



Points
to
Ponder

WELCOME to our church.

If you are visiting for the first time in a congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church you will immediately notice that our praise service is different from that of every other evangelical church. We sing the Psalms of the Bible in the worship of God. This may bring several questions to your mind. The purpose of this leaflet is to answer some of these questions as briefly and yet as clearly as possible. For more complete answers you are invited to consult with the pastor.

I. WHAT ARE THE PSALMS?

The Psalms are the heart of the Bible. They are infallibly inspired by the Holy Spirit (II Timothy 3:16; II Samuel 23:1,2). The New Testament writers quote more often from the book of Psalms than from any other Old Testament book. The Psalms have been used by Christians of every generation as an expression of their love of and reverence for the God of Scripture. The book of Psalms is the world's only perfect manual of praise.

II. WHY SING THE PSALMS?

The use of Psalms in the worship of God is a direct command of God given in the Bible. The Psalms were used in the worship of the Old Testament Church (II Chronicles 29:30; Psalm 105:2; Psalm 95:1,2; Nehemiah 12:24). The Psalms were used in the Apostolic Church, and their use is commanded in the New Testament (James 5:13; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Although the Psalms do not mention the name of Christ, He is the major theme of the book (Luke 24:44). The Psalms speak often of

the Saviour, and Christ is the only Saviour. So they do speak of Him. The Psalms contain the great Gospel doctrines of the Atonement, regeneration, the forgiveness of sins, sanctification and the eternal abode of the redeemed in the Father's House. When we sing the Psalms we are singing the truth — a part of the written revelation of God to man.

III. WHY NOT SING HYMNS?

The infallible inspiration of the Holy Spirit ceased with the conclusion of the book of Revelation. All hymn writers are subject to error and tend to weave their own particular theology into the fabric of their hymns, resulting in the possibility of doctrinal error.

Many hymns are simply the Gospel set to music. We must differentiate between preaching the Gospel and praising God. The former has as its purpose the conversion of sinners; the latter, the expression of the soul's adoration for God. For praise, the Psalms are God's own provision.

IV. WHAT IS GENUINE WORSHIP?

Genuine worship is more than an outward expression of our love for God. It is essentially an act of the soul. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). Genuine worship is dependent upon our relationship with God. The sincere worshipper must know the way into the presence of God, and that Way is Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Genuine worship presupposes that the worshipper has been cleansed through the blood of Christ shed upon Calvary's cross. No outward means, not even the Psalms, can take the place of that inward renewal

known as regeneration. The Psalms become significant and understandable in the light of the cross. Genuine worship is the expression of the redeemed sinner as he recognizes the power, majesty and glory of God, together with His grace manifested in the person of Jesus Christ.

As we now approach the worship of the Eternal God, may our prayer be that of the Psalmist: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." (Psalm 19:14) ●

—John H. Tweed

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