

# The Hands of the Father

First Series – Sermon Nine

Original by George MacDonald

Paraphrase by Dale R. Howie



Jesus came from the Father's hands, and returns to His hands with "It is finished!" Therefore, we are God's hands and feet, words and ways. Our participation is the Light for the weary and evidence of the rest for the suffering.

These are the questions we must ask:

~Will we surrender now into His hands?

~Will we become what we are?

~Will we take no cares, but His?

~Can we allow His Life to flow from ours to others as He did?

## Outline

**All Healed** – For the divine obedience of the Son was perfected in His suffering. He has assumed everything that we are. He did for us what we would come to do for our Father and brothers.

**Fatherhood** – Realize brothers and sisters; we walk in the breath of an eternal Fatherhood!

**The Father** – We can never know Him clearly until we rejoice and are glad for all of our race that He is The Father!

## Luke 23:46 KJV

*"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."*

The Gospel writers end their crucifixion stories with different statements. Each with something special to say. Matthew and Mark end with the "The Eloi." Luke alone records it with, *"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."* John says none of these, only, *"It is finished."* All of them, after His final words, reveal Him as bowing His head and yielding!

## All Healed

Will the Lord ever tell us the meaning in His cry? Was it a cry of relief at the moment of death? Or was it a cry of victory and joy in enduring to the end? **Whatever it was, now sonship and sacrifice were born in the hearts of men! The Son's divine obedience perfected in His suffering. He has assumed everything that we are. He did for us what we would come to do for our Father and brothers. Jesus was from that moment, inside and out, below and above, suffering with us and for us. Giving us all that He had and all that He was! The best of Himself and His love! God had been with us in Jesus, His incarnation ending in a mighty cry!**

The cry meant "*It is finished,*" "*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*" The highest human effort is just a giving back to God of what He has already given to us. "Thou hast given me, here again, is thy gift. I send my spirit home." Every act of worship is the presenting to God of what He has given us. Here, Lord, is what you have shared with me. Your blessing is to experience it in my very being with me. I am your child. Thank you for your overflowing life! **Life is Yours, so it is mine. I am Yours; therefore, I am mine. The great principle of the physical and spiritual worlds is simply the returning of everything to its source!**

**The crucifixion of Jesus in the surrendering of His spirit was only the summing up of what He had done His whole life! He had been offering this same sacrifice, the sacrifice of Himself, all His life. Thus by His self-sacrifice, He had lived the divine life!** Every morning, every night, alone or with others, He was offering Himself to His Father in communion! He would then turn to do the same for us! He sacrificed himself for us with His loving thoughts, words, and deeds. **The way of worship while there is light is to work in the service of God; the only "divine service" is the helping of our brothers!**

**I do not want to refer to this sacrifice of ourselves to the Father as a duty. That would be to turn the highest privilege we possess into a burden too grievous to bear. Instead, the giving of it is the simplest and greatest blessing we have in the whole world!**

Father, I give my spirit into your hands, for my life is your work, not mine. You know every degree of my suffering and care for me in your perfect Fatherhood. Your care creates my sonship, surrounds and includes it. As your child, I can bear great pain knowing you watch over me and wrap your arms around me. You cannot get nearer to me than your caring hands already have. Yes, you comfort me with the comfort I could never imagine. I do not care about the pain so long as Your Spirit is strong in me. In your Love, which is better than life, receive my spirit. Then your tenderness will make my life great!

This is what we can confess to ourselves.

## **Fatherhood**

**Realize brothers and sisters; we walk in the breath of an eternal Fatherhood! Every lifting of our hearts is a looking to Him. Grace and truth are above, beneath, and around us, yes, even in us. When we are the least worthy, tempted, challenged, and unkind, let us offer our spirits into Your hands. Where else would we send it? How would we as earthly fathers love the child who would creep into our presence in his anger and troubled heart and sit at our feet? The child saying, when asked, what he wanted? "I feel naughty, papa, and I want to be good!" Would the father respond to his child, "How dare you! Go away and be good, then come back to me!" Would we dare to think that God would send us away if we came to Him this way? Would He not be pleased that we came? Would not**

**we as fathers let out all our tenderness to such a child? Will we dare to think that we, being evil, know how to give our children good gifts and that our Father would not give us His Spirit when we ask?**

Nor is there anything we would ask for ourselves that we cannot ask for another? Can we not offer any of our brothers and sisters to our common Father! There will be moments when filled with the Spirit. Moments where nothing will ease our hearts of Their love but the offering of everyone to Him. The offering of all of our brothers and sisters to our One Father! Nor will we ever know the rest in the Father's hands, that rest of the Holy Place, which the Lord knew when the agony of death was over. The Place where the storms of life died away. The Place where there is only life! Here, all that is not music will be silence (for all that is noise comes from the conflict of Life and Death). **We will never be able to rest in the heart of the Father. Rest until His Fatherhood is fully revealed in love to our brothers and sisters. He cannot be our Father unless He is their Father! If we cannot see Him as their Father, we cannot know Him as ours!**

## **The Father**

**We can never know Him clearly until we rejoice and are glad for all of our race that He is The Father of all! *"He that loveth not his brother who he has seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"* To rest in the Hands into which our Lord offered His spirit. We must learn to love our neighbor as ourselves!**

## **CLIFFNOTES WITH ORIGINAL MACDONALD QUOTES**

### **All Healed**

Now should inward sonship and the spirit of glad sacrifice be born in the hearts of men; for the divine obedience was perfected by suffering. He had been amongst his brethren what he would have his brethren be. He had done for them what he would have them do for God and for each other. God was henceforth inside and beneath them, as well as around and above them, suffering with them and for them, giving them all he had, his very life-being, his essence of existence, what best he loved, what best he was. He had been among them, their God-brother. And the mighty story ends with a cry.

Every highest human act is just a giving back to God of that which he first gave to us.

'It is thine: it is mine. I am thine, and therefore I am mine.'" The vast operations of the spiritual as of the physical world, are simply a turning again to the source.

The last act of our Lord in thus commending his spirit at the close of his life, was only a summing up of what he had been doing all his life. He had been offering this sacrifice, the sacrifice of himself, all the years, and in thus sacrificing he had lived the divine life.

The way to worship God while the daylight lasts is to work; the service of God, the only "divine service," is the helping of our fellows.

I do not seek to point out this commending of our spirits to the Father as a duty: that is to turn the highest privilege we possess into a burden grievous to be borne. But I want to show that it is the simplest blessedest thing in the human world.

## **Fatherhood**

Think, brothers, think, sisters, we walk in the air of an eternal fatherhood. Every uplifting of the heart is a looking up to The Father. Graciousness and truth are around, above, beneath us, yea, in us. When we are least worthy, then, most tempted, hardest, unkindest, let us yet commend our spirits into his hands. Whither else dare we send them? How the earthly father would love a child who would creep into his room with angry, troubled face, and sit down at his feet, saying when asked what he wanted: "I feel so naughty, papa, and I want to get good"! Would he say to his child: "How dare you! Go away, and be good, and then come to me?" Would we not let all the tenderness of our nature flow forth upon such a child? And shall we dare to think that if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, God will not give us his own spirit when we come to ask him?

We shall never be able, I say, to rest in the bosom of the Father, till the fatherhood is fully revealed to us in the love of the brothers. For he cannot be our father save as he is their father; and if we do not see him and feel him as their father, we cannot know him as ours.

## **The Father**

Never shall we know him aright until we rejoice and exult for our race that he is the Father. He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? To rest, I say, at last, even in those hands into which the Lord commended his spirit, we must have learned already to love our neighbour as ourselves.