

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

REFORMED WORSHIP (PR 640)

Syllabus

Spring 2006

Monday, 8:30-11:30 am

Instructor: Dr. Henry B. Greene
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This is a study of the historical and theological development of Christian worship, with particular emphasis on (a) the centrality of the doctrine of the Trinity to an understanding of the foundation and meaning of worship and (b) the expression of worship in the Reformed tradition. The course will include study of orders and elements of services, the Reformed understanding of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the place of the Word of God in worship. Attention will be given to different worship styles, including music (Are the worst of the "worship wars" over?). The course will also cover special services such as weddings and funerals.

Course Objectives

- To understand the history of the Doctrine of the Trinity and its significance to the meaning of salvation and to the theology and practice of worship.
- To have a working knowledge of the central elements of classical Reformed worship and of the theological rationale underlying those elements.
- To grow in appreciation of different worship traditions.
- To begin to develop strategies for bringing together a Reformed theological understanding of worship with contemporary styles of expression and participation.

Required Texts

Anderson, Ray S., ed., Theological Foundations For Ministry, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979.

Book of Common Worship, Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.

Book of Order 2004-2005, Louisville, KY: The Office of the General Assembly, 2004.

Carson, D.A., ed., Worship By The Book, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

Stott, John R.W., Between Two Worlds – The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982.

Torrance, James B., Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Wright, N.T., For All God's Worth, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.

Recommended Texts

Carson, D.A., Becoming Conversant With the Emerging Church, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.

Kimball, Dan, Emerging Worship, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Morganthaler, Sally, Worship Evangelism, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999.

Webber, Robert E., Blended Worship – Achieving Substance and Relevance in Worship, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.

Assignments and Grading

Students will write a **Personal Worship Analysis paper** (6 pages) on their past experiences in worship, describing settings, activities, participants, their personal reactions at the time and their assessment now of the theological and practical strengths and weaknesses of these services.

10% of the class grade.

A **Worship Service Assessment paper** (8 pages) will be based on attendance at two services of worship, one more liturgical (Lutheran, Episcopal, or Roman Catholic) and one “creative evangelical” or charismatic. The paper should include a description of each church, observations about the physical setting, analysis of movements in the service, points of participation and response by the congregation, the place of the Word and Sacrament(s), and a general sense of the purpose of the service and whether that purpose was accomplished.

20% of the class grade.

An **exam** near the end of the semester will consist of fill-ins, multiple-choice, and short answer questions regarding terms discussed in the readings and class sessions. **20% of the class grade.**

Final paper on the theology and practice of worship (20 pages). Describe your own convictions and conclusions, interacting with the lectures, reading, and class discussion. Indicate any areas of new understanding as well as what now seems most important in your understanding of the theology and practice of worship. Include a definition of worship and rationale for that definition.

30% of the class grade.

Classroom participation. Attendance at class and engagement in discussion are important.

20% of the class grade.

Academic Policies

MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar or Academic Dean.

Class participation is one of the most significant parts of the shared learning experience at MBBS. Any student who misses more than 25% of the class time in a course may have their grade reduced by a full letter grade and may be at risk for failing the course. Exceptions to this policy may be considered because of medical or family emergencies; but all exceptions must be approved by the instructor and the Academic Dean.

Course Outline

January 9, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Introductions, course overview, expectations and assignments.

In-class assignment: Write a one page definition of worship, its purpose, and how that purpose is accomplished.

A theology of worship. Unitarian or Trinitarian? The continuing priesthood of Jesus Christ and the priesthood of all believers.

Resources: Theological Foundations For Ministry, especially pp. 135- 369.
Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace, James B. Torrance.

January 16

No class. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

January 23, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Doctrine of the Trinity. Where it comes from – roots in the Old Testament; the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Apostolic teaching; the worship life of the early church.

Irenaeus and Tertullian. The Council of Nicea and Athanasius. The error of The DaVinci Code.

Resources: Theological Foundations For Ministry, especially pp. 135-369.
Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace, James B. Torrance.

January 30, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Jesus' ministry to the Father on behalf of the world.

Implications for a theology of worship – is it up to us to make worship happen?

The primacy of grace. Which comes first, repentance or forgiveness? “Evangelical repentance.”

The Doctrine of the Trinity and relationship. Implications for the meaning of salvation.

Implications for the meaning of worship.

Resources: Theological Foundations For Ministry, especially pp. 135- 369.
Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace, James B. Torrance.

Worship By the Book, D.A. Carson, ed.

Paper of student's Personal Analysis due. See above.

February 6, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Current trends in worship. The value of expression and response in worship. The place of emotion in worship.

Resources: Blended Worship, by Robert E. Webber;

Emerging Worship, Dan Kimball;

Becoming Conversant With the Emerging Church, D.A. Carson;

Worship Evangelism, Sally Morgenthaler.

February 13, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Meaning of the term “Reformed Worship.” Elements of a classical Reformed service. “The Service For The Lord’s Day” in The Book Of Common Worship.

Students should be familiar with The Book Of Order, “Directory For Worship,” Chapter 1, “The Dynamics Of Christian Worship.”

February 20

No class. Presidents’ Day Holiday.

February 27, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Reformed perspectives on Baptism and Communion. Students should be familiar with The Book Of Order, “Directory For Worship,” Chapters 2 and 3

March 6

No class. Module week.

March 13, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Music and music leadership. The place of music in the Reformed tradition. Music as the locus of worship wars. Why? Are those wars coming to an end?

Class discussion of attendance at “liturgical” and “creative” worship services.

Paper on Worship Service Assessment due. See above.

March 20, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Leading in prayer. The priesthood of Christ and prayer. Types and occasions of prayer.

Written prayers and “free” prayers. See also here, The Book Of Order, “Directory For Worship,” Chapters 2 and 3 and The Book Of Common Worship.

March 27, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Ministry of the Word of God. Reformed patterns showing regard for the Word of God. When, how, and how much to read.

Preaching. Its place in a Reformed service. Definition and purpose.

Resource: Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching In The Twentieth Century, by John R.W. Stott.

April 3, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The Liturgical Year vs. The Secular Calendar.

Resources: The Book Of Common Worship; Blended Worship, Chapter 8, “Enacting Christ In The Services of the Christian Year.”

April 10, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Making the most of preparation, entrance, and dismissal. The value of times often overlooked or poorly prepared.

Models of preparation and planning. The importance of the worship leader’s presentation.

April 17, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Weddings and funerals. Services of healing. Other special services.

April 24 Final paper on The Theology and Practice of Worship due. See above.