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THE LANGUAGE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: THE POSSIBLE IMPACT OF WITTGENSTEIN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE ON WHAT PASTORS SAY WHEN THEY ADMINISTER THE EUCHARIST

By

CORY KLOTH

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
FACULTY OF COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to review of historical formulation of eucharistic liturgy throughout the early church to modern American Presbyterian denominations, and to evaluate the possible impact that Wittgenstein's philosophy may have on future liturgical developments. While individuals may or may not have had an exposure to Wittgensteinian philosophy, this study sought to evaluate their current eucharistic liturgical praxis to see what historical paradigm most influence their current formulations. Then, after such evaluations were made, to ask whether the contemporary Presbyterian church could benefit from implementing part of Wittgenstein's philosophy in future eucharistic formulations. Finally, the researcher sought to explore ways such implementation could happen in current eucharistic liturgical praxis.

This study employed a qualitative design, using semi-structured interviews with six pastors in the Presbyterian Church in America denomination. The review of literature and analysis of individuals focused on four key areas: historical development of eucharistic liturgy from 100- to present age (focusing on Reformed liturgies after 1500 C.E.), historical development of Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy (particularly his early period), philosophical influence of ministers involved in the study, and contemporary Presbyterian doctrinal considerations.

This study concluded that Presbyterian eucharistic liturgical praxis continues to be influenced by centuries old doctrinal subscriptions with little to no influence from modern philosophical development. However, while doctrinal subscription remains the key component on church's liturgical praxis, there is a recognition and openness to vary practice based on Wittgenstein's mystical influence.

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Chapter One

Introduction

R.C. Sproul wrote concerning the renewed interest in the Lord's Supper: "The light of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is in eclipse. The shadows of postmodern relativism have covered the table. For the Lord's Supper to be restored to the spiritual life of the church, there must be an awakening to its meaning, significance, and power."[1] This awakening has caused many churches to rethink the purpose of the sacrament.

The Lord's Supper is important for the church because it is a model for God's gracious act of redemption toward his people. As John Mark Hicks writes in his book *Come to the Table: Revisioning the Lord's Supper*, "The table proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ. It proclaims his atoning work and his resurrection victory."[2] The breaking of the bread and the giving of the cup is designed to point the celebrant toward the forgiveness of sins proclaimed by Jesus Christ on the work of the cross. When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper, they remember the covenant that God made with his people. Hicks explains, "The spiritual reality of this covenant is actualized for us through our remembering. It moves from a past memory to a present experience of the reality of

[1] R.C. Sproul, "Foreward," in *Given For You: Reclaiming Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, by Keith Mathison (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), x.

[2] John Mark Hicks, *Come to the Table: Revisioning the Lord's Supper* (Orange, CA: Leafwood Publishers, 2002), 139.

God's grace."[3] The promises of scripture become a present reality for the participant when the elements are distributed.

This leads people to view communion as a "covenant renewal." This means that the symbol is seen as God making a pledge to his people while God's people make a pledge to him. Hicks notes that this is viewed as "...a moment of rededication and recommitment."[4] The Lord's Supper, when viewed as a covenantal meal, is seen as a completion to the worship service. In his book *The Lord's Service: The Grace of Covenant Renewal Worship*, Jeffrey J. Meyers elaborates, "Therefore, the culmination of the covenant renewal service occurs when we sit down and eat dinner with Jesus, receiving from Him by faith His own life-giving flesh and blood."[5]

The renewed interest in the sacrament of communion has resulted in a focus on presence of God at the table. While there are various views concerning the presence of Christ at the table, the commonality among them is the uniqueness of the presence. Leonard J. Vander Zee wrote in his book *Christ, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship*, "The Eucharist bears the presence of Christ in a unique way that cannot be compared with any other mode of his presence."[6] The table recalls the special presence of God with his people.

Communion also fosters fellowship among Christians. The act itself encourages the local church to be connected, not only within the local community, but to the church

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[3] Ibid., 140.

[4] Ibid., 141.

[5] Jeffrey J. Meyers, *The Lord's Service: The Grace of Covenant Renewal Worship* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2003), 214.

[6] Leonard J. Vander Zee, *Christ, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2004), 194.

around the world. As interest in the sacrament arises, so does the communal effect of participation. Peter Leithart, president of the Trinity House Institute, wrote, "With the current situation of the American church in mind, we can say that frequent eating and drinking at the Lord's table will inoculate the church against the Gnosticism of modern Christianity (not to mention trendy spiritualisms) that would reduce religion to a private, inner, purely "spiritual" experience…"[7] The purpose of communion breaks through the individual thinking that permeates much of American Christianity to draw people into unity with Christ and his body (the church). The Apostle Paul summarized, "The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."[8]

The renewed interest in the Lord's Supper has led churches to consider increasing the frequency of the sacrament. However, most of the literature[9] focuses on the scriptural, theological, and historical reasons why a congregation would desire to move to a more frequent participation, rather than on the practical implementation of such a change. While often overlooked, this is an essential part of increased participation. Without research on the implementation of such a change in the liturgy, there is a danger that the

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[7] Peter J. Leithart, *Blessed Are the Hungry: Meditations on the Lord's Supper* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2000), 185.

[8] 1 Corinthians 10:16-17.

[9] The following are examples of current works that promote the idea of weekly communion but not how to implement such a change: Thomas J. Davis, *This is My Body: The Presence of Christ in Reformation Thought* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008); Scott Hahn, *Consuming the Word: The New Testament and the Eucharist in the Early Church* (New York: Image, 2013); and Keith A. Mathison, *Given For You: Reclaiming Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002).

positive reasons listed above to persuade a congregation to make a change could never be fully realized.

Imagine a person at a Sunday morning worship gathering. After the worshipers are led through the elements of the liturgy, it is time for the administration of the Lord's Supper. The pastor goes to the front, positions himself behind the table, reads a passage from the scriptures applicable to the sacrament, and proceeds to give a lengthy explanation about the sacrament before distributing the elements. Many people can relate to such a scenario; in fact, many may experience it each week. The minister feels the need to add this lengthy explanation for several reasons. First, it may be because the minister views the sacrament as distinct from the rest of the worship service, thus needing to separate it by an elongated introduction. Second, the minister may not connect the earlier parts of the worship service in order to introduce and inform the congregation of the Lord's Supper; thus creating the need to add an extended explanation. Third, the minister's view of the sacrament itself may create the liturgical function of an additional homily before the supper, even though the sermon has already been preached. Whatever the cause may be, the question arises: are these reasons to continue such a practice if a congregation decides to go to a more frequent participation?

When a congregation makes the decision to move to a more frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper, there are several liturgical questions that need to be answered. First, there is the reason for making such a change (as discussed above). The congregation must examine the scriptural, historical, and theological reasons for the increased participation. If convinced, then the congregation must consider the logistical changes that need to be made in order to accommodate the change. Finally, the congregation must consider

making liturgical changes in order to handle the transitions and time constraints that come from such an addition to the worship service. If a church wants to incorporate a more frequent participation, the manner with which the Lord's Supper has normally been celebrated needs to be reexamined.

Ministers should also examine how they introduce the table to the congregation. Can the same methods be used as before when the sacrament was only administered quarterly or monthly? Should the ministers continue to use the same words, the same passages, and speak of it in the same way? Can the presuppositions listed in the earlier paragraph remain? Or does the supper need to be handled in a different way as a congregation moves to more frequent participation?

Ludwig Wittgenstein, the famous Cambridge philosopher, has been described as a "mystic" because of his teachings on the limits of language. He once stated, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."[10] This quotation has been applied to several different fields, especially those of aesthetics, ethics, and theology. Is it possible that his view on language, its power as well as its limits, could have practical implications for the frequent administration of the Lord's Supper?

While there are various views concerning the purpose and the efficacy of the Lord's Supper,[11] there can be little disagreement on the importance of the administration of the elements. Thomas J. Davis, professor of religious studies at IUPUI, wrote, "Indeed, what one finds is that eucharistic theology was not simply about church ritual, but rather,

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[10] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* trans. C.K. Ogden (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1999), 189.

[11] A good summation of the most common views can be found in Russell D. Moore, I. John Hesselink, David P. Scaer, and Thomas A. Baima, *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper,* general ed. John H. Armstrong, series ed. Paul E. Engle, Counterpoints (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007).

it was about who God is, how God operates, how humanity is saved, where God might be found, what the Christian's duty is to others, and so forth."[12] Is it possible that pastors could see an enhanced understanding of the Lord's Supper by varying how they introduce the table on a weekly basis?

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to discover how ministers introduce the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the research:

1. How do ministers change the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion?

2. What resources do ministers use to change the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion?

3. How do ministers perceive the impact on the congregation's understanding of the Lord's Supper after the change in the wording of the introduction?

4. In what ways and to what extent do the minister's changes in the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper correlate to Wittgenstein's philosophy of the limits of language to adequately describe the 'mystical?'

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for ministers and congregations that partake in the communion frequently, as well as for churches that are considering a change to a more frequent participation. It is the desire of the researcher to encourage creative ways to introduce the eucharist which deepen the spiritual impact of congregational participation. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will encourage ministers to reexamine

[12] Davis, *This is My Body,* 13-14.

the traditional use of common texts in lieu of new possibilities of introduction, both spoken and unspoken. It is also hoped that this research will encourage ministers to apply Wittgenstein's linguistic philosophy as a tool to strengthen congregational understanding of the link between symbol and speech as it pertains to the eucharist.

Definition of Terms

Congregation - Unless otherwise noted, a local assembly of Christians overseen by ordained leadership.

Linguistic Philosophy - The view that philosophical problems may be solved by reforming language or by understanding the language currently used.

Lord's Supper - The sacrament of communion presided over by the ordained leadership of the congregation. Synonyms include: Lord's table, communion, Eucharist.

Minister - Ordained or non-ordained congregational leader that has oversight of the sacramental practices of the church.

Mystical - Understood as Wittgenstein defined it: anything that lies outside his perceived boundaries of propositional language; those things which "...lie behind what can significantly be said."[13]

Reformed: A minister who holds to the soteriological, ecclesiastical, and sacramental beliefs as defined in the *Westminster Confession of Faith.*

Sacrament: A Christian rite where the Christ is believed to be uniquely present.

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[13] Donald Hudson, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: Makers of Contemporary Theology* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1968), 27.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to discover how ministers introduce the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion. In order to understand this study's importance for the minister who is considering making the change to a more frequent participation, the following areas of literature were considered: 1) works that explore the historical practice of the Lord's Supper, specifically liturgies that explain how the sacrament was introduced to past congregations, 2) works that explore the liturgical implications of changing to weekly communion in the present-day church, and 3) literature that highlights the connection between Wittgenstein's philosophy and Christian theology.

Literature on the Historical Practice of the Lord's Supper

Worship is considered by many to be the core purpose of the church. John Piper, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church for 33 years, states, "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man."[14] It is believed that the purpose of God's redemption of his people is worship. John Frame, professor of systematic theology and philosophy at Reformed Theological Seminary, writes,

> Redemption is the means; worship is the goal, worship is the whole point of everything. It is the purpose of history, the goal of the Christian story. Worship is

[14] John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 2010), 35.

> not one segment of the Christian life among others. Worship is the entire Christian life, seen as a priestly offering to God. And when we meet together as a church, our time of worship is not merely a preliminary to something else; rather, it is the whole point of our existence as the body of Christ.[15]

The worship of the church becomes a part of redemption. D.G. Hart, the visiting professor of history at Hillsdale College, teaches that the weekly worship gathering is "…a bold political act. It subverts the world's values by assigning glory and praise to the one whom the world despises."[16]

If worship is the primary purpose of the church, then timely reflection on worship is a blessing to the church. N.T. Wright, considered one of the top five Christian theologians by *Christianity Today,* comments,

> It is right, therefore, that from time to time the church should take stock of that which is most central, most important, most vital in our common life together. Though we sing with the tongues of men and of angels, if we are not truly worshipping the living God, we are noisy gongs and clanging cymbals.[17]

Daniel Benedict, retired director of Worship Resources, explains that it is important to reflect upon worship is because it is the church's primary purpose. He writes that worship "…is a collaborative engagement over time, in which the living God and the people of God 'listen' to each other and are shaped in love around each other."[18] This reflection underscores the importance of studying the liturgy of the church.

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[15] John Frame, *Worship in Spirit and Truth: A Refreshing Study of the Principles and Practice of Biblical Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1996), 11.

[16] D.G. Hart and John R. Muether, *With Reverence and Awe: Returning to the Basics of Reformed Worship* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 34.

[17] N.T. Wright, *For All God's Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1997), 8.

[18] Daniel T. Benedict Jr., *Patterned By Grace: How Liturgy Shapes Us* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2007), 13.

Liturgy, as Benedict defines it, "…derives from the synthesis of two words: *leitos*, from *leos=laos* (the people, the public), and *ergon* (to do, to work)."[19] According to Alexander Schmemann, former professor at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, the word was originally understood as "…an action by which a group of people become something corporately which they had not been as a mere collection of individuals-a whole greater than the sum of its parts."[20] Donald Saliers, former professor at Candler's School of Theology, applies this initial definition to the worship of the church: "Think first of the church gathered, as the ongoing prayer and word of Jesus Christ-and the ongoing self-giving of God in and through Christ's body in the world made alive by the Spirit. Christian liturgy is something prayed and something enacted…"[21] It is believed that every church, whether formal or informal, has a liturgy of its own. Benedict explains, "…the very act of gathering for worship on the Lord's Day is a highly significant liturgical act!"[22]

Liturgy is considered to have formative power in the Christian worship service. The belief that the design of the Sunday morning service guides how one views God comes from the fifth-century monk, Prosper Aquitaine.[23] His formula, *lex orandi est lex credendi* ("the rule of praying is the rule of belief") is a guide to understanding the

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[19] Ibid., 14.

[20] Aleksandr Shmeman, *For The Life of the World* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1963), 25.

[21] Donald Saliers, *Worship As Theology*: *Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 27.

[22] Benedict, 16.

[23] Simon Chan, *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 48.

formative power of the liturgy in the worship service. Simon Chan, professor of systematic theology at Trinity Theological College, writes, "It is, to be sure, faith that gives birth to, and 'shapes,' liturgy, but it is liturgy, that by fulfilling and expressing faith, 'bears testimony' to faith and becomes thus its true and adequate expression and norm: *lex orandi est lex credendi.*"[24] This formula is believed to form the Christian over time through the purposeful organization of the worship service. Jeffrey Meyers, a Presbyterian pastor for more than twenty years, exhorts, "Here is how it works. The way a community of faith worships will inexorably, though not always obviously and almost never immediately, affect the content of the worshipping community's confession of faith."[25]

Christopher Irvine, principal of Mirfield Theological College, wrote that the formative power of the liturgy "is explicit in the very language of our worship…"[26] The order of the scripture readings, prayers, and sacraments of worship is used to form the spiritual life of the people. Marlea Gilbert, a professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, notes the importance of congregational participation in liturgy. She writes, "Like Christians through the centuries, in worship we take part in the actions that form our identity as individuals and as Christians."[27] This formation by the liturgy is not

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[24] Aleksandr Shmeman, *Liturgy and Tradition: Theological Reflections of Alexander Schmemann*, ed. Thomas Fisch (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), 39.

[25] Meyers, 111.

[26] Christopher Irvine, *The Art of God: The Making of Christians and the Meaning of Worship* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2005), 66.

[27] Marlea Gilbert, Christopher Grundy, Eric T. Myers, and Stephanie Perdew, *The Work of the People: What We Do in Worship and Why* (Herndon, Virginia: The Alban Institute, 2007), 7.

something that happens instantaneously, but is believed to have a cumulative effect over time. It is the ritual aspect of the liturgy that has this cumulative effect.

Some fear that ritual has a negative impact on the richness of worship. Benedict writes, "Isn't that the downside of liturgy- that because of its repetitiveness and predictability, it can and often does become monotonous?"[28] However, there are others who believe that repetition does not make the elements of worship meaningless, but rather ingrains them into the lives of worshipping Christians. Jeffrey Meyers expands on this notion of the power of ritual in the Christian life:

> …it might be helpful to note that repetition is not inherently bad. I say, "I love you" to my wife over and over again without much variation. I kiss her every day and usually the same way. Our family sits down to eat, going through the same rituals every night. I introduce myself and extend my hand for a handshake the same way as everyone else. These activities are not meaningless simply because they are repeated without much variation. Just the opposite. The uniformity and continuity of these repeated rituals provide stability, security, and structure to our lives. This is what living is all about. We inevitably dispose our lives ritually. Ritual repetition is evidence of life![29]

Martha Moore-Keish, assistant professor of theology at Columbia Theological Seminary, summarizes the power of *lex orandi est lex credendi* in the ritual action of worship by stating, "Ritual itself does not merely enact prior belief; it also forms belief. What we do impacts the way we think, and not just the other way around."[30]

The Lord's table is considered in covenant renewal worship to be the climax of weekly gathering. John Mark Hicks notes,

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[28] Benedict, 104.

[29] Meyers, 176.

[30] Martha L. Moore-Keish, *Do This in Remembrance of Me: A Ritual Approach to Reformed Eucharistic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2008), 11.

> As God created the church to experience and delight in the communion of his people, so the table is at the center of his communion. The Lord's supper, the table, is a communion experience between God and his people…God invites the church to share his life at the table. Thus, at the center of the life and worship of the early church was the "breaking of bread." The sacrificial altar brings the communion of the sacrificial meal. The atoning blood ritual of the cross enables the experience of communion at the table.[31]

The table plays a central role in the Sunday morning liturgy because of the belief by many in what God does through the sacrament. It is considered to have its own liturgy inside the liturgy of the weekly worship service. Martha Moore-Keish explains that the liturgy of the eucharist contains "Inviting, thanking, remembering, sharing, praying: these five actions make up the basic movement of the communion service..."[32]

The liturgy of the table is doctrinally formative through the ritualized words and actions of the congregation. It is not only seen as the climax of weekly worship but has its own ritual aspect. The action of the eucharist is itself formative. Christopher Irvine writes, "…what Christ offers and gives humanity is effected through sacramental actions…the salvation proclaimed in the gospel is assimilated bodily, we might even say ingested, in both the receiving of the Word and the physical sacramental eating and drinking of Communion."[33] J.M.R. Tillard, a member of several ecumenical commissions, wrote that the final hope of a formative eucharistic liturgy is a church "transformed into the sacrifice it celebrates."[34]

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[31] John Mark Hicks, 19.

[32] Martha L. Moore-Keish, 133.

[33] Irvine, 96.

[34] J.M.R. Tillard, *Flesh of the Church, Flesh of Christ: At the Source of the Ecclesiology of Communion* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 84.

How does this happen? First, partaking of the communion elements represents an act of obedience by the faithful. Jesus Christ commanded his apostles, "Do this in remembrance of me."[35] This practice, know as *anamnesis*, is an act of faithful obedience by the Christian toward Jesus Christ. In Jewish tradition, the remembrance was done in prayer by the faithful requesting that God remember them. This historical act helps to explain *anamnesis* in context of the Lord's table. Paul Bradshaw, former professor of liturgical studies at the University of Notre Dame, notes, "The disciple's act of remembering Jesus in their eucharistic meals would inevitably have included calling upon God also to remember and to act."[36] This act of remembering trains the Christian to call upon God for a redemptive purpose, recognizing that he is needed in order for the believer to be delivered.

Next, communion is central to the ritual of the church because of the belief in the presence of Christ. There are some Christians who believe that the function of the table is strictly *anamnesis*. Robert Letham, professor of systematic theology at Wales Evangelical School of Theology, explains, "…exponents of this idea deny that there is anything more in the Lord's Supper than the action on the part of the recipients in focusing their minds on Christ and remembering what took place on the cross."[37] This belief is commonly held in many evangelical and fundamentalist denominations.

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[35] Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24-25.

[36] Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 45.

[37] Robert Letham, *The Lord's Supper: Eternal Word in Broken Bread* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2001), 25.

Many Christians believe in a special presence of Jesus Christ through the elements. There is the belief in the presence of Christ called transubstantiation. Letham explains that this belief is held by those Christians who see "…the body and blood of Christ as present in a physical manner."[38] In partaking of the elements of bread and wine, those who adhere to this believe they are eating the real flesh and blood of Christ. John H. Armstrong, former pastor and church planter, writes that those who partake believe that they "become partakers of the divine nature."[39] This happens because, as J. Neuner, a professor of theology for more than thirty years, writes, "…in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and therefore the whole Christ are truly, really, and substantially contained…"[40] This view, associated with Catholics and Anglo-Catholics, sees the eucharist as the core activity in the life of a Christian, the reason why Christians congregate on at least a weekly basis.

Another branch of Christianity believes in the presence of Christ apart from the elements. While Catholics believe in the transformation of the elements into the physicality of Christ, Martin Luther and the Lutheran church (who reject the notion that the elements themselves change) hold to a different view of the presence of Christ. Letham explains their view as "…Christ was physically present 'in, with, and under' the

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[38] Ibid., 19.

[39] John H. Armstrong, ed., *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Press, 2007), 122.

[40] J. Neuner and J. Dupuis, *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church,* 7th ed., ed. Jacques Dupuis (New York: Alba House, 2001), 621.

elements."[41] This view, commonly called consubstantiation, means that the body and blood of Jesus Christ coexist alongside the elements at the table. The coexistence of the body and blood, according to the Lutheran view, allows, as Armstrong teaches, "…Christ's body and blood lie side by side with the earthly elements without any essential communion between them."[42] Lutherans desire to uphold the communication of attributes from the divine nature of Christ to his humanity. When a believer comes to the table in a Lutheran service, they are believed to be physically present with Christ on earth.

The final view concerning the presence of Christ at the table is that of Reformed denominations. This view, first articulated by John Calvin, 16th century reformed pastor in Geneva, Switzerland, tries to find theological space between the other views of Christ at the table. Calvin writes concerning the mystery of the presence of Christ:

> Therefore, what our mind does not comprehend let faith conceive - viz. that the Spirit truly unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses his life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow, he testifies and seals in the Supper, and that not by presenting a vain or empty sign, but by there exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which he fulfills what he promises.[43]

This view, as Letham explains, "…joins the advocates of memorialism in rejecting a physical presence of Christ in the eucharist…" while "…claiming that Christ is indeed present in the Supper."[44] The Reformed view separates the particular attributes of

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[41] Letham, 24.

[42] John H. Armstrong, 87.

[43] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4th ed. (N.p.: Signalman Publishing, 2008), 25092, Kindle.

[44] Letham, 28.

Christ's divine nature from those of his human nature, while at the same time keeping the physical and spiritual elements of the table distinct but without separation. This allows the physical to be a venue to the divine. Letham calls it "a channel of grace."[45]

The importance of the table as part of the overall liturgy in a weekly service comes from the popular belief in the physical presence of Christ. James B. Torrance, former professor of systematic theology at the University of Aberdeen, believes that the sacrament of the eucharist reinforces "The Christ whom we remember is not an absent Christ. He is present in the power of the Spirit to bring the things we celebrate to our remembrance in an act of communion."[46]

It is believed that the table has a formative liturgy because it communicates a unity of the individual, not only to Jesus Christ (because of his presence), but also to the church. This unity is believed to be both universal (over time and space) and local (those who are immediately present). This is expressed in 1 Corinthians 10.16-17: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." John Zizioulas, visiting professor of theology at King's College, sees this verse as "The idea of incorporation of the 'many' into the 'one,' or of the 'one' as a representative of the 'many'…was from the beginning connected with the eucharistic consciousness of the Church."[47] The belief is

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[45] Ibid., 29.

[46] James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 87.

[47] John D. Zizioulas, *Being As Communion: Studies in the Personhood of Christ* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 1997), 147.

that the supper forms the church into a unified body, one that is distinct from the world yet unified because of the commonality of faith in a Christ who is present. This unity celebrates diversity, not seeing each other as different, but viewing one another, no matter what one's background, as being together. Zizioulas elaborates,

> To be sure the Christians themselves soon came to believe that they constituted a third race, but this was only to show that in fact it was a "non-racial race," a people who, while claiming to be the true Israel, declared at the same time that they did not care about the difference between a Greek and a Jew once these were members of the Christian Church.[48]

Letham believes that the symbolic picture of a single loaf, as described by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians, "…demonstrates that all the faithful share in the one body of Christ."[49] This engagement helps the individual to think about the corporate nature of the body. Martha Moore-Keish believes that through the table, the participant "…with a taste of faith and encounter the presence of Christ, they can be bound to each other and to God in new ways."[50]

Another way the Lord's table is believed to be formative is by emphasizing the way the community of believers takes on the suffering of Christ. Paul also teaches concerning the table in 1 Corinthians 10, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?" This is a reminder that the supper is based around the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on behalf of his people. Presented in this way, the eucharist forms the believing community to be part of the sacrifice, to see themselves as partakers in the self-giving. While Jesus gave his blood for the salvation of his people, the

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[48] Ibid., 151.

[49] Letham, 51.

[50] Moore-Keish, 146.

members of the church are now called to give their whole lives as a spiritual sacrifice to God and to one another. They are formed not as individuals living for themselves, but as people who now live in community. Vander Zee wrote, "When we receive the bread and cup of Christ's sacrifice, we are drawn into his sacrificial love for God and for the world."[51]

The Apostle Paul affirms the importance of seeing the wine at the table as an acknowledgement of this type of sacrificial living. According to William Cavanaugh, professor of Catholic Studies at DePaul, "Power is realized in self-sacrifice; Christians join in this sacrifice by uniting their own bodies to the sacrifice of Christ. Christians become a gift to be given away to others…"[52] The selfless giving of Christ's blood is to form the congregation through the liturgy to become selfless in the way that they live toward one another.

The neo-platonic view, which has impacted many people of faith, furthers the idea that the material of the world is evil (or at least non-useful) for any soteriological purpose. N.T. Wright comments, "Greek-speaking Christians influenced by Plato saw our cosmos as shabby and misshapen and full of lies, and the idea was not to make it right, but to escape it and leave behind our material bodies…"[53] However, as the bread and cup are presented to the believer, this symbolic action reinforces the goodness of creation and the usefulness of the material world. Leithart states, "The Eucharist is different from the

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[51] Vander Zee, 208.

[52] William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 279.

[53] David Van Biema, "Christians Wrong About Heaven, Says Bishop," Time.com, http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1710844,00.html (accessed June 3, 2014).

common meals of daily life, but it is also continuous with them. This suggests that the kingdom does not involve a cancellation of this-worldly concerns; it is not a another world but rather this world transformed and transfigured."[54]

The eucharist strengthens the congregation against the neo-platonic tendencies of current Christianity. The table uses the bread and the wine in a positive way for the congregation. This action communicates to the participants that the material world is a good and useful creation of God, intended to be used for the benefit of believers. James Jordan, founder of the Biblical Horizons ministries, wrote, "God evaluated His work. This is noted in the text where it says, 'God saw what He made and it was good'…Initial evaluation is preliminary to consumption or full enjoyment. Before eating there is tasting."[55]

How does God use the elements of bread and wine? It is believed that the table imparts God's grace to nourish the faithful participants. The Reformed tradition holds that the table brings about spiritual nourishment. Hughes Oliphant Old, professor of reformed theology at Erskine Theological Seminary, wrote, "Through the inner working of the Holy Spirit Christ abides in our hearts."[56] Old explains that this happens because "The Holy Spirit nourishes us by the resurrection of Christ so that we too live in newness of life."[57] Vander Zee agrees, stating that the communion that occurs in the partaking

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[54] Peter Leithart, *Blessed are the Hungry: Meditations on the Lord's Supper* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2000), 169.

[55] James Jordan, *Through New Eyes: Developing a Biblical View of the World* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1999), 120.

[56] Hughes Oliphant Old, *Worship: Reformed According to Scripture* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2002), 133.

[57] Ibid.

"describes the very essence of what takes place in that sacrament. Christ brings us into special communion with himself and with each other so that his life and saving power nourishes our bodies and souls."[58] This belief, when reinforced at the table using words and symbols, teaches the congregation through the liturgy that God uses these material things to provide a spiritual nourishment that is not available to them through any other source or avenue.

A eucharistic liturgy symbolically creates an eschatological mindset in the congregation. The common words of institution include the final phrase, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."[59] Leithart believes this frames the liturgy in an eschatological perspective, because when those words are spoken, the participant hears "…the completion of creation; protology implies a fulfilled eschatology."[60] Robert Webber, founder of the Institute for Worship Studies, believes that when the bread and wine are given, "…they reveal God's intent for the whole world. The offering and sacrifice of Christ is meant to manifest the church as God's new creation. Bread and wine manifest to the world its own ultimate destiny."[61] The table is celebrated with the eternal perspective that God is working his plan of redemption, which will be finalized with the return of Jesus Christ. Christ will not remain away forever; the final consummation of God and his people is the return of Jesus Christ.

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[58] Vander Zee, 199.

[59] 1 Corinthians 11:26.

[60] Leithart, 155.

[61] Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), 145.

Cavanaugh wrote, "At the Eucharist the feast of the last day irrupts into earthly time, and the future breaks into the present."[62]

The table's liturgy is formative because it uses symbols to communicate God's story. The action of the breaking of the bread, the giving of the cup, the partaking of the recipients together, and all the other actions that are included in the meal, use non-verbal communication to present God's redemptive story to his people. Calvin comments on the powerful use of the symbol in the sacrament,

> Sacraments, therefore, are exercises which confirm our faith in the word of God; and because we are carnal, they are exhibited under carnal objects, that thus they may train us in accommodation to our sluggish capacity, just as nurses lead children by the hand. And hence Augustine calls a sacrament a visible word, because it represents the promises of God as in a picture, and places them in our view in a graphic bodily form.[63]

Symbol can communicate complex ideas. Vander Zee writes, "Symbols do not merely point from one thing to another, they join two things."[64] John Burkhart, former professor of theology at McCormick Theological Seminary, states that the word is used to describe the sacraments because "the symbol participates in the reality of that for which it stands."[65]

Chan believes that for the early church, "there was no separation between the spiritual reality and the sign."[66] However, during the Reformation there was a movement

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[62] Cavanaugh, 224.

[63] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 23581, Kindle.

[64] Vander Zee, 31.

[65] John E. Burkhart, "The Meaning and Mystery of the Sacraments," *Reformed Liturgy and Music* 29, no. 1 (1995): 7.

[66] Chan, 121.

against visual art. The reformers removed large amounts of art from worship centers because they believed art to be a source of idolatry. The Puritans took this even further, believing that worship should be free from all material, and they made their devotion to God mostly a cerebral exercise, devoid of symbol. R.J. Gore, professor of systematic theology at Erskine Theological Seminary, teaches, "For the Puritan, appeal to the senses or emotions through ceremony and rite was but an appeal to man's carnal nature."[67] This meant that their worship activity was viewed as a more cerebral event. Gregory Dix, noted liturgical scholar, called it "a purely mental activity."[68] While they made contributions to eucharistic liturgy,[69] the Lord's Supper was celebrated so infrequently that it become less about symbol and more about individual piety.

The Reformers believed that while teaching was always present with the table, it should never become simply about more words. If the sacraments are the visible words of God, Calvin in particular, "…wanted to guard against dissolving the sacraments into words. God gave us the sacraments because our minds are not able to grasp the fullness of God's redemptive work."[70] The symbols of bread and wine communicate to God's people his story of redemption and love for them in a far greater way than using simply words.

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[67] R.J. Gore, *Covenantal Worship: Reconsidering the Puritan Regulative Principle* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2002), 93.

[68] Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1986), 312.

[69] Old, 137.

[70] Ibid., 131.

Finally, the table is seen as the climax of weekly worship because of its mystery. Calvin called it, "the sacred mystery of the Supper," noting that "what the Latins call sacramenta, the Greeks call μυστη;ρια (mysteries)."[71] Mystery, used in this context, means unexplainable, and Saliers believes this applies to communion, writing "a sense of wonderment and awe at the mystery of God's becoming flesh…"[72] Mystery denotes, in the context of this sacrament, an unexplained manner in which God uses the symbols of the bread and the wine to accomplish what he has foreordained. The shaping of the people by the eucharist makes it possible to combat the presuppositions of this anti-supernatural age. Webber notes,

> In order to contemplate Christ at bread and wine, many will have to go through a paradigm shift because we are so deeply formed by Enlightenment rationalism that we only see common bread and win. We live with such a truncated and desupernaturalized faith that we want a reason to believe that Jesus is disclosed at bread and wine. In this demand we do what I have been decrying from the start of this book. We bring our Enlightenment worldview to God's story and demand that God's story be accountable to reason and science.[73]

The table deconstructs the world's story framed in those scientific paradigms and offers the people a glimpse to the supernatural. As the community is taught to believe in the mystery, the result could be an increased acknowledgement of the supernatural in one's life. Peter Berger, professor emeritus of religion at Boston University, explains that this is important because it brings "a regaining of openness in our perception of reality. It will not be, as theologians influenced by existentialism have greatly overemphasized, an

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[71] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 28292, Kindle.

[72] Saliers, 191.

[73] Webber, 146.

overcoming of tragedy. Perhaps more importantly it will be an overcoming of triviality."[74]

As one can see, the eucharist is formative in many different areas. Whether it be changing one's view of God, the church, or the individual, the plethora of aspects of communion give credence to the specialized study of its liturgy. However, while the eucharist is seen as formative, the liturgy that presents the bread and the cup to the congregant has been formed over centuries of church practice.

Eucharistic Liturgies Throughout Ecclesiastical History

Before one begins to study the history of church liturgy, there must be an acknowledgement that the earliest sources available may not present the overarching practice or liturgy of the early church. The fact that a document has survived does not automatically mean it accurately represents the universal practices of the church. Bradshaw reminds the scholar not to make generalizations of early source material, "Yet, while we cannot hope to learn everything we would like to know about the Church's early worship, it is not impossible to say, even if only in a provisional way, a certain amount about how that worship began and developed in the first few centuries of the Christian tradition."[75] The following section should not be considered an exhaustive representation of the eucharistic liturgies through the history of the early church, but rather a sampling that reflects major developments, with a particular focus on Presbyterian liturgies developed after the Reformation.

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[74] Peter L. Berger, *A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1969), 95.

[75] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 20.

Eucharistic Liturgy in Scripture

Communion has played a central part in the formation of church liturgies since the first century. Several works have examined the liturgical history of the church, especially in relation to the manner with which the Lord's Supper was administered among the congregations. Oscar Cullmann, former professor of New Testament at the University of Basel, believes that the first Christian liturgy is found in Acts 2:42-46. Cullmann writes, "In the Book of Acts instruction, preaching, prayer, and breaking of bread are mentioned, and mentioned in such a way as clearly to show that these elements were, from the beginning, the foundation of all the worship of the Christian community."[76] This suggests that the "breaking of the bread" was a regular part of the first Christian gatherings.

The first eucharistic liturgies are found in the synoptic gospels, as well as in 1 Corinthians.[77] These writings built the foundation for the development of ecclesiastical eucharistic liturgies. Yet, while the gospel accounts of the meal contain multiple similarities, there are, as Bradshaw wrote, "significant differences between the various narratives," leading scholars divided as to whether any "has best preserved the historical details."[78] While the researcher recognizes that questions remain concerning the authenticity and purity of the narrative accounts in the gospel, for the purpose of this

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[76] Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship* (Philadelphia: Wyndham Hall Press, 1976), 12.

[77] Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

[78] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 62.

study they were treated as authoritative and original,[79] with the text in 1 Corinthians as the representative eucharistic liturgy for the first Christian communities.

The Apostle Paul gives some context for the passage that has come be known as the "Words of Institution" when he writes, "For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized."[80] Old comments that the original Greek may be translated "when you come together to be the church."[81] This implies, according to Old, "that it is in the meeting together for the purpose of sharing the meal that these individuals become the church, the body of Christ. This Supper constitutes the church."[82] The meal created the identity of the community.

Paul continues by reciting an oral tradition, "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you,"[83] much like a formula used by a rabbi. This section of the epistle is noteworthy because, as Scott Hahn, professor at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, wrote, "Though Paul was Jesus's most prolific interpreter, he rarely quoted the Master. Yet here he carefully narrated the scene and reported Jesus's words at length. It is by far the longest quotation of Jesus's teaching found in the Pauline corpus."[84]

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[79] Current literature on this issue includes John Meier, "The Eucharist at the Last Supper: Did it Happen?" *Theology Digest* 42 (1995): 335-51; and John Koenig, *The Feast of the World's Redemption: Eucharistic Origins and Christian Mission* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000).

[80] 1 Corinthians 11:18-19.

[81] Old, 114-115.

[82] Ibid., 115.

[83] 1 Corithians 11:23.

[84] Hahn, 43.

Does this mean that the words given by Paul, as authoritative as they claim to be (received from Christ himself), were always recited at the Lord's Supper in those early gatherings, much like, as Old believed "the Passover haggadah was recited in the Jewish Seder?"[85] Old concludes, "It would seem to have been, yet, it is not completely clear that it was."[86] Bradshaw agrees, stating boldly that even though this passage is now commonly used at most Protestant table celebrations, "There is no firm evidence at all for the liturgical use of an institution narrative until the fourth century and then it has the marks of innovation rather than a well-established custom."[87]

Next, Paul gave the order the first action of the supper: "and when he had given thanks…" This phrase is the basis for why the meal has come to be known as "the eucharist." The Greek that Paul uses here is εὐχαριστήσας meaning "thankfulness."[88] The table is given the term "eucharist," according to Chan, "because it is a thanksgiving for what God has done for us in Christ"[89] and is believed to be symbolically rendered as some type of prayer to God. While there is no record of the words that Jesus used to give thanks, the historical expression of this prayer by the church will be examined in the later part of this section.

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[85] Old, 115.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 62.

[88] Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Associated Publishers, 1900), 264. See Luke 22:17, 19; 1 Corinthians 11:24; Mark 14:23; and Matthew 26:27.

[89] Chan, 76.

Paul's narrative continues, "…he broke it [the bread], and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"[90] The discussion of this passage turns to the presence of Christ. This was covered briefly above. There are two other possible reasons why Christ took the bread first, which has become the standard order in eucharistic practice. First, to emphasize the sacrificial aspect of meal, and second, to encourage the communal participation of the congregation.

The breaking of the bread communicates the sacrifice of Christ. As Calvin notes, "For the Lord does not present his body to us simply, and without any additional consideration, but as having been sacrificed for us" because the body of Christ "having been subjected, first of all, to so many tortures and inflictions, and afterwards to the punishment of death in the most cruel form, cannot be said to have been uninjured."[91] Peter Leithart examined the precedent established in historical theology for understanding the eucharist as a sacrifice. He believes that the Lord's Supper can be viewed as a sacrificial meal in three ways. First, it can be viewed as a sacrificial meal because this sacrament was instituted to proclaim the Lord's death until he returned. Hence, the eucharist may be called a sacrifice, since it represents the sacrifice of the Lord's death, according to the principle that signs and representations ordinarily take the name of that which they signify. Second, it may be said that in the eucharist, believers offer Jesus Christ to God, insofar as they ask God to receive on their behalf the sacrifice of Christ's death. Third, the eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the divine benefits and

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[90] 1 Corinthians 11:24.

[91] John Calvin, *Commentary on the Corinthians,* Vol. I (N.p.: Amazon Digital Services, 2010), 6323, Kindle.

especially for the benefit of believers' redemption through Jesus Christ.[92] It is, as Meyers wrote, "in this sense that the Lord's Supper may be properly understood as a sacrifice"[93] and emphasized by the visible action of the breaking of the bread.

After the partaking of the bread, Paul informs his audience, "In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"[94] Calvin writes, "The Apostle seems to intimate, that there was some period of time between the distribution of the bread and that of the cup, and it does not appear from the Evangelists whether the whole of the transaction was continuous."[95] Because of the ambiguity, the church has employed a variety of practices concerning the time between the distribution of the bread and distribution of the cup.

As the bread was first to communicate the sacrificial aspect of the meal and the congregation's unity in Christ, the cup was given to symbolize his blood, so that when one drinks of it, as Calvin believed, "…we drink of it in a spiritual sense, that we may be partakers of reconciliation."[96] The cup, filled with wine, denotes the celebratory aspect of the meal, as "the wine to gladden the heart of man."[97] The communion meal is a celebration of the Christian's return from spiritual exile, a commemoration of Christ's

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[92] Leithart, 181.

[93] Meyers, 220.

[94] 1 Corinthians 11:25.

[95] Calvin, *Commentary on the Corinthians*, 6334, Kindle.

[96] Ibid.

[97] Psalm 104:15.

victory over death. The cup is believed to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 25:6, "a feast of well-aged wine." With this perspective, when the wine is consumed with the bread, the body is the covenant and the blood is the confirmatory pledge.

The meal can be seen in a seven-fold pattern, much like Jewish formal meals of the first century. These seven steps are summarized by Daniel Benedict,

> At the beginning of the meal, the head of household:
>
> 1. Took bread
> 2. Offered a short blessing
> 3. Broke the bread
> 4. Shared it with all present
> 5. After the meal took a cup of wine
> 6. Said a longer blessing over it
> 7. Shared it with the table[98]

While there is no evidence that Paul had these meals in mind when he set the pattern, the similarity between the liturgies is astonishing.[99]

1 Corinthians 11.23-26 is considered to be the first eucharistic liturgy of the church. While there is historical ambiguity as to how closely this narrative was followed by the early church, it has become the standard template across all Christian denominations for the order in which the elements are presented, as well as the foundation for the words that are spoken at the table.

Early Church Eucharistic Liturgies

Outside the aforementioned scriptures, the main source of available information concerning the worship of the early church is found in the Book of Acts. However, trying

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[98] Benedict, 111.

[99] See Dennis Edwin Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist: The Banquet in the Early Christian World* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 133ff.

to locate a common liturgical practice within the book can be difficult. Bradshaw wrote, "While some scholars have been inclined to deny that the New Testament supplies much evidence at all for what the early Christians were doing in their regular worship, others have sometimes displayed….a tendency to see signs of liturgy everywhere."[100] While the challenge is presented not to universalize liturgical praxis in the Book of Acts, there are some eucharistic elements that appear to be common to various gatherings of Christians. Darrell Brock, professor of New Testament studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, writes, believes that Acts 2:42 is a template for the basic elements of Christian worship. He wrote that the phrase "devoted themselves" (Greek: Ἦσαν δὲ προσκαρτεροῦντες) invokes "the idea of persistence or persevering in something."[101] The phrase used by Luke denotes that the four items, separated by the article, were constantly practiced by the early church.

The question is, does the phrase "breaking of bread" (Greek: "κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου" and its variance)[102] refer to the communion meal as described in 1 Corinthians, or simply to a common meal? Howard Marshall, professor emeritus of New Testament at the University of Aberdeen, states that in Acts 2:42, the "breaking of bread" is "Luke's term for what Paul calls the Lord's Supper. It refers to the act with which a Jewish meal opened, and which had gained peculiar significance for Christian's view of Jesus' action

[100] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 84.

[101] Darrell Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 4064, Kindle.

[102] Luke 24:35; Acts 2:46, 20:6-11.

at the Last Supper…"[103] Marshall states this in light of the fact that Paul uses the same phraseology in Luke 24:30-31, where Jesus breaks the bread and then a specific revelation happens among the men at the table with him. F.F. Bruce, former professor of biblical criticism at the University of Manchester, agrees with Marshall, stating, "The 'breaking of bread' probably denotes more than the regular food together: the regular observance of what came to be called the Supper seems to be in view."[104] When taken in the context of the books written by Luke, Theophilus, the addressee of Luke, would have known of the phrase because of its occurrence in Luke 24:35. Ben Worthington, professor of New Testament for doctoral studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, gives credence to Luke, pointing out that using such a phrase "is a primitive way of alluding to the Lord's Supper…"[105]

Darrell Bock has a different viewpoint. He believes that "the reference seems to be used broadly in meals, suggesting a broad use here as well…" but concedes, "although 20:7 appears to refer to the table on the first day of the week."[106] Bradshaw takes the strong position that "It must be remembered that we possess no evidence at all for such a practice: it is simply inferred from the narratives."[107]

There can be some generalization concerning the eucharistic liturgy of the New

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[103] I. Howard Marshall, *Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1980), 83.

[104] F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 73.

[105] Ben Worthington, *Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 161.

[106] Bock, 4097, Kindle.

[107] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 70.

Testament. First, the general picture from these intimate gatherings was, as Ronald Byars, professor emeritus of preaching and worship at Union Presbyterian Seminary, writes, that "meal keeping became an identifying feature of early Christian communal life…"[108] The meal was a part of the community gatherings. Second, while there is no direct evidence that these communion meals (breaking of bread) equate to the Last Supper narrative, there are indirect interpretive contextual grids that allow the reader to make that assumption. Third, the only liturgical action directly referenced in these statements is "the breaking of bread." One knows that it accompanied the apostles' teaching, prayer, and fellowship,[109] but as to the content of all those items, one is left to guess. Thus, while the "breaking of bread" may have Last Supper connotations, there is no liturgical pattern from which the researcher can glean liturgical phraseology.

Ecclesiastical Liturgical Praxis: 100-1500 C.E.

The scriptures leave one uncertain as to the words spoken at the community meals immediately following the time of Christ. However, evidence of eucharistic phraseology emerges after the first century. The Didache (or "Teaching of the Twelve") may be the earliest extra-biblical evidence of a eucharistic liturgy.[110] Sections nine and ten entail its guidance concerning the eucharist. First, it gives direction regarding the process of giving thanks for the cup, "We thank thee, our Father, for the holy vine, David thy Son, which thou hast made known unto us through Jesus Christ thy Son; to thee be the glory for

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[108] Ronald Byars, *Come and See: Presbyterian Congregations Celebrating Weekly Communion* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2004), 443, Kindle.

[109] Acts 2:42.

[110] For difficulties on determining the true date, see Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 77-78.

ever."[111] Second, it gives direction concerning the thanksgiving over the bread. This prayer is extensive compared to the blessing of the cup:

> We thank thee, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou hast made known unto us through Jesus thy Son; to thee be the glory for ever. As this broken bread was once scattered on the mountains, and after it had been brought together became one, so may thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth unto thy kingdom; for thine is the glory, and the power, through Jesus Christ, for ever. And let none eat or drink of your Eucharist but such as have been baptized into the name of the Lord, for of a truth the Lord hath said concerning this, Give not that which is holy unto dogs.[112]

The prayers of the eucharist focus on thanksgiving, exaltation of Jesus Christ, the unity of the people, and a warning regarding those who should not partake.

After the specific prayers for the cup and bread, the Didache concludes the eucharistic liturgy with a third prayer, apparently offered before the distribution of the elements. This prayer, which is longer than the previous two, focuses on spiritual aspects of the bread and the cup, stating, "…that we might give thanks unto thee, but to us thou hast given spiritual meat and drink, and life everlasting…"[113] The prayer concludes with a reference to the world passing away and a call to repentance for those who do not believe, along with a salutary "amen" and an imperative for "the prophets to give thanks, so far as they are willing to do so."[114]

A little later in the document, the Didache directs that the breaking of bread (Greek: κλάσατε ἄρτον καὶ εὐχαριστήσατε) should include a confession of sin so "that

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[111] *Didache*, trans.Charles H. Hoole (N.p.: Acheron Press, 2012), 95, Kindle.

[112] Ibid., 100, Kindle.

[113] Ibid., 103, Kindle.

[114] Ibid., 107, Kindle.

your sacrifices may be pure."[115] Keith Pecklers, a professor of liturgy at the Pontifical Gregorian University, views this section as key, because he understands the meal to be "preceded by a confession of sins and reconciliation so that the sacrifice (referring to Malachi 1.11-14) may be offered with pure hearts."[116]

Thus, the Didache provides the eucharistic liturgy order: a prayer of thanks for the cup, a prayer of thanks for the bread, an extended prayer of information, prayers by the prophets, and finally the distribution of the elements. But what does this order, or the content of the prayers recorded, reveal about the early understanding of the eucharist meal? First, this meal was considered "holy." Huub van de Sandt, lecturer in New Testament Studies in Tilburg, Netherlands, states, "The use of 'what is holy' (τὸ ἅγιον) in Did 9:5 suggests a channeling of temple sanctity to the community meal in the Didache."[117] Second, the words used to describe the eucharist liturgy reveal that the Didache community spoke of it in sacrificial terminology. Huub comments that the Didache section 14.3 "does not teach that the Eucharist is a sacrifice, but simply takes this argument for granted to make clear that the fellow Christians in conflict must be excluded from celebration of the Eucharist until they reconcile."[118] So the feast was not explicitly discussed in sacrificial terms, but the imperatives surrounding the meal treated it with the same context as other first century religious feasts. Finally, the Didache does not mention a specific frequency for the communion meal, but it does state that

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[115] Ibid., 131, Kindle.

[116] Keith Pecklers, *Worship: A Primer in Christian Ritual* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 37.

[117] Hubb Van de Sandt, "Why does the Didache Conceive of the Eucharist as a Holy Meal?" *Vigilae Christianae* 65 (2011): 20.

[118] Ibid., 19.

communion should be celebrated "on the Lord's Day" and that the community should gather "together frequently."[119]

Another early liturgy that provides insight is from Justin Martyr, a 2nd century Christian author who, as Bradshaw wrote, "provides the earliest substantial description that we have of Christian Worship."[120] Justin gives a brief explanation of an early Christian worship service, "There then is brought to the president of the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water; and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His Hands."[121] This statement implies that this was a frequent occurrence, if not a weekly, event.[122]

Through this account, one can surmise that the words and actions immediately surrounding the bread and the wine occurred in the following manner (after the exhortation of the teachings of the Apostles): people stand, prayer(s) are given, personal greeting by a kiss,[123] bread and wine are given, prayer(s) given by the "president" (leader), people assent with an "Amen," elements are distributed and consumed, elements are set aside for those absent. While Justin doesn't record any reading of the Lord's

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[119] *Didache*, 139, Kindle.

[120] Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship,* 98.

[121] Justin Martyr, *The Apologies of Justin Martyr,* trans. Rev. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (N.p.: Suzeteo Enterprises, 2012), 1160, Kindle.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid., 1125. These activities are not listed in LXVII where most of the liturgy is provided but in the previous chapter titled "The Administration of the Sacraments."

Supper narrative provided in the gospels and in 1 Corinthians, he is aware of the account, as indicated in his writings.[124] Bradshaw believes that the words spoken were those of the communion narrative, "In view of Justin's comment in Chapter 66, we may assume that it included the recital of Christ's Institution of the Eucharist according to the Gospels."[125] If this is the case, this would the earliest recorded account of what the church now calls "The Words of Institution."

Not only does Justin provide one of the earliest accounts of eucharistic liturgy, but he also records the way that believers spoke about worship, specifically, the metaphorical way in which the communion meal was discussed in the midst of the community. The words that Justin uses are closely associated with offering and sacrifice. For example, Gordon Lathrop, professor of liturgy emeritus at Lutheran Theological Seminary, examines Justin's use of the verb "prospherein," which means "to bring near in ritual," in the communion description as a demonstration of his use of metaphorical language. He notes, "It is as if Justin says, 'Instead of killing and burning for the gods, we give thanks over all that we set out before ourselves, offer to ourselves, to eat. The tradition of the Christians is to offer food not to the gods but to the poor and, with thanksgiving, to themselves. This is our ritual of sacrifice.'"[126]

Justin sees the offering of the bread as the new sacrifice. He also uses the same metaphorical wording for the prayers of the people. Justin's use of the Greek word "pompas" for prayers of thanksgiving and supplication at the table as another action of

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[124] Ibid., 1143.

[125] Bard Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), 5-6.
[126] Gordon W. Lathrop, "Justin, Eucharist, and Sacrifice: A Case of Metaphor," *Worship* 64 (January 1990): 38.

sacrifice. Lathrop writes, "Thanksgiving is, after all, what Christians do instead of sacrifice."[127] Everett Ferguson, distinguished scholar in residence at Abilene Christian University, comes to the same conclusion. He explains, "Throughout his writings, Justin makes much of thanksgiving. This was the Christian sacrifice. Unlike the bloody offerings of paganism, Christians offered to God the pure spiritual sacrifice of prayer and thanksgivings."[128] While Justin frames the meal in sacrificial terms, Christians now do not sacrifice, but instead, are to see the bread and the prayers as the offering.

In summary, Justin's eucharistic liturgy unveils the historical practice of the administration of the elements. Thompson displays a four-fold account of Justin's perception of the meal in light of the evidence given:

> (1) It was an anamnesis, a re-calling of Christ's passion, indeed of the whole Incarnation; the bread and wine were eaten in remembrance that Christ, "being incarnate by God's Word, took flesh and blood for our salvation" and suffered on our behalf. (2) It was a "sacrifice" unto God, fulfilling Malachi's prophecy of the pure offering of the Gentiles…(3) It was a Communion-fellowship that united all the baptized, even those who were absent, through the common participation in the "flesh and blood of that incarnate Jesus." (4) It was a "thanksgiving" for creation and providence, and most especially for the Incarnation and Passion of Jesus Christ.[129]

The next examination is found in the liturgy of Hippolytus (ca. 217), who was a prominent theologian in Rome during the doctrinal controversies of Montanism and Monarchianism. This is important because his work, *Apostolic Tradition,* is viewed as a reactionary account to these heresies and serves as a perseverance of already accepted ritual in the church, as well as a public record of his personal refutation of such heresies.

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[127] Ibid., 41.

[128] Everett Ferguson, "How We Christians Worship," *Christian Worship* 12, no. 1 (1993): 10.

[129] Bard Thompson, 7.

Bradshaw comments, "At any event there appears to be little doubt that Hippolytus wrote the tractate as an avowed reactionary, still within the Roman community, and that we have in this text a record of rites and customs that were already a part of the tradition."[130] This gives credence to the possibility that the liturgy outlined here may have been more commonly used than those recorded in The Didache or in the writings of Justin Martyr. It should be noted that there is disagreement as to the authorship of Hippolytus. Alistair Stewart-Sykes, assistant professor of liturgics at the General Theological Seminary in New York, writes concerning the question of authorship, "The traditional attribution is now subject to widespread doubt, and the evidence supplied by Apostolic Tradition for the liturgy and practice of the Roman church is therefore viewed with suspicion."[131] While there is a debate as to the authorship, most scholars generally agree that most of the text comes from a point between the third century and the sixth century.

The liturgy from Hippolytus is unique because it is the earliest account of what the church has come to call the Sursum Corda (Latin: "Lift up your hearts"). Hippolytus records it in the following words, "The Lord be with you. And the people shall say: And with thy spirit. Lift up your hearts. We have them with the Lord. Let us give thanks unto the Lord. It is meet and right."[132] This new addition to the eucharist affirms the presence of God, the unity of God, and an expressed thankfulness to God. Hippolytus records this early account of the Sursum Corda for the Roman Church, but it also becomes a staple in the Eastern eucharistic liturgies (as will be seen below).

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[130] Ibid., 16.

[131] Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, ed. Alistair Stewart-Sykes (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 2001), 64, Kindle.

[132] Ibid., 1418, Kindle.

Hippolytus discusses the Sursum Corda as only a part of the eucharistic service. The following liturgy is given: Sursum Corda, prayer of thanks for Jesus Christ (virgin birth narrative), prayer and thanks for Jesus Christ (death and resurrection), upper room narrative (in prayer form), anamnesis, prayer of offering the bread and cup, prayer for the gifting of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis), and trinitarian benediction. This eucharistic liturgy, according to Bradshaw, "cannot fail to find traces of Hippolytus' Christology."[133] This Christology included, for the first recorded time, the specific use of the Words of Institution at the eucharist meal. Thompson elaborates, "The rehearsal of Christ's passion led ingeniously into the simple narrative of the Institution."[134]

The record indicates that the words used included a prayer of thanksgiving (for the incarnation and redemption), a rehearsal of Christ's passion, and then the command "When ye do this, ye do my anamnesis…" followed by an invocation of the Holy Spirit.[135] The use of the word "anamnesis" is significant because of the connotations that it carries. When "anamnesis" is used, much like when it first appeared in Justin Martyr's writings, it does not simply mean "remember." Gregory Dix, a liturgical scholar who worked on reforming Anglican liturgy in the mid-20th century, wrote that anamnesis is not simply a historical event that is referenced, but "it becomes here operative by its."[136] He meant that when one take communion, they become a part of living history, not simply remembering history.

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[133] Bard Thompson, 17.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Dix, 161.

After the anamnesis, there was a recorded account of what many consider to be an epiclesis, or invocation of the Holy Spirit. It is considered elementary in form compared to the later Greek rite, because, as Thompson notes, "it did not make reference to the conversion of the elements…"[137] but simply asked for the Spirit to work in the hearts of the communicants.

There are several possible resources that could be referenced in relation to eucharistic practice from the 400's to the pre-Reformation era. One example would be Cyril of Jerusalem, a 4th century theologian who was later declared a Doctor of the Church by the Roman Catholic Church, who advises in reference to the mystery of the sacraments, "When thou shalt have heard what is written concerning the mysteries, then wilt thou understand things which thou knewest not."[138] Cyril left a written liturgy at the end of his "Catechetical Lectures" that described a worship service. Pecklers comments on the worship activity, "Catechumens joined the rest of the liturgical assembly for the Word Service within the Sunday Eucharist but would be dismissed before the Kiss of Peace which bridged the Liturgies of the Word and the Eucharist…"[139] The liturgy of the eucharist looked like this: greeting by a holy kiss, Sursum Corda, doctrinal hymns of creation, epiclesis, prayers for the sick and for the world, the Lord's Prayer, administration of the body and blood by differing postures, and the benediction.[140]

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[137] Bard Thompson, 18.

[138] Cyril of Jerusalem, "Procatechesis," Loyola University, http://evergreen.loyola.edu/fbauerschmidt/www/Th249/cyril_protocatechesis.html (accessed June 11, 2014).

[139] Pecklers, 50-51.

[140] Cyril of Jerusalem, "Catechetical Lecture 23," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* trans. Edwin Hamilton Gifford, ed. Phillip Schaff and Henry Wace, Second Series (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature

One can see the similarities between the liturgies of Hippolytus and Cyril; both contain the Sursum Corda and an epiclesis. However, there are some differences between the two. First, Cyril situates the epiclesis before the administration of the sacraments, placing the focus on the Holy Spirit's work on the elements rather than on the people. Second, there is a question as to whether Cyril's liturgy contained the Words of Institution. He mentioned it in the previous address before his liturgy, so Cyril was aware, but it wasn't explicitly included in the eucharistic prayer in the liturgy above.

Most of the previous examples of eucharistic liturgies have come from the western church. However, helpful examples from the same time period are found in the examination of sixth-century eastern church worship. Their handling of what is called "holy mysteries" shows that there is an understanding of non-understanding in the ways of God's salvation. Walter Ray, associate professor at Southern Illinois University and the author of several articles on liturgy, states that when these "holy mysteries" (referring to the bread and wine) were processed forward, "the beginning and prelude of the new teaching which will take place in the heavens concerning the plan of God for us and the revelation of the mystery of our understanding" was about to occur in the liturgy.[141] "It is impossible," Walter notes, "to describe with complete certainty what worship at the time would have been like, since all liturgical manuscripts date from a later period."[142] However, it is possible to formulate a conservative reconstruction using material close to

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Publishing Co., 1894), revised and edited by Kevin Knight for New Advent.org, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/310123.htm (accessed June 11, 2014).

[141] Walter D. Ray, *Tasting Heaven on Earth: Worship in Sixth-Century Constantinople* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 57.

[142] Ibid., 83.

the same period. The liturgy, while not exactly known, did contain one of two eucharistic prayers (called anaphora) that are preserved.

Two main eucharistic prayers dominated the Constantinople Church during this time period. Walter Ray describes the usage of these two eucharistic prayers:

> …the Eucharistic prayer ascribed to St. Basil the Great (4th c., Cappadocia) is the main text used. On some occasions, it is the Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom (4th c., from Antioch; archbishop of Constantinople, 398-407) that is used. At a later date, the Chrysostom Anaphora will become the predominant prayer said.[143]

R.C.D. Jasper, former lecturer on liturgy at Kings College, provides the order of the eucharistic prayer by Basil:

1. The kiss of peace
2. Creedal confession
3. Sursum Corda
4. Holy Anaphora (Prayer of Thanksgiving)
5. The Sanctus
6. Private prayer by the priest (including a narrative of the life of Christ)
7. Words of Institution (followed by an 'Amen' response by the congregation after each element)
8. Anamnesis
9. Short hymn response by the congregation
10. Epiclesis
11. Simultaneous prayer by the priest while deacons read the diptychs (list of those both living and dead who have been a part of the community)
12. Deacons present the bread and cup
13. Congregation responds
14. Priest calls on God to remember the needs of the congreation
15. Priest labels the elements as "Holy gifts"
16. Lord's Prayer said together
17. People respond giving glory to God
18. Distribution of the elements
19. Responsive dismissal between deacon and congregation
20. Priest ends liturgy with a prayer of thanks[144]

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[143] Ibid., 90.

[144] R.C.D. Jasper and G.J. Cuming, *Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed*, 3rd ed. (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 116-123.

By the ninth century, there was clear instruction in the liturgy regarding what prayers should be read aloud and which ones are to be said privately by the priest. However, Ray notes, "In the sixth century there was a disagreement about whether this prayer should be said aloud enough so that the people could hear it."[145]

A few liturgical developments from Basil are worth noting. First, compared to the western styles already listed above, there is a more detailed liturgy put in place. The prayers by the priest are much longer, while the response of the congregation remains much the same as in the western liturgies. Second, there is the development of private prayers by the priest that the congregation does not hear. This becomes a trend that will carry to the Roman Mass, in which the priest is the primary actor in the eucharistic liturgy. Third, while the eucharistic practices of the West and the East are separated geographically, there is commonality in some of the prayers, especially the familiar Sursum Corda, the Sanctus (which appears first in the liturgies of Basil and Chrysostom but later becomes a part of the Latin Mass), the presence of the epiclesis, and the content of the anaphora.

The eucharistic liturgy in Constantinople was based on the style of Basil until the church became familiar with the liturgy from John Chrysostom. Ray writes that this liturgy "was probably brought to Constantinople from Antioch by John Chrysostom himself when he became archbishop in 398."[146] At first, it was used less frequently than the liturgy of Basil, until, as Ray writes, "by the eleventh century, it was the principal

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[145] Ray, 99.

[146] Ibid., 100.

liturgy, though the liturgy of Basil continued to be used for the most significant occasions, such as Easter and Christmas."[147]

Jasper provides the English translation of the liturgy.[148] The order was:

1. Kiss of peace
2. Creedal confession
3. Sursum Corda
4. People respond: "Holy"
5. Holy Anaphora
6. The Sanctus
7. Private prayer by the priest (trinitarian in focus)
8. Words of Institution (followed by an 'Amen' response by the congregation after each element)
9. Anamnesis (said privately)
10. Short hymn response by the congregation
11. Epiclesis (privately)
12. Simultaneous prayer by the priest while deacons read the diptychs (list of those both living and dead who have been a part of the community)
13. Priest calls on God to remember the needs of the congregation
14. Lord's Prayer said together
15. Priest labels the elements as "Holy gifts"
16. People respond giving glory to God
17. Distribution of the elements
18. Responsive dismissal between deacon and congregation
19. Priest ends liturgy with a prayer of thanks

While the prayers are similar in many ways, there are notable differences between the two liturgies, mostly regarding what was said in relation to the elements. Ray summarizes the main differences, stating:

> While the anaphoras of both liturgies are prayers of thanksgiving that honor God by reciting salvation history, they do so by using different Bible verses. The anaphora of John Chrysostom focuses on God's loving gifts of his Son for the world's salvation, quoting John 3:16. This anaphora is less developed than Basil's. It recounts the creation and the fall in only a cursory way. It expresses its Trinitarian theology not through theological formulation but through structure, devoting one section to the work of each Person of the Trinity. It thanks the

[147] Ibid.

[148] Jasper and Cuming, 131-134.

> Father for creation and redemption, remembers the saving work of the Son, and prays for the presence of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy and the church.[149]

Another major difference between the two is that the priest carries an even more central role in the liturgy of John Chrysostom. Gerald Ellard, a Jesuit liturgical scholar, highlights, "the Liturgy of John Chrysostom calls for antiphonal chant almost ceaselessly."[150] However, the further development of a priest's private prayers began to separate the congregation from some of the elements of the eucharist liturgy. Stanley Harakas, priest of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, explains, "Most of the prayer language of the Divine Liturgy is written so as to be spoken by the priest in the plural, and quite clearly on behalf of the priest and the laity together…"[151] Priests did not take on this role because of their declared holiness or because they were set apart from the laity, but rather because they were leading the laity in repentance. The priests speak about themselves as unclean. Harakas notes, "the most impressive conclusion one arrives at, when reviewing all the texts of the Litury which refer to the priest and his role, is the great emphasis on the priest's sinfulness and unworthiness."[152]

Even considering all of the above, the liturgy developed to include one major actor (the priest) and two minor actors (the deacon(s) and congregation). The liturgy of Basil was lengthier and more involved compared to the liturgy of Chrysostom; however, the church moved away from the lengthier liturgy, preferring the shorter and less involved prayers by Chrysostom. The emphasis on mystery and private language was

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[149] Ray, 100.

[150] Gerald Ellard, "The People's Part in Chrysostom's Mass," *Orate Fratres* 2, no. 8 (June 1928): 247.

[151] Stanley Harakas, "Orthodox Priest as Leader in the Divine Liturgy," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 164.

[152] Ibid., 168.

carried further by missal liturgies that developed in the centuries leading to the Reformation. The development of the words used by priests at the sacramental rite encouraged both the mystery and the spectatorship of the laity, while finding its own distinct form apart from liturgies of the East.

The mass was of highest importance to the people of the western church in the Middle Ages. Diarmaid MacCulloch, professor of the history of the church at Oxford University, writes, "To appreciate the importance of the Mass an explanation of what Christians believed about the Christian Eucharist is needed. They see it as a representation, or perhaps dramatic re-creation, of the last supper which he ate with his disciples before his arrest and death."[153] He continues in reference to their belief about the mass, "The Eucharist became a drama linking Christ to his followers, pulling them back to his mysterious union with the physical world and his conquest of the decay and dissolution of the physical death."[154] How did the liturgy of the pre-Tridentine mass develop?

The Roman mass should be considered separately from the Eastern eucharistic liturgy. Geographical, cultural, and political differences played a role in the separation of liturgical development in the East from that of the West. Marcel Metzger, a professor of history of the liturgy at the University of Strasbourg, notes, "It is a fact that from the sixth to the fifteenth century, the Byzantine church lived in a universe favorable to the

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[153] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 10.

[154] Ibid., 11.

development of institutions, in spite of difficulties and crises."[155] Because of this, the eucharistic liturgies of the East demonstrated deeper theological reflections in their anaphora than the eucharistic liturgies of the West. This was the case, as Metzger explains, because "the West was undergoing the upheaval of the barbarian invasions with all their political, social, and cultural consequences. The battered churches were hardly in a position conducive to theological reflection."[156] This led to differing eucharistic liturgies and a differentiation in the form and function of the eucharist. John Harper, a professor at the University of Wales, notes, "The strength of the churches based in Rome under the leadership of the Pope and Constantinople under the Patriarch led to a growing independence and separation (from the East) from the fifth century onwards, and total schism by the eleventh."[157] This era played a key role in the theological understanding of the supper amongst the congregation, and it continues to have ramifications to this day.

There are many differences between the Roman Mass and the liturgies of Basil and Chrysostom from the East. Thompson comments, "Latin Christianity arose in North Africa at the close of the second century and gradually attained pre-eminence over the West…Compared to the great Eastern liturgies, they had several distinguishing features."[158] These differences arose, not only from the aforementioned geopolitical challenges, but also from the differing practices of the eucharist. Once the West became

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[155] Marcel Metzger, *History of the Liturgy: The Major Stages*, trans. Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 89.

[156] Ibid., 89.

[157] John Harper, *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy From the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 17.

[158] Bard Thompson, 27.

stable under the rule of Charlemagne (c. 742-814), the church's outlook concerning the purpose of the mass was based on its current practice that worship was the vocation primarily of the clergy. Another influence came from the development of the private mass that had become common praxis of medieval Rome. Metzger wrote:

> When the time came for theological restoration in the West, the Church had lost the proper equilibrium as far as the liturgy was concerned: this was regarded as the business of clerics, and private Masses were considered the norm. The medieval theology of the Eucharist took its point of departure from the private Mass.[159]

The points of departure that caused the Roman rite to diverge from the Eastern liturgies will be explored in the following section.

There were several mass traditions in the west. Harper notes, "In addition to the Roman Rite, important traditions emerged in the Ambrosian (Milan), Celtic (Ireland and northern Britian), Gallican (France), and Mozarabic (Spain) liturgies of the first millennium."[160] While these minor liturgies were important for the churches in their distinct geographical area, their influence and practice was short-lived. Thompson advises, "The Gallic type could not withstand the tide of history. It tended to dissociate its churches from the papacy at the very moment when the great missionaries labored to bring the entire West into closer communion with Rome."[161] Harper agrees, "In due course these independent Rites were either overtaken by Roman practice, or remained as

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[159] Metzger, 89.

[160] Harper, 17.

[161] Bard Thompson, 29.

isolated, local rites."[162] For the sake of this study, because of the fading influence of other liturgies, the Roman type will be the focus of this study.

The word "Mass" became synonymous with the eucharist, or the Agape feast, sometime in the fifth century. Thompson notes, "By the time of Pope Leo the Great (440-461), the name 'Mass' was applied to the Eucharist."[163] The source of the name came from the liturgical placement of the eucharist in the Roman liturgy. Thompson continues, "There is little doubt about the origin of the term: mass=missa=mission=dismissio. It meant the 'dismissal' of the church as we find it in the formula at the conclusion of the liturgy: Ite missa est."[164]

The early liturgy of mass developed over a four hundred year time span and became unified under the reign of Charlemagne. At this point, the language of the mass began to take shape, the anaphora becoming more like the Eastern church in the sense that it was used for in-depth theological explanation. Thompson speculates, "Perhaps the language itself became a factor."[165] It was during this time, as Thompson observes, "Thus, about 831, Paschasius Radbertus proposed as doctrine that the body of Jesus Christ was present in the Mass by virtue of a miraculous transformation of the elements that left only their sensuous appearance unchanged."[166] At this point, one can see the beginning language of transubstantiation taking shape in reference to the eucharist.

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[162] Harper, 17.

[163] Bard Thompson, 34.

[164] Ibid., 34.

[165] Ibid., 42.

[166] Ibid.

After this, the medieval mass became expansive with many different forms. Harper provides rudimentary skeleton of the medieval mass:

1. Offertory (a truncated antiphonal psalm)
2. Secret (private by priest but concluded with public doxology and a congregational 'Amen')
3. Sursum Corda
4. Sanctus
5. Benedictus ("Blessed is he that cometh")
6. Canon (including epiclesis, Words of Institution, anamnesis: all recited silently except the final doxology which was said public by the celebrant with a laity 'Amen' response)
7. Pater Noster (antiphonal recitation of the Lord's Prayer)
8. Pax domini (between celebrant and choir)
9. Agnus dei (usually three petitions between the celebrant and choir)
10. Communion (many times the priest alone receiving the elements)
11. Postcommunion (prayer of the celebrant with the laity response of 'Amen')[167]

The Roman rite and the Eastern liturgies use some common liturgical words. The Roman rite places the offertory before the elements, the Sursum Corda, the Sanctus, a narrative of the last supper, and an epiclesis. This is where the commonality between the East and the West ends. The Roman rite developed theological themes as a result of the language used in the mass. These themes led to the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation, which brought about the Council of Trent.

First, there were major linguistic differences between the Roman mass and the Eastern eucharist celebration. While the early liturgies of the East were extensive in their prayers and antiphon, the early Roman mass of the fifth and sixth centuries was much simpler. Pecklers explains, "The character of liturgy in Rome was simplicity. It grew out

[167] Harper, 118-120. For a more detailed account of the medieval mass, see James Monti, *A Sense of the Sacred: Roman Catholic Worship in the Middle Ages* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), Kindle Edition; and Edward Foley, *A Commentary on the Order of the Mass of the Roman Missal* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011), 247-254.

of the Roman cultural genius characterized by brevity, sobriety and noble simplicity."[168] However, the development of the language used during the mass soon displayed excessive extravagance, as the Roman rite departed from its roots. Thompson comments on the language of the mass near the first millennium, "The detail and the constrained pomp of this liturgy are extraordinary."[169] Thus, the laity became spectators rather than participants in the eucharist meal. James White, professor of liturgical studies at Drew University, observes, "There was little connection between what the priest did at the altar and the congregation standing or sitting in the nave…the visual participation had such an attraction for the laity in this period; they had few other possibilities."[170]

There were three main reasons for this movement from a participatory meal to a spectatorship laity. First, the Roman liturgy developed throughout the medieval period with changing songs and prayers. This separated the Roman rite from the Byzantine liturgy. Metzger notes, "In the Byzantine liturgy, the greater number of the prayers of the eucharistic celebration remain the same, whereas in the Roman liturgy, many pieces (songs and prayers) change with each celebration."[171] These changing prayers and songs made the mass difficult for the laity to memorize. Metzger continues, "A formulary that is repeated every Sunday is soon known by heart and nurtures the faith, whereas a short prayer heard but once is remembered only if the formulation helps memorization."[172]

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[168] Pecklers, 52.

[169] Bard Thompson, 40.

[170] James White, *Roman Catholic Worship: Trent to Today,* 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 15.

[171] Metzger, 85.

[172] Ibid., 85-86.

The second reason was the practice of the private mass. Liturgical collections began in earnest in the tenth and eleventh centuries, resulting in compilations, called sacramentaries, organized by the church calendar year in lectionaries. These compilations became widespread due to the invention of the printing press. However, many of the compilations were composed of material from private mass liturgies. Metzger comments:

> About the ninth century, a certain practice became general, a practice that would have momentous repercussions on the understanding of the liturgy and on the way theologies would approach problems. We are speaking of the private Mass, said by a lone priest without the presence of an assembly. What took place there was not a modification of the rites of the Mass, but their application to a practice at odds with the very soul of the liturgy: the Eucharist, summit and center of the life of the Church, was celebrated without an ecclesial community.[173]

These private masses were celebrated at the request of individuals for their personal penance or for the dead, and, as Metzger notes, "the absent donor considered the priest his or her delegate."[174] The private mass was a central practice of the Roman church during the centuries leading to the Reformation. Nicolas Thompson, lecturer in church history at the University of Auckland, notes that the private mass "was central to the piety, architecture and even the economy of the Latin Church prior to the Reformation."[175]

The result was that the parts of the mass (the Sanctus, epiclesis, and anamnesis) were spoken as if the whole event was a private occurrence, not simply some of the

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[173] Metzger, 126.

[174] Ibid., 127.

[175] Nicolas Thompson, "Going Public: Catholic Calls for the Abolition of the Private Mass in the Sixteenth Century," *Reformation and Renaissance Review* 13, no. 1 (April 2011): 64.

designated prayers of the celebrant. Even the anaphora, the prayer itself, developed in reflection to this private mass focus. Metzger explains:

> The Roman Eucharistic Prayer bears traces of this evolution of outlook. In it primitive form, the commemoration of the living was couched in the following terms: "Remember your servants and maidservants and all those here present…who offer you a sacrifice of praise…" A significant addition has transformed the text: "Remember your servants and maidservants…We offer to you for them, or they offer to you…" In this context, the priest acts in the name of the faithful, no longer in common with them since they are absent and have made him their delegate by means of a monetary offering.[176]

The rise of the private mass exacerbated the use of the private language, or the Latin, which was the vernacular of the sacrament since the fourth century, rather than the language of the people in their various regions. It also furthered the view that practice of the eucharist was the vocation of the clergy rather than the shared responsibility of the celebrant and the community of the faithful.

The third reason why the mass developed into a spectator event was the gradual development of a belief that God was distant from the worshiper. The transcendence of God became the primary view of the medieval church in the period leading to the Reformation. Pecklers notes, "The Medieval Period reflects a gradual 'distancing of God'…the liturgy would become remote and distant-the property of the clergy who would perform liturgical acts on behalf of their people."[177] The words and actions of the eucharist reflect this belief. Pecklers explains, "Increasingly, there was an emphasis on adoring the Eucharist rather than sharing it. The Eucharistic prayer came to be prayed in a

[176] Ibid., 127.

[177] Pecklers, 61.

low voice or completely inaudibly."[178] He describes practices such as the laity being separated by a screen, and therefore unable to see all the events taking place, the clergy being the only people welcome in the sanctuary, and the removal of the people's offerings. MacCulloch expands on the visual spectacle of the mass:

> It was such a sacred and powerful thing that by the twelfth century in the Western Church, the laity dared approach the Lord's table only very infrequently, perhaps once a year at Easter, otherwise leaving their priest to take the bread and the wine while they watched in reverence. Even when laypeople did come up to the altar, they received only the bread and not the wine, a custom which has never received any better explanation than that there was worry that the Lord's blood might stick in the moustaches and beards of the male faithful.[179]

While some historians view this as a negative aspect of the medieval mass, others see it as an outworking of the people's theology. Worship is not primarily for the congregation, but for God. The medieval church believed that worship exists for God's benefit, while humanity has the privilege of witnessing it. It was through worship, the medieval church believed, that the sanctification of humanity occurred. These two actions: the worship of God and the sanctification of humanity, happened at mass in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Metzger explains:

> …the clergy rendered worship to God, which could be done without the people, and it insured the believer's sanctification through rites, including the sacraments. Thus, worship was for God and, in a certain measure, for the benefit of Christians. The vocabulary testifies to this evolution: the point was not so much to "celebrate" the sacraments with the faithful as to "administer" the sacraments to them.[180]

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[178] Ibid., 63.

[179] MacCulloch, 11.

[180] Metzger, 129.

Another common theme that played an overarching role in the medieval eucharist leading to the Reformation was that of mystery. The privatization of the mass (including the continual use of Latin) along with the distancing of God through the ceremony promoted the mystical aspects of the rite. Hughes Oliphant Old explains:

> By the end of the Middle Ages, the Lord's Supper had already a long time before become the sacrifice of the Mass. It was a sacred drama that reenacted the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, a most solemn mystery celebrated in a language unknown by the common people. It was, in the eyes of many, a magical ceremony that transformed the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ and made God present on the altar, there to be worshiped and adored in sumptuous religious rites.[181]

This sense of mystery, which developed in the East because of the regular and active participation of the laity, also formed in the West for different reasons. As stated above, the Roman rite was distant and removed from the people, celebrated infrequently, and viewed from behind a screen. The mystery of the mass was also promoted because it opposed the philosophical system of Thomism, an Aristotelian intellectual system that believed human reason to be the highest gift from God. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) adopted the term transubstantiation, which, as MacCulloch states, "formalized and systematized…the miracle of the Mass."[182] The great mystery occurred in the elements because the change of substance opposed the Thomistic philosophical belief of the time that the substance of an object does not change. MacCulloch explains, "Bread consists of substance of 'breadness'…in the Mass, substance changes…Through the grace of God, the substance of the bread is replaced by the substance of the Body of Christ."[183] The

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[181] Old, 126.

[182] MacCulloch, 25.

[183] Ibid., 26.

sense of mystery was not only created by the celebrant's use of private language, but also because of the belief that a miracle happened every time the epiclesis was pronounced by the celebrant.

All of this led to a sense of awe and deep appreciation from the laity. While many believe that the lack of understanding and participation was a negative aspect of the medieval mass, some take a different perspective. Monti expresses a positive view of this mystical aspect of the Roman rite:

> The medieval liturgy has often been criticized on the basis of a supposed lack of active participation in the sacred rites, most notably the infrequency of Communion…Such reticence was inspired not by lay ambivalence toward the liturgy but rather by a profound sense of greatness of the Sacrament.[184]

The faithful who received the mass once a year probably did so more out of a profound sense of the sacrament's greatness rather than, as others surmise, a sense of obligation or fear.

The medieval period linguistically expanded the mass. During this period, the consolidation of sources and practices, which began under Charlemagne, developed the practice of private mass into a liturgy where the words and actions became the primary vocation of the celebrant. This led to an overarching belief that the laity were to be spectators rather than participants. While there was cross-pollination of content between the Byzantine and the Roman rite, the manner in which the eucharist was celebrated led to different theological and ecclesiastical results. However, despite these differences, there was a common emphasis on the mystery of the ritual.

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[184] Monti, 506, Kindle.

Ecclesiastical Liturgical Praxis In Europe: 1500-1700 C.E.

One cause of the Reformation was an attempt to correct the perceived abuses of the church, including the abuse that the reformers believed was happening during the mass. While there were reformers before Martin Luther, he was the one that history remembers as initiating change, especially to the mass. Luther believed that the Catholic church put too much emphasis on man's initiative, rather than on God's grace, an opinion which he rooted in Augustinian theology. Peckler writes, "Luther argued that the Eucharist was God's gracious gift to the Church-indeed, all was God's gift. What he saw in the medieval doctrine Mass as 'sacrifice' was too much emphasis on human initiative bordering on Pelagian."[185] In his short book *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, Luther attacked the church's sacramental practice on the philosophical, theological, and practical fronts. His attack can be summarized by his call to the clergy not to refer the mass as sacrifice:

> For the bread and wine are offered at the first, in order that they may be blessed and thus sanctified by the Word and by prayer. But after they have been blessed and consecrated, they are no longer offered, but received as a gift from God. And let the priest bear in mind that the Gospel is to be set above all canons and collects devised by men. The Gospel does not sanction the calling of the mass a sacrifice, as has been shown.[186]

MacCulloch summarizes Luther's attack on the Roman rite, stating, "Sensational was his attack on the theology of the Mass, fueled by his loathing of Aristotle, who had provided

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[185] Pecklers, 67.

[186] Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (n.p.: Fig, 2012), 1664, Kindle.

the original terminology on which the Church had constructed its preferred explanation of the miracle of the mass: transubstantiation."[187]

Luther's disagreement over the Roman rite led him, over time, to develop his own theology and liturgy for the eucharist. He promoted the belief of consubstantiation and surrounded the administration of the elements with a praxis that encouraged participation from the laity while promoting the view of the clergy as servants. MacCulloch explains, "No sacrifice, no priest: so the clergy who administered communion were not set aside to be special priestly beings…Every faithful Christian was a priest…"[188]

This led Luther to make dramatic changes to the mass, and he published his new eucharist liturgy as *The Formula Missae* in 1523. The first noticeable change was the practice that the mass should not occur without the preaching of the scriptures. Thompson notes, "To correct such abuses, Luther proposed that Christians should not assemble for worship unless a sermon were preached…"[189] He removed or rearranged all the elements of the mass that displayed the rite's sacrificial character, rather than portraying it as a gift of God. He did, however, continue to perform the rite in Latin. Thompson explains, "In the *Formula Missae,* Luther's conservative and evangelical views coalesced. He proposed merely to revise the Missal, retaining the Latin language, but purging the Mass of those things that could not support an evangelical interpretation."[190]

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[187] MacCulloch, 129.

[188] Ibid., 130.

[189] Bard Thompson, 98.

[190] Ibid., 100.

Thompson summarizes the specific word changes that Luther brought to his first alternative to the Roman rite as follows:

1. Elements prepared after sermon
2. Sursum Corda
3. Words of Institution
4. Sanctus
5. Benedictus
6. Elevation of the elements
7. Pater Noster
8. Pax
9. Administration of the elements[191]

In his liturgy, the Sanctus and Benedictus were to be sung by the choir because the narrative of the upper room (the "Words of Institution") were to serve as the point of consecration of the elements. Ultimately, the main way that Luther brought about his theological views of the eucharist was to change the words used during the mass. Olds explains, "The canon of the Mass, that is, the prayer of consecration said over the bread and wine, Luther wanted to rearrange completely so that any prayers implying the presenting of the consecrated bread and wine as a sacrifice to God should be omitted."[192]

While this was the first published liturgy by Luther, he eventually made even more linguistic changes and published another eucharist liturgy in 1525 because of the influence from other reformers in Europe. Thompson explains, "Zwingli abolished the Mass in Zurich and inaugurated far-reaching reforms of worship. At the same time, Oecolampadius introduced simplified services at Basel, and Farel brought out the first evangelical liturgy in the French language."[193]

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[191] Ibid., 100-101.

[192] Old, 127.

[193] Bard Thompson, 102.

This outside pressure caused Luther to make two major changes in his next published liturgy. The first change was to the vernacular. Part of eucharist would now be in German. However, Luther did not wholly commit to the vernacular. Thompson teaches that Luther believed, "Ideally, the liturgy should be celebrated successively in German, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, lest the Christian religion be imprisoned by provincialism."[194] Secondly, Luther further committed himself to the principal of Christian liberty. Vilmos Vajta, former director of the Lutheran World Federation's Department of Theology in Geneva, notes, "The believer indeed is free of stated forms of worship. He worships in spirit and truth."[195] The one thing that Luther did not want changed were the words of institution. Beyond this, his commitment to Christian liberty meant that when forms of worship were no longer desirable, they should be changed. Thompson elaborates, "When this or that form had outlived its usefulness, let it be changed or discarded: no liturgy was worth being idolized."[196] Thus, while Luther published liturgies and made suggestions, because of this commitment to Christian liberty, no standardized liturgical works were recognized. Harper adds, "The pattern of Lutheran worship echoed medieval forms, especially in the Fore-Mass. But no authoritative orders were established, and no standardized liturgical books were widely circulated, except in Scandinavia."[197]

While it is a mistake to view the Reformation as a unified movement, there was common agreement among the major leaders that the church needed liturgical reform,

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[194] Ibid., 103.

[195] Vilma Vajta, *Luther on Worship: An Interpretation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004), 174.

[196] Bard Thompson, 101.

[197] Harper, 155.

especially a change in the eucharist. Old recounts, "For the Reformers of classical Protestantism-Martin Luther (1483-1546), Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560), Ulrich Zwinglie (1484-1531), Martin Bucer (1483-1546), and John Calvin (1509-64)-there was agreement about the most pressing liturgical reforms needed in the celebration of the Communion service."[198] These liturgical reforms were vast and varied depending upon the theological viewpoints of the lead reformer.

A year after Luther's first attempt to change the mass, Martin Bucer, the lead reformer in the city of Strasbourg, published "Grund und Ursach" in 1524, a work to explain the liturgical reforms he was attempting to bring about in the city. Bucer wanted to correct the abuses he perceived in the mass. He formally set out to change the sacrificial aspect of the sacrament as well as the lack of participation from the laity. Like Luther, Bucer emphasized the connection between the scriptures and the eucharist. The communion meal was to focus on the participation of the people rather than the sacrificial elements. The words spoken were to focus on gospel promises rather than serving as a formula of consecration to bring about a substance change of the elements. Old summarizes, "The sharing of the bread and the cup by the whole people of God becomes the heart of the service. The Reformers place the emphasis here rather than in the consecrating, the sacrificing, or the adoring of the bread and wine."[199] The communion was to look like a meal rather than a sacrifice. Bucer replaced the altar with a table.

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[198] Old, 126.

[199] Ibid., 127.

Bucer's changes were, as Thompson notes, "some of the most creative liturgical ideas enunciated in the Reformation…"[200]

What did Bucer's eucharist liturgy look like? The beginning of the service, which was held early in the morning, began with a confession of sin, absolution, and then a sermon, usually on one of the gospels. At this point, the people sang the Apostle's Creed. This, Thompson notes, "marked the transition from Word to Sacrament."[201] According to Thompson, the following liturgy from Bucer received its final form in 1539:

1. Dominus Vobiscum
2. Exhortation (with four points)
    a. Corruption of one's nature
    b. Ministry of the incarnation
    c. Accept his body and blood in faith with a narrative discourse of the upper room
    d. Thanksgiving and praise should be the end result of the meal
3. Prayer (pastor alone with emphasis on the consecration of the people rather than the elements)
4. Pater Noster (together with congregation)
5. Words of institution from 1 Corinthians 11
6. Pastoral charge ("Believe in the Lord, and give eternal praise and thanks unto Him!")
7. Distribution of the elements
8. Pastoral charge ("Remember, believe and proclaim that Christ the Lord has died for you.")
9. Congregation sings a communion hymn or Psalm
10. Dominus Vobiscum
11. Closing prayer of thanks
12. Benediction (usually Numbers 6)[202]

When one compares Bucer's liturgy to the previous eucharist liturgies, there is a noticeable absence of the Sursum Corda, the Sanctus, the Benedictus, Pax Domini, Agnus

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[200] Bard Thompson, 161.

[201] Ibid., 165.

[202] Ibid., 171-179.

Dei, and the elevation of the elements. The remaining elements include the prayer before the elements (without consecration), the Dominus Vobiscum throughout, the Pater Noster, and the words of institution (without specific emphasis on an anamnesis). Bucer's liturgy came to be considered the norm of Sunday morning worship in Reformed churches during the early sixteenth century. Thompson comments, "Indeed, Bucer exercised a great influence upon the Reformed rite and upon the liturgies of Hesse, Cologne, and England."[203]

One possible reason for Bucer's influence was his capacity to work with different views of the eucharist in an attempt to find linguistic compromises. He encouraged small, subtle shifts in the language used to accommodate different practices. Stephen Buckwalter, a researcher on Martin Bucer at the University of Heidelberg, wrote that Bucer's conviction concerning disagreements about the eucharist were for the most part "terminological squabbles."[204] He urged the use of two particular phrases at the table to emphasize the reformers' difference from the Roman rite without it curtailing into an empty (or simply Zwinglian memorialistic) practice. The end result was a liturgy that, as Pecklers describes, "stood the middle ground between Luther's Catholic conservatism and Zwingli's very Protestant approach both in theology and worship."[205]

The first phrase that Bucer desired the minister to use is recorded by Buckwalter as, "With bread and wine the Lord gives us his true body and true blood to eat and drink

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[203] Ibid., 166.

[204] Stephen Buckwalter, "Bucer as Mediator in the 1532 Kempten-Eucharistic Controversy," *Reformation & Renaissance Review: Journal of the Society for Reformation Studies* 7 (April 2005): 199.

[205] Pecklers, 70.

truly as food for our souls."[206] Bucer believed that this sentence brought clarity to the actual presence of Christ without the mysterious substance change that the mass promoted. The second phrase advanced by Bucer was "sacramental union." Buckwalter wrote, "This *unio sacramentalis*…gives communicants the assurance that bread and wine are not just empty symbols, but also avoids the pitfall of crudely turning Christ's true body into mere food for the stomach."[207] This use of the sacramental union kept the mystical aspect a part of Bucer's eucharist liturgy, going so far as to call the ministers, according to Thompson "overseers and dispensers of God's mysteries."[208]

Not only did Bucer emphasize the use of unifying language concerning communion, but he also forwarded gradual liturgical changes surrounding the eucharist that were carried out throughout the rest of reforming Europe. Thompson highlights, "The word 'Mass' gave way to 'Lord's Supper.' The 'altar' became 'altar-table' or simply 'table.' The celebrant was no longer described as 'priest' but as 'parson,' or more often as 'minister.'"[209] Old agrees, "The altar is replaced by a table…The Communion is to look like a meal."[210] Included in these liturgical reforms was the use of the vernacular during the eucharist liturgy. All of these reflected Bucer's corrective actions against abuses that he perceived in the Roman rite concerning the spectatorship of the laity, the sacrificial nature of the elements, and the authoritative power of the priests.

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[206] Buckwalter, 200.

[207] Ibid.

[208] Bard Thompson, 163.

[209] Ibid., 160.

[210] Old, 127.

Parallel to the reformation of the eucharistic liturgies, which was happening along with Luther and Bucer, were Urlich Zwingli's liturgical changes in the city of Zurich. His disdain for the sacrificial aspect of the mass was his primary motivation for these changes. Thompson emphasizes, "Zwingli's main point of contention was the sacrificial emphasis of the Canon."[211]

According to Pecklers, Zwingli's first revision, published in 1523 as "Canon of the Mass:"

> …called for vernacular usage in the proclamation of the scripture readings and replaced the Canon with four prayers: a thanksgiving prayer; an epicletic prayer so as to receive the benefits of holy communion; an anamnesis recalling redemption, and a prayer to worthily receive the body and blood of Christ.[212]

While the scripture readings were done in the vernacular, the rest of Zwingli's liturgy remained in Latin. Two years later, Zwingli enacted a eucharistic liturgy that remained virtually unchanged through the rest of his ministry in Zurich. It was first used on Easter Sunday, 1525.

Much like Luther and Bucer, Zwingli's eucharistic liturgical reforms started gradually. His initial revisions kept the first part of the Roman rite but removed many of the feast days. He made sure that the scripture readings were in the vernacular. Zwingli's patience began to wane, and he soon expedited the reformation of the meal, overwhelmed by what he thought was the incorrect practice of the church. Thompson recounts, "He soon lost patience with its incoherence and barbarisms, and was finally defeated by its

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[211] Ibid., 141.

[212] Pecklers, 69.

sacrificial emphasis."[213] Zwingli's reforms resulted in a service that rid itself of almost all elements of the Roman rite that Zwingli inherited. In comparison to mass or to Luther's liturgy, Old comments, "The service is very short."[214]

Zwingli's eucharist liturgy at was implemented on Easter, 1525. According to Thompson, it had the following order:

1. Prayer of Thanksgiving
2. Pastor reads 1 Corinthians 11, verses 20 and 29 only
3. Congregational Response: "Praise be to God."
4. Antiphonal Hymn (pastor, men, and women with distinct parts in form of *Gloria in excelsis Deo*)
5. Dominus Vobiscum
6. Scripture reading from John 6
7. Reader kisses the scriptures with an acknowledgement of praise
8. People respond with "Amen"
9. Apostles Creed (antiphonal with men and women parts)
10. Warning about improper participation
11. Pater Noster (by pastor while congregation kneels)
12. People respond: "Amen"
13. Intercessory prayer of sanctification by pastor
14. Words of institution from 1 Corinthians 11
15. Distribution of elements separately
16. Antiphonal reading of Psalm 113 (pastor, men, and women with distinct parts)
17. Short pastoral prayer of thanks
18. "Amen" response by congregation
19. Pax Domini[215]

This liturgy immediately impacted Zwingli's congregation in Zurich by promoting several of the reformers' theological beliefs. First, it encouraged the demarcation between the spiritual and the physical, with Zwingli emphasizing the spiritual aspect of the Christian faith. MacCulloch explains, "He emphasized the spirit

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[213] Bard Thompson, 141.

[214] Old, 128.

[215] Bard Thompson, 151-156.

against the flesh"[216] and used John 6:63[217] as an important text to defend his belief. This meant that Zwingli's liturgy moved away from an emphasis on the transformation (or in the Catholic sense, transubstantiation) of the elements to the spiritual condition of the participants at the table. This provided a polar opposite emphasis from the Roman rite, which viewed the transformation of the elements as vital and the laity's attendance to the mass as optional.

This emphasis can be seen in Zwingli's liturgy of 1525. Primarily, this is one of the first major eucharist liturgies that did not include an epiclesis as part of the service. The focus of Zwingli's prayers was on the consecration of the participants, a promise of the people that they were going to live as God had designed. MacCulloch explains, "So the sacrament of the Eucharist was not some sort of magical talisman of Christ's body, which performed wonders: it was an equivalent of the symbolic and reverent daily saluting of the flag, an expression of the believer's faith."[218] B.A. Gerrish, professor emeritus of historical theology at the University of Chicago, goes even further to state that for Zwingli, "the sacraments merely testify in public that grace has been received."[219] This meant that if there was a sacrificial reality to the eucharist, its locus was on the people who sacrificed themselves in faith and thanksgiving. MacCulloch notes, "The Eucharist could indeed be a sacrifice, but the sacrifice was one of faith and thankfulness by a Christian to God- a way of remembering what Jesus had done for humanity on the

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[216] MacCulloch, 147.

[217] "It is the spirit who gives life. The flesh is of no help at all."

[218] MacCulloch, 147-148.

[219] B.A. Gerrish, "The Lord's Supper in the Reformed Confessions," *Theology Today* 23 (July 1966): 226.

Cross and the promises which followed in scripture."[220] Regarding the effect of this emphasis, MacCulloch adds, "For Zwingli, therefore, the meaning of the sacraments shifted from something which God did for humanity, to something which humanity did for God."[221]

This focus on the sacrifice of the participants as they remember was a direct result of Zwingli's belief that Christ could not be present at the table. While Luther prescribed divine attributes to the humanity of Christ, Zwingli did not believe the scriptures warranted such a position. Martha Moore-Keish reasons, "Christ could not be literally present in the elements because of the distinction between his divine and human natures; since the ascension, Christ's physical body has been in heaven."[222] Christ was not present but the memory of Christ was. While the liturgies of the time treated the elements as they were the presence or included the presence Christ, Zwingli solidified his stance regarding the lack of physical presence of Christ and the spiritual act of the congregation with the title that he gave to his published liturgy. Old notes, "A more helpful key to understanding Zwingli's liturgical reform is the title he gave to the service, *The Act or Way of Observing the Memorial or Thanksgiving of Christ.*"[223]

To conclude that there was no mystery in Zwingli's eucharist liturgy would be a mistake. Even though he did not believe in a physical presence, there was a mystical sense in how the memorial itself worked to the blessing of the people. Thompson writes,

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[220] MacCulloch, 147-148.

[221] Ibid.

[222] Moore-Keish, 19.

[223] Old, 129.

"Whatever defects there may have been in Zwingli's Eucharistic theology and liturgy, the occasion was anything but a bare memorial. The Zurich liturgy of 1535 spoke of it as 'a great holy mystery.'"[224] The mystery was found in its simplicity, contemplation, and fellowship. The liturgical words brought the remembrance but were directed at the spiritual working of God in the participants. It was not the subjective remembering but the objective action of thanksgiving that worked by mystery in the hearts of participants. Old concludes, "Obviously, even for Zwingli the celebration of Communion was not just a subjective remembering. It was a quite objective act of thanksgiving."[225]

Zwingli's liturgy in word and deed demonstrated the participation of the laity. The focus of his eucharistic practice was the communal activity of the laity as a whole body. They were to see themselves as the unified body of Christ, and his liturgical readings were geared for a fuller participation. The antiphon prayers gave distinct parts to pastors, men, and women. Zwingli desired to have an even greater role for the laity in the service but was stopped by the civil authorities of Zurich. Thompson explains, "Moreover, if the civil authorities had not prevented him, Zwingli would have given the congregation a substantial part in the liturgy."[226]

It was not only through the word but also through the actions of the eucharistic service that Zwingli promoted the participation of the laity. He hoped that the laity would see themselves connected to one another as a unified whole. A simple table was placed in the midst of the people to communicate that they were a part of the family of God.

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[224] Bard Thompson, 146.

[225] Old, 129.

[226] Bard Thompson, 145.

Thompson shares, "They were fellow members of the Body of Christ, servants of their brethren at this table of the Lord." Here Zwingli made the connection between the body of Christ and the body of the church. This is why some view Zwingli's eucharistic liturgy as more than an empty memorial. Thomas J. Davis concludes, "There is, I think one can argue, a functional though not substantial presence of Christ's natural body in the Eucharist for Zwingli."[227] In this consideration, Zwingli's eucharistic liturgy maintains a mystical nature.

The previous liturgies were designed for the eucharist to be the climax of the weekly service. Zwingli was the first reformer to promote the meal's quarterly observance. D.G. Hart wrote, "Zwingli himself suggested quarterly observance: once in autumn and on Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost."[228]

The culmination of reforming the mass can be seen in the eucharistic liturgy of John Calvin (1509-1564), the Swiss reformer who ministered in the city of Geneva. His eucharistic liturgy was influenced by his time working under Martin Bucer in Strasbourg as well his detailed analysis and correspondence relating to the other eucharist views that came from Luther and Zwingli. Terry Johnson, author of several books on Presbyterian worship, advises, "Calvin's liturgy should be seen not as the product of a single individual, but as the culmination of decades of reform."[229] Similar to the liturgies

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[227] Thomas J. Davis, "Discerning the Body: The Eucharist and the Christian Social Body in Sixteenth Century Protestant Exegesis," *Fides et Historia* 37, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 74.

[228] D.G. Hart and John R. Muether, "The Lord's Supper: How Often?" *Ordained Servant* 6, no. 4 (October 1997): 97, http://opc.org/OS/pdf/OSV6N4.pdf (accessed July 22, 2014).

[229] Terry L. Johnson, *Leading in Worship: A Sourcebook for Presbyterian Students and Ministers Drawing Upon the Biblical and Historic Forms of the Reformed Tradition* (Oak Ridge, TN: The Covenant Foundation, 1996), 121.

developed under Luther, Bucer, and Zwingli, Calvin's liturgy evolved over the course of his ministry. His first attempt started in 1536 and culminated in the liturgy that he prepared and used while in Strasbourg in 1545. Thompson recounts, "Impressed with the Strassburg rite, Calvin appropriated it as his model…"[230]

Calvin, like previous reformers, was motivated by his disdain for what he perceived to be non-scriptural excesses in the Roman rite. Thompson explains, "Having had no priestly tenure, John Calvin cherished nothing of the Mass, but denounced it with raw invective."[231] His aim, much like Zwingli, was "…to restore the eucharist to its primitive simplicity, with Word and Sacrament holding their rightful place and celebrated weekly as the central service of the Christian community."[232] He did this to fight against the words used in the Roman mass, which he considered to be "magical mumblings,"[233] according to Geoffrey Wainwright, professor at Duke Divinity School.

The whole of Calvin's liturgy is seen as incomplete. He organized the service to lead into communion, however various difficulties prevented Calvin from having communion as frequently as he desired.[234] This made his liturgy incomplete. Terry Johnson advises, "If the unadapted form of his liturgy seems out of balance, the omission of the Lord's Supper explains why. It is an ante-communion service, designed to lead into

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[230] Bard Thompson, 189.

[231] Ibid., 185.

[232] Jasper and Cuming, 213.

[233] Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Vesterfield Tucker, eds. *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 782.

[234] As Hart and Muether explain, "The Genevan Town Council never approved this element [weekly communion] of Calvin's reform program." Hart and Muether, "The Lord's Supper: How Often?"

the Lord's Supper."[235] Thompson agrees, "Indeed, the Sunday service preserved the ancient union of Word and Sacrament, being constructed so that on those days when the Supper was not celebrated, the Eucharistic portions could be omitted, leaving the liturgy as Ante-Communion."[236]

What did the frequently omitted part of Calvin's eucharistic liturgy look like? Jonghun Joo, who holds a Ph.D. in worship and culture, summarizes the following eucharistic liturgy from John Calvin's work in Geneva in 1542 (this all follows the beginning part of the service, where the scriptures are read and preached in the vernacular):

1. Exhortations to prayer
2. Pater Noster
3. Confession of Faith (The Apostle's Creed)
4. Scripture and Exhortation (including the words of institution and warning)
5. Sursum corda (nontraditional, minister only)
6. Distribution
7. Thanksgiving
8. Nunc Dimittis (sung by congregation)
9. Benediction
10. Dismissal[237]

This eucharistic liturgy followed what Calvin wrote in his *Institutes of Christian Religion:*

> …the minister, having placed bread and wine on the table, should read the institution of the Supper. He should next explain the promises which are therein given; and, at the same time, keep back from communion all those who are debarred by the prohibition of the Lord. He should afterwards pray that the Lord, with the kindness with which he has bestowed this sacred food upon us, would also form and instruct us to receive it with faith and gratitude; and, as we are of

[235] Johnson, *Leading in Worship,* 122.

[236] Bard Thompson, 189.

[237] JongHun Joo, "Theology and Practice of Calvin's Eucharistic Rite in Geneva, " *Korean Reformed Journal* no. 18 (2011): 95.

> ourselves unworthy, would make us worthy of the feast by his mercy. Here, either a psalm should be sung, or something read, while the faithful, in order, communicate at the sacred feast, the minister breaking the bread, and giving it to the people. The Supper being ended, an exhortation should be given to sincere faith, and confession of faith, to charity, and lives becoming Christians. Lastly, thanks should be offered, and the praises of God should be sung. This being done, the Church should be dismissed in peace.[238]

Mathison observes, "The most striking thing about this liturgy is its simplicity."[239]

The exhortation to prayer immediately followed the sermon, as Calvin shared Luther's view of word and sacrament together. After this time, which concluded with a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, the congregation recited the Apostle's Creed. Thompson states, "The Creed marked the transition of the liturgy…it was a response to the sermon and a sign of commitment essential for Holy Communion."[240]

Noticeably absent from Calvin's eucharistic liturgy was the Sanctus. As stated above, the Sanctus was the preface to the prayer of consecration; the point at which the elements underwent their substantial change to become the true body and blood. Calvin did not believe in such a transformation. An epiclesis was also absent. Since there was no transformation of the elements, there would be no need to call down the Holy Spirit to effect a transformation. There were other absent pieces that were common in the Roman rite. Joo observes, "The Reformed rite omitted many elements of the Medieval Mass, such as the 'Kyrie,' 'Gloria In Excelsis,' 'Reading the Epistles and Gospel,' and 'The Cannon' (the Roman Mass's Eucharistic prayer) as core parts of the Communion."[241] Lee

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[238] Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 25912, Kindle.

[239] Mathison, 45.

[240] Bard Thompson, 192.

[241] Joo, 96.

Palmer Wandel, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, summarizes the changes of Calvin's eucharist liturgy from the Roman rite:

> *The Form of Prayer* bore no relation to the Mass, so completely did it repudiate it. Not only was the Canon eliminated; all the parts of the Mass – Introit, Kyrie eleison, Gloria, Collect, Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia, Gospel, Creed, Offertory, Secret, Sanctus, Pax, Agnus Dei – save the Lord's Prayer, the sermon, Communion, and Benediction, were eliminated…[242]

From the Lutheran view of consubstantiation and Zwingli's view of anamnesis, Calvin cautiously developed a third perspective on the presence of Christ at the table. MacCulloch observes that Calvin "devoted much energy to finding a formulation about the Eucharist to give it due reverence but avoid saying either too little or too much about it."[243] He desired to keep the communication of attributes between the divine and human natures separate (unlike Luther) while supporting the notion that there was a spiritual presence of Christ (unlike Zwingli). Modeling his eucharistic theology on the two natures of Christ (separate but distinct without mix), he came up with his driving principle, which MacCulloch describes as, "distinction, but no separation."[244]

The end result was Calvin's idea that the Holy Spirit takes the believing participants, when they partake of the elements, to commune with Christ in the place where he is seated in heaven. This term came to be known as "spiritual eating." Mathison explains, "Spiritual eating, therefore, does not mean that we partake only of Christ's

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[242] Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation*: *Incarnation and Liturgy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 169.

[243] MacCulloch, 248.

[244] Ibid., 250.

Spirit or only of Christ's divine nature. Instead, it is because we partake of Christ's flesh and blood by the power of the Holy Spirit…"[245]

Calvin's printed eucharistic prayer reflected his teaching on the matter. What stands in the place of the Sursum Corda is an altered version that the reformer received from his mentor and friend William Farel. Jasper wrote that after the reference to the upper room, Calvin's exhortation "concluded with the Farel type of Reformed Sursum Corda, urging the faithful to raise their hearts and minds on high to receive the body and blood of Christ."[246] Joo agrees that "Calvin's focus was not on the nature of the Eucharist, but on the manner of the effect: the Eucharist is a sing of sacred reality but it does not affect communicants by the priest's consecration…"[247] In the Roman rite, the Sursum Corda was meant as a preparation for partaking in the physical body and blood of Christ. Farel's revised Sursum Corda was meant to lift the hearts of the faithful to where Christ was seated in heaven.

There is disagreement regarding how effectively Calvin's eucharist liturgy increased the participation of the laity. With Calvin's emphasis on the hearers' preparation, along with the explicit warning to the unprepared or excommunicated, the danger in his liturgy was that the rite seemed to encourage private introspection. Thompson warns, "The emphasis on introspection and exclusion appears to spoil the Eucharistic spirit and social character of the meal…" Old disagrees, "For Calvin the

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[245] Mathison, 32.

[246] Jaspers, 214.

[247] Joo, 100.

Lord's Supper had profound ethical and moral implications. The communion is not only with God in heaven; it is participation in the Christian community as well."[248]

The participation of the laity was seen in the emphasis that Calvin placed on congregational singing. While Zwingli used dedicated antiphonal readings and prayers for his people, Calvin, while bringing an introspective aura to his eucharistic liturgy, encouraged ecclesiastical participation through singing. Calvin viewed singing as prayer and enveloped the eucharist part of his liturgy with congregational song. Paul Westermeyer, a professor of church music at Luther Seminary, observes, "His position on music parallels his eucharistic theology."[249]

Calvin's eucharistic liturgy continued to promote the idea of mystery in connection with the table. He believed that when the faithful commune with Jesus, they are taken to heaven. How this occurs is a mystery that should be explained to the participants. This is done when the words of institution are read before the administration of the sacrament. Calvin explains, "If the promises are narrated, and the mystery is expounded, that those who are to receive may receive with advantage…"[250] The idea of mystery is present with Calvin, but it is a mystery that must be explained by word for the benefit of the people.

Calvin desired weekly participation but was never able to overcome the obstacle set by the city government, who opposed such a practice. Jasper recounts,

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[248] Old, 133.

[249] Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 155.

[250] Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 25835, Kindle.

> In creating the content and the structure of the rite he was successful: but its establishment on a weekly basis was an ideal which he never succeeded in realizing. It had been a bone of contention during his first stay in Geneva; and now, rather than risk further trouble, he gave way to the magistrates' demands for only quarterly celebration in the interests of peace.[251]

The last of the Protestant reformation liturgies to be examined is the Anglican rite created by Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) and subsequently published in *The Book of Common Prayer*. The death of Henry VIII in 1547 and the coronation of Edward VI, who was only ten years old at the time, opened the door for those who wished to rewrite the mass. The English reformers did not desire to reform the liturgy to the same extent that the continental reformers wished to alter it. Rather, as Thompson teaches, they wished to keep with tradition while adding or changing certain elements "to encourage sound preaching and to establish men in the English Bible."[252] In fact, in the 1549 version, there was no major change from the Roman rite other than the use of the English language. Jaspers writes, "In the case of the eucharist the layman would have noticed little serious departure from the Roman rite beyond the use of the vernacular."[253]

While the first revision came in the 1549, the 1552 version of *The Book of Common Prayer* began to show the theological differences between the English church and the Roman rite. Harper notes in reference to the 1552 version, "Here the theological difference and doctrinal differences embraced within the membership of the Church of England were most evident."[254] Harper continues,

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[251] Jasper and Cuming, 213.

[252] Bard Thompson, 228.

[253] Jasper and Cuming, 232.

[254] Harper, 176.

> The hardening of theological influence from the Genevan Church, and ongoing revaluation of liturgical formation, resulted in continuing change, and the 1549 Prayer Book can only be regarded as an interim measure. The second Book of Common Prayer (1552) might well have been equally transitory, but historical rather than liturgical events have resulted in its exceptional permanence.[255]

Jaspers provides the eucharistic liturgy of the 1552 book:

1. Sursum corda (antiphonal)
2. Introductory Preface (dependent upon celebration or feast day)
3. Sanctus
4. Prayer of Humble Access
5. Anamnesis
6. Prayer of Consecration (for the people)
7. Words of Institution
8. Distribution of Elements
9. Pater Noster (with congregational response)
10. Prayer of Thanksgiving
11. Gloria in Excelsis
12. Benediction[256]

The differences between the 1552 English rite and the medieval mass are provided by Harper:

Book of Common Prayer (1552)	Medieval Missal
Sursum Corda	Sursum Corda
Preface	Preface
Sanctus	Sanctus and Benedictus
Prayer of Humble Access	
Prayer of Consecration	Canon of the Mass (silent)
	Pater Noster
	Pax Domini
	Agnus Dei
	Rite of Peace
Communion	Communion of Priest
	Communion
Pater Noster	
Prayer of Thanksgiving	Postcommunion Prayer
Gloria in Exclesis	

[255] Ibid., 167-168.

[256] Jasper and Cuming, 247-249.

Benediction Benediction[257]

Along with the changes in the order of the eucharist, other actions, such as ceasing the elevation of the elements, continued in the 1552 practice as a counter to the conduct of the medieval mass. Harper concludes, "A comparison of the two orders shows how radical is the new form in the Book of Common Prayer."[258] This was the stated purpose of the 1552 book, as the liturgy evolved beyond the 1549 liturgy. Bryan Spinks, author of multiple books on worship, explains, "The new book 'explained and made fully perfect' the former book: this in fact meant that the new book was more protestant in character than that of 1549…"[259]

The radicalness can be seen in the changes in Cranmer's eucharistic theology. The emphasis of the meal moved away from the Roman rite's sacrificial focus to the continental focus on the consecration of the people and the memorial of thanksgiving. Harper remarks, "The medieval perception of the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice offered by the priest was under attack: the new emphasis was that of the salvation of sinners."[260]

These changes were noticeable in two ways. First, they were evident in the words used to describe the service. Instead of the word "mass," the *Book of Common Prayer* began to use Protestant terminology. Thompson notes, "The main title of the new Book

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[257] Harper, 179-180.

[258] Ibid., 180.

[259] Bryan Spinks, *From the Lord and "The Best Reformed Churches": A Study of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the English Puritan and Separatist Traditions 1550-1633* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1983), 20.

[260] Ibid., 177.

no longer carried the clause, 'after the use of the Churche of England,' which had implied the continuation of Medieval usage; and the expression, 'commonly called the Masse' was stricken from the title of Holy Communion."[261] Another change involved replacing the word "altar" with "table." These linguistic changes demonstrated the move away from the sacrifice topology of the medieval mass to the reformational belief of thanksgiving.

Change was also evident in the wording of the prayers in the 1552 book. Jasper records the 1549 content of the eucharistic liturgy:

1. Sursum corda
2. Preface
3. Sanctus
4. Prayer of Consecration for Church and State
5. Anamnesis
6. Epiclesis of the Elements
7. Words of Institution
8. Pater Noster
9. Pax Domini
10. Confession of Sin (kneeling)
11. Assurance of Pardon
12. Prayer of Humble Access
13. Communion (priest first)
14. Communion (entire congregation)
15. Agnus Dei
16. Prayer of Thanksgiving
17. Benediction[262]

From 1549 to 1552, the eucharist liturgy lost much of what it had inherited from the medieval mass, including the epiclesis, the Pax Domini, the Angus Dei, and the practice of the priest receiving the elements before the congregation. All of these changes were exacerbated by the alteration of the prayers themselves. Jasper remarks, "In the eucharist

[261] Bard Thompson, 240-241.

[262] Jasper and Cuming, 235-242.

there was a clear expression of a theology which regarded it as essentially an eating of bread and a drinking of wine in thankful remembrance of Christ's death."[263]

Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* (1552) was a clear departure from the medieval mass and a move toward the reformed thinking regarding the eucharist. But with whom did Cranmer find most affinity? Some believe that Cranmer found most of his affinity with Zwingli and his view of "sacramental memorialism." The prayer before the elements, now void of an epiclesis, asked God, as Jasper records, that "we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine…may be partakers of his most body and blood."[264] This prayer of consecration was directed away from the elements to the congregants, the same practice that was emulated in Zwingli's liturgy. Jasper observes, "These changes in 1552 brought Cranmer much closer to Zwingli's position."[265] Wandel agrees, noting that Zwingli's liturgy, which was a main topic of discussion at the Council of Trent (1546), was "…influential…with evangelicals such as Thomas Cranmer."[266]

A case is made that Cranmer looked to Bucer as he evaluated the eucharist. Unlike Zwingli, Cranmer did not desire quarterly communion. Also, in 1549, Cranmer had personal contact with Bucer, who was appointed as professor at Cambridge. Through their relationship, Bucer wrote a letter to Cranmer, offering praise and minor corrections to the soon to be published 1552 book. This resulted in the final version in which, as Thompson writes, "Nearly all the rubics to which Bucer had taken exception were

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[263] Ibid., 244.

[264] Ibid., 245.

[265] Ibid.

[266] Wandel, 217.

removed."[267] This leads many scholars to believe, as Jasper notes, "The view of most scholars is that his eucharistic theology was in general agreement with that of Bucer."[268]

There may have been an even greater influence on Cranmer than Zwingli or Bucer. The Italian reformed theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-1562) was invited by Cranmer to be a professor at Oxford after he was forced to leave Italy because of his reformed teachings. While he was at Oxford, his teaching on how the incarnation is a typology for the eucharist had a heavy impact on Cranmer's own development. Old notes, "In 1549 he took part in the great eucharistic disputation held at Oxford and from that time on had a tremendous influence on Anglo-Saxon eucharistic theology."[269]

Vermigli's influence meant a continued sense of mystery in the Anglican eucharistic liturgy. For Vermigli, Christ was the ultimate sacrifice, the sign and seal of a person's redemption. Christ, as both fully divine and fully human, was the typology to understand the eucharistic meal. In opposition to the beliefs of Catholics and Luther, Vermigli did not believe in confusing the two natures of Christ. As Old explains concerning Vermigli's theology,

> Appealing to Chalcedonian Christology, Vermigli reminds us that we should not confuse, mix, or separate the true humanity and the true divinity of Christ. Christ's humanity remains even after the resurrection and ascension. His humanity is not turned into divinity. His divinity does not destroy or efface his humanity.[270]

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[267] Bard Thompson, 241.

[268] Jasper and Cuming, 245.

[269] Old, 134.

[270] Ibid., 135.

At the Anglican table, there was a belief that the bread and the cup do not become the body and blood of Christ, as they are believed to do in the Roman rite. Rather, by the signs of the bread and wine, the congregation in Cranmer's eucharistic theology encounters the body of Christ. Through this encounter, the sanctification of humanity was to occur. This belief moved beyond Zwingli's understanding of a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to a true encounter. Vermigli's influence retained the mysterious aspect of Cranmer's eucharistic liturgy.

Cranmer had a desire to increase the participation of the congregation in the liturgy. Much like the continental reformers, he increased singing in his liturgy, although not to the extent of Luther and Calvin. In the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*, Jasper notes, "all singing ceased."[271] However, by the 1552 publication, a hymn was included before the eucharist section of the liturgy. This occurred after the gospel reading where, as Harper notes, "One of the few provisions for singing is made for the Nicene Creed which follows."[272] However, this shouldn't mislead the individual concerning the lack of music. Harper continues, "On the face of it the 1552 Book of Common Prayer makes little provision for music…in practice choral foundations sang the liturgy…"[273] which became the standard practice due to an injunction in 1559 by Queen Elizabeth. While Cranmer did not increase congregational participation through song like other reformers, he did demonstrate the importance of such participation in other ways. He ceased the practice of

[271] Jasper and Cuming, 244.

[272] Harper, 178.

[273] Ibid., 185.

private mass, and by 1552 he ended the practice of the priest partaking of the elements first, before the distribution of the bread and cup to the congregation.

The reformations on the continent as well as in England did not go unnoticed by the Roman Catholic Church. Their response led to changes in the Roman rite. There has been debate as to the source of the motivation behind the actions of the Catholic church in the sixteenth century. Did the Romans desire to provide a counter to what was happening in the churches of Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, and Calvin? Or did they see a deep need to reform their practices, which many believed to be confused and corrupt? Pecklers answers, "In many respects, both camps are correct."[274] The leaders of the Roman church met at the Council of Trent (1545-1562), which, as Harper notes, "convened for twenty-five sessions between 1545 and 1563. It was continued, mostly in Rome, during the ensuing years."[275] The importance of the event to the Roman rite cannot be overstated. Pecklers remarks, "At the end of the day, what did win out was a rigid liturgical uniformity imposed on the whole Catholic Church-a uniformity that would last 400 years until the advent of the Second Vatican Council."[276] James White agrees, "Liturgically, Trent marks the beginning of a new era in worship just as much as it caps late medieval developments."[277]

What did this uniformity look like with respect to the wording of the mass? First, there was uniformity with the past. While there was debate concerning whether the

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[274] Pecklers, 74.

[275] Harper, 156.

[276] Ibid., 75.

[277] James White, 1.

liturgy should be conducted in the vernacular, no agreement could be reached. The mass would remain in the Latin tongue just like the medieval practice.

Uniformity was maintained concerning the church's sacramental theology. The church publicly supported the view of transubstantiation, a belief that the substance of the bread and wine changed into the actual body and blood of Christ. The overarching theme of sacrifice against which the reformers fought was adamantly maintained in the Roman rite. White observes, "the concepts of the Mass as a sacrifice were staunchly maintained…It did not suffice to speak of it simply as 'a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving' or as 'a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the cross.'"[278]

The uniformity of the rite was also maintained in the open support of the practice of private mass. However, attempts were made to curtail superstition and profiteering from the practice. These non-changes continued to breed separation of the priest from the people. White comments, "As a result, there was little connection between what the priest did at the altar and the congregation standing or sitting in the nave."[279] Metzger agrees, "The liturgical reforms of the Council of Trent no doubt made the practice of Christian worship much more sound, but they did not allow for the active participation of the Christian people in the liturgy…"[280]

The Council of Trent resulted in the distribution of a common missal because of the printing press. Harper writes, "The spread of printing enabled the Roman Catholic

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[278] Ibid., 13.

[279] Ibid., 15.

[280] Metzger, 129.

Church to assert its authority without local variants, and with a new expectation of uniformity of practice."[281] In 1570, Pope Pius V made the Tridentine Mass available to every church. According to Wandel, "this text was to be exclusive, immutable, fixed, and normative."[282] It remained virtually unchanged until 1964.

While the Council of Trent achieved uniformity in worship, the order of the mass remained virtually unchanged. Feast days and saint celebrations were brought together, but the performance of the mass remained the same as in the medieval rite. Wandel gives the familiar order (the elements immediately before and after the bread and cup): "Preface, Canon (including Sanctus, Benedictus, Epiclesis), Communion, Ite missa est or Benedicamus Domino, Benediction."[283]

Protestants continued to make changes concerning the eucharist, as a counter-reformation was occurring at the Council of Trent. One such development was the eucharistic liturgy of John Knox (c. 1517-1524), whose theological training was rooted in Geneva under the watchful eye of John Calvin. Through various incidents which brought about a change from the Anglican eucharist back to the Roman rite in England, John Knox (c. 1514-1572) became the lead pastor of the Scottish reformation. Under his guidance, the Scots wrote a reformed liturgy that came to be known as *The Forme of Prayers* (1556), the liturgical foundation of which was based on Calvin's Genevan worship.

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[281] Harper, 156.

[282] Wandel, 232.

[283] Ibid., 233.

There were noticeable differences, however. One difference was the freedom that the minister had in writing his own prayers. Thompson writes, "The minister enjoyed a large measure of freedom, that, at the inspiration of the Spirit, he might now and then frame his own prayers."[284] This led to a very simple and short liturgy, since the service lacked prayers that must be said by the minister each week. While there was much freedom in what the minister could say, the order was to remain intact. Jasper recounts:

> In structure and doctrine *The Form of Prayers* belonged primarily to the liturgical traditions of Strasbourg and Geneva. It was not a fixed rite, however, like the *Book of Common Prayer.* It provided a standard of worship, leaving a great deal to the minister's discretion, although in the case of the sacraments he was expected to "honour the liturgy."[285]

Another difference was the position of the minister, who was to lead the service from the pulpit rather than the table. Thompson reasons, "It is unlikely, however, that the minister conducted worship form the Communion table, as was at Strassburg and probably Geneva."[286] While there was a strong connection between the word and table, much like in the tradition of Geneva, this did eventually lead to a quarterly practice of the table, following the practice of Zwingli.

Jasper provides the following order (focusing on the liturgy immediately before, during, and after the partaking):

1. Apostle's Creed
2. Elements brought forward to table
3. Words of Institution (1 Corinthians 11)
4. Exhortation of warning (first half from Cranmer's 1552/second half from Calvin)

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[284] Bard Thompson, 290.

[285] Jasper and Cuming, 250-251.

[286] Bard Thompson, 290.

5. Non-prayer statement of humble access
6. Sursum corda (from Farel, said only by minister)
7. (Minister comes down from pulpit to sit at the table)
8. Eucharistic prayer
9. Distribution of elements (while scripture read)
10. Prayer of thanksgiving
11. Psalm 103
12. Blessing[287]

There is dispute as to how closely the eucharistic prayer echoed that of the Roman rite. Jasper observes, "The prayer did not refer to the consecration of the bread and wine, but it contained many of the constituent elements of the canon-praise and thanksgiving for Creation and redemption, an anamnesis, and in conclusion, a doxology."[288] He goes even further to say that the exhortation "ended with a passage which was strongly suggestive of the Sursum corda…which could be traced to Farel…"[289] Bryan Spinks believes the eucharistic prayer intentionally does not reflect these elements, which are common to the canon of the mass. He contends:

> The collect, Epistle and Gospel were replaced by "A Prayer for the Time, and the whole state of Christ's Church"; and after the comfortable words, the *Sursum corda*, preface, proper preface and *Sanctus* disappeared, probably because of their connection with the liturgical calendar, but possibly simply because they were used in the Mass.[290]

Wandel shares the view of Spinks:

> "*The Form of Prayer"* bore no relation to the Mass, so completely did it repudiate it. Not only was the Canon eliminated; all the parts of the Mass-Introit, Kyrie eleison, Gloria, Collect, Epistle, Gradual, Alleluia, Gospel, Creed, Offertory,

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[287] Ibid., 253-257.

[288] Ibid., 251-252.

[289] Ibid, 251.

[290] Spinks, 75.

> Secret, Sanctus, Pax, Angus Dei – saved the Lord's Prayer, the sermon Communion, and Benediction, were eliminated.[291]

Whether or not there was any remnant of the mass in Knox's liturgy, the supported notion of mystery was tied to the sacrament. His sense of mystery was tied not to the transformation of the elements, but in the transportation of the congregation to where Christ was believed to be seated. His exhortation before the elements gives credence to the presence of believer with Christ. Jasper records Knox's exhortation "For the only way to dispose our souls to receive nourishment, relief and quickening of his substance, is to lift up our minds by faith above all things worldly and sensible, and thereby enter into heaven, that we may find and receive Christ…"[292] The instruction of table as a mystery was pronounced in the preaching of Robert Bruce (1554-16310), who followed John Knox as minister of St. Giles in Scotland. He teaches, "Every Sacrament is a mystery. There is no Sacrament but contains a high and divine mystery. Because a Sacrament is a mystery, then, it follows that a mystical, secret and spiritual conjunction corresponds well to the nature of the Sacrament."[293]

Knox furthered the participation of the congregation in the eucharist liturgy in two ways. First, while Knox did not preach behind the table like his reformation counterparts, he did make a visible transition from the pulpit to the table, where the minister sat with the congregation. This action was done to promote a familial perspective. Thompson records, "At the end of the Exhortation, the minister left the pulpit and took his place at

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[291] Wandel, 169.

[292] Jasper and Cuming, 255.

[293] Robert Bruce, *Mystery of the Lord's Supper: Sermons by Robert Bruce*, trans. Thomas F. Torrance (Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 689, Kindle.

'the holy table.' The communicants likewise came forward and sat down at the table, which was ample in size and usually arranged in a U or T shape in the chancel or on the floor of the nave."[294]

Another way that Knox encouraged participation was through the notable simplicity of the liturgy. With many elements of the mass removed, and the liturgy performed in the vernacular, even the least educated in the congregation could participate and gain some understanding of what was being said. Knox's simplistic liturgy was the foundation for Puritan worship moving forward. Thompson remarks, "Indeed, every means was taken to make worship a corporate action, in which the New Testament Gospel could be expressed with clarity and simplicity."[295] This simplicity made the eucharist accessible and understandable to large numbers of people.

These alternations made Knox's liturgy stand apart from previous liturgies. The differences between the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* and previous Protestant liturgies were noticeable. Spinks comments, "The alterations to the text of the 1552 rite were slight; nevertheless they represent an 'independent', adaption to the *Book of Common Prayer*."[296]

While Knox was establishing Presbyterianism in the north, the Puritan movement (late sixteenth century) among the Anglicans gained in popularity. The conflict between the Anglican church and the Puritans focused on issues of worship. Many in the Puritan movement believed that there were still too many aspects of the Roman rite remaining in

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[294] Bard Thompson, 293.

[295] Ibid., 290.

[296] Spinks, 76.

the worship of the English. The Puritans did not care for the use of vestments by the clergy, the use of which was reestablished by Queen Elizabeth in 1549. They also believed that the entire church calendar should be abolished, except for the Lord's Day. They believed that kneeling at communion subtly reinforced the sacrificial nature of the eucharist. To them, there is no empty symbol. Thompson explains, "While all these might be deemed 'indifferent' matters, they were associated with Roman superstition and therefore ceased to be indifferent."[297]

The *Book of Common Prayer*, along with the ministers who officiated, came under attack. MacCulloch wrote concerning the Puritans' motivation,

> Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer was too elaborate and fixed; it preserved the ghosts of the ordered liturgical world of saints' days and prescribed recitations. Lurking behind it might even be "that popish dunghill, the Mass," which one widely read Puritan propaganda work co-authored by John Field unhesitatingly named as the source of the Prayer Book, even though Cranmer had died at the stake for his hatred of the Mass.[298]

The Puritans believed that simply reading the litanies in the *Book of Common Prayer* wasn't enough to move the hearts of those gathered in worship. Those prayers were viewed as empty repetitions, many of them too long and focused on worldly things. They also believed that the church lacked enough capable men to preach a biblical homily or lead worship properly.

This led to the development of several liturgies, which finally culminated in *The Middleburg Liturgy of the English Puritans* (titled as such because it was printed in Middleburg, Zeeland by Puritan exiles). Their goal was to frame worship along the lines

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[297] Bard Thompson, 318.

[298] MacCulloch, 383.

of the reformed churches on the continent, especially Calvin's Geneva. They emphasized that the Bible should be the only guide for worship. This meant the removal of all ceremonies, even the ones that Calvin and other reformers believed to be helpful. Thompson shares, "Although the Puritans professed fraternal ties with the Reformed churches abroad, they in fact exceeded that tradition in those matters we have indicated (and there were others), and sought a cultus still more uncorrupted."[299]

The Puritans limited read prayers in their liturgy. Thompson explains, "…the Puritans contended that read prayers 'quenched' the Holy Spirit…A prayer book seemed to them a product of human pride and sufficiency, which was imposed upon the church in lieu of God's own Spirit."[300] They also believed that read prayers led to the formation of a clergy that could not pray on their own, while falsely promoting the idea that these prayers had scriptural authority because they appeared in a book published by the church.

The end result was a eucharist liturgy that closely resembled Calvin's in Geneva. Spinks declares concerning the Middleburg liturgy, "It is in fact a modified edition of the *Genevan Service Book.*"[301] The Middleburg Liturgy had the following order (provided by Thompson):

1. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11)
2. Warning of partaking
3. Words of humble access
4. Sursum corda (based on Farel's words)
5. Prayer of thanksgiving
6. Distribution of the elements (separately, while scripture is read)
7. Prayer of sanctification

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[299] Bard Thompson, 321.

[300] Ibid., 320.

[301] Spinks, 113.

8. Psalm 103 (sung by congregation)
9. Blessing (with instruction on the table)
10. Depart[302]

The impact of the Puritan eucharistic liturgy remains historically minimal. Spinks reasons, "In retrospect, the Puritans of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century provide rather a liturgical disappointment…The Puritans failed to produce an original alternative to the enacted rite."[303] The Puritans gave great freedom to the pastor leading worship. They also strove against the Anglican books, so a standardized book by the Puritans was never fully realized. Their work in congregational participation, as well as maintaining any mystical element in the eucharistic liturgy, simply echoed what they borrowed from Calvin's rite.

Historical events in England, which forced Scotland to adopt a liturgical book, led to the convention of the Westminster Assembly (1643). This assembly was an amalgamation of Presbyterian Puritans, independents, and non-voting Scot commissioners. The Assembly, known for its eventual confession, also published a liturgy, known as *A Directory for the Public Worship of God Throughout the Three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1644). It was designed, as Johnson explains, "to replace the Church of England's *Book of Common Prayer* (1559)."[304] The directory was produced to counter the enforced *Book of Common Prayer* and to eliminate

[302] Bard Thompson, 334-340.

[303] Spinks, 121.

[304] Johnson, *Leading in Worship,* 140.

many of its forms, prayers, and vestiges, which as Johnson notes, "…unnecessarily burdened the conscience of many…"[305]

The Assembly produced a directory rather than a liturgy. The focus was on providing an outline for the service while allowing the minister freedom to lead as would be appropriate in the immediate context. Johnson remarks, "Thus a directory, not a liturgy, was written, outlining the main headings of worship and general directions to ministers, but allowing within that framework the exercise of individual gifts, such as extemporaneous prayer."[306] Jasper agrees,

> All were agreed on a rejection of the Prayer Book, but differed on what should replace it: the Presbyterians wanted a Genevan type service with fixed elements and set prayers, but the Independents preferred greater freedom relying on ministerial inspiration. Inevitably the outcome was a compromise: and *The Directory for the Public Worship of God* took the form of a set of directions and suggestions, some of which could be converted into set prayers should the minister so choose, and allowing for considerable variation.[307]

The end result was a simple guideline, not only for the whole worship service, but for the manner in which the eucharist would be distributed. Thompson provides the eucharist part of the liturgy as given in the Westminster Directory:

1. Exhortation (including warning and invitation)
2. Words of institution (from a gospel or 1 Corinthians)
3. Epiclesis (sanctification of the elements)
4. Distribution of elements (bread and cup received separately)
5. Short exhortation to holiness
6. Prayer of thanksgiving[308]

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[305] Ibid., 140.

[306] Ibid., 140.

[307] Jasper and Cuming, 265.

[308] Bard Thompson, 368-371.

Since the Westminster Assembly was an amalgamation of several different religious viewpoints, it is no surprised that a suggested, simplified directory was produced rather than a full liturgy. Johnson observes, "The service is simple, encouraging substantial prayer, extensive Bible reading, confession of sin, the singing of Psalms, serious Bible preaching, the Lord's Prayer (its only fixed form), and a spirit of holiness and reverence throughout."[309] Thompson describes it as "a monumental effort to comprehend the virtues of form and freedom."[310]

The compromised directory did lead to some rather noticeable innovations in its eucharistic liturgy. First, it magnified the understanding of mystery in the use of the elements. The suggested prayer in the liturgy included a clear epiclesis for the elements. Many of the previous reformed liturgies (starting with Zwingli) had an epiclesis for the participants to move away from the practice found in the Roman rite. This directory returns the focus from the epiclesis back to the elements. Old says, "This prayer included a very clear invocation of the Holy Spirit 'to sanctify these elements both of bread and wine, and to bless his own ordinance, that we may receive by faith the body and blood of Jesus Christ crucified for us, and so to feed upon him, that he may be one with us, and we one with him.'"[311] This epiclesis was unique to the Westminster Directory. Old asserts, "…the element of invocation is to be found in the prayers of Strasbourg, Zurich, and Geneva, but in nothing like the fullness we find here."[312] While the epiclesis that

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[309] Johnson, *Leading in Worship,* 140.

[310] Bard Thompson, 353.

[311] Old, 138.

[312] Ibid., 138.

resonates toward the transformation of elements, which is commonly found in the Anglican rite, is present, the Genevan version of the Sursum corda is noticeably absent. Jasper explains,

> The directions, which could easily be used as a set prayer and contained an explicit petition for the bread and wine to be blessed and sanctified by Word and Prayer, was evidently introduced under Scottish pressure. It omitted any reference to the Sursum corda but stressed all the positive features of Calvin's liturgy.[313]

The Westminster Directory continued the reformation tradition of congregational involvement. The elements were distributed at or around the table (depending upon the congregation's preference) to encourage the Zwinglian motif of family. The congregants were encouraged to participate in an even more rigorous way by being admonished to prepare themselves a week ahead of time to partake of the table. A distinct eucharistic piety began to develop amongst the Puritans. Old explains, "In the middle of the seventeenth century we find the following instructions in the Westminster Directory for Worship. First, either on the Sunday before the Lord's Supper or during the week immediately beforehand, there is to be a preparatory service that 'all may come better prepared to that heavenly feast.'"[314] This practice reinforced the idea that the people played an integral part in the eucharist feast, and it continued to be a key element in reformed liturgies moving forward.

The *Westminster Directory* made a clear statement about the frequency of communion. Glen James Segger, who received a PhD from Drew University on the subject of Richard Baxter, quotes the directory as stating that the Lord's Supper "…is

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[313] Jasper and Cuming, 266.

[314] Old, 138.

frequently to be celebrated; but how often, may be considered and determined by the Ministers and her Church-Governours of each Congregation."[315] This would remain in all Presbyterian directories of worship until the 1960's.

The impact of the *Westminster Directory* is a source of debate. Historically, it had little impact because it was a compromised document. The Scot-Presbyterians abandoned the usage of it, while the independents continued to push for an even less restrictive ordinance. Jasper suggests,

> This rite was bare, lacked seasonal variation, and lost any sense of order with its permitted variations. Too much was left to the whim of the minister, who-if he had little liturgical sense or ability to extemporize-could easily produce a form of service that failed to commend itself either to Anglicans or to Presbyterians.[316]

Johnson disagrees, noting, "Still today the *Directory* provides an outstanding guide to worship 'according to Scripture,'" and he even encourages that following it today "would result in vast improvement in Presbyterian worship."[317] Thompson calls it "an authentic creation of the Puritan spirit and the truest exemplar of Puritan worship."[318]

While the Westminster Directory had little impact on public worship in England, the desire to unify the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and independents still remained. In 1661, King Charles II (1630-1685) appointed a commission of twelve bishops and twelve Presbyterians to meet in the Savoy Hospital in London. The conference considered a proposed liturgy by the Presbyterian minister Richard Baxter (1615-1691), whom Jasper

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[315] Glen James Segger, *Petition for Peace: A Theological Analysis of Richard Baxter's "Reformed Liturgy"in its Ecclesiastical Context* (Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest LLC, 2011), 98.

[316] Jasper and Cuming, 266.

[317] Johnson, *Leading in Worship,* 140.

[318] Bard Thompson, 353.

calls "the most able liturgist on the Presbyterian side…"[319] Baxter had no desire to remove the existing *Book of Common Prayer*, but he wished to provide an alternative rite he believed had the possibility of replacing the current rite because it was more closely rooted to scripture.

Baxter wrote *The Reformation of the Liturgy* (also known as *The Savoy Liturgy*) in a span of fourteen days for fear that the conference would adjourn without any liturgical conclusions. Jasper records the eucharistic part of Baxter's work as follows:

1. Exhortation on the nature, use and benefits of the sacrament (optional)
2. Exhortation to penitence
3. Prayer of penitence and confession (by the minister)
4. Elements set upon the table
5. Prayer to God the father (including a petition to consecrate the elements)
6. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11)
7. Declaration that the elements were no longer common but now the body and blood of Christ
8. Prayer to Jesus Christ (anamnesis)
9. Bread broken in the sight of the congregation
10. Wine poured in the sight of the congregation
11. Agnus Dei (or some related version)
12. Prayer to the holy spirit (to consecrate the congregation)
13. Distribution of the elements
14. Prayer of exhortation
15. Thanksgiving
16. Hymn or Psalm of praise
17. Blessing[320]

The liturgy provided great flexibility with respect to the distribution of the elements. Jasper explains,

> There was, however, provision for considerable flexibility in this rite. The bread and wine could be consecrated and distributed separately, in which case the same prayers were repeated over each element. On the other hand the bread and the

[319] Jasper and Cuming, 270.

[320] Ibid., 273-276.

> wine could be consecrated and distributed together…communicants could sit, stand or kneel; they could come to the Table or remain in their places.[321]

The words used by Baxter purposefully set a different tone for the eucharistic rite compared to the heritage of other reformed liturgies. His declaration of forgiveness is closer to Calvin's view of absolution rather than Knox's petition for pardon, making the liturgy more personal. Segger declares, "Here is a rare moment in Baxter's liturgy-prayers to affect the heart and soul rather than to enlighten the mind."[322] This was because the exhortation laid aside the dire warnings of previous Genevan-based liturgies and replaced them with words of encouragement for the faithful to participate. Segger observes, "In his exhortation, Baxter broke with tradition, replacing warnings of unworthy participation and eternal damnation with an invitation containing only the promises of salvation and eternal life."[323]

The liturgy advanced the Westminster Directory's prayer concerning the consecration of the elements. Baxter replaced the Sursum corda with a focus on the Holy Spirit's action in the consecration of the elements and the people. Old writes, "Richard Baxter, one of the most influential of the puritans, further elaborated the epiclesis in his *Reformed Liturgy* of 1662."[324] It was through this prayer that Baxter revealed his belief concerning the presence of Christ at the table. While he did not believe in transubstantiation, he did not consider it an empty sign. The consecration of the elements meant that they were used by God as a key to the house of Christ. Segger explains,

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[321] Ibid., 271.

[322] Segger, 106.

[323] Ibid., 103.

[324] Old, 138.

> …he maintained the real presence of the body and blood, but explained it in terms of "investiture" rather than transubstantiation. This allowed Baxter to retain a theology of real presence, one that emphasized what the elements bread and wine represented, rather than an understanding that stressed the elements themselves…[325]

Through this liturgy, Baxter preserved the sense of mystery in the rite. This change continued the reformed tradition of congregational participation.

While the *Savoy Liturgy* quickly disappeared in the background because of the reaffirmation of the *Book of Common Prayer* across England in 1662, it has been historically considered a monument in Presbyterian worship. Thompson asserts that Baxter "transformed the Genevan Exhortation from an instrument of introspection and exclusion to an effective anamnesis or re-presentation of Christ's saving work."[326] Jasper agrees with its form, "It was an admirable and dignified liturgy, attempting to harmonize Genevan liturgical traditions with those of the Prayer Book in an imaginative way…Possibly it was too much ahead of its time."[327]

Ecclesiastical Liturgical Praxis in North America: 1700-2000 C.E.

At the same time that Baxter was attempting to convince the attendees of the Savoy Conference of the value of his liturgy, Presbyterianism began to take shape in the North American colonies. The first presbytery was organized in Philadelphia in the spring of 1706 and consisted of seven ministers. It was a voluntary association without any authorization from a higher body.

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[325] Segger, 113.

[326] Bard Thompson, 383.

[327] Jasper and Cuming, 272.

Many of these ministers left England immediately after the Westminster Assembly. This, along with the loose association of the first presbytery and the lack of ministers in the colonial frontier, led to a variety of worship practices amongst early Presbyterian congregations. Julius Melton, who has spent all his adult life at academic institutions within the Presbyterian tradition, writes, "One result of this variety in colonial Presbyterianism was a large degree of tolerance."[328]

During the First Great Awakening, the Presbyterians in the colonies had available to them the Westminster Directory but no formalized prayer book. However, this did not mean that their liturgies were directionless. They became known for emphasizing the "sacramental season." Melton explains, "This was the practice, inherited from Scotland, of placing the infrequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper within a series of services-days of fasting, sermons, examination of communicants, and singing for which crowds would gather from an entire region."[329] After this period of time, the supper was celebrated by the people. This was the defining practice of worship for early Presbyterian churches until the Revolutionary War.

The first record of a standardized confession among Presbyterians in the colonies was in 1729. The Presbytery Records, recognized as the historical account of the meetings, state,

> The Synod do unanimously acknowledge and declare, that they judge the directory for worship, discipline, and government of the church, commonly annexed to the Westminster Confession, to be agreeable in substance to the word of God, and founded thereupon, and therefore do earnestly recommend the same

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[328] Julius Melton, *Presbyterian Worship in America: Changing Patterns Since 1787* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1967), 15.

[329] Ibid., 16.

> to all their members, to be by them observed as near as circumstances will allow, and Christian prudence direct.[330]

Melton summarizes the action, "The synod of 1729 therefore gave only a qualified endorsement to the Directory, as it reflected on the unique aspects of American experience and the variety within American Presbyterianism."[331]

The next official action toward the Directory of Worship was in 1786. As the church grew in size, it reaffirmed the position taken in 1729, stating, "The Synod also receives the directory for public worship…by the Westminster Assembly as in substance agreeable to the institutions of the New Testament."[332] It is unclear to what extent the reception of the Directory of Worship made an impact on the Presbyterian churches in the colonies. Melton comments, "It is difficult to ascertain exactly the status of the Directory in the colonial church. But it is clear that Presbyterians entered the national era with no firm tradition of a recognized and controlling standard in order effectively the denomination's worship."[333]

This Synod led to the appointment of a committee to revise the Westminster Directory for Worship. The committee submitted their final work in 1788. It included a proposed order in celebrating the supper:

1. At least a week notice before the administration of the sacrament

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[330] William Engles, ed. *Records of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America: Embracing the Minutes of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, From A.D. 1706 to 1716; Minutes of the Synod of Philadelphia, From A.D. 1717-1758; Minutes of the Synod of New York, From A.D. 1745 to 1758; Minutes of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, From A.D. 1758-1788* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1841), 95.

[331] Melton, 17.

[332] Engles, 519.

[333] Melton, 17.

2. Words of institution (either from a gospel or 1 Corinthians 11)
3. Exhortation (which is to include an anamnesis and words of comfort)
4. Warning
5. Invitation of humble access
6. Elements presented (and decently covered)
7. Prayer of blessing
8. Distribution of the elements (with fraction but no pouring)
9. Words of encouragement or exhortation while elements are distributed
10. Prayer of thanksgiving
11. Offering for the poor
12. Hymn or psalm
13. Benediction[334]

This is the first known attempt at a Presbyterian directory of worship in North America. The committee's proposal was still labeled a "directory" rather than a "prayer book." It followed closely the Westminster Directory regarding the purpose or idea of worship. Melton notes, "They cited no divergence from Westminster over theory of worship nor any new light from studying the Scriptures and early Christian practice…"[335]

There were some changes relating to the proposed prayers surrounding the eucharist, however these proposed prayers were only suggestions. The prayer of blessing lacked an epiclesis or a consecration of the elements, suggesting instead that the minister pray, "Bless, O Lord, these elements of bread and wine. May we receive them as the Symbols of the broken body, and shed blood, of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."[336] There was no mention of mystery, setting apart, or a Sursum corda to denote the work of

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[334] *A Draught of the Form of the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New York: S. and J. Loudon, 1787), 79-84.

[335] Melton, 20.

[336] *A Draught of the Form of the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, 81.

the Holy Spirit. There is a suggested mention of a unity with Christ, "May we be joined to the Lord in a new and everlasting covenant, and made one in spirit with him."[337]

Uniting the eucharist within a covenantal framework was typical during the Great Awakening. Sermons preached during that time focused more on people taking on the covenant vows for themselves, moving the focus away from god working through his spirit and toward the view that the sacrament was a response by the people. Old observes, "The Lord's Supper is understood basically in covenantal terms…Now they must take the covenant vows for themselves."[338] While these were proposed prayers, the minister had the freedom to add or subtract from what was stated in the Directory. The committee that proposed the Directory used a tone that encouraged congregational participation. Melton observes that the committee "was also concerned that services impress the worshiper and call forth from him sincere devotion."[339]

After some revision, the Directory was approved in 1788. The record states, "The Synod having now revised and corrected the draught of a directory for worship, did approve and ratify the same, and do hereby appoint the said directory, as now amended, to be the directory for the worship of God in the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America."[340] However, historians believe that this Directory had little impact on the variety or forms of Presbyterian worship in the United States. Because of its vagueness and the influence of the Great Awakening, the atmosphere of the time continued to push

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[337] Ibid., 82.

[338] Old, 141.

[339] Melton, 20.

[340] Engles, 547.

ministers away from set forms of worship and toward what they deemed to be more spiritual forms. Its one impact was that it opened the Presbyterians to new forms of worship in a new nation for a new church organization. Melton summarizes, "The American Presbyterian standards were much clearer in delineating Presbyterian doctrine and polity than in guiding Presbyterian worship. The denomination had produced what could almost be described as a non-directive Directory!"[341]

There were unofficial eucharistic practices among American Presbyterians in the nineteenth century, even though the official Directory remained unamended. These schisms occurred in American Presbyterianism because of religious events like the Second Great Awakening and social issues like slavery. Throughout the diversity and complexity of Presbyterian public worship was an attempt to produce a prayer book that would unify old school Presbyterian theology. A liturgy was produced by Charles Baird, a Presbyterian minister who was known for making available in America the reformed liturgies of Calvin and Knox. Baird used these liturgies as a basis for his work. Baird's eucharistic liturgy was as follows,

1. Invocation
2. Apostle's Creed
3. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11)
4. Exhortation
5. Sursum corda
6. Prayer of consecration
7. Distribution of the elements
8. Sentences (to be read during the partaking of the elements with moments of silence in-between)
9. Prayer of thanksgiving
10. Collection for the poor

[341] Melton, 27.

11. Benediction[342]

The invocation maintained the covenant theme that was prevalent in American Presbyterianism and communion. The exhortation contained both words of warning for those who were unfaithful and words of encouragement in the form of the familiar humble access. The Sursum corda echoed that of Farel's which was used in the previous reformed liturgies. The prayer of consecration made no mention of the elements themselves being set apart (as in the 1644 Westminster Directory) but focused on the people as a holy offering. Baird writes, "We present to these our bodies, and our souls, in a living and holy sacrifice."[343]

The words of Baird's eucharistic liturgy do not address the mystical presence of Christ. He encourages congregational participation through the congregational reading of the Creed and through the content of his prayer of consecration, which discussed the need for Christians to love each other. He prays, "And since Thou hast loved us so much, we acknowledge ourselves constrained to love one another." Baird also implores the minister to give public notice before the communion service, "It is proper that public notice should be given to the congregation, at least the Sabbath before the administration of the ordinance."[344] This warning shows that Baird was conscious of the need to make sure the eucharist was directed to congregants.

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[342] Charles Baird, *A Book of Public Prayer: Compiled From the Authorized Formularies of the Presbyterian Church As Prepared by the Reformers Calvin, Knox, Bucer, and Others* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1857), 89-104.

[343] Baird, 97-98.

[344] Ibid., 89.

While Baird's liturgical work received mixed reviews among his Presbyterian brethren, it did have an impact on future liturgical development in the Presbyterian denomination. His work raised the issue of worship reform to a denominational level. His proposed liturgies and other writings concerning the history of worship in the denomination brought the conversation to a national level. Bradshaw observes, "Little official attention was given to worship until after private efforts in the nineteenth century at service books and other publications, such as…*The Presbyterian Liturgies* by Charles Baird."[345]

Succeeding Baird's liturgical contributions to Old School Presbyterian was the work of Joel Parker and T. Ralston Smith, titled *The Presbyterian Handbook.* Their book was not written from historical sources but by the gathering of contemporary liturgical works of the age. Melton records, "They had gathered not venerable Reformed-materials but compositions of their contemporaries in nineteenth-century America. Thus they were agreeing with a New School dislike of turning to the past for help in what seemed to them a new and capable age."[346] The amalgamation of their contemporaries in worship produced the following liturgy,

1. Invocation
2. Singing
3. Reading of scriptures
4. Prayer
5. Reception of new members
6. Invitation for Christians in good standing
7. Singing (Recommended "Twas on that dark and doeful night")
8. Clothe removed covering the elements
9. Address

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[345] Paul Bradshaw, ed., *New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 86.

[346] Melton, 78.

10. Blessing, breading, and distributing bread
11. Blessing and distributing cup
12. Exhortation
13. Prayer and giving thanks
14. Collection for the poor
15. Singing
16. Benediction[347]

The invocation prayer acts as a reminder of humble access as well as a request to consecrate the participants. Parker writes, "We confess, O Lord, that we are utterly unworthy of these mercies, but we ask them in the name of that Savior who purchased them for us…"[348] Instead of a reformed Sursum corda (emphasizing Calvin's view of spiritually communing with Jesus in heaven), the prayer called down the Holy Spirit upon the congregation. Parker adds, "Let they Holy Spirit fill the place so that this feast may be a foretaste of that communion which we hope to enjoy in the presence of our glorified Redeemer."[349] Parker and Smith hint at the mysterious in the prayer of the breaking of bread. Their prayer includes the words, "May we take this bread into our hands, and so appropriate it that our feeding upon it shall be a true symbol of our faith feeding upon the sacrifice which thou hast prepared for us."[350]

The liturgy encourages participation from the laity by surrounding the rite with congregational singing, showing their sensitivity of inclusion. The invocation includes an address to "strangers" who are welcome to participate.[351] The *Presbyterian Handbook*

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[347] Joel Parker and T. Ralston Smith, *Presbyterian Handbook* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1861), 188-189.

[348] Ibid., 192.

[349] Ibid.

[350] Ibid., 193.

[351] Ibid., 191.

brought little liturgical change to New School Presbyterians, mainly because, as Melton asserts, "The prayers in this contemporary-style manual left much to be desired."[352] It did, however, further the discussion about the possible need for a prayer book for American Presbyterians, whether it be Old or New School.

In 1867, Charles Shields, a Princeton Seminary graduate who became pastor at Philadelphia's Second Presbyterian Church, attempted to rework *The Book of Common Prayer*, much like Baxter had done at the Savoy Conference. Melton observes, "Shield's project was to revise the Book of Common Prayer in the way these Savoy Presbyterians had suggested…He wanted his fellow Presbyterians to consider his production to be properly Presbyterian."[353] Shields' work was titled "The Presbyterian Book of Common Prayer." The eucharistic service is as follows,

1. Warning
2. Exhortation (including examination, humble access, encouragement)
3. Prayer of thanksgiving
4. Hymn
5. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11)
6. Anamnesis
7. Warning
8. Invitation
9. Confession of sin
10. Assurance of pardon
11. Prayer of humble access
12. Sursum corda
13. Sanctus
14. Prayer of consecration
15. Distribution of bread
16. Distribution of wine
17. Pater Noster
18. Prayer of thanksgiving

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[352] Melton, 80.

[353] Ibid., 86.

19. Gloria in Excelsis (or other hymn)
20. Benediction[354]

This order is very similar to the Savoy liturgy written by Baxter, with a similar emphasis on the mystical and on congregational participation. However, there is one noted difference from the Savoy liturgy. Shields includes a comment concerning the sharing of bread. During the distribution, he notes, "That after each element has been distributed, silence may be kept a space for secret devotion. At which time also the Minister himself may communicate."[355] This practice could possibly move the focus away from the communal aspect of the meal and toward a focus on private devotion.

Shield's return to a Savoy prayer book for Presbyterians received mixed reviews. Melton records that one of the leading Presbyterian ministers of that time period, Charles Hodge, "…gloated over how Shields had made inroads into the exclusive claim of Episcopalians to the Book of Common Prayer."[356] While his work sparked continued discussion on the use of a proper liturgy for Presbyterians, it had little long-term impact. J. Dudley Weaver, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary and a Presbyterian minister with more than twenty years experience, explains that Shield's work "was generally greeted with apathy."[357]

While several other unofficial attempts were made to encourage liturgical worship among the Presbyterian churches, the next official change came in 1893. The

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[354] Charles Shields, ed., *The Book of Common Prayer as Amended by the Westminster Divines, A.D. 1661* (Philadelphia: James S. Claxton, 1867), 231-251.

[355] Ibid., 245.

[356] Melton, 87.

[357] J. Dudley Weaver, *Presbyterian Worship: A Guide for Clergy* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2002), 25.

Presbyterian Church in the United States (the southern church) approved a new Directory of Worship. This was the first revision since 1788. The only significant change to the eucharistic part of the Directory was the additional suggestion that the minister may, after the participation of the table, offer a word of exhortation to those who are only spectators. The Directory states:

> It may not be improper for the minister to give a word of exhortation also to those who have been only spectators, reminding them-"Of their duty; stating their sin and danger, by living in disobedience to Christ, in neglecting this holy ordinance; and calling upon them to be earnest in making preparation for attending upon it, at the next time of its celebration."[358]

After this optional exhortation, the eucharistic rite proceeds with a prayer of thanksgiving, a hymn, and a benediction.

Research was performed through the late nineteenth century on the manner of Presbyterian worship in the United States. This resulted in the publication and distribution of a prayer book for the Presbyterian church. Weaver records, "In 1906 the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. approved the *Book of Common Worship* for voluntary use in the church. The volume included complete worship services for morning and evening of the Lord's Day. Also included…an order for the celebration of the Lord's Supper."[359] The order of the service was as follows,

1. Exhortation (including warning)
2. Hymn
3. Words of institution

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[358] *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America: Being Its Standards Subordinate to the Word of God, The Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory for the Worship of God As Ratified and Adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in the Year of Our Lord, 1788 As Amended in the Years 1805-1895 Together with the Constitutional Rules Adopted in 1893-1897, and Administrative Acts of the Assembly of a General Nature* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1900), 430.

[359] Weaver, 26.

4. Prayer of consecration for the people
5. Sursum corda
6. Trinitarian exhortation
7. Sanctus
8. Prayer of consecration for the elements
9. Distribution of the elements (separately)
10. Prayer of thanksgiving
11. Hymn
12. Benediction[360]

This is the first Presbyterian eucharistic worship in the United States that included the traditional elements of the Sursum corda and the Sanctus. These elements placed the eucharistic service in *The Book of Common Worship* on similar footing as that of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

This work emphasized the mystery in the sacrament through the words of the prayer of consecration for the elements, which referred to the work of the Holy Spirit in consecrating the elements so that the faithful partaker "so feed upon Him, that we may be one with us and we in Him…"[361] The liturgy encouraged congregational participation by recommending a notification of one week prior that the supper would be distributed. While the majority of the service was led by the minister, the hymns before and after the sacrament gave a small role to the congregation. The Sursum corda was also responsive.

While the 1906 *Book of Common Worship* was greeted with controversy at the general assembly; it was considered a major milestone in the liturgical worship of the Presbyterian denomination. Weaver asserted in reference the voluntary worship book,

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[360] *The Book of Common Worship for Voluntary Use in the Churches* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian Board of Education, 1906), 34-39.

[361] Ibid., 37.

"Presbyterians have come a long way since 1788."[362] Harold Daniels, who for many years served as the Director of the Joint Office of Worship for the Presbyterian Church in the United States, comments on the historical significance of the book, "This service book gave witness that behind Puritan and revivalistic worship was a form of worship that legitimately laid claim to being Presbyterian and Reformed."[363]

The Book of Common Worship went through several revisions. In 1932, prayers for the Christian year were added, contemporary language was used, and a rudimentary lectionary was included. No major change to the liturgy of the eucharist occurred in this version. While the 1906 version was met with much controversy and published only with a voluntary recommendation, the 1932 book was met with applause and even published. As Daniels observes, "The title page read 'Approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America for Voluntary Use.'"[364] The book was even printed by the Presbyterian Church in the United States (the southern church) and received warm reviews.

The next major revision to the eucharist liturgy of the Presbyterian church came in the 1946 *Book of Common Worship.* The denomination had a desire to express Presbyterian theology through the liturgy, as well as to incorporate the greater knowledge of reformed worship from the sixteenth century. Two sources were used in this version. The first came from Europe. Melton writes, "The impetus for this third edition of the American worship manual had come from the appearance in 1940 of the Book of

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[362] Weaver, 27.

[363] Harold M. Daniels, *To God Alone Be Glory: The Story and Sources of the Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2003), 32.

[364] Ibid., 32.

Common Order of the Church of Scotland…"[365] The second influence was the possible union between Presbyterians and Episcopalians. While the union never materialized, the influence of *The Book of Common Prayer* remained. Daniels explains, "While the discussions failed to result in union, *The Book of Common Worship* (1946) reflected a greater influence of *The Book of Common Prayer* than his predecessors."[366]

These two influences resulted in changes in the eucharistic liturgy from the 1906 to the 1946 book. The eucharistic liturgy was as follows:

1. Invitation (selected biblical passages)
2. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11)
3. Consecration of elements (bread and wine covered)
4. Sursum corda
5. Sanctus
6. Prayer of thanksgiving (anamnesis)
7. Pater Noster
8. Agnus dei
9. Distribution of elements (elders served first)
10. Pax Domini
11. Prayer of thanksgiving
12. Hymn
13. Benediction[367]

This 1946 liturgy emphasized the mysterious aspect of the sacrament by including these words to be said by the minister: "I take these Elements of bread and wine, to be set apart from all common uses to this holy use and mystery…"[368] Congregational participation increased in this revision through the inclusion of the Pater Noster and the Agnus Dei, both of which were to be said in unison or responsively. Another change was

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[365] Melton, 139.

[366] Daniels, 36.

[367] *The Book of Common Worship* (Philadelphia: The Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, 1946), 155-165.

[368] Ibid., 160-161.

the direction in the liturgy for the elders to partake of the elements before distributing them to the rest of the congregation. This was different from the 1906 edition, which gave no such direction.

This version of the *Book of Common Worship* never received widespread use, and only the Northern General Assembly approved it. Criticism was directed at the Episcopalian influence. Daniels comments, "*The Book of Common Worship* (1946) never attained the place in the church hope for by the committee. Evangelicals were unsparing in their criticism that it was more Episcopalian than Reformed."[369]

The publication of the Presbyterian prayer books led to a call for a revision of the *Directory of Worship*, which had remained largely unchanged since 1788. The differences between the *Directory* and *The Book of Common Worship* were significant. A joint committee of the northern and southern Presbyterian churches (as well as other small Presbyterian denominations) was assigned to make the changes so that the *Directory* and the worship book were more synergistic in both theology and form.

This new Directory was adopted by the Northern Presbyterians in 1961. It reworked the 1788 Directory by making recommendations regarding how people should respond to the eucharist. Melton notes, "Ways were suggested for the people to respond following their hearing of the Word in the sermon and the sacrament-namely, their saying the Creed, making their offerings, and joining in intercessory prayers."[370] The directory made a stronger connection between the word and the sacrament. Daniels remarks that the new directory "established a propriety of celebrating the Lord's Supper on each

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[369] Daniels, 36.

[370] Melton, 140.

Lord's Day, and led to an increased frequency of eucharistic celebration."[371] The Southern Presbyterians did not adopt this new Directory but wrote their own which, as Melton explains, "followed more closely the format and content of the Westminster Directory and that of 1788."[372]

While the Northern and Southern Presbyterian branches adopted different Directories, they worked jointly to produce a new liturgy in 1970, called *The Worship Book.* Marsha Wilfong, former professor at the University of Dubuque, described the work as "a entirely new service book rather than simply a revision…It used contemporary languages in its prayers…It set forth word and sacrament as the norm for Sunday worship service."[373] The eucharist liturgy was as follows:

1. Invitation
2. Sursum corda
3. Prayer of thanksgiving
4. Sanctus
5. Pater Noster
6. Distribution of the elements
7. Responsive Psalm (103 suggested)
8. Hymn
9. Charge
10. Benediction[374]

While there is little significant change in the order of the liturgy, *The Worship Book* made two important contributions to the theology and language of the table. This

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[371] Daniels, 39.

[372] Melton, 141.

[373] Marsha Vilsong, "Reformed Worship in the United States of America," in *Christian Worship in Reformed Churches Past and Present,* ed. Lukas Vischer (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 137.

[374] Mary A. Phillippe and Frances McIver, *The Worshipbook* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972), 21.

guide was written in contemporary English for the purpose of clarity and increased congregational participation. It also made clear the expectation that the sacrament was to occur each and every week. Arlo Duba, emeritus professor of worship at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, records, "*The Worshipbook* recovered and set norm for Sunday morning worship among Presbyterians, the 'Word-Table' structure of the service of the Lord's Day."[375] Daniels agrees, "This ordering of the Lord's Day worship thereby clearly sets forth the Word and Eucharist as normative for worship on each Lord's Day…"[376]

The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) separated from the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1973. When they did so, the new denomination adopted their own Directory of Worship rather than using any previously existing prayer book or form of liturgy. The Directory of Worship was included in *The Book of Church Order*, which is the denomination's book of church polity. The Directory of Worship is not considered part of the constitution of the denomination and does not have the rule of law. *The Book of Church Order* states concerning the Directory of Worship, "it does not have the force of law and is not to be considered obligatory in all its parts."[377] Only chapters fifty-six through fifty-eight (those dealing with the sacraments) have full constitutional authority.

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[375] Arlo D. Duba, "Presbyterian Eucharistic Prayers," in *New Eucharistic Prayers: An Ecumenical Study of their Development and Structure*, ed. Frank Senn (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), 98.

[376] Daniels, 43.

[377] *The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America, Sixth Edition* (Lawrenceville, GA: Office of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, 2006), 88.

Chapter fifty-eight, titled "Administration of the Lord's Supper," provides a eucharistic liturgy to be followed by the minister. This liturgy was based upon previous reformed Directories of Worship. The PCA historical center states, "The substance of the current PCA text remains remarkably close to that of the 1645 Directory of Publick Worship of God."[378] The proposed eucharistic liturgy is as follows:

1. Words of institution (1 Corinthians 11 or gospel)
2. Anamnesis and exhortation
3. Warning (can be anywhere before the distribution)
4. Prayer of consecration for the elements
5. Distribution of the elements (with silence, thanksgiving, intercession prayers during this time)
6. Exhortation to the participants
7. Exhortation to the spectators
8. Prayer of thanksgiving
9. Hymn
10. Benediction[379]

Since this is an adopted Directory rather than a prayer book, suggestive prayers and prose are included only for the distribution of the elements, the exhortation to the participants and spectators, and the prayer of thanksgiving.

The liturgy points to the mystical by giving the order to set the elements apart by prayer. Congregational participation is encouraged through the instruction given in the Directory. It states, "The communicants orderly and gravely sitting around it (or in their seats before it)"[380] and "It is proper that public notice should be given to the congregation at least the Sabbath before the administration of this ordinance…"[381] The *Book of Church*

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[378] PCA Historical Center, "The Historical Development of the PCA Book of Church Order," PCAhistory.org, http://www.pcahistory.org/bco/dfw/58/01.html (accessed July 13, 2014).

[379] BCO, chapter 58.

[380] BCO, 81.

[381] Ibid., 80.

Order leaves the determination of the frequency of the eucharist to the individual churches, repeating what was laid out in the 1645 *Westminster Directory*.

Literature Concerning Wittgenstein's Philosophy and Religion

The examination of the development of the words spoken at the eucharistic liturgies of past and present is a gateway to Ludwig Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy. Ludwig (1889-1951) was born in Vienna, Austria into an aristocratic family with a noticeable religious background. Tim Labron, associate professor of religious studies at Concordia University College, records, "His mother was Catholic and he was baptized as a Catholic. His father's side was of Jewish descent, but his grandfather converted to Protestantism."[382] Even though his family identified themselves as Protestant, their Jewish heritage would be a source of embarrassment and, during the rule of the Third Reich, of danger.

Ludwig was an average student in lower school, studying mostly at home. Fergus Kerr, an honorary professor at St. Andrews University, writes, "His school reports…show him to be a poor student-except in religious knowledge, where he twice scored the top grade, the only times that he ever achieved that mark in any subject!"[383] In 1908 he went to study engineering at Manchester University. It was during this time of research that he began to question the foundation of mathematics. During this period, he began to read Gottlob Frege's philosophy and started to work on the problem of system contradiction that had troubled Frege. Wittgenstein eventually travelled to Cambridge in

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[382] Tim Labron, *Wittgenstein and Theology* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 11.

[383] Fergus Kerr, *Theology After Wittgenstein* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1997), 193.

the autumn of 1911 to study under Bertrand Russell. Ray Monk, the professor of philosophy at the University of Southhampton, notes, "Wittgenstein quickly became Russell's favourite pupil and the one to whom Russell looked for a solution to the unresolved questions in the philosophy of logic."[384]

Wittgenstein studied under Russell for two years before living in solitude in Norway in order to work out the philosophical questions that had burdened him since he became an engineer. During this time, Wittgenstein began to formulate the foundation of the only work that he would publish in his lifetime, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (simply known as the *Tractatus*). The foundation of his work would be a theory on symbolism. Monk observes regarding Wittgenstein's discovery, "That there are different types of things (objects, facts, relations, etc.) cannot be said, but is shown by there being different types of symbols…"[385]

After his time of solitude in Norway, Wittgenstein served in the Austrian army during World War One. He did so in search of a personal transformation. Monk explains, "Wittgenstein felt that the experience of facing death would, in some way or other, improve him. He went to war, one could say, not for the sake of country, but for the sake of himself."[386] Eventually, his sense of isolation and the horrors of war brought Ludwig to the point of suicide. At this time, Ludwig had a spiritual awakening that saved him from this action. Monk concludes, "What saved him from suicide…the kind of personal transformation, the religious conversion, he had gone to war to find. He was, as it were,

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[384] Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 2.

[385] Ray Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 102.

[386] Ibid., 112.

saved by the word."[387] Wittgenstein found Leo Tolstoy's *The Gospel in Brief* at a bookshop and carried it with him during his entire time at war. Ludwig at first despised Christianity, but during the war his viewpoint radically changed. Monk shares that Wittgenstein "became not only a believer, but an evangelist, recommending Tolstoy's *Gospel* to anyone in distress."[388]

This interaction with Tolstoy had a great impact on Wittgenstein's philosophical work. He began to think of life in a dualistic way, believing that the human body belongs to this world while the soul inhabits something entirely different. His philosophy of logic combined with the spiritual impact of Tolstoy's book caused Wittgenstein to change the direction of his philosophical work. Monk elaborates:

> His logic and his thinking about himself being but two aspects of the single 'duty to oneself', this fervently held faith was bound to have an influence on his work. And eventually it did-transforming it from an analysis of logical symbolism in the spirit of Frege and Russell into the curiously hybrid work which we know today, combining as it does logical theory with religious mysticism.[389]

Wittgenstein eventually became a prisoner of war in Italy. He used this time of imprisonment to finish *The Tractatus*, which was published in 1921.

Wittgenstein believed that his book had solved all apparent philosophical problems, and he returned to Austria to become a schoolteacher. He eventually returned to Cambridge because he came to realize that more work needed to be done in the area of language and philosophy. During his second stay in Cambridge, this time as a professor, Ludwig believed that his pride needed to be dismantled in order to write decent

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[387] Ibid., 115.

[388] Ibid., 116.

[389] Ibid.

philosophy. Monk explains that Wittgenstein believed "that the problem of writing good philosophy and of thinking well about philosophical problems was one of the will more than the intellect-the will to resist the temptation to misunderstand, the will to resist superficiality."[390] Wittgenstein traveled around Europe, confessing what he believed to be improper actions in his life. He confessed that he had lied to friends, that he had been afraid, and even that he had engaged in illicit sexual relations. He also confessed that he had lied about his heritage. Monk comments, "Wittgenstein had allowed most people who knew him to believe that he was three-quarters Aryan and one-quarter Jewish, whereas, in fact, the reverse was the case."[391]

From his return to Cambridge to teach philosophy until his death from cancer in 1951, Wittgenstein continued to work out his philosophy of analytics. He served at a British hospital during World War Two, traveled around Europe, and made one trip near the end of his life to the United States. He died from cancer in the home of his doctor on April 28, 1951, and was given a Catholic funeral. His last words were, "Tell them I've had a wonderful life."[392]

Wittgenstein's writings on religion were cryptic. This means, as Clack explains, "that we should not expect to find a coherent and consistent philosophy of religion…"[393]

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[390] Monk, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, 366.

[391] Ibid., 369.

[392] Ibid., 579.

[393] Brian R. Clack, *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Religion* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 40.

Wittgenstein was not a Christian,[394] but as Daniel Hudson reminds the reader, "Throughout his adult life Wittgenstein's attitude to religion was anything but that of a hostile positivist critic…He never spoke derisorily about Christianity, or its priests and pastors."[395]

Wittgenstein believed that the words a person uses are a picture of the way in which one understands the world. There are limits, according to Wittgenstein, to one's world because there are limits to one's language. He believed that, as Monk writes, "Philosophy would be cleared up, its problems solved once and for all, not by providing new answers to old questions but by showing that those old questions were ill-formed and arose from nothing more than 'the misunderstanding of the logic of our language.'"[396] In other words, he believed that philosophical problems exist because there are problems with how people use language. Monk notes that Wittgenstein believed philosophy to be "not a body of doctrine but an activity, the activity of clearing up the confusions caused by the bewitchments cast by language."[397] Wittgenstein's work focused on the connection between language and reality.

Ludwig's first contribution to the area of philosophy and language was in *The Tractatus.* It was here that Wittgenstein desired to show the limits of language and how it can represent reality. Norman Malcolm, a student, friend, and biographer of the Austrian

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[394] Norman Malcolm, author of *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* said of Wittgenstein, "I do not wish to give the impression that Wittgenstein accepted any religious faith—he certainly did not—or that he was a religious person. But I think that there was in him, in some sense, the possibility of religion." Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir* (n.p.: Oxford University Press, 1984), 782, Kindle.

[395] Donald Hudson, *Wittgenstein and Religious Belief* (New York: MacMillan Press, 1975), 9.

[396] Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein,* 17.

[397] Ibid., 2.

philosopher, explains Ludwig's work as "In an elementary sentence (proposition), one name deputizes for one simple object, another for another and so on. The names are arranged, linked together…as a whole, is a picture of the possible state of affairs of the world."[398] This led many to believe that Wittgenstein supported a verification principle of language, Donald Hudson, former senior lecturer in philosophy at the University of Exeter, writes that according to Wittgenstein, "So a proposition is understandable, i.e. has meaning, if, and only if, we know what would verify it…"[399]

What about sentences (propositions) that cannot be verified by empirical observation or analytical (mathematic) reasoning? Wittgenstein believed that these can be said by not being said. When the limits of language are reached, especially in the subjects of metaphysics, religion, and ethics, philosophical conundrums occur because of the attempt to use language when it has reached its limits. Wittgenstein concludes his *Tractatus* with the following admonition: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."[400]

Wittgenstein did not teach that silence meant there was nothing to talk about. On the contrary, the topics about which one must be silent were considered the most important things to discuss. This is where Wittgenstein directed his readers to the mystical realm. Bertrand Russell, former professor of philosophy at Cambridge, clarifies, "The totalities concerning which Mr. Wittgenstein holds that it is impossible to speak logically are nevertheless thought by him to exist, and are the subject-matter of his

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[398] Norman Malcolm, *Wittgenstein: A Religious Point of View?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 31.

[399] Hudson, 21.

[400] Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,*108.

mysticism."[401] Brian Clack, tutor in philosophy at St. Clare's International College, explains Wittgenstein's view as "Our language is sufficient only for picturing the mundane world of facts; it is woefully inadequate to handle the glorious ineffability of the mystical, which is beyond the world, and therefore beyond words…"[402]

However, this does not leave one with a limited and impossible view of the things that cannot be discussed, especially in the case of religion. Wittgenstein talked about the difference between what can be said and the importance of symbol, writing, "What can be shown, cannot be said."[403] When one has reached the limits of language, then one can only convey one's ideas in another way. Monk remarks on Wittgenstein's connection between saying and showing, "The philosopher has to bear in mind always that what he or she really wants to say cannot be said, and, therefore, it has to be conveyed another way: it has to be shown."[404]

This aspect of the mystical and the relation of symbolic showing rather than talking is how some believe Wittgenstein viewed religion. The aesthetic of the Christian life is to be desired more than doctrinal statements. What can't be said about God can be shown through the symbols of one's actions. Kerr observes that Wittgenstein "strives to show that neither feeling nor reason but action is the foundational thing."[405]

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[401] Bertrand Russell, "Introduction," in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, by Ludwig Wittgenstein, 23.

[402] Clack, 36.

[403] Ibid., 53.

[404] Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein,* 27.

[405] Kerr, 158.

Wittgenstein's understanding of saying and showing, as applied to the mystical, pays dividends when one sees the Lord's Supper through this lens. Tim Labron notes, "Wittgenstein rejects ostensive definition and shows that understanding requires seeing them in practice. This applies to the Lord's Supper. The phrase 'this is my body' is not an ostensive definition since understanding it necessarily requires understanding of the activity associated with it."[406] The showing through the action of partaking is key to understanding what is occurring.

Another area of Wittgenstein's philosophy is termed "forms of life." To Wittgenstein, a "form of life" was a communal event that brought about common understanding of words and actions which can't be understood by those outside the "form of life." Fergus Kerr comments that "Wittgenstein is evidently concerned with very elementary patterns of social interaction, not all of which are easily found in every society, but which are the kind of activities out of which human life is formed, no matter what language is spoken or what the social structure is."[407] Norman Malcolm believes that Wittgenstein "…looked on religion as a 'form of life' (to use an expression from the *Investigations*) in which he did not participate, but with which he was sympathetic and which greatly interested him."[408] Malcolm later affirms this thought, saying, "Religion is a form of life; it is a language embedded in action-what Wittgenstein calls a 'language-

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[406] Labron, 104.

[407] Kerr, 30.

[408] Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir,* 784, Kindle.

game.' Science is another. Neither stands in need of justification, the one no more than the other."[409]

Wittgenstein developed this idea of the "form of life" in his later writings. Dissatisfied with his previous work in the *Tractatus,* he further developed his philosophy of language to adjust for what he came to believe was not an underlying logical basis for all communication. Rather, the words that are used have meaning within each individual community. Monk explains that Wittgenstein came to see language "as a rich variety of living forms that resisted the attempts by logicians to impose upon it a unitary logical form."[410] This means that rather than a universal logic for all language, communication occurs as a result of the agreed upon meaning from the immediate community. Language is not private, and in order to understand one's own private thoughts, one must belong to a community. Kerr writes that Wittgenstein's "forms of life…reaffirm the indispensability of belonging to a community…"[411]

Theologians explore the importance of this aspect of Wittgenstein's work within religion praxis. If a "form of life" can only be understood by the community that is participating in it, then critique of religious praxis, such as the Lord's Supper, is almost impossible. Alan Keightley, who completed his doctoral studies at Birmingham University, explains, "To say that believers and unbelievers are divided about the reliability of certain evidence is to mis-state completely the nature of the difference

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[409] Norman Malcolm, *Thought and Knowledge* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 212.

[410] Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, 67.

[411] Kerr, 90.

between them."[412] In order to critique, the unbeliever must become a part of the community so that they can fully understand the meaning of the "form of life" religious language that is being used within the community.

The words and actions of communion shape this "form of life" for each particular community that participates in the sacrament. An understanding of what is occurring at the table can come about through the frequent use of language. These words in ritual will then be defined by the community as they hear and partake of the sacrament. The "form of life" in a sacramental community provides a meaning for those partaking of the sacrament. Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy explains the power of words and actions, while showing the mystical elements of the sacrament.

[412] Alan Keightley, *Wittgenstein, Grammar, and God* (London: Epworth Press, 1976), 53.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to discover how ministers introduce the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion. Therefore, a qualitative study was utilized in order to learn from ministers how they've adapted to the change. This study specifically focused on the experiences of those pastors with strong Reformed theological backgrounds.

Design of Study

The research design of the study followed a qualitative approach. Sharan B. Merriam, in her *Qualitative Study Applications in Education*, wrote, "the overall purposes of qualitative research are to achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making, and describe how people interpret what they experience."[413] This moved the focus away from the desires and opinions of the researcher to the experiences of the participants. The researcher did not intend to eliminate the subjectivity of those being studied, but rather recorded, reflected, and observed how the subjectivity of the participants impacted the study. As Merriam wrote, "Qualitative research draws from the philosophy of phenomenology in it emphasis on experience and interpretation."[414]

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[413] Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 14.

[414] Ibid., 15.

The phenomenological emphasis made qualitative research methodology the preferred choice for understanding how minsters adjust the words they say when they increase the frequency of sacramental participation. As ministers were interviewed and data collected, qualitative research allowed the researcher "…to seek patterns in the data. These patterns are arranged in relationship to each other in the building of a grounded theory."[415] Once the data were collected and arranged, a useful theory was built concerning the words ministers use to introduce communion after the increased frequency change.

Participant Sample Selection

The participant sample selection was composed of interviews with six ministers of Reformed congregations. These ministers preside over the introduction and distribution of the elements on a regular basis. While they may not be considered senior pastors, all of these men are recognized as leaders in their respective ministries. The researcher sought to analyze the words they use in administering the Lord's Supper on a frequent basis.

It was important that each member of the participant sample selection be a recognized leader in their respective ministry to their local congregation. The researcher gathered this information by asking the participants about their current vocational responsibilities. All of the participants' positions dictated that one of their primary responsibilities was the regular administration of the sacraments. This experience was vital to the study, as the researcher intended to collect data on the regular experience of introducing the Lord's Supper.

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[415] Ibid., 18.

Next, the ministers were all affiliated with a Reformed denomination. This was an important component of the study because it helped to focus the data collection. There is more connectivity of experience among ministers who share a common view of the role and purpose of the sacrament in ecclesiastical life. Thus, the variables introduced by a variety of theological perspectives were minimized.

Finally, each participant needed to be part of a congregation that practices weekly communion. All of the participants had either led a congregation through a liturgical change to practice communion more frequently or they had experienced a change in their ministry such that they currently serve a congregation that practices communion more frequently than their previous congregation did. One of the core purposes of this study was to gather data from ministers who have experienced an increased frequency of the sacrament. This increase may have brought about a change in the way that sacrament was administered. If the participants were not administering the table on a weekly basis, there would be no experience to which that the participant could relate for the purposes of this study.

Data Collection

The data were collected using interviews based on the general qualitative method as described by Sharan Merriam in her *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* handbook. She wrote, "The most common form of interview is the person-to-person encounter in which one person elicits information from another."[416] This was the format followed for all the interviews in this study. The researcher contacted each participant via phone, email, or in person to ask them to participate in the study. The

[416] Ibid., 71.

researcher then prepared each participant by informing them why they were selected, explaining the topic of the research, and stating the estimated time needed for the interview. No other information was given before the interview.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format. Merriam defines this format as "either all of the questions are more flexibly worded, or the interview is a mix of more or less structured questions…But the largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored…"[417] This format was advantageous to this study because of the prior knowledge of the interviewer and the specific data he desired to collect. This semi-structured format allowed the participants to explore beyond the planned interview questions because a greater sense of freedom and transparency was established. The semi-structured format allowed the interviewees to elaborate on many of their own responses without prompting.

The interviews were conducted in a place that was desirable for intimate conversation. Locations were chosen according to the proximity of the participant, favoring environments where there would be few distractions and places where the interviewer and participant wouldn't feel hurried to accomplish the interview. Most of the time this meant that the interview took place in the participant's church office or in an intimate public place.

Once the participants were selected, the structure determined, and the location chosen, the interviews took place. The researcher and the participant sat at a table so that a digital recorder could be placed conveniently to record the conversation. The researcher had a visible list of questions along with a notebook and pen in order to take notes while

[417] Ibid., 74.

the interview took place. A computer or tablet was not used during the interview because the researcher felt that a screen would be a distraction to the participant.

Once the interviews were conducted, the transcripts were recorded and personal notes were further written immediately following the time with the participant. This was done to limit the possible loss of information and observations by the interviewee. The researcher did this analysis no more than two days after each interview.

The interview protocol questions were structured in the following way, with the understanding that the participants were encouraged to expand upon their initial answers:

1. Tell me when you first experienced administering communion on a weekly basis?
2. Was there an instance when you starting using different ways to introduce the table?
3. How would you describe the way you prepare the congregation for the Lord's Supper in your worship service?
4. What resources do you find helpful in preparing you to administer the sacrament on a weekly basis?
5. Tell me about the time you felt that the words you (including prayer) used had a great impact in the way the congregation understood the sacrament?
6. Has there ever been something you have wanted to say or do to introduce the table, but for whatever reason, have never done it?
7. Tell me about the time(s) where you felt you said too much before introducing the table?
8. In what ways have your heard of Wittgenstein and his impact on the study of theology?
9. How do you believe you uniquely introduce the sacrament that is different from other congregations?

Data Analysis

The data underwent constant comparative analysis. Merriam describes this process as the researcher beginning from "a particular incident from an interview, field

notes, or document and compares it with another incident in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons lead to tentative categories that are then compared to each other and to other instances."[418] This process was performed concurrently with the data collection, because according to Merriam, "A rich and meaningful analysis of the data will not be possible if analysis is begun after all the data are collected."[419] The concurrent analysis was also performed so that the interviewer would not be overwhelmed by the magnitude of data collected.

Researcher Position

In qualitative research, the researcher "…is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis."[420] This leads to the important qualifier that the researcher should be aware of their biases and behavior that could possibly impact data collection. The researcher found three major ways in which data collection could be impacted by his biases and behavior.

First, the simple format of data collection could impact the information gleaned from the interviews. When a formal location with a recorder is present, the participants will "…tend to behave in socially acceptable ways and present themselves in a favorable manner."[421] The setting will have an impact on the interview process. The researcher was aware of reactionary feedback given during the interview process. Subtle changes in

[418] Ibid., 159.

[419] Ibid., 177.

[420] Ibid., 103.

[421] Ibid.

facial expressions or even a visible note taken will encourage or discourage the participant to further extrapolate their answers to the protocol questions.

The researcher was also aware of the subjective biases he carried into the interview. First, the researcher holds to a critical realist worldview. This is "a way of describing the process of 'knowing' that acknowledges the reality of the thing known, as something other than the knower" while at the same time recognizing "that there is no god's-eye view."[422]

Second, because the researcher is a minister who holds a high view of the Lord's Supper, any answers that opposed such a view could have resulted in negative feedback. Also, as one who is well-read on the liturgical implications of weekly communion, as well as the philosophy of Wittgenstein, any answer indicating that the participants have not considered or were not as literate on such subjects could have resulted in disapproving feedback. Conversely, positive data could have resulted in subtle encouragement from the interviewer that had a possible impact on the data received.

Finally, the researcher was aware that his theological presuppositions from a Reformed theological background could influence the interpretation of the results. During his fourteen years of ministry, the researcher has taken two separate churches through a change of an increased frequency of communion. This has given the researcher valuable experience in order to ask follow-up questions of the participants who have also led such a change.

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[422] N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 36.

Study Limitations

Due to limited resources and time, only six ministers currently serving at Reformed congregations were interviewed for this study. The interview analysis was not necessarily universally applicable to all times and situations. This study did not contain an exhaustive review of applicable literature. The researcher was as extensive as possible considering these limitations to the research.

Chapter Four

Findings

The purpose of this study was to discover how ministers introduce the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion. In order to research this subject, the researcher interviewed six pastors to record their thoughts and feelings as they administer weekly communion to their congregations. The researcher then organized the data to find similarities, discrepancies, or outliers in the participants' answers. The research was guided by the following questions:

1. How do ministers change the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion?

2. What resources do ministers use to change the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion?

3. How do ministers perceive the impact on the congregation's understanding of the Lord's Supper after the change in the wording of the introduction?

4. In what ways and to what extent do the minister's changes in the wording of the introduction of the Lord's Supper correlate to Wittgenstein's philosophy of the limits of language to adequately describe the 'mystical?'

In this chapter, the participants will be introduced and their responses to the interview questions will be presented. All names and identifiable information of participants have been changed to protect their identities.

Introduction to Participants

Mark has been a senior pastor for more than ten years. He is a church planter who shepherds an urban congregation of one hundred people. He was reared a baptist before coming into contact with the reformed teachings of Martin Luther and John Calvin while

at his university. After receiving his master of divinity degree from a reformed seminary, Mark's first job was an associate minister position at a church that celebrated weekly communion. He learned from that position the value and importance of frequent participation, and he brought that understanding into the church plant he started. Mark had to take the initial group that started the church through the transition to weekly communion. Many of them came from congregations that did not celebrate it weekly. They now continue to celebrate communion weekly.

Brian has been a youth pastor for almost twenty years. He currently serves as a leader in the youth program of a church with more than five thousand members. While he has served at several churches, this is Brian's first ministerial position at a church that administers communion weekly to the congregation. Brian has an opportunity on a regular basis to administer the eucharist to the congregation. However, he does not emphasize or teach about the sacraments to the youth that he currently leads.

Conner is a senior pastor at a suburban church that currently has five hundred members. He has been the pastor at this church for more than six years. Conner first came to appreciate a frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper when he served as a pastor on the West Coast. When he took this position at his current church, the congregation celebrated communion once a month. Conner guided the congregation through the transition of celebrating the sacrament on a weekly basis.

Jason is a senior pastor at a suburban church that has two hundred members, located in a major midwestern city. He is in his early fifties. In Jason's first call as a pastor, he helped a church that served quarterly communion through a transition into

serving it monthly. At his next call, he helped his current church, which celebrated monthly communion, to change to a weekly celebration of the sacrament.

Wayne is a senior pastor in a large metropolitan area in the southeastern United States. He is a church planter who started the church were he currently serves seven years ago. Previously, Wayne was an associate pastor at a reformed congregation that served communion on a monthly basis. However, when he planted his current church, he decided to celebrate a weekly communion. He, like Mark, had to take the initial group that started the church through the transition to weekly communion. They know celebrate the sacrament weekly.

Scott is a senior pastor in a large metropolitan area in the southeastern United States. He is a church planter who first served as an associate pastor in a congregation that served quarterly communion. His senior pastor helped the congregation transition to weekly participation. Scott took this same direction when he planted his current church out of his former congregation.

The Change of Words When Churches Changed to Weekly Communion

All but one of the interview subjects acknowledged an immediate difference in the way they introduced communion when their congregations transitioned to weekly participation. They all acknowledged that the words they used had to change. Some of the participants recognized that they used fewer words when introducing the table once the congregations celebrated communion on a more frequent basis.

Mark feels that he talks too much and that his transitions can be too long. He has to be purposeful of how much he speaks because he does not wish to lose momentum in the service from the sermon and music to the table. He added that he believed he was

doing a good job in this area until a pastoral concern arose in his congregation. Mark began to have a visitor at his urban city church that was under discipline from another congregation in the same denomination. The discipline involved a suspension of this individual from partaking of communion. When Mark became aware of this situation, he noticed that the individual was taking communion at his church. Mark felt it prudent, for the sake of the purity of his church and with respect to the other church that had suspended this individual, that he spend more time at the beginning of the sacrament giving a warning as directed in the scriptures. This, Mark believed, required him to use more words than he would have otherwise preferred.

To assess the use of words for weekly communion, Scott set up a liturgical review process for the ministers at his church so that they receive feedback immediately after the service. This feedback evaluates the words and transitions that minister used that morning during worship. One of the things that those providing the feedback are trained to notice is extra verbiage used before the eucharist. If there is a sense that the minister did not handle the transition well, they will be critiqued and challenged to correct this action the following Sunday. Scott mentioned that one of the struggles at his church was the fact that the minister administering the sacraments is usually different than the one minister who preached the morning's sermon. This encouraged the minister introducing the table to talk too much. Scott said, "They would end up giving another mini-sermon, or sermonette as we call it." The review system was intended to curb this practice. When asked who had given him the best advice during the review process, Scott replied, "My wife!"

Brian was the only participant who continued to use the same volume of words when doing weekly communion as when he was at his previous church where the sacrament was administered less frequently. Part of the reason was his confessed unfamiliarity with the sacramental liturgy. He was recently ordained and had only recently started to administer the sacraments. He felt that, even weekly, he needed to make sure that he prescribed to the *Book of Church Order* (*BCO*) of his denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America. He also stuck very close to the same number of words prescribed in the Directory of Worship of his denomination because that is what all the other ministers did at his church. When asked what would happen if he deviated and decided to say or do something else, he stated, "Oh, I would hear about it for sure." He didn't believe he had the institutional freedom to deviate from an agreed upon practice, even though the communion is now administered weekly.

Wayne, who planted a weekly communion church from a church that practiced monthly communion, came out on the opposite end of the spectrum, desiring to speak more during the administration of the elements rather than less. While he acknowledged that he probably does speak less now that he is a pastor at a weekly communion church, he has a desire to speak more. He would love to bless each and every person who comes up to take the bread and wine, speaking their name to them as they partake. He felt that these extra words would make the partaking special for the participants. Wayne hasn't done this for logistical reasons: he has too many people worshiping at his church on a Sunday morning.

Jason went through multiple changes of words as he moved his congregation to weekly communion. He felt that at the beginning of the transition to weekly communion

he was talking too much, reading too much scripture, and explaining the table in extended prose. Now that a few years have passed, Jason feels that he probably isn't talking enough. He admitted, "At the beginning I probably talked too much, but now I probably say too little." His focus is to make sure that his words aren't tedious and that they move the congregation to the table in worship.

While all but one mentioned a change in the words that they use to introduce the eucharist since transitioning to a weekly participation, one thing remained constant for most of the participants: the fencing of the table. This is the part of the liturgy when the minister admonishes the congregation regarding who should be encouraged to partake of the elements and who should abstain. This fencing is a liturgical norm in the participants' denomination and is seen as an important aspect of their directory of worship.

Mark considers fencing the table a very important aspect of the weekly communion celebration. He reads from the scriptures and from his denomination's *Book of Church Order* concerning who should come forward and partake. He gives a warning even if he sometimes doubts the congregation understands the full meaning of what he is saying. "They probably don't understand the language of the *BCO*," Mark admitted, "But there is good reason it is there, even though they probably don't understand." Mark said that going to weekly communion has made him more conservative from a theological standpoint. He appreciates the importance of the tradition handed down in his denomination.

Scott, another urban church planter, also makes sure to fence the table each week. He doesn't strictly follow what is written in the *BCO,* but uses terminology to which his congregation can relate. He explained, "I tell them I don't want them to do something

outwardly that they do not believe inwardly." He continued, "If they partake, it is a declaration of a reality that you don't believe is true. You become a hypocrite." Through all the changes that have occurred in his liturgy because of weekly eucharistic participation, this fencing is something that Scott still finds important.

Conner feels differently. He tries to say as little as possible before the table, giving an abbreviated fencing. He stated, "When we fence the table, aren't we really simply talking to visitors? I try to connect the table for the members of our church." This is why he believes that an abbreviated warning is all that is needed. He also mentioned that he would like to put the warning in his worship guide and reference people to a written declaration rather than giving a verbal warning every week.

Jason doesn't usually give a warning. When he transitioned to weekly communion, he moved away from this part of the eucharist liturgy. His church does place a warning in the beginning of their worship guide. There are rare occasions when he gives a verbal warning, but this happens at the beginning of the service. He explained, "If I notice a larger-than-normal number of visitors, I will point people to the section in our bulletin on communion. There it is written who should partake."

Liturgical Resources Pastors Use When Changing to Weekly Communion

During the interviews, the researcher asked the participants what resources they used that helped them make the liturgical transition to weekly communion. All of the participants except one indicated that they use resources outside the denomination to create their liturgies and to inform them of the words to use. Five out of the six participants felt that the denomination-approved *Book of Church Order* was very limited, providing only a basic framework of what to say. Scott commented, "The *BCO* is

basically worthless when it comes to helping prepare communion liturgy." Jason echoed that sentiment, commenting, "The *BCO* was basically written for quarterly communion participation. So anyone looking to it for help in making the transition to weekly communion will be disappointed." He mentioned that the *BCO* was written with the perspective that communion needs to be a special event, not a regular event, and any pastor who wants to celebrate a weekly communion should "basically ignore the *BCO*." Scott echoed the sentiment, calling the *BCO* for this context, "basically useless."

Conner agreed that the *BCO* wasn't as useful as it could be and was written with the assumption of quarterly participation, but he did find it useful for providing a basic framework for what should be said, particularly in providing a warning to those do not believe in Jesus Christ.

One topic that the interviewees mentioned several times when discussing this question was the purpose behind the table. The words used by the pastors were directed not only by their experience and education, but also by the group of people for whom they believed the table was intended. Conner stated:

> When we give a warning, isn't that mostly directed at visitors? Our worship is for believers. While we are aware of visitors and want to make them feel welcome, I'm not going to direct everything I say to that stray visitor. The table is about those who are members. Because of this, I don't feel like I have to give a warning each and every week, especially when I see that the majority present are members and are familiar with our family activity each week.

Jason mentioned the same guiding principles in the words he uses for the weekly eucharist. He doesn't add anything and rarely fences the table. He emphasized, "I stick with the words of Jesus. The Lord's language!" If he notices before the service that there are new people, he may change his words, but relies upon their experience to inform

them. “Let them observe what’s going on,” Jason reasoned, “and let the whole liturgy inform them if they are to partake.”

The participants were asked about the literary resources that influenced the words they say as they practice weekly communion. All but one of the participants mentioned works of liturgy that had no connection with their current denomination. The works that were mentioned across all the participants were *The Book of Common Prayer*, *The Book of Common Worship,* and *The Worship Sourcebook.* They used these books to help plan their weekly liturgy, borrowing prayers and responsive readings to use before the eucharist.

One common item used by the participants was the Sursum Corda, an early liturgical reading. Both Conner and Scott use this every week right before the distribution of the elements. Conner mentioned that this weekly ritual was a transition that keyed the people in the congregation that they were now entering into the communion time. He said that he could see the expression on their faces turn as they recite the words in anticipation of the communion meal. Scott uses the same response and said that this word key has trained the congregation to think of the table as a spiritual event. He added that the Sursum Corda reminds the congregation to spiritually look up and expect a communion event with God. While they may change the transition statements each week, Conner and Scott always have their congregation recite the Sursum Corda to establish a ritual.

While all of the participants referred to the sources listed above, the main source of material for the words that they say before distributing the elements is the sermon. All of the participants attempt to mention something said in the sermon or something read in the scripture reading. It is this connection between the word and table that the participants

most desire to emphasize. For example, Brian clarified, "We let the liturgy lead the way." They don't want the congregation to see the eucharist as a separate event, but as an element that is integral to the whole of the worship service. He uses the sermon to bring a "laser focus" to the table, desiring to make that strong connection between these two elements of worship.

Mark tries to reference the sermon every week. While he is careful to fence the table because of the current context of his ministry, he also connects the table to the sermon. Mark felt that if he read the liturgy as given in the *Book of Church Order,* most of his visitors "…would have no idea what you are saying." While the language in the *BCO* could be confusing, Mark found that doing weekly communion has made him more conservative in his theological views rather than more liberal. Mark did mention that one of the things that helped him the most with what to say at the communion table was a denominational liturgy conference he attended a few years ago. At the conference, he made mentoring connections, and he relies heavily upon those people for assistance with resources.

Jason follows the same practice but doesn't try to force a connection. He refers to the sermon only if there is a natural transition. Jason thought it important not to force such a connection if the scripture from the sermon that morning doesn't naturally lead to one. Scott follows the same process at his church. Their situation is unique because they usually have a different pastor handling communion than the one who preached the sermon. If there is a connection between the sermon and the table, it has to be made by the pastor doing communion. Scott said that this requires focus by the pastor to listen to the sermon and then be able to make that connection as a natural transition in the liturgy.

The overarching resource that the participants used as a reference for words came from a mentoring relationship. The participants mentioned that most of their help came from another pastor or congregation that was already doing weekly communion. They were able to learn what to say by observing other pastors who had walked through the struggle themselves and were already doing weekly communion in their own contexts. For example, Jason recalled:

> The greatest impact for me on what to say when we went to weekly communion was my pastor when I was growing up. I grew up in a church that did weekly communion, and my pastor would talk about it. When my congregation went to weekly communion, I started saying what I heard he said when I was a child.

Scott echoed Jason's sentiment, sharing that the biggest influence on him, not only regarding weekly communion but also regarding most other areas of the liturgy, was the pastor under whom he served as an assistant. He saw his senior pastor take the congregation they were both serving through the change to weekly communion. The words that senior pastor used during the transition are what Scott mimicked when he helped his congregation through the same process. He exclaimed, "He was basically the influence in my ministry having to do with weekly communion."

Brian noted that he is learning what to say at communion by watching other pastors in his church administer the table. Since administering the sacraments is new to him, Brian mimics what he sees from his senior ministers. This has helped him to learn what to say in this new ministry context. Wayne did not have a senior pastor to mimic, so he had to find pastors who were doing weekly communion and ask them for help. He was able to ask questions and gather information on implementing weekly communion, specifically, what to say each week to avoid tediousness in his language. He relied

heavily upon a monthly gathering of other church planters who were going through the same struggle.

The Perceived Impact of Weekly Communion on the Congregation

The participants were asked to subjectively evaluate the impact of weekly communion on their respective congregations. This line of questioning encouraged the participants to discuss specific Sundays that stood out as impactful moments of their weekly celebration. All of the participants mentioned how meaningful the table is for their congregations. While they may not hear specific comments every week, they do hear testimonies from their congregants when they visit other churches. For example, Scott said, "I'll have members who travel [for work or vacation] and worship at a congregation that does not have weekly communion. They come back from their trip and mention to me how much they missed communion." Scott adds that those who talk to him after being away for a Sunday or two see how integral the table is to their own relationship with God. Scott noted that the people see their weekly celebration as an identity marker for their church because it makes them unique from the other congregations in the area.

The participants also mentioned specific moments when the table seemed to have a powerful impact on their congregations. Jason shared that the table seemed to have a greater impact on his congregation when they had to suspend an individual from the table because of unrepentant sin. Before they distributed the elements, Jason mentioned to the congregation that because of unrepentant sin, a certain individual was now suspended from the table and facing excommunication if they did not publicly repent. He recalled, "A different mood came over the church." Jason tries to present table as a source of

celebration. However, when he mentioned the instance of discipline, the congregation changed, and appeared to understand the severity of what had happened.

Conner talked about specific moments that happen each week between him and the congregation. He ministers to a large congregation and does not have regular contact with a number of the church members. At his church, they practice intinction, where individual members go up to receive the elements. Conner states that this distribution of the elements is his time to have contact with the people that he normally does not see on a regular basis. He loves those moments of contact with the people of his church. They lead to "a ton of pastoral care," as Conner believes, because people come to believe that their pastor is approachable. Conner also looks at the people as they come forward each week. He believes he sees the impact of the table on their faces as they come forward to partake in the blood and wine. He shared, "I love people looking for hope in Jesus." He believes that he sees this hope every week in the faces of his congregants.

This personal connection is also how Wayne rates the impact of weekly communion on the congregation. He stands up front and has the congregants approach the table to receive the elements. People use that time, Wayne said, "to talk to him at the communion table." When people come up to receive the elements, they share their personal needs, ask for prayer, or ask to talk to him after the service. The impact is not intellectual but personal, having that immediate contact with their pastor or other members of the congregation.

There was one particular service that impacted Scott. One Sunday, he combined a healing service with communion, which proved to be a very emotional service for both him and for his congregation. However, like the other participants, Scott believes that the

greatest impact comes from the congregants' ability to partake of the bread and wine each week. He said, "This is the best part of service. This is when the world stops." He added that this is special because his congregation "Comes forward to receive Christ." The impact comes from the faith of the people that God is present with them each Sunday morning.

Scott believes that the impact of the table depends upon the impact the supper has on the pastor. In order for the table not to become an empty ritual, Scott said, "The pastor must be fed before the congregation." If the pastor does not have a lively faith, Scott implied, then the supper itself will not have an impact. He shared a story of something that happened in his ministry a few years ago. Scott found that he wasn't taking communion with sufficient reverence. It became an empty ritual for him, not because of the repetition of words, but because of his heart. Scott clarified, "Saying the same thing every week is good repetition for the congregation." It wasn't the liturgy that made the table empty, he believed; it was his heart. He felt like his heart had to change in order for the table to have an impact, not only on him, but also on his congregation.

Brian echoed that perceived impact on the congregation. He serves at a church where the distribution of the sacraments occurs by way of the members coming up and receiving the elements. The greatest impact, according to Brian, "is in the symbolism coming forward. That people are proactive in coming forward to receive Christ." He sees this, after the words of institution and invitation, as having the greatest impact upon the congregation each week.

The participants shared the ways in which they perceive weekly communion having an impact upon the congregation. While there were special moments or Sundays

that stood out for the participants, most shared how the weekly participation had the greatest impact on the congregation. This impact was perceived by the participants to be a result of their belief in the presence of God at the table, the personal connection made with the pastor or other members of the congregation, or their active participation as a public proclamation of their faith. These weekly activities resulted in a great impact upon their congregations.

Has the Philosophy of Wittgenstein Impacted What You Say at the Table?

After an examination of the words used at the table, the resources that influenced their words at the sacrament, and the perceived impact of the table on the congregation, the researcher asked the participants about their knowledge of Ludwig Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy and the impact it had on their sacramental practice. Only two of the participants had heard of Wittgenstein, and of those two, only one had read any of Wittgenstein's philosophical works. Conner, when asked about his knowledge of Wittgenstein, commented, "I know there is an early and late Wittgenstein" (in reference to how most of academia understands the difference between *The Tractatus* and *Philosophical Investigations*). Out of the participants, Jason was the only one that read any book about Wittgenstein, that being Fergus Kerr's *After Wittgenstein*. Jason couldn't remember much of Wittgenstein's philosophy, because it had been several years since he had read the book. Even though the participants had little to no knowledge of Wittgenstein's philosophy, their liturgical practice surrounding the eucharist echoed some of his principles concerning the use of language, symbolism, and mysticism.

In correlation to Wittgenstein's philosophy, many of the participants believed that the fewer words spoken at the table, the better it was for the congregation and the

effectiveness of the sacrament. Mark believed that he often talks too much before the sacrament. He recalled, “A few weeks ago I felt I needed to go into detail about the supper. I ended up talking for ten minutes!” He felt that this, while necessary for the congregation at that time, is normally way too long. Brian talked of maintaining the element of mystery at the table. He said, “When we receive a special grace from God, this is a mystery.” Because of his viewpoint, Brian likes to keep his words to a minimum so that the congregation does not lose the impact of such a mystery.

Mark and Brian were not the only ones who made this connection regarding how their words emphasize the mysterious part of the sacrament. Conner commented, “How we talk about it [the table] emphasizes the mystery.” He uses the language of “spiritual food” and “participating in the blood of Christ.” Conner, understanding the historical debates concerning the presence of Christ, said he wasn’t afraid to use the language of the Bible when stating that the bread is the body of Christ and the cup is the blood. He admitted, “Sometimes I feel like we overreact to other theological camps, like the Baptists, that makes us afraid to use biblical language about the meal.”

Jason uses the prayer before the table to focus on the mystical elements of communion, stating, “Part of the prayer before the table is where I focus on the mystical. I also focus on faith.” He feels it is important that he avoid tediousness, but he also wants to make sure “I don’t say too little.” Jason believes in finding that right balance between saying too much and too little in order to preserve the mystical aspect of the table.

Wayne and Scott, like the others, had no background in Wittgenstein’s philosophy, but they too focus on the mystical. Both do so before the table, though not in way the other participants described. Wayne and Scott promote the mystical aspect of the

table by focusing on the presence of Christ. They talk about Christ being near the people in a way that cannot easily be put into words. Scott said, “I focus on the supernatural union with Christ.”

A discussion on Wittgenstein’s philosophy, something that was new for most of the participants, led to a line of discussion on what the participants would change about their eucharist liturgy, if they were not constrained by logistics or denominational pressures. Mark mentioned that he would love to dedicate more time to the table, not because he wants to say more, but because he wants to allow more time for his congregation to celebrate and meditate. “I don’t think we fully appreciate the table as the wedding supper of the lamb,” Mark said. He desires to dedicate more time in his service for the table celebration, but the logistical time constraints prevent that from happening.

Conner mentioned the same desire. During the discussion of Wittgenstein, he, while knowing very little about the philosopher, turned the conversation to the same thing. He shared that he would love to dedicate more time to the table in his weekly service. He felt that the interactions between pastor and member, and between members, are so brief that he would love to have more time dedicated to the table during his weekly service.

Wayne and Scott also discussed what they would change. They both commented that they would appreciate the use of a kneeling bench at the front of the church so that people could kneel while partaking of the elements. Both felt constrained by the time it would take for their people to partake in this manner, as well as by the denominational criticism they would endure if they adopted this practice. Because of this, while it is a

desire of both, they believed it would never come to fruition. Jason also moved the conversation to what he would like to change. He stated,

> If there was one thing I could change, it is that the people would not eat the bread all at once. We would distribute the bread and then they could eat it whenever they felt led. This, I believe, is how we eat at a normal dinner table. We don't all wait and take bites together. But once we receive it, we eat at our own leisure. I wish I could make this change happen.

The conversation shift from Wittgenstein to what would be changed did not happen in every conversation. Brian, for example, knew nothing of Wittgenstein and, unlike the other participants, did not venture into a conversation about aspects he would change in his current eucharist liturgy.

Summary of Findings

All but one of the participants acknowledged that they changed their words when transitioning to weekly communion. They chose not to follow the procedures that had been used before due to fear of tediousness or repetitiveness. These changes included limiting what they say while letting the liturgy guide the congregation to the table. Although changes did occur, there was still something that remained for most of the participants: the fencing of the table. They believed that this process was both scriptural and historical, and they continued to include it in their weekly words before the table.

All of the pastors mentioned literary works that were helpful references when they were deciding what to say during the transition to weekly communion. However, the majority of the participants mentioned that the two biggest influences on their words were the content of the sermon and the input of other pastors who practiced weekly communion and mentored them through the process. These two sources provided the majority of the content of their words when they made that transition to weekly

communion. Some of the participants also mentioned a specific occurrence that made the table more impactful in the life of their church,. However, all agreed that the personal contact time with congregants on a regular basis was the most noticeable impact for their people.

While the participants had limited knowledge of Wittgenstein, they were practicing some of his philosophical concepts. The participants talked of limiting the words they used to describe the table in order to focus on the mystical aspect of the sacrament. They talked about the importance of symbolism pointing to a spiritual reality. When words are used, the mystical union of Christ becomes the emphasis of the words that the participants use to describe the mystical aspect of the table. The discussion of Wittgenstein often went into a conversation about what they would change about their current eucharistic liturgical practice if they were not inhibited by logistics or denominational constraints.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this research was to study the impact of Wittgenstein's philosophy on how ministers introduce the Lord's Supper as they change to weekly communion. The literature reviewed in chapter two and the participants interviewed in chapter four provided insight in a number of different areas. The first area focused on the changes in the words used by ministers who transitioned to a weekly participation in communion. The second area concentrated on the resources that ministers use to inform the process of changing to weekly communion. The third area looked at the perceived impact that the words used when introducing weekly communion will have on the congregation. Finally, the participants were interviewed about their knowledge of Wittgenstein's philosophy and the possible impact it might have on their weekly liturgy. In this chapter, the researcher will make some connections between the data obtained from the interviews and that obtained from the literature review. The researcher will also highlight some divergent findings and make some final observations.

Discussion of Findings

In accumulating the data, the following broad decisions were made by the researcher. First, the role of mentors in inspiring and guiding liturgical change is an important one. Most of the participants mentioned the influence of their mentors in inspiring their liturgical change and helping them to bring about that change. The interviewees were influenced concerning the sacraments by those with whom they have worked and been mentored. Their mentors not only influenced their theological

convictions to encourage them to weekly communion, but the mentors also provided a model for how to handle the logistical issues.

Second, much of the influence upon the participants regarding liturgical practice of weekly communion comes from outside their denomination. The literature review highlights this with American Presbyterianism. The denomination's constant refusal to agree upon a prayer book has left a vacuum of approved resources for ministers. Because of this lack, the participants use resources from outside their denomination to help them structure the words they say and the prayers they offer around the eucharist.

Third, the majority of the participants recognized that there were significant changes in the words they used when they transitioned to weekly communion. This recognition came from their perception that using the same words every week would led to an unemotional communal response after a few weeks. They recognized that what they used to say before the move to a more frequent participation needed to change.

Fourth, the majority of the participants found that the number of words they used decreased when introducing the table on a weekly basis. They did not follow the precise guidelines (as minimal as they are) that are provided in their denominational Directory of Worship but altered their words according to what they felt to be appropriate. This was summarized by Wittgenstein when, in the process of talking about mystery, one is encouraged to use fewer words, or simply to remain silent.

Fifth, the words that the participants used to introduce the table were guided primarily by the content of the sermon. In that point of transition in their liturgy, from the preached word to the visible word (the sacrament), most of the participants relied heavily upon the content of the sermon to guide their words.

Sixth, the perceived impact of the words on the congregation involved more than a particular service or moment. Rather, the participants discussed the overall attitude of the congregants regarding how appreciative they are of weekly participation. Several participants perceived a great impact in the way that the congregants were able to have close contact, not only with their minister, but also with one another as they communed each week.

Seventh, a large majority of the participants, while practicing some of Wittgenstein's philosophical ideas, had never actually heard of his philosophy. One participant had read a book about the philosopher, and another had heard of him, but the others had no knowledge of the analytical philosopher. The literature bears this out in two ways. First, Wittgenstein published very little when he was alive. Second, those who have written about Wittgenstein, on a comparative basis, have written little concerning Wittgenstein and religion. During the literature review process, the researcher found no published works on Wittgenstein's philosophy and its possible impact on the sacraments.

After summarizing the findings of the literature review and the interviews with the participants, we will now examine these findings under three broad categories: the change in words reflect a change in thought, the need for further liturgical resources, and suggestions concerning the benefit of philosophical education in general, and specifically the possible benefits of Wittgenstein's philosophy in liturgical praxis.

The Change in Words Reflects a Change in Thinking

The change in the words used by pastors when they transition to weekly communion is not simply a logistical matter. Rather, it reflects a theological shift in their thinking regarding the eucharist. In the literature review, it was noted how the eucharistic

liturgy shaped the theological views of the church during the current time period. The words and actions of a priest in the medieval mass reflected the theological purpose of the mass. The words now used by these ministers, in the same way, reflect their theological beliefs of the table. What are those beliefs?

I believe there are two main beliefs that the participants are trying to encourage through the words they have shared in this study. First, the preached word should be followed by the visible word. As the participants testified, the sermon is one of the main sources for the words they use before the table. Their liturgy makes a connection between the word and table that should not be severed. The literature review revealed that after the reformation, reformed denominations severed that connection, culminating in the *Directory of Worship* used by the Presbyterians churches in the colonies, which left the frequency of the eucharist up to the individual churches. The participants in this study are reversing that thinking by using the words and ideas from the preached word to introduce the communion table. This forms a strong connection between the two main liturgical actions of the worship service. As this trend continues, the minister and the congregation will begin to see an inseparable bond between the two, which will carry over into other churches and denominations. The congregants will expect to encounter both the preached word and the visible word when a church community gathers for corporate worship. This expectation will drive further change in a denomination that is already experiencing an increased focused on the sacraments.

Next, the participants showed that their change in words reflected an alteration in their theological thinking regarding communion, a modification that goes beyond a simple question of frequency. While the communion liturgies of the past focused more on

confessing sin and fencing the table as core components of eucharist liturgy, many of the participants in this study use words that promote either a joyful or unifying perspective of the table. This demonstrates a break from the traditional practice of the table in their reformed denomination. While the past emphasis on the eucharistic liturgy seems to have been focused on solemnity, these pastors want the weekly participation to be more of a celebration. Also, their words emphasize unification rather than separation. The reformed liturgies of the recent past focused on those qualified to participate. The current movement among the weekly communion liturgists is steering away from some of the fencing language to encourage participation, even moving to the point that participation at the table is seen as a public profession of faith. This change in perspective, fed both by the simple action of weekly participation (*lex credenda, lex operandi)* and the change in words used by the minister, could bring a view of the sacraments that breaks from the tradition of these participants' current denominational viewpoint. The researcher sees this change in perspective, from solemnity to joy, as a positive shift.

If the trend toward increased frequency continues, there will be increased scrutiny of the pastor's effectiveness in transitioning the congregation from one part of the service to the other. Not only will pastors be assessed by the way they preach, but also by the way they perform the transitions between the liturgical acts. As the importance of the table and the frequency of its celebration increases, the minister will need to be prepared to handle this type of ministerial evaluation.

The Need for a Denominational Prayer Book

How can ministers handle such liturgical assessment? During the interview process, the participants shared that they relied on two sources while making liturgical

changes: mentors and liturgical works from outside their denomination. While the reliance upon mentors is a wonderful thing, what if there are ministers in the denomination who, like one of the participants, did not have a mentor who practiced weekly participation? And, what if the ministers begin to use liturgical resources that espouse a divergent theological view of the table? This could bring about undesirable effects for the pastor, the congregation, and the denomination. This speaks to several needs for the future health of the denomination concerning sacramental praxis.

First, reformed seminaries may want to begin focusing on liturgical training. If the assessment of ministerial qualifications will change because of the liturgical changes involved in frequent participation, an aspect of a young minister's training should include their ability to lead the liturgy. Not one of the participants interviewed mentioned receiving any formal training that helped them in their liturgical preparation. All of their influences came from either mentors at a particular church or literature resources outside their denomination. While mentoring a young minister in how to lead worship is an organic way train new pastors, it also provides a forum in which inadequate or improper training may occur. While the researcher wants to encourage mentoring relationships for all aspects of ministry, including liturgy, a solid foundation in liturgical training at the reformed seminary level would be helpful in providing a base upon which the young minister can build. Also, receiving training from a doctorate-level educator would provide a standard of excellence that may be lacking if such training were simply left to mentoring relationships.

Second, the participants' denomination should consider updating their current *Directory of Worship*. The literature review demonstrates that the scarcity of direction

provided by the *Book of Church Order* dates back to the time of the American colonies. The perspective of infrequent celebration is predominate in the work and does not reflect the current trend of weekly participation. The formation of a committee to discuss and recommend changes to the wording of the communion chapters would be a helpful resource to ministers, considering the liturgical shifts that are occurring in the denomination.

The third need is for a denominational prayer book. While the literature review shows that this has been attempted in the past in American Presbyterian circles, now may be the time for another such attempt . This book could represent a compilation of pastors who have experience doing weekly eucharistic liturgies. In the book, they could provide outlines of liturgies and litanies that they have used, as well as writing in detail the importance of transitional statements This prayer book need not be prescriptive in nature, but it could be suggestive to reflect the accepted practices across the denomination.

The Benefit of Purposeful Words at the Table

The participants gave testimony as to the long-term impact of the words they used in their weekly celebration of communion. While their observations were subjective, they did point to specific observable outcomes in their congregations over time. These observations have led this researcher to make some general conclusions concerning the benefit of weekly communion.

The majority of the participants favored using fewer words to introduce the table. This leads to an organic transition from the preached word to the table, further strengthening the connection between these liturgical elements. This promotes the inclusion of the sacrament with the rest of the liturgy that in some theological circles

continues to view it at an irregular event. Since the participants favored speaking less when introducing the table, there wasn't as strong a tendency for them to preach another sermon before the table, thus marking it as a separate event from the rest of the liturgy. Their lack of words increases the continuity between the previous sections of the liturgy and the table.

The use of fewer words in the eucharistic liturgy could encourage the congregation to experience the mystical aspect of communion. If Wittgenstein is correct when he wrote, "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence,"[423] then the silence at the table by the minister could lead to the understanding that the sacrament is a supernatural event. This could be one of the reasons why the participants noticed an increased anticipation in their congregations for the table. Their experience is that the table is not something defined by words of men, but given by God.

A Subjective Experience

The literature review and the interviews reveal the subjective nature of determining the effectiveness of weekly participation. There was no reference to the long-term benefits of weekly communion found in the literature review. The participants interviewed reflected on the subjective ways they have viewed the benefits of weekly participation. During the interview process, they did not reveal any desire for methodology to quantify the benefits of weekly communion. This may be because of the difficulty in quantifying those types of benefits. While the participants mentioned that their church members shared that they missed the celebration at their local church when they travelled, these are far from quantifiable effects.

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[423] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. C.K. Ogden (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1999), 108.

Ministers who have a desire to transition to weekly communion because they believe that there will be quantifiable effects because of the change, whether it is for numerical growth or visible unity, may be disappointed. The practice of weekly communion should be considered, not because of promised quantifiable effects, but because of theological and liturgical convictions. The literature review and the participants interviewed were convinced of the benefits of this liturgical practice because of their theological convictions, and they did not intend to use it as a tool for encouragement of numerical growth.

Importance of Philosophical Education

Religion and philosophy are intertwined in constant conversation. The literature review reinforced this when the change of eucharistic liturgy formulated and then tried to answer questions about the presence of Christ and the ability for the elements to transform into another substance. Yet, the participants in this study had very little philosophical education. While well-versed in theological doctrine, particularly that of their own denominational heritage, there was little awareness of philosophical works. When the interview questions turned to Wittgenstein, not only were these educated ministers uninformed about the Austrian philosopher, they also demonstrated little knowledge or interest in philosophy as a subject.

All but one of the participants graduated from a reformed seminary. It would be beneficial for those institutions to offer a basic philosophy class to aid in the minister's educational experience. This education would help ministers to make the connection between the philosophical movements of history and the liturgical developments in the eucharist. Ministers would then be able to see the reason behind such liturgical actions in

the past and to critically decide what movements to include in their own liturgies for their present congregation. A philosophical foundation would also aid ministers in their apologetic conversations within their community.

The Benefit of Wittgenstein to Liturgical Praxis

Along with a broad philosophical foundation, it may benefit ministers if they are exposed to the philosophical works of Ludwig Wittgenstein. While I believe that studying Wittgenstein can extend into several different areas of a minister's theological discourse, I will focus particularly on the possible benefits of Wittgenstein's philosophy in relation to liturgical discourse and how it pertains to mysticism in the Christian life.

The study of early Wittgenstein philosophy centers on his final premise in the *Tractatus*, which states, "What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence."[424] Wittgenstein's view of religion belonging to the transcendent realm, beyond the world of language, means that, according to the Austrian philosopher, the aspects of religious life are better demonstrated through showing rather than saying.

Having this perspective from Wittgenstein can be advantageous for the minister's praxis at the communion table. Throughout the centuries, the liturgies demonstrated in the literature review have shown how the eucharistic liturgies of the past added words in order to explain what, according to Wittgenstein, could only be shown. Understanding this perspective may help future ministers move away from the extended discourse of the eucharistic liturgies and encourage them to let the symbol stand for itself. The words, according to Wittgenstein, get in the way of the symbol being communicated.

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[424] Ibid.

The restrained use of words that Wittgenstein promotes is already being put in practice by many of the participants in this study. As they moved to a weekly communion, the research showed that the participants' natural inclination was to decrease the volume of words they used in introducing the communion elements to their congregation. Where did this natural inclination come from?

The first may be simply because of logistical reasons. Fewer words means more time saved in the liturgy. However, this reason did not come up during the interview process. Not one participant mentioned time as a reason why they decreased the number of words they used in the eucharistic liturgies. Also, none of the historical liturgies mentioned time as a factor in their development. Their lack of words may come from something else.

If the decreased word usage does not stem from a logistical motivation, the participants may inherently be putting into practice Wittgenstein's analytical philosophy in relation to his understanding of symbol. As Wittgenstein was building to his climax in the *Tractatus,* he wrote, "There is indeed the inexpressible. This shows itself; it is the mystical."[425] These participants are expressing the inexpressible, mystical elements of communion in the only way they know how, not through language, which Wittgenstein says is limiting, but by showing, letting the symbols of bread and cup speak for themselves, that being the gracious participation of the communicant with the divine.

Conclusion

The church has developed a revolving eucharistic liturgy throughout history. From the basic, simple liturgy recorded by the early church to the complex medieval

[425] Ibid., 106.

mass to the flexible protestant communion service, the eucharist service has historically been in flux. Lately, the Protestant reformed denominations have tended to use a simple eucharistic liturgy which is being combined with an increased frequency of participation. This combination, as this research has shown, has led ministers to become cognizant of the words they use at the table. The participants in this study demonstrated a natural inclination to reduce their words in their eucharistic liturgies to emphasize the mysticism of the sacramental symbols. This approach has led to subjective observations that their congregants long for what they consider to be the climax of the worship service: the weekly communion table.

The change to a weekly communion has led to a change in how the ministers introduced the table. This change is no more pronounced then the decreased words used to introduce the elements. Letting the symbol speak for itself, rather than the minister speaking for it, could have possible Wittgensteinian philosophical underpinnings, whether the minister knows of the Austrian's teachings or not.

Recommendations for Further Research

The researcher believes that this study suggests that there would be benefits from further investigation in three significant areas. First, Protestant reformed denominational seminaries appear to lack liturgical training for their ministerial candidates. Deeper exploration into this subject would be beneficial for those specific theological entities in better preparing candidates for the ministerial practice of liturgical leadership. Second, a quantitative study regarding the number of churches now practicing weekly communion could shed light upon the several factors that are leading this change in sacramental practice. Finally, the researcher believes that Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose written

philosophy spoke indirectly to Christianity in general and sacramental practice specifically, could have a great impact on ministerial practice if the study of his work were encouraged in these areas.

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