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

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

**Chapter 14: Avoiding Rash Judgment**

**Definition and Scriptures:**

**Judgement:**  Basically, the notion of judging means settling a dispute, making things right. Inasmuch as one of the disputants was right and the other wrong, to judge came to mean to help a man obtain his rights. (Encyclopedia.com)

**Matthew 7:2:** For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

**Luke 6:31,35,37,39:** “Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that’s charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that. “I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind. “Don’t pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don’t condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you’ll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you’ll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity. “He quoted a proverb: “‘Can a blind man guide a blind man?’ Wouldn’t they both end up in the ditch? An apprentice doesn’t lecture the master. The point is to be careful who you follow as your teacher.

**John 5:24:** “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

**Leviticus 19:15:** “‘Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

**Quote:**

"If you rely more upon your intelligence or industry than upon the virtue of submission to Jesus Christ, you will hardly, and in any case slowly, become an enlightened man. God wants us to be completely subject to Him and, through ardent love, to rise above all human wisdom."

**Discussion:**

How does making decisions based on one’s attitude differ from making decisions based on one’s circumstances?

How does submitting our will to God allow us to rise above the labels others put on us?