Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

238 To Follow (*Sequi*)

To Follow. There are many differences between the following of men and the following of dogs pursuing a beast. Because a man only follows by tracks. Therefore, he often loses what he follows. If he goes across a rock or through water, the dog follows by the smell which neither the water, rock, nor thorns take away. So many follow Christ in exterior occupation humming the Psalms and other suffrages, but they smell no odor of sweetness. Therefore, often through the rock of avarice,

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through the water of lust, through the thorns of worldly adversity they lose Christ, Lam. 3[:54]: “Waters have flowed over my head.” And “These have no roots, for they believe for a while,” Luke 8[:13]. But on the other hand, it was concerning the apostles and the inspired, Can. 1[:3]: “To the odor of your ointments,” we run.

¶ Certainly four things impede from following Christ, temporal riches, carnal delights, relatives and associates, fear of penalties. But these four have a fourfold aspect. Namely the aspect of worldly vanity impedes which is transitory. For this makes following quickly, Acts 12[:7, 9]: “Arise quickly. And going out, he followed him.” And Matt 4[:20]: “And they immediately leaving” their own vileness they all followed.

¶ Again second, knowledge of one’s own vileness which is done routinely. For this makes one follow humbly, Isai. 51[:1]: “Give ear to me, you that follow that which is just, and you that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence you are hewn.”

¶ Again, the attention of social infidelity which is deception. For this makes one follow prudently, Jer. 17[:5, 16]: “Cursed be the man that trusts in man,” and it follows, “I am not troubled, following you for my pastor, and I have not desired the day of man, you know.”

¶ Again fourth, contemplation of the eternal joy which is consolatory, and this makes one follow perseveringly, Eccli. 23[:38]: “It is great glory to follow the Lord.” And Phil. 3[:12]: “But I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend.” Peter did the contrary of these, Matt. 26[:58]: “Peter however followed him afar off,” but upon that of Heb. [12:1]: “Laying aside every weight,” etc. Thus, Peter made so much hurrying that he fell.

¶ Now at the lifting up in his crucifixion the feet were erect to heaven. And Bartholomew as more expeditious followed, he put off his skin lest he be burdened with superfluities. Laurence could not enter with the burden of fat and so left it on the grill. Francis took off the shoes of his feet. Thus, the other saints so ran that they might catch Christ in heaven. We see that on money the image does not appear unless first the staff of tribulation strikes it, Eccli. 27[:6]: “The furnace tries the potter’s vessels.