

I. Hermeneutics

- A. Authority of Scripture and the "Regulative Principle of Worship"
- B. Statement or "good and necessary consequence"
- C. Precept or example
- D. Elements and circumstances
- E. Do not judge another man's servant
- F. Worship has two axes of communication:
- G. Worship is humble response to God's grace
- H. Worship is holy, public communication between God and his people

II. Prayer

- A. Arguably the most ancient practice of worship
- B. The Temple and prayer
- C. Similarities and great differences between synagogue and Christian prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-4,8ff.; Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 4:2-3; Philippians 1:3-6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3; 2 Thessalonians 1:3)
- D. Essential to any Christian practice of worship (Philippians 4:6; Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4; Romans 1:7; 16:25-27; 2 Corinthians 1:2; 13:14)

III. Word

- A. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are essential to Christian worship
- B. "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." (John 8:31)
- C. "Give your attention to the public reading, the exhortation, and the teaching." (1 Timothy 4:13)
- D. Why? *All* Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16)
- E. This is how we do it: *lectio continua* (most of the time)

IV. Sacrament

- A. Jesus commanded two new practices, and all churches of God practice them
- B. The first is Baptism (Matthew 28:19-20)
- C. The second is the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

V. Song

- A. Definitely one of the most controversial elements of worship
- B. Song was instituted by King David
- C. The praise of Jews and Christians for 3,000 years
- D. When we sing the Psalms we sing with God's people
 - i. is our practice a "minority" position? (Hebrews 12:1,22-23;
 - ii. is this bad for reaching people for Christ?
- E. When we sing the Psalms we are shaped by the Gospel
- F. When we sing Psalms we both *glorify God* and *edify those singing and hearing them* (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; cf. Psalm 3:1 4:1; 72:20)

- G. Does it have to be this way?
- i. How can we possibly judge the Lord's servants in that way?
 - ii. Every church must do what it believes God through the Scriptures wants.
 - iii. Our denomination has judged that the most biblical, the most powerful, the most believer-edifying, God-glorifying, excellent way for us to worship in song is to continue the historic and Scriptural practice of psalm-singing. That is what we do.
 - iv. I encourage you: if you're new to this, dive in.
 - v. If the tunes we sing don't float your boat, look around.
- H. There are lots of other good songs of praise to God. There are none that are this good.
(James 5:16)

Further resources:

Crown & Covenant Publishing – crownandcovenant.com

Psalm-singing resources – psalter.org

Guides to the Reformed Tradition: Worship by Hughes Oliphant Old (Atlanta: John Knox, 1984)

A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life by William Law (various publishers and online)

The Westminster Confession of Faith especially chapters 1, 19-21, 27-29

Athanasius' letter to Marcellinus on the Psalms (various publishers and online)