

CHAPTER SIX

Liturgy: The Language of Our Worship

EXERCISE

(Take half of the class time for this exercise.)

1. Look at your church's printed order of worship, or write down from memory the order of worship your church participates in.
2. Now write down what is being expressed with each part.
3. Then write down what is being formed with each part.

Introduction

We have established that worship is the expression of our love and the formation of our love. Worship is also the manifestation of the relationship of God and his people. In fact, when you looked at your order of worship you may have discerned a conversation happening between God and his people. It can be said that liturgy is the language of our worship. God's voice is present throughout our worship service in his Word through the power of the Holy Spirit. Here are some of the ways we respond through the elements of our liturgy:

Adoration – We say to God, "I love you."

Confession – We say to God, "I'm sorry."

Thanksgiving – We say to God, "Thank you."

Supplication – We say to God, "Help me."

Lament – We ask of God, "Why?"

Commission – We ask of God, "What can I do?"

With this language of liturgy, we are practicing attitudes and postures with which to approach the Lord and his world. These attitudes and postures can also form us for our spontaneous moments of prayer as we learn to bring our whole selves before him. Some churches have even found it helpful to put arrows next to each element of the worship service to show when we are talking to God, he to us, and we to each other.

Effective conversations using healthy language not only express our thoughts and emotions, but also form our thoughts and emotions. And just as

healthy language does not come naturally to children—they have to be taught to say "please" and "thank you" and "I'm sorry"—we, too, have to be taught healthy worship language. One of the ways we learn healthy language is to come to worship together to learn how to speak to God earnestly and fully.

This language is not only for use in worship, but will ideally also be with us in our weeks, helping us to cultivate relational depth with our loved ones and neighbors.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Can I think of a time when my parents made me say something that did not come naturally to me? How was it of benefit to me?

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Now that we have talked about what we have in our order of worship, what changes or additions would we like to make?

Lesson

In Christian worship, we learn a new language with which to speak to God and to one another. (Acts 15:1-35)

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Discussion Question

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Lesson

In Christian worship, we learn a new language with which to speak to God and to one another. (Acts 15:1-35)

What are obstacles in our path to applying this lesson?

Lord Jesus,

Give us a deeper knowledge of Yourself as Savior, Master, Lord, and King. Give us a deeper power in private prayer. Give us deeper holiness in speech, thought, and action. Plough deep in us, that our being may be a tilled field with the roots of grace spreading far and wide. We have no wealth but what you give us – We have no good but what you bestow on us – We have nothing but what we receive from You. Quarry us deep, dear Lord and then fill us to overflowing with living water. Amen.