

“What Makes Worship ‘Lutheran’?” “What Makes Lutherans Worship?”

In the “Lutheran Service Book” for worship services in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Lord’s kingdom, we have some wonderful reminders of what worship is and why we do it. As students are picking up new textbooks with the start of a new school year, there is also a time of review before going into the new material for further growth for life in this world. Such as in the church – we keep reviewing and growing as we go forward in our walk in this world with our Lord Jesus until we walk with Him eternally in heaven by His grace. The following quotes come from the introduction to the hymnal as we look at these two questions.

First of all, what makes worship “Lutheran”? What makes anything “Lutheran”? (Simply put, it’s the *Grace alone, Faith alone, Scripture alone* that permeates the: proclaiming of the Word; gaining of God’s grace as we confess our sins and receive His sacraments for forgiveness, faith and proclaim His death and resurrection through them; and conversing with God in prayer as we come together in His name for blessing and then leave to go out into the world as witnesses with His blessing – to bless others as they perceive and receive His grace through the Holy Spirit working through His Word!) The hymnal also puts it this way: “Within the Lutheran tradition, the wedding of the Word of God to melody was modeled by the reformer himself. Martin Luther had a high regard for music and urged the Church to use it wisely as a vehicle for proclaiming the Gospel. ‘Next to theology,’ he wrote, ‘I accord to music the highest place and the greatest honor.’ Retaining the best of pre-Reformation hymnody, as well as adding a great number of new hymns to the Church’s song, Luther and succeeding generations of hymn writers continue to inspire the faithful to lift their voices in praise and thanksgiving to the triune God.”...“Each of these hymnals [of the Synod in years past] not only handed on the treasures of the past but also offered contemporary expressions of word and song in service to the Gospel....In every age God also blesses His people by raising up hymn writers who have honed their craft to create rich and fresh expressions of praise.”

Now to answer the 2nd question “What makes a Lutheran worship” (which sounds odd since we live under and by grace, we might ask “What **drives or influences** a Lutheran Christian to worship?”) in a Gospel-motivated way, these following words are offered: “Our Lord is the Lord who serves. Jesus Christ came into the flesh not to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. ...Our Lord serves us today through His holy Word and Sacraments. ...The Lord’s service calls forth our service—in sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to Him and in loving service to one another. Having been called, gathered, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, we receive His gifts with thankfulness and praise. With psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, we joyfully confess all that God has done for us, declaring the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Our song joins with the song of every saint from every age, the new song of Christ’s holy people, declaring: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!’ (Revelation 5:12).”

Why else do Lutherans worship? Because as Jesus’ disciples, we follow our Lord (Matthew 4:19; 9:9; John 21:22) and He reminds us that the disciples “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42). Likewise, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25).
Worshiping the triune God with you as His witnesses,

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