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MORE THAN THE SUM OF THE PARTS: WORSHIP AS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

Graham J. O'Brien

How do our church meetings proclaim the gospel story? This article argues that the structure and content of our times together ought to be seen, and therefore harnessed, as a powerful tool for discipleship in the worshipping community.

Introduction

Worship is the goal of the Christian life, and indeed of life itself, which means that our worship—both corporately and individually—has the highest priority in the life and mission of the Church.¹ A central ethos within an Anglican context is a desire for corporate worship to have a strong biblical basis that proclaims the story of God's saving acts,² where the gathering of the local Christian community is an intentional event that empowers our life of worship.³ The challenge then is how to construct worship that deepens its biblical focus, thereby building up the spiritual life of the congregation? For some, especially within the evangelical tradition, the emphasis goes on the readings and the sermon to provide the biblical focus. However, the whole act of corporate worship is in itself the central act of biblical theology in the life of the Church that conveys the biblical message. Central to this, is the ancient pattern of Word and Table that communicates the biblical narrative of God's saving acts and encourages all to make the story of God their story. Therefore, recognising the importance of structure in corporate worship is important as we seek to deepen our relationship with God and recapture the role of corporate worship in evangelism.

¹ As Christopher Wright suggests, 'The goal of our mission is the worship and glory of the one true living God. That's because the goal of human life is to love, worship, glorify and enjoy God.' Therefore, the goal for the mission of God's people is 'to bring others to worship and glorify God.' See Christopher J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010), pp. 244–245.

² Jim Belcher describes this as 'deep worship.' See Jim Belcher, *Deep Church: A Third Way Beyond Emerging and Traditional* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2009), pp. 123–40.

³ What the early Reformers referred to as 'edification.' See, Timothy J. Keller, 'Reformed Worship in the Global City,' in *Worship by the Book* (ed. D.A. Carson; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), p. 202. Graham J. O'Brien, 'The Procuring of Reverence, Piety and Devotion: Determined Worship for a Determined Church.,' *Churchman* 127 no. 4 (2013): pp. 337–346.

What is Corporate Worship?

Although Scripture does not actually define worship, for Christians, worship is the proper response to God's creative and redemptive actions,⁴ where the key terms used for worship within the biblical narrative are: Homage—meaning grateful submission, Service—meaning to serve or a sacrifice of praise, and Reverence—meaning respect for God.⁵ The emphasis here is that God is the object of worship because God is worthy, where human worship of God, centred on Christ and empowered through the Holy Spirit 'properly responds to the redemptive provision that God has graciously given,' through adoration and action, both individually and corporately.⁶ The direction of worship then is a human response to God's move towards us in Christ, an event commonly referred to as 'revelation.'

The practice of Christian worship in the first century inherited much of its liturgical practices from that of Israel.⁷ Therefore, biblical worship, '*remembers* God's work in the past, *anticipates* God's rule over all the earth, and *actualises* both past and future in the present to transform persons, communities and the world.'⁸ Importantly, biblical worship engages both the mind and the heart. As Robert Webber suggests, it is the remembering of God's saving acts that is central to worship, but this remembering (*anamnesis*) is more than just looking back, it is a 'making present' of God's saving deeds. Therefore, remembering involves both a historic recitation alongside a dramatic re-enactment of what God has done, is doing and will do.⁹ Protestants would recognise this as the pattern of Word and Sacrament, where God speaks to us and his love is made audible through his Word, God's love is made visible to us in the Lord's Supper, and we respond to what we have received in anticipation of Christ's return.¹⁰ As a result, 'God draws us closer to himself in the

⁴ Larry W. Hurtado, 'Worship, NT Christian,' in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible S–Z* (ed. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld, et al; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009), p. 916. Also see O'Brien, 'The Procuring of Reverence,' pp. 338–340.

⁵ D.G. Peterson, 'Worship,' in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (ed. T.Desmond Alexander and Brian S Rosner; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), pp. 855–57, 62.

⁶ D.A. Carson, 'Worship Under the Word,' in *Worship by the Book*, pp. 26, 38, 43–44. Carson's formal definition is on page 26.

⁷ Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (2d ed.; London: SPCK, 2002), pp. 23, 33. James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (3rd ed.; Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), pp. 151–53, 176, 229.

⁸ Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2008), pp. 43, 62, my emphasis.

⁹ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 43–44, 48. Also see White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, pp. 232–33.

¹⁰ A paraphrase of both Belcher, *Deep Church*, p. 139; White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, p. 175. Gerald Bray states, the 'Lord's supper is a blessing given

power of his Holy Spirit,¹¹ so we can '[participate] through the Spirit in the (incarnate) Son's communication with the Father.'¹² The act of worship is therefore more than just education, but is where God is made intensely present to us as we hear and respond as the body of Christ. This is especially true of the Lord's Supper where both remembrance through re-enactment and God's mysterious presence combine, as expressed in the Book of Common Prayer (1559 revision) in the words,

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

The difficulty is in taking the extreme position of either 'hyper-supernaturalism' as in medieval Catholicism, or in a 'de-supernaturalism'¹³ focusing on the human action of remembering alone, where the sacramental action of the Lord's Supper as a visible sign of the Lord's real presence and grace is lost. For people such as John Calvin, the middle way represented authentic worship that included elements of transcendence, where God was made 'spiritually real in our hearts.'¹⁴

Corporate Worship as Biblical Theology

That worship remembers and communicates the biblical narrative is what connects it so closely with biblical theology. As the term suggests, biblical theology is both a means of understanding the Christian faith and is a way to embody our faith. At the heart of biblical theology is the narrative of Scripture as canonically received, with the resulting focus on the theological themes that unify Scripture. As a result, biblical theology reads Scripture 'in its totality according to its own, rather than imposed

to us by God so that we can ponder and experience his love more deeply than mere words could ever allow.' See Gerald Bray, *God is Love: A Biblical and Systematic Theology* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2012), p. 719.

¹¹ Bray, *God is Love*, p. 719.

¹² James B. Torrance as quoted in, Thomas F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being, Three Persons* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd, 2001), p. 135. James Torrance calls this 'the gift of participating, in union with Christ, in what he has done for us once and for all by his self-offering to the Father in his life and death on the cross, and what he is continuing to do for us in the presence of the Father, and in his mission from the Father to the world.'

¹³ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, p. 133. Keller describes pre-reformation worship as 'medieval emotionalism.' See Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 209.

¹⁴ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 211.

categories,¹⁵ so that the whole has hermeneutical (interpretive) priority over the individual parts.

What biblical theology offers to our understanding of worship is the importance of the shape of the biblical narrative in forming Christian disciples. From the perspective of biblical theology, Christians are those who have chosen to accept God's story as their own, to be the 'community capable of hearing the story of God we find in the Scriptures and living in a manner that is faithful to that story.'¹⁶ For the church, organisationally, pastorally, and missionally, this means being the community that God has called us to be in the midst of the community and people in which God has placed us. And at the heart of the church community is worship as the primary means of remembering, anticipating and enacting God's story from creation to new creation.

That both worship and biblical theology communicate the narrative of Scripture is important since Christian truth is conveyed primarily through narrative in order to inform the performance of the Christian life through worship, community, prophetic speech, and action in the historical present.¹⁷ Therefore, the Bible declares that all authority belongs to God revealed in Jesus Christ and the Spirit, and as a whole can be read as a story of God's sovereignty in the renewal of all creation. Here we have the one Creator God; the presence of evil in God's creation; Israel as the people through whom God's Kingdom would come and who expressed their world view through the medium of story; and Jesus as the full presence of God who accomplishes what Scripture has pointed to, as told through the Gospel narratives.¹⁸

¹⁵ Craig Bartholomew, 'Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation: Introduction,' in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, (vol. 5, *The Scripture and Hermeneutics Series*; ed. Craig Bartholomew et al.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), p. 1.

¹⁶ George Stroup as quoted by Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *20th-century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 280.

¹⁷ David F. Ford, 'System, Story, Performance: A Proposal about the Role of Narrative Theology in Christian Systematic Theology,' in *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (ed. Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones; Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), pp. 202-204, 207, 208, 214.

¹⁸ N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (vol. 1, *Christian Origins and the Question of God*; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 139-44, 215-23, 371-403. See also N.T. Wright, *Scripture and the Authority of God* (SPCK, 2005), pp. 17-25, 84-86, 89-95. The result is a multi-layered approach which Wright describes as a five-act model: Creation (Genesis 1-2) act 1; Fall (Genesis 3-11) act 2; Israel (the story of Israel from Abraham up to Jesus the Messiah) act 3; Jesus is the climatic act 4; the New Testament including us is the fifth act which presupposes the other 4 and moves toward its final destination. Also

What makes the narrative approach encompassed by biblical theology and worship so powerful is the significance of the story that provides meaning. Significance is the relationship between the story and the world of the reader/listener, where a significant story penetrates and transforms the world and life of reader/listener. Therefore, the life and world of the reader/listener and the story form one world and one story, so that the reader/listener is included within the Christian story.¹⁹ Therefore, as H. Richard Niebuhr suggests, the biblical revelation of God is our *internal* history of God's relationship with us, rather than an *external* history observed from the outside and communicated as normative knowledge. Internal history therefore provides value, meaning, and unity because the past resides and is retold through memory and the future represents potential.²⁰ As a result, worship as an act of biblical theology can be understood as the 'proclamation of the story of God's redemptive actions in history,²¹ in which the Bible can be read as story and one's own story can be told on the basis of the biblical story.

More than the Sum of the Parts

If the priority of worship is to proclaim the biblical story, an act of biblical theology, then the structure of corporate worship is important since the gospel is realised and enacted in our common worship. My suspicion is that in modern or contemporary worship we have unknowingly taken on a fragmentary or modular approach to corporate worship whereby structure, often equated with tradition, is seen as old fashioned or at worst treated with suspicion, resulting in the individual elements in worship being treated as unconnected units that are free to be moved around. However, for worship as in many areas of life, the whole is more than the sum of the parts, since the structure of worship conveys the biblical narrative and in doing so shapes the individual and the community of faith. The act of gathering for worship transcends the individual elements as they work together enabling the people to be in the presence of God. As Gerald Bray puts it, liturgy provides both 'depth and breadth in our devotional life... will cover all the main biblical and doctrinal themes in such a way that allows the worshipper to memorize them and reflect on them more deeply

see Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen, *The Drama of Scripture: Finding our Place in the Biblical Story* (London: SPCK, 2006).

¹⁹ Michael Root, 'The Narrative Structure of Soteriology,' in *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (ed. Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones; Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), pp. 265–66.

²⁰ H. Richard Niebuhr, 'The Story of Our Life,' in *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology*, pp. 22–44. Quote taken from p. 35.

²¹ Grenz and Olson, *20th-century Theology*, p. 276.

over time.²² Therefore it is important in planning worship that the three categories of content, structure and style are correctly prioritised: where the content involves remembering and anticipating God's saving acts; the structure gives depth to content through communicating the story of God in the narrative of Word and Sacrament; and the style provides the indigenous expression to worship in the local context.²³ Style therefore is variable, whereas content and structure are not and I suspect that in much of contemporary worship considerations of style are prioritised above content and structure in order to be relevant. The challenge therefore is to 'forge new forms of corporate worship that take seriously both our histories and contemporary realities, all within the framework of biblical theology.'²⁴ The desired result of worship following the dramatic movement of Scripture through the ministry of Word and Sacrament is that the believing community is built up (edified) to live out the gospel in a life of worship. We experience this as the whole worship service connects us with the metanarrative of Scripture including creation, the history of Israel, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and our future hope through elements such as theme, words, images, and the balance and unity of the worship elements.²⁵

The reality is that even if our style is contemporary, the content and structure of our worship is ancient, and depth to worship involves acknowledging the 'great tradition' so that the drama of the Gospel comes alive.²⁶ Significantly, for many today Christianity's 'ancient roots' and 'common history'²⁷ equate with authenticity in worship, important qualities that people look for in spiritual practices. The earliest reference to the structure of worship in the early church comes from Justin Martyr in 150AD, who wrote his *First Apology*, to explain Christian practices to the Emperor. Justin identifies Sunday as the day of worship, being the first day of the week and the day of the resurrection, with a service divided into 2 parts: the first half being the Service of the Word (readings from the Old and New Testaments, sermon and prayers); the second half being the Service of the Table, the Lord's Supper.²⁸ As Justin writes, in chapter 67 entitled 'Weekly worship of the Christians,'

²² Bray, *God is Love*, p. 709.

²³ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 90–91.

²⁴ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 198. Also see Belcher, *Deep Church*, p. 137.

²⁵ O'Brien, 'The Procuring of Reverence,' pp. 341–342.

²⁶ Belcher, *Deep Church*, pp. 127, 134–35, 138–39. Quote taken from p. 135.

²⁷ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 201.

²⁸ James F. White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993) pp. 55–56, 61. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, p. 154; Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 92–94.

And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons.²⁹

The connection between the ritual remembering associated with the Eucharist and reading, exposition and prayer, reflects the gradual decline in the practice of the *agape*/fellowship meal and the growing centrality in worship for the remembrance of Jesus. Furthermore, as Ivor Davidson notes, this pattern was not innovation but a formalisation of existing practices.³⁰ Therefore it was this worship pattern of readings, sermon, prayers and Lord's Supper that continued until the Middle Ages.

However, the medieval Roman Mass became more of an elaborate performance, removed from the people through language and practice, with the congregation becoming passive observers. The power of the Priest was also increased by focusing on the Mass as a continual sacrifice, with the resulting decrease in any form of preaching.³¹ It is against this turning from the ancient tradition that the Reformers reacted, to bring the pattern of worship back to the assumed pattern used by the early church.³² To quote Martin Luther, 'the service now in common use everywhere goes back to genuine Christian beginnings.'³³ The central understanding for Martin Luther (but not Ulrich Zwingli) and later John Calvin was to link the sacrament of Holy Communion, which is the only sacrament that is a regular act of public worship, to the preaching of the Word of God, thereby keeping the spiritual value while avoiding medieval superstition.³⁴ As Gerald Bray suggests,

²⁹ Justin Martyr, 'Weekly worship of the Christians,' accessed 11/9/2013. Online: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.viii.ii.lxvii.html>. Also see Ivor J. Davidson, *The Birth of the Church: From Jesus to Constantine, A.D. 30-312* (vol. 1 of *The Baker History of the Church*; ed. Tim Dowley; Grand Rapids, Mich.: BakerBooks, 2004), p. 280.

³⁰ Davidson, *The Birth of the Church*, pp. 279-81.

³¹ White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship*, pp. 75-99. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 74-76. Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 207.

³² White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, p. 160.

³³ Martin Luther as quoted in White, *A Brief History of Christian Worship*, p. 107.

³⁴ Bray, *God is Love*, p. 717.

The message of salvation in Christ was never a purely intellectual thing. Indeed in it was the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and so it was necessary to include the body in the message of the Gospel. This was done by means of the Lord's Supper, by which believers took the death and resurrection of Christ into their bodies by means of the sacrament. But since the bread and wine contained no supernatural powers that could do anything to transform the body of the recipient, this benefit had to be understood in a spiritual way, as the promise of the resurrection of the body that would occur when the Lord returns.³⁵

For John Calvin, this balance of Word and Sacrament that followed the ancient tradition and enacted the gospel of grace, reflected a middle way between medieval Catholicism's emotive performance and the Zwinglian emphasis on hearing the Word of God alone without any Lord's Supper as response. As a result, simplicity of form, the goal of entering the presence of God (transcendence), and an order that reflects gospel re-enactment were the features of Calvin's model for corporate worship.³⁶ I suspect that many Anglicans who want to express a more reformed tradition by emphasising the Word, mistakenly follow the more extreme approach of Zwingli rather than the approach of John Calvin. Separating Word from Sacrament leads to a performance model, without any means of response. As Tim Keller identifies,

If we separate the Eucharist from strong preaching, the Lord's Table becomes something to perform, and the gospel-response of thanks is muted in the liturgy's structure. If we separate the preaching from the Eucharist, the Word becomes something to perform, and the gospel-response of thanks is also muted.³⁷

Within the reformation of Anglican worship, the moderate approach is exactly the pattern that Thomas Cranmer adopted using the criteria of: a Bible-centred focus to articulate the theology of grace and a flow of worship from God-to-human; Accessibility through language, structure (simplicity) and participation; and balance in content and style.³⁸ As he states in the Prefaces (Of Ceremonies) to the Book of Common Prayer,

³⁵ Bray, *God is Love*, p. 717.

³⁶ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 217.

³⁷ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' pp. 208–17. Quote from p. 215.

³⁸ Mark Ashton and C.J. Davis, 'Following in Cranmer's Footsteps,' in *Worship by the Book*, pp. 70–77, 89–90.

Yet so, as that *the main Body and Essentials* of it (as well in the chiefest materials, as in the frame and order thereof) have *still continued the same unto this day*, and do yet stand firm and unshaken.³⁹

Therefore the key principle in Anglican worship is that the 'form' and 'order' are non-negotiable to the extent they reflect and enact the gospel, where the pattern of worship being 'Word and Sacrament' is central as an apostolic pattern. This is what is meant by worship being performed 'decently and in order' to convey the truth of the Christian faith.⁴⁰ Worship therefore is built on the centrality of Scripture; and the joining of the ministry of the Word (Scripture and sermon) with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper produces a unity that transcends the spiritual power in both, '[narrating] the worshippers' experience through remembrance and anticipation.'⁴¹ In doing so, the structure of worship:

1. Reveals the truth about Jesus through the pattern of revelation (Word) and incarnation (Sacrament).
2. Reveals the content of worship through remembering and anticipation, as we respond to what God has initiated through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.⁴²

The structure of corporate worship therefore is central in conveying the message of the Gospel, where deep worship does biblical theology by singing, telling and enacting God's story.⁴³

Furthermore, as the central ministry of the Church, worship is the heartbeat from which all other areas of ministry flow. What this means, is that corporate worship is not an aspect of church life to be put at the whim of other church ministries, rather all other ministries flow from the worship of the body of Christ. The temptation however is for the structure of worship to become negotiable in a postmodern age where truth does not matter. But this is nothing new as Thomas Cranmer notes (Prefaces: 'Of Ceremonies'),

Our general aim therefore in this undertaking was, *not to gratify this or that party, in any of their unreasonable demands*; but to do that, which to our best understanding, we conceived might most tend to peace and unity in the Church.

³⁹ My emphasis.

⁴⁰ Bray, *God is Love*, p. 711. Also see Ashton and Davis, 'Following in Cranmer's Footsteps,' p. 78.

⁴¹ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, p. 90.

⁴² Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 104–07.

⁴³ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 90, 94, 97.

By following the ancient pattern of Word and Table, our corporate worship remembers God's saving acts by means of: a 'historic recitation' through readings, prayer, creeds and song; *and* through participating in a 'dramatic re-enactment' of what God has done through partaking in the Lord's Supper.⁴⁴ As a result, God's people are empowered to live as disciples in an increasingly hostile world.

World-Winning Worship⁴⁵

There is one final important aspect to following the ancient pattern of Word and Sacrament, and that is the evangelistic nature of corporate worship, a defining quality of reformed worship. For both Israel and the early Church, God was to be praised before the nations which included a summons for the nations to join in.⁴⁶ John Dickson describes worship as occurring within the 'earshot of those who do not believe.' As he comments, 'I am more than ever convinced that getting your church praise right, by which I mean making it gospel-focused, heartfelt and intelligible to all, is a vital expression of our commitment to promoting the Gospel.'⁴⁷

In the recent past the focus was on special 'seeker services' as the evangelistic form of corporate worship. However we need to recapture the understanding that all Christian worship should be structured and led with simplicity and transcendence in a manner that any non-Christian present would understand. Or have we lost the desire for non-Christians to be present, and instead have focused on corporate worship as the education of the insiders only? As Timothy Keller rightly states, 'praising the God who saves by grace, will both instruct insiders and challenge outsiders.'⁴⁸

Gathering for corporate worship on Sunday can still be considered the 'shop front' of the church, and we should not separate corporate worship from mission, since worship is an act that anticipates the fullness of God's presence in the new creation for eternity. As Christopher Wright comments, 'the mission of God's people, then, is derived from the fact

⁴⁴ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 48–55. As Webber notes, dramatic re-enactment also includes baptism and liturgical time.

⁴⁵ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 218.

⁴⁶ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' p. 218.

⁴⁷ John Dickson, *The Best Kept Secret of Christian Mission: Promoting the Gospel with More than our Lips* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2010), pp. 157 and 70. Also see Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, pp. 244–62. John Dickson goes further in reflecting on 1 Peter by saying; 'Declaring God's praises together—in our readings, creeds, preaching, psalms, hymns and spiritual songs—is one of our central acts of worship as the people of God...Through it, we announce God's mercy and power to those who overhear us, who have not yet been called out of darkness into his wonderful light.' See Dickson, *The Best Kept Secret*, p. 163.

⁴⁸ Keller, 'Reformed Worship,' pp. 218–19.

that they were created to bring praise and glory to God and to bring the nations of the world into the same orchestra doxology.⁴⁹ Gathering together in worship is evangelistic in nature as God's people celebrate God's great acts of salvation and mercy through Word and Sacrament. It may be more difficult within a Western context for those 'within earshot' to hear our praises as we gather, but that does not negate the fact that following the ancient pattern of Word and Sacrament brings people into God's story and provides the best opportunity for them to make that story their own.

Conclusion

As the primary means of biblical theology in the life of the Church, corporate worship involves remembering God's acts of salvation through recitation and re-enactment, as well as anticipating the final establishment of God's kingdom when Jesus returns. The pattern of Word and Sacrament, established in the ancient church and recaptured in the Reformation provides the proper means for deep worship today, where both mind and heart are engaged in the remembering of God's story, the body of Christ is built up (edified), and the gospel is promoted. Therefore all the components of worship fit together as an act of public praise, where through Word and Sacrament, 'God's vision for the world is proclaimed and enacted.'⁵⁰

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⁴⁹ Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, p. 248.

⁵⁰ Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*, pp. 152, 168. Quote taken from p. 168.

