

# WORSHIP

The Christian's Highest Occupation

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## CHAPTER FOURTEEN THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP -- GOD THE FATHER

### 2. God is to be the Object of our Worship

Having viewed this division of our subject negatively, and learned that God prohibits the worship of idols, men, angels and nature; let us now consider the subject positively and discover, from the Word, whom we are to worship. We mentioned, at the beginning of this division, that Scripture enjoins us to worship the eternal Godhead, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We shall now look particularly at each Person of the Godhead.

To the regenerated believer, God is not some far off Deity, too high and holy to take notice of him, but He is revealed as a loving Father, into Whose family he has been born, to Whom he has been brought near, and Who has blessed him with all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 1:3; John 1:12-13).

The title, "Father," as we have already noticed, suggests intimacy, dearness, love and care. In response to His disciples' request to teach them to pray, our Lord answered: "**When ye pray say: 'Our Father, which art in Heaven,'**" etc. (Luke 11:2-4).

In His conversation with the woman at the well, Christ unfolded the great revelation that: "**The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him**" (John 4:23).

Let us note three reasons why we should worship the Father.

(a) *We should worship the Father because of what He is*

The New Testament reveals Him as Father in many aspects. He is:

(i) The Holy Father: "**And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are**" (John 17:11).

He loves righteousness and hates iniquity: "**Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows**" (Hebrews 1:9).

Never was this holiness of the Father more clearly demonstrated than when, at the cross, He forsook the One who bore our sins and visited all His righteous judgment upon our Divine Substitute: **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel”** (Psalm 22:1-3).

(ii) The Righteous Father: **“O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me”** (John 17:25).

By the righteousness of God we mean God’s perfect consistency with His own character. Whatever God performs, He does it on a perfectly righteous basis, either in saving the believer, or condemning the unbeliever. This is Paul’s great argument in the Epistle to the Romans.

(iii) The Father of glory: **“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him”** (Ephesians 1:17).

By glory is meant displayed excellence. God has displayed all the many perfections and excellences of His character in His Son, and recorded them for us in the holy Scriptures: **“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”** (II Corinthians 4:6).

(iv) The Father of lights: **“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”** (James 1:17).

We are told that **“God is light.”** Light is that which **“makes manifest”** (I John 1:5; Ephesians 5:13). To Him **“all things are open and naked”**; for **“known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world”** (Hebrews 4:13). He is the Father who has manifested Himself, and whose outshining glory is seen **“in the face of Jesus Christ.”**

(v) The Father of mercies: **“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort”** (II Corinthians 1:3).

As such, He is also the **“God of all comfort.”** David sang: **“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him”** (Psalm 103:13).

As the Father of mercies, He knows all the frailties, fears, failings and faults of His people, and their constant need of His correcting and restoring grace. Truly: **“His mercy endureth for ever”** (Psalm 107:1). Every need of His children is not only anticipated, but abundantly supplied **“according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus”** (Philippians 4:19).

(vi) The Father of all: **“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”** (Ephesians 4:6).

This does not mean that God is the universal Father of all humanity, and that all people are His children. The false theory of “the universal Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man,” has no foundation whatever in Scripture. The reference here is to the fact that all regenerated believers have **“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”** In other words, there is no aristocracy in His family. All God’s children are equally near and dear to Him, so there is no occasion for spiritual pride, or the exhibition of snobbery amongst Christians.

(vii) The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: **“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort . . . Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ . . . 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”** (II Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3; I Peter 1:3).

What an inexpressibly precious title this is! He is not only the Father of the whole family of the redeemed; but He is also the Father of the One whose precious blood has made such a family relationship possible! Christ is the **“only begotten of the Father.”**

This phrase, **“only begotten,”** means that He is “unique,” or “the only one of His kind.”

The term **“eternal Father”** necessitates an **“eternal Son;”** and an **“eternal Son”** necessitates an **“eternal Father.”** We cannot have one without the other. For all eternity He was the Son of God, equal in every respect to the Father and the Holy Spirit. When Christ became incarnate and was born in Bethlehem, He did not enter into existence, but only unto another form of existence, that of man. Thus Deity became Humanity and **“without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh”** (I Timothy 3:16).

As the incarnate Son of God, He lived His life as a Man on earth, in voluntary submission to all the will of His Father. This will led Him all the way to Calvary, where He accomplished perfectly all the work the Father gave Him to do. The Father indicated His complete approval of this work of redemption by raising His Son from the dead, and glorifying Him at His own right hand. Every sinner, trusting in His finished work and receiving Him as Saviour, is that moment, by the Spirit’s regenerating power, born into the family of God.

From thenceforth he is called

- A “child of God,”
- An “heir of God,”
- A “joint heir with Christ” (Romans 8:14-17).

Thus we have the unspeakable privilege and honor of addressing God by the same name as did His Son while on earth, and we may now call Him, “Father.” Our Lord, in resurrection, associated Himself with all who loved Him and said: **“Go to my brethren and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God”** (John 20:17).

(b) *We should worship the Father because of what He has done*

(i) He has loved us: **“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life”** (John 3:16).

Why He set His love upon us is a mystery we shall never solve, but we rejoice because of its glorious reality. God’s love is described as being:

Eternal: **“The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee”** (Jeremiah 31:3),

Revealed: (John 3:16),

Manifested: **“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him”** (I John 4:9),

Bestowed: **“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not”** (I John 3:1),

Believed: **“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him”** (I John 4:16),

Reciprocated: **“We love him, because he first loved us”** (I John 4:19),

Inseparable: **“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Romans 8:38-39).

(ii) *He has given the unspeakable gift of His Son*: **“And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world”** (I John 4:14).

The greatness of God’s love can only be estimated by the gift He gave, for love is ever measured by the sacrifice made on behalf of its objects. We do well to sing:

“Blessed be God, our God!  
Who gave for us His well beloved Son,  
That Gift of gifts, all other gifts in One!  
Blessed be God, our God!”

(iii) *He has chosen us in Christ*: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love”** (Ephesians 1:3-4).

Before the world was called into being by His creative word, and flung into space to follow its predestined orbit, the believer was foreseen and chosen in Christ. This is a stupendous and breath-taking thought.

It would be incredible but for the fact that God has told us so in plain, unmistakable language.

(iv) *He has saved us by His grace*: “**Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son**” (Colossians 1:12-13).

What a marvellous translation and transformation God has wrought in the life of each believer!

How can Christians possibly estimate the depth of sin, degradation, and spiritual darkness from which they have been mercifully delivered by God’s matchless grace! It becomes them, therefore, to sing:

“Great God of wonders! All Thy ways  
Display Thine attributes Divine;  
But the bright glories of Thy grace,  
Above Thine other wonders shine:  
Who is a pardoning God like Thee?  
And Who has grace, so rich and free?”

(v) *He has blessed us*: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”

How can we possibly enumerate these blessings, or “name them one by one,” seeing they are innumerable?

Our Father is not only the “**blessed God**,” but He also is the God of blessing. The believer’s wealth is untold, for God has said that all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s. There is not a blessing we possess that has not come to us from the loving hand of our Father in Heaven. With the hymn writer, we can lift our voices in worship to Him and sing:

“Praise ye the Father -- Source of all our blessing,  
Before, whose gifts earth’s riches boons wax dim!  
Resting in Him, His peace and joy possessing,  
All things are ours, for we have all in Him!”

(vi) *He has made us His children*: “**Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not**” (I John 3:1).

How wonderful it is to think that we, who “**were sometimes alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works**,” are now not only reconciled but, by the regenerating power of the Spirit of God, actually made the sons and daughters of the Lord God almighty! (Colossians 1:21; II Corinthians 6:18; John 1:12) Thus we have the inestimable birth-right privilege of calling Him, “**Abba, Father**”:

**“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”** (Romans 8:15-17).

As **“the Father”** He revealed Himself in the Scriptures as the One:

- Who knoweth our needs: **“Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him”** (Matthew 6:8);
- Who loveth us: **“For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God”** (John 16:27);
- Who keepeth us: **“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are”** (John 17:11);
- Who comforteth us: **“Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work”** (II Thessalonians 2:16, 17);
- Who heareth and answereth our prayers: **“That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly”** (Matthew 6:4).

(vii) *He has made it possible for us to worship Him:* **“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”** (John 4:23-24).

Not content with all the other things He has done for us, He now both seeks and appreciates the worship of His children. To this end **“a new and living way”** has been provided, by which each believer, by faith, may enter the holiest of all. In His blessed presence, he may now fall before Him and worship Him as the Father.

May each one of us seek to take full advantage of this privilege and thus fulfil the father’s gracious purpose in our redemption and regeneration: **“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”** (Hebrews 10:19-22).

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