

CPC Adult Sunday Studies

Fall 2026 |

The Wonders of Communal Worship #7

The Conclusion of Communal Worship

Last Week: Having entered the Holy of Holies through praise, confession, and forgiveness, we hear God's word preached and then partake of the Supper in the Sacrament. This week, we look at the end of the service, where Christ is crowned as our King, and he gets the last word.

CORONATION - Christ our King

Having been welcomed into his presence and fed by him in Word and Sacrament, we now coronate him as King. Christ reigns as King throughout the worship service, gathering us as his body, organizing us under his authority, yet we also end praising him again as our King. This final movement simply acknowledges that and recognizes that he was, is and ever shall be King.

Notice the movement of Rev. 4-5, where God already reigns, but the gospel flow brings us from God the Creator to God the Redeemer: *"Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!'" 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshiped."* (Rev. 5.11-14)

The song that we sing will be similar in content to the first praise songs, but is also more celebratory and focused on Christ's salvation.

BENEDICTION - God gets the last Word as the King who blesses his people

The benediction is God's blessing upon his people, where he places his name upon his people. The end of the priestly service concluded with the classic benediction: *"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 23 'Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, 24 The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; 26 the LORD lift up his countenance*

upon you and give you peace. 27 “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.” (Num. 6.22-27). See also 1Ki. 8.54-61 and the context of the blessings sought from the patriarch in Genesis 27. To receive a blessing is to receive the inheritance, the reputation, and the identity of the person. **In Christ, we receive the name of the Lord as our name!** In his identity, we can go out into the world, sons and daughters of the King of Kings.

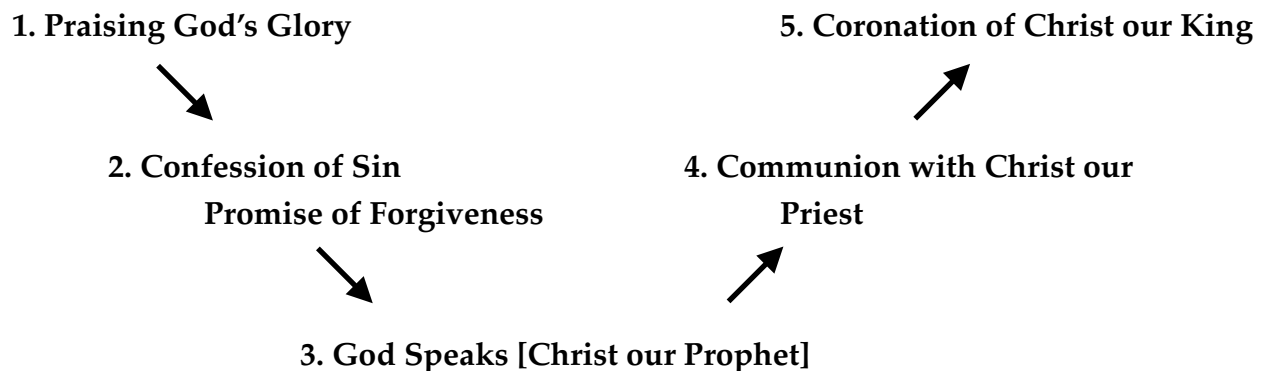
We use a variety of biblical benedictions - from the Old and New Testaments - that are God’s Word to us in grace and peace.

OVERALL REVIEW

Structure of the Worship Service

Long before Marshall McLuhan coined the phrase “the medium is the message,” God’s people were worshipping according to the logic and structure of the gospel! Everyone has a liturgy and our worship patterns always communicate something about what we believe about the gospel.

Gospel Arc - our worship service has a general macro arc to it, starting from God, down to humanity, and ending back “up” with God. There are also micro arcs within each movement that reflect the same pattern.



What is the story that this structure tells? What is the message that this medium displays? We start with God and his glory, who is worthy of worship; that naturally leads us to feel unworthy in his presence, so we confess our sin, but because of who God is in Christ, he forgives us. Having welcomed us into his presence and cleansed us, he now speaks to us by his Word—which itself is confirmed at the Lord’s table, the visible Word; and we naturally want to crown him as our King again, having fed us by his Word and Sacrament, as he leaves us with a blessing.

The first two movements welcome us into the Holy of Holies, and now that we've been welcomed, we can commune with Christ who is our prophet, priest and King.

How ought God to be worshipped?

1. Doxologically - For His Glory
2. Regulated and Directed - By His Word
3. In Communion - With the Triune God who Dwells among his people
4. Covenantally - According to the Logic of the Gospel
5. Communally - With God's People
6. Missionally - Open to All God's People
7. In the Vernacular - In the Languages that God Created

General Participation in Worship

THE DAY:

- **WLC 117. How is the Sabbath or the Lord's Day to be sanctified?** . . . by an holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to **prepare our hearts**, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, **that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.**
- **WLC 119. What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?** . . . all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.

THE WORD:

- **WLC 160. What is required of those that hear the Word preached?** . . . that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what they hear by the Scriptures; receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God; meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts, and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives."

THE SACRAMENT:

- **Preparation** - WLC 171. How are they that **receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to prepare themselves before** they come unto it? . . . by examining themselves of their being in Christ, of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance; love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervent prayer.
- **During** - WLC 174. What is required of them that receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the **time of the administration** of it? . . . with all holy reverence and attention they wait upon God in that ordinance, diligently observe the sacramental elements and actions, heedfully discern the Lord's body, and affectionately meditate on his death and sufferings, and thereby stir up themselves to a vigorous exercise of their graces; in judging themselves, and sorrowing for sin; in earnest hungering and thirsting after Christ, feeding on him by faith, receiving of his fullness, trusting in his merits, rejoicing in his love, giving thanks for his grace; in renewing of their covenant with God, and love to all the saints.
- **After** - WLC 175. What is the duty of Christians, **after they have received** the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? . . . seriously to consider how they have behaved themselves therein, and with what success; if they find quickening and comfort, to bless God for it, beg the continuance of it, watch against t relapses, fulfill their vows, and encourage themselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance: but if they find no present benefit, more exactly to review their preparation to, and carriage at, the sacrament; in both which, if they can approve themselves to God and their own consciences, they are to wait for the fruit of it in due time: but, if they see they have failed in either, they are to be humbled, and to attend upon it afterwards with more care and diligence.

George Herbert, "Sunday"

O Day most calm, most bright,
 The fruit of this, the next worlds bud,
 Th' indorsement of supreme delight,
 Writ by a friend, and with his bloud;
 The couch of time; cares balm and bay:
 The week were dark, but for thy light:
 Thy torch doth show the way.

The other dayes and thou
 Make up one man; whose face thou art,
 Knocking at heaven with thy brow:
 The worky-daies are the back-part;
 The burden of the week lies there,
 Making the whole to stoup and bow,
 Till thy release appeare.

Man had straight forward gone
 To endlesse death: but thou dost pull
 And turn us round to look on one,
 Whom, if we were not very dull,
 We could not choose but look on still;
 Since there is no place so alone,
 The which he doth not fill.

Sundaies the pillars are,
 On which heav'ns palace arched lies:
 The other dayes fill up the spare
 And hollow room with vanities.
 They are the fruitfull beds and borders
 In Gods rich garden: that is bare,
 Which parts their ranks and
 orders.

The Sundaies of mans life,
 Thredded together on times string,
 Make bracelets to adorn the wife
 Of the eternall glorious King.
 On Sunday heavens gate stands ope:
 Blessings are plentiful and rife,

More plentiful then hope.

This day my Saviour rose,
 And did inclose this light for his:
 That, as each beast his manger knows,
 Man might not of his fodder misse.
 Christ hath took in this piece of ground,
 And made a garden there for those
 Who want herbs for their
 wound.

The rest of our Creation
 Our great Redeemer did remove
 With the same shake, which at his
 passion
 Did th' earth and all things with it move.
 As Sampson bore the doores away,
 Christs hands, though nail'd, wrought
 our salvation,
 And did unhinge that day.

The brightnesse of that day
 We sullied by our foul offence:
 Wherefore that robe we cast away,
 Having a new at his expence,
 Whose drops of bloud paid the full price,
 That was requir'd to make us gay,
 And fit for Paradise.

Thou art a day of mirth:
 And where the Week-dayes trail on
 ground,
 Thy flight is higher, as thy birth.
 O let me take thee at the bound,
 Leaping with thee from sev'n to sev'n,
 Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,
 Flie hand in hand to heav'n!

George Herbert, "Prayer"

Prayer the Churches banquet, Angels age,
 Gods breath in man returning to his birth,
 The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
 The Christian plummet sounding heav'n and earth;
 Engine against th' Almighty, sinners towre,
 Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
 The six-daies world transposing in an houre,
 A kinde of tune, which all things heare and fear;
 Softnesse, and peace, and joy, and love, and blisse,
 Exalted Manna, gladnesse of the best,
 Heaven in ordinarie, man well drest,
 The milkie way, the bird of Paradise,
 Church-bels beyond the starres heard, the souls bloud,
 The land of spices; something understood.

Henry Vaughan, "Son-Days"

BRIGHT shadows of true rest! some shoots of bliss;
 Heaven once a week;
 The next world's gladness preposses'd in this;
 A day to seek
 Eternity in time; the steps by which
 We climb above all ages; lamps that light
 Man through his heap of dark days; and the rich
 And full redemption of the whole week's flight!

2.The pulleys unto headlong man; Time's bower;
 The narrow way;
 Transplanted Paradise; God's walking hour,
 The cool o' th' day!
 The creature's jubilee; God's parle with dust;
 Heaven here; man on those hills of myrrh, and flowers;
 Angels descending; the returns of trust;
 A gleam of glory after six-days-showers!

3.The Church's love-feasts; Time's prerogative,
 And interest
 Deducted from the whole; the combs, and hive,
 And home of rest.
 The milky way chalk'd out with suns; a clue
 That guides through erring hours; and in full story
 A taste of heav'n on earth; the pledge and cue
 Of a full feast; and the out-Courts of glory.