'Adoration, veneration and devotion'

* Adoration is the inner and outer act of worshipping divinity, a recognition of God's supremacy, of reverence, of love for God.
* Veneration is a feeling or manifestation of deep reverence and respect or religious devotion.
* Devotion is the total submission to God, a promise and giving of oneself to God.

Whatever the meaning of the three words may be, what matters is to address all inner and outer acts that manifest our love for the Lord to God alone, worshipping Him alone, as God commands us.
Knowing the precise meaning of the three words matters little, because the Lord does not demand of us that we say "Lord I adore you!", or "Lord I worship you!", or "LordI am devoted to You!": He wants us to show our sincere love by keeping His commandments.
Reading the Holy Scripture, we realise that the words adoration, veneration and devotion are all used in reference to the direct love we manifest towards the Lord, and otherwise, by manifesting our veneration to someone else or something other than God, we face grave consequences, both in earthly life and for eternal life.
To confirm this, we can refer to the following parenthetical quotations from the Bible:

"Concerning adoration"

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1) Visit of the Magi to the birth of Jesus:

(They came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.) Matthew 2 : 11

The Magi's adoration of the baby Jesus makes us realise that the Son of God, as Our Lord, is worthy of adoration from birth. The adoration addressed to the Lord Jesus is at the same time addressed to God the Father, because Jesus and the Father are one, as we read in John 10:30.

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2) Jesus' statement to the Samaritan woman:

(God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming, he who is called Christ. When he has come, he will declare to us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who speaks to you.”) John 4 : 24

Jesus showed us that we have a duty to turn our adoration to the Lord, worshipping Him in Spirit and Truth, being God, the true Spirit of eternal life, living in heaven.

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3) After the resurrection of Jesus:

(As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, “Rejoice!” They came and took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.) Matthew 28 : 9

The adoration of the Lord Jesus after His resurrection by some women is another moment of adoration addressed to the Lord, as He proved what He had foretold by saying: “‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,’ referring to his body.

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4) Temptation of the devil towards Jesus in wanting to be worshipped:

(Again, the devil took him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. He said to him, “I will give you all of these things, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and you shall serve him only.’”) Matthew 4 : 8

With the devil's temptation to be worshipped instead of God, Jesus made clear that we must turn our worship to the Lord our God and worship Him alone.

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5) Worship of God in heaven:

(The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, “Amen! Hallelujah!”) Revelation 19 : 4

In the vision of the Apocalypse of John we have another example of worship directed to the Lord, manifested in the act of prostration.

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6) Angel's rejection of John's adoration:

(Now I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who had shown me these things. He said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow bondservant with you and with your brothers, the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.”) Revelation 22 : 8

With the Angel's refusal to be worshipped, commanding John to worship God, not him, we can understand that our worship must be directed to the Lord alone. Therefore, a human being can hardly be worthy of worship, being a creature inferior to the Angels.

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7) False idol worship:

(and the multitude, attracted by the charm of his work, now regarded as an object of worship the one whom shortly before they had honoured as a human being.) Wisdom 14 : 20

This quotation from the book of Wisdom of God makes us realise that we must not fall into the devil's deception that induces man to worship an idol, "as the image of a man who has just died", deceiving him by means of the charm of the work. Also from this we understand that our worship is to be directed at the Spirit of the Lord.

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8) Consequence of idol worship:

(For the worship of idols not to be named is the beginning and cause and end of every evil.) Wisdom 14:27

This other quotation from the book of Wisdom makes us realise that idol worship is the cause of the many evils in the world, due to the non-recognition of the glory of God who lives in heaven, attributing divine status to corruptible material objects. This also makes us realise that our worship must be directed at the Lord.

"Concerning Veneration"

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1) Veneration of material idols:

(Lovers of evil things and fit for such objects of hope are those who either make or desire or venerate them. A potter kneads the soft earth and laboriously moulds each vessel for our service, fashioning out of the same clay both the vessels that serve clean uses and those for contrary uses, making all alike;

but which shall be the use of each of them the worker in clay decides. With misspent toil, these workers form a futile god from the same clay -these mortals who were made of earth a short time before and after a little while go to the earth from which all mortals are taken, when the time comes to return the souls that were borrowed. But the workers are not concerned that mortals are destined to die or that their life is brief, but they compete with workers in gold and silver, and imitate workers in copper; and they count it a glorious thing to mould counterfeit gods. Their heart is ashes, their hope is cheaper than dirt, and their lives are of less worth than clay, because they failed to know the one who formed them and inspired them with active souls and breathed a living spirit into them.) Wisdom 15.6

With these quotations, God's wisdom makes us realise that the veneration of material idols turns out to be a disavowal and thus a denial of the living Spirit of God, our Creator, from whom we have received a living material body, by means of the spirit that the Lord has given us in his image and likeness.

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2) Veneration of a material idol as if it were God:

(Some pour out gold from the bag, and weigh silver in the balance. They hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god. They fall down— yes, they worship. They bear it on their shoulder. They carry it, and set it in its place, and it stands there. It cannot move from its place. Yes, one may cry to it, yet it can not answer. It cannot save him out of his trouble.) Isaiah 46 : 6

This quotation from the prophet Isaiah makes us realise that when we make ourselves a material idol, the purpose is to venerate and adore it instead of God, whereas we know that veneration and adoration are feelings and acts of love that should only be addressed to the Spirit of God. The veneration of the idol is certainly manifested in the veneration rendered to it, while the veneration of the idol is certainly manifested in prostration before it, the kissing of the idol, the offering of incense to it, etc.

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3) Teaching on the worship of the Lord:

(So one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and lived in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear Yahweh.) 2 Kings 17 : 28

This quotation from Holy Scripture makes us realise that our worship must be directed at the Lord.

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4) Worship directed only at God, from the covenant between God and the people of Israel:

(with whom Yahweh had made a covenant and commanded them, saying, “You shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them; but you shall fear Yahweh, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and with an outstretched arm, and you shall bow yourselves to him, and you shall sacrifice to him. The statutes and the ordinances, and the law and the commandment which he wrote for you, you shall observe to do forever more. You shall not fear other gods. You shall not forget the covenant that I have made with you. You shall not fear other gods. But you shall fear Yahweh your God, and he will deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.”) 2 Kings 17 : 35

This quotation from the Holy Scripture makes it clear to us that our worship must be directed at the Lord, our God, alone. The Lord has commanded us not to worship other gods, that is, other deities besides Him, consisting of the material idols that we make with our hands, to prostrate ourselves before or serve them, to worship or venerate something corruptible instead of the incorruptible Spirit of God, who lives for ever. Since worship must be directed only at the Spirit of God, we cannot worship a human being by representing him through an image, whoever he may be. Not even Jesus commanded us to make an image of Him in order to worship Him, because that would mean transgressing God's commandment.

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5) Our false worship of the Lord:

(The Lord said, “Because this people draws near with their mouth and honors me with their lips, but they have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men which has been taught;) Isaiah 29 : 13

Even with this quote from the prophet Isaiah, we can understand that our worship must be directed to the Lord.

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6) Infidelity in idol worship, Moloch:

(then I will set my face against that man and against his family, and will cut him off, and all who play the prostitute after him to play the prostitute with Molech, from among their people.) Leviticus 20 : 5

This quotation from the book of Moses refers to the punishment of those who sinned in idolatry by worshipping the idol Moloch. This also makes us realise that our worship must be directed at the Lord.

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7) The sin of idol worship:

(They abandoned the house of Yahweh, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherah poles and the idols, so wrath came on Judah and Jerusalem for this their guiltiness.) 2 Chronicles 24 : 18

God's wrath on the cities of Judah and Jerusalem for worshipping idols makes us realise that this behaviour of theirs was wrong, as it is now, so our worship must be directed at the Lord.

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8) The Lord's provocation in the worship of false gods or unknown gods:

(“Yahweh of Armies, the God of Israel, says: ‘You have seen all the evil that I have brought on Jerusalem, and on all the cities of Judah. Behold, today they are a desolation, and no man dwells in them, because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, to serve other gods that they didn’t know, neither they, nor you, nor your fathers.) Jeremiah 44 : 2

This quotation from Holy Scripture also refers to the misfortunes on the cities of Judah and Jerusalem for their provocation of the Lord by worshipping false gods. This is another confirmation that we must turn our worship to the Lord and not to idols.

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9) The fate of those who worship idols:

(But for the cowardly, unbelieving, sinners, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their part is in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”) Revelation 21 : 8

In the vision of the Apocalypse of John, the Lord made us realise what those who worship, adore or venerate idols are up against, so it is clear that our worship must be directed at the Lord.

"Concerning devotion"

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1) Devotion of Ananias:

(“One Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews who lived in Damascus, came to me, and standing by me said to me, ‘Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ In that very hour I looked up at him.) Acts of the Apostles 22 : 12

Ananias' observance of God's Law and Saul's recovery from the blindness that had been inflicted on him make us realise that our devotion must be directed at the Lord, certainly manifesting it with the observance of his commandments.

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2) The liberation of man through devotion to the Lord:

(then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, but chiefly those who walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,) 2 Peter 2 : 9

The Apostle Peter made clear in one of his letters that the Lord delivers from trial those who manifest their devotion to Him, as opposed to the evildoers who offend Him. This also makes us realise that our devotion must be to the Lord.

The Messenger of God