



Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart

The better we are at focusing our thoughts on God alone in our worship, the more pleasing to Him it will be.

The off-color tinge of this fallen world has inexorably stained even believers' worship and praise, to the extent that often when we think we are worshipping God, we really are thinking less of Him than ourselves. When we insist on connecting adoration of God with the work He has done in our lives, then it ceases to be true worship.

Whether, because of our traditions, we call it "worship" or "praise," there *must* be moments in our life when we focus all thoughts, all desire, all adoration and honor and glory on God alone. For even with the best of intentions and motives, when we praise or thank Him for what He has done ("I praise you, heavenly Father, for that promotion at work.") we are thinking about ourselves.

The human language, so infantile compared to the language of heaven, is a poor medium for praise. This is why Jesus Himself told us that true, authentic worship must be

"...in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

John 4:23b-24

When people speak to us we appreciate hearing our own language. An English-speaking person traveling in a foreign land will be drawn to a native who knows and speaks the English tongue, just as the native will be pleased with the tourist who uses some of *his* language.

God is spirit-kind; His native language is spirit language. Our attempts

at worship in the flesh too often carry with them the baggage of self, for the language of flesh is self-centric. But worship of God must be God-centric; for that we need the Holy Spirit to translate our stumbling words into the spirit language of heaven. Only then do we rightly honor and glorify our King.

*Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth;
through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty
as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.*

Because we *are* flesh, however, we can lazily relinquish all responsibility for authentic worship to the gracious Spirit. After all, why bother getting things correct, why bother with much effort when He will faithfully translate for us?

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

Romans 8:26-27

But Jesus said that we are to worship “in spirit.” The Holy Spirit is not just a translator, He is to be the motivating force behind our worship, the engine that drives it. In this we worship spiritually, in the language of heaven, and we give the Spirit permission to work through us, removing our gaze from self to God, which, as a result, gives us authentic words of adoration.

*I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
No sudden rending of the veil of clay,
No angel visitant, no opening skies;
But take the dimness of my soul away.*

Out of our worship then flows the realization of dependency. Just as the Spirit must be resident and active to energize our worship and praise, so too must Father and Son be resident and active to energize the life of faith that worship reignites.

*Hast Thou not bid us love Thee,
God and King?
All, all Thine own, soul, heart
and strength and mind.
I see Thy cross—there teach my heart
to cling:
O let me seek Thee, and O let me find!*

*Teach me to feel that
Thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul
to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of
unanswered prayer.*

The believer’s goal, whether in specific worship or in life on the streets of this world, is for the fullness of God to be so real and active, so constant, that our very being vibrates to the pitch of heaven.

*Teach me to love Thee
as Thine angels love,
One holy passion filling all my frame;
The kindling of the
heaven descended Dove,
My heart an altar,
and Thy love the flame.*

George Croly

But just as it is written,
“Things which eye has not
seen and ear has not heard,
And which have not
entered the heart of man,
All that God has prepared
for those who love Him.”
For to us God revealed
them through the Spirit;
for the Spirit searches all
things, even the depths of
God. For who among men
knows the *thoughts* of a
man except the spirit of
the man which is in him?
Even so the *thoughts* of
God no one knows except
the Spirit of God. Now
we have received, not the
spirit of the world, but the
Spirit who is from God,
so that we may know the
things freely given to us
by God, which things we
also speak, not in words
taught by human wisdom,
but in those taught by the
Spirit, combining spiritual
thoughts with spiritual
words.

1 Corinthians 2:9-13

