

Sunday School – February 11, 2018 **Reformed Worship is Historical**

Review of last time: Reformed Worship is **Biblical**

We have seen that the Bible has much to say about worship, and Scripture determines what is acceptable worship; i.e. worship is limited by what God says to do.

Because of our sinful nature, we are incapable of discovering or determining acceptable worship.

Recall the Regulative Principle of Worship: God says what we are to do and how we are to do it.

Scripture prescribes the *Elements* of worship.

*Circumstances* of worship are necessary, but not prescribed; we can use “sanctified common sense”

Today: Reformed Worship is **Historical**

Reformed worship has a *history and tradition, which follows the Bible, which is our rule and guide.*

Tradition is the history of how the saints of God in the past applied the Bible. Our worship is rooted in the history of the church.

Today we will look at the early church.

The early church adopted the practices of the synagogue, which was different from temple worship, and of course radically different from the pagan practices of worship.

In the Roman Empire, there were Greco-Roman gods with cults and temples dedicated to each one. Priests and priestesses were dedicated to the service of the various gods.

Pagan people came to these temples when they *needed something* – and offered a sacrifice.

There was also sexual immorality associated with the pagan gods, including temple prostitutes.

“Mystery religions” developed also; they had some sort of “secret knowledge” known only by the insider who reveals the secret; secret meetings, secret handshakes, initiation ceremonies, etc.

*Christian worship was different.* It was marked by true love, true care and concern, and was not focused on “getting” something.

Of course, because of our human nature, it did not take long for deviations to occur.

**Now reference “The Didache, or Teaching of the Apostles (ca. 50-120),** translated by J.B. Lightfoot

The early church recognized Baptism as an element of worship, with baptism administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

They recognized the basic command, but added other requirements not found in the Bible:

Running water

Cold water preferred to warm

The baptism candidate should fast a day or two prior to the baptism

Was this canon law? Or was it merely indicative of how they did it?

Was it institutionalized?