

attention to the serious defects in the prevalent views concerning it. Judging from my own experience, I should say that very few persons have any conception of its true nature. Prayer is understood, and valued, as a mode of communication with God, as the means through which we are to obtain blessings, both spiritual and temporal, from Him, from whom "cometh every good and every perfect gift," and this acknowledgment of His power is worship in a low degree. But there is in it a reference to *self*, a return is expected. And the influence of this element of selfishness is evident in the mode in which public worship is regarded. We hear many persons say, that they do not care for more frequent opportunities, and do not avail themselves of those which are provided, because they do not find that they derive any special benefit from them, they think that they get more good from more social meetings for prayer. Now, without entering into the merits of this opinion, or discussing its soundness, we observe, on the face of these remarks, evidence of ignorance of one great object of the public assembly in the House of God. The object, in fact, ought to be *His* glory, apart from any consideration of personal gain or advantage. *This* is the highest worship, the worship of the Heavenly Hosts, this has been revealed to us as pleasing to God, and we must conclude that this is the model to which we should endeavor, as far as possible, to conform on earth. By coming together in a public place, we declare in the face of all men our allegiance, we do homage to the King of Kings, we honor Him in a manner, and to an extent, far beyond anything that is possible otherwise. Our views of the nature of our religious services, and of the manner in which they may most properly be conducted, must inevitably be modified by our conceptions of the proper character, and intention of the worship which is most acceptable to our God; and I beg you to consider whether you have been habitually endeavoring to raise the minds of your people, above the common low conceptions of the nature of the worship due to Him, and to make them sensible of the selfish considerations by which those conceptions are characterised. It is true that we never do anything for God's glory, without a corresponding benefit to ourselves, but as the motive is everything in the sight of Him who searcheth the hearts, it is of no little consequence whether we

Worship is the highest service of God