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The final consequence was to move the central focus of Christian worship for Protestants from worship—which, for lay people, had been almost entirely the sacraments—to one in which the sacraments became occasional intruders on a normal pattern of worship. No greater shift has ever occurred in Christian worship, either East or West.

JAMES F. WHITE, *PROTESTANT WORSHIP: TRADITIONS IN TRANSITION* (LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY: WESTMINSTER/JOHN KNOX PRESS, 1989), 37.

There is not the preaching of the Word of God and the sacrament; there is the preaching of the Word of God and sacrament of the Word of God. That is to say that Word of God is given to us in two forms: it is both preached and signified, and it becomes valid through this dual testimony (cf. Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; etc.). This duality echoes the incarnation.

JEAN-JACQUES VON ALLMEN, "THE SERMON IN WORSHIP," CHAPTER 3 IN *PREACHING AND CONGREGATION* (RICHMOND, VIRGINIA: JOHN KNOX PRESS, 1962), 40.

The task of hymns sung during worship as well as the planned worship experience as a whole is to help those present to orient their lives by triggering their imaginations. To accomplish this task requires of the worship planners both good theology and a genuine desire to elicit participation on the part of those worshipping.

TED PETERS, "WORSHIP WARS" IN *WORSHIP* (SUMMER 1994) 33:3:69.

## LAMENT FOR A LOST LITURGY

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*T. M. Moore*

There is a longing in my soul  
for quiet. All around, the whole  
assembly, in electrified  
excess, continues to abide  
the noise that overwhelms their own  
attempts at praise. Am I alone  
in pining for that stillness sweet,  
in which our Savior's face we'd meet?  
In missing those exalted rhymes  
and soaring tones that other times  
employed in service to our King?  
And can these palsy prayers we bring  
to God almighty hope to catch  
His holy ear, or can they match  
the psalmists' lexicon of praise  
and thanks? Oh, how I miss those ways  
that faithful generations gone  
found adequate to lean upon  
in worship! I am told I'll learn  
to like it, I'll adjust, discern

the value of this form to reach  
our Christless neighbors and to teach  
them how to know the Savior in  
familiar ways. This worldly din,  
these unconvicting liturgies  
and folksy, Christless homilies  
may suit the lost among us fine;  
they do not flame this heart of mine  
with passion for the King of Grace  
who bids our presence in this place.  
Must we, who glow with saving fire,  
against God's holy worth conspire  
by wallowing in this world's dust,  
forsaking our traditions, just  
so those who sail in earthly ships  
can take his covenant on their lips?  
God help us! We have taken that  
which you defined, directed at  
yourself, and through the ages long  
refined, in preaching, prayer, and song,  
to suit your pleasure and we've turned  
it to man's leisure! We have spurned  
your purposes for worship, Lord,  
and turned this precious time toward  
the whims of those whose hearts are hot  
for one thing only, and it's not  
to please you, but themselves instead.

We've geared our worship to the dead  
of this corrupt and dying age!  
How long before your holy rage  
lays bare our folly? Must our love  
for those yet lost prevail above  
our love for you, which, in this hour  
of worship, we with the Spirit's power  
and changeless truth would demonstrate?  
And yet I fear it is too late;  
the world into our holy space  
has come, and to our great disgrace,  
is setting the agenda for  
our worship. And, as numbers soar,  
our leadership congratulates  
itself, the volume escalates  
each passing week, the prayers become  
more trifling still, the sermons hum  
along in hortatory dress,  
seducing every man's distress  
or fear, and silence disappears  
into a memory; while my tears  
flow, not, as some might think, in sweet  
response to this week's rockin' beat,  
but for the loss-of focus, form,  
and substance-that's become the norm  
in worship. He alone will cheer  
for whom this soothes his itching ear.