

Through Our Worship Christ Glory Is Revealed

Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice

By. Bryan Chapell

Bonnie Saunderson

Alliance Theological Seminary, New York City

Course Title: Worship Arts And Disciplines

Course Number: CD 701 NZ/NOS

Fall Semester 2022

Dr. Amy F. Davis Abdallah

September 27th, 2022

Summary

Bryan Chapell book introduces his readers to a practice and a mindset towards a Christ Centered Worship in every part of the church's ministry both corporately and individually to worship the Lord God for the praise of his glory even when it comes to the structure of the church. It has always been a competitive practice between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic church especially during the times of the reformation. You could always tell which power were occupying the space of the church. If the Protestant were in power of the church, they would replace the spire of the church from a cross to a rooster that symbolized the new era of the reformation, and if the Roman Catholic returned to power, they would surely, replace the rooster with a cross.¹ When Martin Luther came into power of the church in the sixteenth century, he had a story of the gospel from his perspective that he wanted to tell that would reflect the structure of the reformation starting with the placement of the pulpit. The Roman Catholic placed the pulpit in front of the congregation, which one would interpret it being above the congregants (or more anointed).

However, Luther placed the pulpit that stood in front of the people but not above because he simply saw the people of priest hood of believers, and that the preacher was not more holy than the people.² According to the author he argues that subservient loyalty to traditions will hinder the God given ministry and the church would not be effective to the generations. He also argues

Saunderson 2

¹ Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting The Gospel Shape Our Practice* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2016), 15.

² Chapell, *Christ-Centered*, 15-16.

that we cannot ill talk traditions because it can deny God's purpose for the church (the body of believers) on which the church was established. According to the author he expresses the importance of worship or giving adoration through both Martin Bucer and John Calvin four elements that is important for worship. First, understanding who God is. Second, Participation. Third, Regulation. Last, adoration. Based on (Acts 2:42). They wanted the congregants to understand God's word and worship because one's faith is real by one's devotion of one's heart to God. He says this is impossible without being intentional in knowing God personally and understand God's will in glorifying and lifting his holy name. The author shared how during John's Calvin ministry in Geneva, Calvin began to get old and feeble it was a chair that he sat in beneath the pulpit which kept him sitting among the people at there level. His life in ministry whether young or old, he never exalted himself above the congregation. His participation showed his commitment to the priest hood of believers. As far as regulation was concerned Calvin believed in Regulative Principle of a Christian Worship. He studied scripture to find his liturgy (his practice of public worship).

Last, is the fourth element of essential worship according to Calvin and Bucer is "adoration" being mindful that all of our help comes in the name of the Lord, the creator of Heaven and earth (Psalms 121:2; 124:8).³ Though, throughout the years since the beginning of reformation there has been conflicts concerning the forms of worship. The author expresses how in a great number of denominations in recent movements have searched to unite the strengthens

Saunderson 3

³ Chapell, *Christ-Centered*, 43-44.

of both worship traditions. The bottom line is about the efficacy of scripture; the reading and preaching of God's word as well as musical and dramaturgical practices has influenced creativity and power concerning the way scripture is read.⁴ Christian liturgy is a form of worship in every congregation what the worship is on Sunday, or Saturday. Throughout the worship service it is sacred on to God and his people. One of the greatest high lights when it comes to worship is the benediction when the declaration of God's blessing is spoken over the people of God.

The author reminds us that the covenant people should remain mindful of the promises they have heard during worship so that they may be strengthened in God's will to do, say, and live how he commands them to live. One's blessings are based on the authority of God's word. In some traditions ministers will walk toward the exit giving their final blessings by sometime touch the shoulders, hands, and heads of the congregants; while other traditions there are pastors that remain in the front of the church offering the wideness of the love and mercy from the generosity of their hearts.⁵

Personal Thought

When I think of Christ-Centered Worship, I am reminded of His love, His grace, and His mercy that rest upon me, and all the Children of God. I know that I am a work in progress from his glorious Grace and Mercy. Reading this book helps me to understand that true worship must comes from a renewed mind; a mind of God's truth based on scripture as well as Christ the Holy Spirit in me revealing himself through me for myself and others for Christ Centered worship.

Saunderson 4

Bibliography

⁴ Chapell, *Christ-Centered*, 225.

⁵ Chapell, *Christ-Centered*, 253.

Chapell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Christian: Letting The Gospel Shape Our Practice*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2016.