# To follow the teacher of humility

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*Patristic reading*

Humility therefore is the mistress of all virtues, it is the special and splendid gift of the Saviour. who follows the gentle Lord (cf. Mt 11:29) in the virtues of patience and humility

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[Abba Nesteros said:] “Humility therefore is the mistress of all virtues, it is the surest foundation of the heavenly building, it is the special and splendid gift of the Saviour. For he can perform all the miracles which Christ wrought, without danger of being puffed up, who follows the gentle Lord (cf. Mt 11:29) not in the grandeur of His miracles, but in the virtues of patience and humility. But he who aims at commanding unclean spirits, or bestowing gifts of healing, or showing some wonderful miracle to the people, even though when he is showing off he invokes the name of Christ, yet he is far from Christ (cf. Mt 7:22-23), because in his pride of heart he does not follow his humble Teacher. For when He was returning to the Father, He prepared, so to speak, His will and left this to His disciples: "A new commandment," said He, "give I unto you that ye love one another; as I have loved you, so do ye also love one another:" (Jn 13:34)and at once He subjoined: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love to one another." (Jn 13,35) He says not: "if ye do signs and miracles in the same way," but "if ye have love to one another;" and this it is certain that none but the meek and humble can keep.”

St John Cassian, *Conferences* XV,7