

*PUBLIC WORSHIP.*

DIVINE worship consists in the conscious, earnest and humble approach of our whole nature to Almighty God to seek forgiveness, help and direction for ourselves and others, but principally in thanks and adoration for His inestimable love, and His past mercies, not excluding those which took the form of chastisements.

Preaching is not worship. Preaching may, or may not have in itself, anything suggestive of Divine worship. It may tend to draw men nearer to God, or on the other hand to mislead them, and so cause them to forsake the narrow way that leadeth unto life.

Much of the preaching in our day is taken from that text of the devil in his sermon to Eve,—“Ye shall not surely die.” It denies God’s threat of everlasting punishment, and makes the road to hell a round-about way to heaven, for whilst admitting the possibility of punishment of the soul after its separation from the body, it would make that punishment merely transitory. It believes in a universal purgatory. It denies that it would have been better for Judas that he had never been born.

Again, there is a kind of preaching which denies that the Lord Who bought us is more than a mere creature of God. It denies the Divinity, the teaching and the miracles of Jesus. Finding the Bible and the

Creeds and dogmas of the Christian Church against its denials, it rejects or misinterprets a large part of Holy Scripture, and hates Creeds and dogmas with a perfect hatred.

These are but specimens of the numberless evils which may be introduced by preaching. Preaching is not worship, and it may easily be made destructive of all worship, whilst on the other hand, when accompanied by true worship, and uttered by a soul penetrated and guided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, it may direct and foster the true worship of God.

Public worship is the worship of God publicly and by the public congregation. It cannot be duly rendered by the public praying, or the public singing of one man for all the rest who are assembled for the purpose of Divine worship. The words to be used for and by the assembled public in public worship should be agreed upon beforehand. “If any two of you agree as to anything ye shall ask, it shall be done for you.” They should agree as to the words to be used in praying and in singing, that they may with one mind and one mouth acceptably worship God.

Man should worship God with his whole threefold nature. Not only the spirit, but the mind and body should join in this worship which is to assist in fitting body, soul and spirit for the worship of heaven in the life everlasting. “O come, let