

**Lecture 12- Gospel-Centered Worship**

*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.*

*Romans 8:28-30*

**Key Concepts**

- Worship as Gospel representation and Gospel storyline
- The means of grace converge in worship

**Lecture Objectives**

- Understanding worship in relationship to the Gospel
- Seeing all of the elements of worship as contributing to Gospel transformation

**Preliminary Questions**

- How much attention do you give to the non-preaching aspects of worship?
- How has corporate worship been transformational in your life?
- How might God use a benediction to change your life?
- How important are the non-preaching elements of worship to a service of worship that is pleasing to God?
- What is the relationship between transformational worship and informational worship?

**Gospel-Centered Worship****I. Planning Worship as Gospel Presentation**

Key Gospel passages: Mk 1:14-15; 13:10; Rms. 1:1, 9, 15-16; 1 Co 1:17; Gal. 1:6; 3:8; Phil 1:3-6; Col. 1:5-6; 1 Th. 1:4-6; 1 Tim 1:10b-11; 2 Tim 1:8-12; Titus 2:11-14

**A. The Gospel shape**

1. The holy character of God
2. The sinfulness of men and women
3. The gracious provision of redemption in Christ
4. The empowering grace to live like Christ

**B. Isaiah 6:1-8**

1. The holiness of God
2. The sinfulness of man
3. The gracious provision of salvation
4. Transformed sinners respond to God's call

**C. Exodus 24:1-11**

1. Preparing to worship God in His holiness
2. Atonement for sin necessary
3. God's provision in the sacrifices and blood of the covenant
4. Desire for transformed life in response to God's call
5. Fellowship meal with God Himself present

**D. Acts 2:22-47**

1. Preaching of Peter reflects God's holiness, man's sinfulness, God's provision, call to repentance and faith, and the gift of Holy Spirit for a transformed life
2. Practice of early church
  - a. Gathered in homes

- b. Sense of awe before holy God
  - c. Breaking of bread reminder of God's provision
  - d. Apostles' instruction for living in Christ and telling others
- E. Revelation 4-5
- 1. Holiness of God (4:8-11)
  - 2. Nobody is worthy (5:1-4)
  - 3. God's provision of the lamb slain (5:5-6, 9-14)
  - 4. Transformed lives joined in worship and rule (5:9-10)
- II. Gospel-Centered Preaching: Heart of Gospel-Centered Worship
- A. Worship and the reformation of the church
- 1. Preaching of the true Gospel
  - 2. Congregational participation means of growth
  - 3. Right administration of baptism and Lord's Supper
  - 4. Transformed lives lived to God's glory in everything
- B. Christ-centered preaching central to worship
- 1. Presenting of the Gospel from Scripture
  - 2. The holy character of God
  - 3. The sinfulness of men and women
  - 4. The gracious provision of redemption in Christ
  - 5. The empowering grace to live like Christ
- C. Same aspects of preaching to be applied to all other elements
- III. The Convergence of the Means of Grace in Worship for Christ-like Transformation

Westminster Shorter Catechism: Questions #88-#99

Question 88: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

Answer 88: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of Redemption are, his ordinances, especially the Word, Sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.

- A. God brings together the means of grace and growth into public worship
- 1. Reading the Scripture (1 Timothy 4:13)
  - 2. Preaching of the Word (2 Timothy 4:2)
  - 3. Prayer (I Timothy 2:1)
  - 4. Songs, hymns, and spiritual songs (Col. 3:15-17 and Eph. 5:15-21)
  - 5. Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Mt. 28:18-20 and I Cor. 11:23 ff)
  - 6. Fellowship and mutual edification of believers (Hebrews 10:24-25)
  - 7. Professions or declarations of faith (I Timothy 3:16)
  - 8. Testimonies of God's grace (I Corinthians 14:26)
  - 9. Offerings (2 Corinthians 9:7-9)
- B. John Calvin's view of worship as transformational
- 1. Calvin saw worship as primarily transformational
  - 2. Calvin had expectations that people would be changed to be more like Christ in the worship service itself!
  - 3. Contrasted with Zwingli who saw worship primarily as informational
- C. God's goal is for His people to become like Christ – Romans 8:28-30
- D. Gospel-centered preaching and Gospel-centered non-preaching elements
- IV. Worship and the Gospel Storyline
- A. Worship to be rooted in the biblical storyline of the Gospel

- B. Worship to flow together with its own unique Gospel re-telling
- C. Worship to flow into God's Gospel story in the lives of the congregation