

# Worship — Week 1: Worshiping and “Imaging” the Triune God

Rev'd Benjamin Giffone, PhD — Redeemer Presbyterian Church — Fall 2024

- Personal introduction
  - Continuously involved in church music since I was three
    - Messianic congregation
    - Mom sang hymns to us
    - conservative Baptist church
    - Alliance church, more “contemporary” worship
    - Adulthood: Involved in “contemporary” forms of worship
    - Sojourn in Anglicanism
  - Development of my thought
    - Settled in middle- to low-church Reformed context; worship director
    - Discovery of Anglican liturgy at university
    - Christian university, seminary, graduate school
    - Studied Lamentations; incorporated lament into liturgy
    - Father-in-law, Joe: songwriter, pastor, mentor
    - Worship in intercultural contexts: South Africa, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia
    - My writing: Exploring the function of worship within story; image of God
- Questions to start out
  - Is God a narcissist to demand worship from human beings?
  - Shouldn't we be worshiping, i.e., bringing God glory, all the time by honoring him in our lives?
  - Are human beings the only beings that can worship?
  - Can I worship by myself?
  - Is “worship” the same thing as “music”?
  - What does worship do for us?
  - What does worship do for God?
  - Can worship be evangelistic?
- Goals for the Seminar
  - To honor the Triune God;
  - To allow worship to perform its transforming work in us as individuals and as a body;
  - To focus our church community on the object of worship, the purposes of worship, and the means of worship through the lenses of Scripture and tradition;
  - To help us think through various elements of the worship service, and structural concerns that affect worship
- Question: Is God a narcissist to demand worship from human beings? Answer: the Triune, other-oriented God; perichoresis
  - Other-orientation
    - Does God need his ego stroked all the time? Why does he want worship?
    - The persons of the Trinity receive satisfaction as they love and enjoy one another, and see the other persons glorified.
  - The Father and the Son give each other glory
    - John 1:1
    - Rom 1:3–4
    - Numerous passages from John!
    - Philippians 2:5–11
    - Daniel 7
  - The Father and the Spirit validate the Son – Matt 3:16–17
  - Holy Spirit sent (proceeds) from the Father and the Son
    - John 15:26–27; 16:12–15
    - Acts 1:8; 2
  - The Father vindicates those who glorify the Son and the Spirit — Luke 12:8–10
  - The Spirit and the Son intercede before the Father
    - Romans 8:26–27 Spirit intercedes for us, within us and on the earth
    - Rom 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 8:1 Christ Jesus intercedes for us at the Father's right hand
  - Conclusion: The persons of the Trinity are other-oriented, and they work together for us

- Consider: Humanity as the active, living images of God
  - “What is the chief and highest end of man? A. Man’s chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy Him forever.” (WLC 1) Piper: “To glorify God *by* enjoying him forever!”
    - God is fully satisfied in relation with himself. Creation stems from a desire on the part of each person of the Trinity to see other free beings recognizing the glory of *and* enjoying the other persons of the Trinity. When we glorify the Father, the Son and the Spirit say, “YES!” When we revel in and praise the Spirit, the Father and the Son do a quiet fist bump.
    - Worship is one of the most important ways that we freely enjoy and glorify God—we glorify him by enjoying him!
  - Image of God in the ANE – YHWH’s cult statues?
    - Creation is a temple
    - Garden is the holy of holies
    - Human being are the cult images, given life by the God (incidentally: why images are prohibited in the worship of YHWH—humans are the living images!)
    - Images harm themselves by declaring that they will only “image” themselves.