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

**BOOK THREE:** INTERNAL CONSOLATION

### **Chapter 35:** There is No Security from Temptation in This Life

**Quote:**

“The Voice of Christ

MY CHILD, in this life you are never safe, and as long as you live the weapons of the spirit will ever be necessary to you. You dwell among enemies. You are subject to attack from the right and the left. If, therefore, you do not guard yourself from every quarter with the shield of patience, you will not remain long unscathed.

Moreover, if you do not steadily set your heart on Me, with a firm will to suffer everything for My sake, you will not be able to bear the heat of this battle or to win the crown of the blessed. You ought, therefore, to pass through all these things bravely and to oppose a strong hand to whatever stands in your way. For to him who triumphs heavenly bread is given, while for him who is too lazy to fight there remains much misery.

If you look for rest in this life, how will you attain to everlasting rest? Dispose yourself, then, not for much rest but for great patience. Seek true peace, not on earth but in heaven; not in men or in other creatures but in God alone. For love of God you should undergo all things cheerfully, all labors and sorrows, temptations and trials, anxieties, weaknesses, necessities, injuries, slanders, rebukes, humiliations, confusions, corrections, and contempt. For these are helps to virtue. These are the trials of Christ's recruit. These form the heavenly crown. For a little brief labor I will give an everlasting crown, and for passing confusion, glory that is eternal.

Do you think that you will always have spiritual consolations as you desire? My saints did not always have them. Instead, they had many afflictions, temptations of various kinds, and great desolation. Yet they bore them all patiently. They placed their confidence in God rather than in themselves, knowing that the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to come. And you--do you wish to have at once that which others have scarcely obtained after many tears and great labors?

Wait for the Lord, act bravely, and have courage. Do not lose trust. Do not turn back but devote your body and soul constantly to God's glory. I will reward you most plentifully. I will be with you in every tribulation."

**Definition:**

Enduring - Persisting through trials, challenges, hardships, or difficulties without giving up or losing hope, often requiring patience, perseverance, and inner strength to withstand adversity or pain

**Scripture:**

James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

1 Peter 4:12-13

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

Romans 8:18I

Consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.

**Concept:**

Face life's trials with unwavering faith, knowing that our endurance will not be in vain but will lead us to a place of eternal joy and peace in the presence of our Creator.

**Discussion:**

How do the Bible verses provided (James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 4:12-13, Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:17-18, Hebrews 12:1-2) reinforce the idea that enduring trials and suffering with faith leads to spiritual growth and eventual reward? How can these verses inspire us to face challenges with joy and perseverance in our own lives?

In what ways do the themes of patience, endurance, and reliance on God discussed in the passage align with the message of waiting for the Lord, acting bravely, and finding courage in the Bible verses? How can we apply the lessons from both the passage and the verses in navigating difficult times and maintaining faith in God's plan?

The passage stresses the importance of focusing on eternal glory rather than seeking comfort and peace on earth. How do the Bible verses emphasize the temporary nature of earthly struggles compared to the eternal rewards promised to those who endure suffering and remain faithful? How can we shift our perspective from worldly concerns to heavenly hopes in times of trial?