

The Covenantal Life: Being the Church  
Week 3 - "Calling on the Lord:" What is True Worship?  
1 Corinthians 1:2

- Right worship of the living God is definitional for a true church
  - "Calling on the Lord" - confessing faith in who God is and what He has done, and offering to Him the honor He is due
  - Traditional marks of a true church are means to the end of worshiping God
    - Preaching sound doctrine, administration of the sacraments, exercise of discipline are necessary for God to be rightly worshiped
  - May have areas of difference, but these are not what divide true churches from false ones
- How are we to worship?
  - Normative principle - anything not forbidden in Scripture is allowed in worship
    - Institution of the New Covenant and principle of Christian liberty mean that the church can worship God however it pleases
  - Regulative principle - anything not commanded in Scripture is forbidden in worship
    - Ex. 20:4-5 - forbids all worship from man's imagination
    - Lev. 10:1-3 - God judges man's innovations in worship
    - Detailed instructions for Old Covenant worship
    - Mark 7:3-8 - prescription of human tradition in the worship of God is condemned
    - Matt. 28:20 - we teach all that Christ has commanded
    - Eph. 2:20, Ph. 4:9 - apostolic teaching is the foundation of the church and its practices
  - Elements of worship prescribed by Scripture
    - Acts 2:42 - teaching, fellowship, prayer, sacraments
    - Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16 - singing songs of praise
    - 1 Tim. 4:13 - public reading and preaching of scripture
- High view of public worship is rooted in understanding what worship is
  - Worship is **covenant renewal**
    - Ps. 105 - reminder of what God has done, His promises, and our duty
    - Feasts of the OC were covenant renewal
    - Sacrifices of OC were covenant renewal
    - We "proclaim the Lord's death," taught covenant faithfulness to "all He has commanded," and "stir one another up" and "encourage one another" in God's promises
  - Worship is **responsive**

- Right worship is the fruit of right understanding
- Conversation between God and us - He speaks through His word read and expositied, we speak to Him through prayer and song
- Worship is **joyful, restful, and freely offered**
  - Ps. 100 - the spirit of meeting with God is not drudgery or mere duty
  - Jn. 4:24 - we worship from the heart, not merely outwardly
  - Rev. 4:8 - taste of the heavenly rest we were made for
  - Ps. 110:3 - offer ourselves willingly, not under compulsion
- Worship is **warfare**
  - Christ is ruling “in the midst of His enemies” (Ps. 110:2)
  - Eph. 3:10 - we proclaim Christ’s victory publicly, even to the rulers and authorities
  - Gen. 12:8 - Abraham built a public altar claiming the promised land as God’s
    - Our public worship, by faith, does the same thing in all the world