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

**BOOK TWO:** THE INTERIOR LIFE

**Chapter 10 Part 2:** Appreciating God’s Grace

**Quote:**

"I do not desire consolation that robs me of contrition, nor do I care for contemplation that leads to pride, for not all that is high is holy, nor is all that is sweet good, nor every desire pure, nor all that is dear to us pleasing to God. I accept willingly the grace whereby I become more humble and contrite, more willing to renounce self.

The man who has been taught by the gift of grace, and who learns by the lash of its withdrawal, will never dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather admit his poverty and emptiness. Give to God what is God's and ascribe to yourself what is yours. Give Him thanks, then, for His grace, but place upon yourself alone the blame and the punishment your fault deserves."

**Definition:**

Grace: God's mercy and goodness to us, even though we don't deserve it.

Intelligent Faith – Intelligent Faith is learning through God’s grace

**Scripture:**

Proverbs 15:1

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 20:3

A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.

Matthew 6:14-15

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

**Concept:**

Learning from grace: The gaining of the understanding that another person’s behavior has more to do with their internal struggles than anything you say or do.

**Discussion:**

Why do we allow other people’s behavior to influence our character?

How can the approval/disapproval of others cause us to struggle internally?

How can the grace of God teach us to be gentle and kind with others?