

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: CORPORATE WORSHIP AND THE FORMATION OF SPIRITUAL VIRTUE



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Abstract. This article argues that corporate worship is one of the primary means of making disciples through the ritual formation of spiritual virtue. It explains that a disciple is formed not only through transmission of doctrine, but also through cultivating the heart's inclinations. Christian disciples are not only "knowers"; they are "doers," observing everything Christ has commanded. Since people act primarily according to their hearts' desires, pastors who wish to make disciples must concern themselves with the heart's inclinations. Such inclinations are shaped most significantly through habitual behavior in community, an apt description of corporate worship. This leads, then, to a discussion of the power of corporate worship liturgy—habitual behaviors done in the context of corporate worship—to incarnate biblical values and transmit them to the worshiper/disciple. When the liturgies of corporate worship are reenactments of what God has done in the gospel, these liturgies help to make disciples, for by reenacting what they are in Christ, Christian worshipers become what they are.

Spiritual formation is essential to the church because it is integral to the mission Christ gave her. Christ's great commission to churches was to "make disciples" (Matt 28:19–20). Churches accomplish this mission through proclaiming the gospel, through "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," and through "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded."¹ Christian disciples are a new

¹ All Scripture quotations are from the ESV. For a thorough argument for this understanding of the church's mission, see Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert, *What Is the Mission of the Church? Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom, and the Great Commission* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011); David M. Doran, *For the Sake of His Name: Challenging a New Generation for World Missions* (Allen Park, MI: Student Global Impact, 2002); as well as my forthcoming book.

people of God whose behavior should emerge from and reflect their biblical beliefs and values. This is why Scripture gives such attention to the behavior of Christians; it should be holy as God is holy (1 Pet 1:16). Yet although Christians are new creatures (2 Cor 5:17) with new hearts of obedience to Christ (Rom 6:17–18), holy behavior is not something that comes automatically. Observing Christ’s commands, as the Great Commission explicitly states, is something that must be taught—it is a learned moral behavior. The purpose of this paper is to argue that corporate worship is one of the primary means of making disciples through the ritual formation of spiritual virtue.

DISCIPLESHIP

If the mission of churches is to make disciples, then what will this look like? Very simply, a disciple will observe all that Christ commanded. In other words, a disciple of Jesus Christ will be characterized by a certain collection of behaviors.

How Is a Disciple Made?

How is this accomplished? How do pastors go about teaching others to observe all that Christ commanded in such a way that their behavior changes to better reflect biblical values? Certainly much of what is involved with such teaching is the transmission of doctrine. Without a proper set of beliefs, one will not behave in a manner worthy of Christ.² However, doctrinal transmission is not all there is to such teaching for at least three reasons. First, Christian behavior is more than simply a collection of right beliefs. Jesus did not just say, “teaching them all that I have commanded”; he said, “teaching them *to observe* all that I have commanded.” Christian behavior is a collection of skills, and development of a skillset requires more than a certain amount of knowledge. Reading a book about golf may be helpful in learning to play the sport, but it is going to take more than that. The same is true with learning to play an instrument or fly an airplane. A certain amount of book knowledge is necessary, but these skills require something more. Thus “teaching” in Matthew 28 involves more than just instructing the mind, it also concerns imparting a skillset.

Second, making disciples is more than data transmission because the reality is that most actions are not the result of deliberate, rational reflection

² See Alister E. McGrath, “Doctrine and Ethics,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 34, no. 2 (1991): 126–56.

upon beliefs. Some are, but most of how people act on a daily basis is due to ingrained habits. A pastor may proclaim the gospel to someone and then diligently teach him biblical doctrines, but that will not necessarily make a disciple who is characterized by Christian moral living, especially if a new convert has many habitual behaviors that conflict with biblical living. A drug addict will still have to deal with his addiction, a petty thief may find himself unintentionally slipping things off the shelf into his pocket, and a lazy husband will have difficulty finding the energy necessary to help with the kids. Old habits die hard, even for a Christian.

Third, whether or not we are acting on the basis of a deliberate decision or a habitual response, people ultimately will act not primarily based on the knowledge in their minds, but rather on the inclinations of their hearts. A child who is terrified of dogs will not pet one no matter how many statistics you give her about the docile nature of domesticated canines. A man whose heart is captivated by pornography will sin continually no matter how much he knows it is wrong. Another way of saying this is that people act more based on their desires than on their knowledge. The way many pastors try to combat this reality is to urge people to live according to their beliefs rather than their hearts, but it is not quite that simple. The problem is not that people have replaced what drives their actions with their hearts instead of their minds. They cannot help but be driven by the inclinations of their hearts, and philosophers from Plato to Augustine to Edwards to Lewis all recognized this.³ If the intellect and the heart conflict, people will most often do what they want to do rather than what they know they should do; this is the nature of humanity. This understanding recognizes that “a virtue is a character trait or tendency of ‘disposition’ . . . that inclines one to act in a way that is morally desirable.”⁴ Thus in order to cultivate holy living—in order to accomplish the mission of the church and make disciples—churches must concern themselves with nurturing spiritual virtue.

Inclination

This leads to the question of how spiritual virtue is formed and cultivated. First, it is important to recognize that there is a difference between what might be called higher and lower inclinations. The lower inclinations—or passions—are those impulses that respond primarily to physical appetites. Paul describes those who live according to these lower appetites:

³ See, for example, Plato, *The Republic* 9:571–580; Augustine, *City of God* 14:6; C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: HarperOne, 2001), 24; Jonathan Edwards, *The Religious Affections* 2:96.

⁴ C. E. Harris, *Applying Moral Theories*, 5th ed. (Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, 2006), 182.

“their god is their belly” (Phil 3:19). When set in conflict with the mind, these lower appetites will always dominate since people act primarily on the basis of inclination. A second aspect to human inclinations are the higher inclinations—or affections—of the soul. Jonathan Edwards helpfully described the difference between the two:

The affections and passions are frequently spoken of as the same, and yet in the more common use of speech, there is in some respect a difference. Affection is a word that in the ordinary signification, seems to be something more extensive than passion, being used for all vigorous lively actings of the will or inclination, but passion for those that are more sudden, and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and the mind more over powered, and less in its own command.⁵

Virtue is the cultivation of the affections toward what is right and good, leading an individual to act accordingly. The person still nevertheless acts according to his inclinations, but as C. S. Lewis so famously stated, “The head rules the belly through the chest.”⁶ Therefore, if pastors want to produce disciples characterized by holy behavior, then pastors must give attention to cultivating noble inclinations for what is true and good. Yet the question remains, how do pastors teach people’s affections?

Habit

The earlier analogy of skill development is helpful here. Developing a good golf swing or learning to play the piano requires knowing the right information, but it also requires rehearsing those skills learned in a book over and over and over again. Skill development requires doing, not just data transmission. It requires the cultivation of habits that become second nature. The same is true for cultivating noble affections that will produce holy behavior; it takes training. Holiness, according to Hebrews 12:14, is something a Christian must “strive for.” Paul told Timothy to discipline himself for the purpose of godliness (1 Tim 4:7). Holy behavior takes practice. Once again, Lewis is helpful. He describes the “chest”—the higher inclinations—as “emotions organized by trained habits into stable sentiments.”⁷ Mark Noll describes Jonathan Edwards’s view of the affections as “habitual inclinations at the core of a person’s being.”⁸ The disciplined

⁵ Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, rev. ed. (Banner of Truth, 1978), 26–27.

⁶ C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, 24.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 24–25.

⁸ Mark A Noll, *America’s God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005), 23.

development of habits is essential for the formation of holy living because habit is what trains the affections. Thus, cultivating holy behavior involves shaping the affections through habitual practices.

Community

Such habitual behaviors are cultivated most significantly in the context of community. Evan Hock recognizes the significance of community in considering the development of Christian ethical behavior when he emphasizes the “relational nature of ethics, drawing out explicitly the corporate dimensions of moral responsibility.”⁹ He continues, “To foster the corporate nature of life heightens the awareness of the church as an ethical community. . . . Our discipleship then must never be abstracted from the sense and duty of membership in the church.”¹⁰ In particular, he notes that the development of Christian maturity comes about primarily through “modeling virtue: keeping promises, honoring commitments, speaking to edify, showing forgiveness and such examples.”¹¹

Worked In—Work Out

This suggestion that moral behavior is shaped by nurturing right habits may give the impression that discipleship is purely the work of man, yet this is far from the truth. Spiritual formation is a synergistic process wherein the Holy Spirit of God works in the life of a believer to “work out [his] salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil 2:12–13). The Holy Spirit is the agent that differentiates a person who is enslaved by legalistic habits and one who intentionally nurtures habits that will shape his soul. An individual without the Holy Spirit can develop all the right habits, but this will not transform his life without the Holy Spirit’s activity in his heart.

LITURGY

Spiritual virtue is shaped by the cultivation of inclinations through habitual behavior in community. In a sense, Christian living is the behavior (*ergon*) of a people (*laos*). Considering moral behavior in this way reveals the significance of corporate worship for cultivating such behavior, for *laos*

⁹ Evan C. Hock, “Theology and Ethics,” *Reformation and Revival* 5, no. 4 (1996): 46.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

combined with *ergon* equates to *leitourgia*.¹² The behavior of a people is shaped by its liturgies.

At its root, *leitourgia* is simply a compound word comprised of *laos*—“people” and *ergon*—“work.” Etymologically the term simply refers to any public work. In its older broad sense, *leitourgia* referred to any behavior that was not private, works done in public as a member of the community. Later, *leitourgia* came to refer specifically to public works of worship to God, primarily due to its use in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX).¹³ The LXX translators deliberately chose this term to uniquely denote the formal service of the priests on behalf of the people of God, and they used it almost exclusively for that kind of work in contrast to other public works. This more narrow use of the idea will be in focus later in this paper, but first I will focus on liturgy considered broadly.

Liturgies have several characteristics, the first two of which are embedded in the root words themselves. First, liturgies are behaviors; they are *works*. They are informed by beliefs, and they are reflections of values, but at their essence, liturgies are what people do externally. This is why liturgy is so essentially connected to moral behavior. Yet not all actions are liturgies. The second characteristic of liturgies is that they are the *people's* work—they are communal behaviors.

But not all communal behavior is liturgy. The third characteristic of liturgies is that they are a kind of ritual. In other words, they are habitual practices; liturgies do the same thing over and over again. This point is likely the biggest reason many Christians squirm at the mention of liturgy. For a number of reasons, some Christians have been conditioned to see habitual, repetitious ritual as inauthentic, hypocritical, and ultimately “vain repetition.” Yet it is this very quality that makes liturgies so powerful in cultivating behavior. Consider again the problem with viewing discipleship as only data transmission. Holy living is a skillset that Christians must develop, and such skillsets require practice. What is practice if not ritual? It is doing the same action over and over again, not as an end in itself, but toward the end of developing skill. Repetition is not a deficiency of liturgy; it is actually liturgy's greatest strength and why, for example, Donald Whitney categorizes public worship as a “spiritual discipline.”¹⁴ Many times the aversion to liturgy is that it is just going through the motions; but there is virtue to going through the motions. Going through the motions is not a mark of hypocrisy; going through the motions is a mark of maturity. It is, indeed, certainly possible to perform a ritual in a way that renders it vain

¹² H. Strathman, “*λειτουργία*,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 4:219.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1997), 101–117.

repetition. But rituals in themselves are not inherently vain; rather they are necessary for the formation of virtue. Anyone can tell the difference between a piano student who is running through her scales just because she has to and one who is performing the repetitious exercise with intentionality because she knows that it is through such a ritual that she will become a better pianist. This is exactly where the Holy Spirit's work is essential; without the Holy Spirit, liturgy becomes dry, mundane, and enslaving. But with the Holy Spirit's active participation, liturgy becomes God's tool for spiritual formation.

The goal is that after practicing the scale or the swing over and over again, the individual will be able to perform it without even thinking, and this solves the second problem with viewing discipleship as only the transmission of doctrine: most daily actions result not from deliberate choice but from the habits that have been formed through ritual. The issue is not whether people will be formed by liturgy, but which liturgies will form them. Much of how people act has developed through rituals. Most people have a particular morning routine. That routine may or may not be informed originally by deliberate choices, but regardless, people eventually perform the same morning rituals without really thinking about it. From driving to work to typing on a computer to making the coffee, most of human behavior has been shaped by habitual practices.

The Form of the Liturgy

Behavior is shaped by liturgies because, as Lewis stated, inclinations are organized through trained habits, and habits are formed through rituals. And it is the shape of those rituals that cultivates the habits, because the form of the liturgy embodies certain values.

Here is an illustration. Imagine a dense forest separating two cities. In order to engage in commerce between these cities, merchants must pass through the forest. For the earliest of these merchants, this was a very difficult task, wrought with many mistakes and casualties. Eventually, though, over time and with experience, the merchants discovered the safest, quickest route through the forest. Once they did, they began to carefully mark the path so that they would remember the best way to go. Even then, each of these early journeys required careful attention to the markers so that they would not stray from the best way. Over time, however, their regular trips along that same route began to form a much more visible path to the degree that years later merchants hardly pay attention; they doze peacefully as their horses casually follow the heavily trod road. Here now is a well-worn path cut through the wood upon which travelers mindlessly pass from one city to the other. This path may seem mundane, but in reality it is embedded with values such as desire for safety, protection from the dangers of the forest, and conviction that this is the quickest way through. The

snoozing merchants do not give thought to these values any longer, but the values are there nonetheless, and whether they know it or not, their journey has been shaped by those values. Those values are, as it were, worn into the shape of the path itself.

So it is with liturgies. Liturgies are developed over long periods of time, at first with very deliberate values in view, and those values are worn into the liturgies through regular use. And when people practice such liturgies, they are shaped by the values that have formed them, whether they recognize it or not. Israel Galindo summarizes this point with the foregoing argument when he states, “Even the religious commitments of many adults are rooted not in rational analysis of theological propositions or biblical interpretations, but . . . in affective orientations toward religious symbols and ritual.”¹⁵

Worldly Liturgies

Our aim here has been to discover how Christians can cultivate higher inclinations toward what is true and good, but we must recognize that the reverse also happens—deformation of inclinations. Again, actions are not merely the outcome of rational choices, and this is true of sinful behavior as well. Sometimes Christians sin deliberately and willfully; but often sinful action is the result of ingrained habits, and those habits have been formed through worldly liturgies.

The rhythms of worldly routines are shaping the inclinations of Christians maybe more than they would like to admit. These are routines and habits that are part of the cultural environment. James K. A. Smith, who has recently written helpfully on the power of liturgy in Christian discipleship, emphasizes the need for “cultural exegesis” toward the end of “unveil[ing] the liturgical shape” of practices in secular society.¹⁶ He specifically cites the nature of contemporary consumerism as a network of practices that shape Christians on a daily basis.¹⁷ The problem is that it is because they are liturgies that people have a very difficult time both recognizing how they are being shaped and even considering living without them. If pastors wish to make disciples—if they wish to teach the people in their churches to observe all the Christ has commanded them—then pastors must do something to counteract the effects of the worldly liturgies that are affecting them each and every day. Part of what will counteract their effects is doctrinal preaching, but it will require more than data transmission.

¹⁵ Israel Galindo, “Methods of Christian Education toward Christian Spiritual Formation,” *Review and Expositor* 98, no. 3 (2001): 416.

¹⁶ James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 93.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 90–103. Other examples he discusses include nationalism and academia.

CORPORATE WORSHIP

This is where it will be useful to narrow the definition of *leitourgia* to how it has been used at least since the LXX as the work of the people in corporate worship. Many Christians today consider corporate worship as simply a Christian's expression of authentic devotion toward God. Yet liturgy—considered now in terms of corporate worship—is not just an expression of “authentic” devotion; liturgy is formative. It is not just expressive, and this is why repetition is necessary, for repetition is necessary for formation. This connects a church's corporate worship inexorably with spiritual formation. As Hock notes, “true worship is not primarily something emotive but is accompanied with a moral imperative.”¹⁸ He notes, for example, how Romans 12 connects “acceptable worship” with a consecrated life. *Who* Christians worship is significant for their behavior; as John Murray observed, “Ethics is grounded in and is the fruit of the fear of the Lord. . . . What or whom we worship determines our behavior.”¹⁹ But an understanding of the formative nature of liturgy uncovers the fact that *how* Christians worship also significantly affects their behavior.

This is how corporate worship fits into the Great Commission: the liturgy of a church shapes the liturgy of life. How a church worships week in and week out forms the people—it molds their behavior by shaping their inclinations through habitual practices, because the shape of the liturgy transmits its values. Like that path through the forest, when people travel along the liturgy that we have provided for them, they will inevitably be shaped by the values and beliefs worn into it. It is in Christian liturgy that a Christian's heart, as Lewis said, is “organized by trained habits into stable sentiments,” where a Christian's inclinations are disciplined and trained, and where the negative effects of worldly liturgies may be counteracted.

What is important about a corporate worship service is not just what is said from the pulpit or the doctrine of the hymns, for there are aspects of Christian piety that are inarticulable; much of Christian piety is learned only through doing, and that is what art is—the purpose of art is to incarnate values, and people experience those values as they participate in the art. As Mark Twain once quipped, “A man who carries a cat by the tail learns something he can learn in no other way.” This is the power of aesthetics, and so this extends beyond the shape of the liturgy itself to the other aesthetic forms employed in corporate worship. Poetry, music, architecture, and rhetoric each embody inarticulable aspects of Christian virtue that through their use express those virtues. A story is told that once when Robert Schumann played a new composition and someone asked him what

¹⁸ Hock, “Theology and Ethics,” 44.

¹⁹ John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1957), 231.

it meant, he simply replied, “It means this” and played it again.²⁰ The liturgies and art forms of Christian worship embody and form certain aspects of Christian discipleship in a way that nothing else can. Thus through participation in such aesthetic and liturgical acts, the embedded meaning of those acts are worn into the participant.

Reenactment

Scripture is filled with liturgies, and these liturgies help explain both the purpose of liturgy and how one should be formed in order to nurture virtue. Paul Richardson notes that “the Bible informs the shape of our worship primarily on a larger scale, as it speaks about the nature of Christian community, Christian maturity, and Christian ethics.”²¹ In particular, the liturgies of Scripture illustrate that biblical liturgies shape the people of God through reenactment of what God has done. In this way biblical liturgy is not human work toward God; rather, it is God’s work upon his people.

God prescribed for Israel a liturgical year that shaped their relationship with him by reenacting the covenant that he had established with them and the ways in which he had redeemed them. This is a stark difference between biblical liturgies and pagan liturgies. Pagan liturgies involve rituals designed to attract a god’s attention and manipulate him to do something for the worshiper. Biblical liturgies rehearse what God has already done in order that the worshiper’s affections and life might be formed and shaped.

A few examples in Israel’s liturgical year will illustrate this. The Sabbath itself was a regular reenactment of God’s rest on the seventh day of Creation, and as Jesus later indicated, “the Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27) in order to shape him into a certain kind of person through a weekly routine. The most holy of days for Israel was the Day of Atonement (Lev 16). This Feast Day contained a very carefully prescribed liturgy that pictured spiritual realities through reenactment. The cleansings, the sacrifices, the sprinkling of blood, and the scapegoat all formed the people through their participation into those who recognized the holiness of God, the horrors of sin, and the necessity of atonement. The Passover and Feast of the Unleavened Bread had a carefully prescribed liturgy that shaped the people by their participation in it. It was a reenactment of the historical event of the first Passover, and this is exactly why liturgies are so powerful; by reenacting these events, a person is formed as if he had been there himself. In Exodus 12:14, God called the feast a “memorial,” which is more than simply a passive recollection of something. A memorial is a ritual re-

²⁰ Donald Whittle, *Christianity and the Arts* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1966), 52.

²¹ Paul A. Richardson, “Spiritual Formation in Corporate Worship,” *Review and Expositor* 96, no. 4 (1999): 526.

enactment by which a person enters into the past event and is thus shaped by it.²² Fifteen hundred years later, while celebrating the Passover memorial himself, Jesus Christ established a new ordinance, complete with a carefully prescribed liturgy, and commanded his disciples, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). This *anamnesis*—this “remembrance”—is an active reenactment of the death of Christ on behalf of his people in such a way that Christians are shaped by the act.²³ Each of these examples serve to illustrate the point that biblical liturgies should reenact God’s work for his people and thereby form his people into those whose lives are driven by a recognition of what he has done for them.²⁴

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi

Liturgies form disciples because they both embody and shape beliefs and values. It follows, then, that how people worship both *reveals* their beliefs and values and *forms* their beliefs and values. *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, said Prosper of Aquitaine—“the law of prayer, the law of belief.”²⁵ This is why it is essential that pastors carefully consider how the liturgies of their churches shape the inclinations, and therefore the lives, of their church members. These are things that occur every single week—they are habits that are shaping the inclinations, and therefore ethics, of people in churches.

The structure of a biblical liturgy follows the logic of the gospel and is thus a reenactment of the gospel.²⁶ The logic of the gospel is this: God reveals himself and calls us to worship him, and individuals respond with

²² Frank Stagg, “The Lord’s Supper in the New Testament,” *Review and Expositor* 66, no. 1 (1969): 13.

²³ Melvin Tinker, “Last Supper/Lord’s Supper: More than a Parable in Action?,” *Themelios* 26, no. 2 (2001): 21.

²⁴ See Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).

²⁵ Whether it is the law of prayer that forms belief or reveals belief (or both) is a matter of perennial debate, an exposition of which is beyond the scope of this paper. Here, however, I am taking the view that both are true to an extent, with an emphasis on the formative nature of prayer upon belief. See Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 238–40.

²⁶ Several recent volumes have created a renewed interest in such gospel-shaped liturgy, including Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009); Robbie F. Castleman, *Story-Shaped Worship: Following Patterns from the Bible and History* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013); Mike Cospser, *Rhythms of Grace: How the Church’s Worship Tells the Story of the Gospel* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2013); James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013). For a review of these works, see Scott Aniol, “Gospel-Shaped Worship: A Review of Recent Literature,” *Artistic Theologian* 2 (2013): 106–13.

adoration and confession of their sins as they recognize their unworthiness to be in his presence. God responds by forgiving sins through Christ and welcoming believers into his presence, where they hear him speak, they commit to obedience, they bring their petitions to him, and they enjoy open and free communion.

This is the same logic that informs historic Christian liturgy: Worshipers begin with God's call for them to worship him, followed by adoration and praise. They then confess their sins to him and receive assurance of pardon in Christ. They thank him for their salvation, they hear his Word preached, and they respond with dedication. And the climax of most of historic Christian worship has always been expression of communion with God, either through drawing near to him in prayer, or more often in historic liturgies, through celebrating the Lord's Table. To eat at Christ's Table is the most powerful expression that Christians are accepted by him.²⁷ All of the Scripture readings, prayers, and songs in this liturgy are carefully chosen for their appropriateness in a particular function within the gospel-shaped structure.

Pastors today would do well to value this historic liturgical shape because of the power and inevitability of being shaped by liturgy, the value of what this liturgy embodies, and the consequent potential what this kind of liturgy can do: by reenacting what they are in Christ, Christian worshipers become what they are.

CONCLUSION

In order to make disciples, pastors should employ biblical liturgies that reenact the gospel of Jesus Christ and aesthetically embody values consistent with God's holiness. The primary way that pastors can shape the inclinations and impact the ethical behaviors of people in their churches is by influencing their habits, and one of the primary means they have to do this is through their corporate liturgies. Scripture-shaped gospel liturgies will inform people's liturgies of life, which will in turn form their moral behavior.

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²⁷ See James Torrance, *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 23.