

FULLY FURNISHED

or

THE CHRISTIAN WORKER'S EQUIPMENT

by

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

THE WORKER'S WORSHIP

WORSHIP and work both have their place, but in these days of restless activity it is necessary to watch lest worship be neglected. A Christian sister once remarked to a very devoted servant of Christ who was not without a vein of humor, "Let me introduce you to a working sister?" He replied, with a smile, "Could you introduce me to a worshipping sister." Work done for God, unless done in the spirit of worship, is not of much account in God's sight. When service is done with a heart overflowing with adoration, it is acceptable to God and profitable to man. There are four principal words which are associated with worship in the New Testament, the understanding of which answers the question as to what worship is. These may be summed up under the following points, viz., Submission, Ascription, Consecration, and Communion.

I - Submission.

The Greek word "*proskuneo*" signifies the act: of worship.

It means to kiss, like a dog licking its master's hand as it crouches before him; hence, its signification is to reverence and adore. Satan uses the word, when he urges Christ to "**fall down and worship**" him (Matthew 4:9), but Christ reminds him that there is only One who is worthy of that act, by saying, "**It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve**" (Matthew 4:10).

A further illustration of the word may be found in the thirteenth of the Revelation, where we find that the anti-Christ causes the dragon to be worshipped, and he in turn is worshipped too, for the false prophet causes the anti-Christ to be worshipped, and if there are any who will not worship him they are put to death (Revelation 13:4, 8, 12, 15).

Taking the word in its widest and most spiritual application, it will be seen that the word submission sums it up.

We find seven illustrations of this aspect of worship in the Gospel according to Matthew, in persons who rendered homage to Christ. Suppose we take the passages as illustrative of the deeper meaning of the subject: before us, and call attention to the leading thought in each case.

Submission to Christ's Rule.

When the wise men saw the infant Christ they **"Fell down, and worshipped Him"** (Matthew 2:11), It was the King (Matthew 2:2) they came to seek, and when they had found Him, they gladly gave Him homage, and gave Him the best they had. When Christ rules in our heart by His love, dominates our mind by His truth, sanctifies our being by His Spirit, empowers our inner nature by His in-dwelling, leads our lives by His example, inspires our testimony by His Word, and influences our giving by His claim, then we worship Him, and crown Him Lord of all; for unless we crown Him Lord of all, we do not crown Him Lord at all.

Submission to Christ's Cleansing.

When the leper came to Christ for cleansing, he **"worshipped Him"** (Matthew 8:2). There is a cleansing which all God's children know, that is, the cleansing of the conscience by the atoning blood of Christ from the condemnation of sin; but there is another cleansing, namely, the cleansing from the indwelling contamination of sin. This two-fold cleansing is referred to in I John 1:7, 9. The blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin, as to its guilt; but He Himself cleanses us from **"all unrighteousness,"** as to its government. It has been said, that some Christians are like well-supplied cruet stands, take them which side you will, you will get something pepperish or vinegary. The Lord can cleanse us if we will, He can remove the defilement of an impure heart, He can take away the tartness of an unholy temper, He can remove the black desire of covetousness, He can take away the root of bitterness, He can cut out the ill-humor of pride, He can kill the weed of jealousy, and He can conquer the swagger of self-will. But there must be on our part, as in the case of the leper, the petition of believing request before there can be the communication of Christ's cleansing power.

Submission to Christ's power.

"There came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live" (Matthew 9:18). Jairus had unswerving faith in the power of Christ to raise his daughter from the dead, and his faith was rewarded. We too must have faith in the power of Christ to quicken those who are dead in trespasses and sins, for it is only as we submit to His power that we have any power. What Dr. Maclaren says of the Holy Spirit applies here. "The Holy Ghost is the only real Power for service. Why have we not got this power? Because we are not willing to be made invisible by the investiture." That's it, the invisibility must precede the investment. In other words, submission to Christ's power goes before the operation of that power through us; for when we give ourselves wholly to it, it will give itself wholly to us, even as the electricity in the motor communicates itself to the wire the moment it is in connection with it.

Submission to Christ's Deity.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God" (Matthew 14:33).

The Deity of Christ is not only a doctrine to be believed, in the sense of assenting to its validity; but it is a truth to be known in all its vitality. The one thing which convinced the disciples of the Deity of Christ, was His power to calm the troubled waters; and the argument which shall convince the world of the reality of the Christian faith, shall be as Christ shall calm the storm of sin's passion, and exhibit the calm of His own holy grace in us.

Justin Martyr, in speaking of what Christ did for the early Christians, says: "Those who were lately the slaves of sensual passion, as was the case with myself, have now no ambition other than to lead pure and holy lives; those who were but yesterday given to the practices of sorcery and the art of magic, are to-day consecrated to the service of the eternal and unbegotten God; those who, as Pagans, prized wealth above everything else, as Christians distribute all they have to the poor; those who formerly despised persons of any other nationality but their own, ridiculed their customs, and would hold no intercourse with them, live, since the birth of Christ in their souls, in peace with their enemies, and offer prayers and do other kind offices for those who hate and persecute them."

From what source were such changes effected? From Him who was **"declared to be the Son of God with power."**

If we submit to Him as the Son of God, then we shall know the blessedness and power of His Sonship as brought out in the seven references to it in the first Epistle of John, for they who know Him in truth,

- Confess Him as the Son of God (4:15),
- Have the witness that they possess eternal life (5:10),
- Know it through His assuring word (5:13),
- Live a life of faith upon Him (5:13),
- Have a personal acquaintance with Him (5:20),
- Overcome the world (5:5), and
- Know that He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil (3:8).

Submission to Christ's Word.

"Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me" (Matthew 15:25). The Syro-Phoenician woman never for one moment questioned the words of Christ; when He discouraged her, she clung all the more to Him. Thus it is ever with faith.

Whittier says of faith:

"Through the dark and stormy night
Faith beholds a feeble light.
Up the blackness streaking;
Knowing God's own time is best."

Yes, not only is "God's own time best," but His way is best, too.

Faith says, “I’ll go where He wishes, I’ll do what He tells me, I’ll take what He gives, I’ll follow where He leads, I’ll deliver the message He bids, I’ll lie where He puts me, and I’ll keep low in His presence in humble and adoring worship.”

Submission to Christ’s right.

“Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him” (Matthew 20:20).

The request she made was a wrong one, but she recognized the power of Christ in doing so, although the particular favour asked was in the bestowment of His Father. Still He granted her some favour, in promising that her sons should be identified with Him in suffering.

We may often have a right posture in worship, and put in a wrong plea. We may be perfectly honest and yet be blundering in our requests; hence, the very best answer to our prayers is denial. We recognize His right to give, and He exercises His right in not giving, but if we truly worship Him, it will be quite sufficient that He refuses, for we know that He must have the best of reasons for doing so. In that case His with-holdings are the best bestowments.

Submission to Christ’s glory.

“As they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held Him by the feet, and worshipped Him.” “And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him” (Matthew 28:9, 17).

Christ in the glory of His risen power met the women and the disciples. The glory of Christianity is Christ.

The living Christ,

- With His saving grace,
- With His holy influence,
- With His warm sympathy,
- With His touch of power,
- With His lowly love,
- With His sufficient atonement,
- With His encouraging word,
- With His enabling strength, and
- With His lasting and unchanging personality.

We say as we think of Him,

“Subtlest thought shall fail and learning falter,
Churches change, forms perish, systems go;
But our human needs, they will not alter,
Christ no after age shall e’er outgrow.

“Yea, Amen! O changeless One, Thou only
Art life’s guide and spiritual goal:
Thou the light across the dark vale lonely.
Thou the eternal haven of the soul.”

We may well bow before the lowly, loving, lightening, liberating, and lasting Christ, in adoring worship, and pray that the glory of His personality may penetrate every part of our nature, and that all other glories may pale before His all-glorious person.

II - Ascription.

The word “*Doxa*” is rendered “**worship**” in Luke 14:10, in speaking of the man who takes the lowest place at the wedding feast, but who is called by the governor to occupy a higher one; and, in being thus honoured, he is said to “**have worship in the presence**” of the rest of the guests.

The meaning of the word will at once be seen, it signifies the giving of honour to anyone, as when the cleansed leper gave “**glory**” to God for his cleansing, and when the living creatures give “**glory**” to the Throne-sitter (Luke 17:18; Revelation 4:9, 11; 5:12, 13).

The word has a wide application, and refers to the honour in which anyone is held by another. When applied to God it is generally found ascribing praise to Him, in connection with the sentence, “**To whom be glory.**” Where this sentence occurs, we find that some special trait of God’s character is referred to, which calls forth the ascription of praise. Let us note seven of these references.

Praising God as the Source, Sustainer, and End of all things. “**For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever**” (Romans 11:36).

The keys to unlock this passage of Scripture are found in the prepositions “**of,**” “**through,**” and “**to.**” In the Greek they are “*ek,*” “*dia,*” and “*eis.*”

- “*Ek*” means, “*out of,*” as illustrated in the stream coming out of the mountain, or the light coming forth from the sun.
- “*Dia*” signifies “*by means of,*” as the electricity is transmitted by means of the wire, or the athlete is made proficient by means of training.
- “*Eis*” means “*unto,*” as denoting the purpose for which anything is made, as when we are told - believers are called “**unto the fellowship**” of Christ (I Corinthians 1:9).

From the meaning of the prepositions, we may gather that God is the Source of all things, for from Him proceedeth all things; He is the Holder-together of all things, or He is the Law of Gravitation which keeps everything in its place; and He is the End of all things, for as Hodge says, “The highest end for which all things can exist and be ordered, is to display the character of God.”

When we think of what we owe to God, of all that comes to us through Him, of the end He has in view, can we do anything else than ascribe praise to Him?

Praising God for His wisdom. “To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever” (Romans 16:27).

The apostle is speaking of the wisdom of God in the revelation of the Gospel, and the manifestation of that wisdom in the wondrous display of the grace of God, in making black sinners into bright saints. It is to this display of the wisdom of God that the apostle refers, when he speaks of the manifold wisdom of God being made known to the angelic host by the Church (Ephesians 3:10).

The traveler in Switzerland has often seen in the early morning, the Alps appear under a sky, still dark, and their summits look cold and lifeless. At the base of a mountain range the lake lies motionless, in which are mirrored the pale rays of a setting moon, making it look weird and deathlike. A few hours after, the whole scene is changed, the sun has risen and lit up everything with a glowing splendor, The mountain peaks, with their snow-capped summits, are glowing in their virgin whiteness, the glaciers are reflecting the beautiful sunlight, the streams are singing in their onward course, the lake is quivering in its blueness, the birds are twittering in their gladness, the trees greet the refreshing breeze with a seeming murmur of gratitude, the flowers open and give forth their fragrance, the cattle graze with satisfaction, and the bells around their necks tinkle in discordant harmony; yea, all nature is all alive, and seems to be praising the Lord of Life and Glory. A transformation has taken place, and all brought about by the glorifying of the sun. Something similar takes place when the light of the glorious Gospel shines into the heart of the believer, for then it reflects the light of love, and grace, and holiness, to the praise and glory of God; and as the angels see the variegated glory of God manifested in us, they wonder, and learn, and praise. So with us, they too adore the manifold grace of God.

Praising God for His inworking. “Unto Him be glory in the Church” (Ephesians 3:21).

The end of God’s blessing to the believer is, not for his own comfort, but for the glory of God. The glory of God in the Church is the outcome of, and measured by, **“the power that worketh in us”** (Ephesians 3:20).

When the temple of our being is garlanded with the graces and the beauty of the indwelling Christ, and the realm of our nature is under the absolute sway of the Holy Spirit, then we praise the God of our salvation.

Madam Guyon used to say, “There are only two truths, the nothingness of the creature and the all of God.”

It is only as we are nothing that God can make something of us. Our very impotence makes room for the display of His omnipotence, even as the rich soil can manifest itself in the fruitfulness of the tree which is planted in it.

Praising God for Christ’s sacrifice. “Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Galatians 1:4. 5).

When the Scotch fought the English and were not victorious, James the Fourth of Scotland, and the flower of the Scotch nobles, perished on the field of Flodden. The Provost and the Town Councilors at Edinboro were waiting throughout the night for the news of the battle. Murray came up to the City gates at midnight, but the news was too heavy for him to tell to any until he was able to reach the City Hall, when he stood in the presence of the Provost. As he held in his hand the banner, he said to the Lord Provost and the Councilors:-

“Ay! ye may well look upon it - there is more than honour there,
Else, be sure, I had not brought it from the field of dark despair.
Sirs, I charge you, keep it holy, keep it as a sacred thing,
For the stain ye see upon it was the life-blood of your king.”

The Holy Spirit speaks to us in similar strains, for He charges us to keep “the blood-stained banner of the Cross.”

Does He not say to us of it-

“I charge you, keep it holy, keep it as a sacred thing,
For the stain ye see upon it was the life-blood of your King?”

And as we keep in remembrance His death for “**our sins**,” we must “keep it as a sacred thing,” for the fire of our grateful praise is kindled from the altar of God’s sacrificing grace; and as our praise is perfumed with the merit of the Saviour’s worth, it ascends to God as a sweet-smelling savour. Let us ever say to “**our God and Father**,” to His praise and glory:-

“No subject so glorious as He,
No theme so affecting to us.”

Praising God as the Need-supplier. “**Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever**” (Philippians 4:20).

The apostle had been thanking the saints at Philippi for the help they had sent him in ministering to his need, and had assured them that it had gone up to God as a sweet-smelling savour, and he cheered them by reminding them that He would supply every need of theirs, according to His riches in glory; and then Paul caps his words by this ascription of praise.

Samuel Rutherford, in speaking of spiritual blessing in Christ, says:

“How little of the sea can the child carry in his hand! As little do I take away of my great sea, the boundless love of Christ. I am pained with wondering at new opened treasures in Christ. Our best things have a worm in them; our joys, beside God, in the inner half, are but woes and sorrows. Christ, Christ is that which our love and desires can sleep sweetly, and rest safely upon. Christ hath made me content with a borrowed fireside, and it casteth as much heat as my own. How sweet is the wind that bloweth out of the airth where Christ is. Every day we may see some new thing in Christ. His love hath neither brim nor bottom. Oh, that I had help to praise Him!”

Such a spirit must fill the heart of every believer as he contemplates the fulness of blessing in Christ for him; for as we see the ocean of blessing in God's provision, it constrains us to bring the bucket of our gratitude, and pour out its contents as an offering of praise to God, even as David did with the water which was obtained from the well at Bethlehem at the risk of the lives of three of his mighty men (I Chronicles 11:15).

The ascription of praise is the language of spiritual instinct, which cannot be repressed.

Praising God as the Saviour. **"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen"** (I Timothy 1:17).

As Paul looked at what he was, and what the grace of God had made him, it stirred his heart to its very depths, and made him exclaim as he did in grateful praise to God.

When thankfulness is enthroned in the heart, praise will be on the lips.

The experimental knowledge of God's grace leads us to praise our Lord to His glory. The doxology of our praise ascends to our heavenly Father because the benediction of His favors has first descended into our lives. The Lord compasses us with **"songs of deliverance"** (Psalm 32:7), and we praise Him with our songs of thanksgiving (Nehemiah 12:46). He crowns us with **"lovingkindness and tender mercies"** (Psalm 103:4), and we cast the crowns of our gratitude at His feet (Revelation 4:10).

Praising God as the Preserver. **"The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen"** (II Timothy 4:18).

With martyrdom staring him in the face, his professed friends deserting him, and very little sympathy around him, Paul could look up and praise God, for he was confident He would preserve him unto His heavenly kingdom; and as he confidently thinks of this, it touches the spring of gratitude, and at once praise leaps from his heart and lips.

"You see that finger! As long as that can move, I will put you down," so said the burgomaster of Hamburg to Oncken the pioneer missionary in Germany. Upon which, Oncken replied, "Sir, I see your finger; but I also see an arm, which you do not see, and so long as that is stretched out, you cannot put me down."

With the right hand of God's power around us to protect, and the left hand of His love to caress (Song of Solomon 2:6), we need not fear anyone or anything, for His love will comfort on the one hand, and His power will keep on the other.

We may well, therefore, lie back with content in the everlasting arms, and praise our Father.

Yea, and praise Him for whatever comes, and in whatsoever we do, for His word is, **"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"** (I Corinthians 11:31).

And as we live in this spirit we shall enter into the spirit of the following lines of Kate V. Carpenter:-

“Praise God! Praise God!”
We smilingly say,
With peace within our dwelling,
When love-light beams along our way.
And joy the heart is swelling.

“Praise God! Praise God!”
We murmur low,
When wealth and friends forsaking,
Make dearer still the hearts we know
Still true to us, though breaking.

“Praise God! Praise God!”
With faltering tone
We breathe o’er loved ones, lying
Beneath His rod, whose touch alone
Changed living into dying.

“Praise God! Praise God!”
If from our grasp
He forced a long-sought treasure,
‘Tis but to grasp with loving clasp
Some safer, purer, pleasure.

“Praise God! Praise God!”
Of all bereft
That makes life sweet and pleasant;
Seeking the only refuge left,
We find our Helper present.

“Praise God! Praise God!”
With sobbing breath,
Low on our knees we pray it,
And ask for grace, defying death,
Triumphantly to say it.

III - Consecration.

A writer of fiction, in referring to one of her characters, who was an artist, makes reference to a picture which she had produced, which attracted the special attention of the art world. The idea reproduced by the picture is given in the following quotation:

“It was a fine picture, strongly painted, and was a representation of the Black Country, with its mingled gloom and glare, and its pillar of smoke always hanging over it. In the foreground were figures of men, women, and children looking upwards to the pillar of cloud; and, by the magic spell of the artist. Elizabeth had succeeded in depicting on their faces, for such as had eyes to see it, the peace of those who knew that God was with them in their journey through the wilderness. They were worn, and weary, and toil-worn, as they dwelt in the midst of the furnaces; but, through it all, they looked up to the overshadowing cloud, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed. In the far distance there was a glimpse of the sun setting behind a range of hills; and one felt, as one gazed at the picture, and strove to understand its meaning, that the pillar of cloud was gradually leading the people nearer and nearer to the far-off hills, and the land beyond the sunset; and that there they would find an abundant compensation for the suffering and poverty which had blighted their lives as they toiled here for their daily bread.”

One thought, at least, found in the picture is, that God is found in the protection of His presence, in the smoke of the common duties of life; yea, that that very smoke is the symbol of His presence.

The same thought is found in connection with the third word rendered worship, viz., the word “*eusebeo*.” It is translated “**worship**” in Acts 17:23, where Paul calls attention to the ignorant and empty worship of the Athenians; and it occurs in one other place, namely, I Timothy 5:4, where it is rendered “**to shew piety**.”

The meaning of the word is, *to be devout*, and, in the spiritual sense, signifies to be pious towards God. By the way, have we not in the two instances where the word is used, a suggestive explanation as to the difference between the world’s conception of worship, and God’s thought about it?

Man’s thought about worship very often is, a religious ceremony irrespective of character; but God’s conception of worship is, practical godliness associated with grateful adoration. The one is aptly summed up, “**An altar with this inscription, To the unknown God;**” while the other is epitomized, “**Learn to show piety at home.**”

The connection of the last passage is most suggestive, for in it we find two principles which are abundantly illustrated in the pages of Holy Writ. The verse reads as follows:- “**But if any widow have children or nephews [grandchildren], let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for this is good and acceptable before God**” (I Timothy 5:4).

Real consecration is shown in the fulfillment of the personal obligations resting upon us in the home-life.

The one practical and definite direction given by the apostle is, that children and grandchildren should compensate those who have cared for them. This they were to do, by their willing obedience, by their dutiful reverence, and the giving of their monetary help. But we want to look at the principle bid down in the Scripture as applying to all believers. By way of illustration, let us look at seven things in the tabernacle as indicating what we, as Christians, should be in the home.

1. The fire of a holy love should be burning on the altar of our heart.

When the citadel of the heart is right, then the outworks of the life will correspond. The altar of God's earthly dwelling-place was kindled by the fire of Heaven.

So the love which is to burn on the altar of the believer's heart, is not of earth's igniting, it is the flame of the love of God.

The Apostle John has been called "**the beloved disciple**," and he has been rightly named, but he was so called, not because of his love to Christ, but because of Christ's love to him, for he is said to be the "**disciple whom Jesus loved**." John was the loving man, because he was the loved man. The secret of all love is the love of Christ.

John Leech was, at the age of seven years, sent to the Charterhouse School, but his mother hired a room in one of the houses that overlooked the ground. Here, unknown to him, she would sit behind a blind day by day, happy and content if only she could have glimpses of her loved boy.

Thus ever does love watch over others, and make its warmth felt in loving ministry.

2. The water of a cleansing influence should be in the laver of our life.

Carlyle says of influence:-

"There is not a Red Indian, hunting by Lake Winnipeg, can quarrel with his squaw, but the whole world must smart for it. Will not the price of beaver rise? It is a mathematical fact that the casting of this pebble from my hand alters the center of gravity in the universe."

If such comparatively small matters as Carlyle mentions, have such an influence, how much more the consistent life of a child of God.

The water in the laver was for the priests to wash their hands and feet, that the defilements contracted while about the work of the priesthood might be removed.

Thus as the children of God

- The life should be so pure,
- The conversation so edifying,
- The heart so clean.

That there should emanate from us a cleansing stream of holy influence, that those with whom we come in contact should be cleansed, in that they should be prevented on the one hand from sin, and be led on the other hand to imitate the example set before them, thus we should be to them what the Word of God is to us, viz., the cleanser of the way (Psalm 119:9).

3. The bread of a satisfying help should be on the table of our conduct.

The shewbread had always to be on the table, and after it had been there a certain time, the priests were privileged to eat it. May we not say the Lord is saying to us with regard to those around us, as He said to the disciples of old, **“Give ye them to eat.”**

There are many who are hungering for the help of the sympathetic word, which shall light up the spirit with encouragement, even as Paul’s **“good cheer”** did the people on the storm-tossed ship (Acts 27:22).

Many are hungering for the considerate thoughtfulness, which is careful in doing little acts of kindness in a kind way, even as Joseph was mindful of his father’s age, and sent him provision and kindly words, so that his downcast spirit revived (Genesis 45:27). Many are hungering for the attentive ear, into which to pour their heart’s sorrow, that they may share their burden with another, and so lighten the pressure upon themselves, even as the Shunammite woman, who when she poured forth her sorrow into the ear of the man of God, he at once helped her by granting her the desire of her heart (II Kings 4:30).

As we thus act, we feed the spirits of many, to their betterment and cheer.

George Macdonald says, “If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I feel I shall have worked with God.” Or, to give another quotation, as Lowell says, in speaking of womanly grace in the commonplace things of life:

“She doeth little kindnesses
Which most leave undone or despise;
For nought that sets our heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low esteemed in her eyes.

She hath no scorn of common things,
And though she seems of other birth,
Round us her heart entwines and clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

Blessing she is, God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her, noiseless as the snow;
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.”

4. The light of a kindly testimony should be heard from the tongue of our speech.

The seven-fold light which came from the golden lampstand was the only light in the holy place. It is typical of Christ as the Light of the world, and of the believer, for that which is true of Him, is said of us, as He Himself declares, **“Ye are the light of the world.”**

There are two expressions which occur in connection with the lampstand which are significant.

The lampstand was to be set “**over against the table**” (Exodus 26:35); and the light is said to be “**over against the candlestick**” (Numbers 8:2, 3).

These two passages of Scripture where we have the words “**over against**,” plainly indicate the purpose of the lampstand. It was to light up the table of shew bread, and also to reveal the beauty of the lampstand itself. The same thing is true of the believer’s testimony; it should manifest the glory of the Lord Jesus, and at the same time the life of the witness should reflect a character made luminous with the love of Christ. There is one thing we should especially cultivate, and that is, the kindly tone in our testimony. There should certainly be the light of truth, but it may be dimmed by the snuff of a harsh tone. One thing which will help to bring this about is to see the best in everything.

There is a legend about the Lord Jesus, that on one occasion, He and His disciples saw a dead dog, and the disciples were filled with loathing at the sight, whereupon the Master exclaimed, “What beautiful teeth the creature has!” Dr. Miller well comments upon the lesson found in the legend. “We should see beauty even in loathsomeness.

Miss Mulock tells of a gentleman and a lady passing through a lumberyard, by a dirty, foul-smelling river.

The lady said, ‘How good the pine boards smell!’

‘Pine boards!’ exclaimed her companion, Just smell this foul river!’

‘No, thank you,’ the lady replied, ‘I prefer to smell the pine boards.’

She was wiser than he. It is far better for us to find the sweetness that is in the air than the foulness. It is better to talk to others of the smell of pine boards than of the heavy odours of stagnant rivers.”

“If any little word of mine
May make a life the brighter-
If any little song of mine
May make a heart the lighter-
God help me speak the little word,
And take my bit of singing,
And drop it in some lonely vale,
To set the echoes ringing.”

5. *The incense of a prayerful spirit should be on the altar of our devotion.*

The golden altar in the holy place is called “**the altar of incense**” (Exodus 31:8), because upon it was burned “**the pure incense**” (Exodus 37:29).

It is a type of the Lord Jesus in the personal worth of His priestly character, as He ever lives to make intercession for His people (Hebrews 5:25); it also typifies the consecrated devotion of the priestly intercessions of God's people (Revelation 5:8).

There are two words in the New Testament which are associated with the burning of incense. *Thumiama* is rendered "**odours:**" (Revelation 5:8; 18:13) and "**incense**" (Luke 1:10, 11; Revelation 8:3, 4); and *Osmee* is translated "**odour**" and "**savour**" (John 12:3; Philippians 4:18; Ephesians 5:2; II Corinthians 2:14-16).

Both of these words signify the fragrant burning of incense. The first is associated with the altar of incense, and the second is connected with the altar of burnt offering. I call special attention to the latter word, because of the settings in which it is found.

Notice the first reference is to Christ Himself. "**He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour**" (Ephesians 5:2).

The burnt-offering which went up to God as a sweet-smelling savour (Leviticus 1:9), is a type of Christ in the Godward aspect of His life and death, in His whole-hearted consecration to God's will, as expressed by Christ Himself, when He said to the Father, "**I have glorified Thee on the earth.**"

Paul uses the word in speaking of service, as he was led about by Christ as a trophy of His grace, for He made known His power through him, thus made "**manifest the savour of His knowledge;**" and whether men believed in the Saviour or not, the apostle and his fellow-labourers were a sweet savour in Christ, although to the perishing they were a "**savour of death,**" and to the saved "**a savour of life.**"

The two passages where *osmee* is rendered "**odour**" are found in connection with gifts given to Christ.

The first in calling attention to the costly box of ointment with which Mary anointed Him for His burial, when the house was "**filled with the odour;**" and the second to the gift which the saints at Philippi sent to Paul to meet his personal need, which went up to the Lord "**an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God.**"

The practical thought in these last two verses is, our priestly intercession for others will always cost us something, but the cost will not trouble us when done for the Lord's sake.

- We cannot pray for the heathen without helping them.
- We cannot plead that the need of some brother in want may be met, without helping to meet it.
- We cannot ask that others may be consecrated without consecrating ourselves.

This kindly, thoughtful help, is always an accompaniment to true prayer. A little girl at Mr. Spurgeon's funeral was crying most bitterly, and when asked the reason of her grief, she replied, "He always put two lumps of sugar in my tea." That was characteristic of the man.

Two things always impressed those who came into the inner circle of the great preacher's life, and these were, the fervor of his intercessions, and the kindliness of his thoughtful help.

6. The law of a Divine ideal should always be in the ark of our being.

In the ark of the covenant were placed the tables of stone, upon which were written the ten commandments (Deuteronomy 10:1).

The Holy Spirit now writes His law upon the fleshly tablets of our heart (II Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10).

This was a choice tribute which was once given to a Christian woman: it was said of her, "Her natural life was so completely Christian, that her Christian life became completely natural."

Spontaneity is the feature of the true Christian life.

We do not seek to obey a code of laws, urged by the lash of compulsion; but we keep the law of love, because love is the law operating in our hearts, like the life in the plant which causes it to grow.

This leads me to say that the Divine ideal is possible, because of the Divine Idealizer within us. "**I can do,**" says the apostle, because "**Christ strengtheneth me.**"

In this way the ideal becomes actual. Thus, while the law of the Divine ideal should always be within us, it can only be made a matter of experience through the indwelling Christ.

"My religion won't give me up," was the answer of one, to whom the possibility of giving up her religion was suggested. It was a power in all her life, therefore it was no more possible to separate it from her, than it is possible to have the sunlight without the medium of the atmosphere.

7. The glory of a God-like demeanor should be in all our actions.

The Shekinah glory, the symbol of the Divine presence, was between the cherubim (Exodus 25:22).

The glory of the Lord's presence is not now located in anyone particular place, although it is confined to one set of persons, namely, believers in Christ. It is to them the word is, "**Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**" (I Corinthians 3:16).

Charles Simeon, in writing about John Venn, to one of the grandsons of the latter, said of him, "I wish you had known your honoured grandfather; the only end for which he lived was to make all men see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

- Oh! That the glory of the Divine love may color all our love.
- Oh! That the glory of the Divine holiness may shine from all our ways.
- Oh! That the glory of the Divine power may be felt by all those with whom we come in contact.
- Oh! That the glory of the Divine compassion may operate in all our hearts.
- Oh! That the glory of the Divine grace may empower us at all times; and
- Oh! That the glory of the Divine presence be manifest in all our life.

When these things are in the tabernacle of our home-life, then we shall find we shall worship God in spirit and in truth, for when we shew piety at home, it will shew itself abroad, and above all will rise **“good and acceptable before God.”**

IV - Service.

The fourth word rendered **“worship”** means to serve God in a religious manner. The service is not that of a slave, but rather that of a priest occupied in the service and worship of the temple. The word *latreno*, in the Scriptural use of it, signifies *Divine service*. That the word has a priestly association may easily be gathered, for it is rendered **“serve”** in speaking of those who **“serve the Tabernacle”** (Hebrews 13:10), and of the redeemed in glory, who are said to **“serve”** the Lamb (Revelation 22:3), and also of the great multitude who have come out of the great tribulation, who are said to be **“before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple”** (Revelation 7:15).

There are three main thoughts which are found within the circle of this aspect of worship as connected with the use of the word *latreno*, and these are, Whom we are to worship, Why we are to worship, and How we are to worship. The latter thought is the principal one.

1. *Whom we are to worship.* **“Worship God”** is the unmistakable utterance of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 3:3). **“Him only shalt thou serve”** (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8), was Christ’s rejoinder to the tempter’s suggestion to worship him. The end which the Lord had in cleansing the conscience from dead works, by the blood of Christ, was that we might **“serve the living God”** (Hebrews 9:14).

Paul, when he was before Felix, in answer to the charge of heresy, said **“After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers”** (Acts 24:14).

In each of these Scriptures there shines forth with unmistakable brilliance, the Object of true worship, God Himself.

- We are not to worship superstition with its halo of painted glory, but God in the reality of His personality.
- We are not to worship some fetish with its reputed charm, but God in the might of His living power.
- We are not to worship the creature in the fallibility of his weakness, but God in the infallibility of His truth.
- We are not to worship the Bacchus of worldly gratification, but God in the attractiveness of His grace.

- We are not to worship the Venus of fleshly desire, but God in the purity of His love.
- We are not to worship the Dagon of covetousness, but God in, the fatherhood of His humanity; and
- We are not to worship the Goliath of self, but God in the personal lowliness and loveliness of Christ.

God first, and last, and always is the One whom we are to worship with Divine service.

2. *Why we are to worship.*

Shakespeare, in his Julius Caesar, makes Mark Antony say, in referring to Cesar's will;-

“Let but the commons read this testament-
which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,
And they would go and kiss dead Caesar's wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,
Unto their issue,”

One thought in the above lines is, gratitude on the part of those who are named in Caesar's will, because of what he has done for them. His gifts beget their gratitude.

In the best sense, it should be the same with the child of God.

The reason for our service is found in God's salvation. The bestowment of God's grace in blessing us, is that we should give Him our heart's gratitude in thanksgiving. He has blessed us with His mercies, and we should bless Him with our praises.

God's intention in bringing Israel out of Egypt was, as Stephen expresses it, that they might “**serve**” (worship) Him “**in this place**” (Acts 7:7). He brought them out of the house of bondage, that they might live in the house of blessing. His loving-kindness to them was to be the cause of their living to Him. The same thing is recognized by the Apostle Paul, when he says, in speaking of his relationship to the Lord, “**Whose I am, and whom I serve**” (Acts 27:23). Because Paul had been claimed by Christ, he consecrated himself to Him.

“**Whose I am,**” tells out what Christ had done for him, for before he could be the Lord's, the Lord must pay the ransom price for him, even His own most precious blood.

“**Whom I worship,**” proclaims Paul's consequent gratitude, for when he speaks of service, he is not referring to the outward sweat of compulsory labour, which a slave would give his owner, but to the sweetness of inward gratitude, which rises to God acceptably, for this is the service which God wants, as M'Cheyne says, “God gets more glory from an adoring look of a believer on a sick bed, than from the outward labour of a whole day without it.”

Our topic, in this aspect of it, is further illustrated in the three “**Blessed’s**” of Ephesians 1:3; II Corinthians 1:3; and I Peter 1:3 (all 1:3’s).

The first blessed takes in the riches of our possessions, hence, our song of praise is, “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places** (things, margin) **in Christ.**”

The second blessed reverts to the present supply which is ministered to the believer, hence, our thanksgiving is, “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, even the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation,**” &c; and

The third blessed bids us go up the steps of faith and look out of the window which Love has opened, for it bids us view what God has in store for us, hence our doxology is, “**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away,**” &c.

In each of these blessed’s, the anthem of worship is for something done, some blessing bestowed, or some promise of future recompense, thus demonstrating the point upon which we have been meditating, namely, that it is as we apprehend the down-coming of God’s blessing to our enrichment and betterment, there is the up-rising of our grateful praise in loyal service to Him.

3. *How we should worship.* Three of the most important how’s of the New Testament are,

- “**Take heed how ye hear,**” as to our treatment of the Word of God;
- “**How ye ought to walk,**” is the stimulating word, as to the care which should be exercised in our life; and
- “**How ye ought to answer**” is the restraintive injunction in the exhortation of the Spirit, when He urges us to see that our speech is seasoned with the salt of grace (Luke 8:1 8; I Thessalonians 4:1; Colossians 4:6).

Of equal importance is it that we should exercise care in worshipful service. We are not left in the dark as to how we should act in this matter.

There are at least seven Scriptures as to how we should worship, found in association with the word *latreno*, rendered “**serve**” and “**worship.**”

First, Scripturally. The Holy Spirit, in speaking of the priests under the Levitical economy, says, “**Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount**” (Hebrews 8:5).

Before the priests could serve in God’s worship in the tabernacle, there were certain things which had to be done for them, and which they had to do, according to the instructions given to Moses.

They had to be:

- Washed with water,
- Clothed in priestly garments,
- Anointed with the sanctifying oil,
- Identified with the consecrated offering,
- Sanctified by the blood of separation,
- Their hands filled with the wave-offering, and
- Their garments sprinkled with the blood of atonement (Leviticus 8:6, 7, 12, 18, 23, 24, 27, 30).

All these things have their typical import in the priestly service of the believer.

The body of our spiritual nature must be cleansed in the renewing laver of God's truth, for this is the forerunner of worship (Hebrews 10:22; Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5);

The garments of the new man, which are the graces of the Holy Spirit, must adorn the life, for these are accompaniments of worship (Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10-12);

The anointing of the Spirit's unction, in the consecrating influence of His presence, must be upon us, for this is the power of worship (I John 2:20, 27; II Corinthians 1:22; Acts 10:38);

The identification with Christ in His death, as severing from sin's servitude, self's mastery, and the world's contamination, is the pre-requisite of worship (Romans 6:11; II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 2:20; 21).

The separation to God by the blood of Christ is the qualification of worship (I Peter 4:1; Hebrews 10:19; 13:12); and

The appreciation of Christ's worth and merit, as the wave-offering of His triumphal gladness, is our Plea in worship (Hebrews 13:15); and

Our hearts being sprinkled from an evil conscience is the condition of worship (Hebrews 10:22).

These things are plainly set forth in the pattern of God's Word, and the observance of God's plan is always the securer of His power. Nothing is left to the false light of man's reason, but all true worship is regulated by the light which shines from the sanctuary of God's truth.

Second, Reverently. **"Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire"** (Hebrews 12:28, 29).

The strange fire of irreverence must not be in the censer of our worship. It is not without meaning that it is said of the seraph and his wings, **"With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly"** (Isaiah 6:2). Four wings are passive and two are active. The holiness of the Lord makes the seraph conscious of his unlikeness to the pure Being in whose service he is employed, hence he bows in adoring humility before Him.

The same is true of those who are in the right spirit as they are about the Lord's service.

- They utter His name reverently, as Abraham did, when he called the angel "**My Lord**" (Genesis 18:3);
- They handle the truth of God carefully, as Josiah did, when he read to his people from the discovered book of the law, which led to their restoration (II Kings 23:2, 3); and
- They serve Him faithfully, as did Elijah, when he told Ahab his faults (I Kings 18:18).

The wings of loyal justice, and the wings of loving mercy, should ever be coupled with the wings of lowly service, for the very essence of vital godliness is "**To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God**" (Micah 6:8).

Third, Purely. The Apostle Paul, in speaking of his service to God, says, "**Whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience**" (II Timothy 1:3).

In the famous trial of Warren Hastings it was recorded that when he was put on his trial in so magnificent a manner in Westminster Hall, after the counsel for the prosecution, Burke, Sheridan, and others had delivered their eloquent speeches, he began to think he must be the greatest criminal on the face of the earth; but he related, that when he turned to his own conscience the effect of all those grand speeches was as nothing. "I felt," he said, "that I had done my duty, and that they might say what they pleased."

When there is no stain of sin on the conscience, then the gladness of joy sings to its heart's content.; and when no dust of impurity clouds the lens of the conscience, then the vision is clear enough to see God through the telescope of faith.

To worship the Lord with a pure conscience is to have:

- The sun of God's love to warm us in trial,
- His truth to arm us in conflict,
- His joy to gladden us in sorrow,
- His peace to calm us in trouble,
- His power to strengthen us in weakness,
- His grace to beautify our life, and
- His presence to embolden us in testimony.

Fourth, Holily. "**Serve Him . . . in holiness**" (Luke 1:74, 75).

Holiness is conformity to God's nature, and His nature is love; therefore holiness is not a sentimental theory, but a correspondence of action with God.

It has been said,

- He only is great of heart who floods the world with a great affection.
- He only is great of mind who stirs the world with great thoughts.
- He only is great of will who does something to shape the world to a great career.

- He is greatest who does the most of all these things, and does them best.” And may we not add,
- He is greater than the greatest who does these things, not because of the halo of glory which they cast around the doer, but because they bring blessing to others.

God blesses, because He delights to do so, irrespective of anything it may bring to Him; we are like Him when we love for love’s sake do good for good’s sake - do right because it is the right thing to do.

Fifth, Righteously. “**Serve Him without fear, in . . . righteousness**” (Luke 1:74, 75).

Righteousness is conformity to God’s law.

In other words, righteousness is the art of doing right. Giving to God His right, and the same to man.

Righteousness:

- Never takes advantage of another’s ignorance,
- Never represents an article to be what it is not,
- Never condones a wrong action under the plea that the end justifies the means,
- Never sells a linsey-woolsey material for all wool,

But ever acts according to the straight rule of the Word of God.

Righteousness in its practical bearing means the reproduction of the truth of God, in being true in all our ways.

Sixth, Prayerfully. Of aged Anna, it is said she “**served God with fastings and prayers night and day**” (Luke 2:37).

Who can estimate the worth of prayer?

- Prayer gives grace to life, as Mary of Bethany found as she sat at Jesus’ feet (Luke 10:39).
- Prayer gives grit in trial, as Nehemiah experienced when persecuted by his enemies (Nehemiah 4:9).
- Prayer gives guidance in difficulty, as Eliezer discovered, when he was led to Rebekah in answer to his pleading (Genesis 24:12-15).
- Prayer gives go to work, as Paul’s experience illustrates, for it was after it was said, “**Behold he prayeth,**” we read “**Straightway he preached Christ**” (Acts 9:11,20).
- Prayer gives grip to testimony, as the disciples knew, when after waiting upon God in prayer, they testified in power (Acts 4:31).
- Prayer gives growth in grace, as the apostle implies, when he prayed that the faith of the saints in Thessalonica might be perfect (I Thessalonians 3:10); and
- When prayer gives glow in worship, as may be gathered when Paul and Silas were imprisoned, for we read, they “**prayed and sang praises unto God**” (Acts 16:25), Prayer lead on to praise.

Seventh, Spiritually. “**worship God in the Spirit**” (Philippians 3:3).

The Holy Spirit has aptly been called the Executive of the Godhead, for the possible attainments of the Christian life are His accomplishments.

- He is the Sap of the believer’s life, for He is called “**the Spirit of Life**” (Romans 8:2);
- He is the Seal of the saint’s assurance, for He is God’s mark upon us that we are Christ’s (Ephesians 4:30);
- He is the Strength of the sufferer’s endurance, for He is the Spirit of Glory to cheer those who are suffering for the sake of Christ (I Peter 4:14);
- He is the Source of the worker’s power, for apart from the Spirit of God we have no might (Acts 1:8);
- He is the Spring of the pilgrim’s joy, for it is through Him that we can sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Ephesians 5:18,19);
- He is the Secret of the disciple’s knowledge, for all we know of Divine things is through His instruction (I Corinthians 2:10); and
- He is the soul of the worshipper’s adoration, for it is only through Him that we can approach God in a manner which is acceptable (Ephesians 2:18).

Since these things are so, how important that we should keep in touch with the Spirit, for it is only as we are in the current of His will, that we are in the place of His power.

From what has been said, it will be seen that worship is not confined to attendance at a so-called “place of worship,” but that it takes in the whole of the believer’s life.

Principal Moule has tersely summed up the subject:

“We worship - ours is a hallowed, dedicated, and reverent life. It is spent in a sanctuary. Whatever we have to be, or to do, as to externals; whether to rule a province, a church, a school, a home; whether to keep accounts, or sweep a room; whether to evangelize the slums of a city, or the dark places of heathenism, or to teach language, or science, or music; whether to be active all day long, or to lie alone to suffer; whatever be our actual place and duty in the world, we worship. ‘We have set Thee always before us.’ We have ‘sanctified the Christ as Lord in our hearts.’ We belong to Him everywhere, and we recollect it. Let us reiterate the fact; ours is a hallowed life, for it belongs to a Divine Master; it is a reverent life, for that Master in His greatness is to us an abiding presence. The fact of Him, the thought of Him, has expelled from our lives the secular air, and the light and flippant spirit. We are nothing if not worshippers.”

~ end of chapter 24 ~

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