforts and take pleasure in outward things. Thus, all things are of little profit to you until you realize that I am the one Who saves those who trust in Me, and that outside of Me there is no worth-while help, or any useful counsel or lasting remedy.

But now, after the tempest, take courage, grow strong once more in the light of My mercies; for I am near, says the Lord, to restore all things not only to the full but with abundance and above measure. Is anything difficult for Me? Or shall I be as one who promises and does not act? Where is your faith? Stand firm and persevere. Be a man of endurance and courage, and consolation will come to you in due time. Wait for Me; wait--and I will come to heal you.

It is only a temptation that troubles you, a vain fear that terrifies you.

Of what use is anxiety about the future? Does it bring you anything but trouble upon trouble? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. It is foolish and useless to be either grieved or happy about future things which perhaps may never happen. But it is human to be deluded by such imaginations, and the sign of a weak soul to be led on by suggestions of the enemy. For he does not care whether he overcomes you by love of the present or fear of the future.

Let not your heart be troubled, therefore, nor let it be afraid. Believe in Me and trust in My mercy. When you think you are far from Me, then often I am very near you. When you judge that almost all is lost, then very often you are in the way of gaining great merit.

All is not lost when things go contrary to your wishes. You ought not judge according to present feelings, nor give in to any trouble whenever it comes, or take it as though all hope of escape were lost. And do not consider yourself forsaken if I send some temporary hardship, or withdraw the consolation you desire. For this is the way to the kingdom of heaven, and without doubt it is better for you and the rest of My servants to be tried in adversities than to have all things as you wish. I know your secret thoughts, and I know that it is profitable for your salvation to be left sometimes in despondency lest perhaps you be puffed up by success and fancy yourself to be what you are not.

What I have given, I can take away and restore when it pleases Me. What I give remains Mine, and thus when I take it away I take nothing that is yours, for every good gift and every perfect gift is Mine. If I send you trouble and adversity, do not fret or let your heart be downcast. I can raise you quickly up again and turn all your sorrow into joy. I am no less just and worthy of great praise when I deal with you in this way.

If you think aright and view things in their true light, you should never be so dejected and saddened by adversity, but rather rejoice and give thanks, considering it a matter of special joy that I afflict you with sorrow and do not spare you. "As the Father hath loved Me, so also I love you," I said to My disciples, and I certainly did not send them out to temporal joys but rather to great struggles, not to honors but to contempt, not to idleness, but to labors, not to rest but to bring forth much fruit in patience. Do you, My child, remember these words."

**Definition:**

Transform - To make a thorough or dramatic change in form, appearance, character, or nature

**Scripture:**

Romans 5:3-5:

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Philippians 4:8:

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Galatians 5:22-23:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Ephesians 4:22-24:

Put off then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Romans 12:2:

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Concept:**

Jesus transforms the attitudes of his followers by showing them a new way of living that is rooted in love, faith, and service to others. His teachings and actions challenge them to let go of pride, selfishness, and judgment and embrace compassion, humility, and empathy towards all.

**Discussion:**

How do Jesus' teachings and actions challenge his followers to let go of pride, selfishness, and judgment?

In what ways does Jesus demonstrate love, faith, and service to others as a model for his followers to emulate?

How does embracing compassion, humility, and empathy align with the new way of living that Jesus introduces to his followers?