

Footstep #40 – The Democratic Character of Protestant Worship

1. The theology of all the Protestant reformers – Erasmus, Calvin, Luther, Zwingli, and Knox is one of ***We, the People, For the People, and Of the People!*** People grow in faith as a result of the “means of grace” which is how God shows himself to us in His Word and the sacraments of baptism and The Lord’s Supper. The sermon in a Protestant worship is instructional – for Luther it has two parts: the law, which shows us our sin and human weakness AND the Gospel, which propels people of faith into actions of love, service, and praise.
2. Protestants believe in the Bible and read their Bibles. This was the impetus for the Reformation and the translation of Scripture into local languages. Every Protestant worship includes readings from the ***Holy Bible*** because the Bible is considered the source of truth and true knowledge.
3. Every worship includes an offering of gifts by the people. However, the true intent of the offering is the offering of one’s self to God. The purpose of the offering is for the church to help others; although it is the also the main financial support for the pastor and church building.
4. Since Protestant worship is both private, for the individual/family, and public, for the priesthood of all believers; prayer is the pulse of the Christian’s heart. Although the content of personal prayer is important, prayer is also for individuals to talk with God in a personal way. Protestants do not have the formal prayers of a Rosary or the Stations of the Cross; instead their prayers are conversations with God.

“Prayer also brought home to Luther his conviction that as a God of conversations and community, God wants to talk with his people. ‘For Luther and his followers, prayer was a conversation within a relationship between God and humans, a conversation started by God’s Word, a conversation that respected the integrity and creativity of both parties. Prayer did not depend on human worthiness but on the nature of God, who had promised to hear prayer.’”

(Robert Kolb. ***Luther and the Stories of God***. p. 139)

