

Week One Outline

Why We Worship the Way We Worship

A General Overview of Christian Liturgy in Word and Sacrament

I. Greeting and Orientation

Why We Must Understand Worship

A. Worship Has a Divine Structure

- God establishes the pattern for worship.
- Nothing in Scripture exists without purpose.
- The Holy Spirit does not waste words.

B. The Old Testament as the Foundation

- Leviticus 1–9 provides the pattern for worship.
- The New Testament assumes that pattern.
- God builds on what He has already established.

C. A Common Mistake Christians Make

- Dividing Scripture into “relevant” and “irrelevant” sections.
- The Bible never teaches that parts of Scripture no longer matter.
- Instead, God progressively builds His revelation.

D. The Goal of the Study

- To understand what God is doing in the liturgy.
- To see why worship is structured the way it is.

Questions for the Class

1. Why do you think many Christians assume the Old Testament is less important for understanding worship?
2. What might it mean if the Holy Spirit truly wastes no words in Scripture?
3. Why would God give such detailed instructions for worship in Leviticus?
4. What dangers arise when Christians divide the Bible into “relevant” and “irrelevant” sections?

5. How might understanding the structure of worship change the way we participate in it?
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II. Worship as Judgment and Blessing

The Purpose of the Worship Service

A. Worship Trains Us for Life

- The service teaches us how to live before God.
- Worship is the Spirit's work upon the Body of Christ.
- The gathering is family time for God's people.

B. The Central Pattern: Death and Resurrection

- Judgment and blessing.
- Discipline and restoration.
- Movement from one glory to another.

C. Judgment in Scripture

- Judgment comes in degrees.
- Greater grace means greater responsibility.
- Judgment begins with God's people.

D. Judgment as a Positive Reality

- The Psalms celebrate righteous judgment.
- God disciplines His people like a father disciplines children.
- Judgment produces maturity and unity.

Questions for the Class

1. Why might Scripture describe judgment as something positive?
 2. Why does God discipline His people rather than ignoring their sin?
 3. What does it mean that the worship service trains us for life?
 4. How might judgment and blessing both occur in the same worship service?
 5. Why does Scripture say judgment begins with God's people?
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III. Baptism and the Beginning of the Christian Life

A. Baptism Unites Us to Christ

- Romans 6:1–7
- Participation in Christ’s death and resurrection.
- Justification and cleansing.

B. The Reality of Ongoing Sin

- Romans 7 shows that Christians continue to struggle with sin.
- Sin is missing the mark.

C. The Goal: Maturity

- Reflecting God properly.
- Becoming icons of Christ.

D. Perfection as Maturity

- Matthew 5:48
- The Greek term points toward maturity rather than flawlessness.

E. Creation as Symbolic Instruction

- Families teach maturity.
- Creation shapes us as image bearers.

Questions for the Class

1. What does it mean that baptism unites us to Christ’s death and resurrection?
2. Why does Romans 7 remain important for Christians?
3. How does Scripture define maturity in the Christian life?
4. Why might Jesus command us to be mature like the Father?
5. How does family life teach us about spiritual growth?

IV. Repentance as the Shape of the Christian Life

A. Calvin’s Description of Repentance

- Restoration of the image of God.

- Gradual renewal over time.
- Lifelong repentance.

B. Repentance and Self-Examination

- The Word of God is the standard.
- Christians examine themselves according to Scripture.

C. Avoiding False Introspection

- Puritan overanalysis of assurance.
- Christian identity grounded in baptism.

D. True Repentance

- More than remorse.
- Transformation of life.

E. Godly Sorrow

- 2 Corinthians 7:10
- Sorrow leading to repentance and life.

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Calvin describe repentance as a lifelong process?
 2. What is the difference between remorse and repentance?
 3. Why must self-examination be guided by Scripture?
 4. What dangers exist in excessive introspection?
 5. How does repentance restore the image of God?
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V. Worship as Covenant Renewal

A. The Sacrificial System

- Provided a way for repentance.
- Structured Israel's worship.

B. Covenant Renewal in Worship

- Confession and restoration.

- Word and Communion.

C. The Pattern of Renewal

- Being cut by the Word.
- Being restored through communion.

D. The Stacking of Biblical Concepts

- Understanding Scripture through layered themes.

Questions for the Class

1. Why might worship be described as covenant renewal?
 2. How did the sacrificial system teach repentance?
 3. Why does worship involve both Word and Sacrament?
 4. What does it mean to be “cut” by the Word of God?
 5. How does covenant renewal shape the Christian life?
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VI. Heaven and Earth Meet in Worship

A. The Church as a Unified Reality

- Visible and invisible dimensions.

B. Worship as Participation in Heaven

- Hebrews 12

C. The Assembly of Heaven

- Christ
- Angels
- Saints made perfect

Questions for the Class

1. What does Hebrews 12 say happens when Christians gather?
2. Why might Christians forget the heavenly dimension of worship?
3. How would worship change if we remembered this reality?
4. Why does Scripture describe worship as entering Mount Zion?

5. What difference does this make for reverence in worship?
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VII. The Liturgy of the Word

Consecration

A. The Word as the Spirit's Instrument

- The Word consecrates the people.

B. The Sacrificial Knife

- Hebrews 4:12
- The Greek term referring to a sacrificial blade.

C. The Ascension Offering

- Leviticus imagery.
- The Hebrew word *olah* meaning “to ascend.”

D. The Worshiper as the Offering

- The animal represents the worshiper.
- Smoke ascending to God.

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Hebrews compare the Word of God to a sacrificial knife?
 2. What was the purpose of the ascension offering?
 3. Why did the worshiper place his hand on the sacrifice?
 4. How does the Word “cut” believers today?
 5. What does it mean for our lives to ascend to God?
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VIII. Christ Examines His Churches

A. Revelation's Vision of the Churches

- Christ walking among the lampstands.

B. Christ's Inspection

- Praise and rebuke.

C. The Church as Lampstand

- The light of the world.

D. Word and Sacrament as Christ's Presence

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Revelation describe churches as lampstands?
 2. What does it mean that Christ walks among the churches?
 3. How does Christ inspect His people?
 4. Why would churches lose their lampstand?
 5. What does this teach about accountability in worship?
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IX. Eucharistic Judgment and Communion

A. 1 Corinthians 11

- Judgment through unworthy participation.

B. Christ's Presence in the Meal

- Proclaiming the Lord's death.

C. Consequences of Neglect

- Weakness
- Sickness
- Death

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Paul warn about unworthy communion?
 2. What does it mean to proclaim the Lord's death?
 3. Why might communion bring judgment?
 4. How should believers examine themselves?
 5. Why is the Eucharist central to worship?
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X. The Eucharist and the Unity of the Church

A. Participation in Christ

- 1 Corinthians 10:16–17

B. Becoming One Body

- Eating the same Christ.

C. Fulfillment of John 17

- Unity with God and one another.

Questions for the Class

1. What does Paul mean by participation in Christ?
 2. How does the Eucharist create unity?
 3. Why is the Church called the Body of Christ?
 4. How does communion reflect Christ's prayer in John 17?
 5. Why must the Eucharist be shared as a community meal?
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XI. The Necessity of Worship

A. Hebrews 10 Warning

- The danger of neglecting the assembly.

B. Worship as Nourishment

- Word and Sacrament give life.

C. Life Through Death

- Food as a picture of spiritual life.

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Hebrews warn against skipping church?
 2. How do Word and Sacrament nourish believers?
 3. Why does God use material things to communicate life?
 4. What does the Eucharist reveal about God's design for life?
 5. Why might modern people struggle with sacramental thinking?
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XII. Final Considerations from 1 Corinthians 12–14

A. The Lord's Supper as a Meal

B. Preaching as Secondary to the Table

C. No Magical Formula for Communion

D. Self-examination as a personal responsibility

Questions for the Class

1. Why does Scripture describe the Lord's Supper as a meal?
2. Why might preaching have become central in modern worship?
3. What dangers arise from treating liturgical words as magical formulas?
4. Why must believers examine themselves before communion?
5. What does this passage teach about the structure of early Christian worship?