

**THE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP IN  
ALL AGES: BEING  
THOUGHTS ON WORSHIP  
AND ORDINANCES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649227693

The Spirit of Worship in All Ages: Being Thoughts on Worship and Ordinances by John Green Hine

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Cover @ 2017

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**JOHN GREEN HINE**

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*M. Lucas*

THE  
SPIRIT OF WORSHIP  
IN ALL AGES:

BEING  
THOUGHTS ON WORSHIP AND ORDINANCES;

COMMENDED  
TO THE PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION OF ALL  
PROFESSING CHRISTIANS,

BY  
ONE WHO SEEKS TO FIND IN ALL, SOME POINTS OF UNION  
IN THE TRUE LIFE.

" And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come.  
And let him that heareth say, Come:  
And let him that is athirst, Come:  
And whosoever will,  
Let him take the water of life freely."

LONDON:  
A. W. BENNETT, 5, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT;  
OR THROUGH ANY BOOKSELLER  
1840.

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The following pages are affectionately addressed to all bearing the Christian name, that they may be induced more closely to consider whether their worship of the Father is based on the true ground of all acceptable worship, viz, "in spirit and in truth;" or whether it be in anywise mingled with the precepts or traditions or mere customs of men, and consequently capable of being purified from some defilement either of the flesh or spirit in the sight of God; that they be brought into a greater realization of that spiritual freedom which rightfully pertains to the children of God; but into which we can only be introduced by the Spirit of the Son of God.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—JOHN viii. 36.

"Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."—2 Cor. iii. 17.

## THE SPIRIT OF WORSHIP

IN ALL AGES.

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I. IF we would rightly treat of "WORSHIP," and the end or use of "ORDINANCES" as connected therewith, we must first correctly understand *what* worship is. I take it to be the acknowledgment and adoration of that Being, in whom we believe that we live, from whom we have sprung, by whom we are sustained, and to whom we look for our eternal reward.

Hence Worship is the sequence of Faith; as is beautifully expressed in the words, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews xi. 6). But Faith is based on Revelation, and is indeed so intimately connected therewith, that in one sense the spirit of faith and of revelation may be said to be one and the same thing; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God;" and whether we regard this as spoken of the outward Word, or of that more inward Word wherewith God speaks to us by his Spirit in the heart, the consequence is equally the same: hence we may argue, that

according to our knowledge, (whether externally or internally derived,) will be our faith; and as our faith is, so will be our worship: and the truer our knowledge is, the truer will be our worship, if accompanied with the obedience of faith.

Now God has revealed Himself to mankind in divers manners and in different measures, according to the circumstances in which we have been found, or have placed ourselves; but all his dealings towards us have been with the intent of either leading us nearer to Himself, or preventing us by certain barriers from departing further from Himself. Of these dispensations, let us now more particularly refer to the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian. The former and the latter of these appear to be more nearly allied *in spirit* than the Mosaic, and it is quite a matter of doubt whether we ever should have witnessed such a formal, and we may almost say cumbrous, framework of Rites and Ceremonies as is specified in "the Law," had there been a faithful adherence to *what was revealed before the law was given*.

The first recorded *acts of worship* in the Scriptures are those of Cain and Abel. They both, it may be safely presumed, were blessed with the same amount of external revelation through the medium of their father and mother; and it is evident, from the expostulation of God with Cain, they were also



equally favoured by God with an inward manifestation of His own free grace and power, such as He was pleased to reveal internally in that early period of the world's history. The one improved that which was confided to him; the other did not. Abel was *consequently* a righteous man, and Cain was also accordingly a wicked man. This is fully borne out by the Apostle's language: "And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and those of his brother righteous" (1 John iii. 12). The word *works* being in the plural in both cases, shows that it had reference to more than one act. It is said of these brothers that in process of time they both brought an offering unto the Lord: and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, by which He testified that he was *previously* a righteous man (see Hebrews xi. 4): but unto Cain, and to his offering, He had not respect; thus openly testifying that in his case the worshipper was *in spirit* a wicked man, though he had brought an offering unto the Lord; and yet, by the subsequent expostulation of the Lord with him, we may learn he was not beyond recovery, if he would do well, and with full purpose of heart turn to God.

Now this may be regarded as a symbol for all succeeding generations, illustrative of that truth of which Jesus testified,—that they who worship God

must worship Him in spirit and in truth ; by which words, I believe, our Lord intended to convey, *not only* that it must be by the aid of the Spirit of God we should seek to worship, but *also* that worship in order to be acceptable to God must proceed *from our spirits*, and be in our spirits both true and *heart-felt*, and must be *correspondent* with our external offerings or deportment, whatsoever these may be.

Cain's *spirit* was not accordant with his offering ; the bent of his mind was not towards God ; his *heart* was not right in the sight of God ; and **THEREFORE** God who seeth the intents of the heart accepted him not. Abel's spirit on the contrary was inclined towards God, not only at the time of his offering, but previously, and probably to a great extent uniformly ; the state of his heart was fairly and correctly expressed and represented by the deportment of his worship, and on that ground God accepted him, and testified that *his life* pleased Him.

We are too apt to look upon the offering of Cain and of Abel as that *one act* in their lives which was pleasing or non-pleasing to God ; whereas the acceptance and non-acceptance on the part of God was nothing more than a *sequence* : a consequence of the previous spirit of their lives for probably a considerable time : and it was not merely because one brought of the firstlings of the *flock*, and the

other of the fruits of the *ground*, they were either accepted or rejected;\* for it is most likely that each brought of the *best* of his individual possessions, intending thereby to show the greatest mark of *external respect*: and had Cain's spirit or life corresponded with that act of worship, there can be no doubt that God would have accepted his offering equally with that of Abel, though it differed in kind: which should show us, that if the spirit of our minds be really inclined towards God, it signifies very little *what* the external rites or ceremonies are, provided in them all, or in the absence of any, we approach God in spirit, right, true, and intent upon Him; that is, if the spirit of our minds, and the intent of our hearts, be really, truly, and, as far as is possible, uniformly, bent on serving Him. We have, therefore, in this record two instances of worship; one true, the other false; and the characteristic features of each may be regarded as the true index of all succeeding acts of worship in the world, to determine which is true, and which false: and God has thus been pleased to inscribe upon the opening pages of the inspired writings, that He, who alone searches the hearts

\* In making this statement I am fully prepared to admit that the spirit of Faith in Abel led him to select a lamb as the most appropriate sacrifice he could offer, in the shedding of whose blood he might have seen a type of the future sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God on Calvary.