

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

### **BOOK THREE: INTERNAL CONSOLATION**

#### **Chapter 11: The Longings of our Hearts Must be Examined And Moderated**

##### **Quote:**

The Voice of Christ

MY CHILD, it is necessary for you to learn many things which you have not yet learned well.

The Disciple

What are they, Lord?

The Voice of Christ

That you conform your desires entirely according to My good pleasure, and be not a lover of self but an earnest doer of My will. Desires very often inflame you and drive you madly on, but consider whether you act for My honor, or for your own advantage. If I am the cause, you will be well content with whatever I ordain. If, on the other hand, any self-seeking lurk in you, it troubles you and weighs you down. Take care, then, that you do not rely too much on preconceived desire that has no reference to Me, lest you repent later on and be displeased with what at first pleased you and which you desired as being for the best. Not every desire which seems good should be followed immediately, nor, on the other hand, should every contrary affection be at once rejected.

It is sometimes well to use a little restraint even in good desires and inclinations, lest through too much eagerness you bring upon yourself distraction of mind; lest through your lack of discipline you create scandal for others; or lest you be suddenly upset and fall because of resistance from others. Sometimes, however, you must use violence and resist your sensual appetite bravely. You must pay no attention to what the flesh does or does not desire, taking pains that it be subjected, even by force, to the spirit. And it should be chastised and forced to remain in subjection until it is prepared for anything and is taught to be satisfied with little, to take pleasure in simple things, and not to murmur against inconveniences.

##### **Definition:**

Eagerness - Excited by ardent desire in the pursuit of any object; ardent to pursue, perform or obtain; inflamed by desire; ardently wishing or longing

##### **Scripture:**

Proverbs 23:17

Do not let your heart envy sinners, But live in the fear of the Lord always

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Psalm 27:4

One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord And to meditate in His temple.

**Concept:**

To ardently pursue God with wisdom brings great joy and stability

**Discussion:**

In what ways can uncontrolled emotions lead people away from God?

How does wisdom impact the way we see God and those around us?

How do believers develop an eagerness to do the will of God?

How does God develop within us an eagerness to be good stewards of all that He has entrusted to us?