

# THE WESTMINSTER DIRECTORY OF PUBLIC WORSHIP (1645)

## A paper first presented to the 1989 Westminster Conference in London

by Dr Alan C. Clifford

### Introduction

Had this Westminster Conference been commissioned by Her Majesty's Government to reform British Christendom, some of us would doubtless relish the opportunity. Others would hasten back to their pastorates, utterly intimidated by the sheer scale of the task. For the boldest spirits among us, the charge of Erastianism notwithstanding, the prospect of sending the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Durham and a few more prelates to the Tower — even if they didn't lose their heads — would be doubtless irresistible. The thought of not only disestablishing but abolishing the Church of England (as the Puritans did in 1643) in favour of a more biblical institution would excite our most fervent expectations. However, would a hypothetical Westminster Assembly of the 1990s have even a fraction of the success of its seventeenth-century forerunner? Probably not, for the ecclesiastical situation we face today is infinitely more confused and intractable than that faced by the Westminster divines. Even if our proposals were to pass through Parliament and receive the Royal Assent, the current confusion of British evangelicalism would hardly ensure their acceptance in the country. At least seventeenth-century evangelicals were convinced of the need for continuing reform and there was little doubt in their minds that the criteria of reform were to be determined exclusively by Holy Scripture.

It would appear that in some respects, current confusion in the realm of worship is more difficult to cure than more theoretical theological differences. While it is ultimately true that faulty theology lies behind faulty practice, not all those who have abandoned traditional Reformed worship have rejected Reformed theology, at least notionally. What a former FIEC president has recently written in his church magazine gives us a measure of the problem:

Within the service of worship we are also trying to proclaim God's truth, and here too there is room for variety. The sermon as we think of it, is a relatively modern invention. There is room for all kinds of ways of reading the Scriptures, and also, I believe, for testimonies, interviews, and drama. We have to distinguish very honestly between what dishonours God, and what annoys our sensibilities.<sup>1</sup>

And all this in a magazine which happily, in the same issue, quotes — as a SOP for traditionalists? — from Matthew Henry and Thomas Watson! Without pursuing our subject in pure academic and historical isolation, we may surely ask if the Westminster divines can help us nearly three hundred and fifty years on? At least they might help us to understand our confusion a little more clearly!

### The Regulative Principle and Its Limits

The famous Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, together with their Independent and Particular Baptist derivatives, are well known throughout the international Reformed constituency. The Directory of Public Worship is less well known although it was the first document to be produced by the Assembly of Divines. That it ever commanded agreement is truly remarkable, for unlike the drafting of the Confession of Faith, the Directory's passage in committee and debate was often stormy.<sup>2</sup> For the most part, differences of opinion concerned matters which the Scriptures shed no specific light on, a fact which serves to underline the difficult task before us, namely, that 'the speaker is asked to consider to what extent the Directory — as a replacement for the Book of Common Prayer — advanced the cause of the reformation of worship and to evaluate critically its biblical basis.' The task is made no easier when one learns, in the words of Dr. Horton Davies, that the Directory was in fact 'a compromise between the three parties, the English Presbyterians, the Scottish Presbyterians and the Independents.'<sup>3</sup>

An evaluation of the Confession of Faith would have been easier to make: the subject matter in question is all contained in the Bible. But apart from certain leading principles, adopting the 'regulative principle' found the various parties at considerable odds where the Directory of Worship was concerned. It is easy to discern from the Scriptures that preaching, scripture reading, prayers and the singing of God's praise are the main elements of Christian worship and that the two divinely instituted symbolic ordinances are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Undergirding this is the New Testament stress

that all worship should be both 'orderly' and 'spiritual'. But concerning the precise form of sermons and prayers', the structure of a service of worship, the number of psalms (and/or hymns) to be sung, the frequency of the Lord's Supper, the conduct of marriages and funerals, such matters are not determined in the New Testament. In short, what exactly does it mean to be biblical in the details as well as the principles of worship?

The Westminster divines soon realized that their attachment to the regulative principle did not solve all their problems. It was relatively easy to detect the unbiblical elements in the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), but not so easy to replace them by valid alternatives. Hence the Preface states that in laying 'aside the former Liturgy, with the many rites and ceremonies formerly used in the worship of God ... our care hath been to hold forth such things as are of divine institution in every ordinance; and other things we have endeavoured to set forth according to the rules of Christian prudence, agreeable to the general rules of the Word of God'. Whereas these criteria were sufficient to ban the sacerdotal and superstitious overtones of the BCP — and still are sufficient to ban drama and dance as well as women preachers and priests of either sex, areas of potential disagreement still remained. This is hardly surprising, for three distinct outlooks faced one another in the Assembly. The English Presbyterians were ex-Anglican Puritans, who, in their 'nonconformity' had been used to 'reformed' editions of the BCP. The Scottish Commissioners had used the Book of Common Order, the so-called 'Knox's Liturgy', which reflected the forms of Calvin's Genevan liturgy. These two groups both accepted the validity of liturgical worship. And then there were the 'proto-charismatic' Independents who were opposed to any kind of service book. Such was the rather ominous lament of Robert Baillie, one of the Scottish Commissioners: "While we were sweetly debating on these things, in came Mr. Goodwin, who incontinent assayed to turn all upside down, to reason against all directories... I hope God will not permit him to go on to lead a faction for renting of the kirk."<sup>4</sup>

### **The History and Development of Worship**

To make a comprehensive and objective evaluation of the Directory requires a pre- as well as post-Westminster perspective. We who are used to so-called non-liturgical orders of service have inherited a largely Directory-based state of affairs, i.e. the usual hymn (or psalm)-free prayer-sermon sandwich. Such a 'simple' service is not without some vestige of order even when it remains unpublished. Even anti-formal charismatic fellowships cannot dispense with some kind of structure; they seem to opt for 'praise and chorus-time, prophecy and tongues-time, dance and drama-time and a sermon if there's any time left'. One caricatures — not maliciously, I trust — to make a point! That said, few are aware that the Westminster Directory largely terminated a Reformed tradition of liturgical worship, at least in the Anglo-Scottish tradition. However, a case may be made that liturgical worship is ultimately derived from New Testament times, and that when the reformers inherited corrupted forms of worship, they reformed and simplified them without discarding them entirely.

The close contact between the early church and the synagogue very probably influenced Christian worship at an early stage. Accordingly, Professor John M. Barkley writes:

The early Christians naturally made use of the synagogue forms of worship in their own meetings. Synagogue worship consisted in reading from the Old Testament (Law and Prophets) with exposition, praise and prayer. These four elements continued in Christian worship, but they were permeated with a new meaning and spirit. Praise and prayer were 'in the name of Christ'. and to the Old Testament readings were added gradually readings from the Epistles and Gospels.<sup>5</sup>

For those persuaded by the Jonathan Edwards thesis,<sup>6</sup> the Apostle Paul clearly envisaged a time when the presence of the revelatory gifts would cease (1 Cor. 13: 8, 13), and even when they were intended to function in worship, he ruled decisively in favour of 'decency' and 'order' (1 Cor. 14: 40). On this key text, Calvin writes:

The Lord allows us freedom in regard to outward rites, in order that we may not think that his worship is confined to those things. At the same time, however, he has not allowed us unlimited and unbridled liberty, but has, so to speak, put railings round about it; or at any rate he has restricted the freedom, which he has given us, in such a way that it is only from his Word that we can make up our minds about what is right... Furthermore, we may easily infer from this, that the Church's laws are not to be regarded as mere human traditions, seeing that they are based on this general injunction, and clearly give the impression of being approved, as it were, from the mouth of Christ himself.<sup>7</sup>

In urging 'decency' and 'order' on the Corinthians, Paul probably had the order of the synagogue in view. Specific evidence of synagogue influences may be noted in the letters to the seven churches, addressed as they were to the 'angel' or messenger of each church. In his comment on Rev. 2: 1, Philip Doddridge — without questioning the plurality of elders at Ephesus — makes three useful and

relevant points:

That there was one pastor, who presided in each of these churches, is indeed evident from the expression here used; but that he was a diocesan bishop, or had several congregations of Christians under his care, can by no means be proved... Many have shown from ancient Jewish writings, that there was an officer in the synagogue who had the name of *angel*. See Vitringa, *de Synagoga*. Vet. Jib. 3, p. ii. c. 3. And Dr. Lightfoot adds, that from his office of overlooking the reader of the law, he was called *episcopus*....<sup>8</sup>

Justin Martyr, writing about 155 AD. provides an account of Christian worship in which synagogue and Christian features appear. The service is conducted by the 'president', and preaching precedes the Eucharist or Lord's Supper.<sup>9</sup> With the advent of spiritual apostasy, ritualism began to assert itself. As Professor Brilioth points out, in the medieval Western Church specially, worship was 'overshadowed by the offering of the sacrifice'.<sup>10</sup> A priestly emphasis became prominent in the time of Cyprian (d. 258). He worked out a detailed parallelism between the worshipping Christian community and Old Testament Israel. The title *sacerdos* (Latin for 'priest') as applied to the presiding presbyter/bishop and the doctrine of Apostolic succession was affirmed.<sup>11</sup> The Eucharist was now regarded as a sacrifice and the focal point of worship.<sup>12</sup> It is surely significant that in the writings of Cyprian there is no reference<sup>13</sup> to the Epistle to the Hebrews with its stress on the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ and his exclusive priesthood. With the passage of time, error proliferated. The doctrine of transubstantiation was a ninth century invention of the monk Radbertus,<sup>14</sup> and the promulgation of the theory by the fourth Lateran Council (1215)<sup>15</sup> elevated the sacrament of the altar to idolatrous heights.

### **Calvin and Cranmer: The Character and Priorities of Worship**

Such was the situation inherited by the Protestant Reformers. In their concern to restore preaching to its apostolic and spiritual importance, the Reformers cleansed worship of all superstitious and idolatrous overtones. Nowhere was this policy carried out more consistently and thoroughly than in Geneva; and Calvin's concern for purity of worship in England is especially seen in his lengthy letter to the Duke of Somerset.<sup>16</sup> The great priority was the restoration of preaching: 'And the utmost care should be taken, that so far as possible you should have good trumpets, which shall sound into the very depths of the heart.' This letter was written in October 1548, a year before Cranmer's first Prayer Book appeared. We should note that Calvin recognized the need for 'a certain written form' for a catechism, the administration of the sacraments and the public prayers, 'for the sake of supplementing the ignorance and deficiencies of some, as the better to manifest the conformity and agreement between all the churches' and 'to take away all ground of pretense for bringing in any eccentricity or newfangled doctrine'. All this is consistent with Calvin's liturgical provisions in his *Les Forme des Prières* published in Geneva in 1542.<sup>17</sup>

While Cranmer's 1549 Prayer Book was a decided disappointment to many, the 1552 book was a more faithful expression of Reformed worship. Indeed, it represents the high water mark of Reformed Anglicanism — or the low water mark if one is an Anglo-Catholic! Even the 1662 Prayer Book has more affinities with the Elizabethan book of 1559 which, in fact, reverted to the 1549 in certain important details. The 1559 reintroduced the 1549's doubtful and ambiguous wording in the delivery of the sacraments to the communicants,<sup>18</sup> and it removed the famous 'black rubric', a typically Cranmerian compromise between John Knox's belief that communicants should sit at the Lord's Supper and any idolatrous overtones in the kneeling of communicants.<sup>19</sup> Also, the 1559 deleted the 1552 Litany's reference to 'they tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities'.<sup>20</sup> Cranmer would have regarded these changes as retrogressive and ominous, a point which history arguably confirms. For those tempted to think that such details are of minor importance, the history of theology confirms too frequently the theory that oaks of falsehood grow from acorns of error.

While Calvin expressed his doubts about the residual Romanism of the Anglican liturgy<sup>21</sup> and the slow pace of the English Reformation<sup>22</sup> we should recognize the incipient Puritanism of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer. Did not Cranmer establish a puritan precedent by using the word 'minister' more frequently than 'priest' in the 1552 Order for Morning Prayer, and introducing it into the Communion service?<sup>23</sup> In fact, Puritan editions of the Prayer Book, appearing from 1578 onwards, applied these measures more consistently.<sup>24</sup> And had not Cranmer recognized as early as 1540 that the New Testament assumes an identity between bishops and presbyters, and that the people, rather than princes, elected overseers in the church?<sup>25</sup> The logic of these observations leads inexorably to Puritanism. Thus there seems to be some evidence that, for all his caution, Cranmer was moving in this direction. His understanding was never static and, had both he and England's Josiah, King Edward VI, lived, the English Reformation would have gone beyond the 'half-way house' Elizabethan settlement. One wonders what might have happened if Cranmer's projected Reformed ecumenical synod had taken

place with John Calvin in attendance at Lambeth!<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, what might Cranmer's close friendship with the proto-Puritan John Hooper have produced had both men survived the Marian persecutions?<sup>27</sup> Speculations apart, the evidence cited above suggests that if the 1552 Prayer Book does not lead directly to the Westminster Directory of Public Worship, its author would arguably have been more at home with the abortive 1689 Prayer Book proposals<sup>28</sup> than the anti-puritan 1662 Prayer Book.<sup>29</sup> He would doubtless have shared the view that when John Calvin's achievement was celebrated at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Geneva, on Reformation Sunday, 1986, it was altogether inappropriate to use the 1662 Prayer Book.

### **Puritan Worship: the Westminster Directory**

To return to the Directory itself, the in-built ambiguities of Elizabethan Anglicanism, the constant threat of Romanism and the Romanizing measures of Archbishop Laud form the immediate backdrop to the Westminster Assembly. With political Puritanism in the ascendancy, the scene was set to complete the English Reformation. With respect to a replacement for the BCP, various options were open to the Assembly as it commenced its work on 24 May 1644. These included the various Puritan editions of the BCP and other similar substitutes,<sup>30</sup> together with an abridgment of Calvin's *Form of Prayers for the Church* and its Knoxian derivative, *The Book of Common Order*.<sup>31</sup> However, the Assembly preferred to issue a work of its own composition.<sup>32</sup>

If the text of the Directory tends to obscure differences over alternative preferences, the Preface justifies the replacement of the BCP in no uncertain terms. While its virtues are not ignored, it had become an 'offense' to many of the godly at home and abroad. 'For, not to speak of urging the reading of all the prayers, which very greatly increased the burden of it, the many unprofitable and burdensome ceremonies', e.g. wearing the surplice, the sign of the cross at baptism, confirmation, bowing at the name of Jesus, etc., 'have occasioned much mischief' by troubling the consciences 'of many godly ministers and people'. Many good Christians have been 'kept from the Lord's Table' and 'able and faithful ministers' have been debarred from their ministry. The bishops had virtually insisted that use of the BCP was the only acceptable way of worshipping God. Preaching had been 'jostled out as unnecessary, or at best as far inferior' to the reading of the service. In short, the Prayer Book had become 'no better than an idol by many ignorant and superstitious people'. Accordingly, the 'Papists boasted that the book was a compliance with them in a great part of their service; and so were not a little confirmed in their superstition and idolatry, expecting rather our return to them, than endeavouring the reformation of themselves'. Furthermore, exclusive use of the BCP had promoted 'an idle and unedifying ministry', which contented itself with reading 'set forms' composed by others 'without putting forth themselves to exercise the gift of prayer, with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all his servants whom he calls to that office'. These were the 'weighty considerations' which led the Assembly to 'lay aside the former Liturgy'.

### **A Liturgy for Life**

Before we focus particular attention on the public worship of the Lord's Day, it should be remembered that 'worship' embraced the whole of life in the minds of our forefathers. God was to be acknowledged, loved and obeyed in all the experiences and decisions of daily life. Accordingly, the BCP — in keeping with centuries of Christian tradition — made provision for the great and momentous occasions in life from the womb to the tomb. What we immediately think of as 'worship' was a special instance of communal Lord's Day worship, where the Lord is pleased to 'command the blessing' (Ps. 133: 3). Thus against a background of common Sabbath desecration, even in less secular times, the Directory supplied practical spiritual guidance on 'the sanctification of the Lord's Day'. While this concern was justified, it was recognized that in the vast majority of English parishes, then as now, the only certain contact people had with the church was through 'hatchings, matchings and despatchings'. Here the Directory is so unlike the Prayer Book in dealing with the problems posed by nominalism in a territorial conception of the church. Taking matters in reverse order, concerning the burial of the dead, 'When any person departeth this life, let the dead body, upon the day of burial, be decently attended from the house to the place appointed for public burial, and there immediately interred, without any ceremony'. Because of superstitious abuse, readings, prayers and singing 'are to be laid aside'. At most, the minister — if he is present — is only to encourage the mourners to engage in suitable meditations. The pressure to eulogize over the doubtful virtues of the irreligious is thus removed. The minister is also delivered from perjuring himself. No longer does he have to say beside the graves of the ungodly 'Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed....' However, one wonders if the Directory's blanket solution goes a little too far.

May not a graveside oration comfort the relatives of one who is a 'dear departed brother/sister'? The question of funeral sermons was hotly debated, the Scots objecting to what the English wished to retain.<sup>33</sup> One notes with interest that Knox's Liturgy left it an open question, permitting — where Calvin's Genevan service book had enjoined — that the minister go to the church and make 'some comfortable exhortation ... touching death and the resurrection'.<sup>34</sup> With reference to human mortality, the Directory reminds ministers of the pastoral and evangelistic opportunities of sick visitation: 'He is to admonish' the people 'in time of health, to prepare for death; and, for that purpose, they are often to confer with their minister about the estate of their souls; and in time of sickness, to desire his advice and help ... before their strength and understanding fail them'.

On the 'solemnization of marriage', the Directory states categorically that 'marriage be no sacrament, nor peculiar to the church of God, but common to mankind'. While the XXXIX Articles deny that 'matrimony' is a sacrament of the gospel' (Art. XXV), to this day there remains a somewhat mystical regard for church weddings; so this directive is no less necessary in some quarters. Yet because the Scriptures give directions to Christians about marriage 'in the Lord', the Assembly judged it 'expedient that marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister of the word'. Thus the idea of a strictly secular marriage was ruled out. Few may quarrel with this appeal to expediency, a criterion generally anathema to the Puritan mind. At the same time, none can object on scriptural grounds to a purely civil ceremony. Indeed, the Bible provides no specific guidance either way. Despite the impact of his presence at the marriage at Cana, the Lord Christ was no more than a guest. He didn't even bless the marriage as the Prayer Book almost implies. Among the Jews, marriage was at one time a merely civil ceremony; not until the later Middle Ages did the presence of a Rabbi become obligatory at Jewish weddings.<sup>35</sup> Even in post-apostolic Christian times, marriage was a private ceremony. Only with the advent of sacramentalism were marriages blessed at special services, i.e. the eucharist.<sup>36</sup> That said, there is no violation of principle in the Assembly's ruling provided stress is placed on the need for life-long marital commitment and fidelity under the Lordship of Christ rather than on some mystical, sacramental blessing conveyed by a priest or minister. Unlike the Genevan church,<sup>37</sup> the Assembly advised that weddings should not take place on Lord's Day.

### The Sacrament of Baptism

This brings us to the administration of the sacraments. Every member of the Westminster Assembly was committed to the Reformed doctrine of covenant baptism. Like all the sixteenth century Reformers, they did not consider that infant baptism was an unscriptural relic of Roman Catholicism. Unlike the BCP, but in harmony with the continental Reformed churches, the Directory places infant baptism in a covenant context when it declares:

That baptizing, or sprinkling and washing with water, signifieth the cleansing from sin by the blood and for the merit of Christ, together with the mortification of sin, and rising from sin to newness of life, by virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ: That the promise is made to believers and their seed; and that the seed and posterity of the faithful, born within the church, have, by their birth, interest in the covenant, and right to the seal of it, and to the outward privileges of the church, under the gospel, no less than the children of Abraham in the time of the Old Testament; the covenant of grace, for substance, being the same; and the grace of God, and the consolation of believers, more plentiful than before ...

Time forbids an in-depth discussion of the subject of baptism. Suffice it to say that the Westminster divines believed they had a strong *biblical* case for rejecting the Baptist position. The present lecturer, after many years of thought, is now inclined to think that the Waldensians, the Reformers, the Huguenots, the Pilgrim Fathers, the Puritans, and the Covenanters had it right after all! While seventeenth-century Baptists argued their case chiefly from a partial, New Testament view of the evidence, they were naturally confirmed in their antipaedobaptism by the abuses of the Reformed. But the Westminster Assembly was no less concerned to root these out, while taking care not to throw out the covenant baby with the superstitious font-water.

However, while the Assembly clearly rejected the Prayer Book's language of baptismal regeneration — the Directory states that 'the inward grace of baptism is not tied to that very moment of time wherein it is administered' a highly questionable statement is made: '...all who are baptized in the name of Christ, do renounce, and by their baptism are bound to fight against the devil, the world and the flesh: **That they are Christians, and federally holy before baptism, and therefore are they baptized**'. Now does federal or covenant holiness necessarily imply actual grace? Is it not a red rag to a Baptist bull to say 'they **are** Christians'? Surely the statement is neither true nor necessary. One notes that this unfortunate expression of the Directory finds no parallel in Calvin's form of administering baptism.<sup>38</sup> Observing the circumcision analogy, even the Apostle Paul denied that someone was a (true)

Jew in the sight of God without evidence of the circumcision of the **heart** (see Rom. 2: 28, 29). As surely as the prophets preached the necessity of heart circumcision to those circumcised in the flesh, so preachers must urge the necessity of the new birth upon the baptized children of believers. They are not to be told they are Christians without a credible, personal profession of faith. Let it also be said that the danger of nominalism no more invalidates the lawfulness of infant baptism than a similar state of affairs in the Old Testament invalidated divinely-commanded circumcision. Neither should Baptists give the impression that paedobaptists are the only ones plagued by hypocritical nominals. Both schools, in the absence of godly discipline, may be confronted by the same problem in church life. Indeed, are there not unregenerate members of Baptist churches? Comparing the current Rome-ward drift of the ecumenical Baptist Union with the traditionally faithful paedobaptist Free Church of Scotland suggests that Baptist ultra-Puritanism is no sure guarantee of doctrinal and ecclesiological purity. Is it not significant that if one drew up a list of faithful preachers and theologians from the last 450 years, Baptists would be a decided minority? While we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of dividing over baptism, these points must be made in the interests of truth. Equally it should be said that Presbyterians have not opposed believer's baptism as Baptists have opposed infant baptism. In a missionary context — such as the period of the Acts of the Apostles — Presbyterians would expect to baptize believers **but not without their children**. While the evidence is not entirely conclusive, the covenant view makes better sense of NT household baptisms than the individualist Baptist view does. The Directory's failure to provide for a missionary context reflects the general lack of missionary awareness during the Puritan period. Interestingly, the 1662 BCP added a service of baptism for those of 'Riper Years' to meet the need caused by the neglect of the sacrament during the Commonwealth and by the beginnings of missionary work in the colonies.<sup>39</sup>

The divines were clearly opposed to an undisciplined, indiscriminate administration of infant baptism of the kind Anglicanism had encouraged. In other words, the sacrament made no sense unless at least one parent was a true believer; and in stressing the responsibility of the father, the Directory abolishes the idea of godparents. Furthermore, infant baptism is not to be 'administered in private places, or privately, but in the place of public worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear; and not in the places where fonts, in the time of Popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed'.

This raises the question of the mode of baptism. While the Prayer Book allows for 'dipping', and no absolute prejudice against immersion was entertained by Calvin<sup>40</sup> and the other reformers, the Directory ruled in favour of 'pouring or sprinkling of the water on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony'. The etymology of *baptizo* surely justifies this position. The 'baptism of the Spirit' was an 'outpouring' (Acts 1: 5; 2: 17) rather than an 'immersion'; Israel's 'baptism unto Moses' simply meant an identification of the people with their leader, when they were neither immersed nor sprinkled. Their baptism was entirely dry, for not a drop of water fell on them! (1 Cor. 10: 2); as for the alleged immersionism of Romans 6, the notion of a watery grave is more applicable to God's enemies than his friends if the flood and the drowning of the Egyptians are anything to go by. As one may be perfectly clean after a bath or a shower,' so ceremonial washing is adequately signified by sprinkling (see Numbers 8: 7). Indeed, the quantity of water is quite irrelevant. Even the Apostle Peter seems to warn against attaching too much importance to the sign of baptism (1 Pet. 3: 21), a danger which faces Roman Catholics and Baptists alike. The essential thing which must always unite Bible-believing Christians — especially at the Lord's Table — is the reality of regeneration and a living, obedient faith in Christ.

### **The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

This brings us to the subject of the Lord's Supper. The Directory states that it is 'frequently to be celebrated', without determining just how frequently. In terms familiar to most of us, the Assembly decided that it should be celebrated 'after the morning sermon' or, as is suggested elsewhere, after the final psalm. This practice has been criticized for treating the Lord's Supper as a mere appendage, a thought reinforced by the relative infrequency of celebration in the Scottish tradition. This practice reflects the view of Zwingli rather than Calvin, who actually desired a weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper,<sup>41</sup> incorporated into the Lord's Day morning service rather than merely tacked on the end. In this respect, the Independents were closer to Calvin's wishes than the Scots were.

Unlike the Prayer Book with its ceremony of episcopal confirmation, the Directory says nothing about the admission of catechized young people to the Lord's Table. In this respect also, Anglo-Scottish Presbyterianism went beyond the Continental Reformed churches. While admittance to the Lord's Table before the congregation by the minister and kirk session with the right hand of fellowship became the norm,<sup>42</sup> even Calvin argued for a simple form of confirmation with laying on of hands by

the pastor.<sup>43</sup> However, a general exhortation is to be made at every celebration. The minister fences the table by warning 'all such as are ignorant, scandalous, profane, or that live in any sin or offense against their knowledge or conscience, that they presume not to come to that holy table'.

While the Westminster divines were agreed on the theology of the Lord's Supper, the seemingly innocuous statement that 'communicants may orderly sit about' or 'at' the table hides the fact that violent disagreement occurred over the question of 'posture'. Baillie complained that 'The Independents and others kept us long three weeks upon one point alone, the communicating at a table'.<sup>44</sup> Heated discussion of a merely circumstantial aspect of the sacrament of unity, as Dr. Robert Paul writes, 'almost tore the Assembly apart and occupied all the time until a compromise was reached'.<sup>45</sup> Three kinds of practice were argued for. The ex-Anglican Puritans had been used to kneeling at the Lord's Table (in the spirit of the 'black rubric', i.e. no adoration of the elements was intended); the Scots believed that communicants should come up to the table — in separate groups if numbers demanded it — and sit about it; whereas the Independents insisted that communicants should receive the elements sitting in their pews!

Extremist misrepresentation of one another's position produced a loss of perspective. It was surely sufficient to stress, negatively, that the place of remembrance was not an altar of sacrifice, and positively, that the act of receiving the elements was the significantly symbolic act. As for **kneeling** or **sitting**, either at the table or in one's pew, the first disciples received the elements in a **reclining** posture. Such a circumstance could hardly be repeated in a large congregation, even assuming that the procedure was either necessary or desirable. While Charles Herle argued that the Scots practice tended to fragment the congregation into groups, and Edmund Calamy replied that the unity of the congregation is in the unity of consecration,<sup>46</sup> it arguably maximizes the sense of unity if all receive the elements sitting in their pews. Goodwin was surely right in this, that 'Christ doth not put the honour in that sitting at table, but that he serves them'.<sup>47</sup> Once it was realized that the regulative principle could be taken a little too far, the result was a rather Anglican kind of agreed statement permitting all three procedures!

The radical simplicity of the Directory's Lord's Supper is in stark contrast to the Prayer Book. Gone are the rehearsing of the Ten Commandments (with responses), the Nicene Creed and the comfortable words. One notes with interest that in Calvin's Geneva (where 'coming forward with reverence and in order' to kneel at the Lord's Table was not viewed with suspicion)<sup>48</sup> the administration of the Lord's Supper included the Lord's Prayer (in paraphrase form) and the Apostle's Creed.

### **The Public Worship of the Lord's Day**

A combination of radical simplicity and reverent spirituality characterizes the Directory's recommendations for the worship of the Lord's Day. The order of service is as follows:

- Call to worship
- Prayer for grace and enlightenment
- Scripture reading:
  - OT chapter
  - NT chapter
- Metrical Psalm
- Prayer of confession and intercession
- Preaching of the Word
- Prayer of thanksgiving and petition
- Lord's Prayer
- Metrical Psalm
- Benediction

### **The Pastor and the People**

The Directory urges that the people prepare their hearts before assembling for worship, and that they meet 'not irreverently, but in a grave and seeming manner, taking their seats or places without adoration, or bowing themselves towards one place or another'. If the divines were anxious to discourage idolatrous genuflections in worship, they were equally concerned to prevent casual familiarity. Hence there were to be no 'private wisperings, conferences, salutations, or doing reverence to any person present, or coming in'. Likewise, there should be no 'gazing, sleeping, and other indecent behaviour, which may disturb the minister or people' in 'the service of God'.

The Scriptures are only to be read by 'pastors and teachers', and occasionally by ministerial students. Thus the office of reader, tracing its ancestry from an earlier Reformed tradition back to the synagogue,<sup>49</sup> was — with doubtful necessity — laid aside. Indeed, do the Scriptures support the

Directory at this point? Unlike the Prayer Book lectionary, readings from the Apocrypha are forbidden, but 'all the canonical books' are to 'read over in order, that the people may be better acquainted with the whole body of the scriptures'. Occasionally, part of what is read may be expounded, after the reading, for clarification. However, 'regard is always to be had unto the time' so that the rest of the service, and especially the preaching is not 'rendered tedious'.

### **The Priority of Preaching**

Thus the major concern of the Assembly was to restore preaching to a place of prominence in public worship. Here one detects the great difference in priorities between Anglican and Puritan worship. Not that the Anglican Reformers had neglected the great necessity of preaching, at least in principle. Indeed it had been Cranmer's intention that after Morning prayer, the Litany and Ante-communion, a 'sermon or homily' should be preached. The excellent Books of Homilies<sup>50</sup> were intended as a basis for the reformation of preaching. However, as the Prayer Book became more established, the sheer length of the liturgy left little or no time for a sermon. Practice rather than intention thus justifies Dr. Kenneth Brownell's observation that 'Anglican worship is primarily priestly' whereas 'Reformed worship is primarily prophetic'.<sup>51</sup> The truth is that Anglican worship was only semi-reformed, and under the iron hand of Queen Elizabeth, who disliked Puritans AND preaching,<sup>52</sup> the prophetic features of the English Reformation became smothered by more priestly elements. Thus, in the spirit of Calvin's letter to the Duke of Somerset, the Westminster Assembly was determined to ensure that 'good trumpets' would have plenty of time to preach. Accordingly, the Directory declares that 'Preaching of the word, being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the gospel, should be so performed, that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save himself, and those that hear him.'

Whatever our former FIEC president means by saying that the sermon is a 'relatively modern invention', we have the Puritans to thank for reasserting its importance. When the centrality of preaching is attacked by those ostensibly in the Puritan tradition, it is high time to remember our roots. For all that is best and most enduring in the history of evangelicalism has been due to the God-honoured, Spirit-anointed preaching of Christ and him crucified. We must not be ignorant of Satan's devices. He is always opposed to preaching. The introduction of drama and dance among so-called evangelicals gives him — as well as others — great pleasure, for the gap between truth-obscuring 'dramatic worship' and the truth-corrupting theatricalism of the Mass is no great chasm!

One trusts it is not necessary in this conference to labour these points. But, for us to be self-critical for a moment, a thorough study of the Directory's excellent pronouncements on preaching would not only complete a preacher's education; it would help us to avoid the sometimes valid criticism one hears about modern Reformed preaching. For instance, the preacher should not simply dish up dull, undiluted systematic theology. Truth must be made to live. After all, doesn't the prince of darkness prefer dull, dark sermons too? So 'illustrations, of what kind soever, ought to be full of light'. More generally, the Westminster divines were clearly aware that mere orthodoxy of sentiment, soundness of education, competence in knowledge, correctness of pulpit utterance and dignity of gesture are not enough. True, as John Caiger made clear in his helpful exposition<sup>53</sup> of the Directory's teaching on preaching, Puritan preaching was intellectual, biblical, theological, pastoral, and spiritual. And what ensures this balanced character of true preaching? The preacher's own personal walk with God. According to the Directory, he must have 'his senses and heart exercised in (the holy scriptures) above the common sort of believers; and by the illumination of God's Spirit, and other gifts of edification, which (together with reading and studying of the word) he ought still to seek by prayer, and an humble heart'. Without this priority, sermons will be little more than arid dissertations and preaching nothing but unspiritual oratory. And if preaching is to be the highlight of Reformed worship, powerless preaching is all the excuse our detractors need to go elsewhere and do something different! May we heed the words of the greatest preacher Puritanism ever produced, Richard Baxter: 'Nothing is more indecent than a dead preacher, speaking to dead hearers the living truths of the living God'.<sup>54</sup>

To be practical, the Westminster divines didn't expect that every preacher should conform to a rigid Puritan equivalent of the Anglican stereotype with his sanctimonious grin and parsonic voice! They weren't out to crush individuality. As surely as Cranmer's style was not Calvin's, so Bunyan was not to ape Baxter, nor was Goodwin to duplicate Gouge. So, the Directory's 'method is not prescribed as necessary for every man...but only recommended, as being found by experience to be very blessed of God'. But whatever our homiletic method, our ministry should be 'Painful' rather than negligent, 'Plain' for all to understand, 'Faithful' in seeking Christ's honour alone, 'Wise' in the use of reproof, without personal passion or bitterness, 'Grave', so as not to make preaching appear contemptible — there must be no attempt to entertain — and 'Loving' or 'affectionate', that our hearers may see our only concern is



'to do them good'. Lastly, he who teaches others must be seen to be 'taught of God, and persuaded in his own heart, that all that he teacheth is the truth of Christ; and walking before his flock, as an example to them in it; earnestly, both in private and public, recommending his labours to the blessing of God, and watchfully looking to himself, and the flock whereof the Lord hath made him an overseer'. If preaching was in need of reformation according to these criteria 350 years ago, God forbid that we should say anything less today!

### **The Practice of Prayer**

If the prominence given to preaching distinguishes the Directory from the Prayer Book, so does its policy with regard to public prayer. While the divines retained a fixed liturgical framework, they did not prescribe set forms of prayer. Hence their recommendations were called a 'directory', i.e. the subject matter for prayer is set down for the minister's guidance in prayer. As we have noted earlier, the Directory was something of a compromise, judging by the preface. The ex-Anglicans were not totally opposed to the Prayer Book even when they lamented its exclusive imposition on ministers. The moderate Scots were not uncomfortable with their 'discretionary' liturgy, the *Book of Common Order*. However, the Independents believed that even a directory was inconsistent with the liberty of the Holy Spirit.<sup>55</sup> It was not easy to ensure harmony on these points, as Baillie made clear: 'one party purposing by the preface to turn the directory to a straight Liturgy, the other to make it so loose and free that it should serve for little use; but God helped us to get both these rocks eschewed.'<sup>56</sup>

The debates of the Westminster Assembly have a relevance for us today, not least where the content of so-called 'open worship' and sometimes of pulpit prayers are concerned. Indeed, as I heard on one occasion, is it spiritual to thank God for 'sending the Holy Spirit to lick us into shape'? The framers of the Directory would never have called such undignified rubbish Spirit-directed prayer! As A. F. Mitchell makes clear: 'Nothing was further from their intentions than to encourage unpremeditated or purely extemporary effusions, or to represent any fluency in these as the stirring up of that gift which is given to all the children of God in some measure.'<sup>57</sup> Even the Independent Philip Nye admitted there was a middle way between set forms and extemporary prayers when he said: 'I plead for neither, but for *studied* prayers.'<sup>58</sup> Surely, as Nye argued, public prayers require no less preparation than sermons. If the 'open-your-mouth-wide-and-I-will-fill-it' policy is irresponsible where preaching is concerned, why should we imagine it is acceptable in the case of prayer? If notes — and even written-out sermons in the case of Jonathan Edwards — are admissible, then why not written-out prayers? And let us not forget that if the minister prays *extempore*, what he utters becomes a pulpit-prescribed form for the praying congregation!

Once the idea of prepared prayer is admitted, the objection to liturgical forms has to be treated with considerable reservation. Indeed, the Psalms may be regarded as liturgical documents, and did not the apostles weave part of Psalm 2 into their prayer in Acts 4: 24-30? The Puritans and others objected to *imposed* liturgies — this being the major objection to the Prayer Book — but they were not altogether opposed to the use of precomposed forms. John Owen granted this later, even though he argues for Christ's gift of prayer to ministers.<sup>59</sup>

Of course, as the preface to the Directory makes plain, the mere reading of fixed prayers could be a totally unspiritual exercise. That said, it is arguable that the Independents tended to be unnecessarily 'ultra'. They were understandably over-reacting to the mechanical abuse of an imposed liturgy. Indeed, had the Church of England adhered more closely to Calvin's policy of a simpler, more flexible liturgy (including set prayers) from the beginning, this over-reaction would have been avoided. As it was, the Independents helped produce a Directory which cut the Reformed Churches adrift from a tradition of discretionary liturgical worship.<sup>60</sup> Our current free-for-all policy really dates from this time. But surely, may not fixed forms be freely chosen by spiritually minded men alongside their own premeditated prayers? The all important point is the state of the heart. A man may be as unspiritual in his proud opposition to a liturgy as one who slavishly follows it.

It was quite wrong to write the Prayer Book off completely, and later in the century, the Presbyterian Matthew Henry had occasion to rebuke the excessive criticism of it by another minister.<sup>61</sup> One suggests that it would have been sufficient for the Assembly to have produced a much revised and modified Prayer Book giving greater prominence to preaching. In short, a kind of Reformed ASB, possibly along the lines of the *Reformed Liturgy* produced by Baxter for the Savoy Conference of 1661,<sup>62</sup> but incorporating some of Cranmer's beautiful and spiritual prayers as options. Indeed, some of the anti-puritan hostility of the Restoration might have been reduced had such a course been followed. True, as the preface of the Directory states, the Prayer Book had become an idol to some, but Cranmer's prayers had helped create a genuine piety among many Englishmen. And who would question the theology and the unction of the prayer of humble access in the communion service:

We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy:...

Surely Cranmer still has something to teach us today about public prayer.

As for the view that using set forms is somehow unspiritual, the charge is magisterially disproved by the eighteenth-century revival. While John Wesley clearly shared some Puritan misgivings about the Prayer Book, was he unspiritual when he declared that 'there is no Liturgy in the world, either in ancient or modern language, which breathes more of a solid, scriptural, rational piety, than the Common Prayer of the Church of England.'<sup>63</sup> For those who would never be swayed by an Arminian, let us hear the Calvinist Whitefield's verdict on the worship of the Church of England: 'I have conscientiously defended her Homilies and Articles, and, upon all occasions, have spoken well of her Liturgy'.<sup>64</sup> If the views of an English Calvinistic Methodist are not enough, let us turn to a Welsh one. Dr. Eifion Evans reminds us, that a 'remarkable manifestation of God's power' occurred during the early period of Daniel Rowland's ministry at Liangeitho 'while he as reading the Anglican Prayer Book Litany'.<sup>65</sup> Returning to England, even Augustus Toplady gloried in the fact that John Calvin had some influence on the 1552 Prayer Book.<sup>66</sup> And who has not been blessed by Calvin's wonderful prayers at the conclusion of his expository lectures? These authorities are not cited to call in question the legitimate Puritan criticisms of the Prayer Book, but to warn against the dangers of superficial over-reaction.

### The Privilege of Praise

To the Westminster reformers, public worship consisted of proclamation, prayer, and praise. Thus the Directory concludes: 'And because singing of psalms is of all other the most proper ordinance for expressing joy and thanksgiving, ... It is the duty of Christians to praise God publicly, by singing of psalms together in the congregation, and also privately in the family.' Time and propriety forbid a lengthy discussion of the exclusive psalmody versus hymns debate. This was simply not an issue for the Westminster Assembly, and the era of English hymnody had hardly dawned. However, the hymns of Watts and Wesley made their impact on exclusive psalm-singers during the following century throughout the English-speaking world. In the United States, the 1788 Presbyterian Directory enjoined the singing of 'psalms and hymns'. Forty years earlier, Jonathan Edwards had reacted to the new fashion with moderation. After preaching away from home, he found that his Northampton congregation had been using Watts' hymns to the exclusion of the Psalter. He 'disliked not their making some use of the hymns; but did not like their setting aside the Psalms'.<sup>67</sup> However, this moderation is not enough for Michael Bushell whose reactionary *tour de force* in favour of exclusive psalmody nonetheless deserves the attention of chorus and hymn singers alike!<sup>68</sup> Certainly psalm singing deserves a much higher profile in modern worship. After all, are the psalms not the heritage of New Testament children of the covenant?

However, one wonders if Bushell has not overstated his case. It is simply not that obvious that the Apostle excludes the possibility of post-apostolic hymns in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. Without denying that the 'word of Christ' is found in the psalms, surely New Testament Christians are expected to sing the 'word of Christ' in the language of fulfillment as well as prophecy. It seems strange that our understanding, preaching, and praying may be expressed in NT language when our praise should remain in OT language. This may be illustrated from Calvin who was no exclusive psalm singer<sup>69</sup> even if he did not write that beautiful hymn attributed to him.<sup>70</sup> The Reformer says 'As for public prayers, there are two kinds: the one consists simply of speech, the other of song'.<sup>71</sup> Now if *spoken* prayers may use NT language, why should *sung* prayers be confined to OT language? Is the praise of Christians to be no different from the Jews? And is the issue to be settled by a tune?

Bushell argues that 'uninspired praises', i.e. hymns not found in the Bible, have no place in Christian worship. But this could imply the most rigid kind of liturgical worship, with all our prayers and sermons taken *verbatim* from the Bible, for what Christian could be content with uninspired worship at any point in the service? It is surely sufficient to ensure that every part of worship is consistent with scripture truth rather than a *verbatim* copy of it. If the psalms, unlike our sermons, are 'untouched by human hands', where does that leave the Anglo-Scottish Psalter which, in the words of Sir Richard Terry, 'groans under the weight of the monotonous 'Ballad Metre', i.e. 8.6.8.6'.<sup>72</sup> Did the Holy Spirit reveal them to David and Asaph in such a straitjacket, sometimes producing embarrassing if not amusing results? The regulative principle could overthrow the entire Presbyterian tradition of metrical psalms in favour of the Anglican chant! The answer is, of course, that literary form is a thing indifferent, and that it is the divinely-inspired truth-content that makes them acceptable. Quite! And is it

not an insult to the Holy Spirit to describe a hymn which is orthodox and full of Christ 'uninspired'? This is not to supplement scripture, but to acknowledge that a hymn may *reflect* revelation as in a mirror. Just as the Westminster Directory was concerned that preaching and praying should faithfully reflect the Word of God, so hymns fulfilling the same requirement may surely be admitted. Consistent with Calvin's actual position, later Presbyterians like Charles Hodge<sup>73</sup> and Albert Barnes<sup>74</sup> endorse the use of post-apostolic hymns. As for modern choruses, our forefathers would probably say that *some* of them are useful teaching aids for very young children. But for adults, they can only be the effusions of immature Christians reared on superficial preaching. Where there is a healthy appetite for the Reformed Faith, nothing less than the psalms and hymns of the Reformed Faith will be suitable vehicles of praise.

It is unfortunate that English-speaking psalm-singers usually end up pleading for one rather unpoetic, seventeenth-century version of the Psalms. This is not to forget some glorious and justly famous individual psalms, nor do I wish to appear ungracious in my remarks. But there are other versions which could convince those brought up on the eloquence and energy of Watts and Wesley that psalms should not be so neglected. The *Anglo-Genevan Psalter*,<sup>75</sup> with its tasteful translations of Marot's and Beza's paraphrases, employing varied metres and set to the majestic and glorious tunes of Greiter and Bourgeois, meets this requirement. Here are the psalms which inspired the heroic-Huguenots in their sufferings for Christ. There was nothing drab about Reformed worship at the beginning, judging by the experience of a student passing through Strasbourg in 1545 where Calvin had published his first psalter just six years before:

You would never believe what a happy thing it is and what peace of conscience one experiences in being where the Word of God is purely proclaimed and the sacraments purely administered. Also when one hears the fine Psalms sung and the marvellous works of the Lord... At the beginning when I heard the singing I could scarcely keep myself from weeping with joy. You would not hear one voice drowning another. Everybody holds a book of music in his hand. Every man and woman alike praises the Lord.<sup>76</sup>

### **Conclusion: Worship in Spirit and Truth**

I would like to conclude on this note of joy in true worship. After all, the psalmist declared 'In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures for evermore' (Ps. 16: 11). One wonders if this was always the dominant note during the seventeenth century. True, there were great theologians, mighty preachers, and occasional revivals. But there were also — to use the subtitle of Richard Baxter's *Catholick Theologie* (1675) — the 'dogmatical word-warriors', whose bitter disputings and ultra-orthodox contendings tended to drown the note of praise. Alas, the Puritans duplicated their confessions and their energies. It was a century which ended on the low notes of heresy, fragmentation, deadness, and secularism. And all this despite the faithful though formal attempts of the Puritans to complete the English Reformation. Do we not feel burdened by these things today? Do we not yearn for those seasons of revival and refreshment which would cure many — if not all — of our present ills? We dare not think that the mere reformation of worship will guarantee worship itself, any more than reformation itself automatically brings revival. There must be an earnest pleading with God and a humble dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Unlike the Westminster divines whose prescribed services — including solemn fasts and public thanksgivings — were quite formal, the Methodists of the next century restored the less formal love-feasts referred to in 2 Peter 2: 13 and Jude 12, and known in the early church. Thomas Manton<sup>77</sup> doubted whether they had any permanent place in the fellowship of the church whereas Calvin is happy just to acknowledge that these 'frugal' and 'restrained' gatherings were 'feasts which the faithful held among themselves, to witness to their brotherly concord.'<sup>78</sup> During the early days of the evangelical revival, something very remarkable occurred at a Methodist love-feast. As if to prove that God only meets with those who seek him with a whole heart, whatever forms they use, John Wesley recorded in *his Journal* for Monday, January 1, 1739:

Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchins, and my brother Charles, were present at our love-feast in Fetter Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'<sup>79</sup>

May the Lord in his infinite mercy so visit us again in our day. Let us pray:

Grant, Almighty God, that we may ever be attentive to that rule which has been prescribed to us by thee in the Law, as well as in the Prophets and in the Gospel, so that we may constantly abide in thy precepts, and be wholly dependent on the words of thy mouth, and never turn aside either to the right hand or to the left, but glorify thy name, as thou hast commanded us, by offering to thee a true, sincere, and spiritual worship. Grant

also that we may truly and from the heart turn to thee, and offer ourselves to thee as a sacrifice, that thou mayest govern us according to thy will, and so rule all our affections by thy Spirit, that we may through the whole of our life strive to glorify thy name, until having at length finished all our struggles, we reach that blessed rest, which has been obtained for us by the blood of thy only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus so Christ. Amen.<sup>80</sup>

*The Revd Dr Alan C. Clifford pastors the Norwich Reformed Church in Norfolk, England. For more information about NRC, please see their website at [www.nrchurch.co.nr](http://www.nrchurch.co.nr)*

## References

Various editions of the Directory are available. The one used in this paper is included in *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (The Publications Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland: Glasgow, 1973).

- 1 David Middleton. 'Praise' in *Angle* (Surrey Chapel Magazine, Norwich. July, 1989).
- 2 For a detailed account of the progress of the Directory, see W. A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church* (Longmans, London, 1900, i. 337-57); Robert S. Paul, *The Assembly of the Lord* (T. & T. Clark. Edinburgh, 1987), 359-75.
- 3 Cited in J. M. Barkley, *The Worship of the Reformed Church* (Lutterworth, London, 1966), 31.
- 4 Cited in W. A. Shaw, op. cit. 340.
- 5 *The Worship of the Reformed Church*. 10. See also Paul P. Levertoff, 'Synagogue worship in the first century' in *Liturgy and Worship*, ed. W. K. Lowther Clarke (SPCK, London, 1932), 60-77.
- 6 *Charity and its Fruits* (Banner of Truth, London, 1969), 305-25.
- 7 *Comm.* 1 Cor. 14: 40. (Calvin's Commentaries, eds. D. W. and T. F. Torrance: *The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, tr. J. W. Fraser (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1960), 310.
- 8 *The Family Expositor* in *The Works of the Rev. P. Doddridge. DD.* eds. E. Williams and E. Parsons (Leeds, 1802-5), x. 435
- 9 J. M. Barkley., op. cit. 11-12.
- 10 Y. Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith & Practice: Evangelical and Catholic* (SPCK, London, 1930), 82.
- 11 F. J. Foakes Jackson, *A History of the Christian Church from the Earliest Times to the Death of St. Leo the Great*. 4th ed. (J. Hall & Son, Cambridge, 1905), 221.
- 12 Leighton Pullan, *The Church of the Fathers: Being an Outline of the History of the Church from AD 98 to AD 461*, 2nd ed. (Rivingtons, London, 1906), 201.
- 13 Brooke Foss Wescott, *A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament*, 5th ed. Macmillan (Cambridge, 1881), 371-2.
- 14 William Cunningham, *Historical Theology: A Review of the Principal Doctrinal Discussions in the Christian Church since the Apostolic Age* (Banner of Truth, fac., London, 1960), i. 206.
- 15 Ibid. 467.
- 16 *Letters of John Calvin* (Selected from the Bonnet Edition: Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1980), esp. 97.
- 17 J. M. Barkley, op. cit. 19.
- 18 The 1549 wording is:  
'The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee. preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. etc.'  
The 1552 wording is:  
'Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving, etc.'  
(*The Two Liturgies, AD 1549 and AD 1552* (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1844), 92, 279). The 1559 combined the two forms (see *Liturgies ... set forth in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1847), 195).
- 19 '...Whereas it is ordained in the book of common prayer, in the administration of the Lord's Supper, that the Communicants kneeling should receive the holy communion: which thing being well meant, for a signification of the humble and grateful acknowledging of the benefits of Christ, given unto the worthy receiver, and to avoid the profanation and disorder, which about the holy communion might else ensue: lest yet the same kneeling might be thought or taken otherwise, we do declare that it is not meant thereby, that any adoration is done, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental bread or wine there bodily received, or to any real and essential presence there being of Christ's natural flesh and blood...' (*The Two Liturgies*, 283).
- 20 Ibid. 233.
- 21 *Letters of John Calvin*, 173-4.
- 22 *Letters to Cranmer and Grindal*, ibid. 141 and 228.

- 23 *The Two Liturgies*, 217ff and 265ff. The 1549 Order for Matins directs that 'The Priest being in the quire, shall begin with a loud voice the Lord's Prayer, etc.', whereas the 1552 Order for Morning Prayer states, 'At the beginning of morning prayer ... the Minister shall read with a loud voice, etc.' (Ibid. 29, 217). Richard Hooker agreed that 'in truth the word *Presbyter* doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable than *Priest* with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ' (*Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, V: lxxviii: 3, in *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr. Richard Hooker*, ed. J. Keble (Oxford, 1836), ii. 601).
- 24 Francis Proctor and Walter Howard Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer* (MacMillan, London, 1901), 133-5; also *The Puritan Prayer-Book in Fragmenta Liturgica*, ed. Peter Hall (Binns and Goodwin, Bath, 1848), i.
- 25 Questions 10-11 in *Questions and Answers concerning the Sacraments and the Appointment and Power of Bishops and Priests in Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer* (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1846), 117.
- 26 Cranmer communicated the idea to Philip Melancthon, Henry Bullinger and John Calvin in 1552. To the latter he wrote, 'Our adversaries are now holding their councils at Trent for the establishment of their errors; and shall we neglect to call together a godly synod for the refutation of error, and for restoring and propagating the truth?' (*Miscellaneous Writings and Letters*, 432). Calvin shared Cranmer's enthusiasm for Reformed ecumenicity and his response is famous: 'So much does this concern me, that, could I be of any service, I would not grudge to cross even ten seas, if need were, on account of it.' (Letters, 133); see also Philip Edgecumbe Hughes, *Theology of the English Reformers* (Hodder, London, 1965), 257ff.
- 27 Cranmer wrote to Bullinger: 'Master Hooper is in such great esteem among us .... and he is at this time living in my house upon the most intimate terms, during the sitting of parliament' (*Miscellaneous Writings and Letters*, 431).
- 28 Proctor and Frere, op. cit. 206ff. The 1689 proposals were not entirely fruitless, since the Prayer Book of the Free Church of England (founded 1844) is largely based on them. See F. Vaughan, *A History of the Free Church of England*. FCE Publications Committee (London, 1960), 171ff.
- 29 J. C. Ryle writes: 'To show the spirit of the ruling party in the Church, they actually added to the number of apocryphal lessons in the Prayer-book calendar at this time. They made it a matter of congratulation among themselves that they had thrust out the Puritans . and got in Bel and the Dragon' (*Light from Old Times*, (C. J. Thynne, London, 1902), 317).
- 30 See ref. 24.
- 31 *The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland ... and the Directory for the Public Worship of God...*, with introduction and notes by George W. Sprott and Thomas Leishman (William Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1868).
- 32 Proctor and Frere, op.cit. at 158.
- 33 W. A. Shaw, op. cit. 350, n. 2.
- 34 Sprott and Leishman, op. cit. p. xlvi.
- 35 W. K. Lowther Clarke, *Liturgy and Worship* (SPCK, London, 1932), 460.
- 36 Ibid. 460.
- 37 'Form and Manner of Celebrating Marriage' in John Calvin, *Tracts containing Treatises on the Sacraments. etc.*, tr. Henry Beveridge (Calvin Translation Society, Edinburgh, 1849), ii. 123.
- 38 'Form of Administering the Sacraments', *ibid.* 113-18.
- 39 W. K. Lowther Clarke, op. cit. 425.
- 40 *Institutes* IV, xv, 19.
- 41 J. M. Barkley, op. cit. 20.
- 42 J. Moffatt, *The Presbyterian Churches*, 2nd ed. (Methuen, London, 1928), 125.
- 43 *Ibid.* 124-5; also J. M. Barkley, *Presbyterianism* (General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Belfast, 1958), 41-2.
- 44 Robert S. Paul, op. cit. 371, n.76.
- 45 *Ibid.* 366.
- 46 *Ibid.* 371.
- 47 *Ibid.* 368.
- 48 Calvin, *Tracts*, 122.
- 49 See Sprott and Leishman, op. cit. p. xxiii and 332.
- 50 *Sermons or Homilies appointed to be read in Churches* (Prayer Book and Homily Society, London, 1833; fac. Focus Christian Ministries Trust: Lewes, 1986).

51 'Worship and the Marian Exiles in Frankfurt', in *Spiritual Worship* (Westminster Conference, London, 1986), 13.

52 Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1979), 233ff.

53 J. A. Caiger, 'Preaching — Puritan and Reformed' in *Press Toward the Mark* (Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference, London, 1962), 46-61.

54 Cited in Philip Doddridge, *Lectures on Preaching in Works*, eds. E. Williams and E. Parsons (Leeds, 1802-5), v. 461.

55 Sprott and Leishman, op. cit. p. xxx and 263.

56 W. A. Shaw, op. cit. 349.

57 *The Westminster Assembly, its History and Standards* (James Nisbet, London, 1883), 228.

58 Ibid. 229.

59 'It is not about stinted forms of prayer in the worship and service of God, by those who, of their own accord, do make use of that kind of assistance, judging that course to be better than anything they can do themselves in the discharge of the work of the ministry, but of the *imposition* of forms on others who desire "to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ hath made them free", that we enquire' (*A Discourse concerning Liturgies, and their imposition* in *The Works of John Owen, DD*, eds. W. H. Goold (Johnson, and Hunter, London, 1851), xv. 21). Agreeing with Owen in principle, yet also arguing in favour of traditional Reformed worship, James Bannerman writes: '...we do not deny that a form of words is not only lawful, but necessary, in social or public prayer. We do not deny that it is lawful ... for ministers, in conducting the devotions of public assemblies, to premeditate or precompose their prayers... We do not deny, in respect even to human compositions of prayer or formal liturgies... it may become necessary to make use of forms of prayer as helps to ministers and people....' (*The Church of Christ: A Treatise on the Nature, Powers, Ordinances, Discipline, and Government of the Christian Church*, (Banner of Truth, fac. London, 1960), i. 382.)

60 Sprott and Leishman, op. cit. 263.

61 J. B. Williams, *Memoirs ... of the Rev. Matthew Henry* (1828) in *The Lives of Philip and Matthew Henry* (two volumes in one), (Banner of Truth, fac., Edinburgh, 1974), 182.

62 *The Savoy Liturgy in Reliquiae Liturgicae*, iv, ed. Peter Hall, (Binns and Goodwin, Bath, 1847); also E. C. Ratcliffe, 'The Savoy Conference and the Revision of the Book of Common Prayer' in *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962*, eds. Geoffrey F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick (SPCK, London, 1961), 89-148.

63 *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, AM*, ed. Thomas Jackson (John Mason, London, 1842), xiv. 288.

64 L. Tyerman, *The Life of the Rev. George Whitefield* (Hodder, London, 1877), ii. 359.

65 *Daniel Rowland and the Great Evangelical Awakening in Wales* (Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1985), 50.

66 *The Works of Augustus M. Toplady, AB* (William Baynes, London, 1825), i. 512-16.

67 Cited in Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn* (The Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, 1915), 163.

68 Michael Bushell, *The Songs of Zion* (Crown and Covenant Publications, Pittsburgh, Pa., 1980).

69 Judging by his Strasbour and Genevan Psalters, Calvin was not exclusively committed to the OT Psalms, since they included metrical versions of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Song of Simeon and the Apostles Creed. Bushell admits that 'It is quite true that Calvin never, so far as we know, formally and explicitly condemned the use of any and all uninspired songs in worship' (Ibid. 140). Indeed, this is explained by Calvin's unprejudiced exegesis of Colossians 3: 16, so very different from Bushell's forced view. Bushell overstates Calvin's position when he says 'The Psalms in Calvin's view are so superior to human hymns that to place the latter alongside the former could only be an act of impiety' (Ibid). What Calvin actually said was: '...we shall find no songs better and more suitable for our purpose than the Psalms of David', which is rather different.

Barkley shows that civil interference in Geneva frustrated Calvin's desires for weekly communion, and there is evidence that he preferred the worship of Strasbour to that of Geneva, where hymns were sung as well as psalms. See *The Worship of the Reformed Church*, 16-21. In 1545 Calvin prepared a third edition of his liturgy *La Forme des Prières* for the use of his former congregation in Strasbour. His outline of the ideal Sunday morning service hardly suggests exclusive psalmody; it also says something about the warmth and breadth of Calvin's 'Calvinism': 'We begin with the confession of our sins, adding readings from the Law and the Gospel (that is, sentences of remission) ... and after we are assured that as Jesus Christ has righteousness and life in Himself, and that He lives for the sake of the Father, so we are justified in Jesus Christ and live in a new life by the same Jesus Christ ... we continue with psalms, hymns of praise, the reading of the Gospel ... and ... quickened and stirred by the reading and preaching of the Gospel, and the confession of our faith (that is, Apostle's Creed) ... it follows that we must pray for the salvation of all men for the life of Christ should be greatly enkindled within us. Now the life of Christ consists in this, namely, to seek and save that which is lost...' (Ibid. 17-18).

The available evidence suggests that Calvin was really in sympathy with psalms and scripture-based

paraphrases. Unlike earlier editions, the 1611 edition of the Scottish Psalter reflected Calvin's position more closely. To say these hymns were acceptable for private rather than public worship is to rest a questionable argument on the mere size of the congregation! See Hector Cameron's doubtful discussion of these points in 'Purity of Worship' in *Hold Fast Your Confession*, ed. Donald Macleod (Knox Press, Edinburgh, 1978), 102-3. To say these 'hymns' were published in a *public* service book for only *private* use — when no such rule is indicated — is not very convincing.

70 See the hymn 'I greet Thee who my sure Redeemer art' in *Christian Hymns*, Evangelical Movement of Wales, (Bridgend, 1977), hymn 124; also *Hymns and Psalms* (Methodist Publishing House, London, 1983), hymn 391. The hymn first appeared in the 1545 Strasbourg Psalter, the very same year Calvin produced the new liturgy for his old congregation. Is it not possible that he wrote the hymn for them too? According to Philip Schaff, it was also discovered in 'an old Genevese prayer-book' (*Christ in Song* (Anson Randolph, New York, 1869), 678. While external evidence might not be conclusive (see Bushell, *op. cit.* 199, n. 56), strong internal evidence of style and piety — comparing the hymn with Calvin's recorded prayers — arguably strengthens Schaff's case for Calvin's authorship of the hymn.

71 Cited in *Book of Praise: Anglo-Genevan Psalter* (Committee for the Publication of the Anglo-Genevan Psalter, Hamilton, Ontario, 1971), p. v.

72 *Calvin's First Psalter (1539)*, ed. Sir Richard Terry (Ernest Benn Limited, London, 1932), p. viii.

73 *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (Banner of Truth, fac., London, 1964), 303-49.

74 *Notes ... on the New Testament: Ephesians-Colossians* (Partridge and Oakey, London, 1850), 132.

75 See ref. 71.

76 Cited in Jean Cadier, *The Man God Mastered*, tr. O. R. Johnson (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London, 1960), 98-100.

77 *An Exposition on the Epistle of Jude* (Banner of Truth, London, 1958), 273-4.

78 *Comm. Jude 12* (Calvin's Commentaries, eds. D. W. and T. F. Torrance, *A Harmony of the Gospels ... and the Epistles of James and Jude*, tr. A. W. Morrison (Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1972), 330-1.

79 *The Journal of the Reverend John Wesley, AM*, in *Works*, ed. Thomas Jackson (John Mason, London, 1840-2), i. 160-1.

80 John Calvin, *A Commentary on the Twelve Minor Prophets: Volume 2: Joel. Amos & Obadiah* (Banner of Truth, fac., Edinburgh, 1986), 183-4 and 104.