

The Grooves of Grace

Liturgy and Worship

Thomas Bergler, *The Juvenalization of American Christianity*

“Juvenalization is the process by which the religious beliefs, practices, and developmental characteristics of adolescents become accepted as appropriate for Christians of all ages. It begins with the praiseworthy goal of adapting the faith to appeal to the young. But it sometimes ends badly, with both youth and adults embracing immature versions of the faith.”

Thomas Bergler, *The Juvenalization of American Christianity*

“The story of juvenilization is a story not of a sinister plot or a noble crusade, but of unintended consequences and unquestioned assumptions.”

God cares about worship

- Created us to worship (Genesis 1-2)
- Saved us to worship (Ephesians 1)
- Commands us to worship
 - *On certain days*
 - *In certain ways*
 - *With certain hearts*

God cares about us.

- David Foster Wallace: *“Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what we worship.”*
- We can worship what takes life.
- We can worship what gives life.

Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship: Reformed
According to the Scriptures*

“Holiness is not something you bring into worship. It’s the fruit of worship.”

I. Worship tells a story

What story is it telling?

- OT Worship
- NT Worship

Common Elements in Christian Worship

- Acts 2:42

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”

- Colossians 3:16

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

- Creeds or Affirmations of Faith

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6
- Philippians 2:6-11
- Colossians 1:15-20

The Individual Elements of Worship Tell a Story

- Baptism
- The Lord's Supper

The Arrangement of the Elements Tell a Story

- Call to Worship
- Confession of Sin
- Assurance of Pardon
- Affirmation of Faith
- The Word of God – read and preached
- The Lord's Supper
- Sending

Our choices in worship tell a story

II. A Story That Transforms

James K.A. Smith, *You Are What You Love*

“The church’s worship is the heart of discipleship. Yes, Christian formation is life-encompassing, Monday through Saturday, week in and week out project; but it radiates from, and is nourished by, the worship life of the congregation gathered around the Word and Table. There is no sanctification without the church, not because some building holds a superstitious magic, but rather because the church is the very body of Christ, animated by the Spirit of God and composed of Spirited practices...Liturgy is where we learn to ‘put on’ Christ (Col. 3:12-16).”

John Calvin, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*

“[B]elievers have no greater help than public worship, for by it God raises his own folk upward step by step...[It is the means of grace by which God] bears us up as if in chariots to his heavenly glory, a glory that fills all things with its immeasurableness and even surpasses the heavens in height!”

What worship does

- George Robertson: It digs the “grooves of grace” into our hearts.
- Trains the believer
- Invites the non-believer