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It is here that the distinction between our problem and St. Paul's seems to me to be the sharpest. That words in a known tongue might edify was obvious. Is it equally obvious that the people are edified by being allowed to shout their favorite hymns? I am well aware that the people like it. They equally like shouting Auld Lang Syne in the streets on New Year's Eve or shouting the latest music-hall song in a tap-room. To make a communal, familiar noise is certainly a pleasure to human beings. And I would not be thought to despise this pleasure. It is good for the lungs, it promotes good fellowship, it is humble and unaffected, it is in every way a wholesome, innocent thing—as wholesome and innocent as a pint of beer, a game of darts, or a dip in the sea. But is it, any more than these, a means of edification? No doubt it can be done—all these things can be done—eating can be done—to the glory of God. We have an Apostle's word for it. . . . What we want to know is whether untrained communal singing is in itself any more edifying than other popular pleasures. And of this I, for one, am still wholly unconvinced. I have often heard this noise; I have sometimes contributed to it. I do not yet seem to have found any evidence that the physical and emotional exhilaration which it produces is necessarily, or often, of any religious relevance. What I, like many other laymen, chiefly desire in church are fewer, better, and shorter hymns; especially fewer.

The case for abolishing all Church Music whatever thus seems to me far stronger than the case for abolishing the difficult work of the trained choir and retaining the lusty roar of the congregation. Whatever doubts I feel about the spiritual value of the first I feel at least equally about the spiritual value of the second.

C. S. LEWIS, "ON CHURCH MUSIC" IN *CHRISTIAN REFLECTIONS* (GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN: EERDMANS, 1967), 95-96.

## THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS AND WORSHIP

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*Tom Wells*

Every Christian knows what the book of Hebrews is, but what precisely is worship? In brief, worship is a response to greatness. Not just any response, of course! One man may meet greatness with defiance, another with craven fear. Neither of these qualifies as worship. We will not be far from the mark, however, if we call worship an appreciative response to greatness. A worshiper is a person who thinks he finds greatness in another and responds with admiration. A Christian worshiper finds that greatness in God and Christ. Thomas Watson, the Puritan, said that God calls us to be God-admirers.<sup>1</sup> And so he does.

Is there admiration of God in Hebrews? If the question means, "Does the writer admire his Maker?" the answer is clearly Yes, as it would be for any Bible author. But in asking the question I mean two additional things. First, does he<sup>2</sup> supply us materials that will prompt our own admiration and worship? Second, does Hebrews speak directly about worship? In both cases we will see that answer is Yes.

The word *worship* is not common in Hebrews (1:6; 11:21 only; both in Old Testament quotations; but cf. 10:2). This should not surprise us. It is uncommon in all the letters of the New Testament. In part this is due to worship words in Greek often referring to posture, to bowing and kneeling, words that interest narrators such as Matthew and John more than others. (The New Testament is not necessarily indifferent to posture in worship. But its

emphasis on inward attitudes naturally suggests different vocabulary.)

### MATERIALS FOR WORSHIP IN HEBREWS

If worship is an appreciative response to greatness, the worship of God and Christ demands the display of their glory. We must see them to worship them. The Bible, of course, is full of this, not least the book of Hebrews. A major theme of Hebrews is to call his readers back to faith in Christ if they are wavering. To do this he lays out the case for the superiority of Christ to all other persons in the universe except God the Father and God the Spirit. More than that, he identifies the Son as God himself. The call to faith in such a person is immediately a call to worship as well. We will trace this case through the book.

Hebrews opens with three contrasts connected with revelation: "Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son" (1:1-2a). The first contrast concerns time. God spoke long ago and again in these last days. The second has to do with recipients. God spoke to the fathers, but now speaks to us. The third contrasts the instruments He used. God previously spoke by the prophets, but now by his Son.<sup>3</sup> This summary statement at the beginning of the book alerts us to three facts. We live in a better time, we are more privileged people, and God's instrument of revelation is incomparably greater than any other.<sup>4</sup> Hebrews develops all three of these ideas further, but what interests us is this incomparably greater instrument, the Son of God. We will look at him in this section as Son, Heir, King and Priest.

The name Son of God is used in various ways in the Bible when applied to the Messiah. Early use suggests that godly kings of David's line were God's adopted sons (cf. 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 2:7, 12). Such kings typified the

coming great King who, as we now know, would be God's Son in still richer ways. In the gospels this richness emerges. The angel who tells Mary of her coming Child calls him "the son of the Most High" who will have a "kingdom [with] no end" (Luke 1:32-33). So far this is Messianic language easily recognized by the godly in Israel. But he said more: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God" (1:35). Here the angel identifies the Lord Jesus in his humanity as God's Son. The product of God's activity in Mary, the human being who will be *born*, will "be called the Son of God." John's gospel takes a further step by giving us much of the material from which the doctrine of the Trinity comes (see especially 1:1-18). Here the Son of God displays a glory that belonged to Him in eternity past. Later the Son speaks to the Father in these words: "Father . . . glorify your Son . . . with the glory I had in your presence before the world existed" (17:1,5). To be the Son of God is to be God himself.

Hebrews reflects this whole development. More than that, it reaches its high point almost immediately. Who is this Son? He is the one "through whom he [God] also created the worlds" (1:2b). He is the Creator himself, "the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being" (1:3a). Nor is Hebrews done! The Son sustains the world by his providence. "He sustains all things by his powerful word" (1:3b). Only a man blinded by sin could not see materials here for the most exalted heights of worship! But we are blind, so Hebrews presses the deity of Christ upon us. The Lord speaks of his angels as ministers, but "of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever'" (1:8). In the words of the Father, the Son *is God*. One point of all of this is to lead us to intelligent worship.

The idea of Jesus Christ as "heir of all things" (1:2) is

closely related. In his letter to the Romans, Paul tells us that God himself is Heir of all things: "For from him and through him and *to him* are all things," with the consequence, "*To him be the glory forever*" (Rom. 11:36, italics added). It is clear that Hebrews could have adopted these very words for the Son. To be Creator is to be Heir. These are God's prerogatives. We are inwardly compelled to admire him.

Hebrews also describes the Lord Jesus as King, a title that calls for subjection. Subjection, of course, does not imply worship as an appreciative response to greatness. There is such a thing as unwilling subjection, as there are such things as unrighteous kings. The rule of God's Son, however, invites our appreciation. God speaks of the eternity of his kingship (throne). He bases that eternity on the righteousness of the Son:

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions (1:8-9).

This means that no one who subjects himself to the righteous King will have reason to complain of his rule. Beyond that, he has earned his kingship by sharing the human condition. "We do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death . . ." (2:9). Why was he crowned? *Because of the suffering of death!* Hebrews develops this fact to show how this King acts as a father to his children.

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death

he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery . . . . Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect . . . . Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested (2:14-15, 17-18).

Believers are the children he aids as a kingly father. Surely we will want to admire and adore him for this also.

Hebrews closely ties the kingship of the Son to his activity as Priest. Psalm 110:2 declared of David's greater Son, "The Lord sends out from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your foes." The entire Psalm celebrates the Messianic kingship of the Lord Jesus. But verse 4 strikes another note: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedec." Priest and King! Hebrews develops this twofold description, especially in chapter 7.<sup>5</sup> He describes Melchizedec as follows:

This "King Melchizedec of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham as he was returning from defeating the kings and blessed him"; and to Abraham apportioned "one-tenth of everything." His name, in the first place, means "king of righteousness"; next he is also king of Salem, that is, "king of peace" (7:1-2).

This passage teems with suggestions about the kingship of Christ. If Salem is Jerusalem, the connection with a Davidic Messiah cannot be missed. Then, too, who can receive the titles of "king of righteousness" and "king of peace" more suitably than our Lord Jesus? But Hebrews has already established the kingship of Jesus and turns his attention to Christ as Priest. This occupies chapters 7 to 10 and gives us more material to consider in relationship to the worship of the Son of God.

Hebrews first sets before us a contrast with the former priests of Israel. Acting under the Mosaic covenant they failed to open the way into God's presence for God's people. Their failure was the failure of the Law that was abolished at the coming of Christ's priesthood.<sup>6</sup>

There is, on the one hand, the abrogation of an earlier commandment because it was weak and ineffectual (for the law made nothing perfect); there is, on the other hand, the introduction of a better hope, through which we approach God. . . accordingly Jesus has also become the guarantee of a better covenant (7:18-19, 22).

This better covenant rests on the activity of our Priest in several ways. It hangs on His perpetual life (7:23-25). It depends on his power to save for all time (7:25). It hinges upon his person, as well, especially his incomparable godly character (7:26-27). All of these facts call us to look in wonder and admiration at the Son of God, to be God-admirers indeed. Millions have been made worshipers by the sight of Christ.

#### DESCRIPTIONS OF WORSHIP IN HEBREWS

While chapters 8 to 10 continue to offer us materials for worship, they do so in large measure by referring to the outward performance connected with worship in the Old Testament. Thus far we have treated worship only as an attitude, but attitudes express themselves in forms. The true Old Testament worshiper expressed his worship of God, in part, by approaching the Levitical priests to carry out their ministry on his behalf. The writer is interested in how these Old Testament activities point us toward completed redemption by the Lord Jesus. He cites the work of priests particularly, and he shows how that work anticipates the work of Christ.

The central act in the Old Testament system of priestly rites was the offering of sacrifice. Through Israel's history there were always large numbers of priests, all from the tribe of Levi. These facts led Hebrews to say that there would have been no room for Jesus as a priest under the Mosaic covenant.

Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They offer worship in a sanctuary that is a sketch and shadow of the heavenly one; for Moses, when he was about to erect the tent, was warned, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain" (8:4-5).

Despite this, the Lord Jesus is a priest, a high priest, because the tabernacle was meant to picture a greater reality, heaven itself or the presence of God. "Now the main point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent that the Lord, and not any mortal, has set up" (8:1-2).

We may think of the Levitical system as a means to get into God's presence symbolically. The people were barred from that presence. They could come only near the entrance of the tabernacle. The priests themselves were barred from entering the tabernacle, except on rarest occasions (cf. Luke 1:8-9). Only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place where the symbol of God's presence resided, and that only once a year when he brought blood for his own sins and the sins of the people (7:27).

If all this seems contrived to keep people and priests away from God, at least symbolically, it is no accident. It is meant to show us the effect of sin. On the other hand, the Lord Jesus goes right into the presence of the Father, called

here the *Majesty in the heavens*. And if priests act for people, as they do, we believers find ourselves in the Father's presence as well. The law could not do this for us, but the Lord Jesus has done it! No wonder we worship him.

There is a sense, of course, in which all men are already in God's presence because God is everywhere (omnipresent). In speaking of God's presence, then, we are not thinking primarily in terms of location but of relation. Let me illustrate. After Adam sinned, "God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?'" (Genesis 3:9). The text suggests that God was "over here" and Adam was "over there." Since God may have taken human form in seeking Adam, the suggestion is correct. But the real separation between Adam and God that the text emphasizes is not *local* but *moral*. A friend once told me that "God never asks a question for his own information." God knew where Adam was and he could have appeared "there" at Adam's side, making the question unnecessary. And what would have been the effect of that? We would have lost the sense of intense moral separation that the question conveys. "Where are you?" reminds us that Adam and God were a million miles apart spiritually and morally.

We must still, however, try to understand what it means to now be in the Father's presence. Again Hebrews refers to the Old Testament rites and symbols to make this plain; and again this truth turns on the superiority of Christ to the Old Testament priests. In 9:6-9 Hebrews describes the work of the priests and draws a conclusion from it:

Such preparations having been made, the priests go continually into the first tent to carry out their ritual duties; but only the high priest goes into the second, and he but once a year, and not without taking the blood that he offers for himself and for the sins committed unintentionally by the people. [Then Hebrews draws this conclusion:] By this the Holy Spir-

it indicates that the way into the sanctuary has not yet been disclosed as long as the first tent is still standing.<sup>7</sup> This is a symbol of the present time, during which gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper . . . .

The priests were busy about the tabernacle in keeping with God's instructions to them. But the very building they used, the tabernacle (and later the temple), showed that they were not the ultimate solution to our alienation from God. Their sacrifices showed the same thing. The whole Mosaic service "cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper" (9:9). It could not give the sinner who was conscious of his sins the conviction that God wholeheartedly received him. It required a better priest, a better service and a better sacrifice to do that. That priest is Christ. His service is the service of the new covenant. His sacrifice is himself.

[H]e entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, with the sprinkling of the ashes of a heifer, sanctifies those who have been defiled so that their flesh is purified, how much more will the blood of Christ . . . purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God (9:12-14)!

Christ has entered the real "sanctuary," heaven (9:24). He has not rushed out again, only to repeat the experience hundreds of times (9:25). God is pleased and satisfied with his work. What is the significance of this? His sacrifice has cleansed his people once and for all. No such cleansing came from the Mosaic ritual.

Since the law has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the true form of these realities, it can never, by the

same sacrifices that are continually offered year after year, make perfect those who approach. Otherwise, would they not have ceased being offered, since the worshipers, cleansed once for all, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year (10:1-3).

The failure of the Mosaic ritual is spelled out here. It contained an annual reminder of sins rather than eliminating "the consciousness of sin." It could not relieve men and women of an evil conscience. The practical effect of this was devastating. The godly Jew bore a guilty conscience much of the time. Worse than that, there was no way to get fully beyond that experience. What, then, became of his prayers? He could never be sure they were heard. Did God find his voice offensive? He could not say.

But are things all that different among Christians? Are Christians free from nagging feelings of guilt? Are their consciences clear? Follow me closely here. The subject of conscience is tricky, but we will invite Paul to help us with it.

When Gentiles, who do not possess the [Mosaic] law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them . . . (Romans 2:14-15).

Here Paul describes unconverted Gentiles.<sup>8</sup> They did not have the Mosaic law, but they nevertheless had consciences attuned to some of Moses' chief commands. We may think of the laws against stealing and murder, for example. Since conscience acts as a judge of how we act, their consciences would cry, "Innocent!" or "Guilty!" just as a judge in a court of law does. Of course, over time, they

could teach their consciences to speak against some things and not others (cf. 1 Corinthians 8:8-12). They could also squelch them almost completely (1 Timothy 4:1-2). The point here is this: while we live, we train our consciences. If we train them by Scripture they will become more comprehensive and more sensitive. The godly Jew experienced that, and so does the Christian. Both felt guilty when they defied their consciences. God planned it that way.

Hebrews tells us, however, that the blood of Christ, his sacrificial death, is sufficient to quiet the conscience. The "blood of bulls and goats" could not do that (10:4). But the death of Christ can.

Why, then, do Christians still feel guilty? There are two reasons. First, a conscience trained by the Word of God must feel guilt when it recognizes sin. Schemes for doing away with this role of conscience are misinformed at best, and ungodly at worst.

The second reason, however, is the one that interests us here. The conscience is not sufficiently trained when it only cries "Guilty!" We want it to do that; we need it to do that. But that is not enough. It must be trained to cry "Innocent!" as well. Normally it does so when we do something right, but that is not the whole story. The reason guilt plagues many Christians is that once they have repented (turned from their sin) they have not trained their consciences any further. One more step is needed. We must train our consciences to run to the blood of Christ!

It is a training process, just as sharpening the conscience about sin is. Perhaps the problem comes because we have not recognized that conscience must be trained. We train it against sin, when we read the Word of God, but we may have never thought of what we are doing in those terms. The Bible usually trains the conscience without our realizing it. That is where the rub comes in. In keeping with our fallen condition, some of us sharpen it against our-

selves as we read, and neglect teaching it to run to the comfort of the blood. Yet both are necessary for the Christian life.

In all of this I may seem to have wandered far from the subject of worship, but I have not. The point of this long excursion was to say that every Christian is welcome in God's presence and to show what that means. Negatively it means to escape the burdens that often plagued the Old Testament believer's conscience. Those burdens generated fear. Positively it means that the New Testament believer may be fully confident that his worship and prayer are acceptable to God.

Hebrews shows us how this works out in practice:

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience . . . (10:19-22).

His argument runs like this. What Jesus has done in dying has opened the door to God so fully that we may have utter confidence in approaching him. Our forgiveness is complete, since our sacrifice is perfect (10:15-18). There are no barriers between the believer and God. Worship, praise, thanksgiving and prayer—all the things we address to God—are equally acceptable to him. Since that is the case, we can run to him at any time!

We must train our consciences, then, to look to Christ. If your conscience denounces you, it makes no difference, unless you are determined to cling to your sin. Otherwise, a guilty conscience must be washed in the blood, and the sooner the better! Such is the confidence God wants you to

have in the death of his Son. "You've just sinned!" your conscience may say. "You've no right to expect God to hear your prayer!" The conscience that says that is only half-trained. Yes, you did just sin. That much is true. But you have a right to expect God to hear you anyway. It is not a right that is natively yours. Nor is it a right you have earned. Rather, it is a right purchased by the blood of Christ, and it is greater than all your sin! "Let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience!"

### CONCLUSIONS

At the outset we asked two questions. First, does Hebrews provide us with material for worship? Second, does the author speak directly about worship as well? Let's see what we have found.

Hebrews exalts the Lord Jesus. He does so by setting him forth as God's Son, as Heir, as King, and as Priest. In these things and in all else, Jesus is superior to all other persons except the Father and the Spirit. Hebrews makes these points to call forth our admiration of Jesus Christ. Such admiration is worship. If we enter into the spirit of Hebrews we become God-admirers.

In addition, Hebrews discusses worship. He uses the Old Testament ritual worship to show what Jesus did in taking us by the hand and leading us into the presence of God. We see the Old Testament priests in a tedious round of sacrifice that could not cleanse the consciences of the worshipers for long. Once a year we see the high priest, apparently barely welcome into the tabernacle chamber that contained the symbol of God. And we are told that sin was the barrier between man and God. But, thank the Lord, there is more to the story. That "more" is Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus is the high priest of his people. As such he has offered a sacrifice, himself, that erases the barrier of

sin for all who trust in him. Believers, therefore, may freely offer prayers and praise without feelings of guilt. Such prayers go straight to the throne of God, just as if the believer himself were there. Not even a bad conscience can hinder them, as far as God is concerned. That is how completely the sacrifice of Jesus opens the way to the Father.

You can see, then, that along with showing us the Lord Jesus in his various offices, Hebrews caps his efforts to make us worshipers by reciting the effect of Jesus' death. Not only are we to be overwhelmed by the greatness of the person of Jesus Christ, but his work demands our admiration as well. Its bearing on us is breathtaking. It is unmitigated good news for sinners like ourselves.

#### Author

Tom Wells is one of the pastors of The King's Chapel, West Chester, Ohio. He is the author of numerous books, including *Come to Me, Come Home Forever, God Is King, Christian: Take Heart, A Price for a People, A Vision for Missions* and *Faith: The Gift of God*. He is a regular contributor to *Reformation & Revival Journal*.

#### Notes

1. Thomas Watson, *A Body of Divinity* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Banner of Truth, reprint 1958), 5.
2. In speaking of Hebrews as *he* rather than *it*, I am taking a cue from Barnabas Lindars (*The Theology of the Letter to the Hebrews* [CUP, 1991, pp. xi-xii]). When you meet the word *Hebrews* it will sometimes mean *the author of Hebrews*. In that way I avoid the frequent use of the longer phrase. We do not, of course, know who the author is, so it is impossible to cite him by name.
3. "By his Son" could also be translated "in nothing less than a Son!"
4. The same three contrasts are in 2:2-3 where, however, *angels* replace *prophets*. By speaking of angels, Hebrews shows that the time past that chiefly interests him is the time of the Mosaic covenant. Angels played a role in its delivery (cf. Deut. 33:2; Ps. 68:17; Acts 7:38,53; Gal. 3:19).
5. Psalm 110 is alluded to or cited extensively in the New Testament—about 20 times. Hebrews refers to it repeatedly. See 1:3, 13; 5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21; 8:1; 10:12; 12:12. "Buchanan's definition of Hebrews 'as a homiletical

midrash based on Ps. 110' . . . is too constricting, but there is no denying the importance of this psalm throughout the epistle" (Ellingworth, *NIGTC, The Epistle to the Hebrews* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993], 129-30).

6. We must not suppose that the Mosaic law failed to accomplish the purposes for which God gave it. But it did not accomplish the believer's direct access to God. That awaited the work of Christ.
7. The "first tent" (or "tabernacle," NRSV margin) in this verse may mean the same as in verse 6, i.e., the first room in the tabernacle. But here its presence implies the ongoing Mosaic covenant with its priestly service. As long as that first room remained, the tent (or tabernacle) and its ministry remained in force.
8. It is the view of the majority of scholars that the Gentiles in view are Gentiles generally, not those who have come to Christ. For the contrary view see C.E.B. Cranfield, *ICC, The Epistle to the Romans* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1975), 1:155ff.

In our human, frail, broken, unworthy response, the Spirit helps in our infirmities, lifting us up to Christ who, in his ascended HUMANITY, is our God-given response, the leader of our worship, the pioneer of our faith, our advocate and high priest, who through the eternal Spirit presents us with himself to the Father. So in and through the mediatorial ministry of the Spirit, we worship the Father in the name of Christ: "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he who searches the hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:22-27). That is, the Spirit is not only speaking Spirit but also interceding Spirit, exercising not only a prophetic ministry but also a priestly ministry. It is all too possible for us in the Reformed tradition so to stress (a) that we neglect (b). We so stress that God comes to us as God to address us through his Word in preaching that we short-circuit the real humanity of Christ, the role of the continuing priesthood of Christ in representing us to God, and have a one-sided view of the work of the Spirit. We can then so obtrude our own response to the Word in Pelagian fashion that we obscure or forget the God-given response made for us by Jesus Christ. It is possible for us so to obtrude our own offering of praise that we lose sight of the one true offering of praise made for us (Hebrews 2:12). . . . God does not throw back upon ourselves to make our response to the Word in our own strength. But graciously he helps our infirmities by giving us Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to make the appropriate response for us and in us. Can we not adapt Galatians 2:20 and say, "We pray, and yet it is not we who pray, but Christ who prays for us and in us; and the prayers which we now offer in the flesh, we offer by the faithfulness of the one who loved us and offered himself for us"?

JAMES B. TORRANCE, *WORSHIP, COMMUNITY AND THE TRIUNE GOD OF GRACE* (DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS: INTERVARSITY PRESS, 1996), 88-89.

At the Reformation this doctrine had immediate effect in the overthrow of Roman sacerdotalism—Jesus Christ is our sole Priest. He is the one and only Man who can mediate between us and God, so that we approach God solely through the mediation of the Humanity of Jesus, through his incarnate Priesthood. When the Humanity of Christ is depreciated or whenever it is obscured by the sheer majesty of his Deity then the need for some other human mediation creeps in—hence in the Dark and Middle Ages arose the need for a human priesthood to mediate between sinful humanity and the exalted Christ, the majestic Judge and King. There was of course no denial of the Deity of Christ by the Reformers—on the contrary they restored the purity of faith in Christ as God through overthrowing the accretions that compromised it; but they also restored the place occupied in the New Testament and the Early Church by the Humanity of Christ, as he who took our human nature in order to be our Priest, as he who takes our side and is our Advocate before the judgment of God, and who once and for all has wrought out atonement for us in his sacrifice on the Cross, and therefore as he who eternally stands in for us as our heavenly Mediator and High-Priest.

T. F. TORRANCE, *THEOLOGY IN RECONSTRUCTION* (LONDON, ENGLAND: SCM PRESS, 1965), 166-67.

. . . true worship is the highest and noblest activity of which man, by the grace of God, is capable.

JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE, "REFORMATION IN DOCTRINE, WORSHIP, AND LIFE" IN *HERE WE STAND! A CALL FROM CONFESSING EVANGELICALS*, JAMES MONTGOMERY BOICE AND BENJAMIN E. SASSE, EDS. (GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN: BAKER), 183.