

# The Following of Christ:

The Spiritual Diary of Geert Groote (1340—1384)

(Edited Excerpts)

## Chapter 1: Of the Necessity of Choosing Christ and Rejecting the World

1. “Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,” Jesus says. With these words he advises us to follow him and live like he did if we wish to be enlightened and delivered from our blindness. Let it be our highest priority then, to train ourselves in living like him.
2. The life of Christ surpasses all doctrine, and the one that has the right spirit will find great sweetness hidden in it.
3. It happens however, that many, even though they hear the instructions of Jesus, feel little inclined to follow them, because they do not have his spirit.

## Chapter 2: Of the Humble Estimation of Self

1. Every man naturally desires knowledge, but what will knowledge help him if he does not fear God?
2. A humble uneducated man that serves God is better than a proud philosopher who, neglecting his salvation, knows all about the solar system.
3. He who knows himself well feels his own unworthiness and shuns the praise of men.
4. If I knew everything in the world but had no love for others, what would that profit me before God who will judge me according to my deeds?
5. Give up your inordinate desire for knowledge, for it often brings you needless worries and deceives you.
6. Learned men are anxious to be held in great esteem and to be called wise. But there are many things we may know that are of no advantage to the salvation of the soul. He is very unwise who busies himself with anything except God and what will be of eternal value.
7. Many words do not satisfy the soul, but a godly life comforts the heart and a pure conscience gives great confidence in God.

8. The more you know the more severely you will be judged. For that reason you should not be puffed up because you have learned something. Even though you may know much, it is very little when compared to what you do not know.
9. Why do you wish to lift yourself above anyone else, seeing there are many who know a great deal more than you?
10. Should you wish to learn something to your profit, desire to be unknown and to be counted as nothing. That is the highest and most profound lesson—to know yourself like you really are, to hold a humble opinion of yourself, and to think less of yourself than you do of others.

### **Chapter 3: The Simple Truth**

1. Blessed is he who has seen the Truth, not just spoken or heard about it, but experienced it like it really is.
2. Our imagination easily deceives us, and discerns but little.
3. What does it help to argue about profound and hidden things that God will not even ask us about on the day of judgement?
4. There is great danger in neglecting what is profitable and necessary while paying all our attention to what is merely fascinating.
5. He to whom the Eternal Word speaks, no longer troubles himself about foolish theories. The Word within him (Jesus) lets him see and understand what is really important.
6. He to whom this Word is everything, he who refers everything back to it, and sees everything in it, is able to keep a steadfast heart and live in perfect peace.
7. It makes me tired to read and hear so many things. But in you, Lord, I find everything I desire. Let everyone and everything be silent before you, and may you alone, Lord, speak within me.
8. The more a man is united with you and becomes like you, Lord, the better he understands you.
9. A man of pure, simple and steadfast mind, even though he has much to do, does not become distracted. He does everything for the glory of God and seeks freedom from all selfishness.
10. A humble knowledge of self is a surer way to God than a deep study of the sciences.

11. Useful knowledge is not to be rejected, but a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred. The one who pays more attention to getting knowledge than on leading a virtuous life, is often deceived and brings forth little fruit.
12. If only people were as earnest in rooting out their vices as they are in asking questions that cannot be answered! Then there would not be so much evil and scandal among them, or so much trouble in Christian communities.
13. When the day of Judgement comes, we shall not be asked what we have read, but what we have done—not how well we have spoken, but how well we have lived.
14. Tell me, where are all those great men and professors you knew while they lived and flourished in the sciences? In their lifetime they seemed to be something, but now they are not even mentioned. How quickly the glory of the world passes away!
15. If only their lives had been in keeping with their learning they would have read and studied with profit.
16. Oh how many people perish because they learn much but care little about serving God! Choosing to be famous rather than humble and useful, they perish in their own conceit.
17. He is truly great who has great love for God.
18. He is truly great who is little in his own estimation, and counts the highest honours as nothing.
19. He is truly great who “accounts all earthly things as rubbish so he may gain Christ” (Phil. 3:8). And he is truly learned who does the will of God and renounces his own will.

#### **Chapter 4: Of Prudence in Action**

1. We should not believe everything people tell us or suggest to us. Rather, we should wisely and patiently weigh things and consider them before God. For human nature, unfortunately, is so weak that evil gets passed on more readily than what is good.
2. Virtuous and accomplished men do not quickly believe what is reported to them, for they know that human weakness tends toward evil and falsehood.
3. It is great wisdom not to be hasty in one’s actions, and not to be too obstinate in holding one’s own opinion.

4. It is also a part of wisdom not to believe too quickly what people say, and not to relate thoughtlessly to others what one has heard.
5. Take advice of a wise and conscientious man. Prefer to be instructed by him rather than to follow your own opinion.
6. A good life makes a man wise God's sight, and experienced in many things.
7. The more humble a man is in himself and the greater his submission to God, the wiser and more peaceful he will become in everything.

### **Chapter 5: Of Avoiding Inordinate Affections**

1. Whenever a man wants something he shouldn't have, he becomes restless.
2. A proud and greedy person is never at rest. But a poor and humble person may live in great peace.
3. A person that has not died to himself is easily tempted and overcome, even in little things. He is weak in spirit and hankers after excitement, especially that which appeals to the senses. He just cannot turn completely away from it.
4. For this reason he feels miserable when he cannot have what he wants and easily gets angry when someone spoils his plans.
5. On the other hand, if he gets what he wants his conscience gives him no rest for having yielded to temptation again. That keeps him from finding the peace he so much desires.
6. Peace of heart comes only from resisting temptation, not by yielding to it. There is no peace for the one whose life revolves around outward material things, but for the earnestly spiritual person there is true peace.

### **Chapter 6: Of Avoiding Vain Hope and Pride**

1. You would be foolish to put your trust in man or created things.
2. Do not rely on yourself, but on God.
3. Do what lies in your power, and God will help you do what is right.
4. Do not trust in what you have learned, but in the grace of God that assists the humble and brings down the proud.

5. Do not glory in earthly possessions or in your friends because they are powerful. Glory in Jesus who gives all things to everyone and who even gives himself to you.
6. Do not place much stock in your good looks or height of stature that even a slight accident or illness could ruin.
7. Take no pride in your talents and abilities, lest you displease God that gave them to you.
8. Do not think yourself better than others, lest you be found worse in the sight of God.
9. Do not think much of your good works. God does differently from man, and what pleases man, often displeases God.
10. No matter how much good might be in you, keep remembering that there is more in others, so that you may remain humble.
11. It is not harmful for you to think all others better than yourself, but it does you great harm to think anyone worse than yourself.
12. Lasting peace belongs to the humble, but frequent envy and indignation fill the hearts of the proud.

### **Chapter 7: Of Obedience and Humble Submission**

1. It is a very good thing to live in obedience, to be subject to a superior, and not to be one's own master.
2. It is much safer to be a subject than to be the person in charge.
3. Many obey their overseers because they have to, not because they want to. For this reason they have much to grumble and complain about.
4. You will never know true freedom until you learn how to submit yourself to authority with all your heart, for the love of God.
5. You may go wherever you like, you will never find true peace until you learn to subject yourself humbly to others set over you.
6. The idea that things would go better somewhere else and the longing for a change of residence have deceived many.

7. Everyone gladly acts according to his own liking; and gets along well with those that agree with him. But if God is among us, we must sometimes give up our opinions for the sake of peace.
8. Who is so wise that he could know everything about everything? No one, of course. So do not trust your opinions too much, but listen also to the opinions of others.
9. It will not hurt you, even if your opinion is good, to give it up for the love of God and the sake of peace.
10. I have often heard that it is safer to take advice than to give it.
11. It may well be that everyone involved in an argument has a valid opinion, but to get obstinate about it or refuse to believe in the good judgement of others when the occasion requires it, is nothing but pride and stubbornness.

### **Chapter 8: Of Not Speaking Too Much**

1. Do not waste all your time listening to what is happening here or there, or what people have to say. Even if told with the purest intention, much information will just make it hard for you to keep your thoughts in the right place.
2. I often wish I had just kept silence and not gone out among the people. Why do we have so much fun talking and chatting one with another, when we so seldom return from doing so without a wounded conscience?
3. The reason we like to talk so much is that we look for consolation in our sharing with others. Either we discuss what we like and how things ought to be, or else we discuss what we dislike and should not have to put up with. But, sad to say, our talk usually has little effect on anything, either one way or the other.
4. To look for this consolation in one another is no small hindrance to finding true consolation in fellowship with Jesus. We must watch therefore, and take care that we do not waste our time on what yields little fruit. When the time comes for us to talk, let us say nothing but what helps another and builds him up.
5. Bad habits and simple carelessness are the main reasons we keep so little guard over our tongues. But when we speak of eternal things, especially with those of one heart and soul with us in God, we make great headways.

### **Chapter 9: How to Have Peace and Make Spiritual Progress**

1. We might enjoy much peace if we stopped making ourselves busy with what others say and do, which is no concern of ours.

2. How can anyone live in peace if he keeps meddling in the affairs of others—if he runs after outward distractions, and little or seldom enters into himself?
3. Blessed are those who fix their heart on one thing alone (on pleasing God). They enjoy great peace.
4. Even when a little thing goes wrong we so easily become downhearted, and turn to others for consolation. But if we kept on fighting valiantly for what is right, our Lord would surely come to our rescue. He is always ready to help those that keep their courage in the thick of battle.
5. If we only work on outward things, our decision to follow Jesus will not last long. But once we lay the axe to the root, once we dig out and forsake our evil desires, we find true peace for our souls.
6. If we would only do this little violence to ourselves in the beginning, we could finish what we started with ease and joy.
7. It is hard to break old habits—harder still to go against our evil desires. But if we do not overcome little and easy things, how shall we overcome great and difficult things?
8. Resist bad habits or they will get you into even greater trouble.
9. If you only knew how much inner peace and joy it would bring you and your companions in community, you would strive to make much greater spiritual progress!

### **Chapter 10: How Trouble and Suffering Helps Us**

1. It is good for us that we sometimes meet with trouble and suffering. That makes us search our hearts and realise this life is but a proving ground.
2. It is good for us to suffer contradictions and have people misjudge our motives (even while we do what is right). Such humiliation keeps us from thinking too much of ourselves.
3. When a man with an honest heart suffers rejection, when others put him down, despise him or try to ruin his good name—or when evil temptations afflict him inside—he only senses a greater need for God, without whom he can do nothing. All this trouble only makes him pray more.
4. It makes him eager for the hour of his release when he may “depart and be with Christ, which would be far better” (Phil. 1:23). It takes away his desire to belong to this world.

## Chapter 11: On Resisting Temptation

1. As long as we live in this world, suffering and temptation will accompany us. Like Job says, “The life of man on earth is a war” (Job 7:1). For that reason we should strengthen ourselves through prayer and spiritual exercises, lest temptations overcome us and we be led astray.
2. No man is so perfect that temptations never trouble him.
3. Temptations, even though they bother and dismay us, turn us into better people, for in them we are tried, purified, and humbled. Through suffering temptation we learn many things.
4. Some, wishing to escape temptations, fall even more deeply into them. We cannot escape temptations just by running away from them. Rather, by resisting them humbly and steadfastly, we become stronger than all our foes.
5. The one who flees a temptation but fails to pluck out its root, profits little. It will overcome him with all the more strength, sooner or later, and leave him in an even more miserable state.
6. Little by little and with God’s help you may overcome temptation, rather than by drastic and unreasonable methods on your part.
7. Take counsel often, if you are tempted, and when others share their temptations with you, do not get rough with them. Give them comforting advice, of the kind you would also like to receive.
8. Temptations spring from an unstable heart. Like a ship without a helm is tossed to and fro by the waves, so a half-hearted and insincere person—one who fails to stick with his purpose—is tempted in many ways.
9. Fire tries gold and temptations try the honest believer.
10. We often wonder how we would make out under real persecution. Well, by the way we handle our temptations we have a good idea! Temptations let us know how spiritually fit (or unfit) we really are.
11. First we start thinking about something we should not have or do. Then we start picturing it in our minds. Then, if we do not stop the procedure with Jesus’ help, it becomes irresistible. We come to a place of mental consent and finally give in and do it. This is how the wicked enemy gains entry into our lives when we do not resist him right away.
12. The longer we put off a firm resistance (saying a firm “No” to temptation) the weaker we grow, and the stronger the enemy becomes against us.

13. We need to pray much to Jesus that he will strengthen us against temptation—that he will help us overcome them and lead us to a blessed end.
14. Some keep themselves from great temptations but let little ones overtake them. This may help to humble them and keep them from having too much confidence in themselves.

### **Chapter 12: On Not Judging Others Too Quickly and Being Fair**

1. Look carefully at your own life and do not worry so much about what others are doing.
2. You easily waste your time judging and correcting others. You may well be mistaken anyway and you easily sin by doing so. But in judging and correcting yourself you cannot go wrong. Quite to the contrary, you may do yourself a great favour.
3. We judge others—not so much by the facts as by what we feel for them in our hearts. According to our likes and dislikes we decide who is right and who is wrong.
4. If we had our eyes on God and kept them there, we would not be so easily upset when others contradict our opinions.
5. Many seek to gratify their selfish desires, even without being fully aware of it. They live happily and in peace as long as everything goes their way. But as soon as things go against them they begin to pout, fuss, and get all discouraged.
6. Through differing opinions and feelings about things, disunity easily divides brothers and sisters one from another. No one likes to give up old customs, and everyone feels like sticking to his or her views.
7. But if you go by what you think instead of humbly submitting to Jesus, you will never become an enlightened person. Our Lord expects total submission—that is, to surrender our feelings and judgements totally, in flaming love, to him.

### **Chapter 13: Love that Works**

1. The one who loves much gets much accomplished.
2. The one who accomplishes much serves the community rather than his own interests.
3. We may imagine ourselves doing good deeds in love when in fact we do them for nothing but carnal affection.

4. Whoever loves for real envies no one, seeks himself in nothing, but desires only the greater glory of God in everything. He sees all good works as coming from God, the source of all blessing, and in whom the saints come to rest in eternal joy.
5. Whoever has as much as a spark of true love burning in his heart considers all earthly things as vanity

#### **Chapter 14: Of Bearing One Another's Imperfections in Love**

1. The things we cannot correct in ourselves or in others we should simply tolerate in patience until our Lord fixes the problem.
2. It may be better, in fact, if he does not fix it, so we have more opportunity to exercise our patience. But however it goes, you should always pray—while your patience is getting tested—that God may give you the strength to bear all inconveniences with grace.
3. Take the challenge to become more patient, and to live cheerfully with the weakness and imperfections of others. They have enough to put with in you.
4. For as hard as you must struggle to make yourself what you ought to be, how dare you expect to get everyone else patted to shape, just like you want them?
5. We expect perfection from others, yet find it so hard to correct our own shortcomings and faults.
6. When others do wrong we would love to see them corrected severely, yet we hate correction for ourselves.
7. It hurts us when others get their own way, yet we do not want anyone to deny us of anything. So often it becomes clear that we do not weigh our brothers and sisters in the same scale we weight ourselves.
8. If all men were perfect, what should we have to suffer from others for God's sake? But God lets it be this way so we may learn to "bear one another's burdens."
9. No one can live without a burden to bear. No one is sufficient in himself. We all need the help of one another to make it through the troubles that come upon us (Galatians 6:2).

#### **Chapter 15: Of Life in Community**

1. You must learn to break your own will in many things if you wish to live in peace and concord with others.

2. It is no small matter to dwell in a Christian community, and to keep on living in it without complaint. Blessed is he who has lived well therein, and has brought his life to a happy end.
3. You must be willing to be considered a fool for the sake of Christ if you wish to belong to a Christian community.
4. Religious clothing will profit you little as long as your habits do not change and you do not put to death your evil desires.
5. He who seeks in communal living anything but God alone, and the salvation of his soul, will find nothing in it but sadness and trouble. Nor can he long remain there in peace, who does not strive to be “the last of all and servant of all” (Mark 9:34).
6. You came here to serve, not to rule. Therefore you should know that you came to suffer and work, not just to visit or have a good time.
7. Here, in Christian community, men are tried like gold in a furnace.
8. No one can stay here unless he is willing to humble himself with all his heart for the love of God.

### **Chapter 16: Of the Love of Solitude and Silence**

1. Keep watching for good times to spend by yourself and never stop thinking of God’s loving kindness to you.
2. Give up reading things just to satisfy your curiosity. Read what inspires and strengthens you, rather than what fills your imagination with worthless images.
3. By keeping yourself from too much talking and useless goings-about, as well as from listening to gossip, you will find enough and suitable time to meditate on holy things.
4. It is easier to be altogether silent than to say many things but not too much. It is easier to remain at home than to keep watch over yourself abroad. Whoever wishes to live an inwardly blessed life and to become spiritually minded must, with Jesus, withdraw himself from the crowd.
5. No one knows how to act in public before he knows how to act when he is all alone.
6. No one should speak in public before he knows and appreciates the value of keeping silent.

7. No one is fit to be a leader in the community before he can humbly do like he is told. No one commands safely, until he has learned to cheerfully obey.
8. Oh, what great peace we would have if we never wasted our time running after worldly pleasures, or made ourselves busy with projects of no lasting value!
9. Oh, what great peace and quiet we would have if we set aside all our worries and thought only of eternal things!
10. No one receives eternal blessings before he truly and thoroughly repents.
11. If you wish to enter a repentant and holy frame of mind, go to your room, shut out the racket and learn the value of quiet fellowship with Jesus. In your little room you will find what you often lose abroad.
12. If you spend much time in your room with Jesus, it will become a sweet and attractive place to you. But if you seldom use it for that, it will only bore you.
13. If, when you first come to know Jesus, you spend much time with him alone, he will become a dear friend and a very great comfort to you. During quiet times with him you will grow much and come to understand the hidden things of the Scriptures.
14. It is better for you to lead a godly life in seclusion than to neglect the state of your soul and work miracles.
15. It is good for those that live in Christian community to avoid going out too much, and to keep themselves from the worldly crowd. Why do you wish to see what you cannot have anyway? "The world passes away and the lusts thereof" (1 John 2:17).
16. What valuable thing can you see elsewhere that you cannot see right here?
17. Perhaps you think that by seeing enough in the world you would eventually satisfy your curiosity. But that is impossible. Even if you saw everything there was to see, it would still be nothing but a passing illusion (Ecclesiastes 1:14).
18. Lift your eyes to God in heaven and ask for his mercy on your shortcomings. Leave vain things to the vain, but fix your attention on what God wants to show you.
19. Shut the door of your room behind you and call out to Jesus, your Beloved. Stay with him in your little room, for you will not find so great peace anywhere else.

20. Had you never left this blessed place nor paid attention to what goes on in the world, you would have kept yourself in perfect peace. But since you found your pleasure in hearing and seeing new things, you must suffer the consequences—that is a troubled and disquieted heart.

### **Chapter 17: Thinking about Death**

1. Very soon you will no longer be here. Consider, therefore, the state of your soul.
2. Today man is, and tomorrow he is gone. And when he is out of sight, he is soon out of mind.
3. Oh how small-minded and ignorant are they who think only of the present and do not care about the future! You should think, act, and do, all the time as if this were your last day.
4. If you had a good conscience death would not frighten you.
5. Avoiding sin is infinitely more important than trying to avoid death.
6. Blessed is the man who always sees the hour of his death before him, and who lives every day in preparation for it.
7. If you have ever seen anyone die, think how you must go the same way.
8. When it is morning, think that you may not live until evening. And when evening comes, do not promise yourself the next morning.
9. Always be ready and live in such a way that death may never catch you unprepared. Many die suddenly and unexpectedly, for “at what hour you know not, the Son of Man will come.”
10. How happy the man that strives to live now like he wishes to be found at the hour of death! Learn now to die to the world, that then you may begin to live with Christ. Learn now to disregard all worldly things so you may freely go when your time comes.
11. Oh foolish man, why do you think of living long, when you are not sure of a single day? How many let themselves be deceived with thoughts like these, but suddenly find themselves snatched away?
12. How often you hear of one getting killed in an accident, another drowns, another breaks his neck by falling from a high place. One dies eating, another drinking. One perished by fire, another by the sword, another gets murdered. And so death is the end of everyone, and “the life of man passes away like a shadow” (Psalm 143:4).

13. Oh dearly beloved, do everything you can now, because you know not when your hour will come. Now, while you have time, lay up for yourself everlasting riches (Luke 12:33).

### **Chapter 18: How We Should Change Our Lives**

1. Be watchful and diligent in God's service. Remember why you came into this community and why you left the world.
2. Did you not come to this place so you might live for God and become a spiritual man? Pay much attention then to making spiritual progress, because you will soon receive the reward of your labours. If you have lived well, there will be neither fear nor sorrow at the hour of your death.
3. Just keep on working faithfully, a little longer, and you will come to great rest in everlasting joy.
4. I knew a certain man, full of anxiety, who often wavered between fear and hope of his salvation. One day, overcome by a great sadness in prayer before God, the following thought came to his mind: "Oh, if I only knew that I should persevere until the end." Then he heard within himself a divine answer: "And if you knew it, what would you do then? Do now what you would do then and you will be perfectly safe." Strengthened and comforted by this inspiration, he committed himself into God's hands and his anxious wavering ceased.
5. From that point onward this man stopped worrying about what would happen to him in the future. All he paid attention to was serving God now.
6. When you begin to grow lax and lukewarm you also begin to get uneasy. But when you give yourself fervently to Jesus you will find much peace and your work will grow lighter with his help.

### **Chapter 19: Of the Inner Life**

1. "The kingdom of God is within you," Jesus said.
2. Therefore, seekers, "be converted to the Lord with all your heart," forsake this miserable world, and your soul will find rest.
3. Learn to despise "outer" worldly things. Set your heart on "inner" spiritual things and the kingdom of God will come to you.
4. The kingdom will come within you—"for the kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," and God gives no such things to the wicked.

5. Jesus will come to you and give you his consolation, if you prepare yourself inwardly to receive him.
6. Courage then, faithful soul! Prepare your heart for the Bridegroom and he will surely come! “If any man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and will make our abode with him” (John 14:23).
7. Make room for Jesus and forbid all others to enter. If you have Jesus inside, you are rich! He is all you need. He will give you what is best and care for you faithfully so you never need to put your trust in men.
8. Men change quickly and fail you, but “Jesus lives forever,” and stands firmly with you to the end (John 12:34).
9. Place no great trust in a weak and mortal companion, even though he is friendly and useful to you. Neither feel bad if he sometimes turns against you and contradicts you. Those who are with you today may be against you tomorrow, and vice versa, for they are as changeful as the weather. Put your whole trust in God. Fear and love him alone.
10. God will look out for you arrange everything for the best.
11. “You do not have a lasting city here.” Wherever you may be, you are a stranger and a pilgrim. You will never have peace, unless you become inwardly united to Jesus.
12. Why do you stand here looking around, seeing you do not belong here? Travel on to heavenly places! Pay no attention to any of this. Everything here will pass away. See you do not cling to any of these earthly things, lest you get caught on them and perish.
13. Keep your thoughts focused on Jesus and stay in continual prayer contact with him.
14. Do not be afraid of suffering, for how could you be Jesus’ friend and refuse to suffer? Suffer with Jesus, and with your neighbour, if you wish to reign with him.
15. If you had so much as glimpsed the heart of Jesus and caught a flicker of the fire of his love, you would no longer worry how things go for you. Rather, you would rejoice even though others humiliate you, for the love of Jesus makes a man forget about himself.
16. A true lover of Jesus, free from all affections that would distract him, may turn to Jesus and rise—out of himself and above himself—to rest and joy in him.

17. The one who takes all things at their true value, not as they are said or thought to be, is truly wise. His knowledge comes from God, not from man.
18. He who leads an inner life and sets little value on outward things does not need a special place or time to worship God.
19. The inner man easily recollects himself and stays focused on God. He never puts his whole attention on exterior things, and he is not hindered by exterior labour or business that he must do for the time being.
20. He who keeps himself in order, inwardly, does not let strange happenings or the bad attitudes of others unsettle him.
21. A man can only be hindered and distracted by such things to the degree that he pays attention to them.
22. If you keep yourself in good order, inwardly, everything that happens to you would serve for your good (Romans 8:28).
23. Many things displease and trouble you because you have not died completely to yourself, nor detached yourself completely from earthly things.
24. Nothing will defile and trouble you more than to set your chief affection on others. If, on the other hand, you forsake all inordinate affection and the consolation you seek to get from it, you will be able to contemplate heavenly things and begin to experience inner joy.

## **Chapter 20: On Humbly Submitting Yourself**

1. Do not worry who is for you or against you. Just watch that you stay on God's side in everything you do.
2. Keep your conscience clean and God will protect you. No wicked plot can overthrow the one he helps.
3. If you suffer in silence you may count on God's help. He knows the way and the time to deliver you. Only trust yourself to him.
4. Let God free you and vindicate you from all disgrace.
5. Many times is better for us—it keeps us more humble—when others know about our imperfections and admonish us for them.
6. Humbly acknowledge your faults and you will easily get on the good side of others. You will quickly come to terms with those that get provoked at you.

7. Jesus protects and helps the humble. He loves and comforts those that seek him. He gives them grace and lifts them from rejection and trouble into glory.
8. Jesus reveals his secrets to the humble and draws them gently to himself.
9. The humble remain in perfect peace even though others despise and insult them. They rely on God and not on the world.
10. Do not think you have made spiritual progress unless you think yourself inferior to all others.

### **Chapter 21: Of a Good Peaceful Man**

1. Learn how to get along with yourself. Then you will get along with others.
2. A peace-loving man is worth more all around than an educated man.
3. One who disturbs the peace turns good into evil and readily believes what is not even true. But a peaceful man draws good from everything.
4. The one who has peace in himself thinks no evil of others but suspicions of many kinds plague the one who is discontented at heart. He comes to no rest in himself and cannot let others rest. He often says what he should not and fails to say what he should. He points out what others overlook, but overlooks many things himself.
5. Get zealous about your own good conduct. Watch out for yourself before starting to work on others.
6. You easily excuse yourself but find it hard to accept the excuses of others. How much better—and more fair—it would be to blame yourself and excuse the rest!
7. If you want others to bear with you, bear with them.
8. Just see how far you still are from the true love and the humility that never takes offence and is never displeased with anyone but itself!
9. It is nothing great to get along with the good and gentle. Anyone can manage that. Anyone can live in peace with those they agree with and that treat them nicely. But to live peacefully with difficult, stubborn and undisciplined people, or with those that always disagree and complain—now that is a wonderful grace and a most valiant and praiseworthy accomplishment.
10. Some live in peace with themselves and those around them. Others do not have peace and will not let others have it. They are a burden to others, but always a greater burden to themselves.

11. Then there are people that keep themselves in peace and do as much as they can to bring others into a peaceful frame of mind.
12. All peace in life has to do with humbly forbearing one another, not with being free from opposition.
13. The one that is most willing to suffer enjoys the greatest peace. Such a person conquers himself, becomes master of the world, a friend of God, and an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven.

## **Chapter 22: Of Purity of Heart and Simple Intention**

1. We need two wings to lift us out of earthly trouble. That is, the wings of simplicity and purity.
2. We need simple motives and pure desires.
3. Simplicity thinks only of Jesus and looks to him. Purity allows us to enjoy him and stay with him.
4. Nothing will get in your way if you are inwardly free from desires you should not have. Wanting nothing but to please God and to help others is the way to great inner freedom.
5. If your heart is right, everything God created becomes a mirror and a book of holy doctrine to you. No created thing, no matter how small or lowly, fails to reflect the goodness of God.
6. If you were good and pure inside you would see and understand everything much better.
7. A pure heart comprehends everything from heaven to hell.
8. We judge everything according to what we have in our hearts.
9. If there is any joy, it surely belongs to the pure in heart. On the other hand, if there is any sadness or anxiety, the one with an evil conscience knows it best.
10. Like iron loses its rust in the fire and begins to glow, we turn into new and shining personalities by giving ourselves to God.
11. When we turn lukewarm our work becomes drudgery to us and we start looking for all kinds of relief and entertainment. But when we overcome ourselves and walk with courage in Jesus' way, everything gets light and easy.

### **Chapter 23: Of Considering Ourselves**

1. We dare not ourselves too far because we often lack grace. We have so little light, and the little we have we easily lose through negligence.
2. Many times we cannot even see how inwardly blind we are. We do what is wrong and make excuses for ourselves. Or we act on foolish emotions and mistake them for godly zeal!
3. We notice little defects in others but overlook greater ones in ourselves (Matthew 7:5).
4. We resent what we have to put up with in others and spent much time brooding over it, but forget how much others have to tolerate in us.
5. The one that considers his shortcomings carefully and is fair with himself, does not judge others so severely.
6. The man with his inner being in order pays more attention to his own doings than the doings of others. Because he takes his own life into account, he finds it easy to keep silence about others.
7. You will never become inwardly spiritual unless you keep silence about others and work on getting yourself in line.
8. If you keep your focus on God and keep working on yourself, you will not find what you hear outside so perturbing.
9. Where are you when you do not attend to yourself? And when you have busied yourself with all sorts of things while neglecting your inner wellbeing, of what profit is it to you?
10. You will make great progress if you keep yourself from worldly cares. But to set value on temporal things will keep you back.
11. Let nothing be great, important and pleasing to you, except God alone.
12. God alone, who is eternal and immeasurable and fills all things, is the comfort of souls and the true joy of hearts.

### **Chapter 24: Of the Joy of a Good Conscience**

1. The joy of a good man is in the testimony of a good conscience.
2. As long as you keep your conscience clean you may enjoy life.

3. A good conscience can bear many things, and is happy even in great adversity. But an evil conscience is always fearful and uneasy.
4. With your conscience at rest you can sleep well, and you feel like rejoicing when you do what is right.
5. The wicked never have true happiness nor enjoy true peace, for, as the Lord says: "There is no peace to the wicked" (Isaiah 48:22, 62:21).
6. Even though they insist, "We have peace! Nothing bad is happening to us," do not believe them. God's wrath rises quickly and what they say and what they do will perish (Psalm 145:4).
7. To rejoice in suffering is not hard for one who loves, for to rejoice that way is to rejoice in the cross of Jesus (Romans 5:3, Galatians 5:14). But the joy that is given or received by men is short-lived.
8. Sorrow always follows worldly joy.
9. The joy of the righteous is in their hearts, not in what others say about them.
10. The joy of the righteous comes from God and remains in God. It is joy of knowing the Truth.
11. The one that desires true and everlasting joy cares little for the fleeting joys of the world.
12. And whoever seeks worldly joy, whoever does not despise it from the heart, finds little enjoyment in heavenly things.
13. Great peace of heart comes to those that care neither for praise nor blame.
14. The one whose conscience is pure is easily satisfied.
15. Getting praised makes you no better than you really are, and getting blamed for things makes you no worse.
16. You are what you are. Neither can you pass for better than God knows you to be.
17. If you consider well what you are within yourself, you will not care what people say about you. For man looks to the face, but God looks into the heart (1 Kings 16:7).
18. Others see what you do, but God sees your intentions.

19. The one that trusts God seeks no external testimony for himself. “For not he who praises himself,” says the Apostle, “is approved, but he who is praised by God” (2 Corinthians 10:18).

### **Chapter 25: Of Loving Jesus More Than Anything Else**

1. Blessed is he who knows what it is to love Jesus and who disregards himself for that reason.
2. To love Jesus we must let go of everything else, for that is the only way he will be loved.
3. To love created things is deceptive and disappointing. To love Jesus is safe and has eternal possibilities.
4. He who clings to created things will perish with them when they perish. But he who clings to Jesus may stay with him from this life into the next.
5. Love Jesus then, and keep him as a friend. Even when all others abandon you, he will not. He will not let you fall or forget about you in the end.
6. As far as human companions go, you must sooner or later leave them anyway.
7. Cling to Jesus in life and death. Commit yourself to him, for when all else fails you, he will help you.
8. If you can free yourself completely from the love of created things, Jesus will gladly dwell with you.
9. Whatever you give or do, unless it be for the love of Jesus, you will find to be done in vain.
10. Do not lean on waving reeds or trust in grass. “All flesh,” the prophet tells us, “is like grass, and its glory will fall like the flower of the grass” (Isaiah 40:6).
11. Looks may deceive you. If you trust people too far or place all your confidence in them, you will get hurt. But if you seek Jesus in all things, you will surely find him.
12. If you seek yourself you will also find yourself, but to your own ruin. For a man who does not seek Jesus does more harm to himself than what all his enemies or the whole world could do him.

### **Chapter 26: Of Jesus’ Very Special Friendship**

1. With Jesus everything goes well. Nothing seems too hard or unpleasant to do. But without Jesus everything gets really complicated.
2. When Jesus does not speak within us, every comfort from without seems worthless. But with just one inspiring word from Jesus, we feel great consolation.
3. See how Mary rose in haste from where she stood weeping, when Martha said, “The Master has come and calls for you”? (John 11:28). O blessed hour when Jesus calls from tears to inner joy!
4. How dry and hard everything gets without Jesus. How foolish you would be to want anything other than him!
5. Missing out on Jesus—would that not be a greater disaster missing anything else in the whole world? What can the world give you?
6. To live without Jesus is a foretaste of hell. To live with him, on the other hand, is a foretaste of paradise.
7. With Jesus, no enemy can really hurt you.
8. To know how to communicate with Jesus is an art, and to know how to stay in fellowship with him is great wisdom.
9. Stay meek and humble and Jesus will stay with you.
10. You may easily drive Jesus away and lose his grace, if you give yourself to worldly things. And if you drive him away and lose him, to whom shall you turn when things go bad? Whom shall you seek for a friend?
11. You cannot easily get along without a friend, and if Jesus is not your friend above all others, you will soon be sad and miserable. For that reason you would be foolish to put your trust in anyone else.
12. It is preferable to have the whole world against you than to offend Jesus.
13. Love all men for the sake of Jesus, but love Jesus for his own sake. For him and in him you may love even your enemies, and pray for them that they will come to love him too.
14. If you wish to know how good the Lord is you must offer your heart in purity to him. This is only possible if his grace helps you and draws you to him, so that being set free from all things, you may be united unto him alone.
15. When you sense the presence of Jesus you feel ready and strong enough to do anything. But when this awareness of his presence fades, you may feel poor,

weak, and guilty again. Do not let that discourage you or cause you to give up hope. Accept whatever comes to you, for the love of Jesus, and remember that after winter comes summer, night turns into day, and great storms are always followed by fine weather.

### **Chapter 27: When all Consolations are Taken Away**

1. You must learn to give up your dearest and most needed friend, if necessary, for the love of Jesus. Neither should you grieve too much when a good friend leaves you. In the end we must all go our way, one by one.
2. A man has to go through a hard and long struggle with himself before he learns to master himself completely and direct all his affection to God.
3. When a man relies on himself, he often falls victim to human consolations. But the true lover of Christ and zealous imitator of his virtues does not fall back on consolation, nor does he seek sweetness, but rather chooses strenuous labour and hard suffering for the love of Christ.
4. For this reason, when God grants you spiritual consolation, accept it with gratitude. Just remember, it is a gift from God and not something you have earned or deserve.
5. Do not get proud. Do not feel too elated or smug with yourself when things go well for you spiritually. Rather, let God's gifts make you more humble, more prudent and more cautious in everything you do, for this peace will pass and temptation will follow.
6. When God withdraws his consolation from you, do not despair. Just wait in humility and patience until another heavenly visitation comes. Whatever God withholds or withdraws he is able to give back in much greater measure.
7. For Spirit comes and goes however he wants to. Like Job says, "You visit him early in the morning, then you prove him suddenly" (Job 7:18).
8. On what may I build my hope, and in what shall I put my trust, save in the great mercy of God alone, and in the hope of heavenly grace?
9. Even though I live in the midst of wonderful brothers and sisters, even though I have many faithful friends, read good books, listen to lovely hymns and take part in the worship of God, all these things are of little help and small comfort when I feel forsaken by grace and left to my own poverty. For such times the best remedy is to wait in patience and submit myself to the will of God.
10. I have never found anyone, no matter how spiritually minded he may be, who does not experience this withdrawal of grace sometimes, or who never feels

dejected and sad. Never was there a saint so highly exalted and enlightened that he lived completely outside the range of temptation.

11. No one enters greater and higher levels of fellowship with Jesus except through suffering tribulation with a good attitude.
12. Really bad temptations and great spiritual struggles are usually a sign that exceptional comfort and grace is about to come. To those that withstand temptations, God promises heavenly consolation. "To him that overcomes," he says, "I will give to eat of the tree of life" (Rev. 11:7).
13. God gives you heavenly comfort from time to time so you may become stronger to bear adversity. And he lets you suffer adversity so you will not become proud and trust in yourself.
14. The devil has not gone to sleep yet, nor has your flesh died for the last time. For this reason, do not stop preparing yourself for the fight. On your right hand and on your left are enemies that never rest.

### **Chapter 28: Of Gratitude for God's Grace**

1. Why do you seek rest, knowing you were born to labour?
2. Dispose yourself to patience rather than to consolation, and to carry the cross rather than to enjoy pleasure.
3. Who is there among worldly men who would not gladly accept spiritual joy and consolation, if he could always obtain it?
4. Spiritual consolation surpasses all worldly enjoyments and all pleasures of the flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean, but spiritual delights are pleasing and honourable, springing from virtue and poured out by God on all who are pure in heart.
5. Just remember, no one enjoys this consolation from heaven all the time, or gets it back whenever he wants it. We seldom live without temptation for long.
6. I do not even want to receive consolations to the point that I would never feel sorrowful or repentant anymore, or to where I would just become stuck-up and proud.
7. Not everything that men exalt is holy, nor is everything with a sweet taste, good.
8. All affection is not pure, nor everything lovely pleasing to God.

9. I will gladly receive what it takes to make me more humble, more prudent and more ready to deny myself.
10. Put yourself always in the lowest place, and the highest will be given to you (Luke 14:10). There could be no “highest,” for that matter, if the lowest did not exist.
11. The saints who stand highest before God have been the lowest in their own estimation. The more exalted they are, the more humble they are in themselves. And because they crave not for vainglory, they are filled with truth and heavenly glory.
12. Being firmly established in God, they can in no way be proud. They ascribe to God whatever blessings they have received. They do not desire the praise of one another but the praise that comes from God alone. They want nothing other but for God to be praised in themselves and in all his saints (John 5:44).
13. Whoever wishes to remain in God’s grace, must be thankful for every grace that is given him, and be patient when he withdraws it again.
14. If God withdraws his heavenly consolation from you for a time, just pray that it may return. And when it comes be cautious and humble so you may not lose it again.

### **Chapter 29: Of the Few That Love the Cross of Jesus**

1. Many love Jesus’ heavenly kingdom and look forward to it, but few love to bear his cross.
2. Many come to Jesus seeking consolations, but few thank him for the trouble that brought them there.
3. Many come to sit at Jesus’ banquet table, but few join him in his fasts.
4. We all want to rejoice with Jesus, but few of us want to suffer for his sake.
5. Many like to eat Jesus’ bread, but few will drink from the cup of his pain.
6. Many admire Jesus’ miracles, but few delight in the humiliation of his cross.
7. Many love Jesus when no adversity befalls them. Many praise and bless him as long as they receive some consolation from him. But when Jesus hides himself and leaves them for a little while, they begin to complain and become depressed.
8. Those who love Jesus for Jesus’ sake, and not for their own consolation, praise him in all tribulation and distress—just like they do while things go well. Even if

- Jesus would never give them then any consolation again, these people would always praise and thank him.
9. Oh, how powerful is the pure love of Jesus, free from all self-love and self-interest!
  10. It is the hirelings—not the sons and daughters—that always come back for more consolation.
  11. Are they not lovers of self rather than lovers of Christ, who always think of their own profit and gain?
  12. Where shall you find one who is willing to serve and love God without the thought of gain?
  13. Those who are spiritually minded enough to get rid of all their possessions are few and far between.
  14. Who can find one that is truly poor in spirit and detached from all created things? Far and from the uttermost coasts is the price of him (Proverbs 31:10).
  15. Even if a person gives up all his possessions, it is nothing. If he does many good works it helps him little. If he understands much, becomes a great example in virtue, and truly fervent in devotion, he still lacks a great deal—namely, that one thing that is most necessary. And what is it?
  16. The most necessary thing is to forsake oneself and all personal interest. And even when that is done we should think of it as having done nothing at all. For “when you shall have done all these things that are commanded you, say: ‘We are unprofitable servants’” (Luke 17:10).
  17. Having left ourselves and our self-interest behind, we become poor and naked in spirit, and say with the prophet: “For I am alone and poor” (Psalm 24:16). But no one is richer than in such a condition.
  18. No one is more powerful, no one more free than he who can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

### **Chapter 30: Of the Royal Way of the Cross**

1. To many persons this seems a hard saying, “deny yourself, take up your cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24).
2. By why do you fear? Take up the cross that opens the way to the kingdom! In the cross is salvation. In the cross is life. In the cross is protection against the enemy.

Through bearing the cross you come to heavenly consolation. In the cross is strength of heart. In the cross is spiritual joy.

3. Bearing the cross you discover a hidden treasure of virtues.
4. In the cross is perfection and holiness. There is no salvation or hope of eternal life, except in the cross. Take up, therefore, your cross and follow Jesus, and you will enter life everlasting.
5. If you die with Jesus, you will also live with him (Romans 6:8). And if you take part in his sufferings, you will also take part in his glory (2 Corinthians 1:7).
6. Everything depends on the cross and dying on it. There is no other way to life and no true inner peace than the way of the cross and daily death.
7. Go where you will, seek what you will—you will never find a higher way above, nor a safer way below than the way of the cross.
8. No matter where you live or what you do, no matter how you arrange your life, you will never find all things to your liking. Whether you like it or not you will always have a cross to bear—either the cross of physical pain or the cross of tribulation in the soul.
9. At times you will feel forsaken by God. At times the people around you will try you sorely, and what is more, you will often be a burden to your own self.
10. Neither will you find relief in any remedy or solace. You will carry your cross as long as it pleases God.
11. Sometimes God lets you suffer affliction without consolation, so you may learn patient endurance and stay humble.
12. The cross is always prepared, and everywhere waiting for you. You cannot escape it no matter where you run, for wherever you go you bring yourself along, and always find yourself.
13. Look upward or downward, outward or inward. Everywhere you look you will find the cross. And everywhere you need patience if you want to have inner peace and wear the eternal crown.
14. If you willingly carry your cross, it will carry you and bring you to your desired goal—that is, where all suffering comes to an end.
15. All that happens if you carry your cross reluctantly is that you become a burden to yourself and increase your load. But you still have to carry it.

16. If you reject the cross, you may well have to carry another and much heavier one.
17. Do you think you can escape what no mortal man has been able to do so far?
18. Who among the saints has gone through life without the cross and suffering? Not even our Lord Jesus spent one hour on earth without it.
19. Man is not naturally inclined to carry the cross, to love the cross, “to chastise the body and bring it into subjection,” to shun honours, to suffer the accusations of others calmly, to disregard himself and to wish to be disregarded, to bear opposition and humiliation with patience, and to keep from wishing for prosperity in the world (1 Corinthians 9:27).
20. And be assured, if you count on your own strength to do any of these things, you will miserably fail (2 Corinthians 3:5). Only if you trust in the Lord, strength will be given you from heaven, and the world and the flesh will become subject to your will.
21. Resolve, then, as a good and faithful servant, to carry the cross of your Lord with unending valour—the cross of him who was crucified out of love for you.
22. Prepare yourself to suffer many adversities and all kinds of trouble in this miserable life, for such will be your lot wherever you are. And such, in truth, you will find it to be wherever you hide yourself. So it must be, and there is no way to escape from tribulation and suffering.
23. Drink willingly from Jesus’ cup if you want to be his friend and have part with him (John 18:2).
24. Leave consolation to God, to dispose of it as he pleases.
25. On your part, prepare yourself for nothing but suffering and count your trouble as a great blessing. For the sufferings of this time, even though you alone should have to carry them all, cannot compare with the glories to come (Romans 8:18).
26. When you have reached the state where tribulation is sweet to you, and you delight in it for the love of Christ, then all is well with you. Then you have found paradise on earth.
27. As long as suffering weighs heavily on you and you desire to flee from it, so long will you be unhappy, and the tribulation you wish to escape will follow you everywhere. But as soon as you resign yourself to suffer and to die, you quickly become relieved and find peace.

### **Chapter 31: Against the Tongues of Slanderers**

1. My son, do not take it hard when some think evil of you and say what you do not like to hear.
2. You ought to think even less of yourself than they do, and you should not believe anyone worse than yourself.
3. If you lead an inner life, you will attach little importance to passing words.
4. It is no small prudence to keep silence in an evil time and to direct your thoughts to Jesus rather than to be troubled by the opinions of men.
5. Do not let your peace depend on what people say. For whether they judge you bad or good, you are just like you are. What they say makes you neither better or worse.
6. True peace and joy is to be found in Jesus alone.
7. The one that does not desire to please men and has no worries about displeasing them enjoys great peace.
8. All useless fear, all disquiet of heart and distraction of the senses, comes from loving the wrong things.

### **Chapter 32: How One Should Pray for Jesus' Help**

1. Turn to Jesus right away when things start going wrong. What keeps you back from heavenly consolation is that you are too slow in praying.
2. Before praying earnestly to Jesus, you seek help from many other sources and try to comfort yourself through other means. But nothing works, nothing delivers you from your distress until you realise that only Jesus can help you.
3. Where is your faith? Stand firm in your faith and persevere. Be patient and have courage, your consolation will come in due time.
4. Wait on Jesus. He will come and heal you (Matthew 8:7). It is only a temptation that troubles you now—only a useless fear that unsettles you for the time being.
5. What other use is your great worry concerning future things than to cause you one sorrow after another? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof' (Matthew 7:34).
6. For that reason it is vain and useless to let yourself be disturbed on one hand, or pleased on the other, about future things that may never happen.

7. It is quite human to be deluded by thoughts of this kind, but they come from minds still weak enough to give in to false suggestions of the enemy.
8. The enemy does not care whether he deceives you by truth or falsehood, whether he causes a man's downfall by the love of present things or the fear of future things. Just do not "let not your heart be troubled, or let it be afraid" (John 14:27).
9. Believe in Jesus and trust in his mercy completely.
10. When you think Jesus is furthest from you, he may in fact be the closest by.
11. Right when you imagine everything is lost may be the time your deliverance will come. You must not judge according to your feelings of the moment, or lose hope in any situation.
12. Do not think yourself forsaken by Jesus when he allows you to pass through tribulation or when he withdraws his consolation from you for a time. Take heart—that is the way into the kingdom of heaven!
13. Whatever Jesus gives he may take away, and give it back when he pleases. Whatever he lets you have still belongs to him, and when he takes it back you should not think he is taking what is rightfully yours.
14. Every good and every perfect gift comes from above. When Jesus sends you trials and adversity, do not let it vex or discourage you, for he can quickly relieve you and change all your sadness into joy.
15. Jesus is fair and works with nothing but your best interest at heart, even when he lets you go through troubled times.
16. Just keep doing what is right, regardless how you feel or what happens, and troubles will no longer bother you so much. Rather you will rejoice and thank Jesus, considering it a special favour that he chastises you with suffering for your eternal benefit.
17. "As the father loves me, I also love you," Jesus said to his disciples when he sent them out—not to worldly joys but to great conflicts, not to be honoured but to be despised, not to leisure but to much hard work, not to rest but to gather much fruit in patience.

### **Chapter 33: Of Inconstancy of Heart**

1. My son, trust not your affections that so easily change from one thing to another.

2. As long as you live you will find yourself changing in spite of yourself—sometimes joyful, sometimes sad. Sometimes peaceful, sometimes disturbed. Now devout and diligent, now slothful, now heavy, now light of heart.
3. But a wise man, well experienced in the spiritual life, keeps himself on top of all these circumstances. He pays little attention to what he feels or from which way the winds of his emotions blow. He cares only to keep his heart at the right place through it all.
4. Doing this, he remains unmoved and undisturbed. Through all changing events and circumstances he keeps the eye of his intention fixed on Jesus.
5. The clearer the eye of your soul the steadier you may pass through the storm.

### **Chapter 34: Of the Judgements of Men**

1. My son, trust firmly in the Lord with all your heart, and fear not the judgements of men when your conscience declares you innocent.
2. It is good for you to bear with this, and not at all difficult for a humble heart that trusts in God rather than in himself.
3. It is impossible to satisfy everybody.
4. Paul the Apostle endeavoured to please everybody in the Lord, and “became all things to all men,” yet he considered it a very small thing to be judged by human justice (1 Cor. 9:22, 1 Cor. 3:4). He laboured much for the salvation of men, as much as lay in his power. Yet this did not save him from being judged and sometimes despised by others.
5. For this reason he just committed everything to God who knows all things and with patience and humility he shielded himself from his enemies who spoke evil or thought vain and false things of him.
6. Only when it became absolutely necessary did Paul answer them, so the weak might be confused by his silence (Acts 26).
7. Who are you that you should be afraid of a mortal man? Today he is and tomorrow he is not to be found.
8. Fear God and you shall not be frightened by the terrors of men.
9. What harm can anyone do to you with words and injuries? He does more harm to himself than to you, and whoever he may be, he cannot escape the judgement of God.

10. Have God before your eyes and contend not in quarrelsome words (2 Tim. 2:14).
11. Should you be overcome and suffer disgrace that you have not deserved, do not make a big scene of it, lest Jesus remove your crown for your impatience. Just keep looking to him who can save you from every disgrace and injustice, and who will reward every man according to his works (Romans 2:6).

### **Chapter 35: Of Pure and Full Surrender to Jesus**

1. My son, if you forsake yourself, you will find Jesus. Give up your own will and all you possess. That will be to your advantage in every way.
2. As soon as you give yourself completely to Jesus he will give you more and greater dimensions of grace.
3. The Lord Jesus makes no exceptions. He desires to find you detached from all things. How could you be his and he be yours, if you did not detach yourself inwardly and outwardly from all self-will?
4. The sooner you do this, the better it will go for you, and the more fully and sincerely you do it, the better you will please him.
5. Some want to give themselves to Jesus but with a few reservations. They do not trust him altogether and think it necessary to keep on watching out for themselves.
6. Some offer themselves completely, but as soon as they encounter difficulties they go back to what they have given up. Such people make no spiritual progress at all.
7. They never come to the freedom of the pure of heart nor to the grace of Jesus' happy friendship unless they surrender themselves without reserve to him. Unless they offer themselves up as a daily sacrifice not blissful union between them and Jesus can exist.
8. I have told you many times and tell you again: Forsake yourself, surrender yourself, and you will enjoy great inner peace.
9. Strive after this, pray for this and desire that you may be stripped of all you have and are. Nakedly follow the naked Christ. Die to yourself and you will live forever with him.
10. Then all your vain imaginations, your unrest and turmoil, and all your needless worries will disappear. You will not live in terror of the future anymore and your attraction to evil things will fade away.

**Chapter 36: Of the Uselessness of Worry**

1. My son, let Jesus take care of everything. He will know what to make of everything in the right time and way.
2. Wait until Jesus takes your trouble away. Then you will see how it was to your advantage.
3. You may think you want something very badly. But after you get it you may soon lose interest in whatever it was. That is how it goes with human desire. It passes constantly from one thing to the next.
4. For that reason it is good to crucify your desire for earthly things.
5. True progress comes through forsaking yourself, and if you do that, you will be free and secure.
6. The old enemy, always opposing all that is good, never stops tempting you night and day. He lays dangerous snares into which the unwary easily fall. For this reason the Lord says, "Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation."

**Chapter 37: Of Disregard for All Earthly Honours**

1. My son, be not disturbed when you see others advanced and honoured while you get despised and humiliated.
2. Turn your heart to Jesus in heaven. Then whatever the rest may think of you will not make you sad.
3. We are blinded and easily misled by our vanity.
4. On examining myself I must conclude that I have never suffered an absolute "injustice." There has always been some truth to the accusations brought against me. For this reason I do not complain to God. I have sinned against him so many times that I deserve to have all men rise up in arms against me.
5. I deserve shame and contempt. Only God deserves honour, glory and fame.
6. Unless I prepare myself to be despised and counted as nothing by everyone, I can never be inwardly settled and at peace. Neither can I be spiritually enlightened or fully united to God.

### **Chapter 38: That We Should Not Depend Too Much on Others**

1. My son, if you trust in others and hope that will bring you peace, you are in for much disappointment and heartache. But if you trust Jesus you will always have someone to depend on, regardless what happens or who abandons you.
2. Your love for a friend can only be as solid as your love for Jesus. And only for Jesus sake may you dare love those around you, and those that are dear to you in life.
3. Without a common love for Jesus, the friendship of men has neither value nor duration. Unless Jesus forms the bond of human love it cannot be true and pure.
4. Learn then, to conquer yourself even in the area of affection and human love, for Jesus' sake.
5. If you love anything or anyone too much, it will hold you back from the highest love that will let you be forever with him.

### **Chapter 39: Against Vain and Worldly Wisdom**

1. My son, do not let the fair and subtle words of men deceive you. The kingdom of God is not in words but in power (1 Corinthians 4:20).
2. Listen to the words of Jesus that enlighten your mind and set your heart aflame. Only they will bring you to repentance and true consolation.
3. Never study the words of Jesus so others to impress others with your learning or wisdom. Study them rather to kill your bad desires for that will profit you more than the knowledge of many difficult things.
4. When you have read and learned many things, you must nevertheless go back to the one principle: All wisdom comes from Jesus. Only he gives a clear understanding to the humble.
5. The one Jesus teaches very quickly becomes wise, and makes much spiritual progress. But woe to the one that seeks to learn great and rare things from men, while paying little attention to what Jesus says, or to serving him.
6. The time will come when the Master of masters and the Lord of angels will come to hear everyone's lesson—that is, to examine everyone's conscience. Then he will visit and search Jerusalem with a lantern, and he bring to light the hidden things of darkness. Then the arguing tongues of men will cease (Revelation 1:12, 1 Cor. 4:5).

7. In one moment Jesus can enlighten your heart and you will know more than if you had studied ten years at the university.
8. Jesus teaches without the sound of words, without the confusion of ideas, without inflating the minds of men.
9. Jesus teaches men to despise earthly possessions, to disregard temporal things, to seek what is eternal, to flee worldly honours, to endure humiliation, to place all their hope in him, to desire nothing beside him, and to love God above all things.
10. To some Jesus teaches ordinary things. To others he imparts special knowledge.
11. To some Jesus makes himself known through signs and wonders. To others he shows himself secretly but in great light.
12. The voice of books is the same, but it does not teach all men alike. Jesus alone is the inner teacher of truth, the one that searches hearts, that discerns thoughts, that rewards good deeds, and give to everyone what is best for him.

#### **Chapter 40: That We Must Not be Concerned About Earthly Things**

1. My son, you do well to be ignorant of many things and to reckon yourself as dead to the things of the earth. Let the world be crucified to you (Galatians 6:14).
2. You must pass by many things with a deaf ear, and think only of what contributes to peace.
3. In many cases it is better for you to turn your eyes from what displeases you, and to let each one hold his opinion, rather than getting involved in conflicts you cannot resolve.
4. If you stand right with God and respect his judgement, you will not be grieved if others get the best of you in an argument.

#### **Chapter 41: That We Must Not Believe Everyone**

1. Oh Lord, help in tribulation, for men cannot help me (Psalm 59:13).
2. How often I have found no loyalty where I expected to find it! But on the other hand, I have also found it many times where I expected it least of all.
3. It is useless, therefore, to place our hope in man.
4. We are weak and unsettled. We are quickly deceived and changed.

5. Who is the man who can guard himself so wisely as not to fall sometimes into some deception or perplexity?
6. Only the one that trusts you, Lord, and seeks you with a simple heart, keeps himself from falling. No matter how great his troubles you quickly help and console him. You never abandon those that trust you to the end.
7. So why have I trusted others as readily as I have?
8. You, Lord, are the Truth. You neither deceive nor are you deceived. But all men are deceitful, weak, inconstant, inconsiderate, especially in words, so that one scarcely ought to believe what to all appearance sounds true.
9. You have spoken wisely, “A man’s enemies are they of his own household” (Micah 6:6).
10. “Be careful,” a man will tell you, “just keep to yourself what I say to you.” But he goes out and right away tells others what he warned you not to tell.
11. From all such tales and untrustworthy people protect me, Lord, so I may not fall into their hands (Psalm 119:2). Put into my mouth a word that is true, firm and sincere, and keep far from me a crafty tongue.
12. Oh how good and peaceable it is to keep silence about others, neither to believe every report nor lightly to repeat the secrets of others. To open one’s heart to only a few, not to allow oneself to be swayed by every influence, but to desire always that all things may be done according to the pleasure of your will!
13. We remain in a secure and heavenly place if we shun all demonstrations of honour and refuse the admiration of men.
14. How many have suffered harm because their virtue became known and men praised them too soon.
15. And how good has it been for many that grace remained hidden in this weak life which is spent in continual temptation and warfare.

#### **Chapter 42: That We Must Trust in God against the Sharp Arrows of Slander**

1. My son, be brave and trust in Jesus.
2. Words, after all, are only words! They fly through the air but cannot really hurt anything.
3. If you are guilty of what people accuse you, think how you may do better. If you are innocent, think what a privilege to suffer this for the love of God!

4. It is little enough that now and then you should suffer a few words, you who are as yet unable to stand heavy blows.
5. Why do you take to heart such trivial things, except that you are still too carnal and desire too much human respect?
6. You are still afraid others will despise you. You are unwilling to be blamed for your defects, and always seek to make excuses for yourself. Now look into yourself more carefully, and you will find that the world lives in you, as well as the vain desire to please men.
7. If you are unwilling to be humiliated and put to shame for your defects, it is evident that you are not as yet truly humble nor truly dead to the world, and that the world is not crucified to you.
8. Just listen to Jesus' words, and you will not care for even two thousand words of men.
9. If all the evil that can be maliciously invented were spoken against you, what harm could it do you, if you ignored it and considered it as mere chaff? Can all this talk remove a hair from your head? (Luke 21:18).
10. But he whose heart is not settled inside within, he who does not have Jesus continually before his eyes, easily becomes disturbed by a word of reproach.
11. On the other hand, the one that trusts Jesus and refuses to justify himself in his own eyes lives free from the fear of men.
12. Jesus is the judge and knows all secrets. He knows how everything happens. He knows both the one that does the injustice and the one that suffers it.
13. Jesus will judge the guilty and the innocent. Human testimony often errs, but his judgement is true. It will stand and not be reversed.
14. The judgement of Jesus is hidden from many and made known to few, yet it never errs, although it sometimes seems unjust in the eyes of those that do not understand. For that reason you should trust him without hesitation, and without leaning on your own judgement.
15. The just man will not be disturbed by whatever happens to him with God's permission (Proverbs 12:21).
16. Even if people say unfair and unkind things about him, the just man will not be troubled. Neither will he rejoice when he is vindicated by others. He knows that

Jesus searches all hearts and that he does not judge according to the face and outward appearance of men (Psalm 7:10).

17. What is blameworthy in Jesus' eyes is often found worthy of praise in the judgment of men.

#### **Chapter 43: That We Must Endure Every Trial For the Sake of Eternal Life**

1. My son, do not allow yourself to get discouraged in the labour you have undertaken for Jesus sake, nor to be case down by any tribulation. Rather, let his promises strengthen and comfort you under all circumstances. He is able to reward you in every way and above all measure.
2. Your labour and trouble here on earth will not last long. Wait only a little while and you will see the end of your trial.
3. There will come a time when labour and unrest will cease. Everything is trivial and brief and passes away with time.
4. Do well what you are doing. Labour faithfully in Jesus' vineyard, and he will be your reward.
5. Write, read, grieve and be silent. Pray, labour, bear opposition valiantly, for eternal life is a worthy reward for this and still greater conflicts. You will see the day of eternal light, of splendour without end, of permanent peace and rest without anxiety.
6. Then you will no longer cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24). Nor will you say, "Woe to me that my sojourning is prolonged!" (Psalm 69:5). For then shall death be banished and salvation permanent.
7. No fear shall trouble you any longer but the joy of the blessed in sweet and lovely community.

#### **Chapter 44: Of the Desire for Eternal Life**

1. Oh my son, when you feel a longing for eternal bliss, when you want nothing more than to depart out of your body so may contemplate the unchangeable glory of God, open your heart wide and receive this holy inspiration most eagerly.
2. Be grateful to God for dealing so kindly with you, for his merciful visitation that stirs you up and encourages you so powerfully. Thank him for not letting you sink to the level of earthly things under the weight of your tribulations.
3. My son, the fire often burns, but the flame does not rise without smoke. So also, some people's desires burn toward heavenly things, but they cannot free

themselves from selfish and carnal desires. For this reason they never catch a good view of God's glory they so eagerly want to see.

4. Do not pray for what is pleasing and advantageous to you, but for what pleases God and gives him glory.
5. If you judge correctly you will prefer what God wants to whatever you might want or long for.
6. The Lord Jesus hears your longings and sighs. He knows how much you desire the glorious freedom of the children of God. You want an eternal home and to live in the heavenly fatherland filled with joy. But the time for this has not yet come. This is a different time, a time of conflict, of labour and of pain.
7. You wish to be filled with the highest bliss but you cannot have it here. First you must be tested on earth, and your character tried in many ways.
8. Sometimes Jesus will give you sweet consolation, but never to your full satisfaction. Take courage and be strong. You need to learn how to do and how to suffer things that go contrary to nature.
9. You must put on a new man, and be changed into another man (Ephesians 1:6, 1 Kings 10:6). You must often do what does not appeal to you and what you really want to do, you must leave undone.
10. What pleases others will succeed, what pleases you will be a failure.
11. What others say will be listened to, but what you say will be accounted as nothing.
12. Others ask and receive. You ask and you remain unheard.
13. Others are praised in public. You get passed over in silence.
14. Others are assigned to one position or another. But you are accounted as fit for nothing.
15. Although you bear it in silence, you may sometimes feel unhappy about this, and it may cause no small struggle within you.
16. In these and many other things, the faithful servant of God is tested how far he can renounce himself and break his own will.
17. Few things go more against your grain than to have others run things in a way that makes no sense to you—especially when they command you to do what seems unreasonable and useless to you.

18. You think it hard to submit your judgement to the will of others, and to give up your own opinion. But my son, look at the fruit of these labours. Look to their short duration and their exceeding great reward. Then these trials, instead of being a cause of grief to you, will be a consolation if you bear them in patience.
19. By readily sacrificing your will now, you will have your own way forever with the Lord. There you will want nothing but what he wants. There you will ask for and receive whatever you desire. There it will be in your power to have all good things without any fear of losing them.
20. There no one will oppose you, no one will complain about you, and no one hinder you. Whatever you desire you will have, and your desire will be completely fulfilled.
21. There the reproaches you have suffered will be rewarded with eternal glory. Your sorrow will be rewarded with praise, and for the lowest place on earth, the Lord Jesus will give you a glorious throne in his eternal kingdom.
22. There you will enjoy the fruit of obedience. There you will receive for your patience and humble subjection a crown of glory that does not fade away.
23. Therefore, bend your will humbly to that of the rest. Do not even think about who has said this or commanded that.

#### **Chapter 45: That We Must Employ Ourselves in Humble Work**

1. My son, you cannot always continue in your fervent desires nor hold the highest degree of contemplation. Sometimes, because of the weakness of human nature, you have to come down and bear with humility the burden of this corruptible life.
2. As long as you are clad in this mortal body, you will feel grief and weariness of heart. For that reason you will often have to groan in spirit under the weight of the flesh that prevents you from devoting yourself constantly to spiritual exercises or to divine contemplation.
3. In such circumstances it is good that you apply yourself to humble exterior labour and seek distraction in good works while you await with firm confidence the coming of Jesus and his heavenly visitation.
4. Bear your dryness of heart with patience until Jesus visits you and delivers you from all anxiety. Then you will forget all your labours and enjoy inner peace.
5. Then he will open the holy Scriptures to you, so that with a free heart you may run the way of his commandments (Psalm 118:32) Then will you say that “the

sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18).

### **Chapter 46: Of Nature and Grace**

1. My son, pay diligent attention to the your own nature and the grace of God at work within you, for they are much opposed to each other and move in such subtle ways that even a spiritual, devout and enlightened man can scarcely tell them apart.
2. All men, indeed, desire what is good. In their words and deeds they strive for what is good, but under the appearance of good many are deceived.
3. Nature is crafty and deceives many. It always seeks itself. But grace walks in simplicity. It avoids all appearances of evil. It lays no snares but does all things for God’s sake alone.
4. Nature is not willing to die. It will neither be subdued nor conquered. It is reluctant to be subject to others. But grace diligently strives to mortify its own will and selfishness. It resists evil desires and seeks to be in subjection. It longs to be overcome and does not wish to enjoy its own freedom. It prefers to be kept under discipline, not ruling over others but always living and remaining under God. It is ready for God’s sake to subject itself to whatever is necessary and right.
5. Nature works for its own comfort, and seeks its own gain and profit from others. Grace, on the other hand, does not go by what it wants but what is of help and profit to all (1 Cor. 10:13).
6. Nature likes to receive honour and reverence, while grace gives all honour and glory to God Almighty.
7. Nature dreads shame and contempt, while grace rejoices to suffer reproach and injustice for the Jesus’ name (Acts 4:41).
8. Nature likes leisure and rest, while grace willingly accepts work and refuses to be idle.
9. Nature seeks what is rare and beautiful, and scorns what is cheap and coarse. Grace is content with simple and lowly things, and likes to be dressed in simple clothes.
10. Nature thinks first of its immediate good. It rejoices over earthly gain, grieves over loss, and is angered for the slightest cause. But grace thinks of eternity and does not cling to temporal things. It does not grieve over the loss of any possession, nor is it angered by harsh words, for it has its treasure and joy in heaven where nothing can perish.

11. Nature is covetous, and would rather receive than give. But grace is generous and liberal. It asks for nothing special, is content with little, and judges that it is a more blessed thing to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).
12. Nature looks to created things, to its own flesh, to vanity and to gadding about. But grace looks to God and virtue. It flees from the world of created things. It says “no” to evil desires. It refrains from useless travelling and spending, and blushes to appear in public.
13. Nature likes external pleasures wherein it may delight. But grace seeks no consolation but in God alone, and places its delight in the promise of his coming reign.
14. Nature does all things for its own gain and profit. It will do nothing without pay. It wants its works and gifts to be valued highly and expects praise or favour for every good deed. But grace does not seek reward or praise. All it seeks is God.

#### **Chapter 47: Of the Wonderful Effect of Jesus’ Love**

1. Love is a great thing and great blessing. It alone makes light what is otherwise heavy. It bears whatever goes wrong without getting upset.
2. Love carries burdens without feeling their weight. It makes bitter things sweet.
3. Love for Jesus is noble, impelling those that know it to ever greater deeds and sacrifice. To ever higher levels of godliness and grace.
4. Love for Jesus surpasses all other forms of love and cannot be restrained by anything on earth.
5. Love for Jesus is free of all worldly affections. If we have it we keep ourselves from all worldly interests, and with it we overcome all adversity.
6. Nothing in heaven or on earth is sweeter than love. Nothing is stronger, nothing is higher, and nothing is happier, more precious or noble than love. For love is born of God. Love is higher than all created things and cannot rest except in God.
7. Love runs, flies, is happy and free. Nothing can hold it back.
8. Love does not look at the gifts, but turns itself to the giver of all that is good.
9. Love cannot be measured. It feels no burden, resents no labour, and always wants to do more and more.
10. Love considers nothing impossible and feels equal to all things.

11. Love wakes and sleeps not. Others may be weary, but love does not grow weary. When in trouble it is not disturbed, but as a living flame it rises ever upwards and securely forces its way through every obstacle.
12. Love is swift, bright, tender, happy and cheerful. It is brave, patient, faithful, prudent, valiant, and never seeks its own good. For where one seeks himself, there he falls from love.
13. Love is generous, humble and just. It is neither weak nor fickle. It thinks not of vain things. It is sober chaste and steadfast.
14. He who is not ready to suffer all things and to be conformed to the will of the beloved is not worthy to be called a lover.
15. A true lover accepts all hard and bitter things willingly for the sake of the Beloved. Neither does he turn away from his Beloved because of anything unpleasant that may occur.

#### **Chapter 48: Of the Proof of a True Lover**

1. My son, you are not as yet a strong and wise lover. For the slightest difficulty you lose heart, and you crave too much for consolation.
2. A strong lover remains firm in temptation, and pays no attention to the crafty suggestions of the enemy.
3. While his heart is true to Jesus in times of prosperity, it is no less so in times of adversity. A strong lover thinks not so much of the gift of the beloved as of the love of the giver.
4. A noble lover does not rest in the gifts, but rests in the Beloved above every gift.
5. Do not think that all is lost when at times you experience less love for Jesus and for your brothers and sisters than you desire.
6. The comforting and sweet affection you sometimes experience is the effect of heavenly grace. It is a foretaste of the land to which you are going. But you must not rely too much upon it, for it comes and goes.
7. To fight evil thoughts and impulses, to despise the suggestions of the evil one is a noble virtue.
8. Let no strange imaginations disturb you, no matter from what source they may arise. Remain firm in your purpose and keep your affection centred on God.

9. It is no illusion when you are suddenly raised to sublime contemplation, then brought down again to common and useless thoughts.
10. Such thoughts are involuntary on your part. As long as they displease you and you resist them, they are harmless and a good exercise for you.
11. You must know that the enemy makes every effort to break down your good resolutions and to draw you away from spiritual exercises—from keeping watch over your heart and from your firm desire to make spiritual progress.
12. He puts many evil thoughts in your mind to make you sad and weary and draw you away from prayer and spiritual reading. But pay him no attention. Do not believe what he tells you and avoid the snares he lays for you.
13. My son, fight on like a valiant knight. Though you should fall through weakness sometimes, get up and go on with greater strength than before. Trust in more grace. But take diligent heed against slothfulness and pride. Through pride many have been led into error and fallen into perpetual blindness.
14. Let the end of the proud and presumptuous be a lesson to you and a warning to be always humble.

#### **Chapter 49: Of Acquiring Patience**

1. My son, do not look for peace to come through freedom from temptation.
2. You will not have peace in your heart until you learn to be joyful right through the midst of everything—temptation, adversity, opposition, whatever it may be.
3. Do you think that people outside our community have less to suffer than you? Do you think everything is easy and pleasant in the world? No. Not even the healthiest and wealthiest have everything going their way.
4. “But,” you may say, “they have many pleasures and follow their own will, so they must have little to worry about.”
5. Be that as it may, how long do you think that will last? The rich of this world vanish like smoke and will not remembrance their past joys. Even while they are yet alive, do not think for a moment that they enjoy their riches without bitterness, sorrow and anxiety.
6. The very things in which they delight are often the cause of their pain and sadness. For that reason, having set their affections on the wrong place and run after worldly pleasures, they cannot enjoy them without bitterness and shame.
7. Oh, how brief, how false, how shameful are all worldly pleasures!

8. Yet in their intoxication and blindness of heart men cannot realise it. Like dumb animals they rush to the death of their souls for the sake of trivial pleasure.
9. Therefore, my son, “go not after your evil desires. Delight in the Lord and he will give you the requests of your heart” (Ecclesiastes 18:30, Psalm 36:4).

### **Chapter 50: How We Must Act and Pray When We Want Something**

1. My son, you should always say, “Lord, if this be pleasing to you, so let it be. Lord, if it be to your honour, let it happen in your name. Lord, if you see that it is useful and profitable to me, give it to me so I may use it to your honour. But if it be harmful to me and not good for the salvation of my soul, then take such a desire away from me.”
2. For not every desire is from the Holy Ghost, even though it seems good and just to you.
3. It is difficult, sometimes, to know whether your desires come from a good or an evil spirit. Many have been deceived, thinking they wanted something for a good purpose, when their true motive was selfishness or pride.
4. Whenever you want something, consider it first in the fear of God and with true humility of heart. Let God make the decision by praying: “Lord, you know that is best, let this or that be done according to your will. Give what you will, as much as you will and when you will. Deal with me however you want to. Place me where you will for I am in your hands. Turn me around whichever way you please. All I want is for my life to bring honour to you!”

### **Chapter 51: Of Suffering Injustice Patiently**

1. The better you prepare yourself to suffer, the more wisely you act when affliction comes upon you. It is by practice that you train yourself to endure suffering.
2. Do not say, “I cannot stand it from this man. I do not have to tolerate such things from him because he has done me great wrong. He has accused me of things of which I never thought, but I would could take it from another.”
3. Such thoughts are unwise, because you ignore both the virtue and the power of patience and of him who is to reward it.
4. He who is willing to suffer only what seems fair to him and from whom he pleases is not a truly patient man.
5. A truly patient man does not care through whom his trial comes—whether through his superior, his equal, or his inferior, whether through a good man or one

that is perverse and unworthy. He just accepts with gratitude whatever adversity comes, and takes it as from the hand of the Lord.

6. Be prepared to fight if you want to win. Without struggle you will never wear the victor's crown.

### **Chapter 52: That You Ought to Forsake Yourself and Follow Jesus**

1. Follow Jesus. He is the way, the truth and the life. He is the Way you must follow, the unfailing Truth, the life without end.
2. If you stay with Jesus you will know the truth. If you will enter eternal life, keep his commandments (Matthew 18:17).
3. If you want to know the truth, deny yourself and follow Jesus (Mark 8:34).
4. If you want to live a blessed life in the future, do not attach yourself to this one. If you want to reign with Jesus, bear the cross with him.

### **Chapter 53: That a Man must be Patient and Humble in Adversity**

1. My son, patience and humility in adversity are more pleasing to God than great joy and devotion in prosperity.
2. Why are you sad because someone said a little thing against you?
3. Let it pass. It is nothing new or important. It is not the first this has happened to you, nor will it be the last if you live long. Just pay no attention to it.
4. You are brave enough when you meet with no opposition. You can give good advice to others and confront them with words. But when tribulation suddenly comes to your door, it seems you lack counsel and strength. Then you forget the examples and the spiritual advice you have used to strengthen others.
5. Consider your great weakness in small difficulties, and take note of how such things take place for your good.
6. When these and similar things happen, put them out of your heart as best you can, and although they are troublesome, do not let them bring you down.
7. At least bear patiently what you cannot bear cheerfully.
8. If there is anything you do not want to hear, if you feel upset about anything, control yourself. Just stay quiet for a while and let nothing escape from your mouth that might offend the little ones around you.

9. The storm within you will soon subside, and your inner grief will give way to returning grace.
10. "I still live," says the Lord, "more ready to help than ever, if you have confidence in me and call on me with a sincere heart" (Isaiah 49:12).
11. Just calm down, and prepare yourself to withstand even greater things.
12. Do not think all is lost when you feel oppressed and severely tempted. You are a man and not God. You are flesh and not an angel. How could you always stay in the same positive and cheerful state of mind when even the angels in heaven and the first man in Paradise failed to do it?
13. Jesus restores the afflicted and if those that follow him admit how weak they really are, he will lift them up.