Victory Everlasting Gospel Church

Sabbath March 25, 2017

**“Reverence”**

The title of today’s sermon is: **“Reverence”**

Before we begin, let us pray …

I wanted the 1828 Noah Webster’s Dictionary definition of this word reverence. Here is what I found:

**REVERENCE, as a noun** [From the Latin word reverentia.]

1. Fear mingled with respect and esteem; veneration.

When quarrels and factions are carried openly, it is a sign that the reverence of government is lost.

The fear acceptable to God, is a filial fear, an awful reverence of the divine nature, proceeding from a just esteem of his perfections, which produces in us an inclination to his service and an unwillingness to offend him.

Reverence is nearly equivalent to veneration, but expresses something less of the same emotion. It differs from awe, which is an emotion compounded of fear, dread or terror, with admiration of something great, but not necessarily implying love or affection. We feel reverence for a parent, and for an upright magistrate, but we stand in awe of a tyrant. This distinction may not always be observed.

2. An act of respect or obeisance; a bow or courtesy.

2 Samuel 9:6. **“Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence.”**

**REVERENCE**, as a verb - To regard with reverence; to regard with fear mingled with respect and affection. We reverence superiors for their age, their authority and their virtues. We ought to reverence parents and upright judges and magistrates. We ought to reverence the Supreme Being, his word and his ordinances.

Leviticus19:30, and 26:2 say exactly the same thing, “**Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I [am] the LORD.”**

1 Kings 1:31 **“Then Bathsheba bowed with [her] face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live forever.”**

Esther 3:2 **“And all the king's servants, that [were] in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did [him] reverence.”**

 Esther 3:5 **“And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.”**

Psalm 89:7 **“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all [them that are] about him.”**

Matthew 21:37, **“But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.”**

Mark 12:6 **“Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.”**

Luke 20:13 **“Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence [him] when they see him.”**

Ephesians 5:33, **“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband.”**

Hebrews 12:9 **“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected [us], and we gave [them] reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”**

Hebrews 12:28 **“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:”**

Now I want us to consider another form of reverence to the LORD and that is the only correct position while praying. When we are talking to the supreme power in all the universe, why do we stand on our feet or sit in a chair when praying?

Doesn’t it seem logical that when we are presenting our petitions to the One who has the power to grant our requests, that it is a matter of reverential respect to kneel?

1 Kings 8:54 **“And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven.”**

Here is what God’s prophet says is acceptable worship, ***“The prayer offered by Solomon during the dedication of the temple, was not made while he stood upon his feet. The king knelt in the humble position of a petitioner.***

***Herein is a lesson for God's people today. Our spiritual strength and our influence are not increased by conformity to a worldly attitude during prayer. In these perilous times, those who profess to be God's commandment-keeping people should guard against the tendency to lose the spirit of reverence and godly fear.***

 ***The Scriptures teach men how to approach their Maker,--with humility and awe, through faith in a divine Mediator. Let man come on bended knee, as a subject of grace, a suppliant at the foot-stool of mercy. Thus he is to testify that the whole soul, body, and spirit are in subjection to his Creator.”*** {RH, November 30, 1905 par. 13-15}

Listen carefully to what Sister White wrote here:

***“I have received letters questioning me in regard to the proper attitude to be taken by a person offering prayer to the Sovereign of the universe. Where have our brethren obtained the idea that they should stand upon their feet when praying to God? One who has been educated for about five years in Battle Creek was asked to lead in prayer before Sister White should speak to the people. But as I beheld him standing upright upon his feet while his lips were about to open in prayer to God, my soul was stirred within me to give him an open rebuke. Calling him by name, I said, “Get down upon your knees.” This is the proper position always.”***{1NL 119.1}

We have many scriptures which teach us to kneel. Here are just a few:

(Luke 22:41), **"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed."**

 (Acts 9:40), **"Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up."**

 (Acts 7:59, 60). **"They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."**

 (Acts 20:36), **"When he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all."**

 (Acts 21:5), **"When we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed."**

 (Psalm 95:6), **"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker."**

 (Ephesians 3:14), **"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

Now listen carefully to the prophet of God, ***“To bow down when in prayer to God is the proper attitude to occupy. This act of worship was required of the three Hebrew captives in Babylon. . . . But such an act was homage to be rendered to God alone--the Sovereign of the world, the Ruler of the universe; and these three Hebrews refused to give such honor to any idol even though composed of pure gold. In doing so, they would, to all intents and purposes, be bowing to the king of Babylon. Refusing to do as the king had commanded, they suffered the penalty, and were cast into the burning fiery furnace. But Christ came in person and walked with them through the fire, and they received no harm.”*** {2SM 312.6}

 ***“Both in public and private worship it is our duty to bow down upon our knees before God when we offer our petitions to Him. This act shows our dependence upon God.”*** {2SM 312.7}

 ***“There should be an intelligent knowledge of how to come to God in reverence and Godly fear with devotional love. There is a growing lack of reverence for our Maker, a growing disregard of His greatness and His majesty. But God is speaking to us in these last days.”*** {2SM 315.3}

 So my brothers and sisters, let us each decide from this day forward, as we are able, that we will no longer pray standing like a Pharisee, sitting or lying down, rather we will worship God always praying on our knees with reverence.

And so let us pray…