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CONSECRATION
OF THE
POLANEN CHAPEL
BRIDGEPORT, CT.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

The Polanen Chapel has been erected by Madame Bernardina Adelaide van Doorninck, widow of the Honorable Roger Gerard van Polanen, L.L.D. formerly Minister Resident of the Batavian Republic at Washington D.C. &c. &c. &c. - He died at Bridgeport, Ct. 9th September 1833. - She died at the same place, Decbr. 3. 1852. They are both buried in the old cemetery at Bridgeport, Connecticut, under two similar Tabular monuments of white marble, with appropriate inscriptions. - (vide post p. 15. footnote).

S. P.

1853.

The Father, the only proper object of Christian Worship.

A

S E R M O N ,

PREACHED AT THE

C O N S E C R A T I O N

OF THE

Polanen Chapel,

BRIDGEPORT, CT.,

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1849.

~~~~~  
By FREDERICK A. FARLEY,

PASTOR OF THE

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR,

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY HENRY SPEAR, 78 WALL STREET.

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## S E R M O N .

LUKE IV, 8.

*And Jesus answered and said—"it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy GOD, and Him only shalt thou serve."*

JOHN IV, 23.

*The true worshippers shall worship the FATHER.*

I COR. VIII, 6.

*To us, there is but One GOD, the FATHER.*

THE public prints have given notice that this Chapel would be consecrated at this hour, to the worship of the one living and true God, the FATHER. It was intended that this notice should be significant; and mark at once and at the outset, an important difference between the worship of this, and of other places of worship in this city. With a single exception,\* the worship in all of them differs from that to be offered here, in having a different object or objects to which it is addressed. The difference in this respect, is a difference not accidentally, not by habit, but deliberately, and by design adopted. It is, I am bound in charity to presume,—it is a matter of conviction, on their part as much as on ours. Still there is the difference;—in itself, important:—as a matter of principle or conviction, important;—in its practical bearings and influence, very important too. They not only believe in what we deny, namely, a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each of whom is God,—but they worship that Trinity, and they worship interchangeably each of the Persons. Enter on any Sunday morning a Protestant Episcopal Church, and you will hear the congregation uniting in the following petitions:—

\* The Universalist Church.

"O God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O God, the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father, and the Son, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners.

"O Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons and one God, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners."

Ere long, the Litany proceeds, addressing the Son—

"By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy nativity and Circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation:

"Good Lord, deliver us.

"By thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost;

"Good Lord, deliver us."

Almost immediately, in the same Litany, follow these words—words in which all Christian worshippers can join;—

"We sinners do beseech Thee to hear us, O Lord God!"

While it closes thus;—

"Son of God, we beseech Thee to hear us!

"O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world:

"Grant us thy peace!"

I pass by the Roman Catholic Church, since if you should happen to go there, the worship of the Trinity, of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, of Saints, being offered in a dead language, might not be so obvious to all of you. But among the other Protestant Churches, it is common, I have sometimes thought that it is becoming more common than once, to worship the Son, to worship Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, I will not say exclusively, but pre-eminently. It is indeed a very striking fact, that while some of the freest and most acute minds around us are rid, or are fast getting rid, of the harsher and more repulsive features of Calvinism, even though ascriptions to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may close their prayers, the prayers themselves are very commonly, and to my own feelings, I must say, most offensively, addressed in great part to Christ;—the tendency seeming but the more direct toward the distinct worship and deification of the Son. We hold all this to be unscriptural error; directly opposed to the

instructions and the example of Christ and his Apostles,—and, I may add, to the practice of the primitive Church. And, therefore, of design and deliberately, do we this day consecrate this house, to the sole worship of the One living and true God, the Father.

I shall proceed to justify this position, and this act. In doing so, I am aware that you, my friends, of the like precious faith with myself, will be exposed to a wearisome repetition of that which to us is but the alphabet of the pure doctrines of the Gospel. But the occasion, viewed in strict connexion with the region of country in which this Chapel stands, must be my apology, if apology I need. In this city, no name is more obnoxious than the one which we bear. No efforts are viewed with more disquiet or jealousy among the professedly religious portions of this community, than those which the doings of this hour and place betoken. I give our brethren of the so-called orthodox denominations around us all credit for sincerity; for a sincere belief that the holy horror which they express at the upspringing of a place for Unitarian worship in their midst, is just that which as good Christians they ought to feel. I stand here to-day, wholly unconscious of the slightest hostility towards them of any name. I will be as ready as any one, now and always, to do honor to whatever proofs of a true, living, ever-active piety, of an abiding devotion to the service of God and of man, they may show, however superior to any which we can present. But none the less “earnestly” shall I “contend for the faith once delivered to the saints”—for “the truth as it is in Christ Jesus”—for the pure worship of “his God and our God, his Father and our Father.” In “the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free,” I will, with whatsoever strength God has given me, resist and try to strip off the error which has been made even for ages to cling to Christ’s holy Gospel, though banded hosts defend it, and hurl at me their loudest anathema and denunciation. God only grant, that it be in a spirit and temper becoming this now sacred place, and the ministry which I share!

This House is erected, and consecrated forever to Christian Worship. I know that it is designed also for Christian Instruction; instruction in the faith, doctrines, hopes, promises, requisitions, sanctions, of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But my purpose is to speak of it, in reference to that which I deem its first, great, solemn design, as a “House of Prayer,” as a place of worship;



and that worship, specially, specifically, CHRISTIAN worship;—worship,—the sublimest act of the soul—the loftiest privilege of a dependent spirit. What is worship? It is that by which we escape and pass beyond the visible, the material, the temporal, and enter into communion with the unseen, the spiritual, and the eternal. It is that act, in which the noblest powers and affections of our nature are engaged in their highest exercise. It is that privilege, in the devout use of which, the fetters of sense, passion, and the world, seem to fall off; and the felt presence of God in all the plenitude of His glorious being and attributes to be revealed. I do not say that this humble house, or any house “made with hands” however spacious or magnificent, though it lift its dome or spire to the skies and enclose vast multitudes beneath its vaulted nave and arches, is the only place in which this sublime act may be worthily or acceptably performed, or this lofty privilege enjoyed. The religion in which we rejoice, confines worship to no selected spots—bounds the Infinite by no local temple. Everywhere amid the outspread universe is His dwelling-place;—everywhere, therefore, may His presence be sought by the devout heart. Still it is no less true, that the humblest Christian Church tells of the nature, dignity, and destiny of man, as the most gorgeous and imposing temple of ancient Greece or Rome never told, though it stood in most exquisite proportions, covered all over—frieze, architrave, capital—with richest and most elaborate sculpture; and, that to the consecrated altar set up and kept apart for the high uses of Christian worship, the rightly disposed soul loves ever to turn; aye, and yet more and more as time, and years, and the changes of life, and the great lessons of religious experience, roll on and make impressions upon it. Especially will it be so, if there a new light first dawned upon the waking spirit—if there the spell of prejudice was broken—the hold of the world loosened—the fountains of repentance opened—the deep cravings within for light and truth and deliverance met and satisfied—the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of man, the love of duty, kindled up and inspired—and the hope of heaven brought in, and made the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul” amid the trials and storms of life. And all this, we trust and pray, shall yet be felt by multitudes here!

Thus much I say of this house in general,—that it is erected as a place for worship. But specially, specifically, I repeat, for CHRISTIAN

worship. All worship implies an Object of worship; and Christian worship, of course, implies that Object to which the Christian Religion, or Christ himself its Great Founder, directs the supreme homage and service of his disciples. The several passages which I have placed at the head of this discourse taken together, seem overwhelmingly clear as to this point; and taken apart, abundantly so. In the first, the Saviour himself adopts and reiterates, by his own divine authority, that explicit command of the elder dispensation—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and *Him only* shalt thou serve!" This alone were enough. But in the second, Jesus declares of himself and originally, the rule of the new dispensation which he had brought in;—"The time is coming, and now is, when *the true* worshippers shall worship *the FATHER.*" Again, I say, this alone were enough. But if any doubt remain upon the question, whether "the Father" be not "the Lord God" of whom in the first text the Saviour had spoken, the third text, —words of the inspired Paul, of themselves too, enough,—declares in opposition to any multiplicity of gods more or less, "to us, there is but One God, the Father." Demonstration itself could scarcely make it clearer, that the Scriptural Object of Worship is One, undivided, unrivalled, alone—"the Lord thy God"—"one God"—in one person, "the Father."

Had we only the light of nature, our Reason, which according to a multitude of circumstances might vary very widely in its suggestions to different individuals or communities, would nevertheless be our guide. But it is not so. We have the light of Revelation. That great boon which the wisest and most spiritual of ancient sages coveted for the race, has been granted to us. The beloved Son of God, the "sanctified and sent" of the Father, "full of grace and truth," has come into the world, and made known the Divine Will. "To him must we go, for he has the words of eternal life." Let Councils and Churches and Creeds decree what they may, let multitudes and majorities echo and assent to and strive to uphold their decrees, the more urgent the need, the more pressing the call, for every devout and faithful seeker after the truth, to go apart and consult for himself the sure "oracles of God;" to go to the Scriptures, in which are recorded our Lord's own directions to his followers; and thus gain the all-supporting assurance that while he obeys them, he is safe and "blessed in his deed."

Now in regard to the Scriptures, one thing is most certain, and must

be admitted by all, that in the Old Testament, but One Object of Supreme Worship, One God in one Person, is revealed; and that most frequent, express, and solemn are its injunctions against worshipping any other being whatsoever. Under the light of the Mosaic dispensation, the Jews were living at the advent of Christ; and at that time, as in all ages to this very hour, worshipped accordingly "the Lord GOD of their fathers," and Him only. Did Jesus ever during his entire ministry, in a single instance, directly or indirectly change that Object of Worship—point worship to any other Being—or declare that that Being existed, however mysteriously, in more than one person, whether in three or three thousand? I deny that he did. I deny it utterly, unqualifiedly; and challenge contradiction.

What did he say on the subject? Bear with me, my friends, while I quote; for though you and I are satisfied that the general, the uniform tenor of Scripture is with us, yet our brethren who differ from us will hold us, and rightly, to its special language. What then, I ask, did Christ say of the Object of Worship? So far from proposing to change the Object of Worship which Moses had declared,—so far from pointing out defects either in the declaration of Moses, or in the Jewish belief on this subject,—he repeats to the tempter, just as he was himself entering his public ministry, the very words of the ancient Covenant—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve!" In confirmation of this, and also that Jesus distinctly taught that the God of the Jews is the God who is still to be worshipped, I remind you of his language to the "woman of Samaria," when, identifying himself with his Jewish countrymen he said—"we know whom we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." Jesus thus recognised and taught as the only proper Object of the supreme homage of his followers, the same and Only Being whom the Jews had been taught to worship, and of whom this great Lawgiver had commanded,—“Thou shalt worship no other God!”

It is not, however, to be supposed that Jesus did not enlighten the world in regard to the Object of Worship; upon God's relations to us and ours to Him; so as at once to help us in our infirmities when we approach Him, and to make the service more attractive and more elevating. Directly the reverse. In the Old Testament, the names or titles usually applied to God are august and awful; implying the grandeur, power, and majesty of the Supreme:—the Almighty—the God of

hosts—the mighty and terrible God—the Lord most High. He is described as possessing “terrible majesty;” as surrounded “with clouds and darkness.” Sublime beyond that of any uninspired bard, yet profoundly fearful, is that remarkable description of the prophet: —“His brightness was as the light. \* \* \* \* \* Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet. He stood, and measured the earth; He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow. \* \* \* \* \* The mountains saw Thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by; the Deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hand on high. The sun and the moon stood still in their habitations; at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation; Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger!”—Now you search in vain among the words of Christ for anything like this. But what do you find there? One, all-endearing, most attractive, profoundly touching image,—that of “the Father!” This, so to speak, is his favorite, constantly recurring title of God. In the brief transcript of the Evangelists of his sayings while on earth, he calls the Being who had sent him on his great mission of love to our race, some twenty-six times, God; but some one hundred and thirty-six times, “the FATHER.” It is true that in the Old Testament, God once or twice is called “a Father,” while the character of a Father as belonging to Him, is in several passages implied; and, that from the whole collection of books comprised in it, as touching representations of the Divine Being and His dealings with men may be gathered, as can be conceived. But in the New Testament, and especially in our Lord’s teachings, God is ever “the FATHER;” not by name or title only, but in His views, purposes, and intercourse with mankind. And that “the Father” is always the Being and the only Being whom he directed his followers to worship, is manifest both from his precepts and his example. It is expressly recorded, that on one occasion the disciples came and asked him to “teach” them “to pray.” It is a natural supposition, that, as devout Jews, they were anxious to know whether any new Object of prayer was to be presented to them by their master. They had been accustomed to worship the One God in One Person, Jehovah; and they knew nothing of any three persons in the Godhead, or of what is now called the Trinity. What, then, did



Christ reply? Taking several separate petitions from prayers already familiar to the chosen people, he arranged them in a simple formula, and directed their minds as they were wont, to One, distinct Person or Being, as the Great Object of Prayer:—"He said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven!" Now, here was the very occasion of all others, we should think, upon which he would have seized had truth required it, to direct them to the new revelation which it is often alleged that he came to make, of One God in Three distinct Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; of the Trinity, that is—Three Persons and One God, as the new Object or Objects of Prayer. But not a word or hint of such a thing. Never, in one instance did he speak of a Trinity; much less of worshipping a Trinity, or himself, or the Holy Ghost, but "the Father" only. This endearing name of "Father" is made the special title by which God is to be addressed: and the humblest child of God's grace and blessing is taught, in the simplicity and confidence of a child, to say,—**"OUR FATHER!"**

Need I show how perfectly, how uniformly the practice of our Lord corresponded to his teaching? Who more devout than Jesus? And yet how always did he pray to "the Father!" When he gave utterance to his gratitude, his language was—"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth!" When he felt that miraculous power had been granted to him to recall his friend Lazarus to life, again he said—"Father, I thank Thee!" When his soul was "troubled" his prayer was—"Father, glorify Thy name!" And when the deadly agony bowed him to the earth, it was—"O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done!" Before this, in that longest of his prayers, recorded by the beloved Apostle, six times does he address God by the same title. While the soldiers were nailing him to the cross, he prayed—"Father, forgive them!" And the last words which fell from his blessed lips, were—"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit!"

This is the way in which the Saviour, whom all Christians are commanded to honor and to imitate, prayed. Never, in a single instance, did he pray or teach to pray, to what in modern phrase is called, his divine nature, or to the Holy Ghost; but to the Father always, and to the Father only. "The true worshippers," said he to the Samaritan woman, "the true worshippers shall worship the Father."—If anything

more pointed or explicit be asked for, let it be remembered that when he was about to "leave the world and go to the Father," he took special care to warn his disciples against praying to himself. They had been wont to look to him directly and constantly for instruction and aid; "Lord, increase our faith!"—for deliverance in danger; "Lord, save us, we perish!"—"Lord, help me, or I sink!"—He had, as God's representative, been at hand to respond to such petitions. Now he was going away; and lest they should suppose that they might continue in the same way to seek his help, and careful to direct their homage and reverence to, and to impress them with a sense of their dependence on Him who had sent him, he expressly forbids them to pray to himself:—"in that day, ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you." How, I ask, how more effectually, had that been his special design, could he have forbidden the worship of any other being besides the Father?

So in "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants," there are two remarkable passages most direct to the point under consideration. John "fell at his feet to worship him." But Jesus said to him—"See thou do it not! I am thy fellow-servant, of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: Worship God!"—Again did John make the same attempt; and again in the same way was he forbidden.\* Thus clearly and explicitly, did our Lord Jesus Christ prohibit all worship of himself or of any other being, and direct it to be rendered solely and exclusively to the Father.

After the Ascension, the instructions and the practice of the Apostles exactly coincided with those of their Master. Almost immediately after that stupendous event, we find them "lifting up their voices to God with one accord, and saying, Lord, thou art God! which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is." They speak of the rulers being "gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ."—"For," they add, "of a truth against *Thy holy child* Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed." Who does not see that they here strictly followed the injunction of Christ, and worshipped his God and Father?—Paul, though "caught up to the third heaven" and illumined by special communion with his Master, still "bowed his

\* Chap. xix, 10—xxii, 8, 9.—Vid. also, Chap. xiv, 6, 7—xv, 3, 4.

knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ:”—still gave “thanks always for all things unto God even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ:”—still “thanked God always for the grace of God given by Jesus Christ,” and blessed “God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.”—So Peter instructs those to whom he writes, to “call on the Father;” and blesses “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—James declares of the tongue—“therewith bless we God, even the Father.”—John wishes “Grace” unto his converts, “from God, the Father;” and in the first verse of Jude’s epistle, we read of “God the Father.” There is no exception to this mode of teaching or of worship, in the Epistles. That “to us, there is but One God, the Father,” as expressed by Paul in my text, was the sentiment uppermost and ever cherished in the minds of the writers.

The sentiments and the practice of the early Church, correspond with those of Christ and the Apostles as here exhibited. To this fact we have Trinitarian testimony. One of the most eminent prelates of the English established Church (Bishop Bull) says—“In the first and best ages, the Churches of Christ directed all their prayers, according to the Scriptures, to God only, through the alone mediation of Christ.”\* This statement is all the more valuable, because it was incidentally made; and was not intended as testimony, but merely to illustrate the unauthorised prayers of the Romish ritual. It is fully confirmed by Justin Martyr, who flourished about the middle of the second century; and who although the first to corrupt the pure Christian doctrine in some important particulars, nevertheless declares—“There are no nations on the earth, in which prayers and thanksgivings are not put up to the Maker and Father of all things, through the name of Jesus who was crucified. \* \* \* \* In all our oblations, we bless the Maker of all things, through His Son.” Irenæus, some thirty years after Justin, in a prayer calls upon “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” as “the only and true God, above whom there is no God.”—And Origen, some sixty years later still, explicitly says—“We ought not to pray to any one of those things which are made, nor to Christ himself, but only to the God and Father of all, to whom our Saviour himself prayed as I observed before, when he teacheth us to pray, not to himself but to the Father saying, ‘Our Father which art in heaven!’”

\* Dr. S. Clarke’s Scrip. Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 435.



Such is the testimony in behalf of the great and solemn duty of confining our supreme homage and worship to One God in One Person, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, drawn from the express instructions, and the uniform practice of both Christ and his Apostles, and of the early Church. The amount of testimony might easily be swelled from all these sources. In the New Testament, its uniform tenor directs all prayers to be offered to God the Father; while the testimony already cited is enough, and more than enough, to forbid the worship of Christ as God, or the Holy Ghost as God, or a mystical and mysterious Trinity of three persons in the God-head. The worship of the "One God, the FATHER"—that august and gracious Being whom our Lord himself described in prayer to Him, as "the Only True God"—is the only pure and Scriptural worship; and therefore, to such worship alone, is this house consecrated.

I am aware of the answer which may have already suggested itself, in the minds of some of my hearers, to this entire argument—namely that our Lord Jesus Christ when on earth was worshipped, and that he accepted the worship. But do we at this day need for the first time to learn, that the word rendered "worship" in our English Bible, is a word of ambiguous import; the special significance of which is in every case to be gathered from the connexion in which it occurs? It sometimes denoted merely civil homage or respect. In the Old Testament (1 Chron. xxix, 20) we read—"and all the congregation fell down and worshipped the Lord and the King." They paid civil homage to the monarch, while they adored their God.—Again (2 Sam. ix, 6) we read, that "Mephibosheth *did reverence*" to the King David; which of course meant that he paid him obeisance, or the usual outward tokens of respect. But in another place, (Psalm xcv, 6) the word in this rendered "did reverence," is rendered "worship;"—"O come, let us *worship* the Lord our Maker." Here of course it denoted the homage due only to God. So, in the New Testament, Christ in one of his parables represents the servant as falling down and *worshipping* his lord and master.—Again, the word was used to express the homage or reverence due to prophets or messengers of God; as in the book of Daniel (ii, 46) we read, that "Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and worshipped Daniel." This was the homage rendered and specially due to Christ, as the best beloved and most illustrious prophet and messenger of the Almighty.—And finally, the word in

question denoted, as in the passage already quoted from the Psalms, that Religious Service which is due only to God. A similar ambiguity pertained to the English word "worship" at the time when our translation was made, as any reader of the English authors of that age well knows. Christ while on earth *was* indeed worshipped, and he accepted the worship. Admit it, and what then? He was worshipped and he accepted the worship, because he knew that it expressed, and was intended to express, only that respect and homage which were due to him in his divine office of the Messiah, as the great Representative and Messenger of the Most High; in the glowing language of the ancient Clement in his epistle to the Corinthians, as "the sceptre of the majesty of God." We have a striking instance of this, recorded by the evangelist Matthew. Jesus had trod the rough waters of the Galilean sea, and by a word stilled the storm. "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying—'of a truth thou art the Son of God!'" These words of the awe-struck and wondering disciples, show beyond all question what their action meant. They paid him homage, not as God, but as "the Son of God." On another occasion, before referred to, when he perceived that John, over-awed by the stupendous Revelations which he had made to him, fell at his feet to offer him the homage due only to his Father, of whose unrivalled supremacy he was ever mindful, he exclaimed—"See thou do it not! WORSHIP GOD!"—if anything more be wanted to prove, that Christ though worshipped, was not worshipped as God, but as His Prophet and Messenger, let it be remembered how jealous the Jewish people were at that time and always, of everything which in the least degree savoured of trenching upon the religious worship of Jehovah; and how instantly the popular indignation would have been kindled against any who should have presumed to offer such worship to a man, as they deemed Jesus. Jesus, however, was in some sense worshipped; often, openly, publicly, in the streets of Jerusalem, in the precincts of the temple, in the very presence of the cavilling Pharisees and his most watchful enemies. And yet, not an objection was made. Is it credible, that no objection would have been made—that no special process would have been had, either against those who offered the worship, or Jesus, or both,—promptly, nay, instantly, if it had been understood that the one adored him as Jehovah, or that the other as such accepted the adoration?

The argument of my discourse, has grown to a length altogether beyond my expectation. I alluded in the outset to a practice, common among some other denominations, apparently becoming more common in their pulpits, of paying direct, supreme worship to Christ. I am aware that this practice is well warranted by their creeds; perfectly consistent with them; nay, demanded by them. If Christ, as those creeds assert, be God, then, of course, he should be worshipped as God. The final appeal, however, is not to those creeds, but to Holy Scripture. I am not on the one hand, for magnifying the differences which separate us from other Christians; but on the other, I am none the more for depreciating them. I am for seeing them just as they are, and speaking of them just as they are, both on the score of honest conviction, and of a true charity. I believe those differences on some points to be important differences, and on the one under consideration not the least so. On that point, one thing is certain. Either our brethren of the so-called Orthodox denominations, are wrong,—or, we are. If on a sober and careful examination of Scripture, there be no warrant for their worship of Christ, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the Trinity, then they are wrong; and no array of numbers or antiquity, no assumption of authority however bold or imposing, can prove them right. If on the contrary all worship except that of the Father be there expressly forbidden, and that alone as expressly enjoined, then we are right; and no allegation that we are in the minority, can prove us wrong. There is no alternative. I rejoice, however, to think, that the vast body of Trinitarians after all have, at heart, a more evangelical faith than that which their creeds express; that to them as to us, the term “Father” in addressing God, comprehends in fact not the first person of a Trinity only, but all that is involved in the great idea of God, or the DEITY. I know, indeed, that in the petitions which I cited before from the Litany of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the worshippers professedly adore “God the Father”—“God the Son”—and “God the Holy Ghost;”—nay, nor only so, but a “Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God.” But what portion of the multitudes that from Sabbath to Sabbath hear and respond to the last three of these petitions, have ever seriously reflected upon their import and bearing—ever independently, and on their accountableness to God, attempted to reconcile them with Scripture—ever seriously inquired into their origin or authority? To the generally Scriptural



worship of the Liturgy of that Church, I gladly bear witness. The prevailing form of address or invocation in its prayers, is certainly such; and in most of the prayers themselves, we, as a Christian denomination, can heartily unite. What more Scriptural, for example, than where in the Collect for the eighteenth Sunday after Trinity, the petition is—"with pure hearts and minds to follow Thee, the Only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord?" Or, in that for the next Sunday;—"mercifully grant that Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord?" In the Communion Service, too, how admirably is that view of the Great Object of Christian worship which we hold, expressed, and how exactly accordant with Scripture!—"It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at *all* times, and in *all* places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, HOLY FATHER, Almighty, Everlasting God!" And yet, the rubric directs that "these words *Holy Father* must be omitted on Trinity Sunday!" Why, why, let me ask, except that for consistency's sake, on the day set apart specially to honor and glorify "the Trinity"—the Trinity, a thing totally unknown, unheard of, in Scripture,—that peculiar and most attractive title by which Christ addressed, and taught his followers to address God, in prayer, and therefore, pre-eminently Scriptural, must be omitted, lest peradventure it seem to conflict with the dogma on which the service of that day is based!—In other Trinitarian Churches, the prayers in general begin by addressing God, often as Father; but too often they mingle up direct addresses to Christ, and the Holy Spirit, to each of them as God; and close with ascriptions to the Three Persons of the Trinity, just as contrary to the Apostolic practice recorded in Scripture, as the perpetually recurring *Gloria* of the *Roman*, and of the *Anglo-Catholic* or Protestant-Episcopal, Churches.

My special object has not been to refute the dogma of the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, but to urge the true Scriptural worship of the Father, and the Father alone, as the One only living and true God;—a position, fatal, I am well aware, to that widely received and cherished dogma. To that worship, the worship of the Father, do we consecrate this house.—The worship of the Father! Words cannot express the thrilling joy, the divine peace, the simple and affectionate trust, with which the thought of God as the FATHER, fills the soul which truly receives and faithfully cherishes it! To set apart a particular place for worship, may at first seem to imply something merely formal,

or at least outward. But when the Great Object of that worship, is revealed, and felt to be the Father;—when it is felt that the Infinite Being, He who “inhabiteh eternity”—who is “from everlasting to everlasting”—who “dwelleth in light inaccessible and full of glory”—has condescended so richly to the weakness of our nature, as to declare Himself to be “Our Father” and invite us into the “glorious liberty of children,” thus binding us to Himself in the chords of an unutterable love,—how immediately does worship become an inward and heavenly spirit; the communion of the soul with its Great Source, freely, trustfully, affectionately, as the child with its parent; until the work of assimilation is begun and grows, and by this intercourse of the Human with the Divine, “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

To this filial, joyous, affectionate worship, ever sacred be this place ! In rendering it, most truly shall we honor him, our ever blessed Saviour, who, by revealing the Father, has introduced us to this grateful, delightful service. O may these walls reared in faith in that Saviour—a faith which cheered, guided, and sanctified the pious dead,\* and which is the joy, and staff, and support of the venerable living—ever testify, that though Christ be not worshipped and adored here, he is most truly, affectionately, reverentially honored ! May admiration for his unclouded and spotless righteousness—gratitude for all that he did and suffered for the salvation of mankind—desires and efforts to obey him, as his own, as the great test of love, springing up spontaneously and warming the hearts of the worshipper—ever keep this house from becoming a place of forms ! Here ever be that worship “in spirit and in truth” which is acceptable to God, and conform-

\* The allusion is to the Hon. Roger Gerard Van Polanen, who died at Bridgeport Sept. 9, 1833, aged seventy-six years, having resided in this country thirty-four years. His Pastor, the Rev. Wm. Ware, in “a Sermon preached in the First Congregational Church in Chambers Street, New York, on the Sunday following his death—of which church, Mr. Van Polanen had almost from the first been a most respected member—says :—“If he had a joy at last, it was inspired by the religion of Jesus ; if he had a hope, it grew out of the Gospel ; if he sued for mercy, it was through the promises of Christ.” He was truly a most accomplished man, and exemplary Christian ; and his testimony to the truth and paramount worth of the Unitarian view of the Gospel was most decisive. Mr. Ware tells us in the same sermon that he “said, he believed he should still have continued to the end a believer in Christianity, though an unhappy one, if he had never heard of that form of it, which, for the last twenty years of his life he had embraced and esteemed as his chief possession ; but that he could not adequately describe the great accession that had been made to his happiness, after he became fully acquainted with the religion of the New Testament as he last received it. This supplied every want, cleared up every doubt, swept away every cloud.”—This Chapel, erected by his widow, bears his name in grateful and respectful memory of his faith and virtues.

ed to the instructions and example of Christ! And when the venerable founder of this Chapel, having, by the blessing of the Father whom she adores, been long permitted to share in its devout services, and enjoy its sacred associations and privileges, shall have been called to rejoin the spirit of him whose memory she would piously embalm in this freewill offering to God, to the religion of the Saviour, and to the spiritual welfare of those who may gather here;—when the voices which have first stirred its echoes shall have long ceased to be heard on earth; still may humble, penitent, grateful, obedient worshippers of the FATHER and disciples of His Son, continue from generation to generation to tread these courts, until all meet hereafter in “a Temple not made with hands!”—АМЕН.

NOTE.—I have been told that after the delivery of this discourse, it was said by some of the hearers by way of objection to my argument, that I had taken no notice whatever of the text 1 John, 5. 7, commonly called the text of the Three Heavenly Witnesses. Of course I did not; for whatever else is to be said of that text, it has nothing to do with my precise purpose.

But perhaps it may be well to avail of this opportunity of stating very briefly the reasons why I reject that text, as being a mere interpolation, and no part of the writings of the beloved Apostle; and therefore never to be cited or quoted in argument upon any occasion where any doctrine of Christianity is under discussion.

Before the fifteenth century no Greek manuscript of John's Epistle, and before the ninth no Latin one, has it.—No ancient version has it.—No Greek ecclesiastical writer cites it, although many such writers quote and argue from the sixth and eighth verses in support of the dogma of the Trinity.—No early Latin Father cites it.—Near the end of the fifth century it is first cited by Vigilantius, a writer of no account, and even by him is thought to be forged.—Luther the Reformer omits it in his German version, and many editors since the Reformation.—Erasmus in his editions of 1516 and 1519 omitted it; and afterwards inserted it in 1522, because he had promised to insert it if a single Greek MS. containing it could be found.—Such a one was found at Dublin; of which no writer pretends to assign an earlier date than the 13th, and most attribute it to the close of the 15th century.—Charles Butler, the learned Romanist and of course a Trinitarian, says of this MS. that “it is neither of sufficient antiquity nor of sufficient integrity, to be entitled to a voice in a question in sacred criticism.”—Zuinglius rejected it; and Calvin though he retained, speaks very doubtfully of it. In the old English Bibles previous to between 1556 and 1580, it was printed in small types or in brackets.

In modern days, Wetstein, Griesbach, Simon, Michaelis, Harwood, Matthæi, reject it. Bullinger, Beyer, Knapp, mark it doubtful. Bishop Lowth denies the use of his understanding to him who defends it. Dr. Middleton, the late Bishop of Lincoln, Archbishop Newcome, Bishop Marsh, Bishop Bloomfield, Prof. Porson, and many others, all of the Church of England, reject it. Home, of the same church, after having maintained its genuineness in the first edition of his Introduction, abandons it as spurious in the second. Adam Clarke, the Methodist Commentator, sums up his examination of it by saying—“In short, it stands on no authority sufficient to authenticate any part of a revelation professing to have come from God.” The Eclectic Review, long the organ of the English Dissenters, says—“We are unspeakably ashamed, that any modern divines should have contended for retaining a passage so indisputably spurious.” The London Quarterly Reviewers, champions of the British Church, and the British Critic its avowed organ, reject it utterly. Prof. Stuart of our own country, is known to have declared to his theological classes at Andover, that “the spuriousness of this passage has done more harm to the doctrine of the Trinity, than a thousand Unitarian preachers.”

I have quoted only Trinitarian writers; and on Trinitarian authority alone, do I pronounce this text “ unquestionably spurious.”

And as to its interpretation, supposing it to be genuine, Trinitarians also shall be our expositors; for Calvin says that the expression “these three are one” must signify “in agreement, and not in essence.” Beza says the same. And Macknight says in his paraphrase of the passage,—“these three are one, in respect of the unity of their testimony.”























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