

*Faith* cometh by *hearing*, and when hearing has resulted in the repentance of the sinner, attending angels shout, "Behold he *prayeth*." But the change in him only reaches its fullness, when rising from the dust "rejoicing in *hope*" he pours forth the utterance of exultant *love* in the language of *praise*. "He inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God."— And just as love excels the other graces in being permanent and forming the spirit of heaven, so will praise excel the other ordinances in being eternal and forming the characteristic exercises of the Upper Sanctuary. "Love never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease." So we may say that preaching will be unnecessary, where none are ignorant and all are saved; prayer, at least as now exercised, will be superseded, where there is nothing to bewail or to fear. But praise cannot die. The redeemed from among men shall cease not the utterance of *praise*, while the many angels round about the throne, so far as they can sympathize with them, mingle their voices in ascribing "blessing and honor and glory and power unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." As love may be said to be the end to which faith and hope are but as means, so the sentiments, of which praise is the natural expression, may be regarded as the end to which all other ordinances are subservient as means.

It is remarkable however how little attention has been directed to this ordinance.— There is scarcely any institution of Christianity, which has been less discussed, and in regard to which there has been less effort among genuine christians to secure the great spiritual ends which it was designed and is fitted to secure. One reason for this probably is that there has been so little controversy about it. Over every point in connexion with prayer, there have been long and hard fought battles, but in regard to praise but few points have ever

excited discussion at all, and upon these the controversies have never been very extensive. A question arose among a section of the Anabaptists, as to whether singing was any part of New Testament worship. The denial of this was so contrary to the yearnings of every christian heart and christian assemblies without singing were so dull and dead that the controversy on the subject neither extended far nor lasted long, and it is now known only to the curious. After the Reformation, a question arose between the Presbyterian or Puritan party and the High Church or Romanizing party, as to whether praise should be conducted by singing or by singing accompanied by instruments of music. The subject underwent that thorough discussion, which most of the questions relating to christian doctrine and life underwent at that era. But it was chiefly discussed as a portion of a greater question, viz. whether we are warranted to add the inventions of men for the purpose of improving or embellishing the institutions of the Almighty. This controversy has long since slumbered, so that now if we wish for information on the subject or to find a thorough examination of it, it is necessary to go back to the writings of the theological giants of those days. Almost the only other question that has been raised regarding praise is as to its matter, some small bodies in Britain and the United States contending for the exclusive use of the scripture Psalms, while the great body of the christian church either use hymns of human composition entirely, or such in addition to versifications of the Book of Psalms. But this question has not excited very wide spread attention.

Of practical works on this subject there are but few in the English language. Theological works, which treat of the ordinances of Divine worship, say nothing about this. Even our admirable Shorter Catechism does not mention praise as distinct from prayer. We have indeed music books, but they do not treat of the duty of praise as a part of divine worship. Binney's "service of song in the house of the Lord" is little more than a compilation of scripture passages, not only on the subject of praise but