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*SOLA SCRIPTURA STATUAT LEX ORANDI: TOWARD
A TRANSCULTURAL THEOLOGY OF LITURGY*

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Introduction

The Seventh-day Adventist church is one of the most diverse religious groups. With this diversity comes a preponderance in worship practices. Calling upon the Reformation principle, *sola scriptura*, the Bible alone should establish the rule for liturgy. How do we apply the Bible as the rule for liturgy, with so many worship preferences and diversity of cultures within the Adventist church? In this paper, I seek to articulate a way forward, developing a transcultural theology of liturgy to be applied in every Adventist culture, allowing room for a rich variety of local cultural contextualizations.

Let us briefly define some terms. Worship is attitudinal homage, grateful submission, and praise, both in emotion and reason, toward God.¹ In short, worship is attitude. Liturgy is the

¹ David G. Peterson defines worship as a “specific bodily gesture, expressing an attitude of grateful submission, praise or homage to God.” *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1992), 55. Thanksgiving and submission are essential aspects of worship. Worship derives from the English “worth-ship,” ascribing God’s worthiness to receive devotion as Creator-Redeemer-Lord. The *Oxford Dictionary of English* offers a concise attitudinal definition of worship as “the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity.” *Oxford Dictionary of English*, s.v. “worship,” <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/worship>, (accessed July 15, 2015). In contrast, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), an etymological dictionary, gives a more complex definition: “To honour or revere as a supernatural being or power, or as a holy thing; to regard or approach with veneration; to adore with appropriate acts, rites, or ceremonies.” *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. “worship, v.,” <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/230346?rskey=4CkT8P&result=2> (accessed May 18, 2016). The biblical semantic field for worship is broad and holistic. The most common Hebrew term for worship, occurring over 170 times in the Old Testament (OT), is *hištah“wâ* (הִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה), “to bow down, worship, and to prostrate oneself.” Past scholarship parsed *hištah“wâ* as the Hithpael of *šāḥâ* (שָׁחָה), “to bow down.” *Hištah“wâ* is now understood to be Eshtaphal stem of *ḥāwâ* (חָוָה) III, “to bow down,” a Ugaritic cognate of *šāḥâ*. Edwin Yamauchi, “ḥawa,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 267-69; Yamauchi, “šaha,” 914-15. *Šāḥâ* is also related to *šāḥaḥ* (שָׁחַח), “bow down,” and its derivatave *šaḥ* (שָׁח), “low, lowly.” *Šāḥaḥ* occurs seventeen times in the OT. Victor P. Hamilton, “šahaḥ,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 915. The corresponding most common Greek word for worship in the New Testament (NT) is *proskuneō* (προσκυνεω), generally meaning, “to fall down to kiss the ground before a king or kiss their feet; to homage (do reverence to, adore); worship.” C. Maurer,

actions of worship, including praying, singing, reading, preaching, etc.² One may give lip service to God through singing, but may not be worshipping. One may have liturgy without worship,³ but one cannot have attitudinal homage to God without a corresponding action. Worship always leads to liturgy (action).⁴

The “Liturgy” refers to the totality of the public worship gathering. This paper focuses on the Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath morning Liturgy, which is often referred to as the Service, the Divine Service, Divine Hour, the Eleven O’clock Hour, or as simply “church.” I also speak

“*proskuneō*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: Abridged in One Volume* (TDNT), ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 948-49. It also means, to render “submission, adoration, and devotion to God.” Walter Bauer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BAGD), 2nd ed., s.v. “*proskuneō*.” In the Septuagint (LXX), *hištah^awā* is translated with *proskuneō* 148 times in its 170 occurrences in the OT, highlighting the significance that both these terms tend to be understood as *corporate* expressions of “prostration,” “worship,” or even “obeisance.” Yamauchi, “*hawa*,” 268. These primary biblical terms indicate both attitude and action of worship. Etymologically, praise is redundant with worship, deriving from Latin, *pretiare*, “to appraise, value,” and Old French, *preiser*, “to value, to make a valuation of, to esteem, to attach importance to, to laud, praise, speak highly of.” *Oxford English Dictionary (OED) Online*, “praise, v.,” <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/149314?rskey=9Z99Kc&result=3> (accessed May 19, 2016). While the OED may seem to muddy the waters a bit with a definition that combines both attitude and action, it comes closer to the biblical concept. Though coming from different origins, worship and praise share similar meanings, “to value, set a price, esteem worth.” Nonetheless, it is helpful to actually include praise in the definition of worship, for it propels the act of forth-telling the character of God. It also implicitly embraces the dual function of worship as both attitude and action. However, praise also belongs in the realm of liturgy, for praise tends toward the action spectrum rather than attitude. Praise can be feigned, a “lip service,” without any genuine worship of the heart. “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me” (Matt 15:8, NIV).

² Liturgy is understood as the actions performed by Christians in their personal existential experience of corporate worship. “The actions of a congregation responding in worship to Christ’s total ministry, and the words it speaks, by means of which it illustrates and defines the content of its confrontation with God.” C. Raymond Holmes, *Sing a New Song: Worship Renewal for Adventists Today* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1984), 15. The *OED* defines liturgy in two primary ways. First, “With capital initial. [‘Liturgy’, as opposed to ‘liturgy’]. The service of the Holy Eucharist: properly applied to the rite of the Eastern Churches. In liturgics, used specifically (with qualification) of the different types of Eucharistic service.” Second, “A form of public worship, especially in the Christian Church; a collection of formularies for the conduct of Divine service. Also, public worship conducted in accordance with a prescribed form.” *OED Online*, s.v. “liturgy,” <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/109293?rskey=91Czwq&result=1> (accessed July 15, 2015).

³ “Participation in liturgical forms and ceremonies is not worship. True worship can exist without congregational liturgy.” Fernando Canale, “Principles of Worship and Liturgy,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 20, no. 1 (2009).

⁴ Not all worship is corporate. Even in personal devotion, true worship always corresponds with action, whether it be kneeling, singing, hand-raising, shouting, closing one’s eyes, praying, etc.

about a theology of liturgy, which is a theology about liturgy, based upon an authoritative source(s). In contrast, liturgical theology is the manifest or derived theology drawn from liturgical practices.

The Need for a Theology of Liturgy

Adventist pioneers did not articulate a theology of worship, liturgy, or culture, though they did lay a foundation for it through the fundamental pillars, or landmark doctrines.⁵ Without a theology of liturgy, the movement followed the prevailing liturgical norms of its historical milieu. In the nineteenth century, Adventist liturgy closely resembled the order of prevailing American revivalism.⁶ Methodists, Baptist, Presbyterians, and new groups, such as Disciples of Christ, the Christian Church, the holiness churches, and Seventh-day Adventists,⁷ followed revivalism. These denominations embraced the Reformation principle of the priesthood of all believers, actively applying democracy not only in church organization, but also worship, liturgy, and music. “Their Protestantism was more an extension of the dominant evangelical trends,” and

⁵ Sabbatarian Adventists (1845–1860) erected five pillars, or landmarks, that would establish Adventism as a liturgical renewal movement. These five pillars were the cleansing of the sanctuary, the second and third angels’ messages, the temple of God and His Law, the Sabbath, and conditional immortality. George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 27; Denis Fortin, “The Theology of Ellen G. White,” in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013), 242-43. Ellen White first articulated the landmarks of Adventism, based on pioneers’ Bible study, amidst the theological controversies of the 1880s. Ellen G. White, Manuscript 13, 1889, in *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 1987), 516-519.

⁶ James F. White labels the Second Awakening, with its ensuing century of revivals as the Frontier Tradition, so called for its early ministry efforts in the American “frontiers” of Appalachia, Ohio, and the Tennessee River valleys. In later revival waves, this would also include New England, the Midwest, and even as far as the West Coast. These ripples of reform quickly moved from the frontier to urban centers. Frontier worship was the first tradition to create a “whole system of worship that led to baptism rather than leading from it.” James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1989), 171.

⁷ “Together, this collection of groups formed the evangelical movement that continues to this day, held together in large part by a common commitment to revivalist worship.” Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 9.

“drew on themes from the history of Christianity” and “the history of the United States.”⁸

Leading the revivalism charge was Charles Grandison Finney (1792–1875). Not only regarded as the greatest Second Great Awakening evangelist, Finney was the “most influential liturgical reformer in American history.”⁹ He declared, “God has established no particular system of measures . . . [for] public worship.”¹⁰ The Reformation principle of *sola scriptura* had cultivated the concept of the priesthood of all believers, developing into the principle of religious liberty. By the nineteenth century, it revolutionized the liturgy.

Adventist liturgy did not follow the tradition of a specific denomination, but rather continued in the heritage of American revivalism. Any attempt to view Adventist liturgical heritage more narrowly does a disservice to the historical context. Throughout the nineteenth century, liturgical practices continued to be quite diverse, with liturgical appropriateness and local preferences fostering variety. Amidst the variety and spontaneity, a gradual shape began to take place, featuring singing, prayer, Scripture, sermon, and still more singing.¹¹ Sources are abundant for Adventist liturgical and musical practice in all periods, though the shape of Adventist liturgy, as seen through the well of time, proves murky at best. We cannot fully articulate with absolute certainty what Adventist liturgy always looked like.¹²

⁸ Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 192.

⁹ White, *Protestant Worship*, 176; Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *American Methodist Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 11; Redman, *Worship Awakening*, 9.

¹⁰ Charles G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (New York: Leavitt, Lord and Company, 1835), 232.

¹¹ This order is significant, for it follows the liturgical pattern discussed later in this paper.

¹² I explore this abundant data in my forthcoming dissertation: “Worship Music as Spirituality: An Examination of Music in the Liturgy among Black and White Adventists in the United States, 1840–1944” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2018).

By the twentieth century, the liturgy had become much more formalized. The 1932 *Church Manual*, though only descriptive of the usual order of liturgy, resulted in becoming normative toward a theology of the church. John Nixon suggests that the *Church Manual* liturgy became authoritative over time:

In a sense the form of the worship service, which was adhered to fairly strictly, became the substitute for an official ecclesiology. If Adventist worship could not be grounded in a coherent biblical thesis it could at least be safeguarded by a strong organizational formality, and this is exactly what came to pass. Uniformity of practice developed into a worship tradition that eventually became the established orthodoxy, and worshipers in the pews learned to identify a particular order of service as constituting authentic Adventist worship. In the more conservative congregations, deviation from this order came to be looked upon as heretical.¹³

The result of this *de facto* ecclesiology was that the liturgy functioned as the basis for Adventist beliefs about worship, liturgy, and even the church. At the end of century, as Adventists began to explore various modes of worship renewal, this identity was challenged.

Today, the Seventh-day Adventist church faces an impending crisis in regards to ecclesiology. Amidst the rich ethnic and cultural diversity of Adventism, there also exists a multitude of variance of liturgical practices. These variances include, but are not limited to, the traditional Adventist liturgy in the *Church Manual*, the praise and worship movement, the liturgical renewal movement, and emergent worship. A crisis is discerned when one recognizes that these liturgical practices reflect a plurality of theological beliefs. This manifestation of theology from liturgical practices is understood as liturgical theology.

¹³ John S. Nixon, "Towards a Theology of Worship: An Application at the Oakwood College Seventh-day Adventist Church" (DMin diss., Andrews Univeristy, 2003), 20.

Liturgical Theology

Lex orandi lex credendi

Liturgy proclaims theology. Liturgical theology is the expressed theology of the worshiping community.¹⁴ Ellen G. White keenly perceived this reality. She declared that “modes of worship” reveal conceptions of God, the world, humanity, and even salvation.¹⁵ When Christians gather for worship, modes of worship—liturgy—implicitly and explicitly embody theology. The performance of Christian liturgy is the primary form of doing theology.¹⁶ A parishioner, even a child, embodies beliefs by keeping the Sabbath, singing praise, kneeling for prayer, or listening to the Word of God read and proclaimed.¹⁷ Chronologically speaking, the

¹⁴ David W. Fagerberg, *Theologia Prima: What is Liturgical Theology?*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2004), ix.

¹⁵ “It is Satan's constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God so that they regard Him with fear and hate rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed to the Creator; it is embodied in systems of religion and expressed in modes of worship. Thus the minds of men are blinded, and Satan secures them as his agents to war against God. By perverted conceptions of the divine attributes, heathen nations were led to believe human sacrifices necessary to secure the favor of Deity; and horrible cruelties have been perpetrated under the various forms of idolatry.” Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 569; Karl Tsatalbasidis, “If the Foundations are Destroyed, What Can the Righteous Do,” *Adventists Affirm*, (Fall 2008): 57. Conceptions of God, the world, and humanity are considered the first principles, or philosophical foundations for all knowledge. Fernando Canale, “Philosophical Foundations and the Biblical Sanctuary,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 36, no. 2 (Autumn 1998): 184-185.

¹⁶ When Christians speak of theology, they often refer to the work done by scholars. This discipline is considered *theologia secunda*, “second-level” theology, for it “concerns itself with describing, analyzing, criticizing, and organizing the doctrines” of theology. In contrast, liturgy is understood as *theologia prima*, first-level theology, for it includes the “actual living-out and personal practice of religion.” Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 21.

¹⁷ Norval F. Pease, *And Worship Him* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1967), 31, 42. Liturgical practices reveal an often “unreflected-upon” theology. A congregation does not often purposefully reflect upon their worship actions, nonetheless, their actions manifest theological meaning. Consider the unbeliever who comes into the Christian worship experience, and falls on his face declaring, “God is here!” (1 Cor 14:24-25). The unbeliever has not reflected on the deep theology he has just performed. However, Scripture teaches that bowing before God is an act of worship (Ps 95:6). While the new worshiper had not reflected upon his theology, his liturgy of bowing signified belief, a *theologia prima*.

worship of Christians reveals their *first* expressions of theological thought.

Lex orandi lex credendi

A tension develops in the life of the worshiper. Worshipers express their beliefs through the actions of the liturgy. However, the liturgy not only expresses beliefs, but also contributes to shaping or forming those beliefs. Over time, liturgical practices not only inform beliefs, but also become normative for beliefs, assuming the role of an authoritative source.

In the history of Christian theology, liturgical practices have often become the basis for theology.¹⁸ Prosper of Aquitaine (c. 390 – c. 455) argued for liturgical practice to become the

¹⁸ “Several of the central Christian doctrines were prayed liturgically long before they were formalized dogmatically.” Maxwell E. Johnson, ed. *Sacraments and Worship: The Sources of Christian Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), xiv. While historically this has been true, most of these developments were unbiblical. “The speed with which the early Christians tobogganed into apostasy takes one’s breath away.” C. Mervyn Maxwell, “Change of the Sabbath,” in *History of Sabbath and Sunday* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1973), 3. A prime example of the interplay between doxology and orthodoxy in the liturgy may be observed in the historical development of the Eucharist. While rightly understood as thanksgiving and “good grace”, the Eucharist primarily developed in the early centuries as a sacrifice of the Christian towards God. This sacrifice developed into a work of the priest on behalf of the people in order to achieve justification. The Roman Catholic priesthood usurped the liturgical role of Jesus Christ as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. Herein lies the *Oxford English Dictionary’s* primary definition of Liturgy: the Divine Service, or work of the people to please God. As stated in the third edition of the English Roman Missal, the priest says, “Pray, brethren that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.” “The Order of Mass,” *The Roman Missal* (2010): 3. https://www.magnificat.net/romanmissal/pdf/PewCard4pages_195x270_site.pdf (accessed April 14, 2016). For more on the development of the doctrine of sacrifice, see: Frances M. Young, *The Use of Sacrificial Ideas in Greek Christian Writers from the New Testament to John Chrysostom*, Patristic Monograph Series, vol. 5 (Cambridge: The Philadelphia Patristic Foundation, 1979); Robert J. Daly, S.J., *The Origins of the Christian Doctrine of Sacrifice* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 135-140; Maxwell E. Johnson, “The Apostolic Tradition,” in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 8. Sometimes doxological practices have been given as the defense for orthodox beliefs. The relationship between doxology and orthodoxy serves as fundamental issue for all liturgical theologians. The English Methodist and great liturgical theologian Geoffrey Wainwright suggests that the liturgy, or work of the people, finds its “focal point and function” in the holism of the Christian life. “Into the liturgy the people bring their entire existence so that it may be gathered up in praise,” which is doxology, “the praise of God.” Wainwright’s entire systematic theology centers on this theme: Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 8. Liturgical theologians have connected the term, doxology, with the similar term, orthodoxy. Doxology and orthodoxy are related. Orthodoxy’s definition is expanded from simply “right teaching,” to being equally understood as “right glory,” “right praise,” or “right worship.” David W. Fagerberg, *What is Liturgical Theology? A Study in Methodology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 302; Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, The Hale Memorial Lectures of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, 1981 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 81-83; Don E. Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 40.

based for faith: “*Ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*,” meaning, “So that the rule of supplication may establish the rule of believing.”¹⁹ This complex Latin phrase has often been quoted in short form: *lex orandi lex credendi*, “The rule of praying is the rule of believing.” Prosper placed normative authority in the liturgy, providing the primary source for establishing the Christian faith. Max Johnson agrees: “The practice of Christian worship forms the belief of the church [. . .]. In turn, worship itself is formed further by that belief and, further still continues to form people into believers and disciples of the crucified and risen Lord.”²⁰

Other Christians in the Protestant tradition of *sola scriptura* disagree with this perspective. The great liturgical theologian and British Methodist, Geoffrey Wainwright, articulates the critical distinction between Catholics and Protestants regarding *lex orandi, lex credendi*:

Roman Catholicism characteristically appeals to existing liturgical practice for proof in

¹⁹ “In inviolable decrees of the blessed apostolic see, our holy fathers have cast down the pride of this pestiferous novelty and taught us to ascribe to the grace of Christ the very beginnings of good will, the growth of noble efforts, and the perseverance in them to the end. In addition, let us look at the sacred testimony of priestly intercessions which have been transmitted from the apostles and which are uniformly celebrated throughout the world and in every catholic church; so that the law of prayer may establish a law for belief [*ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*].” Prosper of Aquitaine, *Episcoporum Auctoritates*, Patrologia Latina, ed. Jacques P. Migne, 209. Translation Johnson, ed. *Sacraments and Worship*, 50-51. Prosper of Aquitaine was a Gallican layman and one of the earliest disciples of Augustine of Hippo. In battling the semi-Pelagian controversy, he utilized the church’s liturgical supplication for grace as an argument for the causative role of divine grace in salvation. Kavanagh stressed the importance of the grammar of the patristic maxim, arguing that the predicate makes the phrase clear—it is the law of supplicating that *establishes (statuat)* the law of believing. “The predicate *statuat* does not permit these two fundamental laws of belief and worship in Christian life to float apart or to be opposed to each other, as in the ‘tag’ form *lex orandi, lex credendi*.” Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 91. Kavanagh correctly analyzed Prosper’s statement, but he places normative authority in the liturgy, the source *prima* for establishing the Christian faith. Alexander Schmemmann further asserted, “The accepted doctrine of the Church sees in ‘the tradition of sacraments and sacred rites’ an inviolable element of Tradition, and thus also one of the sources which theology must utilize if it seeks to expound fully the faith and life of the Church.” In his note, Schmemmann cited the Eastern Orthodox *Catechism*: “Concerning Sacred Tradition,” which states, “The term ‘Sacred Tradition’ refers to the fact that those who truly believe in and honour God transmit by word and deed, to one another and as ancestors to descendants, the doctrine of the faith, the law of God, the Sacraments and sacred rites.” Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans. Asheleigh E. Moorhouse, 3rd ed. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1986), 17-18. In other words, the Sacred Tradition is how the theology of the Church is fully communicated.

²⁰ Johnson, ed. *Sacraments and Worship*, xiv.

matters of doctrine. There *lex orandi, lex credendi* is most readily taken to make the (descriptive) pattern of prayer a (prescriptive) norm for belief, so that what is prayed indicates what may and must be believed. Protestantism characteristically emphasizes the primacy of doctrine over the liturgy. The phrase *lex orandi, lex credendi* is not well known among Protestants, but they would most easily take the dogmatic norm of belief as setting a rule for prayer, so that what must be believed governs what may and should be prayed.²¹

Wainwright noted the reality of the Latin maxim. “Worship influences doctrine, and doctrine worship.”²²

Edward Yarnold states that this relationship also exists between liturgy and spirituality:

The principle *lex orandi, lex credendi*, asserting as it does the mutual interaction of prayer and belief, implies a similar interaction of liturgy and spirituality. No one’s spirituality is entirely individual. Spirituality is shaped by public worship; and conversely forms and styles of public worship are conditioned by the spirituality of the worshipping community.²³

Yarnold touches on the critical point, that spirituality is shaped by public worship. If so, then liturgy directly influences beliefs, becoming a normative source for theology.

Sola scriptura statuat lex orandi

Lex orandi lex credendi runs contrary to the Adventist commitment to the Reformation principles of *sola, tota, prima scriptura*. The Bible is the inspired, authoritative, infallible self-revelation of God, the ultimate norm for theology.²⁴ Notwithstanding, liturgy and personal

²¹ Wainwright, *Doxology*, 251-252, 218.

²² Wainwright, *Doxology*, 218. Not all Catholic liturgical theologians view the maxim as dogmatically as Kavanagh and Fagerberg. Jesuit liturgical theologian, Edward Kilmartin, recognized a greater reality, that worship and theology influence each other. “The law of prayer is the law of belief, *and vice versa* [emphasis added].” Edward J. Kilmartin, *Christian Liturgy: Theology and Practice*, vol. 1, Systematic Theology of Liturgy (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1988), 97.

²³ Edward Yarnold, SJ, “Media of Spirituality,” in *The Study of Spirituality*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, SJ (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 39.

²⁴ Fernando Canale, *Basic Elements of Christian Theology: Scripture Replacing Tradition* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Lithotech, 2005), 17. Richard Davidson expands on this formula: “(1) the Bible interprets

devotional practices exert a powerful influence upon instilling the Word upon the faith and spirituality of the worshiper. The implication is that while Adventism wishes the rule to be *lex credendi lex orandi*, the pattern tends to be *lex orandi lex credendi*. Traditional and contemporary worshipers often find difficultly worshipping in the opposing style of liturgy, because their experience has become normative.

This should not be. Instead, theologians and worship leaders²⁵ should view liturgy as formative in the process of discipleship, providing tools for teaching the faith.²⁶ Leaders planning services hold a high responsibility to uphold the Bible as the standard of faith and practice, while recognizing that the liturgy will prove immensely influential in shaping beliefs. *Sola scriptura statuat lex orandi*. The Bible alone establishes the rule of prayer. Knowing the tremendous power of the liturgy, worship leaders must leverage the totality of Adventist beliefs, as rooted in *sola, tota, prima scriptura*. Only through this dedication to Scripture, will the faith and spirituality of worshipers be formed according to the norms of the Bible. As the gathered Church on Sabbath mornings, we must be certain that our liturgy in corporate worship is grounded and reflects our scriptural principles and teachings.

The phenomenological reality of liturgy lies in the performance of the actions of

the Bible (*Sola Scriptura*); (2) the totality of Scripture interprets Scripture (*Tota Scriptura*); (3) the analogy of Scripture (*analogia Scripturae*); and (4) spiritual things are spiritually discerned (*Spiritualia spiritualiter examinatur*). "Principles of Biblical Interpretation," unpublished manuscript. In Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena*, 661 (note). See also Richard M. Davidson, "Biblical Interpretation," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 58-104; Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), 116-127, 661-677. General revelation—including nature, providence in history, and personal interaction—must be interpreted through the light of Scripture. Canale, *Basic Elements*, 18; Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 201-203.

²⁵ This includes pastors, musicians, and other leaders involved in planning and executing the divine service.

²⁶ James Thomas Bingham, "Liturgy and Ritual as Religious Education: Implications for the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (PhD Diss., Andrews University, 1984), 34-38.

Christian worship. If liturgical practices reveal beliefs about God, the world, and humanity, then it is conceivable that the church is currently manifesting a plurality of liturgical theologies. What if those liturgical theologies contradict? If so, then the church faces a crisis of identity. There should be a theology of liturgy that guides both the local church in Providence, Rhode Island, as well the parish in Nairobi, Kenya, allowing for diversity of expression within those local cultures. Therefore, a great need exists for a theology of liturgy to guide liturgical practices. Raymond Holmes states, “We cannot ignore the relationship between what we believe theologically and what we do in worship liturgically.”²⁷

Theology of Liturgy

Let us now turn our attention to the teaching of liturgy in the Bible. The biblical concept of liturgy must be applied to the phenomenological reality of our liturgies. This will guide us toward a transcultural theology of liturgy rooted in Scripture.

The etymology of liturgy expands its semantic field. Liturgy derives from the Greek, *leitourgía* (λειτουργία), a compound word from *leitós* (λήϊτος) “people, community” and *ergon* (ἔργον) “work”, literally meaning “the people’s work” or “the work of the people.”²⁸ The genitive “of” is ambiguous. Liturgy may mean the work performed on behalf of the people, or the work performed by the people. In Scripture, it is used both ways.

In classical Greek culture, the term liturgy experienced considerable development in its meaning. Originally, it possessed a political meaning, “performing a public service,” or a

²⁷ Holmes, *Sing a New Song*, 12.

²⁸ Klaus Hess, "Serve, Deacon, Worship," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown, vol. Vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1971), 551; Hermann Strathmann, "leitourgeō," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 216.

“service for the people.” Ideally, liturgy was the rendering of service at one’s own expense, but it could also be compulsory. The service was for the benefit of the people of the nation. Over time, the term extended to “all kinds of service to the community,” eventually possessing a weaker popular use for any type of service.²⁹ In addition to the political and popular meaning, it was applied to religious and cultic use (rites of sacrifice). While the cultic priests represented the people, the god was the recipient of their work, not the people.³⁰ Even still, this application to religion was likely due to the public importance of the cultus as a benefit for the community.³¹ Priests performed the work of cultic liturgy towards the god on behalf of the people. All of these historical uses of liturgy provide the background for its use in Scripture.

Let us now consider the use the term in the Old and New Testaments. The OT employs both the weaker popular usage (general service) and the religious cultic. Because our concern is with a Greek term, our starting point is the Septuagint (LXX), providing the historical milieu for the NT use of the Greek term.³²

²⁹ Strathmann, "TDNT," 215-217. Liturgy as “service” shares similarities with the other NT service words, *latreuō* and *diakoneō*, though space in this essay does not allow a deeper exposition. A complete exegetical analysis of all three service oriented words is necessary for a biblical theology of service. The *NIDNTT* gives a good summary of the differences between the three service words: “*Leitourgeō* originally expressed voluntary service for the political community, and then priestly service in the cultus. *Latreuō* primarily stresses details of the cultus, but is then used for the inner attitude of worship. *Diakoneō* and its derivatives, as their etymology suggests, are used mainly for personal help to others.” Hess, “*Serve, Deacon, Worship*,” 544. While each of these words carries its own theological weight, it is relevant for this present study to note that the biblical usage of *leitourgeō* incorporates much of these related words’ meanings.

³⁰ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 67.

³¹ Hess, “*Serve, Deacon, Worship*,” 551.

³² Our concern here is primarily with the historical development of the meaning of the Greek term, rather than the original Hebrew. More in-depth study would be helpful in examining the changes in the nuances of meaning as the LXX scholars translated from Hebrew to Greek. This study does not deny the validity of the original Hebrew terms towards a theology of liturgy, but they go beyond the scope of this essay. Timothy McLay convincingly argues that the LXX influenced the writers of the NT, though more work must be done in this area. R. Timothy McLay, “Excursus: The Use of the Septuagint in the New Testament,” in *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 224-240.

In the LXX, *leitourgeō* (verb) occurs about one hundred times, *leitourgia* (noun) about forty times. Over one hundred of its occurrences apply almost exclusively to the cultic priestly service, mostly being found in the cultic biblical literature: Exodus 28-39 (13 times), Numbers (25 times), Chronicles (20 times), and Ezekiel 40-46 (16 times). This frequency demonstrates that the term was adopted to express the relationship, both of the worship of the people through the priesthood to God and the sacrificial service by the priests for the salvific welfare of the people.³³

David Peterson, Anglican minister and biblical scholar, helps situate liturgy within the greater context of worship in the OT. He summarizes worship as honoring, serving, and respecting God. At the heart of these three is the cultic priestly activity, or liturgy, at the earthly sanctuary: homage and adoration before the Ark of the Covenant; dependence and submission to God in the sacrificial services; and reverence through obedience to the covenantal law.³⁴ Cultic liturgy linked these aspects of worship (figure 1).

³³ Hess, "Serve, Deacon, Worship," 552. "The recipient of the service is God, not the people, though the service promotes the national welfare, which depends on the gracious disposition of God. The people receives [*sic*] the service merely to the degree that it can offer its sacrifices only through the mediation of the priests." Strathmann, "TDNT," 222. Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 68.

³⁴ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 72-74.

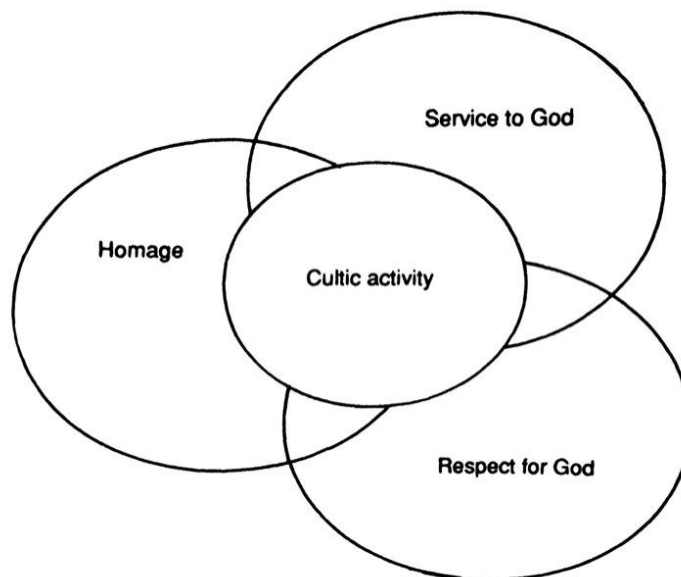


Figure 1. Old Testament Worship. Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 74.

The NT use of *leitourgeō/leitourgia* connotes a broader meaning than the traditional sense of the English word “liturgy.”³⁵ Liturgy, in all its related Greek forms, occurs fifteen times.³⁶ It appears to draw from both the weaker popular use in classical Greek culture and also the cultic in the LXX. Seven times it uses the popular meaning of general service to another (Rom 13:6; Rom 15:27; 2 Cor 9:12; Phil 2:25, 30; Heb 1:7, 14). This may mean the spiritual service to God or service to humanity according to God’s will. Two instances employ cultic language, though a spiritual or figurative interpretation is mandated (Rom 15:16; Phil. 2:17). Five instances of liturgy in the NT are explicitly cultic (Luke 1:23, Heb 8:2, 6; 9:21; 10:11). Acts

³⁵ Frederick F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 293.

³⁶ I have reorganized the material here into general categories of lexical meaning, rather than the approach used by the dictionaries, which list the occurrences according to the verbal and nominal forms. Strathmann, “TDNT,” 226-228; Hess, “Serve, Deacon, Worship,” 552-553. Bo Reicke, “Some Reflections on Worship in the New Testament,” in *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of Thomas Walter Manson, 1893-1958*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Manchester: The University Press, 1959), 194-195.

13:2 is an anomaly, deserving our attention. The usage of liturgy in Hebrews and Acts reveal positive ways in which we should conceive and apply liturgy in our churches today.

Jesus Christ as Liturgist

The overwhelming use of liturgy in Scripture referring to the priestly cultus must not be understated. The OT cultic liturgy of the earthly sanctuary service corresponded to the heavenly sanctuary in function, structure, and theology, including themes of judgment, governance, grace, atonement, forgiveness, reality of the great controversy, the covenant, and the experience of the worshiper.³⁷ The OT cultic liturgy served as a pattern, copy, and shadow of the heavenly, shown to Moses on the mount (Exod 25:40, Heb 8:5). The OT sanctuary was an antitype of the heavenly (Heb 9:24), and the cultic liturgy was a type of the high priestly ministry of Jesus Christ in the heavenly sanctuary,³⁸ the “seat of God’s operations.”³⁹ In the heavenly sanctuary we see “*real* deity, *real* humanity, *real* priesthood—and we may add, a *real* ministry in a *real* sanctuary.”⁴⁰ The objective reality of Christ’s ministry is therefore ontologically external to the

³⁷ Elias Brasil de Souza, “The Heavenly Sanctuary/Temple Motif in the Hebrew Bible: Function and Relationship to the Earthly Counterparts” (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2005), 483, 497.

³⁸ Richard Davidson demonstrates the complex function of typological structures. In summary, the heavenly sanctuary is the type, for it preceded the earthly antitype. The sanctuary services are understood as typical, for they received their antitypical fulfillment in the ministry of Jesus Christ after His ascension. Richard M. Davidson, “Typology in the Book of Hebrews,” in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook, Daniel and Revelation Committee Series, vol. 4 (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989). Though the book of Revelation does not use the word liturgy, its vivid sanctuary cultic scenes contribute to our overall understanding of the heavenly sanctuary and its NT fulfillment. Richard M. Davidson, “Sanctuary Typology,” in *Symposium on Revelation: Introductory and Exegetical Studies*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1992). See also Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, 414-415.

³⁹ George R. Knight, *Exploring Hebrews: A Devotional Commentary* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2003), 136.

⁴⁰ William G. Johnsson, *In Absolute Confidence: The Book of Hebrews Speaks to Our Day*, Southern Publishing Association (Nashville: 1979), 91, italics his. While the reality of the heavenly sanctuary is certain, we have “little data” on its exact nature. The earthly sanctuary informs us only through shadowy descriptions. William

experience of the worshiper. In the heavenly sanctuary, the high priestly ministry or work of Christ is liturgy:

Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister [leitourgos] in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry [leitourgias], by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. (Heb 8:1-2, 6)

Christ's liturgy stands apart from the cultic liturgy of the OT, for He has obtained a *more excellent liturgy*. His liturgy fulfills all the historical definitions of the term. His earthly ministry and sacrifice on this earth were liturgical, a giving of Himself on behalf of all humanity (John 3:16). His liturgy was also political, for He is the greatest Public Servant. While earthly politicians seek votes and monetary gain, Jesus Christ gave up all the riches of the City of God, to come, live, and die as a servant of all (Phil 2:5-11). His liturgy did not end at the cross, for he continues in cultic liturgy, offering the merits of his sacrificial liturgy on behalf of our salvific welfare.

The liturgy of Jesus Christ, both his sacrifice and high priestly ministry, stands central to the entire message of the book of Hebrews.⁴¹ It stands central to Seventh-day Adventist Christology, soteriology, and ecclesiology in worship: the solution to humanity's problem of sin defilement is through purgation by the application of Christ's blood, resulting in the cleansed conscience of both the individual and corporate worshipers (Heb 9:9, 14; 10:2, 14, 22).⁴² The

G. Johnsson, "The Heavenly Sanctuary—Figurative or Real?," in *Issues in the Book of Hebrews*, ed. Frank B. Holbrook (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 1989), 35. Canale, "Philosophical Foundations and the Biblical Sanctuary," 205-206.

⁴¹ Christ and His high priestly liturgy is the center of the chiasmic structure in the book of Hebrews. Albert Vanhoye, S.J., *Structure and Message of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Subsidia Biblica (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1989), 40.

⁴² Davidson, "Typology in the Book of Hebrews," 144-145.

liturgy of Jesus Christ, both his sacrifice and high priestly ministry, provides the acceptable means for humanity to “draw near” to God (Heb 4:16; 7:19, 25, 10:1, 22; 11:6, 12:18, 22).⁴³ We may enter God’s presence, only through the liturgy of the One Mediator (1 Tim 2:5).

“Acceptable worship in all its dimensions can only be offered through Christ, by God’s enabling.”⁴⁴ Christ’s ministry is liturgy *par excellence*. His liturgy becomes the means through which we begin to understand the phenomenological reality of the church’s liturgy. Therefore, Christ’s cultic liturgy articulates our worship “in all its dimensions.” Such a conclusion is in harmony with the OT system of worship: homage, service to God, and respect for God, articulated through Christ’s cultic activity.

Liturgy in a New Testament Worship Service

Acts 13:2 is the only NT passage explicitly using the term liturgy in the phenomenological reality of a Christian worship service:

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping [*leitourgountōn*] the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13:1-3, NIV.

The use of liturgy in Acts 13:1-3 poses challenges for the interpreter. What is the best translation for *leitourgountōn*?⁴⁵ Should it be liturgizing? Ministering (NASB, KJV)? Serving (WEB, NET)? Worshiping (NIV, RSV)? Some Bible translators and commentators agree the

⁴³ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 238.

⁴⁴ Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 246. “An engagement with God through Christ is now the only way to offer the worship that is due to him.” Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 187.

⁴⁵ *Leitourgountōn* is the participial form, meaning liturgizing.

term should be translated in the figurative sense of worship. The *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* agrees, stating that figurative use of liturgy is appropriate in this context based upon Paul’s figurative application to his own ministry to the Gentiles (Rom 15:16, *leitourgon*; Phil. 2:17, *leitourgia*).⁴⁶ Klaus Hess stated, “Compared with the LXX usage, [Acts 13:2] is something completely new. [. . .] Here the cultic meaning is completely spiritualized and applied to Christian worship in prayer.”⁴⁷ Marvin Vincent stated that here, liturgy is understood as the “performance of Christian worship.”⁴⁸ As we have defined earlier in this paper, it could be both worship and liturgy, because worship is attitude and liturgy is the corresponding action.

The context of the passage connects liturgy to prayer, evidenced by a chiasm in the short pericope:

A. Church gathers (Acts 13:1).

B. *Liturgy* and fasting⁴⁹ (13:2a).

⁴⁶ “Ministered” [Acts 13:2], *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., ed. Francis D. Nichol (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976-1980), 6:281. However, if figurative of worship, it could not be equivalent to the technical sense of worship (*proskuneō*, “to bow, prostrate, submit, adore”). Reicke, “Some Reflections on Worship in the New Testament,” 195.

⁴⁷ Hess, “Serve, Deacon, Worship,” 552. Peterson, *Engaging with God*, 151; Reicke, “Some Reflections on Worship in the New Testament,” 195; Earnst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 395. Rudolf Meyer saw a total spiritualization of the concept in the sphere of cultic worship. He believed that by the time of Jesus, a “spiritualized” liturgy had become the norm through the reading of scripture and prayer at the synagogue over and beyond the cultic liturgy at the temple. Rudolf Meyer, “Leitourgeo,” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 4, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), 219, 225. This perspective has derived from Hans Wenschkewitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultus begriffe: Tempel, Priester und Opfer im Neuen Testament*, Archiv für Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte und Kulturkunde (Leipzig: E. Pfeiffer, 1932). Albert Hogeterp takes issue with Wenschkewitz, arguing that cultic imagery must not be completely spiritualized, for it was central to Jewish life. Albert L. A. Hogeterp, *Paul and God's Temple: A Historical Interpretation of Cultic Imagery in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006).

⁴⁸ Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), 514.

⁴⁹ Luke’s choice in coupling fasting with liturgy and prayer should not be overlooked. The double emphasis on fasting in the passage demonstrates the seriousness with which these Christians withdrew from the “influence of

C. God the Holy Spirit speaks, calls to service (13:2b).

B'. Fasting and *prayer* (13:3a).

A'. Church sends (13:3b).⁵⁰

The parallel treatment of liturgy to prayer suggests these terms should be understood similarly in this passage. But theologically, what happens in prayer? Prayer is articulated by cultic activity. Through prayer, the Christian draws near to the throne of grace through the intercession of Jesus Christ (Heb 4:16, 7:25). The book of Revelation expounds on this reality. The apostle John saw in vision an angel “holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne” (Rev 8:3). Jon Paulien interprets this text as a fitting portrayal of the “ongoing mediation of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.”⁵¹

This golden altar, the altar of prayer, was situated “in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony,” where God declares, “I will meet with you” (Exod 30:6). Says Ellen White, “As in that typical service the priest looked by faith to the mercy seat which he could not see, so the people of God are now to direct their prayers to Christ, their great High Priest, who, unseen by human vision, is pleading in

the world” in order to be “receptive to commands from heaven.” Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, 396. Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 374.

⁵⁰ Even the laying on of hands is liturgical. Space does not suffice to address the implications here for ordination. However, in light of the biblical theology of liturgy, I would suggest that the liturgy of the laying of hands should be relate to the theology of Christ’s liturgy in heaven.

⁵¹ The language of a censer, incense, and golden altar is typical of the work of a priest, a “role appropriate for Christ.” The mediating angel, if not Christ, is a “fitting image of Christ,” and “the incense, no doubt, is a symbol of the merits of Christ that make these prayers acceptable to God.” Jon Paulien, *Decoding Revelation's Trumpets: Literary Allusions and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 312-314. Davidson, "Sanctuary Typology," 117.

their behalf in the sanctuary above.”⁵² In Acts 13, when the Antiochian Christians liturgized, they entered by faith, through the Holy Spirit, into the reality of Christ’s High Priestly liturgy in the heavenly sanctuary.

The phenomenological reality of liturgical action in the experience of the worshiper corresponds with the ministry of the High Priest. As a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2:9) we have cultic activities to do.⁵³ As worship, Christians “offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (2:5). In Acts 13, Christians offered up their hearts⁵⁴ as worship through the liturgical act of prayer.⁵⁵ Raymond Holmes summarizes this well:

⁵² Just preceding this, she gives the OT context: “In the offering of incense the priest was brought more directly into the presence of God than in any other act of the daily ministrations. As the inner veil of the sanctuary did not extend to the top of the building, the glory of God, which was manifested above the mercy seat, was partially visible from the first apartment. When the priest offered incense before the Lord, he looked toward the ark; and as the cloud of incense arose, the divine glory descended upon the mercy seat and filled the most holy place, and often so filled both apartments that the priest was obliged to retire to the door of the tabernacle.” Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets: As Illustrated in the Lives of Holy Men of Old* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1958), 353. “Prayer moves heaven.” Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1955), 335. “Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him.” Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1952), 93.

⁵³ Hermann Strathmann insisted that the term must not be understood in the cultic liturgical sense, for never in the NT is the cultic liturgy used in connection with early Christian leaders such as apostles, teachers, prophets, presbyters, bishops, etc. Strathmann, “TDNT,” 228. But this misses the point. We do have liturgy in the performance of ritual action in worship. Strathmann did not utilize the systematic theology that allowed him to conceptualize Christ’s liturgy corresponding to the liturgy of the royal priesthood. As priests, they offered the sacrifice that God wants: “A broken spirit and a contrite heart” (Ps 51:17), and the “sacrifice of praise” (Heb 13:15). The Adventist church also needs a theology of sacrifice and of praise. The connection between the royal priesthood and sacrifice needs more development. Some have included this in their theology of liturgy: The church’s “mission is to render highest honor to God by exercising the priesthood of continual praise. It is in this high sense that we must hear the word *liturgy* and not in the narrow concept of an order of service.” Richard Paquier, *Dynamics of Worship: Foundations and Uses of Liturgy*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1967), 56.

⁵⁴ This is similar to Paul’s application of liturgy in Romans 15:16 and Philippians 2:17, according to my classification of “spiritual service to God.” This understanding sheds light on our conception of a “church service.” Our term, “divine service,” no doubt has been handed down to us from the greater Protestant tradition, even the Roman Catholic “Divine Liturgy.” Liturgy understood as spiritual service to God makes a clear break with the Tradition. In divine service, we liturgize or serve God. Our heart worship is a service to our Creator-Redeemer-Lord.

⁵⁵ “The believer in Christ is consecrated to high and holy purpose. Before the service of the royal priesthood the glory of the Aaronic priesthood is eclipsed. Called according to God’s purpose, set apart by grace divine, invested with Christ’s righteousness, imbued with the Holy Spirit, offering up the sacrifices of a broken and contrite heart, the true believer is indeed a representative of the Redeemer. Upon such a worshiper, God looks with

For the New Testament believers the priestly cultus had reached its end with the sacrifice and ascension of Christ, and they proclaimed in the gospel the leitourgia which took place on Calvary's cross and continues in Christ's heavenly ministry. The new community, the church, consists of priests who have access to God by faith in Christ, and a High Priest who is performing the leitourgia (ministry of service) before God on behalf of His people.⁵⁶

The Five-fold Pattern for Transcultural Liturgy

Just as in the old covenant there was a correspondence between the “divine worship and the earthly sanctuary” (Heb 9:1), in the new covenant (8:6, 9:15) there remains a correspondence between the divine worship and the heavenly sanctuary (10:19-22). The writer of Hebrews urged believers to worship through liturgy, for we must “not forsake our own assembling together” (10:25)—an assembling that must correspond to the new covenantal liturgy of Jesus Christ.

Christ's liturgy in heaven does not cancel out liturgy but has established a new form of liturgy that fits perfectly with the heavenly liturgy. That is, a Christian liturgy still based on the sanctuary. If Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is correctly understood as liturgy, and if humanity's worship is a participation in Christ's liturgy, then Christ's liturgy in the heavenly sanctuary becomes the articulating principle for a theology of liturgy in worship.⁵⁷ Christ's

delight. He will let his light shine into the chambers of the mind and into the soul-temple if men, when they lack wisdom, will go to their closets in prayer, and ask wisdom from him who gives to all men liberally and upbraids not. The promise is, “It shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” Christ has pledged himself to be our substitute and surety, and he neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from his obedience. In heaven his merits, his self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured up as incense to be offered up with the prayers of his people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of his life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears his Son.” Ellen G. White, “Pray without Ceasing,” *Review and Herald*, (October 30, 1900): par. 7. *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2 (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 169.

⁵⁶ Holmes, *Sing a New Song*, 13. Peter Brunner, *Worship in the Name of Jesus*, trans. M. H. Bertram, (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 14-15.

⁵⁷ An articulating principle operates by linking existing elements into new patterns thereby adding new meanings to them. Fernando Canale proposed an exposition of the Adventist system of theology, indicating the role of the sanctuary as the articulating principle of all theology. The sanctuary is not only a “type” or metaphor (as in hermeneutical exegesis), but it is phenomenological, a thing that can be experienced. Fernando Canale, “From

ministry reveals the process by which in worship we may experience repentance, forgiveness, righteousness, communion with God, and service to the world. Therefore, the methodologies of liturgical theology and biblical theology of liturgy are not just to criticize tradition from a biblical perspective. The purpose is to construct from a biblical perspective what liturgy must contain in order to generate true worship.

The sanctuary also articulates the various theophanies of Scripture, including Acts 13 (Ex 3, Isa 6:1-8, Ez 1-3). Bringing to bear upon these passages, the theology of liturgy described above, the theophanies provide a concise liturgical pattern. Inherent in each of these passages is a liturgical structure:

God Gathers
Humanity Surrenders
God Speaks
Humanity Responds
God Sends

Consider Exodus 3. God called Moses to the burning bush, declaring his holiness. Moses surrendered by taking off his sandals. The God spoke to Moses, calling him to service. Moses responded to the call, and God sent him back to Egypt.

At the heart of the chiasm is the central goal of liturgy: to engage with God in an interpersonal, devotional, transformational, relationship. When God speaks, are we listening (Hab 2:20)? This is the liturgy of the Word,⁵⁸ the supreme “liturgical criterion.”⁵⁹ Christ

Vision to System: Finishing the Task of Adventist Theology, Part I: Historical Review," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 15, no. 2 (2004); Fernando Canale, "From Vision to System: Finishing the Task of Adventist Biblical and Systematic Theologies, Part II," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 16, no. 1 (2005); Fernando Canale, "From Vision to System: Finishing the Task of Adventist Theology, Part III: Sanctuary and Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 17, no. 2 (2006).

⁵⁸ While the living Word (John 1:1) is in heaven, He has provided the written Word (6:63; 17:1; Rom 10:17), God-breathed and inspired (2 Tim 3:15-4:2; 2 Pet 1:21), God's revelation as Scripture. Gulley, *Prolegomena*, 288.

mediates the Father's presence through His liturgy of His Word, in heaven and as Scripture. The liturgy of the Word is the source for encountering God in the experience of worship. Only in Scripture can one find the reality of Christ's liturgy in the heavenly sanctuary from which a theology of our liturgy may be crafted. Christ's liturgy is designed to lead the Christian from sinfulness to right-standing with God, mediating His Presence in His Word.

The five-fold pattern,⁶⁰ presents a broad dialogical pattern through which God desires humanity to seek Him in His sanctuary: God calls humanity to gather to worship through His Word. We behold His holiness, recognizing our sinfulness, and seek God's grace. In the heavenly sanctuary Jesus takes a coal from the altar of prayer, purging our sins, applying His righteousness for our own. Then God speaks through the Bible, the central component for earthly liturgy. God invites the worshiper to respond in commitment, sending the gathered community out to love and serve the world.

This simple five-fold pattern represents a broad transcultural theology of liturgy for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.⁶¹ Transcultural beliefs are not limited to the 28 Fundamental

⁵⁹ While certainly avoiding the bibliolatry of Puritanism, their emphasis on the Word was correct. Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534–1603*, Combined ed., 6 vols., vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 258. The Protestant tradition has long held the centrality of the Scriptures in the liturgy. White, *Protestant Worship*, 41, 42, 47, 60. "The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human. Such a union existed in the nature of Christ, who was the Son of God and the Son of man. Thus it is true of the Bible, as it was of Christ, that 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (John 1:14)." Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 25.

⁶⁰ Other scholars see a four-fold pattern: God Gathers, Speaks, Humanity Responds, God Sends. Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 1945); Constance M. Cherry, *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010). Based on the theophanies and the biblical sanctuary, I think a more dialogical pattern emerges: God Gathers, Humanity Surrenders, God Speaks, Humanity Responds, and God Sends. The narratives give strong evidence of surrender, such as the Antiochians "liturgizing," Moses removing his sandals, and Isaiah receiving a coal from the altar. A surrender liturgy is essential to the pattern.

⁶¹ The Lutheran World Federation's statement on worship and culture gives four modes for the dynamic relationship between worship and culture: transcultural, contextual, counter-cultural, and cross-cultural.

Beliefs, but should also include a theology of liturgy. Broadly, transcultural liturgy includes, though not limited to, singing, praying, Scripture, and the proclamation of the Word and Gospel. I am proposing, based upon Scripture, that transcultural liturgy also include the five-fold pattern. This is what should be in every Adventist worship gathering, whether a house church, or Pioneer Memorial Church, at Andrews University.

Consider briefly the suggested “Longer Order of Worship” in the 2016 Seventh-day Adventist *Church Manual*.⁶² I indicate how the five-fold pattern fits the existing structure:

(God Gathers)

- Musical Prelude
- Announcements
- Service participants enter
- Doxology
- Invocation (prayer)
- Scripture reading
- Hymn of Praise

(Humanity Surrenders)

- Prayer
- Anthem or special music
- Offering
- Hymn of consecration

(God Speaks)

- Sermon

(Humanity Responds)

- Hymn

(God Sends)

- [Closing Hymn]
- Benediction
- Congregation standing or seated for a few moments of silent prayer
- Musical postlude

The pattern also fits the complex liturgy at Oakwood University Church, for Holy Communion,

⁶² Secretariat, *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual* (Nampa, ID: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2016), 173.

September 27, 2014:

(God Gathers)

[Footwashing pre-service]

Prelude of Praise

Introit

Prelude

Call to Worship

Doxology

Invocation

Music of Praise

Welcome/Pastoral Remarks

(Humanity Surrenders)

Hymn of Worship

Intercessory Prayer

Offertory

Music of Thanksgiving

Music of Meditation

(God Speaks)

Sermon

(Humanity Responds)

Scripture

Prayer for the Emblems

Holy Communion Table Revealed

Ceremonial Washing

Serving of the Emblems

Musical Selections

Holy Communion Cloth Retrieved

(God Sends)

Challenge

Hymn

Prayer of Dedication

[Postlude]

And finally, consider the contemporary worship format of the first service of the Florida Hospital

Church, June 19, 2004:

(God Gathers)

Praise . . .

(Humanity Surrenders)

& Worship
(God Speaks)
Scripture
Special Music [consecration for listening]
Message
(Humanity Responds)
Praise & Worship
(God Sends)
Informing the Church [announcements for ministry]

In each of these cases, the liturgical structure follows the five-fold pattern. What emerges from this study is a paradigm through which the church can view the liturgy of one's own local church, and the liturgy of other Adventist churches. These three orders of worship demonstrate vastly different possibilities of contextualization of the transcultural pattern. This pattern allows Adventists to be tolerant to liturgies different from their own. I am greatly encouraged to see that the *Church Manual*, Oakwood, and Florida Hospital, all follow the same five-fold pattern. This creates unity, without uniformity. The critical challenge will be in crafting liturgies that not only follow this pattern, but that espouse the theology of liturgy derived from Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, centered in the Word. Only in this way will the Seventh-day Adventist church avert a liturgical-ecclesiological crisis. A transcultural theology of liturgy is possible. May the new maxim guide us: *Sola scriptura statuat lex orandi*.