

249. Be Steadfast in Serving the Triune God, and Him Only.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. *Rev. 2, 10.*

God desires man to serve Him. For that purpose He created him, and to that end He sent His only-begotten Son to redeem him after he had fallen into sin.

There is but one true service, the *service of the Triune God*, the only true God, who has revealed Himself in the three Persons of the holy Trinity. Any other so-called service of God is an abomination to Him. He says: "I am the Lord, that is my name, and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images"; and again: "Thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, *and Him only* shalt thou serve."

Furthermore, let your service be a willing service and not for the sake of performing an irksome duty which you must perform if you wish to escape the terrors of hell and earn heaven. Every service not begotten of faith in Jesus and not based upon gratitude to God for His tender mercies is a vain service and ill-pleasing to our heavenly Father. Always bear in mind what Christ has done for you, and that heaven is offered you as a free and unmerited gift of grace; bear in mind that in your infancy God received you into His kingdom in Holy Baptism, made you His child and an heir of salvation; and also bear in mind that on the day of your confirmation you promised before many witnesses to serve Him forever. Then your service will be a willing and glad and therefore a genuine service and will remain so even amidst trials and difficulties; then your service will be a *steadfast* service. There are many children who soon after their confirmation forgot their oath and to-day, despite all warnings, are walking the way of sin. The first symptom of their fall was a certain indifference and a lack of zeal for heavenly things, which took possession of their souls. They were not interested in God's kingdom as much as they formerly had been. They no more read the Scriptures, and they cease to pray. They commit gross sins and do not repent of them. Are *you* going this downward course? Blessed is he who serves God in true faith all the days of his life!

Prayer.

O my God, how can I sufficiently thank Thee that Thou hast deigned to raise me, a wretched sinner, to the blessed relation of a Christian by means of Holy Baptism, that gracious washing of regeneration? Oh, keep and preserve me in this state of grace unto death! Let me not waver amid all the trials and temptations that beset me. Let me not follow those who shun the company of Christians and seek their most intimate friends among the children of this world. I entrust myself fully to Thy care, grace, and love. Amen.

Let me be Thine forever,
Thou faithful God and Lord;
Let me forsake Thee never
Nor wander from Thy Word.
Lord, do not let me waver,
But give me steadfastness,
And for such grace forever
Thy holy name I'll bless.

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