



Week 14 (May 24, 2017) - The Lutheran Liturgy (Session 9 of DVD)

Introduction:

“The Lutheran liturgy is a gift received from our Lutheran heritage. We cherish it as a vehicle for us both to acquire God’s gifts to us and to express our grateful responses to Him. The Structure of the liturgy can be viewed as an outline or a format to follow so all the things that will build up the body of Christ in the congregation are included. Knowing that Lutheran theology is formative, the liturgical structure affirms the truths that we believe, teach and confess about God’s grace, the importance of the Gospel, how we express our gratitude to God, the proper use of the Sacrament of the Altar, and the life of prayer. As God’s gathered guests, we cherish our time together, so we desire that what we do is done to the glory of God and in a fitting and orderly way (1 Corinthians 14:26-40).”

-Rev. Timothy Maschke, *Gathered Guests: A Guide to Worship in the Lutheran Church*

Last Week: The Entrance, Preparation, and Distribution

The Lutheran Liturgy of today is a wonderful expression of the ancient church’s understanding built on the precedence of the Jewish and the early Christian origins of how it is that the body of Christ, the Lord’s body, comes together on the Lord’s Day to receive the Lord’s Supper.

The Augsburg Confession - Article XXIV: The Mass

¹ Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. The Mass is held among us and celebrated with the highest reverence. ² Nearly all the usual ceremonies are also preserved, except that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns. These have been added to teach the people. ³ For ceremonies are needed for this reason alone, that the uneducated be taught what they need to know about Christ. ⁴ Not only has Paul commanded that a language understood by the people be used in church (1 Corinthians 14:2, 9), but human law has also commanded it. ⁵ All those able to do so partake of the Sacrament together. This also increases the reverence and devotion of public worship. ⁶ No one is admitted to the Sacrament without first being examined. ⁷ The people are also advised about the dignity and use of the Sacrament, about how it brings great consolation to anxious consciences, so that they too may learn to believe God and to expect and ask from Him all that is good. ⁸ This worship pleases God [Colossians 1:9–10]. Such use of the Sacrament nourishes true devotion toward God. ⁹ Therefore, it does not appear that the Mass is more devoutly celebrated among our adversaries than among us.

¹⁰ It is clear that for a long time the most public and serious complaint among all good people is that the Mass has been made base and profane by using it to gain filthy wealth [1 Timothy 3:3]. ¹¹ Everyone knows how great this abuse is in all the churches. They know what sort of men say Masses for a fee or an income, and how many celebrate these Masses contrary to canon law.

Note: This article clearly demonstrates Lutheranism's desire to continue—not to reject—the wholesome, beneficial, and historic worship practices of the Church. Lutheranism retained the traditional form of the Mass, that is, the service of Holy Communion. In many respects, the ceremonies and liturgy of the Lutheran Church were very similar to those of the Roman Church. The difference lay in Lutheranism's rejection of false teaching concerning the Mass: that somehow, and without faith, simply by attending and observing the spectacle of the Mass, people could merit the forgiveness of sins. Worst of all was Rome's teaching that a priest saying Mass is actually offering Christ in an unbloody manner to appease God and secure His favor. Masses became a source of considerable revenue for the Church, since people were encouraged to "sponsor" the saying of a Mass for their living—and dead—friends and relatives. All this is entirely contrary to Christ's institution of the Lord's Supper. He gave the Church this Sacrament as a gift and blessing, to be used in faith by the people of God. See chart, p. 219. (See also Ap XXIV; SA III II; FC Ep X and SD X.) -McCain, P. T. (Ed.). (2005). [Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions](#) (pp. 47–48). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

The Liturgy used in the Roman Empire was sophisticated, crisp, clean, simple, elegant and beautiful. What happened when Barbarians from the North invaded the Roman empire, were converted and embraced the liturgy?

What happened to the liturgy during the Medieval Church?

It demonstrated a _____ between the clergy and the laity. Though the ordinaries (Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, Agnus Dei) had been sung by all the people in response to God's gifts, now the ordinaries were sung only by the clergy. In other words the Liturgy became something for "professional Christians."

It diminished also the reading of the Word of God by adding the _____ and the _____ to the reading of the Bible. Also, _____ itself began to diminish.

What sorts of loss/destruction to the faith & Church came about because of the loss of the Liturgy?

When Luther came along around AD 1500, God worked through him to reform both the Church and the Liturgy:

Luther sought to restore the liturgy back to the _____, so the people of God could _____.

What was the fundamental principle used by Luther to Reform?

When was Confession and Absolution added to the Liturgy? Why?

As we have discussed before:

Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi, Lex Vivendi. - "As we Worship, So we Believe, So we Live"

In other words, how we worship reflects what we believe and determines how we will live.

Liturgical worship is not an "add on" for a Lutheran Christian. It is the foundation of Lutheran identity; expressing our highest purpose. Worship reveals what we truly believe and how we view ourselves in relationship to God, one another and the world into which we are sent to carry forward the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ. How the Church worships is a prophetic witness to the truth of what she believes and professes. Good worship becomes a dynamic means of drawing the entire human community into the fullness of life in Jesus Christ.

The Augsburg Confession - Article IV: Justification

¹ Our churches teach that people cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works. ² People are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. By His death, Christ made satisfaction for our sins. ³ God counts this faith for righteousness in His sight (Romans 3 and 4 [3:21–26; 4:5]).

Note: "There is a historic saying in Lutheranism that the Church stands or falls on the article of justification. To justify means "to declare righteous." God's sure and certain declaration that we are righteous in His eyes is possible only because of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Through His life, Jesus satisfied God's demand for perfect obedience. Through His sacrificial death, Jesus took God's wrath and atoned for the sins of the world. The Holy Spirit, through the means of grace, works in us saving faith, which personally apprehends what Christ has done for us. Our justification before God, therefore, is brought about by the One who lived, suffered, and died for our salvation. We cannot merit God's favor through our obedience; we cannot offer sacrifices to pay for our sins. But what we cannot do for ourselves, Christ has done for us. He is the solid Rock on which God builds His Church. On Him, and Him alone, we stand forgiven." -McCain, P. T. (Ed.). (2005). [*Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*](#) (pp. 32–33). St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

If Lutherans are convinced that justification is the article of doctrine upon which the Church stands or falls, what sort of impact will that have on our liturgy and the way we worship?