

# The Twelfth Degree of Humility

by St. Benedict of Nursia

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*The twelfth degree of humility is manifesting humility in appearance and cultivating a sense of guilt for sins, leading to perfect love of God and delight in virtues.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 37:7, Psalm 119:107, Matthew 8:8, Luke 18:13, Romans 8:15, Galatians 5:22, 1 John 4:18-19

**Topics:** "Christian Humility", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

St. Benedict of Nursia preaches about the twelfth degree of humility, emphasizing the importance of manifesting humility not only in the heart but also in appearance, by always having a posture of reverence and acknowledging one's sins. He encourages monks to constantly feel the guilt of their sins, be mindful of the judgment day, and humbly confess their unworthiness before God. By climbing the steps of humility, monks can attain perfect love of God, which eliminates fear and motivates them to follow God's precepts out of love for Christ and delight in virtues.

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## Transcript

The twelfth degree of humility is that a monk not only have humility in his heart but also by his very appearance make it always manifest to those who see him. That is to say that whether he is at the Work of God, in the oratory, in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the fields or anywhere else, and whether sitting, walking or standing, he should always have his head bowed and his eyes toward the ground.

Feeling the guilt of his sins at every moment, he should consider himself already present at the dread Judgment and constantly say in his heart what the publican in the Gospel said with his eyes fixed on the earth: "Lord, I am a sinner and not worthy to lift up my eyes to heaven" (Luke 18:13; Matt. 8:8); and again with the Prophet: "I am bowed down and humbled everywhere" (Ps. 37[38]:7,9; 118[119]:107). Having climbed all these steps of humility, therefore, the monk will presently come to that perfect love of God which casts out fear. And all those precepts which formerly he had not observed without fear, he will now begin to keep by reason of that love, without any effort, as though naturally and by habit.

No longer will his motive be the fear of hell, but rather the love of Christ, good habit and delight in the virtues which the Lord will deign to show forth by the Holy Spirit in His servant now cleansed from vice and sin.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/st-benedict-of-nursia/the-twelfth-degree-of-humility/>

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