

A little over a year ago, as a result of increased understanding about biblical worship from the preaching and teaching, one member came to the Session with a difficulty about participating in the worship as it then stood. There was much sympathy for this difficulty on the Session, who asked Pastor Hakim to preach a series directly on the public worship of God as Scripture teaches it (and, therefore, as we also confess Scripture to teach it).

This [sermon series](#) took place January 12–April 5 of this year... PRAISE GOD for the providential timing of this, as it was in perfect season for equipping and encouraging us to understand, value, and practice the public worship of God, despite the willingness of many to compromise it or sacrifice it altogether.

As a result of the preaching, it became clear to many that there were places where our worship could be brought more into line with the Lord Jesus's will in Scripture as He leads us from heaven, and to assist each worshiper in attending well upon that worship. The Session discussed and prayed for these things for months, asking Pastor Hakim to produce a paper, examining these things in detail. During this time, the Lord's providence to us also included the release of the *Spirit and Truth* film, and the children's catechism class moving through the 2nd commandment, both of which reinforced among the congregation what the Session also was learning.

After receiving the paper, the Session asked for a specific proposal (which you will find at the end of this document), along with a brief summary of the reasoning behind it. This proposal was received at the November 16 meeting, and the plan is to distribute this information and have at least one Sabbath School class for Q&A in advance of implementing the bulk of the changes when Pastor returns from vacation, January 3 (weekly Supper will begin January 17).

The primary principle here is the second commandment. Especially as understood in light of the redemptive work of Christ, it emphasizes to us the importance of worshiping only as commanded by Scripture. **The worship is the Lord's, and the Lord Jesus Himself has passed through the heavens to lead our public worship personally from the throne of glory in a very direct way. Anything not commanded by Him is not only offensive, but also disconnects it from our Lord's worship leadership in glory, without which we cannot rightly hope either to magnify Him or grow by His grace.**

What we confess to be Scriptural via WCF 21:

21.1. The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.

21.2. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature: and, since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.

21.3. Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men: and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of his Spirit, according to his will, with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and, if vocal, in a known tongue.

21.4. Prayer is to be made for things lawful; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter: but not for the dead, nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.

21.5. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear, the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence, singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God: beside religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings, and thanksgivings upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.

21.6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshiped everywhere, in spirit and truth; as, in private families daily, and in secret, each one by himself; so, more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or willfully to be neglected, or forsaken, when God, by his Word or providence, calleth thereunto.

So, in that public worship that God calls by His Word (i.e. ordinary), we are to have—and only to have: praying, reading, preaching, singing, sacraments.

And, on that public worship that God calls by His providence (i.e. upon special occasions), we are to add as providentially called for: religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings, and thanksgivings

Some additional observations...

The weekly "proclamation of forgiveness" portion is really something that God Himself has ordained to do at the table, whereat our eating the bread and drinking the cup "shows for the Lord's death until He comes." Where it sits right now is in place of "the absolution" from papist worship, where everyone is to feel/receive forgiveness just for being there and hearing it. We mitigate that a little bit by saying beforehand "all who rest only upon Jesus Christ and His merit," but it seems that God's wisdom is better by actually showing forth Christ Himself at the table. Recognizing that God has given us a place in His worship to hear and do this ought to help us reform not only by the removal of that which slightly alters the papist innovation, but also by partaking of the Lord's Supper together every week.

Anything that we do exactly the same, every single week, makes it seem like this particular form is something that the Lord Himself has commanded to be used in all public worship. This is least problematic with the Lord's Prayer, since at least it is Scripture, and the Lord Jesus says to pray "like' this.

There are several points at which we make it more difficult for the congregation to pray by requiring reading, synchronization, etc. Also, "scripted" prayer presents obstacles to sincerity of "reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love." I recommend that we keep these to a minimum. A good place for one is that final prayer, because it flows from the sermon, in which our hearts and minds have been engaged in an extended period of time. Being thus "warmed up" to those particular ideas and statements helps overcome the hindrance of scriptedness and trying to read together in synch.

Although the recitation of creeds is not a part of the public worship of God in Scripture, and thus we do not confess creeds to be part of public worship, we do see in Scripture that response and affirmation are often part of the preaching action, which fits well with what we confess in the phrase "the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word." We should all be thinking/saying such affirmation internally, throughout the preaching. But, we see it done audibly sometimes in Scripture, and it is difficult to imagine doing this in an orderly manner outside some unison statement. A great "AMEN!" would suit well, in my opinion; but, I don't mind continuing to recite from our Confession and Catechisms as a sort of "training wheels" approach to this.

The liturgy that can be distilled from the Westminster Directory is included in the ARP Directory for worship, and I have included it in a footnote. It is, for obvious reasons, consistent with our Confession. The proposed new liturgy is very similar, slightly adapted to meet the Hopewell ARP congregation where we are.

<u>Current Liturgy</u>	<u>New Liturgy</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture reading for call to worship • Scripted prayer (for help) with everyone trying to say it at the same time • Song (adoration) • Another scripted prayer (confession of sin) with everyone trying to say it at the same time • “Proclamation of forgiveness” with Scripture reading • Collection for the ministries of the church (and, less than ¼ of the time, for the poor) • Singing the same song every week, that isn’t even from Scripture (doxology) • Three Scripture readings from three different places • Singing the same song every week, that isn’t even from Scripture (gloria patri) • Song (Psalm of the month) • Scripture reading to call us to prayer • Elder-led prayer • Recited prayer—same prayer every week • Sermon • Unison recitation from our standards, affirming our belief of and commitment to what has been proclaimed from the Scripture • Song (application/response) • Less than ¼ of the time... Lord’s Supper • Scripted prayer of commitment • Benediction (understood to be a form of preaching, as only ministers of the gospel may give them) • Departing song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture Call to Worship • Elder-led extemporaneous prayer of adoration • Song • 2 readings (since the third is covered already in the evening sermon) • Elder-led extemporaneous prayer of confession of sin, and prayer for help. [Sometimes, but not always, concluded with the Lord’s Prayer in unison, as the elder leads us into or doesn’t] • Song (Psalm of the month) • Sermon, concluding with prayer for application and pastoral prayer. • Congregational affirmation of the proclaimed Word (currently called “Confession of the Faith”) • Song • Weekly Lord’s Supper (for reasons stated above, it might be helpful if we did not sing the same song at the table every single week) • Scripted prayer of commitment and devotion (at the table) • Benediction (at/from the table)

Note 1: The order of worship distilled from the Westminster Directory for Public Worship, which the ARP Directory of Worship includes.¹

Note 2: What about collections??

¹ Among the “sample” orders of worship in the ARP Directory for worship are many that include a number of things that we would immediately recognize as inappropriate for public worship (such as several elements from the 1993 PCUSA Book of Common Worship liturgy). Even the listing of the Westminster Directory in the ARP DoW incorrectly includes the collection for the poor as part of the public worship, whereas the quote from that Directory above demonstrates that while there were collections for the poor whenever the Lord’s Supper was celebrated, it was not considered a part of the public worship and was specifically prohibited from hindering the parts of the public worship. Also, the listing in the ARP DoW incorrectly includes “The Lord’s Prayer” as an element, where the actual Directory only recommends that it sometimes be used/included in the Pastoral Prayer. These errors have been corrected below. Note that the order of service that I have recommended above follows this almost exactly, with one more song and the “training wheels” congregational affirmation included as part of the public action of preaching and hearing. **(1) Call to Worship, (2) Opening Prayer, (3) OT Reading, (4) NT Reading, (5) Metrical Psalm (i.e. Scripture paraphrase), (6) Prayer of Confession and Petition, (7) Sermon, (8) Pastoral Prayer (sometimes including the Lord’s Prayer), (9) Metrical Psalm, (10) The Lord’s Supper: Exhortation/warning/invitation; Prayer of consecration and thanksgiving; Minister partakes and distributes; Congregation communes at the table; Exhortation and thanksgiving, (11) Benediction.**

² Regarding Collections. Collecting resources for the ministry of the church and for the poor is everywhere commanded in Scripture. That is beyond question. But, the apostle Paul in 1Cor 16:2–6 indicates that as for timing he wishes that it not occur during his possibly several month stay with that church. A more exhaustive study of the manner by which the collection was done shows that while it was to be brought by every individual as he came to worship, the Scripture never records or implies the activity of contributing and collecting being done as an action of the corporate worship assembly. The collection being a possible distraction from public worship is recognized by the 1645 Westminster Directory for Public Worship (published by the Assembly, along with the Confession and Catechisms, and which says “The collection for the poor is to be so ordered, that no part of the public worship be thereby hindered.” It is not a new desire to pull the collection into the public worship of God, even in the Presbyterian churches. Just three years later, it was enough of a problem that the General Assembly just three years later (1648) had to declare, “Collections of the poor, in time of divine service, (which is practiced in some churches abroad) are discharged, as being a very great and unseemly disturbance thereof. And kirk sessions are ordained to appoint some other means for receiving these collections.” Thus, we can see fairly easily simply why we do not confess them to be a part of the public worship of God.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

I would very much enjoy just standing here and watching you fellowship for the next. Half an hour or so. But we have an assignment this morning God, let us commend ourselves into the care of the Lord for it as bright.

Our Father in heaven how grateful we are to you. That you who lift up the lowly. Have been pleased to lift us up from. Despisers of you who pushed down on the knowledge of you. Who? Worshiped the. Creative thing rather than the creator who is blessed forever. When you have had mercy upon us in Christ.

And. You are taking us all the way to the other extreme. To be adopted. As your children not only. In our status, but in our state to be conformed to his image. To be those who worship you in spirit and in truth perfectly holy and perfectly happy forever and ever.

We thank you for the varying degrees in which you have progressed each of us in grace, we thank you and praise you for the work that you have been doing in this congregation. And we ask that you would be much glorified by the continuing of that work plus our time together now as we consider some things connected to what you have been doing and how we have been growing and help us out.

To follow our Lord Jesus. As he leads us in all things. And particularly and the greatest thing of the public and corporate worship of you our God in Jesus name and then.

All right, so just a few words about how we got here.

And then we'll open it up for questions one of the things that we had mentioned was possibility of doing Q&A once a month first floor day or last Lord's day some of you have been here for conferences and we've done it with conference speakers so you know a format might look like in many of you have in your family worship times or personal study had things that you wanted to think about more or maybe wanted a fuller.

Explanation and have grabbed my elbow on awards day or something an email etc and often something that you have asked about is something that I thought would be very helpful for the whole congregation to have taught work explained in fact some of you know that my answers to you ended up being nice little shortcuts for me for the barrel because I just reformat it for the pastoral letter and he saved me, you know the work there, so please don't ever worry about.

Bothering the pastor is literally what I'm called to do and quite often doesn't eat up any extra time in God's good province to us. But today's Q&A will be specifically about. The changes coming to the order of worship first on January third when we get back from when my family gets back from our vacation and then excuse me, January 17th when we begin having the supper weekly.

Lord willing.

So first of all, I think hopefully everybody understands this but maybe important to explain what this is not this is not see how the congregation likes it and one of the reasons that we are making changes to our order of worship is because worship is from God for God defined by God and our preferences do not factor in to what is good our preferences off.

And exposed to us that we still have room to grow. But you know what we find particularly worshipful or meaningful or even in our own opinion helpful does not necessarily make something either right or wise so. There are two things or two important ways that consideration of of what we do as decided by the elders both are from the Bible the first is the most important what according to the Bible is correct and right and then the second is what according to the Bible is why and is the way we are doing it skillful and wise according to the Bible says, Some some questions are correct if we do it it is right if we don't do it as a it's a sin or you know with other things of course if you do it it's a sin and if you don't do it that's right, so there's questions of that which is correct and right for worship and then a number of the things that are being changed are things that.

Is is this wise according to the Bible so Bible tells us that we have to worship corporately this way or the the Bible teaches us that the individuals need to be doing ABC and D while we do this is the way that we are doing that particular thing helping the congregation do it in the way that the Bible says as well as possible is there a way that we could do it that would be more helpful.

So you know, so you've got the the correct verses wisdom issues, so how we got here, first of all, we didn't get here exactly in the way that I thought we would. When the session picked for the first major series after the Lord called me here the book of Hebrews, I thought boy are they going they meaning the whole congregation and also the session hopefully going to be climbing for changes in the worship.

Because the reason that the session picked hebrews for you all is it has perhaps of course, this is a stiff competition among the looks of the Bible the clearest most glorious display of who Christ is what he has done and the ongoing impact of that in the church, and of course what I do as I.

Prepared for and preach the determines was that this was this especially connected to Jesus' personal leadership of the public worship of his people on earth from his throne on heaven where he presents us in glory where he is the one who sings his father's praise and his congregation where he is the one who addresses us in his word as it is faithfully preached where he is the one who intercedes for us and mediates all.

The heart prayers where he is the one who nourishes us on the merit of and from the life that he has that he himself has in his own resurrection and on the merit of his sacrifice and so I knew that we were about to handle for what ended up being a couple of years a portion of the Bible that.

If we really got it. We would be in the worship service thinking is this really something that the Bible says Jesus is leading from heaven checking our confession of faith and saying well here in chapter 21 of the list of things that we do and so I thought that would happen and it didn't.

What God does with didn't it first what God does with his worship what God does with his word what God does with his ministry is up to him in terms of timing and level of impact those of you who have children at all know that sometimes it's the 378th time you show your child something or remind your child of something from the Bible that the Lord decides to bless it to them and that some some children sometimes anyway, so the, Timing of the Lord is perfect one of the things that did eventually happen and I don't know if it was related to that was we had someone come with one part of the worship service that they were having difficulty participating in in good conscience the way that we were doing it at the time.

And the session discussed it. I don't know if they were surprised or not to hear that yeah hear me say yep is exactly right what we're doing is actually a sin and I have a real hard time with it too so they asked for more information provided just a little bit of a biblical outline at the time and it was the the collection of the offering something that had never been a part of the, Public assembly of God unless you count those offerings that were sacrifices that were full from the Old Testament that were fulfilled by Christ in the New Testament.

So that you would never ever come empty-handed you always came with something that whose blood would be shed in addition to whatever else you are going to have further celebration after the assembly with before God but there were collections of money and whenever there was something that was needed for the worship of God there were collections that.

Didn't take place in the public assembly there would be a storehouse or there would be particularly appointed people that they would bring the whatever it was that they were contributing for that and there were multiple tides. Some of you think got only required ten percent he actually required depending on.

You know, how you do the math 27.1 percent or 30 percent there's some question as to whether the second type is a tied from the remaining ninety so it's only nine and then third type would be a type from the remaining eighty one so it'd be eight point one that's where you get the twenty seven point one eight point one plus nine plus ten gives your twenty seven point one or if all of them were a tie from the original.

And part of that, you know, one of those three ties was for the care of the four and when you look at giving in the New Testament giving in the New Testament follows the pattern of the giving for the work of the church and giving for the poor and those were the those were the Old Testament offerings that did not participate in the public worship.

Of God and. You know, you can do more of the biblical theology there but there is no mention in Scripture of a collection in the assembly and certainly not a requirement some of the passages that in fact the passage that most use for it is first Corinthians 16 in which the the church and Judea is having a famine and, Paul wants the Corinthians to join the Macedonians and taking up collection for the poor of the church and he actually tells him to lay it aside aside.

When they are gather in the first day of the week and then he says so that there will be no collections when I come and then a versatility says then by the way, I hope to say the winter. So obviously not saying this is an element of public of the weekly public worship because it could not go on to say and I hope that we don't include this element in the public worship the whole time that I'm with you for months.

So it just it just does not able to carry the weight there. So initially, I gave kind of a you know, very kind of broad brush stroke explanation of why the collection is not an element of the worship service session said okay, but if we're gonna make the change with people need instruction, I cried a little inside because we had just spent two years in the books.

But, How good God was to us in giving us that worship series. Because if you think about to when that worship series started, we started that series on the theology of the public worship of God in January. And by the time the the whole. Coveted craziness ramped up in March.

This church had spent two months. Seeing the absolute necessity of the assembly on earth the glory of having our resurrected ascended savior personally leading the assembly in a way that is different than and other than what individual Christians have and what individual Christians have is glorious and wonderful, but it is not the assembly on earth.

Hebrews chapter 10 joined to the assembly and glory. Hebrews chapter 12. And so the timing of the Lord and that was perfect. So we had. So we had a series of sermons very briefly on how we are to worship God from Scripture. Anything that originates from man and worship does not reach up to the true God because it does not and cannot come through Jesus Christ.

Okay. Only what God has commanded can come through Jesus Christ, and that's John for 16 through 26 Hebrews 8 1 through 6 all of these of course are some of full sermons and if you don't know how to go on a sermon audio and and grab that I can yeah.

Just shoot me an email or something and I'll send you specific links that you can click. Second thing we saw. Wait, let's what is John 4:16 through 26 anybody know at the top of your head. It's Jesus with the.

The woman at the well. God is spirit those who worship Him must worship the spirit of truth. She wants to know the right way to worship actress. She wants to know the right place to workshop and Jesus basically says you cannot get to God. Either on the mountain or in Jerusalem God is spirit.

You can only get to God the way that He gives you to get to him which up until this point has been the temple because the Jews were right. So he does kind of stick that one in forever. Okay next we had Leviticus 9:18 through 10 verse 7. Tell me what that passages.

They made up in a bio. It has never cheating in church to use your Bible. I'm not testing knowledge. I'm just encouraging interaction, so they tell us. Native and about you. Anything that originates from man despises? God's holiness. When they added their own idea to what God had given God said that does not treat me as holy.

The in ordered properly to regard God to treat God as holy and worship we worship Him only as He has commanded and of course. He reminds us of that in the climax of that big section. Hebrews 1 through 12 chapter 13. You've got kind of some concluding. Applications but in the climax when he's when he says our God is a consuming fire.

Then we looked at. Matthew 15 verses 1 through 20 as in which. Jesus says this thing that we would all be horrified to have him say about our worship in vain, do they worship me. And their hearts are far from me. What an awful thing. To hear the Lord Jesus say about worship that the worship is empty, worthless vaporists and heartless toward him.

And he doesn't say their hearts are far from me because they don't have warm fuzzies about me while they do that. The vanity and heartlessness of worship. Was because they were treating the traditions of men as on on par with the word of God, they treated as doctrines the traditions of men.

And then Hebrews 1:1 through 4 and 12:28 through 29, which was just the bookends of Hebrews chapters 1 through 12 and we in that sermon we took a. A running to work through what we had spent two years on in the past and just remembering that the whole point of God's design for the Christian public worship assembly in particular is the superlative glory of the Lord Jesus and of having him as the one who leads worship.

And so it begins with God speaking at various times in various ways through others, but in these last days he has spoken to us. Through his son and the supremacy of Christ and it he treats Christ as the apostle and high priest of our faith. If also of our faith the one who has sent to us as a prophet and the high priest of our faith the one who stands for us in heaven as our priest and he concludes at the end where he where he began the danger of refusing him who speaks who is by his leadership of our worship bringing in.

The unshakeable kingdom and and the concluding application let us have grace, you know, everyone wants to emphasize worship him with reverence and all yes, absolutely that's worshiping with reverence and all but what is required for it? Let us have grace so that we may worship him with reverence and all.

And then the final sermon in that many series. Deuteronomy 5:8 through 10, which would be what?

What do you find in Deuteronomy 5 and Exodus 20 Ten Commandments Deuteronomy 5:8 through 10, especially the second commandment and the reason we took it out of Deuteronomy 5 is because Moses in that long sermon and Deuteronomy was probably originally a sermon at the conclusion of Moses' ministry had in his lead-up to the Ten Commandments emphasized the second commandment.

In chapter four because he in order for you to understand why God refers to worship that he has not commanded as hating him or another that's the commandment that says then that hate me about those who don't keep it. In order to understand why he says that about graven images, why is graven images?

Hating the true and living God while he is he's just finished explaining it length and did around me chapter four. That God reveals to himself himself to Israel gave himself to Israel in a specific way. And when he did that that's specific way was the hearing of his voice.

Was by his work no pictures he said you didn't see anything you only heard I give myself to you and your faith through the ear gate not the eye gate and so you come and worship me in the way I have given myself to you and you get the real me if you come and you want to worship me in other ways what you're getting is the version of me that you would prefer.

And you can hear now why that would be considered aiding the true God, can you imagine coming to God and saying I prefer to have you this way because I prefer to think and feel think about you this way and feel about you this way and suddenly you're basically saying my idea of you is better than you actually are.

And so the worst violation of the first commandment is actually to violate the second commandment so. So we had our series on on worship and you know, I had kind of said this ahead of time that if we have a series on worship and then we come back and we try to implement just the one change they're gonna be a lot of other things and I think at top of the list for many of you was probably Lord's Supper.

Right? Lord supper is not this kind of individual mysterious tuning in of Jesus by how badly you feel that he died. It is a means of grace in which his death has shown forth and he nourishes his his body upon himself as a corporate entity is a celebration a feast with a toast.

And we can think Nick Wilburn for that language. I had never made the connection before but it is a really good verbal image that connects the that. I think explains well what is happening in the cup a feast with a toast so. You know collection needed removed by that time some folks that attended a conference on the church in which the need for giving was stressed in one of the talks and the man who gave the talk who is dear dear man, and we actually had him for conference a year a couple years ago decided to try to connect the necessity of giving as a Christian virtue.

A central part of our Christian life and Christian walk which scripture absolutely teaches with. The taking of the collection being an element of the public service. Even to the point where and if you want. My dear eldest daughter transcribed the the talk. I don't remember she transcribed the Q&A as well, but even to the point where he argued that if you have worship twice on the Lord's Day, you should take a collection twice on the Lord's Day.

And every single every single household at least and the individual preferably should be putting something in that collection. It is a really, Argued for it being an element of the corporate worship service. Of course. Or maybe not a of course which presents a problem as you can see with Westminster Confession 21, we're going to have to have Q&A next week apparently.

But you can see in Westminster Confession 21, which is our chapter on the public portion. It lists prayer, especially. And then it completes the other parts of religious worship in Section 5 and then in Section 6, it says neither prayer nor any other part of religious workshops is now under the Gospel and and so on.

So it's given you the parts of religious worship and then it goes on to talk about those parts. It's designed to be in it presents itself an exalted as an exhaustive list and then if you look, At the directory for public worship which we don't confess the directory for public worship but it was published by the same assembly that produced the Westminster confession of faith which we do confess.

So in order to understand what the what Westminster 21 looks like when it's fleshed out in real life best place to look is the Westminster directory for public worship. You can find it online you can buy all of the documents all of the documents that. The Scott's church at the time accepted from that assembly in one volume from banner of truth.

It's. Feels prohibitively expensive to me and I love books but I you know, I think it's like \$38 or something. You know, maybe you're independently wealthy or just want to skip going out for one evening in order to own a treasure and great health for your life. It's amazing what we freely spend on and then what we stingily spend on isn't it?

But the reason I make the connection to the director for public workshop is in our own doctrinal standards as a church the ARP. It gives quote unquote sample reformed liturgies and. You have to understand the airpea has been reforming for a long time. We just got rid of the PC USA chapters in the confession of faith in 2014, okay, so what God has been doing even though the inerrancy question is the Bible the actual Word of God that's where the ARP was answering that question late eighties early nineties to where it is now definitely not where we would like to see her yet, but the Lord has been merciful.

And that mercy has been persistent for what we can now really say as a generation, which you look at the landscape of the church and. As marvelous that the Lord is doing that so. Our directory for public worship or book of worship. I think they call it no directly upwards of in the air peace standards we use a lot to be desired but in their sample reform liturgies they include things like Calvin's liturgy and Knox is literacy because people who want to add a lot more structure.

They go back to kind of those right out of you know, We were papers yesterday and the reformation happened and we made some changes and there you know, so Calvin's and Knox is liturgies are you know in the dawn of the Reformation but there's a lot more structure because the people were accustomed to a lot more structure and the structure is more evangelical it's Gospel based.

It's stuff from Scripture. It's kind of like a training wheels. Now. Kids who had training wheels. Sometimes you resisted taking them off. You're like these things keep me straight and they keep me upright and I want to be drive straight and I want to drive upright. And your older siblings that take them all to.

Take them off. Hopefully not because they're cool older siblings and wanted to see skin knees and elbows. But because they knew the liberty that you would have having had the training wheels to get you into a right way and then taking them off to be able to do that with full full zeal and freedom.

You know, the overly formal liturgies of Calvin and Knox are like training wheels some other things you will find if you look at the ARP director of worship in its sample liturgies are some of the abominations that came in the late 19th all the way into the 20th century the, The sample order of worship from the PC USA of 1993 is still in there, but one of the things that you will find is something that claims to be and you actually have to and I've given you some footnotes on the where it either misunderstands which you hope for or misrepresents, which you hope against but either one aren't good for pastors right it's our job to understand although you don't want moral corruption and misrepresenting intentionally, but for the most part it doesn't.

Get job the order of worship from the Westminster directory for public portion and if you look at those two things if you've got this sheet that order of worship from the Westminster directory for public work so is in the bold print under here and you'll see that just by eliminating things that were unbiblical.

From what we were doing and trying to do things that we were doing that were biblical in a wiser way training wheels off way to help to help us who are especially in the pews, it's going to be a little more work for the elders sorry elders actually not sorry.

God called you to it. It's going to be a little more work. I will help you if you need help. I can be your elder training wheels if you need me. A little more work for the elders to study and plan in order to pray hopefully extemporaneously and yet not unpreparably right there's a difference

between unprepared and extemporaneously we talk about that some other time but just by eliminating those things that were unbiblical and deciding to try to do these things more wisely so that the congregation could do what they need to do while we pray.

And so forth so that the proclamation of the gospel the assurance of pardon takes place at the table where it's designed to take place or confession of sin isn't something that you know, you're you know, rapidly trying to say at the same time and read and you know, cut off your phrases together with everybody else at the same anyway all those kinds of things.

Just by making those modifications we end up with the order of service on the. Right on the right hand side. And it's almost identical. To what the directory for public worship had. Yeah for 350 years ago. When not that it wouldn't necessarily be identical. Because I think frankly they were smarter more studied and more spiritual in the tour than we are.

But this is something that I am very grateful to God for giving us.

All true reformations are true revivals. And all true revivals are true reformations. There is this idea in some that a reformation is when you do things more correctly. And a revival is when people are more sincere and alive. The Holy Spirit is the author of both of those things.

And if you aren't clamoring to do things more correctly, you aren't actually more alive no matter how excited everybody is. And if you aren't more sincere and zealous toward God and your brother and your neighbor then you aren't doing things more correctly. Regardless of how much study and precision and offending others has been involved in the changes you've made.

I'm. Grateful to God. I think he's been giving us both. And that doesn't mean that you know, what we're doing is perfect or that we what we've done is perfect but that's basically introduction explanation of how we got here we'll jump right into I'm not gonna recap this next week, we'll jump right into the Q&A about different parts of it next week if you want to send questions in advance, that's fine we do that for the conference.

With other things occur to you you have not missed your chance to ask them, you know, you could feel free to ask them, let's pray.

Our father we thank you for your word. We thank you that. We may be more sure. Of what you say. Then of what we feel. We pray that you would.

That you would magnify yourself. Before us not only in the worship that we are about to go into now. But in the public worship. So long as you maintain it in this place. We ask that you would continue to maintain it. Lord Grant unto us that inward spiritual work of your Holy Spirit.

So that we would not come and do things more accurately and precisely. With cold dead hearts. Wills that have not been bent or changed at all in the way we live unto you. But Grant that you would glorify yourself both in the worship and by what you accomplished through it even as you have.

Commanded for it the means of your grace. We asked these things in Jesus' name. Amen.