

## **Lecture 13- Worship Leadership & Participation (I)**

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

*Ephesians 4:1-13, 16*

### **Key Concepts**

- Role and authority of elders in worship
- Participation of members

### **Lecture Objectives**

- Introduce the role of elders in the corporate public worship service
- Explore the use of the congregation’s gifts within the authority of the elders

### **Preliminary Questions**

- What are your gifts for the “general ministry” of the church?
- Paul tells Timothy, “Watch your life and doctrine closely.” What does that mean for the way in which we should view (and pray for) the leaders of our church?

## **Worship Leadership & Participation (I)**

### I. Ephesians 4:1-16

- A. Called into relationship with Christ by grace (1)
- B. Called into fellowship of church - Christ’s body (2-6)
- C. All are gifted for general ministry (7-10)

“The gifts of Christ’s grace are like a majestic stained-glass window in his church. Each Christian is set in place like a piece of jewelled glass, so that the radiance of God’s grace may shine through him to add a beam of crimson or emerald or azure to the orchestration of color blazing within.”

Ed Clowney, *Called to Ministry*, 28

1. Each believer has been given a gift from Christ
  2. The “some” (e.g. pastor-teachers) are a part of the first three groups
- D. Some are called to ordained ministry of teaching and shepherding (11-16)
    1. The “some” are a gift of God to His church
    2. Work of some in the ministry is to shepherd and equip all in the general ministry, by the word and sacraments
    3. Body builds itself up in love as each part does work

### II. Congregations under the leadership of elders who are under Christ

- A. I Peter 5:1-7 The elders are under-shepherds of Christ and overseers of the flock
- B. Acts 20:17-38 “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.”
- C. I Timothy 4:11-16 “...you will save both yourself and your hearers.”  
 “I love being an elder in the PCA, but I tremble at being an elder in the PCA.”
  - 1. Acting on the behalf of Christ
  - 2. Don’t neglect your gifts
- D. Hebrews 13:17 “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.”

### III. Participation of Members Exercising Gifts Under Oversight Elders

- A. I Corinthians 11-14: Orderly worship under the elders, and the individual gifts being used under that authority
- B. Acts 2:14-41 – gifts at Pentecost showered on all
- C. I Peter 2:4-5: Imagery of the temple, the spiritual house, each working together
- D. Romans 12:1-8
  - 1. A broadening and sampling of the kinds of ways God gives gifts
  - 2. Paul’s apostleship is itself just one of the gifts of grace for the building up of the church

### IV. Preliminary Implications for Corporate Worship (Hebrews 2:10-13)

- A. Elders as worship leaders with authority and oversight from Christ
  - 1. Under Christ declaring God’s name
  - 2. Responsible for directing the Gospel storyline of worship
  - 3. Thus: Call to worship, declaration pardon, preaching word, administration of Sacraments, benediction, authoritative instruction, rubrics...
- B. Congregation as worship responders led by Christ
  - 1. Songs, prayers of response, scriptural responses, testimonies, eating of bread and cup, professing faith ...
  - 2. Utilization of gifts for edification of body under oversight elders

### V. Who is Actually Leading and Participating in Worship

- A. Christ the heavenly worship leader with all authority (Heb. 2; 8:1-2)
  - 1. He is present in local church worship through the Holy Spirit
  - 2. He connects heavenly worship to earth - Heb. 12:22-29
- B. The earthly human worship leader
  - 1. Gifted, trained, ordained elder
    - a. Usually a teaching elder
    - b. Delegated authority from the body of elders (session)
  - 2. Overseeing authority in the planning and carrying out of the worship service
- C. The corporate congregational unison participation
  - 1. Songs, prayers, scripture readings, creeds, vows, responses, bread and cup, etc.
  - 2. The corporate “Amen”
- D. The utilization of “lead” worshipers in various strategic places
  - 1. Note: All of this is under clear oversight and authority of worship leader
  - 2. I Corinthians 14:26
  - 3. Other elders leading various elements
    - a. Preaching
    - b. Prayer
  - 4. Deacons
    - a. Prayer or task related to collection and offering

- b. Testimony and prayer for mercy ministry
- 5. Non-elders (men, women, and children)
  - a. Testimonies of God's grace
  - b. Mission moments
  - c. Sentence prayers of praise and thanksgiving
  - d. Occasional scripture readings not connected to preaching
- 6. Music Leaders
  - a. Worship song leader
  - b. Choirs and ensembles
  - c. Soloists
  - d. Instrumentalists