

WCF 21 - Of Religious Worship and the Sabbath Day

A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath Day. It is good to give thanks to the LORD, And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; To declare Your lovingkindness in the morning, And Your faithfulness every night, On an instrument of ten strings, On the lute, And on the harp, With harmonious sound. For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands.

~Psalm 92:1-4~

I. The Obligation to Worship (1)

A. Revealed in Nature

1. God's Glory Displayed in Nature

- a. Ps 19:1-3
- b. Acts 14:15-17
- c. Rom 1:18-20

2. God's Design of Man by Nature

B. Revealed in Scripture

1. What is Acceptable

Deut 12:29-32

2. What is Unacceptable

- a. Will Worship - Jdg 18:30-31; 1Ki 12:32-33

- b. Satanic Suggestions

- c. Images

Heidelberg 98: But may not images be tolerated in the churches as books to the laity?

Answer: No, for we must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have His people taught, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of His Word.

- d. Anything not commanded: RPW

II. The Object of Worship (2)

A. Exclusively the True God: Father, Son, Holy Spirit

B. Through a Mediator

III. The Manner of Worship

A. Prayer: The Soul's Approach to God (3-4)

B. Scripture: God's Rule of Direction to Man (5)

IV. The Nature of Worship (6)

A. Universality

1. Location

- a. Deut 12:5-6
- b. Joh 4:21

2. Direction

- a. 1Ki 8:30

b. Dan 6:10

B. Spirituality

WCF 7.6 - Under the gospel...the ordinances...*though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity, and less outward glory, yet, in them, it is held forth in more fullness, evidence and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles...*

C. Frequency

1. Private
2. Family
3. Publicly

V. The Day of Worship (7-8)

A. Principle of Nature

B. Clarified by Scripture

C. Required of all People

1. Blessings
 - a. Take Delight in the Lord
 - b. Ride on the Heights of the Earth
 - c. Be Fed w/ Heritage of our Father Jacob
2. Concern

“Perhaps the best test of the degree in which a community is thoroughly Christian is to be found in the way in which the Sabbath-day is observed. And this rest, to have religious value, must not be merely an enforced civil rest, but a holy rest, and a devout worship of Him who is Lord of the Sabbath...The massing of multitudes in large city centers, the development of inventions in various industrial activities, the formation of large soulless corporations, and the increase of the worldly temper even among Christians, are some of the things which are insensibly, but very really, affecting the practice of Sabbath observance. Surely it shall not be that the Presbyterian Church will ever fail to uphold the sanctity of the Sabbath, She must be true to her history and her Standards, and then she shall be true to God, the church, and the nation.”

Francis Beattie, *The Presbyterian Standards*, 266