

Martin Luther the Worship Leader

Processes and Methods of Liturgical Reform through the Reformation

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Abstract

During the Reformation, Martin Luther led the movement to bring a new, biblical focus into congregational worship. The means by which Luther ushered this new focus into the church service was the introduction of his own liturgies and with reforms of liturgies that were currently being used by the Roman Catholic Church. In this liturgical reform, there are several observable principles by which Luther operated. First, Luther operated with caution, attempting to keep the changes respectful and gradual. Second, the changes were based primarily on what he believed the teachings of Scripture dictated, and he was purposeful in making sure that peace among the brethren was sought by all, even when opinions in practice conflicted. Third, Luther was purposeful in making the Word of God available to the common man, when before it had only been available to the clergy. Fourth, Luther sought to make the Word of God central to the worship service, hoping to eliminate all extraneous and erroneous practices in the process. Fifth, Luther took steps to return to the worship service the practice of congregational song.

The Liturgies of Martin Luther: Worship Leader of the Reformation

Martin Luther is known for his role as a leader and pioneer of practical church reform during the Reformation. Although Luther himself contributed many religious writings to the world, he believed that only the Bible itself could create a true change of heart within the people he was trying to reach. To this effect, he said, “Enough has been written in books, yes; but it has not been driven home to the hearts.”¹ From this statement as well as much of his writings in general, it is apparent that Luther operated according to the belief that in order for true reform to occur within the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), reform first had to occur within the hearts of the people. Luther’s writings during the Reformation revolve around the ideology of inner transformation, and this ideology is most clearly reflected in his liturgical works.

Many factors influenced and motivated Luther as he penned these liturgies, which were some of the most significant evangelical documents of his time. In the broader framework of history and the movement of culture, nothing of Luther’s theology can be understood outside of the context of the Reformation. Leading up to this great movement, Luther discovered many problems with the RCC and he developed a long list of grievances that needed to be addressed. But, even as he came to grips with the reality of these problems, Luther demonstrated wisdom in the steps that he took to bring about change. As Luther blazed a new trail for congregational worship during the Reformation,

1. Martin Luther, “The German Mass and Order of Service,” rev. ed., trans. Paul Strodach. *Luther’s Works* 53 (n.p.: 1523): 67. From this point on, the source “Luther’s Works” will be referred to as “LW.”

there were five primary goals that he kept in focus: (1) Keeping the transition from RCC tradition respectful and gradual, (2) Reforming the sacraments based primarily on the teachings of Scripture and for the edification of the brethren, (3) Making the Word of God available to the common man, (4) Making the Word of God central to the worship service, and (5) Implementing congregational song into the worship service.

Respecting Church Tradition

The grievances that Martin Luther held against the RCC were justifiable. Prior to the Reformation, elitism and corruption within the RCC hierarchy had essentially produced a *superstitious* congregation rather than one driven by faith. Furthermore, the sacraments had become so bogged down with external requirements that the people had begun to operate according to a works-based theology.

Building on the Church's foundation. Basic knowledge of Luther's reactions to these atrocities might cause the casual student to regard Luther as a figure of rebellion. Certainly, his voice was one of innovation and change when butted up against the stagnant RCC. However, Luther did not regard himself in this way at all— nor was it his motivation to stir up any inklings of dissension. For Luther, this would have been counter-productive. Modern worship leaders who desire to see change happen in their churches today may observe Luther's approach to reform and perceive his conservative methodology as either inherently praiseworthy (for the preservationists at heart) or inherently deplorable (for the developmental at heart). With these quick judgments, however, they neglect to take into consideration the historical context in which Luther

was operating. The oldness or newness of a form of worship simply was not something that Luther was concerned with.²

As much as possible, Luther wanted to remain faithful to the orders of the RCC, only making the necessary changes that Scripture required. His reasoning for this methodology was the idea that new forms of worship must maintain some continuity with the “Church of the past.”³ In fact, a great amount of his reforms were built on previously-existing RCC traditions.⁴ For example, in Luther’s *Order of Baptism*, the structure of the service was based on the traditional RCC order, with only a few minor changes.⁵

Another purpose of Luther’s conservative approach to liturgical reform was promoting unity among the people. For, in anticipating extreme reactions among the people to these reforms, Luther had referred to himself as both “hesitant and fearful.”⁶ One area in which this timidity is largely apparent is the *structure* of Luther’s liturgies. Most of them do not attempt to present any kind of technical order of worship—the kind that is used commonly in churches today—at all. Instead, Luther provided the congregations with a simple discourse on reasons for change and why it was necessary to begin implementing them within church services.⁷

2. Helmut T. Lehman and Ulrich S. Leupold, eds., *Liturgy and Hymns*, vol. 53 of *Luther's Works* (1965; repr., Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), XV.

3. Vernon P Kleinig, “Lutheran Liturgies from Martin Luther to Wilhelm Lohe,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (April 1998): 127.

4. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XVII.

5. Ibid., 95. See section on Baptism.

6. Martin Luther, “An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg,” rev. ed., trans. Paul Strodach, *LW* 53 (n.p.: 1523): 19.

7. Kleinig, “Liturgies to Wilhelm Lohe,” 125.

Furthermore, although Luther had his own opinions on many of the finer points of Christian doctrine, he strongly urged the other church leaders to put aside any doctrinal differences which were unnecessary for salvation. This was for the sake of the common people, so that they would not be confused or discouraged by any conflicting opinions among the church leadership.⁸ Luther conceded that the church leaders themselves may “have no [personal] need for such uniformity,” but he stressed its extreme necessity at the present time, for without the tight bond of the leadership holding them together, the congregations were sure to fall apart.⁹

With regard to the *extent* of the unification that Luther proposed, it should be noted that he did not desire to impose one overarching order of worship for every church to follow without question. Rather, Luther encouraged unity and uniformity only within each distinct principality.¹⁰ Luther did not want the people to start following *him* instead of following Christ. Luther said, “In the first place, I ask that people make no reference to my name; let them call themselves Christians, not Lutherans. What is Luther? After all, the teaching is not mine. Neither was I crucified for anyone.”¹¹ Ironically, this kind of idolatry (as referred to by Luther) was what had caused the great downward spiral of the RCC, and Luther feared that these new churches would fall into the same trap. For this reason, the concept of unity within the church was necessary, but it needed to be balanced with another essential facet of the Christian life: freedom.

8. Martin Luther, “A Christian Exhortation to the Livonians Concerning Public Worship and Concord,” rev. ed., trans. Paul Strodach, *LW* 53 (n.p.: 1523): 47.

9. Luther, “Exhortation to the Livonians,” 48.

10. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 53.

11. Martin Luther, “A Sincere Admonition...to All Christians to Guard against Insurrection and Rebellion,” *LW* 45 (n.p.: 1522): 70.

Obstacles in the implementation process. As a great priority, Luther advocated individual faith and freedom within the practice of Christianity. Although Luther himself advocated a new method of practicing the sacraments, he also acknowledged that the changes would have to be implemented more gradually in some congregations than in others. The reason for this disparity in the implementation process was the fact that, in some congregations, there proved to be a significant number of weaker brethren among them.

It was inevitable that some negative reactions would arise toward Luther's changes in the liturgy. Luther predicted that if negative reactions arose, the bulk of the commotion would come from people in two camps: first, those who are "weak in faith" and unable to adopt a new and unaccustomed form of worship. These weaker brethren were so attached to the older customs that they were prone to take offense at the general concept of change, or if changes were made *too quickly*.¹² The second group (which is even worse, he says) consists of those who rush into new practices "like unclean swine without faith or reason...delight[ing] only in novelty and tire of it quickly, when it has worn off."¹³ As a result, the congregations that Luther dealt with consisted of a mix of personalities—those who were preservationist by nature, those who were developmental, and also those who were (like Luther himself) somewhere in between.

In the midst of this conflict, Luther sought to strike a balance among these different groups within the church. For, although each approached the process of reform differently, all were in agreement with Luther that it needed to happen. Unity was essential to the survival of the church, but the allowance for individual freedom in church

12. Luther, "Church at Wittenburg," 28.

13. Ibid., 19.

practices was necessary. So, Luther put into words exactly how the balance between unity and freedom was to be struck in this situation: “we must feel and think the same, even though we may act differently.”¹⁴ In other words, the people were to be unified and unwavering in their adherence to the fundamental truths of the Gospel, but freedom was allowed where the individual conscience was concerned, especially as it affected the implementation of church practices.

Another obstacle that the congregations faced during this time was that there were few printed copies of the Bible in circulation. The fact that the Word of God was so physically unavailable also meant that there were very few preachers in existence who had committed themselves to enough study and had received enough practical instruction to be able to exposit the Bible well enough on their own.¹⁵ Because of this, Luther feared that the church leaders might potentially start preaching their *own* ideas rather than relying on the Holy Spirit to work among the people through the Scriptures. Luther pointed out that this very thing had become a regular occurrence in the RCC, whose clergy had become so self-serving and egotistical that their sermons had become frivolous and unedifying. Luther gives an example of this as he alludes to an RCC sermon in which the clergy spoke endlessly on the topic of “castles in Spain.”¹⁶

Luther recognized these potential problems early on, and in doing so he was able to prepare himself in such a way that his concerns did not in any way hinder his ministry to the people. His chief concern was the spread of the Gospel, for in the midst of his

14. Luther, “Church at Wittenburg,” 31.

15. Luther, “German Mass,” 78.

16. Ibid.

struggles he still firmly held to this charge: "...I must bear with them, unless I want to let the gospel itself be denied to the people."¹⁷

Reforming the Sacraments

Even though Luther anticipated mixed reactions to reforming the sacraments, there was no doubt that it needed to be done. As it was, the fundamental truths of the Gospel were being violated, for in practice, the majority of the people's faith had warped into shallow superstition. For example, within the RCC Mass the strongest motivator for Christian devotion was the idea of *purgatory*. In fact, many regular celebrations of the RCC were popularized as a result of the widespread fear that this place of spiritual confinement could potentially be awaiting them in the afterlife. It was believed that through congregational participation the people could effectively work themselves and their deceased loved ones out of purgatory and into heaven (or at least reduce the amount of time that they would have to spend there). Such celebrations included requiem Masses, vigils, the common week, and All Souls' Day—all previously existing practices which had, in recent years, become more focused on the dead than on the living.

Many of these practices within the RCC were formulated to prey on the less fortunate—those who had little earthly hope left, and so were naturally compelled to cling to religious practices which promised significant eternal rewards for only a small price. One practice in particular, called a "soul-bath," was performed most often by poor people for the purpose of reducing their deceased loved ones' punishment for sin.¹⁸ A similar purpose was sought in the buying of indulgences, or pieces of parchment which

17. Luther, "German Mass," 78.

18. Helmar Junghans, "Luther on the Reform of Worship," in *Harvesting Martin Luther's Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2004), 215.

were said to possess the power to credit the buyers with the “merits of Christ together with the superabundant merits of all the saints.”¹⁹ With these merits, buyers hoped to release their deceased loved ones from purgatory. It was in opposition to the selling of these indulgences that Luther posted his Ninety-Five Theses. In these theses, Luther questioned the extravagant claims being made about the power of indulgences, as well as the authority of the pope to extend this power to souls in purgatory. As a central motivator of his theses, Luther called the people of the church to hold the Gospel as their “true treasure,”²⁰ as opposed to these indulgences.

Another common practice was the worship of relics, or physical objects such as bones or keepsakes of famous saints. These objects were believed to possess a spiritual worth or power on their own, and the majority of the people were deceived in thinking that making regular visits to such relics would benefit them spiritually. Furthermore, there were some who abused this widespread belief, hoping to make a profit by falsely claiming the discovery of a new relic. Thus, the masses could be expected to turn up when word spread that a new relic was in town. People would stand in line for hours and then pay a small amount of money only to spend several cherished seconds in front of these “relics.” Luther was disgusted at such abuses, saying, “...so many manifest lies and so much nonsense has been invented about the bones of dogs and horses that even the devil has laughed at such knavery.”²¹

19. Martin Luther, *The Smalcald Articles* (Champaign, Ill: Project Gutenberg, 1990s), II.ii, <<http://www.netlibrary.com/urlapi.asp?action=summary&v=1&bookid=1085486>>.

20. Scott Hendrix, “Luther,” eds. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz. *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004): 43.

21. Luther, *The Smalcald Articles*, II.ii.

All of the aforementioned practices demonstrate that the Mass had become a thing of futility, for the entirety of the people's devotion was being spent (and *wasted*, in Luther's opinion) on rituals for the afterlife. As it was, congregational involvement in the church was limited to the avoidance of future consequences, and thus, there was no part of the church practice which acknowledged the existence of *present* spiritual benefits for the people. In this aspect, the people were neither closer to God, nor did they understand what it meant to have a real relationship with Him. The people operated according to the paradigm that the weight of spiritual responsibility fell on their own shoulders, and thus, life under the RCC became a burden.²² Martin Luther was subject to the same temptations that the people faced. He himself was once a slave to works-based salvation, and he understood the pressures of being daily bombarded with the idolatrous propaganda of the RCC. So, Luther had first-hand knowledge of how easy it was for the masses (a generally uninformed and uneducated people) to fall subject to such a thing. In the midst of such an oppressive social climate, Luther knew that because of his own education and experience, it was his responsibility to take the necessary steps to bring spiritual freedom to the people. Thus, Luther began his reformation of the RCC sacraments.

22. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XVI.

The Lord's Supper. *Uses and abuses.* Next to the doctrine of justification by faith, Luther devoted most of his energy to writing on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. For the most part, Luther distanced himself from the RCC and called for the reform of specific practices. However, there were some aspects of the sacrament in which Luther was more closely aligned with the RCC than with some of the more radical reformers.²³ The RCC held to what is known as "transubstantiation." The major components of this theory rest on the philosophical distinction between the "accidents" of a thing (that which is sensed in the human experience) and the "substance" of a thing (that which is true in reality).²⁴ As it applied to the Lord's Supper, the RCC taught that after the priest spoke the Words of Institution,²⁵ the bread and wine were transformed (in substance) into Christ's body and blood, although their appearance (in accident) was perceived as still maintaining the same physical qualities. Luther also believed in the true, physical presence of Christ's body and blood in this sacrament. That is, he "would agree with the pope that there is only blood" with regards to the wine while the other reformers ("fanatics" according to Luther) believed that what was being used was "mere wine."²⁶

23. David C. Steinmetz, *Luther in Context*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 74. What characterized these reformers as being more "radical" was their *metaphorical* interpretation of the Jesus' words in Mt. 26:26 (e.g. "this is my body"). Charles Zwingli was one of these reformers, influenced by the grammatical analyses of Dutch humanist Cornelius Hoen.

24. *Ibid.*, 73.

25. Erwin L. Lueker, Luther Poellot and Paul Jackson, eds., *Christian Cyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), s.v. "Institution, Words of," <http://www.lcms.org/ca/www/cyclopedia/02/display.asp?t1=i&word=INSTITUTION.WORDSOF> (accessed April 8, 2010). The "Words of Institution" are the words which Jesus Christ used in instituting the first Lord's Supper (cf. Mt 26:26–28; Mk 14:22–24; Lk 22:19–20; 1 Co 11:24–25). These same words are used in modern times by church leadership in the consecration of the bread and wine.

26. Martin Luther, "Confession Concerning Christ's Supper," In *Luther's Works* 37, ed. Robert H. Fischer, and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress press, 1961), 317.

Although aligned with the RCC in this way, he disagreed with regards to the *manner* in which the body and blood are present.²⁷ Widely-used in the Lutheran Church today is the phrase “in, with, and under” to describe the presence of Christ’s body and blood.²⁸ That is, Christ’s body and blood are present *in, with, and under* the bread and the wine in the sacrament. Luther called this description the “sacramental union”²⁹ (referred more commonly today as the “Real Presence”),³⁰ likening it with the union of the Holy Spirit and the dove (cf. Luke 3:22) as a means of understanding it, but also recognizing discrepancies in those parallels.³¹ Where the RCC taught that the bread and wine were only *perceptually* present (*fundamentally replaced* by the true presence of Christ’s body and blood), Luther taught that the bread and wine and the body and blood were *both truly* present; the substance of one did not cancel out the substance of the other.

In his addresses to the churches on how they were to perform the sacrament, Luther explained that what was most important was that no part of it appeared works-based, or “sacrificial” as he described it.³² Luther distinguished the sacrificial elements of worship from the sacramental ones—where the RCC had been teaching that the sacrament was a good work one does *for* God (sacrificial), Luther insisted that it was a

27. Steinmetz, *Luther in Context*, 73.

28. Erwin L. Lueker, Luther Poellot and Paul Jackson, eds., *Christian Cyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2000), s.v. “Grace, Means of, IV 3,” <http://www.lcms.org/ca/www/cyclopedia/02/display.asp?t1=g&word=GRACE.MEANSOF> (accessed April 8, 2010). In *Christian Cyclopedia* the phrase is shown to be used by Lutheran contemporaries with complete exclusivity as it is used to describe the nature of the relationship between Christ’s body and blood and the bread and wine.

29. Luther, “Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper,” 299-300.

30. Lueker, “Grace, Means of, IV 3.”

31. Luther, “Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper,” 299-300.

32. Luther, *Church at Wittenburg*, 22.

gift which the believer receives *from* God (sacramental).³³ This distinction some regarded as one of Luther's most significant contributions to the religious intellectual world.³⁴

Although he applied this distinction to other elements of worship as well, it was most helpful in creating a right understanding of the Lord's Supper during the late medieval era of the RCC.

The current sacrificial basis of the Lord's Supper was something that infected every area of the sacrament. First of all, such an understanding dictated that the participants offer prayers on behalf of all those present *or absent* (including the dead), and thus it was believed that everyone who was included in those prayers would receive the spiritual benefits of the sacrament as a result. Potentially then, the sacrament could be without the congregation even being present at the institution. This methodology was in direct opposition to what Luther believed to be the foundation of the structure of worship—that it is an *action of God toward man*.³⁵ For, in its original institution, the Lord's Supper was a simple ceremony and Christ's intentions were evangelistic.³⁶ In light of this fact, Luther explained that the Lord's Supper “is a sacrament of love. As love and support are given you here, so you must in turn render support and love to Christ in his needy ones.”³⁷

33. Kleinig, *Liturgies to Wilhelm Lohe*, 129.

34. *Ibid.*, 125.

35. Junghans, “Luther on the Reform of Worship,” 212.

36. Luther, “Church at Wittenberg,” 20.

37. Martin Luther, “The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body of Christ, and the Brotherhoods,” in *Luther's Works* 35, ed. Ernest Theodore Bachmann and Helmut J. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 3554.

Luther was adamant about teaching this to the common people, for although he allowed for freedom of practice in some areas of worship, he did not allow freedom of theology where it would result in the detriment of one's faith. To Luther, the Lord's Supper *was* the Gospel.³⁸ Thus, if the people were not taking part in it, they were missing out on an essential part of the Gospel truth.

Furthermore, it was believed in the RCC that the Words of Institution were a working magical formula. Thus, the priest who spoke these words over the bread and wine was endowed with the power to physically transform the elements into the body and blood of Christ. As a result, the RCC feared that the prospect of such power could tempt the laity to learn the words and then abuse them for their own purposes. For this reason, the priest only ever spoke the words in silence in order to keep them a secret.³⁹ As such, it became that Christ was no longer the enactor of the sacrament, but only an *example* whose power was no longer needed. This compromised Christ's true role as *Savior* and *Lord*⁴⁰ and again, this challenged Luther's belief that worship is fundamentally an act of God.

Furthermore, this sacrament in particular had become increasingly commercialized as the amount of artifacts deemed "necessary" for worship grew, i.e. vestments, candles, images. Luther commented, "There was scarcely a craft in all the world that did not depend on the mass for a large part of its business."⁴¹ In this way, the

38. Kleinig, *Liturgies to Wilhelm Lohe*, 126.

39. Junghans, "Luther on the Reform of Worship," 213.

40. Cameron A MacKenzie, "Worshiping in the 21st Century: Taking Our Cue from Martin Luther" (Ph. D. diss., Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN, 2001), 8.

41. Luther, "Church at Wittenberg," 22.

RCC became even more fundamental in the lives of the people, for their even their livelihoods depended on it. With the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in such a disastrous state, Luther believed that he needed to take quick action in communicating the truth about these practices to the common people.

Specific instructions to the churches. First, Luther discussed the type of wine which should be used, considering whether or not it should be mixed with water. In coming to a conclusion he considered Isaiah 1:22, which seemed to give the practice of mixing wine a "bad connotation."⁴² Second, the practice of "the elevation," or the lifting of the cup, was explained as being a physical representation of Christ being "remembered and elevated by the word of the sermon."⁴³ Third, Luther advocated that the men and women should be physically separated from each other in this practice, and that the men should take communion first, followed by the women.⁴⁴

As for the communicants themselves, Luther taught that there were serious spiritual requirements involved before one could partake. People who wished to receive of the Lord's Supper were required to ask it of the bishop *in person*, and then be subjected to questions regarding their faith and their reasons for desiring such a thing. Luther did not, however, believe that these practices should be implemented in the same manner for every person, but rather that most only needed to be examined once a year, some only once in their entire lives, and some never at all if that person demonstrated a deep understanding of the issue. Luther also taught that it was important for the

42. Luther, "Church at Wittenberg," 26.

43. Luther, "German Mass," 82.

44. Ibid.

communicants to partake of the Lord's Supper publicly, in front of the entire congregation, so that they would be recognizable and by association with such a practice held to a higher standard of accountability.⁴⁵

The overall purpose of this examination was to emphasize the "use and benefit" of the Lord's Supper to the faithful, and to destroy any lingering works-based ideas among the congregations.⁴⁶ It has been demonstrated that Luther held some strong positions on these various matters regarding the Lord's Supper. However, as it has already been observed, Luther took great pains to keep new superstitious practices from arising among the people. Furthermore, he recognizes that ultimately, "Christ will not care very much"⁴⁷ about the issues which are not expressly commanded in Scripture; that is, holding to one's own convictions about such things is of little importance when compared to encouraging a brother or loving a neighbor.

Baptism. *Luther's theological assertions. The water and the Word.* Although Luther acknowledged that baptism itself adds nothing to a person's salvation,⁴⁸ he maintained that the institution of baptism and the sanctification of the believer are connected. Through the combination of the washing of the water and the work of the Holy Spirit a person is purified from sin and is then enabled to live according to the rule of the Spirit.⁴⁹ He said, "...it is not baptism that justifies or benefits anyone, but it is faith

45. Luther, "Church at Wittenburg," 33-34.

46. Ibid., 32.

47. Ibid., 26.

48. Luther, "Exhortation to the Livonians," 47.

49. Martin Luther, "The Order of Baptism," in *Luther's Works* 53, trans. Paul Strodach (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 97. Luther also asserted that this sacrament of baptism has a direct impact on the human's transformation from being a "child of sin and wrath" to becoming a "child of God."

in that word of promise to which baptism is added. This faith justifies and fulfills that which baptism signifies.”⁵⁰ Thus, baptism was not meant to be a magical formula through which people were to receive salvation.

Instead, Luther strongly believed that *faith* was the driving force behind the power of baptism – faith that was bestowed upon the one being baptized by hearing the Word of God spoken during the ceremony. Although infants, if measured by man’s standard, would prove to be incapable of having such faith, Luther asserts that God promises to *create* faith (by the power of the Holy Spirit) in the infant through this sacrament.⁵¹ Luther explains, “...you can reason: If God is able by the word to create heaven and earth and fill the world...why is it not possible to take water and baptize, saying ‘In the name...’ and so be washed from all sins in body and soul?”⁵²

Baptizing infants. The fact that Luther believed that small children could and should be baptized is evident in his liturgies, for they are written from the perspective that child baptism is assumed.⁵³ The baptism of infants was, at that time, a long-standing tradition within the RCC. Luther remained loyal to this tradition, but not apart from valid (in his own mind) biblical reasons for doing so.⁵⁴ One of the prominent passages that is used in defense of this position is Mark 10:13-16. In this passage, while Jesus is welcoming the children to Himself, He tells His disciples in verse 15 that “anyone who

50. Martin Luther, “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,” in *Luther’s Works* 36, ed. Abdel Ross Wentz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 66.

51. Mark D. Tranvik, “Luther on Baptism,” in *Harvesting Martin Luther’s Reflections on Theology, Ethics, and the Church*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans), 26.

52. Tranvik, “Luther on Baptism,” 26.

53. Luther, “Order of Baptism,” 97.

54. Tranvik, “Luther on Baptism,” 37.

will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”⁵⁵ Another significant argument for infant baptism comes from Luther’s interpretation of the workings of God’s New Covenant toward mankind. According to Luther, the church must baptize everyone because the Gospel is meant for everyone. Thus, “To exclude anyone from baptism on the basis of their age would not only challenge an ordinance of God; it would also suggest that the divine promises were dependant upon human activity.”⁵⁶

Practices of belief. Since baptism was predominantly bestowed upon children, and since they (naturally) could not understand their own sinfulness, it was up to the child’s “sponsors” to take on the full weight of the child’s spiritual responsibility until the child was able to answer those important questions on his own.⁵⁷ It was believed that after baptism, a child could not lose his salvation- he is guaranteed it forever. However, if sponsors neglect their responsibility to the child, the consequence is that the sacrament becomes a mockery and “an insult to God.”⁵⁸

A significant focus of the *Order of Baptism* was the exorcism of a demon from the child prior to the water baptism. In fact, there were two separate exorcisms within the

55. Luther, “Order of Baptism,” 98-99. NIV translation.

56. Tranvik, “Luther on Baptism,” 35.

57. Luther, “Order of Baptism,” 102. In contrast to Luther’s position, some have raised the observation that some people who have been baptized as infants do not continue to live godly lifestyles. In response, Luther suggests that in such a case, the child’s sponsors are to blame. He says that the child’s sponsors must have been “so cold and careless [that] we, at their baptism, interceded for them without zeal.”

58. Ibid., 103.

scope of the service.⁵⁹ The purpose of this was two-fold: (1) to make room for the Holy Spirit to physically enter into the child,⁶⁰ and (2) to symbolically demonstrate the future spiritual struggle that the child will now be faced with and that the sponsors must guide him through.⁶¹ The amount of emphasis that Luther placed on this struggle seems to indicate that exorcisms were at that time believed to be a standard practice within the baptismal service:

...[I]t is no joke to take sides against the devil and not only to drive him away from the little child, but to burden the child with such a mighty and lifelong enemy...[I]t is very necessary to aid the poor child with all your heart and strong faith, earnestly to intercede for him that God...would not only free him from the power of the devil, but also strengthen him, so that he may nobly resist the devil in life and death.⁶²

There were three types of immersion used in Luther's day. The first was *immersio*, in which the entire body was immersed, the second was *superfusio*, in which the child was held over the font and great amounts of water were poured over him, and the third was *infusio*, in which only the head of the child was immersed in the font. Luther himself was a proponent of *immersio*, or total immersion.⁶³

59. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 106. Luther, "Order of Baptism," 97-99. In "Order of Baptism," the term "exorcism" itself is never used, but is strongly implied by the use of phrases such as "thou miserable devil...depart" (97) and "thou, devil, flee; for God's judgment cometh speedily" (99). There is no question in this commentator's mind that these are referring to exorcisms.

60. Ibid., 96.

61. Ibid., 102.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid., 100.

Writing the first order of baptism. Luther's writings on baptism were influenced most heavily by the doctrine of justification by faith alone.⁶⁴ For Luther, this essential doctrine encompassed all aspects of what it means to be a Christian, and in the sacrament of baptism, Luther saw nearly every benefit of the conversion experience brought to life:

In Baptism every Christian has enough to study and to practice all his life. He always has enough to do to believe firmly what Baptism promises and brings – victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, God's grace, the entire Christ, and the Holy Spirit with his gifts. In short the blessings of Baptism are so boundless that if timid nature considers them, it may well doubt whether they could all be true.⁶⁵

Luther's first circulated liturgy for baptism was *The Order of Baptism* in 1523. Predominantly, the service that Luther describes is a collection of prayers led by the priest which are offered on behalf of the child being baptized. Interwoven with these prayers, however, is a significant number sacraments which Luther believed were essentially useless, not because he believed that they were unbiblical, but because their presence in the ceremony clouded the true meaning of baptism for the people.⁶⁶ *Faith* being the essential element of this sacrament, Luther feared that "...now faith is passed over in silence, and the church is smothered with endless laws concerning works and ceremonies..."⁶⁷

Revising the order of baptism. By the Middle Ages, the sacrament of Baptism had degenerated to an act which only had significance at the beginning of life, its only purpose being to wash away the guilt of original sin. As the believer then matured to the

64. Tranvik, "Luther on Baptism," 24.

65. Martin Luther, *The Large Catechism* (Gardners Books, 2007), 41-43.

66. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 106.

67. Luther, "Babylonian Captivity," 70.

age of accountability, penance was required for daily restoration from sin.⁶⁸ In contrast to this mainstream medieval belief, Luther taught that Baptism was not a mere external rite of passage meant to be performed only once, rather, it was meant to permeate the entire life of the believer.⁶⁹

Although Luther himself desired to cut all of these sacraments from the liturgy early on, he predicted that doing so at that point in time might offend some of the weaker brethren in the church. These sacraments had come from the order of the RCC, after all, and some of these new Lutherans needed more time than others to adjust to the reality of letting go of some of the old traditions and taking on new ones.⁷⁰ In his own mind, though, full and complete justification by faith was offered through baptism, and was thus, in a sense, a mighty weapon fit for use in the war against the RCC hierarchy.⁷¹

Two years after the first version was published, then, the time seemed appropriate to make the revisions that he and his friends had desired for so long. The new liturgy that resulted was *The Order of Baptism Newly Revised*.⁷² The *Newly Revised* version of the baptismal order is taken almost entirely from the original order. However, it is about four times shorter in length because most of the external elements have been removed, including the first exorcism (there are two in the original), the giving of the salt, and the lighting of the candle. This order, as well as other writings of Luther which discuss the concept of baptism, take the same, fundamental approach to the sacrament. For this

68. Tranvik, "Luther on Baptism," 25.

69. Ibid., 24.

70. Ibid., 102.

71. Ibid., 30.

72. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 106.

reason, it has been said that Luther “single-handedly rescued baptism from obscurity to place it again at the center of Christian life and thought.”⁷³

Making the Word of God Available

One of Luther’s primary concerns throughout the majority of his Christian life was the fact that, since every man is sinful by nature, it is necessary that *all* are given access to the Word of God, not just the clergy. At this point in time the majority of the general population was not able to read or write. Motivated by this truth, Luther made reforms in the worship service for the purpose of making God’s Word more easily accessible to the common man. Luther believed that many of the arts could be used to accomplish this task, for “[h]is was a multimedia gospel in a world of organ, printing press, folk song, and illustration.”⁷⁴ In this way, the music and lyrics of the Reformation served as a teaching tool of Scripture to the masses.⁷⁵

Furthermore, the majority of the people in these congregations were not seasoned Christians. In fact, most of them were not Christians at all. Hoping to see a spectacle, which they would often witness in the public pagan rituals, they would come to Mass with high hopes for entertainment, not the Gospel. As it was in the normal practice of the medieval mass, the priest would *silently* pray the Canon of the Mass. This canon included

73. Wengert, *Harvesting Martin Luther’s Reflections*, 4-5.

74. *Ibid.*, 7.

75. Mark S Sooy, *Essays on Martin Luther’s Theology of Music* (n.p.: Blue Maroon, 2006), 6.

nearly every significant sacrament within the church service.⁷⁶ Luther feared that if the people were not even able to hear these words, then how could they possibly put their faith in them? For this reason, Luther believed it necessary to preach the Gospel *out loud* and as often as possible.⁷⁷

Liturgies in the common language. Still, even if the Mass was read aloud, the people would not be able to understand what was being said. For, up until this time, masses were only available in Latin, even though the language of the common people was German.⁷⁸ As new Lutheran congregations began to spring up along the countryside, the need for worship liturgies among the widespread congregations grew. Others before Luther had written German liturgies, but in their attempts had simply substituted German words for Latin ones. Within the structure of the existing plainchant, the result was, as Luther put it, something that sounded like “an imitation in the manner of the apes.”⁷⁹ The fact was that the German *manner* of singing differed from the Latin one. Luther recognized that, in order for the music to be sing-able by the congregations, the musical notation of the songs needed to match the speech rhythm of the German language.⁸⁰

76. Junghans, “Luther on the Reform of Worship,” 211. Junghans provides a complete list of the sacraments included in the Canon of the Mass—“...the offering up of the gifts and prayers for the church, prayers for the living, remembrance of the saints, petition for the acceptance of the offered elements, petition for the transubstantiation of the elements, the transubstantiation itself (Words of Institution), remembrance of Christ’s work of salvation, petition for the acceptance of the unbloodied sacrifice, petition that we may be united with Christ’s sacrifice, remembrance of the dead, petition for communion with the saints, blessing, and praise.”

77. Luther, “German Mass,” 63.

78. Ibid., 61, 101. In his “Order of Baptism” Luther expressed the necessity that the baptismal service, in particular, be performed in the German language. Apparently, congregations were not taking this service as seriously as they should have been- the main reason being that the majority of the people present could not understand what was being said in the Latin.

79. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 54.

80. Ibid.

Liturgies for the small Church. In most of these new, small country churches resources were limited. Understandably, Luther had only previously dealt with the large cathedrals and convent churches which were capable of performing even the most elaborate versions of his Masses. In order to provide for all of the smaller churches Luther formulated an order of worship fit for use in “even the smallest church.”⁸¹ The first liturgy of this nature that Luther created was the *German Mass*. Luther avoided making his liturgies too prominent for fear that they might be soon regarded as some kind of universal law. For this reason, his liturgies for “special services” (services written for a specific sacramental practice, which could be used within the larger mass—including baptism, private confession, and marriage) were not universally circulated, but were written as per request by his friends and colleagues.⁸²

Another early liturgy of Luther’s that applied easily to any kind of church was A *Christian Exhortation to the Livonians Concerning Public Worship and Concord*. In its structure, this order was written as a brief letter from Luther to one small congregation. In it, Luther offered no practical or musical forms of liturgical employment at all, but rather a heartfelt explanation of the theological principles of liturgical reform.⁸³ In general, Luther’s written liturgies expressed a greater devotion to the theology of worship than to its specific form.

81. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XVI.

82. Ibid., 93.

83. Ibid., 5.

Making the Word of God Central

Luther's primary goal during the Reformation was the correct handling and teaching of the Word of God in all its creative forms.⁸⁴ The RCC had in many ways turned worship into an abuse of the congregation for the love of their own power.⁸⁵ It was Luther's deepest desire to abolish these abuses, for they had become a detriment to the faith of the masses, and also to promote in the new churches the faith and love of the Bible.⁸⁶

Like a good doctor who is as careful in protecting and building up the healthy organs in his patient as he is ruthless in removing the diseased, Luther preserved and strengthened every vital feature in the traditional liturgy and deleted all corrupt intrusions.⁸⁷

Scripture-saturated liturgy. Luther's prioritization of the Word is directly witnessed in his liturgies, for they are saturated with Scripture. Also, stylistically they are extremely reminiscent of the New Testament Epistles. Furthermore, Luther's understanding of the proper use of church music was heavily influenced by his study of the Psalms. Within its chapters, Luther encountered the worship of Israel, which seemed to center on three main purposes: "(1) the praise of God, (2) an offering of the congregation, and (3) Christian education of humanity."⁸⁸ Luther sought to fulfill these purposes in the church of the Reformation.

84. Martin Luther, "Concerning the Order of Public Worship," in *Luther's Works* 53, trans. Paul Strodach (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 4.

85. *Ibid.*, 1.

86. Luther, "German Mass," 90.

87. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XVI.

88. Sooy, *Luther's Theology of Music*, 7.

Core doctrines in the catechisms. Another set of teaching tools that Luther provided for churches were the Small and Large Catechisms. The catechisms were written as clear and concise presentations of the essence of Christian belief. Their purpose was to instruct those who desired to be Christians “in what they should believe, know, do, and leave undone, according to the Christian faith.”

According to Luther, the whole of what is contained in the catechism can be summed up in three parts: the Ten Commandments, the Apostle’s Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer.⁸⁹ Luther believed that these three parts must be read aloud to the congregation, over and over, that they might remember the truths contained in them. Furthermore, the people were to take this practice into their own homes, reading them aloud to their children and servants, and to keep each other accountable in knowing all of these truths. To be sure, it was not a rote memorization of these things that Luther called for, but a true and deep understanding of them that would come from both speaking and hearing the Word of God.⁹⁰

The Rebirth of Congregational Song

During the period of the Reformation, hymnal printings far surpassed printings of the German Bible. In this way, hymns were one of the primary sources of making the Word of God available to the church laity, as well as the poor and illiterate masses.⁹¹ On a personal level, Luther found a great deal of comfort in music. Luther did indeed have many supporters, but for a revolutionary (a public status that is inherently divisive), it

89. Luther, “German Mass,” 64. What is modernly known as “The Lord’s Prayer” was known in Luther’s day as the “Our Father.”

90. Luther, “German Mass,” 64-65.

91. Christopher Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel: Luther Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 15.

was natural that Luther would have many enemies as well. In response to his earthly troubles, Luther said in 1530, “I hope my life is nearly at an end, for the world hates me and I am sick of it...so I keep humming this canticle.”⁹² In this way, Luther found *security* in the *order* of music. Of this security, Brian Horne poetically divulges:

For Luther the entirely non-figurative, non-representational, non-verbal world of sound in which every note and rhythm finds its proper place in the whole, and is indispensable to the whole, was not only a sign of the possibility of order, but was an actual achievement of that order, a sure indication of the stability of God in a shifting and unstable world.⁹³

Having such a deep passion and gratefulness for music himself, it seemed unfair that the people in church were given such little opportunity to participate in it themselves. Luther strongly believed that music was a gift from God and that it should be regarded as the second-most important element of the worship service:⁹⁴

I would certainly like to praise music with all my heart as the excellent gift of God which it is and to commend it to everyone. But I am so overwhelmed by the diversity and magnitude of its virtue and benefits that I can find neither beginning nor end or method for my discourse. As much as I want to commend it, my praise is bound to be wanting and inadequate.⁹⁵

Worship in the public sphere. The common worship service of the Middle Ages was performed primarily by the priest, for it was believed that he was the only person who had divine authority, and thus only his offerings would be acceptable to God. Choral singing was occasionally allowed, but the orchestration of these songs was so ornate that

92. Brian L Horne, “A Civitas of Sound: On Luther and Music,” *Theology* (January 1985): 27.

93. Ibid.

94. Sooy, *Luther’s Theology of Music*, 6. The *most* important element of the worship service was the preaching of the Word.

95. Martin Luther, “Preface to Georg Rhau’s *Symphoniae iucundae*,” in *Luther’s Works* 53, trans. Ulrich S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1538), 322.

the congregation was not allowed (or able) to participate in them.⁹⁶ As such, the church was in desperate need of music appropriate for congregational use. There is evidence that Luther recognized this need early on, for he addresses it in one of his first liturgies (i.e. his letter to the Church at Wittenberg in 1523). At the same time, he soon recognized that the number of qualified poets and musicians needed to produce such a product was lacking. Luther set to work on this immediately, and within a year, Luther and his cohorts had created a substantial repertoire. The liturgies were warmly received by the congregations, and soon spread like wildfire throughout Germany.⁹⁷ Furthermore, as Luther's hymns spread, so did the Gospel message. In the northern German city of Magdeburg, for example, there is evidence that the very first reports of Evangelical teaching were received through Luther's hymns during the 1520s.⁹⁸ In every sense of the word, Luther's hymns were "liturgical"—that is, they were deeply embedded into the church service order.⁹⁹ In fact, one of Luther's worship services included song from beginning to end, in which both the duties of priest and the responses of the congregation were set to music.¹⁰⁰

Inspired by the creation account. Although some scholars seem to overlook this fact, one place from which Luther drew very deep inspiration was the doctrine of creation. As Luther recognized in himself the capacity for creativity in the arts, he reflected on the Creator Himself and examined the connection between these two

96. Junghans, "Luther on the Reform of Worship", 220.

97. Ibid.

98. Brown, *Singing the Gospel*, 9.

99. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XVI.

100. Junghans, "Luther on the Reform of Worship", 220.

realities.¹⁰¹ In his exegesis of the book of Genesis, Luther looked at the creation story and what stuck out most to him was the concept of *order*. God's establishment of order was first and foremost in the process of creation, and consequently it was man's subversion of this order which led to the most dramatic shift from order to chaos of all time: the Fall.¹⁰²

Influenced by scholasticism. This theme of order was also a significant element of medieval scholasticism. Luther received his education during this era of thought and there is much evidence that he was strongly influenced by the writings of both Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine.¹⁰³ Augustine's influences on Luther's understanding of order come from Augustine's *The Nature of Good*, in which he proposes the divine goodness of order. Luther adopted this as the basis of his theology as he examined the creation story of Genesis.¹⁰⁴

As Aquinas and the other scholastics of the middle period believed it, order was relevant to the common man in how it applied to his virtues. Essentially, when man received from God redeeming grace and faith, man's reason would be redeemed in the process, and from that point on man would be free to practice theology without vanity. In this way, reason and faith were of equal importance.¹⁰⁵

Parallel to the balance of these elements was Luther's struggle in finding the balance between *law* and *Gospel*.¹⁰⁶ Although Luther was strongly influenced by the

101. Sooy, *Luther's Theology of Music*, 15.

102. Horne, *On Luther and Music*, 27.

103. Hendrix, "Luther," 41-42.

104. Sooy, *Luther's Theology of Music*, 22-23.

105. *Ibid.*, 22.

106. *Ibid.*, 20.

balance that Aquinas proposed, to Luther the Gospel (or *faith* as Luther equated the two terms) was exceedingly important and essentially superior for the workings of the Christian life.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, faith, when contrasted with the Law, represented the freedom that the Christian has in living his life, because he is no longer bound to performing all the duties of the Law.

Freedom of musical expression. This idea of the balance of *order* and *freedom* in the span of God's creation had a great impact on many of Luther's beliefs and practices, but none was more impacted than his music.¹⁰⁸ Just as Aquinas had allowed for the redemption of reason within the sphere of Christian thought, Luther allowed for the redemption of artistic freedom in the writing of new liturgies or additions to his own circulated writings.¹⁰⁹

This freedom that Luther allowed extended even further than this to the allowance of popular secular melodies, known as *contrafacta*, to be used within church music.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, an attempt at being more like Luther has caused some individuals in the modern Lutheran Church to push for a return to more ancient forms of liturgical worship. As it has been shown, this way of thinking "was as foreign to Luther as to the Romanist theologians of his day."¹¹¹ In reality, Luther's attitude about what was required of music in order for it to be usable by the church was that, if Scripture did not expressly forbid it,

107. Sooy, *Luther's Theology of Music*, 25.

108. Ibid., 30.

109. Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1941), 208.

110. Charles Garside, *The Origin's of Calvin's Theology of Music: 1536-1543* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1979), 19.

111. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XIV-XV. Interestingly enough, this whole concept, that there is an inherent nobleness in the ancient rituals, comes from the influence of nineteenth-century Romanticism.

then it was either acceptable or redeemable.¹¹² Still, the idea that some music was “redeemable” was not a concept that Luther took lightly. Though accepting, he was not flippant about what should or should not be used in the church. He said, “An order is an external thing. No matter how good it is, it can be abused. Then it is no longer an order, but a disorder.”¹¹³ Thus, Luther recognized that any kind of order could potentially be abused. For this reason, Luther was open to the use of secular music, but advised the use of caution in doing so.

Luther’s influence on the development of music. Martin Luther is considered by some to be the “father of Protestant Hymnody.”¹¹⁴ In all, Luther wrote about 40 hymns.¹¹⁵ What many fans of Luther do not know is that he was not only a writer of hymns, but also of chants. While his hymns became renowned throughout the world, most of his chants did not create much of a stir outside Germany’s own borders. Although the difference between hymnody and chant was small in Luther’s day, it became evident that while Luther’s chants would soon fade in importance while his hymns would carry on and help to usher in a new form of music in the church.¹¹⁶

There were two kinds of musical notation in Luther’s day: (1) chorale and (2) mensural. Chorale notation was used for plain-chant melodies; the primary distinction between notes was *long* and *short*. Mensural notation, an observable fore-runner to

112. Sooy, *Luther’s Theology of Music*, 17.

113. Luther, “German Mass,” 90.

114. Sooy, *Luther’s Theology of Music*, 11.

115. Brown, *Singing the Gospel*, 7. In his footnotes, Brown explains that this number differs among various sources because of (1) disputes about authorship and (2) disputes about which of Luther’s musical compositions should be considered a “hymn.”

116. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, 149. In Luther’s day the musical structure of hymns and chants was much more similar than it is today. In fact, several of the commonly used melodies of the day such as the Gloria in Excelsis, the Sanctus, the Agnus Dei, or the *Te Deum* could have been classified as either.

modern notation, successfully measured note values, but left out the distinctive bar.¹¹⁷

Although Luther paid close attention to the proper use of musical forms, his methodology was flexible for the sake of showcasing the text.¹¹⁸

Most famous among his hymns is “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” Upon moderate observation, it becomes clear that this song comes almost directly from Psalm 46. In his analysis of Luther’s famous hymn, Sooy points out several key theological emphases that should be recognized in order to understand Luther’s thought processes in writing this hymn. The first emphasis is (not surprisingly) God’s power and majesty, the second emphasis is the Lordship of Christ, the third emphasis is the weakness of man, the fourth is the reality of evil forces (namely, Satan) in the world, and the fifth is a careful acknowledgment of each member of the Trinity.¹¹⁹

It was essential to Luther that correct doctrine and theology be at the center of every part of Christian worship because this in itself was the true praise of God. And for Luther, the true praise of God in *music* required the practice of solid musicianship. For these reasons, Luther sought to hold the *form* and *content* of the music in perfect balance. Luther devoted all of his energy to achieving this, and in doing so he created a collection of hymns that have remained valuable to the church today.¹²⁰

Conclusions

Martin Luther’s legacy holds great significance, for it demonstrates a fact which potentially provides an important element in understanding the big picture of who Luther

117. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XIX.

118. Ibid., 58.

119. Sooy, *Luther’s Theology of Music*, 13.

120. Kleinig, *Liturgies to Wilhelm Lohe*, 126.

was and exactly what he stood for. Luther was a true pioneer for a scriptural understanding of the workings of the Christian worship service,¹²¹ and the deep conviction he felt about his beliefs was evident, for he took great caution and care in his approach to causing change.

In this way, it is most certainly true that, “All who...want to understand Luther must not limit themselves merely to his dogmatic pronouncements but must...consider his actual behavior.”¹²² History has shown that Luther’s behavior and actions sparked great and incalculable change in the world. Even more noteworthy is the fact that, in setting out to accomplish the change he saw necessary, Luther succeeded in laying a foundation of respect, biblical scholasticism, and a high regard for musicianship that every aspiring worship leader could potentially build their ministry upon. The Lutheran Church today has certainly recognized this, and perhaps that is why Luther’s liturgical writings are still considered to be a fundamental part of their doctrine.¹²³ Indeed, “whoever wrestles with the question of worship in Luther’s thought is also shaping the prerequisites for a better understanding and deeper experience of evangelical Lutheran worship” as it exists today.¹²⁴ Regardless of whether or not one agrees with every part of Luther’s theology, it is evident that Luther desired, above all, to bring glory to God through his purposes in the Reformation.

121. Luther, “German Mass,” 64. Many are unaware of the fact that although he was contentedly confined to the liturgical practices that were appropriate in his own time and culture, Luther proposed a radically different kind of worship service. For those who possessed a deep desire to grow in their faith, Luther advocated something similar to the house churches of the New Testament. Since this group did not need to cater to the masses, it could function on a much more intimate level.

122. Junghans, “Luther on the Reform of Worship,” 215.

123. Lehman, *Liturgy and Hymns*, XIII.

124. Junghans, “Luther on the Reform of Worship,” 207.

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