

Is there Any Rhyme or Reason?

Thoughts on why we worship our God in the order we do.

Corporate worship is a meeting of the Triune God with His redeemed people. Thus there is a dialogue – a holy conversation – that takes place in this meeting. God speaks and we respond.

1. **God Calls us to Worship** → We respond by calling upon His name to help us worship Him aright →
2. **God greets us with His favor** → We burst forth into song extolling His greatness and holiness →
3. **God reveals Himself as the Holy lawgiver to whom we must give an account** → We confess our sins to Him and cast ourselves upon His mercy in Jesus Christ →
4. **God announces His grace and forgiveness to us** → We sing of His wonderful mercies in Jesus Christ for poor, penitent sinners → We are thus emboldened to come to Him with our prayers of thanksgiving and petition →
5. **God speaks to us His covenantal Word** → We respond with song/ meditation as our hearts are attuned to hear His Word preached → We pray for illumination of the Holy Spirit to understand His Word →
6. **God proclaims unto us His Word in the ordinance of preaching** → We respond to His Word preached by earnest prayer that He would apply it to us →
7. **God calls us to absolute devotion** → We respond by giving ourselves unto Him in the giving of our tithes and offerings →
8. We prepare to depart with a new song in our hearts/on our lips → **God blesses us as we go forth in His name.**

Building upon Points 3 and 4 from the Other Side “The Law of God”

As we move into 2014, I want to clarify “The Law of God” portion of the worship service. Why do we have this *placeholder* in our worship? Any why is it where it is in the order of worship?

“The Law of God” is best understood as God’s call to us to collectively confess our sins before Him in humility and repentance.

So how does this work? We enter into God’s presence and are confronted by God’s holy standard of righteousness. God thus shows us that we are defiled by our sins. He reminds us that we must be cleansed anew by the blood of Jesus if we are to draw near to Him. In this way “the Law of God” serves as a mirror to expose our sin and drive us to Christ.

What then? As we are convicted of our sins do we then wallow in self-pity and despair? No! We confess our sins and put our trust in Jesus Christ alone – in His shed blood for the forgiveness of all of our sins. We do this through believing prayer – sometimes led by the Pastor, sometimes in silence.

Having confessed our sins and declared our repentance, we then eagerly desire a Word from our God - His announcement of grace and forgiveness to all who are truly penitent and trust in Jesus.

This announcement of the assurance of God’s grace has always been seen in the history of the church as an act belonging to the pastoral office (just like the salutation and the benediction).

I hope this helps to clarify the role of “the Law of God” for you in our worship service.