

Return to Obedience
The Role of Ritual in New Covenant Worship
by Timothy R. Nichols

Introduction: Why Return to Ritual?

- Liturgy is Unavoidable
- ~~Liturgical vs. Nonliturgical~~ Formal Liturgy ↔ Informal Liturgy
- Against Liturgical Revolutions
- For Liturgical Reformation

New Testament Principles and Commands

- Physical Rituals are Required (Baptism and the Lord's Table)
- We Worship in a Regimented, Dignified Way (Col. 2:5, 1Cor. 14:40)
- We Worship in Heaven (Hebrews)
 - What Does Heavenly Worship Look Like? (Rev. 4:8-11, 19:1-7)
- We Pray for Certain Things (Matt. 6:9-13//Lu. 11:2-4, 1Tim. 2:1-2, Jam. 1:5, 5:13-16, 1Jn. 5:16)
- Bodily Attitude in Prayer
 - Raising Hands and Eyes (1Tim. 2:8, 2Chron.6:12-14, Neh. 8:6, Ps. 141:2, Jn. 17:1, cf. 11:41)
 - Bowing Down (Ezra 9:5-6, Lu. 18:10,13, Ps. 38:5-8, Gen. 23:12-13, 24:48)
- We Sing Psalms (Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, Jam. 5:13)
 - The Meaning of "Songs, Hymns and Spiritual Songs" (Ps. 3, 6, 18)
 - Must We Sing Only Psalms? (Ps. 33:3, 96:1, Ex. 15:1-21, Lu. 1:46-55, 68-79, 2:29-32, Rev. 5:9-10, 14:1-3)
 - Our Worship Should Not Clash with the Psalms We Are Singing
 - Psalm-Singing in Church History (Basil the Great, Jerome, the Rule of St. Benedict, the Eastern church, the *Book of Common Prayer* (Coverdale Psalms, 1535), the *Anglo-Genevan Psalter* (1556), *Bay Psalm Book* (1640), *Scots Metrical Psalter* (1650))
- How Do We Measure Up?

The Lord's Table and the Christian Life: Mystical Experiences?

- Perichoretic Unity (Jn. 17:20-23, 15:4-5)
- Pauline Outworking (Gal. 2:20)
- Table Fellowship and the Peace Offering (Lev. 3, 7:11-21, 19:5-8)
- The Mystery of the Table
 - A Communal Event
 - Paul and Jesus Don't Believe in Transubstantiation (1Cor. 11:27, Mt. 26:29)
 - Symbolic? (1Cor. 11:23-27)

In Spirit and in Truth: A Second Look (Jn. 4:19-24)

Conclusion: Known to God from Eternity Are All His Works