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

**BOOK THREE:** INTERNAL CONSOLATION

**Chapter 4:** We Must Walk Before God in Humility and Truth

**Quote:**

#### “THE VOICE OF CHRIST

MY CHILD, walk before Me in truth, and seek Me always in the simplicity of your heart. He who walks before Me in truth shall be defended from the attacks of evil, and the truth shall free him from seducers and from the slanders of wicked men. For if the truth has made you free, then you shall be free indeed, and you shall not care for the vain words of men.

#### THE DISCIPLE

O Lord, it is true. I ask that it be with me as You say. Let your truth teach me. Let it guard me, and keep me safe to the end. Let it free me from all evil affection and badly ordered love, and I shall walk with You in great freedom of heart.

#### THE VOICE OF CHRIST

I shall teach you those things which are right and pleasing to Me. Consider your sins with great displeasure and sorrow, and never think yourself to be someone because of your good works. You are truly a sinner. You are subject to many passions and entangled in them. Of yourself you always tend to nothing. You fall quickly, are quickly overcome, quickly troubled, and quickly undone. You have nothing in which you can glory, but you have many things for which you should think yourself vile, for you are much weaker than you can comprehend. Hence, let none of the things you do seem great to you. Let nothing seem important or precious or desirable except that which is everlasting. Let the eternal truth please you above all things, and let your extreme unworthiness always displease you. Fear nothing, abhor nothing, and fly nothing as you do your own vices and sins; these should be more unpleasant for you than any material losses.

Some men walk before Me without sincerity. Led on by a certain curiosity and arrogance, they wish to know My secrets and to understand the high things of God, to the neglect of themselves and their own salvation. Through their own pride and curiosity, and because I am against them, such men often fall into great temptations and sins.

Fear the judgments of God! Dread the wrath of the Almighty! Do not discuss the works of the Most High, but examine your sins -- in what serious things you have offended and how many good things you have neglected.

Some carry their devotion only in books, some in pictures, some in outward signs and figures. Some have Me on their lips when there is little of Me in their hearts. Others, indeed, with enlightened understanding and purified affections, constantly long for everlasting things; they are unwilling to hear of earthly affairs and only with reluctance do they serve the necessities of nature. These sense what the Spirit of truth speaks within them: for He teaches them to despise earthly things and to love those of heaven, to neglect the world, and each day and night to desire heaven."

**Definition:**

Eternal truth – God’s word - the Bible unchanging and timeless. Eternal divine truth teachings include information about God and God’s nature, the nature of the human soul, its growth and potentials, how to have a relationship with God, what is loving from God’s perspective, how to become a more loving individual, life after death, spirits and the spirit world, and the laws that govern the operation of the universe.

**Scripture:**

1 Peter 1:25

 but the word of the Lord endures forever

Matthew 24:35

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Psalm 117:2

For His lovingkindness is great toward us,
And the truth of the Lord is everlasting.
Praise the Lord!

**Concept:**

To be set free from sin we must focus on what pleases God and His eternal truth

**Discussion:**

What does it mean to walk before Me in truth?

What does it mean to seek Me always in the simplicity of your heart?

What does it mean to walk with Jesus in freedom of heart?

How does the divine truth allow us to walk with Jesus in freedom of heart?