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

**BOOK ONE:** THOUGHTS HELPFUL IN THE LIFE OF THE SOUL

**Chapter 17: Monastic Life**

**Definition and Scriptures:**

**Suffer:** To feel or bear what is painful, disagreeable or distressing, either to the body or mind; to undergo. We suffer pain of body; we suffer grief of mind. The criminal suffers punishment; the sinner suffers the pangs of conscience in this life, and is condemned to suffer the wrath of an offended God. We often suffer wrong; we suffer abuse; we suffer injustice. (KJV Dictionary)

**Isaiah 53:3:** He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

**Psalm 34:19:** The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all.

**Revelation 21:4:** ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.

**Romans 8:35:** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

**1 Peter 3:14:** But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.

**2 Timothy 3:12:** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

**Quote:**

" You have come to serve, not to rule. You must understand, too, that you have been called to suffer and to work, not to idle and gossip away your time. Here men are tried as gold in a furnace. Here no man can remain unless he desires with all his heart to humble himself before God."

**Discussion:**

To love someone is more about serving that person then being served by that person. By loving God, we are called to serve the least of these. How could serving the least of these bring about suffering?

How does isolation, suffering, and humility tie into worshipping (loving) God?