

Cultural Invasions of the Church's Worship

I. Cultural Invasion: Drama in Corporate Worship.

A. Reasons that Drama Is Not Biblically Allowable in Worship. Some will say that drama, plays, skits, etc., are alternate forms of preaching, teaching, or otherwise communicating the gospel; thus, they are allowable in worship, where we are to share the gospel. The reasons that disprove this sort of worldly thinking:

1. The Bible calls for verbal public proclamation of the Word of God, with explanation and application, as the God-ordained method of communicating the gospel, particularly in the corporate worship service. This is the way that God blesses for the effectual calling of God's elect. Rom. 10:14-17; 2 Tim. 4:2; Is. 61:1-3; Col. 1:25; 1 Tim 4:13; etc. Cf. WCF XXI.5; WLC 155, 158, 159.
2. Preaching is itself an alternative form of verbal communication unlike any other and cannot be replaced by other forms. This is the nature of the Heb. *qarah* and the Greek *kerusso*. It is a proclamation under the unction of the Holy Spirit and used by Him in a special way to soften or harden hearts according to the will of God.
3. The actions of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, sometimes claimed to be drama, were not drama. They were revelatory actions that were not done as part of corporate worship. Besides, the church in the NT age is neither commanded nor instructed or allowed to copy every action of individual Christians or of the church throughout all ages.
4. The apostles never used or authorized the use of drama in NT worship. This is a very telling point since drama played an important part in the

worldly culture of the first century. The apostles did not allow pagan cultural forms of communication into the NT church (1 Cor. 1, 2).

B. Conclusions.

1. Drama is a worldly form of communication that has no place in the corporate worship of the church. It is neither commanded nor in any way authorized nor exemplified by its use in any place in Scripture.
2. The use of drama in the corporate worship of many churches today is an invasion of worldly culture. The church has invited the world into the church, and the church and her worship is being corrupted by it.

II. Cultural Invasion: Dance in Corporate Worship.

A. Reasons that Dance Is Not Biblically Allowable in Worship.

1. Dance is not commanded for corporate worship in OT or NT. The Psalms neither command nor exemplify dance in corporate worship. Psalms often give exhortations regarding aspects of life outside corporate worship, to teach Christians that all of life is to be lived to the glory of God. Specifically, e.g., Ps. 149:5, 6 make it clear that this Ps. is concerned with other aspects of life; we don't lie on our beds in corporate worship, and we don't take a sword into corporate worship. Ps. 150 is the same context.
2. David dancing before the ark was not a corporate worship service. None of the other OT examples of dance were performed in corporate worship, either. Ex. 15:20; Jdg. 11:34; 21:21, 23; etc. In some of these cases, it was a metaphor for exuberance of heart.
3. There was a processional in temple worship, but not dance. The processional was a type of the triumphal procession of Christ.
4. Dance is never found in NT worship.

5. Those who use or advocate dance in corporate worship claim the need to be more participative in worship. We can worship God with the whole body, but only as a corporate act, and only with Biblical postures. The issue is posture in worship, not dance.

B. Discussion of Postures. Some examples of Biblical posture in corporate worship, including prayer postures.

C. Conclusions.

1. Dance is an expression that communicates in a manner not Biblical in corporate worship. While dance is not sinful in and of itself, it is a worldly way of thinking to believe that we can find better ways to communicate God's truth than what He Himself has ordained for His church.

2. Dance is also an expression that does not worship God with our bodies in corporate worship in the way that He has told us we are to worship Him. Thus, whether it is interpretive dance, or congregational dance, it is not to be used in worship.

III. Conclusion: The nature of the church as those who have come out from among the unclean, and the RPW, teach us that we must take care not to allow the world into the church, nor the culture to pervade the church. The RPW is a principle we must be willing to uphold in our own congregations in accordance with the Bible and our standards. And we should be ready to enter into discussion with others, even well-meaning Christians, who are yet unaware or unconvinced of this principle of the Scriptures along with all it implies for some of today's practices. We must also pray for the Spirit of Christ to convince them of the truth regarding worship.