

What Do We Sing in Public Worship? Only the Psalms?

Pastor Ronald E. Pearce
Church of the Covenant, Orthodox Presbyterian Church
319 Blau Road
Hackettstown, NJ 07840-5227

© *Ronald E. Pearce*
May 29, 2025

No portion of this syllabus may be duplicated without written permission from the author.

What Do We Sing in Public Worship? Only the Psalms?

Historically Scottish Presbyterian and Reformed Churches only sang the 150 Old Testament Psalms in public worship. This position is known as Exclusive Psalmody. But the Lutheran and Anglican Churches in the Reformation and most Presbyterian and Reformed Churches today do not hold to this position. Why is Exclusive Psalmody not the practice of Bible believing churches? Should it be?

Maybe the question of Exclusive Psalmody has never been an issue for you. But it is an important issue that needs to be discussed. It is an issue that often arises in people's minds when they come to understand the Regulative Principle of Worship, and they will often wrestle with this question. Or, when a believer who holds to Exclusive Psalmody raises this matter you need to be able to have an answer for his questions explaining what you believe.

Let's consider each position and then reflect on suggested resolutions:

The Exclusive Psalmody Position: to Sing Only the Psalms in Public Worship.
The Psalms and Hymns Position: to Sing Both Hymns and Psalms in Public Worship.
Suggested Resolutions for the Two Positions to Abide Together in the Body of Christ.

The Exclusive Psalmody Position: to Sing Only the Psalms in Public Worship

Why do some believe they should only sing the Psalms? The answer is three-fold: they believe: the Scriptures require this conclusion; secondly, they believe that's what church history supports; and thirdly, it is what the Confession teaches.

The Scriptural basis presented for Exclusive Psalmody

The Biblical argument for Exclusive Psalmody flows from the Regulative Principle of Worship, that the Church must include in public worship only what God has instituted in Scripture as an element of worship. We may not go further than what the Scriptures prescribe for our worship.

Scripture commands the Old Testament church to sing the psalms as an element of worship. "Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him" (Psalm 105:2 KJ). God divinely inspired and appointed these psalms of praise for the Old Testament Church, intending them for a permanent use in public worship. The Church of God through history is one Church, so we as the New Testament Church have been given the same Psalms and instructed to use them in worship. Since there must be Divine revelation to direct worship, and since there is no *command* in Scripture to sing anything other than the Old Testament Psalms, therefore the New Testament Church may only sing in her public worship the Old Testament Psalms. All other hymns or songs are excluded for public worship. There is no warrant in Scripture for the use of uninspired human compositions in the singing of God's praise in public corporate worship.

The two New Testament texts used to support Exclusive Psalmody are: Ephesians 5:18-21 (ASV) "And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in **psalms and hymns and spiritual songs**, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ" (emphasis added). And the parallel passage in Colossians 3:16-17 (ASV): "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with **psalms and hymns and**

spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (emphasis added).

The argument is that the Greek phrase “**psalms, hymns and spiritual songs**” does not indicate three different types of music, as if we may sing hymns and spiritual songs along with Old Testament Psalms. Rather, it is maintained that this phrase is what is found in the Greek Old Testament (LXX) of the Psalms as an interchangeable synonym for the Book of Psalms.¹²

The historical basis presented for Exclusive Psalmody

The early New Testament Church followed the model of the synagogue for worship. The Psalms would have been sung in the synagogue. So this would have been the practice of the Church as well (it is assumed).³

Testimonies in the ancient church to the use of the Psalter are plentiful. Athanasius, an apologist wrote, “I believe that a man can find nothing more glorious than these Psalms; for they embrace the whole life of a man, the affections of his mind, and the motions of his soul. To praise and glorify God, he can select a psalm suited to every occasion, and thus will find that they were written for him.” And Basil of Caesara declared, ‘The Book of Psalms is a compend of all divinity; a common store of medicine for the soul; a universal magazine of good doctrines, profitable to everyone in all conditions.’”⁴ Many monks memorized the entire Psalter, reciting it in full in a vigil. The Synod of Laodicea about 360 AD declared in its 59th canon: We forbid “the singing of uninspired hymns in the church, and the reading of uncanonical books of Scripture.”⁵

Some have attempted to claim John Calvin held the Exclusive Psalmody position. It is true Calvin was the father of the Psalter, even though he was not a musician. The Geneva Psalter was first published 1551, and eleven years later the complete edition was published.⁶ In the Calvinistic churches of the Reformation the psalms were sung in public worship. In France to chant the Psalms meant in popular parlance to turn Protestant. In England the Psalter (Sternhold and Hopkins) became in the 17th century the most familiar verse known to the majority of Englishmen. Extensive knowledge of the Psalms gave rise to the fertile spiritual hymnology of the 18th century. (Worley)

¹ Hector Cameron

² For example, the argument might be that “psalms” are referred to in such references as Psalm 105:2, 1 Chron 16:9. Whereas Psalm 120 song of degrees, is an example of a “spiritual song.” And the hallelujah psalms, 105-109, 145-150 would be examples of “hymns.”

³ Godfrey, 61

⁴ Godfrey, 62

⁵ Gerstner, 203

⁶ Even though Calvin authored the Psalter, he did not compose it because he held an Exclusive Psalmody position. “He advocated the singing of psalms not because he thought singing songs outside the Psalter violated the Regulative Principle, but rather on grounds of quality. He thought that the Psalms represented the best conceivable worship songs.” (Dr. John Frame, in personal letter, December 12, 2002)

The Confessional basis for Exclusive Psalmody

The Westminster Confession chapter XXI states the church is to sing “Psalms with grace in the heart.” It would have been understood by the original audience of the Confession that what “psalms” referred to were the Old Testament Book of Psalms. In the Westminster Directory for Worship the congregations were exhorted to sing psalms and those who could read should acquire a psalm book. The Westminster Divines recommended Rouse’s version of the metrical Psalms for use in the three Kingdoms of Great Britain (the subject of instrumental music was never raised). The first book published in America, showing the Puritans’ concern on the matter, was The Psalter.

So one might suppose with such support from Scripture from Church history and from the Confession, why would another position even be considered? Why isn’t the position for all Bible-believing churches Exclusive Psalmody? The answer is that we do not believe the Scriptures teach Exclusive Psalmody, nor does church history require this. We turn now to consider the second position.

The Psalms and Hymns Position: to Sing Both Hymns and Psalms in Public Worship

The question is: “Must we *only* sing the Old Testament Psalms in public worship?” On the basis of God’s Word we strongly answer, “No.” Do we believe that there should be a high regard for the singing of the Psalms and that they should be sung frequently in worship? Absolutely, yes. *Frequently*, but *not exclusively*. Consider the value of the Psalms. They record a wide variety of poetry set to music for temple choirs or for the people’s singing. Some are songs of individuals, especially those by or for the king as he represents the people. There are also the “we” psalms, where the people of God collectively engage in lament, praise, confession or prayer. In the psalms God’s people respond to Him, encourage one another in His presence, and bear witness to the nations (Psalm 96:3). There is a rich variety emotional expressions and subjects in the psalms, a variety that is broader than what is sung in most churches.

But we also have the freedom Biblically to sing *more* than the Psalms of David. In the language of our Directory for Worship, “Since the metrical versions of the Psalms are based upon the Word of God, they ought to be used frequently in public worship. Great care must be taken that all the materials of song are in perfect accord with the teaching of Holy Scripture. Let the tunes as well as the words be dignified and elevated . . .”⁷ We believe that we may sing the Psalms and other hymns in public worship because, the Scripture allows for singing more than only Psalms. Secondly, Biblical history allows for singing more than only Psalms. Thirdly, Church history allows for singing more than only Psalms.

The Scripture allows for singing more than only Psalms

Let’s look at the two passages of Paul and then the Scriptures as a whole. Neither teach Exclusive Psalmody. First, let’s consider Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. These verses are too weak to support the Exclusive Psalmody position, in fact they are not teaching Exclusive Psalmody at all. “And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-21 ASV).

The phrase, “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” cannot be proven to refer to the Old Testament Psalter (which is the Exclusive Psalmody claim). Rather the three terms overlap and are interchangeable. We can’t be precise in saying what they mean or if they were ever intended to be precise, technical, different terms.⁸ It cannot be proven that this phrase is used Biblically to refer to the Psalms. Paul’s trilogy (psalms, hymns and spiritual songs) is unattested in the Bible as referring to the Book of Psalms. Outside of these two occurrences in Paul “nowhere in the Bible is this a way of referring to the 150 Psalms as a corpus, i.e., the Psalter, or of the 150 psalms conceived individually. While it is true that some psalms are labeled by one or more of these descriptives, many psalms are not labeled by any of these descriptives (in Hebrew or Greek). The three words are used separately (in separate contexts) and one or two together (in the same context) in reference to the psalms in the Psalter. Moreover, although the other two words were used in Jewish circles only of Biblical psalms, “songs” is used of other songs not found in the Psalter.”⁹

Dr. Robert Godfrey (who himself supports Exclusive Psalmody) points out two examples of how these words are used as synonyms. After the Last Supper Christ and His disciples went out by singing a “hymn” (Matthew 26:30). But we know from the Hebrew practice of Passover that they were actually singing Psalm. 118. So hymn and psalm are used as synonyms. Also in 1 Corinthians 14:26 we read, each one has a “psalm.” But in context “psalm” would have been a hymn composed by the Corinthian church. And so for this reason the NIV and NRS translate the verse as “each one has a hymn.” What Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 14 is the spontaneity of the apostolic church. Tongues and interpretation of tongues reveal what is *new*. Clearly “psalm” used in such a context is *not* in the sense of David’s Old Testament Psalms, but a fresh working of the Holy Spirit in His Church giving a fresh composition of songs of praise to God.

It cannot be proven that Paul in Ephesians or Colossians is even talking about public worship services of the Church. The Exclusive Psalmody position seems to assume that he is, but that cannot be proven from the text. Paul addresses the Christian’s walk in general, one’s relationship with other believers. He describes evidence for a Spirit-filled life. But nowhere does he say anything about limiting our singing in church worship.¹⁰ At the very least we conclude from these passages that the phrase “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” is probably not referring to the 150 Old Testament Psalms. There is too much fluidity in definitions and overlap with the words. One cannot prove that Paul means only the Old Testament Psalms with this phrase, any more than every time the word “judges” appears in Scripture it must refer to the Book of Judges.

⁸ To say the three terms overlap does not mean that there is no distinction. “**Psalms**” can refer to psalms generally, broader than the 150 Old Testament Book of Psalms, as the term “judges” is broader than only the Old Testament Book of Judges. “**Hymns**” is a generic term for religious music. Even the Roman world had hymns, religious lyrics in praise of their gods. A hymn would be a song in tribute of worship to God. As God evokes worship from us, as we meditate on His Creation, providence; His names, His saving acts, His presence we respond in worship of hymns to the Lord. Particularly in the New Testament, these hymns focus on work Christ and His work, the fulfilment of all Messianic hopes. An examples of an early Church hymn would be the Magnificat of Mary, Luke 1:46-55. Augustine’s definition of a proper hymn is a song of praise to God addressed to Him. “**Spiritual songs**” focuses on the source of our hymns, they come from the Holy Spirit’s wisdom and illumination.

⁹ Coppes, 14

¹⁰ Dr. Leonard Coppes points out that if the Exclusive Psalmody position wishes to use these verses to address public worship they create for themselves insurmountable problems. They must conclude more than they wish to establish. For one, Paul says we are to “speak” the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. If these verses are setting the norm for public worship, then they establish that all that is *said* must consist of express passages from the 150 psalms. Secondly, Paul says this applies to all believers, which if this is saying all are to speak in public worship, this would be contrary to having women speak in worship (1 Corinthians 14:34). Thirdly, if this passage binds us to only sing the 150 Old Testament Psalms in worship, it also binds us to only preach and teach by quoting the 150 Old Testament Psalms (“teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”). Coppes, 12.

What do these two passages in Ephesians and Colossians call us to do? We are to use **spiritual songs**, songs as the Holy Spirit gives insight and illumination into the words of Christ. In the same way Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 2:13, “This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”¹¹

We are to “**let the word of Christ** dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms *and* hymns *and* spiritual songs” (Colossians 3:16). This phrase, “the word of Christ” (logos) is found only here in the New Testament. It is *not* a synonym for the *written* Word of God, Scripture. Rather it is the *spoken* word of Christ – His teaching while He was on earth, all that the Holy Spirit would bring back to mind of what He taught the apostles, it’s the Gospel. In the same sense that Paul said, “For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you” (1 Corinthians 11:23 NIV).

Paul therefore had *much more* in mind than the Old Testament’s 150 psalms. Believers are to teach and admonish one another through song with **new words** as the Holy Spirit applies Christ’s teaching and work to us. We exhort and teach one another, not (only) with verbatim words of psalms to one another but with fresh wisdom of the Spirit, as we apply Christ’s teachings.

How can we let the word of **Christ** be sung with “psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” if we mean only Old Testament Psalms, which *would not even mention the name of Jesus Christ*? The irony, the deep sadness, and I believe the inconsistency of the Exclusive Psalmody position is found here—we are commanded to let the word of **Christ** dwell in us richly, but if we only are to use the Old Testament Psalms, we will never sing the name of Jesus the Messiah of all Old Testament hopes, we will not praise the Savior’s Name who died to procure our salvation, the King and Head of the Church. We would not ascribe glory to His Name who is the center of redemptive history and the Gospel, the One who is worshiped by all the hosts of heaven *in song* as the Lamb who is worthy. May we not ever sing a hymn with His name in it until we reach Glory? If we must now pray in the Name of Christ alone, and sermons of the Church call us to worship Him, why can we not also sing His glorious Name in music? That strikes me as profoundly out of accord with the fulfilment we have of all Old Testament types and shadows.

It seems best to understand these verses in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5, *not* as requiring us to only sing the 150 Old Testament psalms (though they may be included in the first word “psalms”), but in addition to psalms, we have *new* expressions of song written as the Holy Spirit gives the Church insight into the work and teaching of Christ. As the New Testament Church meditates on new work of God in redemptive history in Christ, a new song is called for. In his commentary on the phrase “psalms, hymns, spiritual songs,” John Piper correctly explained, “Along with the singing of Scripture, there is to be a continuing flow of new and fresh expression of musical praise and worship that faithfully teaches and admonishes the church as we sing to our Lord and God.”¹²

¹¹ The reference to “spiritual songs” is *not* saying we are to only sing inspired Scripture. “Spiritual” does not mean inspired (theopneustos), as if we can only sing Scripture put to music. This word for “spiritual” (pneumatikais) is never used in the New Testament for inspiration of Scripture. It is used of the spiritual as contrasted to physical – sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body, 1 Corinthians 15:55. It is used for a reference to the Holy Spirit’s “spiritual” gifts (Romans 1:11, 1 Corinthians 12:1, 14:1). The Law is “spiritual” (Romans 7:14). This word “spiritual” is used in places where it obviously *cannot* mean inspired – the whole Corinthian congregation would not be “inspired” (1 Corinthians 3:1, Colossians 1:9). So the best way to understand “spiritual songs” is songs of the Spirit, under His insight, with His illumination into the teachings of Christ, from His wisdom (Colossians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Ephesians 5:14; 2 Timothy 2:11-13). We sing the songs of the Spirit – guided by the Spirit into understanding the teaching of Christ.

¹² As in Reformation and Revival Journal, Fall 95, page 51.

Biblical history allows for singing more than only Psalms

We believe that we may sing the Psalms and other hymns in public worship because the Scripture allows for singing more than only Psalms. Secondly, Biblical history allows for singing more than only Psalms. Scripture calls us to sing more than the Old Testament psalms. Even the Old Testament did not require the Church to sing exclusively from the Book of Psalms. No where do the Scriptures require the exclusive use of the Psalter. That command is not there.

In addition to singing the Psalms, the Church is to sing the statutes and Law of God. “Your decrees are the theme of my song.” (Psalm 119:54). May my tongue sing of your word, for all your *commands* are righteous.

The Church is to sing the deeds of God. The redemptive works of God throughout history are to be sung with new songs. Psalm 33:3 “Sing to him a new song” (40:3; 144:9) . Psalm 149:1 “Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the saints” (Psalm 107:22). In Isaiah 42:1, 9, 10 God prophesies that in the Age when the Gentiles are brought into Messiah’s kingdom they will sing a new song to the Lord. And “new” is defined as that which did not exist in the Old Covenant Age, verse 9. “Behold, my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon Him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. . . Behold the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them. Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth.” Isaiah is fulfilled as the Church in glory is singing a new song to Christ, singing of His work. Theirs is a new song, new—not an Old Testament Psalm—but new words of praise to Christ for His work of redemption. “And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9, also 14:3).

Scripture itself includes hymns beyond those included in the Book of Psalms. According to Exodus 15:1 After God delivered His people from Egypt, they sang. God’s Redemptive work evokes worship. This song of redemption is not included as a whole in the Psalms (though seven psalms refer to division of Red Sea, and eighteen psalms contain a parallel to Deuteronomy 32). Numbers 21:17 records how the Lord gave Israel water to drink in the wilderness and the Holy Spirit recorded that hymn of worship in Numbers but not in the Psalms. In Deuteronomy 32:1 the Lord renews the covenant, and commits it to Israel’s memory with song. In Judges 5:1 God delivers Israel through the Prophetess Deborah and her song inspired by the Holy Spirit is recorded in Scripture. But it is not recorded in the psalms, except one phrase, “lead thy captivity captive” in Psalm 68. Hannah’s prayer is recorded in 1 Samuel 2. Her hymn of worship is not recorded in the Psalms, yet it was a Holy Spirit inspired song of worship.¹³

God’s people sang more than the 150 Old Testament Psalms in their worship. These hymns of worship were inspired of the Holy Spirit as part of Scripture, but were not included in the Psalter. And God never forbade Israel to stop using those songs in worship once the Psalter was completed.

The Dead Sea Scrolls part of the Qumran writings, were composed near the end of the Old Testament period. Among these scrolls were found hymns, additional to and not included in the Psalter. One such is The Hymn Scroll, a fine expression of personal faith and desire to glorify God.¹⁴ “Scholars know of the existence of songs

¹³ One portion is found in Psalm 113:7-8

¹⁴ Martin, p 51.

for worship which were composed after 300 BC and sang [sic] in the synagogue worship.”¹⁵

The New Testament as well records hymns of the Church that were not part of the Psalter. Luke 1:46-55 records “Mary’s Song” or the Magnificat. Christ is conceived by the Holy Spirit and Mary’s hymn of worship is put into inspired Scripture. Mary’s song becomes an early hymn of the Church in worship to the Lord apart from Davidic psalms. Luke 1:67–79 is the inspired record of Zechariah’s song, another early hymn of the Church, which the Holy Spirit also put into Scripture, which we refer to as “The Benedictus.” Luke 2:14 records the “Gloria in Excelsis,” and Luke 2:29–32, the “Nunc Dimittis.” We believe these and other passages of Scripture such as Revelation 4:11 were early hymns of the church. “Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.” Other early hymns of the Church recorded in Scripture are John 1:1-18; the Christological hymns of Philippians 2:6–11; Colossians 1:15–20; and 1 Timothy 3:6; as well as other lesser hymns such as Revelation 4:8; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Timothy 1:17; Ephesians 5:19; and Hebrews 1:3.¹⁶

Biblical history shows God’s works evoke worship and the Church sings more than only the Old Testament Psalms. God works in history and His people respond with shouts of praise. The redemption of God in Christ, the greatest act of redemptive history, evokes new hymns and songs. The Old Testament anticipated and prophesied the work of Christ, but in shadows and types. The completeness of the work of Christ requires new songs of praise, songs of fulfilment and completeness. Exclusive Psalmody conflicts with the once for all complete work of Jesus Christ. He has fulfilled all Old Testament types and shadows. We must never return to them again (Book of Hebrews). In the language of Paul, speaking to those Judaizers who wanted to place religious significance in Old Testament circumcision, to return to the Old Testament shadows, “you are severed from Christ” (Galatians 5:4). The work of Jesus Christ has completely fulfilled and abrogated the Old Testament religions system with all its types and shadows. “The Psalms are part of the Levitical system. They stand in the same relationship to the new covenant as does the rest of that system.”¹⁷ Yet Exclusive Psalmody friends say the New Testament Church should only sing Psalms from the age of types and shadows; only sing the Psalms that refer to Mosaic sacrifices, Levitical priests and temple; but we cannot sing of the finished work of Christ. I am not implying at all that Exclusive Psalmody believers have fallen from grace and are not true believers. But their position to only sing from the Mosaic Law system seems to be completely out of accord with the finished work of Christ. Exclusive Psalmody is contrary to the Biblical teaching that all true worship in the Messianic Age will involve singing a new song together with what is sung in the heavens and in heavenly worship.¹⁸ Neither the Old nor the New Testament Church was given a static hymnal in the psalms and commanded to only sing from it. That cannot be substantiated from Scripture.

¹⁵ Coppes, 14, who refers to Kittel and Friedrich, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol vii, page 497.

¹⁶ Christ Himself sings before the Father, beyond what is limited to the 150 psalms of Old Testament Scripture. Hebrews 2:12; Romans 15:9. Our Savior joins with our song, Psalm 22:22; Zephaniah 3:17; Romans 15:9. Our God is a singing Lord, one who joins us and leads us in triumphant song (Frame).

¹⁷ Coppes, 4

¹⁸ Coppes, 6

Church history allows for singing more than only Psalms

We believe that we may sing the Psalms and other hymns in public worship because the Scripture allows for singing more than only Psalms. Secondly, Biblical history allows for singing more than only Psalms. Thirdly, Church history allows for singing more than only Psalms.

The scholar, B. Fischer held that in the earliest times Christians did not *sing* the Psalms but only read them as scriptural lessons.¹⁹ Whether that's accurate or not, to claim the early church only sang David's psalms in worship can't be proven.²⁰ Perhaps better to say, with Dr. Robert Godfrey (who himself holds to Exclusive Psalmody) that evidence of the earliest centuries is scarce and ambiguous as to whether the church sang only psalms or also their own compositions.²¹

Exclusive Psalmody cannot be proven to have been the position of the apostolic church. Rather there is evidence of the early church singing *more* than only David's psalms. The earliest hymn we know of with extant full verse is from 200 A.D. or earlier, "*Hail, Gladdening Light*." Others we know of are, "*The Day of Resurrection*" and "*The Day is Past and Over*". From the Latin period, late 4th century, the most famous hymn is *Te Deum Laudamus*, by author Ambrose of Milan (339-397) who wrote other immensely influential hymns, including "*O Splendour of God's Glory Bright*." Prudentius Clemens' (348-410) hymns are translated and included in our English hymnals. "A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing" was written on the Resurrection of Christ, by The Venerable Bede (673-735). Medieval hymns include those of Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), "*Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee*;" Abelard (1079-1142); and Francis of Assisi's (1181-1226) "*All Creatures of Our God and King*."

Though some have attempted to associate John Calvin with the Exclusive Psalmody position, that was not his conviction. "The church at Geneva under his leadership sang non-Psalm portions of Scripture like the Ten Commandments, and extra-Scriptural settings, for example the Apostles' Creed. Further, he did not condemn the Reformed churches of Cologne and elsewhere that used extra-Biblical hymns in the Lutheran pattern. Calvin advocated the Psalms, not because he thought (with the Puritans and Scots) that singing songs outside the Psalter violated the Regulative Principle, but rather on grounds of quality. He thought that the Psalms represented the best conceivable worship songs."²² While Calvin had a large impact in the development of Protestant congregational singing, he did not hold to the Exclusive Psalmody position.²³

¹⁹ Wainwright, 211

²⁰ "Evidence for the use of Psalms in or prior to the 1st century is disputed. I don't think the record is clear as to when music was and wasn't used in the synagogue." (Dr. John Frame in a personal letter, December 12, 2002)

²¹ Godfrey, 61

²² Dr. John Frame, in a personal letter, December 12, 2002

²³ Calvin's Biblical understanding shaped Reformed worship music:

1. He believed the Priesthood of all believers. Calvin returned singing to the congregation instead of music being the exclusive realm of professional choirs. During his first stay in Geneva he and Farel came to the Council with the request to grant this right to all believers. It's also significant that he encouraged the use of popular tunes so that the people would be able to exercise their restored privilege. He also retained a trained choir to lead the people so that they would learn again how to sing the psalms.
2. He believed the Doctrine of common grace. God has given general gifts to His creation apart from special saving grace. Skill in music is part of His common grace and to be captured for the worship of God. Thus at the academy in Geneva, Calvin required music four hours each week. This training was for those who could sing in the choir. Abraham Kuyper, in his *Lectures on Calvinism*, would note, "Music . . . would flourish, henceforth, not within the narrow limitation of particular grace, but in the

Exclusive Psalmody was not the uniform practice of the Reformation churches. The Scottish Reformed tradition sang only David's 150 Old Testament psalms for public worship. The Scottish psalter goes back to 1650.²⁴ But Luther did not see this position as required in Scripture. Luther was a very gifted hymn composer. His valid insight, based upon Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3, was to view hymns the same as preaching—to express the truths of the Word of God. In his TableTalks Luther wrote, “The notes bring the text to life” . . . “After all the gift of language combined with the gift of song was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming (the Word of God) through music.”²⁵ The singing of hymns was regarded as, *praedictatio sonora*, a resounding sermon. Luther could say, “Music is a noble gift of God, next to theology”²⁶ And, “We should not ordain young men as preachers, unless they have been well exercised in music”²⁷ So Luther translated Roman Catholic hymns from the Latin and “improved them in a Christian manner” —that is, he corrected wrong doctrine. Luther also composed hymns, based on Old Testament psalms, and other Scripture passages. He required all hymns to be theologically sound, but they did not need to be from the Psalms or other Scripture.²⁸

Our English history includes hymns beyond the Psalter. The first English hymn book had contributions from such men as George Herbert, John Milton, and John Bunyan (*He Who would Valiant Be*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*). We also have hymn(s) of Richard Baxter, a giant of a Reformed world (*Ye Holy Angels Bright*). Isaac Watts (1674-1748) Christianized the Psalter. He meditated on David's psalms and masterfully included the Name of Christ. He was perhaps the finest English hymn writer. Watts hymn, “*Our God Our Help in Ages Past*” (based on Psalm 90), is the most popular English hymn ever written. To the Methodist Charles Wesley is attributed 6,500 hymns. His brother, John, compiled *The Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, in 1737. The Presbyterian hymn writer, Horatius Bonar, composed 600 hymns. We have 17 of his hymns in our Trinity hymnal.

New songs and new hymns parallel new works of God when He revives the Church. Periods of revival almost always produce new developments in hymnody. The Protestant Reformation produced new hymns in the Lutheran church and new psalm arrangements in the Reformed church. The Great Awakening produced an outpouring of new music written by Charles Wesley, such as, “And Can it be that I Should Gain.” At the same period as the Revivals A.M. Toplady wrote “Rock of Ages,” and John Newton with William Cowper produced in 1779, *Olney Hymns*. And new hymns should continue to be composed, especially in times of revival. Do you

wide and fertile fields of common grace.” (Yet why did Calvin allow the choir to sing four-part harmony, but not the people?)

3. He believed in the Theo-centricity of worship. All is to be done to the glory of God, He alone is the audience for our praise.

The glory was not to go to man. So Calvin opposed congregational singing in four-part harmony and the use of an organ. His fear was that too elaborate a musical service would draw people to admire human skills. Many a church father expressed this fear before Calvin did. And so the congregation's singing of psalms was only to be in unison without instrumental accompaniment.

²⁴ “We admit that the Westminster Confession of Faith does teach exclusive psalmody. However, we are not bound by this because (1) it is not part of the system of doctrine set forth by the Confession and Catechism (it is incidental to that doctrine) and (2) the Bible does not teach exclusive psalmody” Coppes, 3.

²⁵ Janson, p. 20

²⁶ As per Reformation and Revival, Fall 1995, page 30

²⁷ As per Reformation and Revival, Fall 1995, page 30

²⁸ Literacy in Germany was not widespread so Luther not only required children to memorize the six chief questions of Luther's Small Catechism but he also taught the children to sing them.

look at a hymn's notations? Who was the author, when did he live, what were the issues of the day? Reflect on the working of God and appreciate the catholicity of the Church, expressed in the singing of hymns.

The critical and central question that Exclusive Psalmody must establish is this, "Where do the Scriptures command that we sing *only* the 150 Old Testament Psalms?" We believe the answer is, "The Scriptures nowhere command the exclusive use of the Psalms in worship." Neither the Old Testament nor New Testament require the Church to sing *only* psalms. Exclusive Psalmody is not the consistent teaching of Scripture because it "binds the believer beyond what God has commanded us to do. It forbids us to do what God commanded us to do [sing more than the psalms]." ²⁹

Does Church history support the Exclusive Psalmody position? Again we believe the answer is, "No, it does not." Church history is full of examples of the Church using more than the 150 Old Testament Psalms. The conclusion we draw from history is that there was no apostolic position handed down to the Church that supports Exclusive Psalmody. The Church has always sung both Psalms and hymns. The Christian Church began with singing a hymn at Christ's cradle (Luke 2:10-14), and she will enter her glorious consummation with new songs to herald Christ's victorious return and final triumph. The New Testament Church is not bound to sing *only* the 150 Old Testament Psalms in public worship. We sing with the Church in Heaven, exalting the finished work of Christ with new songs taught by the Spirit of God.

We are bound by the Regulative Principle of Worship. But the Scriptures do not require the Church in her worship to sing *only* the 150 Old Testament Psalms. The two New Testament passages that Exclusive Psalmody uses are not teaching Exclusive Psalmody at all. Rather, these texts explicitly instruct us to use songs (spiritual songs) other than the 150 Psalms. "The Bible clearly teaches we are to sing not only the 150 Psalms but other words consistent with Biblical teaching." ³⁰

I believe the position that our General Assembly has taken is the position of the Scripture: "Since the metrical versions of the Psalms are based upon the Word of God, they ought to be used frequently in public worship. Great care must be taken that all the materials of song are in perfect accord with the teaching of Holy Scripture." ³¹

Where do we go from here? Is it possible for these two positions to exist in the same church? I believe it is possible, and it must be possible. This issue of Exclusive Psalmody must *never* divide believers from one another. Let's consider some suggested resolutions.

²⁹ Coppes, 6

³⁰ Coppes, 22

³¹ *OPC Directory of Worship*, chapter III, paragraph 6, page 141.

Suggested Resolutions for the Two Positions to Abide Together in the Body of Christ.

A call to those who hold the Exclusive Psalmody position:

1. Please be careful of a judgmental spirit towards us, which Scripture forbids (Romans 14). We who do not embrace Exclusive Psalmody feel the judgmental spirit when we are “accused” of not holding to the Regulative Principle if we do not exclusively sing psalms, or if it is implied that failure to practice Exclusive Psalmody is the first sign of liberalism and unbelief creeping into our church. Realize that we do sincerely hold to the Regulative Principle. It’s just that we don’t believe you have proven your case that the Scriptures require Exclusive Psalmody. We feel the judgmental spirit when this issue is made a distinctive to keep congregations and denominations from unity, or used as a measure of purity or maturity, or when Psalmody causes a believer to leave our churches. Keeping us apart implies to us that you view us as unbiblical. We are trying to establish everything from Scripture and trying to uphold the Regulative Principle with all conscience.
2. Please reflect on your different labels for “worship services” so as to allow for different types of music other than the Psalms. You call one service a “worship service” or “chapel service” and then you are obligated to sing only psalms, but if you were to call the very same meeting on the same day with the same preacher a “convocation” then you allow (almost) any kind of music to be sung. To those of us outside your position, this appears to us to be inconsistent and silly at best, and hypocrisy and legalism at worst. If you truly believe that when believers gather to worship God they should only sing psalms then be consistent and only sing psalms regardless of what you call the “service.” Don’t play word games.

A call to those who hold the Hymns and Psalms position:

1. We need to be very sure that all the music in the public worship of God conforms with Scripture. In this day of chorus singing the danger is very real that proper music will be compromised. We need to examine diligently all music of the day to be sure it is Biblical. The conscience of Exclusive Psalmody is wanting to have all things measured by the Word and we can learn from that passion.
2. We need to be sure to include psalms frequently in our public worship services, because of their great value and rich variety of instruction. And we should frequently include psalms to show deference to those believers among us with conscience bound in this matter. Would the Reformed Presbyterian congregations show the same deference and sing at least one hymn every service? If not, why not? As I select the order of worship each Lord’s Day I try to select at least one selection from the Psalter. We need to include the psalms in worship without patronizing or despising those who are conscience bound (Romans 14:3).

Our denomination has individuals and whole congregations that differ on this issue. But the General Assembly left this issue to each session to address pastorally, so as not to create division over this issue in the church. *This issue of Psalmody should never divide Christian from Christian, church from church, or denominations from having unity together.* I pray this paper will be one way for believers to come to a greater understanding of the complexity of this issue and in deep love live together preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Rev. Ronald E. Pearce

Appendix A

If Not Exclusive Psalmody, What Is the Biblical Standard for Appropriate Hymns in Worship?

Though Scripture does not bind us to sing only the psalms in public worship the Scripture does set the standard for all church worship and music. We must show discernment and measure all our music to God's Word. Is a particular hymn true to Scripture? Is it the best text and tune we can find to enhance worship? Does the melody have "weight and majesty" (*poids et majeste* - Calvin) since we sing it in the presence of God and His holy angels? Music measured by Scripture will fall into several categories. These are:

1. Hymns Which Are Scriptural Quotations

Examples would be Psalter or any other Scripture quotation, such as John 3:16 or Revelation 5:12, *Worthy is the Lamb*. Handel's *Messiah* is another example, a music composition all quotations from Scripture (The KJV).

2. Hymns Which Are Scriptural Paraphrases

Examples of Scriptural paraphrases would be hymns based on a psalm, or a meditation closely guided by Scripture. "*Jesus Shall Reign*" is one, based on Psalm 72. "*Jesus shall reign, where'er the sun, does his successive journeys run; His kingdom stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more.*" Isaac Watts employed language and idiom of the Hebrew Psalter with necessary transpositions "to make David speak like an English Christian" as he would say. He "made" Psalm 72 preach Jesus Christ. Another example would be "*O Worship the King*, based on Psalm 104. "*O worship the King all glorious above, o gratefully sing, his pow'r and his love; our shield and defender, the Ancient of Days, Pavillioned in splendor and girded with praise.*"

3. Hymns Which Are Scriptural Allusions

This is a step beyond a paraphrase of Scripture. These hymns refer to incidents or teachings of Scripture, without attempting to follow a text. These parallel a sermon which is more than a paraphrase of Scripture.

An example would be, *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*. This hymn tells the account of the angels announcing the birth of Christ. The hymn while not a text of Scripture, abounds with allusions to Scripture:

- glory to the newborn king, Luke 2:14
- late in time behold him come, Gal 4:4
- offspring of the Virgin's womb, Mat 1:23
- Jesus our Emmanuel, Isa 7:14
- veiled in flesh the Godhead see, Phil 2:6
- Hail the Heavn-born Prince of Peace, Isa 9:6
- mild He lays His glory by, Phil 2:6
- born that man no more may die, born to raise the sons of earth, born to give the second birth, Jn 3:3, 16

A useful and important bar to set a standard for legitimate hymns would be, "Where in Scripture is this hymn referring? Where are the allusions to the Word?"

As another example, should we include into the hymnal, *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*? I don't believe we should, because there are no allusions to Scripture, much less is it a paraphrase of Scripture (Unless we were to include the reference to Babel and Peace on Earth, good will to men). But the extra-Biblical, poetical license, is unwarranted: Midnight clear? Angels bending? Harps of gold? World in stillness? Cloven skies? Peaceful

wings? Peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendour fling? Age of gold? There is no reference to Jesus Christ (a later edition added a verse, referring to Prince of Peace). Don't you find it odd, maybe a little disconcerting, that there be a Christmas carol with no mention birth of Christ? It is an ode to angels and peace written by Edmund Sears, a Unitarian, who denied the Trinity and the Deity of Jesus Christ.³² Think about what we sing and measure all by Scripture!

4. Hymns Which Are Scriptural Theology

This bar for legitimate hymns requires more discernment and care because we extend into the experience and life of the believer. There are some very good examples which we love to sing, there are many others which should not be in hymnals.

Some very good examples would be, *Rock of Ages*. "Rock of Ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee; let the water and the blood from Thy riven side which flowed, be of sin the double cure, cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r. Not the labors of my hands, can fulfil thy law's demands; could my zeal forever know, could my tears forever flow, all for sin could not atone; Thy must save, and thou alone." Another good example would be, *Great is Thy Faithfulness*. "Great is Thy Faithfulness, O God my Father. There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not, as thou hast been thou forever will be."

Edward Paronet became so overwhelmed with the Biblical doctrine of Jesus Christ's glorification and reigning as King of kings, and Lord of the universe, wrote, "All hail the power of Jesus' name, Let angels prostrate fall, bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all." Fanny Crosby, blind by the age of six, but convinced of God's purpose in her blindness for His glory, wrote many hymns such as, "To God be the Glory," "Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It," and "I shall see Him Face to Face." John Newton, expressing God's grace in saving his soul from the dark life of the slave trade wrote, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see."

Appendix B

Have the Exclusive Psalmody Believers Really Reflected on What They Sing as a “Psalm”? ³³

1. Unless one were to sing the Hebrew text, no one sings the actual inspired psalms.

When we sing from the Psalter we sing *translations* of the psalms. Unless we were to sing the Hebrew text of the Psalms we are not singing the inspired text. Old Testament believers who spoke the Hebrew language sang the psalms as they were written. But any one not singing in Hebrew, sings *a translation* of the inspired text. It is a truth that *all* translations of the original text *must do some interpretation*. This is why there are differences in Bible translations. So all “psalms” in the English Psalter have some measure of *interpretation* of the Hebrew text.

And so the question is, “If one sings *translations and interpretations* of the Psalms, what is the *principal* difference and why would it be wrong to sing a psalm with the Biblical-theological interpretation from the perspective of fulfillment in Christ?” If it is a matter of degree of interpretation (which must be admitted) then where is the “line crossed” between interpretation and too much interpretation? *Principally* what is wrong with Isaac Watts who employed the language, phrases and idiom of the Hebrew Psalter, with necessary transpositions “to make David speak like an English Christian” as he said?

2. Most, if not all psalms are paraphrases to some degree.

In a technical sense most if not all of the English “psalms” as printed in the Psalter are paraphrases. Words and phrases are moved around to fit the meter and tune. It is not accurate for someone to say, We only sing the psalms.” No, they sing paraphrases of the psalms. The editors of the Psalters made *editorial changes* to make the text fit to the meter and form of the music, or they repeat a line or two which is not as the Bible has it. Few if any, of the “psalms” in the Psalter are actually *exactly the text* of Scriptural psalms, but they are *edited versions of the psalms to a greater or lesser degree*. An example would be the English Bible’s text of Psalm 100:1 “Shout joyfully to the Lord all the earth” *is changed*, and becomes in the psalter, “All people that on earth do dwell, Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.” The Psalter is *not* an identical translation of the Hebrew text. *The Psalter edits and paraphrases Scripture to fit its arrangements*.

It is not wrong that the Psalter edits and paraphrases Scripture to fit its arrangements. But it appears to us outside of Exclusive Psalmody as being very confusing and hypocritical for someone to refuse to sing “*Joy to the World the Lord is Come*” a very close paraphrase of Psalm 98 speaking of Christ’s Advent, refusing to sing it “because it is a paraphrase.” But then having a Psalter that is itself also mostly English paraphrases. That is not consistent. If it is permissible to sing psalms that have been edited and paraphrased in the Psalter, why isn’t it correct to sing psalms of greater paraphrase?

Isaac Watts’ hymns would not be Old Testament psalms but they follow the psalms and express the truths of the psalms. Isaac Watts set out the theological principles on which he operated in his *Psalms of David imitated in New Testament Language* (1719): *It is necessary to divest David and Asaph, and of every other character but that of a Psalmist and a Saint and to make them always speak of the common sense of a Christian. . . . Where the Psalmist described religion by the Fear of God, I have often joined Faith and Love to it Where he talks of sacrificing goats or bullocks, I rather choose to mention the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Where he*

³³

These insights are from Dr. Frame’s syllabus, Westminster seminary

*attends the Ark with shouting in Zion, I sing the Ascension of my Savior into Heaven, or His Presence in his Church on Earth.*³⁴ And so Watt's, *Jesus Shall Reign Wherever the Sun*, is an example of His Christological principle at work on Psalm 72.

It seems arbitrary for one edition of the Psalter to change the wording of a Biblical psalm in order to sing it and still call it a psalm, and yet not allow someone else to have greater latitude and still sing a psalm he has paraphrased. It would be more consistent if Exclusive Psalmody would say they will only sing the psalms as found in the Bible (what translation?) with no editing. One could open their Bible and just sing word for word as found in the text.

4. To require the exclusive singing of psalms is to confuse what the Regulative Principle regulates.

The Regulative Principle is the Bible's rule for the elements of a worship service—only what the Scripture reveals may be allowed into a worship service. The Scripture gives us the required elements of what should be in a worship service, such as preaching of the Word and prayer. But the *way in which we perform the elements of worship* are **not** given in the Scripture or in the Regulative Principle. The *way* in which we perform or conduct the elements are known as *circumstances of worship*. A *circumstance* of worship is the *means* that we conduct worship, but it has no religious meaning in itself, in contrast to what is essential to worship which are the *elements* of worship.

The Church has always been free to express *circumstances* of worship appropriately to their culture and according to the wisdom of the local elders. One doesn't need to find a "proof text" in the Bible for a *circumstance* of worship. For example when a church in Nigeria sings a hymn antiphonally that is a *circumstance* of worship. Or if one church receives the offering with plates and another has a box at the back of the auditorium. Both receive an offering but do it in different ways, which are difference *circumstances* or worship.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states that circumstances are determined by what is "common to human actions and societies."³⁵ The church has the authority to order worship in a fitting way, to apply the circumstances of worship, but not to add to the elements of worship (1 Corinthians 14:40). Calvin, commenting on that verse wrote, "The Lord allows us freedom in regard to outward rites, in order that we may not think that His worship is confined to those things." The Church has been given latitude in ordering worship to keep us from confusing the elements of worship (what is mandatory) and the forms (what is discretionary); from confusing the essential with what is circumstantial. That confusion is a likely result when we are bound too strictly to particular forms or seek to enforce conformity in the church to a single pattern.

The Regulative Principle is *principle* (guide) not a completely elaborated program or procedure. "The regulative principle is misunderstood (and begins to be misapplied) when it is construed to mean that God has specified our worship 'down to the last detail' or told us exactly how we are to worship him."³⁶ So, Presbyterians have a *Directory* for Worship, not a fixed, prescribed liturgy.

³⁴ Wainwright, 212, 213

³⁵ WCF Chapter vi: 2,3,5

³⁶ Gaffin, in the report to General Assembly. See this report for more discussion on the difference between elements of worship, and circumstances.

The elders of the church are free to arrange the circumstances of worship in an orderly and respectful way. What is the common way of doing things in that culture? So for example the Scripture requires that the Church gather for worship on the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, the Lord's Day. However at what time? Do we have a Sunday School? If we do, should it be before or after a worship service? Do we have one or two services? Do we stand or sit? Do we sit on floors or chairs? Do we sing accompanied by guitar, or piano, or pitchpipe, or flute?

We must not confuse what is an element of worship and what is a circumstance of worship. "If recounted accurately, there is something both admirable and pathetic about the practice of an aging Samuel Miller and his wife continuing week after week to stand alone, in protest, long after the congregation where they worshiped had changed to sitting for the long or pastoral prayer."³⁷³⁸ The *element* of worship is prayer, and the *circumstance* of worship is whether stand or sit, or kneel.

The question for our discussion is, "Is singing *an element* of worship (and thus under the Regulative Principle), or a *circumstance* of worship and therefore under the wisdom of the church in her culture?" The answer is, "Singing is more a *circumstance* of worship than an element."

Singing does not stand alone. There is no religious value in singing music, the religious significance is always in the *content* of what is sung. Singing is only a *form* in which we teach and admonish, pray, adore our Lord. *As we sing* we teach or exhort or pray. Singing is a *way* to pray or to teach. Singing is more a circumstance of worship, not an element of worship of its own. And so Scripture presents song as having the same function in worship as spoken words. Song has no function that cannot also be performed by spoken words.

The correct use of the Regulative Principle to music, would be for us to ask *what content* does the Scripture command us to have in our songs? How should we pray or teach *as we sing*? In the same way (that all Christians agree) that extra-Scriptural words may be used in prayer, praise and teaching. We are not required to pray only the prayers of Scripture in public worship. Hence since singing is a circumstance, and since the Regulative Principle does not address circumstances of worship, only elements of worship, therefore is it a misuse of the Regulative Principle to apply it so directly and rigidly to singing.

The Exclusive Psalmody position often also forbids all musical instruments in public worship, since nowhere in the New Testament is there an explicit command to have instruments in worship. But the instrument is not an *element* of worship but rather a circumstance. In our culture we use instruments to help us sing, keep us on pitch and keep the tempo. It is ironic that often in Exclusive Psalmody congregations that don't use instruments to accompany singing, there will still be someone with a pitch pipe to help them with the pitch of the first note. But if it is lawful to use an instrument for the first note, why not the second and the third, and why not for the whole piece? And if an instrument is acceptable for the pitch, why not for the tempo, and the harmony, the rhythm, the volume, the tone quality? (There is not one text in Scripture in which singing occurs that is demonstrably *not* accompanied with musical instruments!) Having a musical instrument to accompany singing has no religious meaning in itself, it is a natural part of the culture. It is a circumstance of worship.³⁹

³⁷ As reported in Melton, Presbyterian Worship in America, 1967, p 38

³⁸ Gaffin, 1204

³⁹ See Frame's further explanation of why instruments are not prohibited in worship, syllabus, p 157ff

RESOURCES

Bannerman. The Church of Christ

Cameron, Hector. *Art Purity of Worship* www.freechurch.org/holdfast5.html

And www.freechurch.org/crown3_main.html

Carson. *The Directory for Public Worship*, chapter in Commemoration of the WCF, To Glorify God.

Clowney, Edmund. Class syllabus from Westminster Theological seminary.

Clowney, Edmund. Chapter 9, *The Service of Worship*, in The Church.

Coppes, Dr. Leonard J. “Exclusive Psalmody and Doing God’s Will as it is Fulfilled in Christ”, booklet published by the author, 1994.

Correnti, James. *In Search of Good Hymns*, articles in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Fall 1995, p 31f

Engle, Paul. Discovering the Fullness of Worship

Frame, John. Class syllabus from Westminster Theological seminary, page 155 ff on the Second Commandment

Frame, John. Worship in Spirit and Truth

Gaffin, Richard. Report to OPC General Assembly, see, www.opc.org

Gerstner. Reasons for Duty

Gerstner. *Singing the Words God has Put in Our Mouths*, chapter in *Writings*, vol 1, p 202f.

Godfrey, Robert. *Ancient Praise*, article in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Fall 1995, p 62 f.

Griffith, Frank. *The Role of Singing in the Life and Worship of the Church*, article in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Fall 1995, p 37 f.

Janson, P. *A Reason to Sing*, article in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Fall 1995, p 15f

Jones, Douglea. *Liturgy Lessons from Owen*, article in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Summer, 1996, p 111f.

Laudermilch, Kenneth. *Musical Integrity in the Church*, article in *Reformation and Revival Journal*, Winter, 1998, p 79f

Martin, Ralph. *The Worship of God*

MacArthur, John. Tape “True Worship I” 1982, GC 2004

Mack, Wayne. Life in the Father’s House, chapter *Participating in Worship Services*

Muther, John. Fight the Good Fight, chapter on the Regulative Principle

OPC Directory for Worship, chap 3, p. 138 *Usual Parts of Public Worship*

- Payton, Leonard. Congregation Singing and the Ministry of the Word, art Ref&Revival, Winter, 98, p 119f
- Pearce, Ronald. Sermons on Exclusive Psalmody, What Shall We Sing? August 30, 1998, September 6 and 13, 1998 www.sermonaudio.com/hackettstownopc
- Poythress, Vern. *Preaching in Worship: Voice of God, Voice of Christ* - four articles in the *Standard Bearer*, Jan-Apr, 1998
- Reformation and Revival, Fall issue 1995, whole issue on music
- Ryken. Worldly Saints. Chapter on Puritan Worship, p 123f
- Thomas, Geoffrey. www.banneroftruth.co.uk/News/john_frame_on_worship.htm
- Wainwright. Doxology.
- Wilson, Douglas. *Just One Channel and no Remote*, Credenda, vol 7, no 3., p 9.
- Wilson, Douglas. *The Noise of Your Songs*, Credenda, vol 8, no 2, page 13
- Worley, David. *Sing Where the Bible Sings*, art www.io.com/~ics/C...Studies/1993/Worley.html