

Liturgy: Worship

Music Style, Vestments, and Church Calendar

Music Style

1. Prevailing Modern Assumption – Style is Neutral
 - a. The “form” of something has no impact on its “content.”
 - b. This assumption is incorrect.
 - i. “Style not only reflects but actually shapes content.” -Michael Horton
 - ii. TV commercials rarely showcase products but rather those who consume them. (Beer commercials vs infomercials)
 - iii. What marketers have come to understand is that the form has a stronger force in promotion than the actual content.
 1. They can get the result they want (you buying their product) relying chiefly on form and style and minimizing the role of content.
 - iv. This is largely the problem in the forms or style of marketing or advertising.
 1. Attention/entertainment, consumption and choice are the chief pillars of marketing and consumerism.
 - a. The goal is to keep your attention long enough for you to be convinced to consume a product with the assumption that the consumer always has the **choice** to move on to whatever is more attention-grabbing!
 - c. Thesis: It is not possible for the church to adopt the tactics and forms of consumer culture and be faithful to the Biblical command to worship God in reverence and awe.
 - i. “In the style of the culture of marketing, there can be nothing serious or unsettling—people have a choice, you know, and have learned to switch channels over the slightest sign of a low entertainment value. The criterion for tuning in is whether it’s interesting, not whether it’s true.” – Horton
 - ii. We must ask ourselves the question, “If God is glorious (“weighty”) and we are called to worship him in reverence and awe, are certain styles and forms more appropriate for that content than others?”
 - iii. When the form of communication...contradicts the content, the form often wins. This is in part because we are involved in formal structures at a deep, precognitive, often visceral level—a level closer to our hearts than our heads. If our affections and desires are nudged in a direction that contradicts the direction suggested by content, the content is likely to lose. – Myers (xi)
 1. Think » Christian rap, heavy metal, VeggieTales, etc.
 - iv. As Christians we believe in what CS Lewis called “the objectivity of value.”

1. Moral, aesthetic, or metaphysical value is not determined by our subjective preferences, but objectively corresponds to reality itself. Right/wrong, beautiful/ugly, and true/false are not questions of preference but questions of objective value.
- v. This means that we must confess that some forms of worship are more appropriate than others.
 1. Because many Christians have adopted the subjectivism of popular culture, questions of the aesthetics of liturgical expression are usually reduced to a question of "what the market (i.e., the congregation's tastes) will bear." – Myers, 100
2. What Style/Form is Appropriate to Worshipping with “Reverence” and “Awe”?
 - a. High | Folk | Pop Culture as paradigm
 - i. “Pop music is not simply the popular music of our day but a style all its own in history—the product of a convergence of many streams: marketing/advertising, the triumph of the therapeutic, and entertainment as stimulation rather than refinement.” – Horton

<u>Traditional (folk) and High Culture</u>	<u>Popular Culture</u>
Focuses on the timeless	Focuses on the new
Encourages reflection	Discourages reflection
Pursued with deliberation	Pursued casually to “kill time”
Offers us what we could not have imagined	Gives us what we want, tells us what we already know
Requires training; encourages patience	Relies on instant accessibility; encourages impatience
Emphasizes knowledge and wisdom	Emphasizes information and trivia
Encourages qualitative concerns	Encourages quantitative concerns
Celebrates ability	Celebrates fame
Appeals to appropriate, proportioned emotions	Appeals to sentimentality
Content and form governed by requirements of created order	Content and form governed by requirements of the market
Formulas are the tools	Formulas are the substance
Relies on formal dynamics and the power of symbols (including language)	Relies on spectacle, tending to violence and prurience
Aesthetic power in intrinsic attributes	Aesthetic power in reminding of something else
Communal	Individualistic
Transforms sensibilities	Leaves us where it found us
Capable of repeated, careful attention	Incapable of deep or sustained attention
Allusive (suggests the transcendent)	Lacks ambiguity
Relies on “Secondary World” conventions	No discontinuity between life and art
Encourages understanding of others	Reflects the desires of the self
Tends toward submission to standards	Tends toward relativism
Received	Used

Vestments

- General
 - Theology of clothing – a manifestation of office, sign of a position in the world or society – we’re not beyond this.
 - Still believe in uniforms – think about it – still a uniform, but who picks style, judge in shorts? Cop at your door? They manifest office.
 - Why to judges wear black robes? They are ministers – so the state can, but not the church?
- Clerical Collar
 - Pastors – distinguishing as representatives of Christ.
 - Collar represents slavery – slaves of Christ per Paul
 - Minister – not their own, they speak for Christ.
 - His words are not his own. He is bound to speak and represent Christ.
- Alb & Stole
 - Only one mediator, but ordained pastor and elders represent Christ in a unique way – ordination as representative, speak and act for Christ in special ways – set aside.
 - Baptism – Jesus is doing the baptism, but he’s using a human officiant.
 - Emphasizes office – a public man, an emissary of Jesus Christ.
 - Stole – a yoke, appointed as a servant, washing feet.
 - Rev. 4 (a worship service) – John’s ascension into heaven coming before the throne of grace.
 - Leaders of the church, elders were in white robes.
 - Old covenant – also examples of priests ministering in the tabernacle and temple.
 - Not essential, but fitting.
 - Graduation often treated with more formality than worship.

Church Calendar

- Not “whether” but Which.
 - Humans create calendars to tell stories
 - July 4th, Memorial Day, Labor Day, etc.
 - Who are the saints? How are they changing? (Pride Month/Juneteenth)
- No commands in the Bible to celebrate church calendar but cultures create calendars to create and maintain and Christians should not be in the habit of scorning such calendars if they do not go beyond the bounds of Scripture. Christians should be peaceable.
- Old Covenant Israel
 - Passover (planting seed of Israel) » Pentecost (first fruits) » Tabernacles (harvest)
 - One day of fasting (Day of Atonement) » 80 days of feasting
 - Calendar told story + prophesied future

- Dominical (Lord) cycle tracks the life of Christ
 - Advent, Christmas, Epiphany (manifestation/appearing, baptism, transfiguration).
 - Ash Wednesday, Lent (focus on Jesus and his suffering running through 40 days).
 - Holy Week - Maundy Thursday (remembers what Jesus did in the upper room, last supper – Maundy is “new command” – love one another, washing feet).
 - Good Friday, Holy Saturday (Jesus resting in the grave).
 - Easter – runs 50days.
 - Ascension Sunday (40 days from Easter)
 - Pentecost – 50days out, pouring out of the Holy Spirit
 - Trinity Sunday – revealed to us in story.
 - Ordinary time
 - Christ the King - last Sunday before the first Sunday in Advent, looks ahead and focuses on final coming.
 - Dominiontide