

(1) We are "to draw from the Holy Scriptures and the usage of the Reformed Churches" in the preparation of the forms of service. Here we find not only a guide for the spirit and manner of our work, but also a rich treasure-house of materials lying ready to our hand.

The doctrine of the Reformed Churches in regard to worship has always been distinctively Scriptural. Our Catechism teaches that the Scripture "forbids the worshiping of God by images, or in any other way not appointed in His Word" (*Shorter Catechism*, 51). The Confession of Faith, while conceding that "there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God . . . which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence," insists at the same time that this should be done "according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed" (*Confession*, I, 6).

We turn, then, to the Bible to learn what are the proper parts of common worship, there recognized and appointed. We find clear warrant for certain great features of divine service by assembled worshippers.

The singing of praise, either with or without the accompaniment of instrumental music (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; Ps. xxxiii. 2-3, lxxxi. 1-2).

The offering of prayer, either in set forms or in free utterance (Deut. xxvi. 5-15; Matt. vi. 9; 1 Kings viii. 22-53; Acts xx. 36).

The repetition of sentences of adoration, thanksgiving, or supplication, either in unison or responsively, and the consent of the people in prayer or praise by the audible *Amen* (Acts iv. 24; The Psalms, *passim*, cvi. 48; 1 Chron. xvi).

The reading of Holy Scripture (Deut. xxxi. 10; Jer. xxxvi. 8; Col. iv. 16; Luke iv. 16).

The public confession of faith in God and Christ (1 Kings viii. 33; Luke xii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 12; Heb. x. 23).

The bringing of offerings to God for His service (1 Cor. xvi. 1-4).

The preaching of the Word (Neh. viii. 8; Acts xxviii. 23, xx. 7; Luke iv. 21-22).

The pronouncing of a blessing upon the people in the name of God (1 Kings viii. 14; 2 Cor. xiii. 14).

The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.