Worcester F 80 Distinctiones

6 To Adore (*Adorare*)

To Adore. [Matt. 2:11]: “Falling down they adored him.” The good fall in his presence. Just as it is said in Apoc. [7:11]: “They fell down before the throne upon their faces.” The evil fall backwards.[[1]](#endnote-1) Wherefore it is said in John [18:6]: “They went backward and fell to the ground.”

First, they fall on Christ and before Christ just as vassals and the devout, Psal. [44:6] Wherefore “under you shall people fall, into the hearts.” Again, we proceed before God. Such ones thus falling adore Christ according to that of Matt. [4:10]: “The Lord your God shall you adore,” etc. Namely,[[2]](#endnote-2) by adoration of worship truly since only God is to be adored. Worship to which pertain the altars, temples, and sacrifices, which are to be consecrated, dedicated, and offered only to God; not certainly to the angels, not to the apostles, not to the martyrs, but only to God to the honor of these. Just as is evident in Apoc. [22:9], where the angel said to John wishing “to adore” him. And in the Acts of the Apostles [14:11-14], Paul and Barnabas after the healing of the disabled man in Iconium prohibited themselves to be adored. And Mardochai feared to adore the proud Aman “lest he should transfer the honor of God to a man” [Esth. 33:14]. Why is it, therefore, that

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the Magi are said to have adored the child, when this child in nature was human according to that said, the child is not a maker but was made, [Matt. 2:1-12]. Also, when Moses mandated in the law “lest you be deceived by error, you adore and serve them, which the Lord your God created,” [Deut. 4:19]. This is said syllogistically,[[3]](#endnote-3) that God is to be adored, but this child is God, therefore he is to be adored.

¶ For there is such a great personal union in this substance (*hypostasis*), so that in this Deity they adore the humanity, and the contrary, according to that of Psal. [98:5]: “Adore his footstool, for it is holy.”

¶ They who adore the Lord ought to address three things: motive, mode, and condition. Motive is double, namely the work of creation and the work of redemption.

¶ Concerning the first, if someone restores to me a limb that has been lost, justly I would adore him. But God gave me the soul with powers, the body with limbs, and the world with its contents. Therefore, we say with the Psal. [94:6]: “Come let us adore and fall down before the Lord because he made us.” Apoc. 14[:7]: “Adore him, that made heaven,” etc.

¶ Concerning the second, the son is held to adore the father, moreover the thief his bondsman, the infirm his healer, Exod. 4[:31]: “They heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction and falling down they adored.” Wis. [16:28]: “we ought to prevent the sun and adore you at the dawning of the light.” Luke, the last chapter, [24:52]: “They adoring went back into Jerusalem, with great joy.”

¶ Again, the mode of adoring is double: one does it reverently with an exterior action: not laughing,[[4]](#endnote-4) not telling stories, not thinking distractedly, 2 Esdr. the last book [8:6], lifting their hands, they adored him with their faces to the ground. Or reverence is owed for a benefice, but most to God himself. Therefore, John 9[:38], the blind man enlightened “said, I believe, Lord. And falling down, he adored him.” Matt. 4[:10]: “The Lord your God shall you adore.”

¶ The second mode of adoring relates to an interior effect, so that God is adored fervently, not feigned, not lukewarm, John 4[:24]: “They that adore him, must adore him in spirit and in truth.” Eccli. 35[:20]: “He that adores God with joy, shall be accepted, and his prayer shall approach even to the clouds.” If a hand approaches the fire, it gets hot. Much more the heart approaching to God, who is called fire, Psal. [95:9]: “Adore the Lord in his holy court,” that is, in the heart.

¶ Again, the condition of adoration is double. The first is in the present, namely, the request of petitions. Thus, the needy adore power so that they may be heard. Jer. 29[:12]: “you shall call upon me and I will hear you.” The example in the people with leprosy as Matt. 8[:2]: “Behold a leper came and adored him,” etc.

The second, Hebr. [10:11], in the future, namely, in the reign of the blessed, Matt. 2[:11]: “Falling down

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they adored him.” And it follows, through another way they returned to their region. Concerning which in Psal. [114:9]: “I will please the Lord in the land of the living.”

¶ Christ is to be adored on account of three things which are clear in his incarnation. Because of his power, because the greatest distances are joined, as deity and humanity. For wisdom because the greatest marvels are revealed, as, namely, he becomes the creator, as the Virgin brings forth. Because of the goodness, because the highest becomes one, the strong becomes weak, God becomes man. Therefore, on account of the first he is adored with reverence, Psal. [71:11]: “The kings of the earth shall adore him.” Because of the second he is adored with prudence, Isaiah [66:23]: “All flesh shall come to adore before my face,” etc. Because of the third he is adored with devotion, [2] Chron. [23:30]: “Bowing the knee they adored.”

1. Jerome, *In Ezechielem* 2.3 (PL 25:32): Et in Evangelio secundum Ioannem, qui ad comprehendendum venerant Dominum, postquam ille respondit: Ego sum, ceciderunt retrorsum in terram (Joan. 18:6).  [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Innocent III, *Sermo* 8 (PL 217:488-489): Verum cum solus Deus sit adorandus, illa videlicet adoratione quae latria Graece vocatur vel nuncupatur, ad quam pertinent altaria, templa et sacrificia, quae soli Deo sunt dedicanda, consecranda et offerenda, non quidem angelis, non apostolis, non martyribus, sed Deo tantum ad honorem ipsorum; quia videlicet servitus ista non creaturae, sed Creatori debetur. (Unde angelus [Col.0488C] in Apocalypsi se prohibuit adorari, dicens Joanni: «Deum adora; ego enim frater tuus sum, et conservus fratrum tuorum (Apoc. XIX).» Et Paulus et Barnabas cum Lystris in Lycaonia claudum sanassent, et voluissent eis turbae victimas immolare, conscissis tunicis exierunt in turbas, prohibentes se adorari (Act. XIV). Et Mardochaeus testatur se timuisse Aman superbissimum adorare, ne honorem Dei sui transferret ad hominem, et ne quemquam adoraret, excepto Deo suo (Esth. XIII).

Quid est hoc quod magi non Deum, sed puerum adorasse dicuntur? Qui licet in veritate sit Deus, non tamen secundum naturam divinam, sed secundum carnem assumptam est puer, secundum quam etiam non est [Col.0488D] Factor, sed factus, Paulo attestante: «Qui factus est ex semine David secundum carnem (Rom. I),» contestante Psalmista, quod «Homo factus est in ea, et ipse fundavit eam Altissimus (Psal. LXXXVI),» cum et Moyses mandet in lege, ne quis errore deceptus adoret ea, quae fecit Dominus Deus suus (Deut. IV).

Porro si solus Deus sit adorandus, cum puer iste sit Deus, Isaia propheta testante: «Puer natus est nobis, et Filius datus est nobis, et vocabitur nomen ejus Admirabilis, Consiliarius, Deus, Fortis;» ergo puer iste, qui natus est nobis, quasi Deus adorandus existit. Una quidem adoratione cum Patre qui genuit, et Spiritu qui procedit, sicut ipsa Veritas ait in Evangelio: «Veri adoratores adorabunt Patrem in Spiritu et veritate [Col.0489A] (Joan. IV).» Nam et tanta est illa unio personalis inter divinam et humanam naturam, ut in hypostasi Verbi, propter assumentem divinitatem, humanitas etiam adoretur assumpta, secundum illud propheticum: «Adorate scabellum pedum ejus, quoniam sanctum est (Psal. XCVIII).» Caetera vero sacra vel sancta non adoranda sunt latria, sed dulia veneranda, ne forte sub specie pietatis θεοσέβεια convertatur in idololatriam, et ita subintret vitium pro virtute. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 5.3, 1014a35-1014b3 (Barnes 2:1601): The so-called elements of geometrical proofs, and in general the elements of demonstrations, have a similar character; for the primary demonstrations, each of which is implied in many demonstrations, are called elements of demonstrations; and the primary syllogisms, which have three terms and proceed by means of one middle, are of this nature. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Bernard, *Tractatus de Interiori Domo seu de Conscientia Aedificanda* 8.15 (PL 184:51): Denique ratio per mentis excessum in contemplationem sublimium sublevata, et in divinae contemplationis arcanum rapta, atque ibi illuminata [Col.0515C] ad cognitionem veritatis et veri luminis, inflammata ad desiderium bonitatis, omnes illicitas voluptates, affectiones, et vagas memoriae cogitationes, cordis dispersiones, animi fluctuationes, spiritus evagationes, et mentis distractiones in unum colligit, atque in illo felicitatis fonte totum suum desiderium figit.

31.66 (PL 184:540): Proh dolor! religio relinquitur, et silentium rumpitur: hinc indi volant verba vana et inutilia, forsitan et detractoria. Sic confabulando saepe consumitur dies integra.

34.73 (PL 184:543): Tu vero comedendo, bibendo, jocando, et ridendo, tempus otiose vivendo perdis, quod tibi indulserat Deus ad acquirendam gratiam, et ad promerendam gloriam. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)