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

**BOOK THREE:** INTERNAL CONSOLATION

### **Chapter 15:** How One Should Feel and Speak on Every Desirable Thing

**Quote:**

#### “The Voice of Christ

#### MY CHILD, this is the way you must speak on every occasion: "Lord, if it be pleasing to You, so be it. If it be to Your honor, Lord, be it done in Your name. Lord, if You see that it is expedient and profitable for me, then grant that I may use it to Your honor. But if You know that it will be harmful to me, and of no good benefit to the welfare of my soul, then take this desire away from me."

#### Not every desire is from the Holy Spirit, even though it may seem right and good. It is difficult to be certain whether it is a good spirit or a bad one that prompts one to this or that, and even to know whether you are being moved by your own spirit. Many who seemed at first to be led by a good spirit have been deceived in the end.

#### Whatever the mind sees as good, ask and desire in fear of God and humility of heart. Above all, commit the whole matter to Me with true resignation, and say: "Lord, You know what is better for me; let this be done or that be done as You please. Grant what You will, as much as You will, when You will. Do with me as You know best, as will most please You, and will be for Your greater honor. Place me where You will and deal with me freely in all things. I am in Your hand; turn me about whichever way You will. Behold, I am Your servant, ready to obey in all things. Not for myself do I desire to live, but for You -- would that I could do this worthily and perfectly!"

#### A PRAYER THAT THE WILL OF GOD BE DONE

#### Grant me Your grace, O most merciful Jesus, that it may be with me, and work with me, and remain with me to the very end. Grant that I may always desire and will that which is most acceptable and pleasing to You. Let Your will be mine. Let my will always follow Yours and agree perfectly with it. Let my will be one with Yours in willing and in not willing, and let me be unable to will or not will anything but what You will or do not will. Grant that I may die to all things in this world, and for Your sake love to be despised and unknown in this life. Give me above all desires the desire to rest in You, and in You let my heart have peace. You are true peace of heart. You alone are its rest. Without You all things are difficult and troubled. In this peace, the selfsame that is in You, the Most High, the everlasting Good, I will sleep and take my rest. Amen.”

#### **Definition:**

Will – The Hebrew word for will is ratzon (רצון) which refers to the desire or will as it relates to the intention, purpose, or mental focus behind an action

**Scripture:**

Matthew 6:9-13

“This, then, is how you should pray:

“‘Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
**10**your kingdom come,
your will be done,
    on earth as it is in heaven.
**11**Give us today our daily bread.
**12**And forgive us our debts,
    as we also have forgiven our debtors.
**13**And lead us not into temptation,
    but deliver us from the evil one.’

**Concept:**

Discerning whether a desire comes from a good or bad spirit or even from one’s own desire can be a challenge; therefore, humbly and cautiously ask God for what is good while trusting His wisdom and surrendering to his ultimate plan and seek confirmation from God through prayer asking for his guidance, clarity, and confirmation regarding a particular prompting. Sometimes God may use multiple confirmations, such as Scripture, circumstances, or the witness of other believers, to affirm His leading.

**Discussion:**

Why are God's ways better than our own?

How do we distinguish between the prompting of the Holy Spirit and that of Satan?

What does it mean to completely surrender to God’s will?