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

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

**Chapter 19: The Practices of a Good Religious**

**Definition and Scriptures:**

**Watching:** WATCH, n.  *It is from the same root as wake, which see.*

1. Forbearance of sleep.

2. Attendance without sleep.

All the long night their mournful watch they keep.

3. Attention; close observation. Keep watch of the suspicious man.

4. Guard; vigilance for keeping or protecting against danger.

**Matthew 24:42-44:** “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. For this reason, you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

**Matthew 25:13:** Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.

**Luke 12:43-44:** It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

**Luke 22:39-46:** Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”  He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. “Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”

**Matthew 25:1-13: “**Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. The five who were foolish didn’t take enough olive oil for their lamps, but the other five were wise enough to take along extra oil. When the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

“At midnight they were roused by the shout, ‘Look, the bridegroom is coming! Come out and meet him!’

“All the bridesmaids got up and prepared their lamps. Then the five foolish ones asked the others, ‘Please give us some of your oil because our lamps are going out.’

“But the others replied, ‘We don’t have enough for all of us. Go to a shop and buy some for yourselves.’

“But while they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came. Then those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was locked. Later, when the other five bridesmaids returned, they stood outside, calling, ‘Lord! Lord! Open the door for us!’

“But he called back, ‘Believe me, I don’t know you!’

“So, you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.

**Quote:**

"Blessed is the servant," says Christ, "whom his master, when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen I say to you: he shall make him ruler over all his goods."

**Discussion:**

A light shined into darkness will reveal truth. Religion can be equated to a light. Religion spiritually lights up the truth that we are to hold on to. How does religion prevent Satan from stealing our passion to follow Christ?

What can Satan do to take away our desire to pursue God at all costs and how do we overcome it?