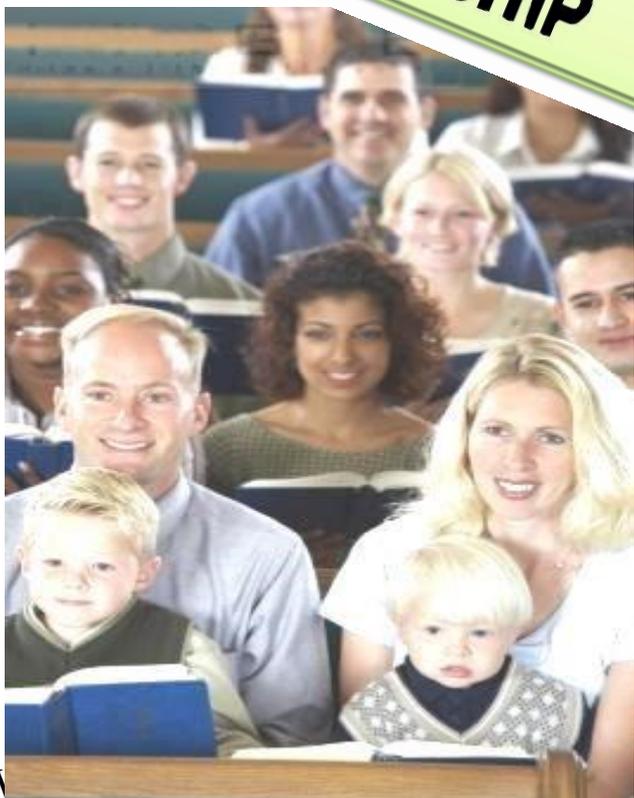


**8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CONFIRMATION SEMINAR**

**THE WAY LUTHERANS  
WORSHIP**



## Lesson #3 Elements of Worship part 1

### HomeWork

**Watch the Video:** Why are Lutheran hymns so hard, depressing and icky?

**Complete the review sheet** for this video.

#### **Read the Following Article: Lutheran Worship Is Characterized by Reverence and Dignity**

Lutheran worship needs to be characterized by reverence and dignity. I am concerned when I notice a movement away from a sense of reverence and dignity in our Lutheran worship. Let me speak plainly. I am troubled when I notice some of our pastors conducting the liturgy as if they were entertaining friends in their home, with little quips and humorous asides sprinkled throughout the service. This robs the people of the opportunity to focus their thoughts on Jesus Christ. Such self-indulgence has no place in our worship services. A sense of reverent awe and dignity needs to permeate our Lutheran worship services.

Our Lutheran worship services should be known as truly sacred events, marked by a deep sense of the holiness and majesty of God. We need to realize that when we attend the worship service, truly holy things are going on. God is with us. He is present among us through Word and Sacrament. The great struggle of God against Satan is taking place as life and salvation are given out. These are serious matters. The angels in heaven sing, "Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord of Sabaoth!" and cover their faces at the sight of the holy God. Dare we behave in a manner that clearly conflicts with this wonderful sense of reverence and dignity?

It is very tempting for the Christian church to do whatever is popular for the moment in the culture around us. We need to recognize that Lutheran worship transcends culture. I am not saying that church is an "escape" from the world. This can never happen. I am saying that our worship services need to help us see clearly that when we gather as God's people, we have stepped out of our own human opinion and passing fads, and have moved into God's world. We need to take great care in our worship practices that we not allow our church to be caught up in the latest trends that come along in our culture. We also need to take care that what we do in worship does genuinely communicate God's truths to God's people today. An excellent article appeared in a journal for church musicians that underscores the point I am trying to make under this thesis. Let me share a quote from the article:

Today's culture tells us that we deserve whatever we want whenever we want it. This mentality is rapidly invading the church. The ultimate blasphemy of a consumer culture is its desire to consume God. Though not church-growth advocated, televangelism has turned religion into magic, instead of the mystery we may all need. If the church roots itself in marketing and consumerism, it will always seek to please the customer. Worship planners will seek to use the "immediately familiar." The result will be the "tyranny of the familiar" that changes every few years even while we ignore our own traditions. The long-term implication will be that we can cut ourselves off from deeper and longerlasting Christian roots and even our own unique denominational roots. . . . In a "get and go" culture, and in one which says, "Don't worry, be happy," how are we to proclaim that we depend on God, rather than having God depend upon our ceaseless activities that may masquerade as gospel? (Collman, "The Tyranny of the Familiar," *The American Organist* [March 1995], p. 39).

These are strong words. We need to consider such words carefully. As we seek to reach out boldly with the Gospel, let us take care always to remember that our worship services are not merely one more way people can be amused or

entertained. We need to be gathered by God to receive His gifts, and to hear His Word applied to our lives. Then we are equipped to go out into our world to serve Him who so wonderfully serves us with His Gospel. We gather in worship to be strengthened for service to our Lord in our daily callings in life, whatever they may be, wherever they may be. If our worship only reflects what we find in our world, then something has gone seriously wrong. If our worship services become only a little bit different from what we might experience at a rousing musical concert or an exciting sporting event, haven't we missed the mark?

We would not wish to give people the impression that there is one specific and distinct period of time we must emulate. That is why the Christian church's worship has developed slowly and gradually down through the centuries and why, from culture to culture, there are differences in the style of music and the forms used. Underneath it all, at least in the historic Christian traditions, of which Lutheranism is certainly a part, there are common patterns and forms of worship that have come down through the ages. These forms have served the church well, and will continue to serve us well as we move toward the year 2000 and beyond.

**Multiple Choice:**

\_\_c\_\_ In the Invocation of the Divine Service, we are ...

- a. trying to be in style
- b. earning our salvation
- c. calling on the LORD
- d. asking for trouble
- e. playing a game with God
- f. jumping to conclusions

\_\_b\_\_ The Good News of the Christian Faith is that ...

- a. Jesus came to show us what we need to do in order to please God and earn our salvation.
- b. salvation is by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Who died for all sins and rose again.
- c. we are able to decide that Jesus is going to be our Lord and Savior
- d. God gets us started on the path to heaven and we are responsible for getting there after that.

\_\_c\_\_ During the Confession of Sins, I am admitting that ...

- a. I am a pretty good person.
- b. I am not sinful but I do sin.
- c. I am both sinful and a sinner.
- d. I deserve to be forgiven because I have kept the Law.

\_\_d\_\_ During the Confession of Sins, I am asking God the Father to be merciful and gracious to me because ..

- a. I am basically able to keep the Ten Commandments but I just hadn't tried hard enough before.
- b. of the fact that no one is perfect and I do the best I can; so God is happy when I sin just a little.
- c. the devil makes me sin and that means it is not my fault when it happens.
- d. His boundless mercy and for the sake of the sufferings and death of Jesus, the Son of God.

\_\_a\_\_ When I hear the Absolution, I am hearing ...

- a. pure Gospel
- b. mostly Gospel
- c. the Law of God
- d. a threat from God
- e. a teeny, tiny smidge of Law & gobs of Gospel
- f. a promise to be forgiven some day soon

**Matching:**

\_\_c\_\_ Invocation

\_\_f\_\_ Confession of Sin

\_\_e\_a\_ amen

\_\_b\_\_ Trinity or Triune

\_\_f\_\_ Confession of Faith

\_\_g\_\_ Absolution

\_\_a\_e\_ Amen

a. a true response or "this is most certainly true!"

b. One God — Father, Son, Holy Spirit

c. calling on the Name of God in the Divine Service

d. calling on a higher being for help or to be present

e. a statement that something is true

f. admitting you are a sinner and have sinned

g. being freed from something

h. the announcement of the forgiveness of sins

**True-False:**

- T\_\_ When I was baptized, I was crucified with Christ.
- F\_\_ In the Divine Service we *end* with the Invocation.
- F\_ It is wrong for Lutherans to make the sign of the cross.
- T\_\_ In worship we all have the Invocation together while at home I may call on God in prayer.
- F\_\_ The pastor is able to forgive sins because he is not a sinful man and is not a sinner.
- F\_\_ In the Divine Service the Confession of Sins and the Absolution are near the end.
- T\_\_ Absolution is connected to Baptism because of the forgiveness of sins in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- T\_\_ I am forgiven because of the Father's love, Jesus' death and the Holy Spirit's gift of faith.
- T\_\_ The Invocation, the Confession of Sins and the Absolution prepare us to be in the Presence of the LORD God Almighty.