

Liturgy is Life

2/4/07

Summary Year 1

New Changes, include, kneeling, singing Lord's Prayer, moving tithe to after sermon, the word of the Lord, thanks be to God, raising hands during prayer of illumination, looking up to ceiling during prayer of illumination or other prayers.

Psalm 96, John 4:21-24

Psalm 96

Ps 96 96:1 O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. 2 Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. 3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. 4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens. 6 Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

This Psalm describes worship as showing the glory of the Lord before all the heathen. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised. Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

7 Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. 8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. 9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

God certainly gives to us in worship, but we also give to Him and serve Him. We bring an offering of praise and worship into His courts in the beauty of holiness. This should cause all the earth to fear before Him.

10 Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously. 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice 13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

The fact of our worship is a declaration among unbelievers that Jesus Christ is Lord. This is the truth of all truths. It is the bedrock and cornerstone and cannot be moved. The earth and sea will be glad at this. The fields and trees will rejoice before the Lord because He comes to judge. We often see the judgment of God as a bad thing but that is not the case. The righteous call upon God to judge. We desire that He come as judge for it is He that comes to judge for good on our behalf. This, too, is a declaration to the world, that God is right and He has chosen a people for His own name's sake. This should cause us to bow down in reverent worship and to rise up with lips of praise.

INTRODUCTION

I have titled this sermon-The Lord's Service, Liturgy is Life. That title may give some of you the heebee jeebies. The idea that the things that we do are loving God or that the liturgy that we do brings life smacks at the heart of much of what we have been taught in modern evangelicalism. But if our liturgy is not knowing God, if our liturgy is

not a source of life and growth in Christ, then I find it extremely difficult to find any other reason to be here this Lord's Day.

We come to worship the Lord. This means that we esteem Him as God, lay hold of Him through Christ, bless His name and receive blessing from Him. We are accounted His people and take His name on us as our God. We are prepared for a feast, here a preparatory message from our King, sing songs in the joy of the celebration and it all culminates in the eating of a meal. This is a great love relationship. We love God and He loves us. This is all declared in the acts that we do here each Lord's Day.

God is concerned about raising up a faithful people to worship Him in Spirit and truth. He was in the times of Abel at the beginning and with Abraham as He called a people to Himself, as He called the children out of Egypt and as they sojourned in the Wilderness and made their way into the Promised Land. God desired a people to worship Him in the tabernacle of David and in the Temple of Solomon and again as they returned from their captivity. And God has made a way for us to worship Him now, in the most holy place through Jesus Christ. Christ is seated in the heavenlies at the right hand of the Father and we are drawn up to Him each Lord's Day as we gather to worship. Our main desire should be to do this in a way that pleases the Lord.

The Word of God is a sharp-sword. It cuts us deep. Before God, we are not able to hide, to resist His will, or to defend ourselves. We are flayed open like a sacrificial lamb and sacrificed before the Lord. This is the picture of death and sacrifice. But it does not leave us there. The picture of death always includes resurrection. Our High Priest was resurrected and so are we. We rise and live and are encouraged to come boldly into His presence with thanksgiving to obtain mercy and find grace for our souls.

This is grand and glorious. God's Word lays us bare and reveals the thoughts and intentions of the heart. This frightens us as we know that our hearts so easily deceive us. If we were honest, this flaying open by the Word of God ought to make us shrink from His presence but that is not the conclusion of the writer to the Hebrews. It should make us march boldly into the throne room of God expecting mercy. How so? Because we have a High Priest and He is still ministering at the altar on our behalf. His once for all sacrifice cleanses us for all time. If we grasp this glorious truth, we are glad for the Word to cut us deep so that we might be healed in the name and righteousness of Jesus Christ. No sacrifice means no resurrection. What we do each Lord's Day ought to picture this glorious truth.

My intent today is simply to walk through our liturgy and give some brief explanations about what we do and why we do what we do. We do a liturgy sermon each year. That way, any new members that may not understand what we are doing get an opportunity to see that it is purposeful. Also, as we continue to reform in this area, it will be good for us to continually remember why we do what we do.

One of the surprises in my life has been to attend mainline denominational churches or even a Roman Catholic church and see what they are saying in their service. It is often glorious. The Words and the music testify of the holiness of God and the goodness of Jesus Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit but you look around and see people that think that they are chewing on gravel instead of enjoying a feast. The problem is *not* that they don't have something beautiful, good, and savory in their liturgy. The problem is that they have stopped believing it. They are like the dwarves in the stable at the end of the Last Battle. We must continue to believe God as we worship

Him. And one way we can do this is to understand the dance steps that we are taking in our liturgy. We want to know the Liturgy so that we can do the dance without having to think about the process of the dance too much. But we must do so with wisdom, knowing that we go this way for a reason because we have to soon go that way and it is all part of the enjoyment and glory of embracing Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.

We should embrace our Lord's Day services with the zeal of a great oath. We come to pledge our allegiance to Jesus Christ and to receive His blessing upon us. He holds out the promises of God to us and we receive them by faith.

We should view our Lord's Day Service as a paradigm in which we learn to live the rest of our lives. In this life, we fill many roles. We are citizens of a country, husbands, fathers, wives, mothers, children. But *fundamentally*, we are the people who worship the one true God, in the Triune name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And we should view this not only as individuals embracing God but as the gathered worshipping people of God. This view of reality is no more clearly seen than when the saints gather on the Lord's Day to worship God.

OLD TESTAMENT MODEL AND THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLE

Many Presbyterians claim to be adherents of the regulative principle of worship which says that whatever is not commanded in Scripture is prohibited. A different formulation of worship is that whatever is not prohibited is allowed. There are problems with both of these views. I suppose our view is somewhere in between. We do believe that we must have a biblically informed worship. The New Testament does not give us a tremendous amount of detail on Christian Worship. Many adherents of the Regulative Principle have a hard time of making much of a worship service from the New Testament example alone. This is one reason why their services are very simple, the sanctuary extremely plain, no instruments, psalms only, no recognition of the church year or decoration. Many of these things are just not to be found in the pages of the New Testament.

We agree that our form and substance of worship must be biblical. However, the mistake of arguing the regulative principle mostly based upon the contents of the New Testament alone, have led to minimalistic applications of New Testament era worship. It would be better for us to look at all of Scripture to come to an understanding of how the Old Testament forms apply to us in the era of Jesus Christ. For they were certainly given for our benefit as well as the benefit of the Old Testament saints. In order to practice a biblical form of worship, we must look to the Old Testament Sacrificial system and understand it in the light of being fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Many Christians wrongly assume that the Old Covenant system was a means to keep people away from God. That is not what was going on at all. The purpose was to draw worshippers to God. God, in His grace and mercy, made a way for sinful men to approach Him and to be cleansed from their sins. This process culminated in a meal of fellowship. We want to view our service as a process whereby God draws us up into Himself. And where we renew our covenant vows to Him and He renews His vows to us.

There are three major movements in our liturgy and two minor ones.

The Major Movements are Cleansing, Consecration, and Communion. Read page 79-Meyers.

The Minor movements are the Call To Worship and Commissioning. Beginning and ending. Not insignificant. They are important, but are a prelude and a postlude to the major aspects of worship. The Call to Worship recognizes the fact that we have come to God to begin formal corporate worship. The Commissioning is an acknowledgment that we have worshipped God and have been made aware of all His blessings for obedience and potential cursings for disobedience. It is a charge to remain faithful and a blessing until we meet here again.

Let us now walk over the different elements of our particular service. You can follow along in your bulletin so that you can understand what I am referring to and how we go through this liturgy each week.

Pre-welcome-Our piano player begins to play. This is a call to come and be seated, to get the children in order and get ready to join the corporate worship service.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

We do these before we start our official worship that it may not be interrupted by mundane matters.

MEDITATION AND PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

This sets the mood of reverence and solemnity as well as gives individuals an opportunity to turn their hearts and minds away from previous distractions and towards the worship of the only living and true God. This is a good time to confess any sins that are keeping you from drawing near to God. We encourage you to silent prayer and preparation to join the people of God through the blood of Jesus.

If you have already confessed your sins in preparation for worshipping God, which a recommend that you do, then follow along the words of the Psalm or Hymn and let the words minister to your heart.

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart(#58)

Please follow along in silent meditation

CALL TO WORSHIP: GOD SUMMONS HIS PEOPLE

God certainly calls us into His presence. This is the minister formally calling the saints to worship God. We should understand that we are ascending into heaven. We sometimes view worship as God coming down to be with us, but Jesus has ascended to heaven and is seated there at the right hand of the Father. He has sent the Spirit to draw us up into Him as He reigns over all the earth.

Congregation stands-

Posture is important in our worship for several reasons.

1. We do not worship God with our minds only. God has saved us as complete men. We are saved in soul, spirit, and body and we should worship God that way. This means that we incorporate our bodies,

emotions, and intellect into our worship. We are not stoics or Gnostics. So, we worship God with our bodies.

2. Different bodily postures are representative of different states of mind. We stand to honor God, just as a gentlemen should always stand to honor a lady when she walks into a room. Or as young men should stand when their elders walk into a room. This shows reverence, respect and due honor. Just so, we stand to honor our God, who has come into our room. Or being consistent with the picture I mentioned about being called into His presence, we stand. But we stand with humility recognizing that He is higher than we are.

Scripture reading of praise:

We want to do all that we do in close association with the scriptures, this includes our worship and prayers. Our attempt here is to read a Scripture that exalts God. We want to show His majesty in His works of creation and providence. This kind of Scripture helps us to see God as our exalted Father. It also shows us that He has condescended to saving and sustaining us. Our response is one of praise and thankfulness.

Prayer of praise-This prayer is generated from the Scripture reading of Praise. It is meant to raise our eyes up to God as our Great Father in Heaven. Because He is exalted and we are sinners, this prayer should point out the gulf that is between us. It should make it apparent to us that the only way to bridge this gulf is for God to do something because we are wholly incapable of ascending up to Him on our own efforts or by our own merit.

Far from being a prayer of despair, this prayer should give us hope also, acknowledging that God has done this work of coming to us in His Son and in His Spirit. By praying this way, we recognize God in His Triune character, seeking to honor God in all His revealed persons.

Prepared Prayers-Many of the prayers in our Liturgy are prepared. Some in the church both modern and historical have objected to prepared prayers. The argument is generally along the lines that they are stiff or that they stifle the leading of the Holy Spirit. Some prepared prayers are stiff as some men cannot read without sounding like they are reading. This gives a very wooden sense to public prayers and speaking. So, these men would do well to read over their prayers and be able to deliver them in such a way that the hearers are not distracted by their style.

As to prepared prayers stifling the Holy Spirit, this is a wholly inconsistent and foolish argument, as if the Holy Spirit cannot work ahead of time as easily as He can work at the spur of the moment. Ministers and laymen that pray in public ought to think about what they are saying. Why *not thinking* about what they are going to say ahead of time is more spiritual than thinking a great deal about it ahead of time, is beyond me. Men should think about their prayers so that the prayers are biblical including scripture and scriptural language as well as the particular situation and the context of worship.

It is not necessary that all of our prayers be written down. Writing them down is good but they can be prayed either by reading them or saying them without the help of notes. But they should be thought about. Like any written document, the prayer should be concise and to the point.

Furthermore, unprepared prayers tend to often be incoherent and rambling, filled with many filler words, um, I just, uh, that sort of thing. If one prays unprepared, he should probably make his prayer very short and very to the point.

Congregational response- This service is also a conversation between God and His people. God speaks in His Word and the people respond in prayer and singing. Or shall we say prayerful singing. We also respond with Amens. We also respond to various parts of our worship with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, the Doxology, and the Offertory. Not only is God speaking to us but we are also speaking to Him.

Jesus Shall Reign(#50)

AMEN!! We need to take our Amens seriously. They should be said with all the enthusiasm of an oath. They should be more than, "Yes wasn't that a nice song." It should have the impact of "Those words bind us to obedience in the Lord for blessing in obedience and for cursing in disobedience." We have made some headway in our Amens. It would be good if they were said with gusto. Volume is important but I don't mean merely volume. I would like them said with sincerity of heart. If this is taken seriously, there will be both volume and emotion. This is also true of the way that we recite the creed, sing the Lord's Prayer and offertory as well as the doxology. Because these things are regular parts of our service that we do every single week, there is a temptation to get lazy in the way that we approach them. Do not do that. Don't get lazy in your worship. Pay attention. Speak with sincerity, knowledge, passion, honesty and faith.

Exhortation

As we move towards the corporate confession of sin, it is helpful for us to see that we have need of confessing our sins. This exhortation is both an encouragement and an exhortation as we see what God has done, realize that we have failed His standard, and yet again, as we rejoice in His grace and mercy in confession and repentance.

We have used this exhortation for various teaching on the creeds, church and family issues, the church calendar of holidays and many other subjects. In all of them, the purpose is to hold up the standard of God's words and requirements for Christian living. When we do this, if we are honest, we must necessarily see that we fall short of His standard. If we are faithful Christians, this realization will lead us to the duty of confession and repentance.

This is nothing less than a mini presentation of the gospel of reconciliation. God is perfect. He has perfect standards. Here they are. You have fallen short and are so made liable to His wrath and curse. However, God has preserved a way of salvation for you through His Son. So, come to Him in confession and repentance and you will be forgiven.

CONFESSION: GOD CLEANSSES HIS PEOPLE

Scripture reading of confession: These Scriptures are not always directly a command to confess sins and repent. Sometimes, they are scriptures that simply point out the fact that we are sinners in need of repentance. The scriptures from the call to worship, confession of sin and assurance of pardon are coordinated so that they present a consistent message.

Congregation kneeling-We changed our liturgy so that we would kneel at this point of confession. It has been a wonderful addition. It is hard to be proud when you are on your knees. It hurts, like confession. But the end result of our humility and pain is that we get to stand up, refreshed and forgiven.

Scripture of Assurance

As I mentioned above, the Call to Worship, Confession and Assurance Scriptures are coordinated to present a consistent message and presentation. They are often taken from the same Psalm or Chapter of the Bible. This shows how often the duties of exalting God, being made aware of our own need, confessing and then receiving reassurance from God are presented to us in Scripture. This is no wonder as this is the biblical story. This is the gospel.

Assurance of pardon

Congregation Stands-We rise up forgiven in Christ.

This is a very important part of our service. I hope that you all take care to listen and to heed these words. Because we take sin seriously, many of you are of a tender conscience and are easily made to feel the weight of your sins. This is good and is a blessing from God. If you did not easily feel the weight of your sins, the danger is that you might become cold and indifferent to repentance and drift away from following Christ.

But some of you have a hard time receiving the real forgiveness offered in Jesus Christ. You are good at feeling guilty and ashamed, bad at feeling clean and holy. This can come from humility but it can also come from a sneaky version of pride.

A humble man does not think highly of himself, so he will not easily exert his rights. This is good and a godly characteristic. But there is a sneaky form of humility that is pernicious.

This form of humility says that one must beat himself up in order to receive the favor of God. He thinks, "I have sinned and therefore I am not worthy to come into the presence of God." The problem with this way of thinking is that it is so unbiblical. The only ones who can come into the presence of God are those who have sinned. To refuse to come to God because you are sinner is to refuse the healing hand of God for sinners.

Furthermore, to fail to believe the assurance of pardon is a sneaky and prideful way to assert your merit of sorrow above God's declaration of pardon. You cannot be sorry enough for your sins to merit the right to heaven. You don't get to heaven through merit. You get there by grace through faith.

So, your duty here is to believe God. When the minister pronounces the pardon of sin, you must believe that you are pardoned from your sins. You are made innocent before God. You are absolved of your sins. You are made blameless in His sight. To

continue to grovel in your sins after this point merely shows that you either have not been honest in your confessions or that you do not believe God's promises.

The answer to both of these problems is to confess them as sin and to truly receive the pardon of Jesus Christ. This is glorious stuff and should make us truly joyful.

Apostle's Creed- Early formulation of what a Christian and a Christian Church is. We continue our covenant vow renewal as we confess not only what we believe but stand with Christians throughout the world and the ages as we profess our faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This should not be mumbled. It should be intensely read or recited with emotion and volume.

Congregational response in song.

Again, the words are binding. The Psalms have been the songbook of the church for 3000 years. They are transforming. Study them, learn them, sing them.

Predominant Psalmody

While we are not exclusive psalmodists, we do believe in singing the Psalms and predominantly so. When we are singing the Psalms, we are singing God's very words after Him. The Psalms are a magnificent microcosm of the Scriptures. They recount much of the Old Testament story of God's people and also point a great deal to the Messiah. They cover many theological subjects, human emotions, divine worship, enemies, laments, ascents, praises and more. Singing Psalms is both transformational for individuals and congregations and very reformatory as our thinking is conformed to a biblical standard.

Psalm 40E, Psalm 47A-Our standing and sitting here also has to do with the human condition. We do a lot of standing, so you need a break. We sit for a minute to rest and stand up ready to hear the Word of God.

CONSECRATION: GOD EQUIPS AND PREPARES HIS PEOPLE

After confession, we move into the section of our service where God sets us apart to His Holy Work in and through us. We hear His Word and respond to Him in faithfulness.

Reading of God's Holy Word

Congregation stands-posture is important here as we stand in respect for the words of God.

We have recently begun to read more scripture. For some of you this is different and may seem long. But this speaks of the great authority of God's Word. As elders, we know that the body is hearing the Word of God. We pray that the Holy Spirit will give ears to hear and hearts to obey what God says in His Word. We proclaim ourselves as those who submit to the Word of God.

We are committed to reading the entire Bible to you. We will read Old and New Testaments. Some extremely long chapters may need to be split up. Old Testament Chapters-929 chapters, New Testament Chapters-260 chapters

It takes about eighteen years to read through the whole Bible this way. Old Testament once, New Testament three times. Our children will hear the whole Bible at church in the course of their lives. By the end of the year 2021, we will have read the entire Old Testament to you once and the entire New Testament over three times. That is a great testimony to our commitment to bring you all of God's Word.

Hear the Word of the Lord-it is not enough to simply hear the men reading the text. You must hear the Word of the Lord when you hear the men reading the text.

Old Testament Scripture: (Psalm 96)

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

What we are doing here is a conversation. God speaks and we agree with Him.

New Testament Scripture: (Rev. 5:1-10)

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord taught us how to pray and we ought to both pray according to this prayer as well as pray this prayer. It is fittingly placed here as various men lead in prayer. May the Lord's prayer instruct us in what kinds of things to pray for as well as how to pray for them.

This was one of the main consistencies in all the post-reformation reformed liturgies.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND PETITIONS

It is fitting for us to thank God and ask Him to continue to bless us. We try to stay away from praying whatever comes to mind. We give our men notice of their prayers a day or two ahead of time so that they can compose a thoughtful prayer to the Lord. Some men write them down and this is appropriate.

Thanksgiving

New and ongoing petitions

Psalm 96A

Preaching of the Word:

Text: 1Peter 1:22-2:3 Read without comment and then preached verse by verse or section by section. Make sure to tell the story of the bible and not just the individual words of the bible. Don't miss the forest for the trees. It is better to preach more rather than less, larger sections rather than shorter, get the broad picture rather than a closeup. Of course, these are generalizations. Sometimes, the import or difficulty of the passage requires us to bite off a very small portion to understand it correctly. But the far greater mistake is that preachers don't really tell the story of the bible because they are busy preaching only their favorite theological texts and these much too slowly.

In some traditions, the preaching of the word has become so central to the Lord's Service as to minimize the rest of the service. It is the grand show that everyone is waiting for and the rest of the service is sort of tacked on and around the preaching to simply set the stage or to relieve us from having to hear two hours of preaching. This should not be the case. Although the primacy of the preached word is important to the Lord's Service, it ought not to be so emphasized that everything else that we do is incomplete without a bang-up sermon.

Think of how you talk about the service. Is the only thing that mattered what the preacher said? Is the rest of the service somewhat irrelevant? What about the confession of the creed? Did you believe it? Did you gain any insight into your faith through it? What about the confession of sin? Did you hide your sins from God? Are you not really being honest with Him? Or do you have a hard time believing that you are actually forgiven and thus are not able to adequately worship with the saints?

We ought to receive teaching from all of the Bible. Obviously, this takes time, but there should be a clear commitment from the elders to preach all of the Bible, Old and New Testaments and to do whatever it says. We cannot preach only favorite texts. We must engage with all of God's revelation.

Tithes and Offerings-This is an important part of worship as we recognize that all blessing comes from God. We don't pass the plate but we do bring our offerings to the Lord for blessing.

The tithe also shows that we offer ourselves to the Lord. The Lord receives us because we have been called to Him, confessed our sins and been forgiven, been laid open before Him and instructed by the Word. We are now set apart and holy and are therefore able to draw into His presence without fear. We give Him our offerings because we give Him ourselves. The tithe is similar to the Lord's Day. We do not give ourselves to God on Sunday because that is His day. We give ourselves to Him on the Lord's Day in recognition that all days are His.

This is also true for the tithe. We give a tenth of our increase to the Lord, not because that is His portion but as recognition that it is all His. Some argue that the tithe is no longer valid in the New Covenant and that we are now governed by a law of grace and love instead of the Old Covenant administration. Although I disagree with this view, in relation to the tithe, I believe if you argue this way, then you are required by your theology to pay more than ten percent. The law of grace and love should far outshine in formal law that is more restrictive. Giving is good, so under the New Testament we should give MORE not less. Sadly, many Christians who think this way, actually use it as an excuse for giving less or none at all. This simply shows that they are not giving themselves to Jesus Christ.

COMMUNION: GOD NOURISHES HIS PEOPLE

This is central to our understanding of Christ and His Church.

Wine-why not grape juice? The Lord instituted this supper with wine. If it was good enough for him it is good enough for us. It tells of the potency of Jesus Christ. It is no wonder that an impotent modern church uses grape juice.

Bread-why leavened? The Passover meal was with unleavened bread. However, as the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost and the saints were gathered, breaking bread, that meal was using leavened bread. The kingdom is like a loaf of bread that is leavened and

grows until the whole loaf is leavened. The sins have been permanently purged in Jesus Christ and so we can fully enjoy the loaf that is Christ.

We look around as we eat the bread and drink the wine because this is what we are invited to do at a table. We want to see who is at the table with us. We want to talk to them afterwards about the exciting fact of being invited to the table of Jesus Christ the King. We want this communal meal to be a joyous event and not a personal self-absorbed, introspective, morbid dirge. We are looking at the joy of the cross, not the misery of the cross.

We eat together because we all partake of the one loaf, Jesus Christ. It is simply good manners to wait until everyone is served before eating.

Meditation during communion

The word is always to accompany the sacrament. Reading of the word and preaching of the word meets this requirement. It is also good to think of the many different facets of the Lord's Table. Of course, the many facets of the Lord's Supper should be viewed through the lens of the Bible and not through the lens of artful creativity.

Also, this encourages us not to do it in an unthinking way. We meditate upon the what the Lord is declaring in this meal and also what we are declaring. We do believe that this meal is a blessing, but we don't believe that it is an automatic blessing. We must do it in faith. And it is good for us to think about what it is that we do. We declare that we are in union with Christ and one another. We are in Him and He is in us.

Soul Adorn Thyself with Gladness (#39)

COMMISSIONING: GOD BLESSES HIS PEOPLE

Congregation stands as is ready to march out into the world having been fed and blessed by Jesus Christ.

Congregational Response: Gloria Patri-Our final response to God for His calling us here for blessing.

Congregation raises hands-again posture is an important part of worship. The scriptures have many instances of ministers raising hands in prayer and of the congregation lifting up holy hands. Modern conservative Presbyterians need a good dose of this. For many in our circles, worship has become a painfully mental gymnastic. We deny that this ought to be the case. God has saved our whole man, including our bodies. These are bodies are not yet perfected spiritual bodies,

We give praise to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We proclaim this truth and that it will go on world without end, amen. Or simply to say that God's glory will never end.

Charge and Benediction

This is a true blessing. We receive it the same way that we do the rest of the service, in faith.