

Introduction

What is worship?

What people mean by this term: a service? The act itself?

Anglo-Saxon word: “something rendered to acknowledge a person’s worthiness,” think of their burial ships and treasure hoards

Pagan sense, an act to be performed for a reward, faith isn’t necessarily a part of it

Sacrifice of Cain vs. Abel: Christian worship is really the opposite of this, it flows from faith

The action of God is the most important thing > *Gottesdienst*, “God’s service”

“Worship” vs. “Divine Service” (works both ways, but what’s the emphasis?)

God doesn’t need anything from us! (Ps 51:16-17), desires only faith

John 4:23, true worship “in spirit and truth,” but this can only come from the gift of God

God must act upon us before we can respond

The liturgy is the framework for us to do this

Sacrificial and Sacramental

Two directions; ask about every part of the service (which is the most important?)

Orientation (facing the people or altar; use of the freestanding altar); 2 Cor 5:20

“Liturgy”: not “the work of the people,” but “public service”

Holistic Worship

True worship is “in spirit and truth,” yet it’s not merely mental, it manifests itself and is expressed physically

Greek work for worship: prostrate, fall down

Incarnational worship, sacramental worship

Rite (the text), rubric (red text), and ceremony (what is done)

Who is the service for?

If the service is a tool for outreach, how would that manifest itself?

If the service is primarily for the edification of believers, how would that manifest itself?

Acts 2:38-46 shows the model (emphasis v. 42!)

1 Cor 14:23 assumes outsiders will be present, we shouldn’t ignore guests

Catholicity of our liturgy

Historic liturgy not just because we like old things or that’s what we grew up with: the liturgy is so ancient that it holds everyone at arm’s length!

Personal preference/taste/style is the wrong approach

“That faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all”; what does using the same liturgy as the ancient church confess? Isn’t that more suitable than something ever-changing?

“Great cloud of witnesses” - Heb 12:1

United with churches today as well!
Most of it's just the Bible! United with that as well!
What's the value of using the same service every week?
Pre-literate and post-literate
Worship with a low floor and a high ceiling

Structure of the Service: Two (or Three) Mountaintops

Means of grace (define) surrounded by parts of the liturgy
Chancel furnishings and what that says about our service and what we value (freestanding altar)

Structure of the Service: Ordinary and Proper

Ordinaries do not change, except for the Creed are sung, provide the framework surrounding the means of grace, either in anticipation of or in praise and thanksgiving for having received (Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Sanctus, Agnus Dei are the five historic ordinaries; Latin names)
Propers change (Introit, Collect, Lessons, Gradual/Verse, Sermon, Proper preface, hymns), vary from Sunday to Sunday or Season to Season
Why is the service the same every week? A lot of it changes! You get a sense of what to expect, balance between familiarity/structure and something new/different

Luther's Attitude and Services

Luther desire to reform, not reinvent
Control the chaos of new liturgies
Kept everything except abuses or false doctrine (catholicity)
Marked difference from Zwingli: throw everything out that couldn't be found in Scripture! Far different approach, conservative reformation
Formula Missae (1523): Latin, very similar to the Catholic Mass (intentionally); Calvinists visceral reaction to this
Deutsche Messe (1526): afraid of radical action, German, hymn-based
Misconception: one of Luther's pet peeves was that the liturgy should be in German

Later History, leading to us

FM became the norm in large city churches, *DM* in country churches
These two forms existed side-by-side, freedom (later) but uniformity
History of decline
And later renewal: Common Service of 1888
Common for all American churches, taking what was common in all Golden-age Lutheran services
Simplest way: *Formula Missae* in English

Adiaphora

Neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture

But not “indifferent”

Many things we are commanded to do (gather, Word, preaching, Sacraments, prayer, singing, thanksgiving) but not the precise way to do it

How do we use freedom? What’s beneficial? (1 Cor 14:40) Edifying? (v26)

Things we can fight about (because we shouldn’t be fighting about doctrine!)

We won’t condemn those who don’t, but our liturgy does all these things and follows the patterns established by Jesus and His Apostles

Examples in Scripture are descriptive, but why wouldn’t we want to follow those?