

THE SERVICE OF PRAISE.

O come let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our Salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise to Him with Psalms. Ps. xcv, 1, 2.

There are two great reasons why we ought to worship God first, because it is honouring to God Himself; and secondly, because it is useful to man. Of these two great reasons, the first is the greater, inasmuch as the honour of God is in itself more important and ought also to appear more important in our eyes than the advantage of man. But so great is our natural selfishness that we are apt to invert the order and to be more concerned about our own advantage than the Divine honour. Let us put it to ourselves. What is our principal object in coming to the house of God? Is it not that we may be edified, that we may be instructed, that we may be stirred up, that we may *receive* blessing from the Lord? Now that is a most worthy object indeed. Would to God that all professed worshippers had it in view. But it is not the main object. At all events it is not the first object. We go to the sanctuary *to worship the Lord*. It is true that the worship of God will be a service most profitable for ourselves; but then it is the honour of God and not our own profit that should stand out as the primary object in view. And it is important to bear in mind that it is by contemplating chiefly the honour of God that we shall most certainly and fully secure our own spiritual improvement. We may rest assured that the less we think of ourselves and the more we think of God in our religious services, the more profitable as well as delightful will they be. It is indeed the part of a good Christian to have due regard for his true interests, but it is not the part of a good Christian to regard even his highest, his eternal interests, to the exclusion, or even to the subordination of the glory of God.

The self-regardful spirit, of which we speak, may be seen in the comparative importance we attach to those parts of worship which bring into prominence the one object or the other—the honour of God or

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J. M. G.