

# Poverty and Spoliation the Way of Christ.

by Francois Fenelon

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*Francois Fenelon's sermon teaches that true discipleship requires self-denial and embracing the cross to attain spiritual growth and righteousness in Christ.*

**Topics:** "Self Denial", "Sanctification"

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## Description

Francois Fenelon preaches about embracing poverty and spoliation as the way of Christ, emphasizing that God uses trials for our advancement and sanctification. He highlights the importance of dying to self, denying self-love, and taking up our cross to follow Jesus in darkness, privation, and death. Fenelon encourages believers to allow God to strip away self-love and adornments to receive the purity of Christ, becoming entirely His and finding true delight in Him.

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## Transcript

LETTER XXXII.

Poverty and spoliation the way of Christ.

Everything contributes to prove you; but God who loves you, will not suffer your temptations to exceed your strength. He will make use of the trial for your advancement. But we must not look inwards with curiosity to behold our progress, our strength, or the hand of God, which is not the less efficient because it is invisible. Its principal operations are conducted in secrecy, for we should never die to self, if He always visibly stretched out his hand to save us. God would then sanctify us in light, life, and the possession of every spiritual grace; but not upon the cross, in darkness, privation, nakedness and death. The directions of Christ are not, if any one will come after me, let him enjoy himself, let him be gorgeously apparelled, let him be intoxicated with delight, as was Peter on the mount, let him be glad in his perfection in me and in himself, let him behold himself, and be assured that he is perfect; on the contrary, his words are; If any one will come after me, I will show him the road he must take; let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me in a path beside precipices, where he will see nothing but death on every hand. (Matt. xvi. 24.) St. Paul declares that we desire to be clothed upon, and that it is necessary, on the contrary, to be stripped to very nakedness, that we may then put on Christ.

Suffer Him, then, to despoil self-love of every adornment, even to the inmost covering under which it lurks, that you may receive the robe whitened by the blood of the Lamb, and having no other purity than his. O happy soul, that no longer possesses anything of its own, nor even anything borrowed, and that abandons

itself to the Well-beloved, being jealous of every beauty but his? O spouse, how beautiful art thou, when thou hast no longer anything of thing own! Thou shalt be altogether the delight of the bridegroom, when He shall be all thy comeliness! Then He will love thee without measure, because it will be Himself that He loves in thee.

Hear these things and believe them. This pure truth shall be bitter in your mouth and belly, but it shall feed your heart upon that death which is the only true life. Give faith to this, and listen not to self; it is the grand seducer, more powerful than the serpent that deceived our mother. Happy the soul that hearkens in all simplicity to the voice that forbids its hearing or compassionating self!

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