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Fr. Henri Caffarel
being present to God; Letters on Prayer
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Chapter Overview of Letters # 50-58

“Hallowed be your name!”
(Mt 6:9)

In the Christian’s prayer, we find the various elements that make up the prayer of the Son of God who became man.

The first reaction of anyone who places himself in the presence of God (of his excellence, his splendor and his holiness) is a sense of reverential awe. It is a sentiment akin not to fear but to an adoring love.

50 *Remember Bichr*—To adore is to confess: “You alone are God,” in an interior attitude of awe and love, wonder and joy.

51 *“You shall do homage to the Lord your God.”* (Mt 4:10)—Praise springs from adoration. The prostrate man rises to his feet to celebrate the perfections and great works of his God.

52 *“To praise his glory”* (Ep 1:12)—To give him thanks for his help and his munificence, and above all to thank him for all that HE IS.

53 *Thanks for being you*—These varied attitudes culminate in an extremely rich perspective that encompasses and overflows them. This is the self-offering of oneself in a “sacrifice of praise.”

54 *At Ronchamp*—In this offering, the Christian commits his whole being: his past, present and future, his body and soul, his life and death.

55 *Letter to Jean Pierre*—But, by contrast with inanimate objects, man does not offer himself up once and for all. Only the person who never ceases offering himself or herself to God, is truly given to God.

56 *Second letter to Jean Pierre*—Our offering of love is a repayment to the Lord for the superabundant life that his love has given us.

57 *Third letter to Jean Pierre*—At a deeper level, it is a participation in the surge of thanksgiving that has impelled the Son into the arms of the Father from all eternity.

58 *Fourth letter to Jean Pierre*—In the saints, this need to offer oneself to God becomes a desire for self-abasement. This desire must be rightly understood. It is a vehement yearning to be consumed by divine love, the way that sacrifices of ancient times were consumed by the fire that fell from heaven.