

The crowned Elders before the throne say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are, and were created," (Rev. iv. 11). "All things were created by Him (Christ), and *for Him*," (Col. i. 16).

So is it in the new creation, likewise. "This people have I formed for Myself, (says God): they shall shew forth My praise," (Isa. xliii. 21). "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.....*to the intent* that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," (Eph. ii. 10 : iii. 9, 10, 11).

This Divine propriety, this eternal fitness, meets us where we should least expect it. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, where God's love seems bent only on working our good, yet there are we instructively reminded, that God is after all His own End—"Rejoice *with Me*, for I have found My sheep." God's joy in His own is first and chief, and the ground of all other right joy. It would be a violation of the relation between the Creator and the creature to say first, "Rejoice that a *lost sheep* is found"—and, alas, this *is* usually men's first thought,—that man is saved, rather than that God is glorified by recovering His own.

Not only in this parable touching men, but in words spoken specially of Himself, does our Blessed Lord give us the weightiest and most impressive illustration of this principle—that God must be First. "The love of Christ (says St. Paul) passeth knowledge," and the great expression of His love is the Cross. In view of it He says,