

## **Lecture 15- Planning a Worship Service**

*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." Then I heard the voice of the Lord...*

*Isaiah 6:1*

### **Key Concepts**

- Planning worship with Gospel progression in mind

### **Lecture Objectives**

- Review worship seminar by Dr. Chapell
- Apply the regulative principle and Gospel-flow of worship to the task of planning

### **Preliminary Questions**

- What impact does the knowledge of Christ leading worship have upon the way the planning of worship should be approached?
- Why is the flow or structure of worship important for the congregation? Why – with regard to the congregation – should one not simply ‘toss’ the elements together?

### **Planning a Worship Service**

Introduction – Additional discussion of women in worship and church

#### I. Five-fold Approach to Regulative Principle of Worship (Review)

- Commanded elements
- Biblical content
- Gospel shape or arrangement
- Variety of valid expressions
- Circumstances unique to local churches

#### II. Format Approaches to Worship Services

- Dialogical
- Flowing praise
- Content-driven or thematic

#### III. Dr. Chapell handout on Gospel worship (see Appendix D)

- Re-presenting the Gospel (page 5)
- Aspects of a worship services
  - Gospel in form (page 6)
  - Purposeful in format (page 6)
- Components of worship services (page 7)
  - Calls (Scriptural, pastoral, choral, congregational, responsive)
  - Prayers (collects, forms, Scriptures, extemporaneous, hymns)
  - Readings (pastor, congregation, choral, antiphonal, responsive)

4. Music: Hymns, solos and choral pieces
  5. Offerings and collections
  6. Benedictions and charges
  7. Transitions (explanations and rubrics (i.e., instructions))
  8. Sermon
  9. Sacraments
  10. Other? (e.g. fellowship, testimonies...)
- D. Practical instruction in leading worship
1. Intangibles of worship (pages 8-9)
  2. Miscellaneous worship concerns (pages 9-10)
- IV. Basic Structure of Worship Services (Five-fold Pattern)
- A. Call to worship – God’s initiative taking hold of His people
  - B. Confession and forgiveness – God separates His people from sin
  - C. Consecration – God speaks to His people: Scripture reading and sermon
  - D. Communion – God gives tangible signs and seals: The Lord’s Supper
  - E. Commission (benediction): God arranges for succession
- V. Worship Elements or Building Blocks
- A. Prayer – I Timothy 2:1
  - B. Offering – 2 Corinthians 9:7-9
  - C. Reading and preaching Scripture – 2 Timothy 4:2
  - D. Singing – Colossians 3:15-17 and Ephesians 5:8-20
  - E. Sacraments – I Corinthians 11:23ff
  - F. Other - Confessions of faith, oaths, vows, testimonies – I Co. 14:26
- VI. Choosing and Arranging Elements and Expressions of Worship
- A. Re-presenting the Gospel in way you arrange elements and choose content
  - B. Shaping worship to follow the Gospel storyline that flows from Scripture into the lives of congregation
  - C. How does the presence of Christ (Hebrews 2:11-12) impact choices?
  - D. Is worship dialogical?
    1. Dialogue is built into the Gospel flow
    2. Is worship about what we get or what we give? Yes! Both!
  - E. Ask question of everything: Why am I planning to do this?
  - F. One page diagram from beginning of class - evaluate what you planned
- VII. Example of Music in Choosing Resources for Worship
- A. Great old hymns with great old tunes (which can be arranged according to preferred instruments)
  - B. Great old hymns with great new tunes (also arranged according to preferred instruments)
  - C. Great new hymns with great new tunes (ditto)
  - D. Great contemporary choruses bridge between other songs and/or elements (I Love You Lord, He is Exalted, etc.)
  - E. Great historic “choruses” as bridges between other songs and/or elements (Doxology, Gloria Patri, etc.)
  - F. Songs from the nations
- VIII. Example of Presbytery Service (see Appendix E)
- A. Ohio Valley Presbytery context
  - B. Creative use of historic and contemporary – convergent worship
- IX. Grid of Questions for Worship Planning in a Local Church
- A. How does the session oversee the worship of the church?
  - B. Who makes up the worship planning team?

- C. The biblical elements
  - 1. Are they present?
  - 2. How are they arranged?
  - 3. Is there room for creative and fresh expressions?
  - 4. Do they support each other?
  - 5. Do they support the overall focus of the service?
  - 6. Are they given appropriate time and weight in the service?
  - 7. Is each element “Word-centered” and “Christ-centered” and does it serve the Gospel purpose and storyline of this specific worship service?
- D. What is the overall structure of the service?
  - 1. Liturgical
  - 2. Thematic
  - 3. Flowing praise
- E. The sermon and the rest of the service
  - 1. What is the role of the sermon?
  - 2. What is the role of the non-sermon elements?
  - 3. Where do the sacraments fit in?
- F. Representing of the Gospel each week through the sermon and other elements
- G. Does our worship invite participation?
- H. Do we make changes with proper instruction and patience?
- I. Does our service engage the whole person?
- J. Does the music express reverent joy in content and style?
- K. Does our worship bring us into each other’s presence as well as God’s presence (horizontal and vertical)?
- L. Do we draw on both richness of past and freshness of present?