

February 13, 2022

How the Gospel Shapes Public Worship

1 Corinthians 14:26-40

The ecclesiology letter

It's amazing to me how *church-focused* this letter is. Back in **ch.11** Paul began instructing us on *how* we are to conduct ourselves in public worship. Four chapters dedicated on how to worship publicly. Add to that **ch.2** which deals with *how* preaching is to be conducted; **ch.5** which deals with *how* church discipline is to be conducted, and then the multiple spatterings of other church-related topics including church divisions (**ch.3**) paying ministers (**ch.9**); taking up offerings (**ch.16**); and we find that most of this letter is consumed with teaching us how to do church. It's a book of ecclesiology, meaning it is a study of the Church. God cares how we do Church because it reflects upon Him.

The necessary conditions for edification

That's *especially* true this morning. Paul's main argument in ch.14 is that when the church come's together, it's imperative that all the saints are built up. He repeats that for a 5th time in our text this morning, End of v.26 "Let all thing be done for building up." So what conditions must prevail in the Church so that she is built up? If you are a painter, what must the forecast be if you are to paint outside? It can't be raining. If you install laminate, what must the house have? Heat. Likewise in the church, in order for saints to be built up, and encouraged, and comforted certain conditions must be met. What are those conditions? There are 2 in this chapter. The first condition in v.1-25 that is necessary for building up the saints is **intelligibility**. This is why tongues without interpretation is forbidden in Church, because those who can't understand will not be edified. The second condition found here in v.26-40 that is necessary for building up the saints is **order**. When the Church gathers to worship, there must be order, there must be proper arrangement, and regulation.

And Paul grounds this in the very nature of God. Why should public worship have order to it? Because v.33 “...God is not a God of confusion but of peace.” If public worship is out of control, and chaotic and confusing then God is not on display. That’s where Paul is taking us this morning.

The Big Idea...

Because God is not the author of confusion, our public worship must be done decently and in order

☆ Our Doctrine

☆ Our Duty

☆ Our Duty

I. Our Doctrine

How should we *then* worship?

Look at the question Paul begins with in v.26 “What then, brothers?” He’s asking ‘How should we then worship?’ Notice how he answers. “When you come together [*meaning in the corporate gathering*], each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. “Let all things be done for building up.” Notice how this is different from Paul’s first argument. At the beginning of this chapter, he contrasted just two gifts: prophecy and tongues. He argued that prophecy is to be desired because, unlike tongues, it is intelligible—it can be understood—and therefore it is edifying to all. **But** here, Paul is bringing in multiple elements—a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. His basic principle is *the same* “...let all [these] things be done for building up [the Church].” **But** now the issue *is not* intelligibility, but chaos. The Corinthians were behaving like little children treating church time as their own

opportunity for show and tell. As one author puts it “...they all wanted to participate at the same time. They were not interested in serving, or learning, or edifying, but only in self-expression...”¹ There was chaos in the church because there was no order in their service. They reasoned that since the Spirit gave them gifts, they could practice them whenever and however they wanted—they were interrupting each other and talking over each other, so that the whole assembly was in a state of noisy confusion.

Sweet sixteen

What is Paul’s solution? He issues 16 commands.² I believe this passage has the most commands out of any section in this letter. Some of the commands include:

- limits on how many times a gift can be practiced (v.27, v.29)
- that each person take turns while the others listen quietly (v.27, v.30)
- the listeners are to test what is being said against Scripture (v.29)
- that women cannot preach in corporate worship (v.34)
- that the apostolic word must be recognized as coming from the Lord (v.37)

The taxonomy of worship

Paul ties it altogether in v.40 “But all things should be done decently and in order.” Order is the Greek word τάξις *taxiv*. It’s where we get the word taxonomy. Taxonomy is how scientists classify the animal and plant kingdom by assigning to each one a genus and species. Taxonomy is concerned with putting every organism in its proper order. Likewise the Church has a divinely inspired taxonomy, a divinely inspired order of things that must be present so that the saints can be edified.

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Publishers, 1984), pg. 385

² v.26, v.27 (x3), v.28 (x2), v.29 (x2), v.30, v.34, v.35, v.37, v.38, v.39 (x2), v.40

Objection: *'this is quenching the Spirit'*

Now I have spent much time in churches with our charismatic brothers and sisters, and often the most immediate objection to this necessity of order is that it quenches the Holy Spirit. The sentiment goes like this: 'the Spirit is spontaneous and free, and if we submit to an order, then we will quench the Spirit's work in the Church.' **2 Corinthians 3:6** is often given in support of this view: "The letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."³ How do we answer this?

First, **2 Corinthians 3:6** which says "the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" was given to illustrate how the Holy Spirit has set us free from the Law as a Covenant of Works.⁴ Anyone who still sees the law as a way to justify themselves is under the curse of death. In that sense, the letter kills.⁵ But the Holy Spirit doesn't free Christians from the need to obey God's Word. In fact, the Holy Spirit writes the law on our heart (**Jeremiah 31:33**) and He causes us to love God's law (**Psalms 119:97**⁶).

Secondly, to reject the necessity of order in worship is to pit the Holy Spirit against Himself. Who ultimately wrote these words that Paul puts down? The Holy Spirit did. **2 Peter 1:20** "...no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." So if someone ignores these Spirit-filled words, they are actually the ones who are quenching the Spirit.

³ In other words, "To be led by so many rules is to be governed by a dead letter instead of a live Spirit"

⁴ See Turretin Vol. 2, pg. 144, sec. XII

⁵ The NLT nails it here in it's translation of the verse: "The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life"

⁶ "Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day."

Thirdly, the idea that to be spontaneous⁷—free to do whatever one desires in public worship—is to be taken captive by vain human philosophy.⁸ The Holy Spirit doesn't move us into greater spontaneity *away from the Word*. His main job is to bring us into greater conformity to the Word. **John 16:13** “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”⁹

Fourthly, the very passage where Paul actually says “Do not quench the Spirit” (1 **Thess. 5:19**) he immediately tells us what this means in the following verse: “Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast to what is good” (v.20-21).¹⁰ In other words, the Holy Spirit is quenched *primarily* when we disregard what He says in read Word, preached Word, and taught Word.

Learning algebra at a rave

To return to Paul's argument, it's clear that the reason *why* he requires order in public worship, is because without order, there can be no edification. Imagine trying to learn how Algebra at a rave. You can't do it. You need silence, you need to be able to think, to meditate. Likewise if you come to worship, and everyone is practicing their gift at the same time—chaos will abound—nobody will be taught, nobody will be comforted, nobody will hear from God. Therefore the *leading reason* our worship services must be orderly is for the sake of edification.

⁷ Furthermore I would ask: How does one know whether one's Spirit-filled spontaneous actions (in worship) are really from the Holy Spirit? “For even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.” 2 Corinthians 11:14) What is the infallible test of one's revelation if not the Scripture? If someone responds: But it is insulting to make the Holy Spirit subject to the Scripture. I answer, the Holy Spirit tells us to do this very thing! The Apostle John speaking under the power and influence of the Spirit says in 1 John 4:1 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (see Calvin's Institutes I.IX.II).

⁸ Colossians 2:8 “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”

⁹ John 14:26 “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

¹⁰ In other words, as Calvin says here “...the light of the Spirit is quenched the moment prophesyings fall into contempt” (Institutes I.IX.III).

Doctrine: God is not the author of confusion

But the *main reason* Paul requires order in public worship is *because* this is what God is like. Look at v.33 “For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.” The KJV says “God is not the author of confusion.” God is not a God of disorder, or unruliness, God is never “out of control.” That brings us to **our doctrine**: *God is not the author of confusion*. The Puritan Thomas Manton says here “God has always delighted in [order]. All his works are managed and carried on in an accurate order...All order is from [Him]; but all discord and confusion is from the devil.”¹¹ Loved ones, consider 3 proofs that God is a God of control and order.

Proof #1: Creation is a display of God’s order

Creation is not simply God showing Himself to be the Greatest Artist—sculpting mountains, painting sunsets, and designing rainforests. In creation God show Himself to be the Greatest Systematizer and Organizer. In Genesis 1 after God creates, He immediately starts ordering His creation. It says 6 times that “God separated” or “God gathered.” He separated the light from darkness (**Genesis 1:4**). He *separated* the heavens from the earth (**Genesis 1:7**). He gathered the waters into one place so that dry land could appear in one place and the seas in another (**Genesis 1:9-10**). He separated the night from the day (**Genesis 1:14**). Do you realize earth would be unlivable if God didn’t bring order to it? Order is just as necessary as beauty. Next time you have a beautiful plate of ribeye steak, a baked potato and a dinner salad, go disorder it’s contents in the blender and see if it is still beautiful. Creation doesn’t *merely* display God’s beauty but His relentless commitment to order.¹²

¹¹Thomas Manton, *The Works of Thomas Manton*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2020), pg. 425

¹² Therefore we rightly affirm that disorder in the world today is really an attack against God. Just as injustice is an attack against God's just character, so disorder is an attack against God's order.

Proof #2: Providence is a display of God's order

When God commanded Noah to build the Ark, He gave a detailed order on how it was to be put together. **Genesis 6:15** “This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.”¹³ The reason Assyria became the dominant superpower in 8th century B.C. is because God providentially ordered it to be. **2 Kings 19:25** “Have you not heard that I determined it long ago? I planned from days of old what now I bring to pass, that you should turn fortified cities into heaps of ruins.” Likewise God orders and plans out every step. **Psalm 37:23-24** “The steps of a man are established [*ordered*] by the Lord, when he delights in his way; ²⁴ though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.”¹⁴ The only reason our lives don't fall apart is because God is ordering them according to His most holy and wise counsel.

Proof #3: Scripture is a display of God's order

The Bible is composed of 66 books written by 40 different authors over a period of 1,500 years, and yet instead of finding a hodgepodge of disconnected lore, we find the most perfect order and harmony. The Old and NT are perfectly in order and agreement with each other. When the Apostle Paul preached, He said “...nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass.” (**Acts 26:22**). Both testaments bear witness that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ receives forgiveness of sins through his name (**Acts 10:43**). The Scripture is in perfect order and agreement with nature.¹⁵ Both Scripture and nature testify to an eternal, omnipotent, infinite God who deserves to be worshipped (**Romans 1:20-21**). Both Scripture and nature testify to our guilt and the need for righteousness (**Romans 2:15**). The Scripture is so

¹³ Likewise when God commanded Moses to build the tabernacle, he had to follow a specific order. **Exodus 25:40** “Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.”

¹⁴ Thus Joseph could confidently say to his brothers who had tried to ruin his life “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good” (Genesis 50:20)

¹⁵ See Petrus Van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology, Vol. 1: Prolegomena*, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Reformation Heritage Books, 2018), pg. 77

perfectly ordered precisely because it has been breathed out by God¹⁶ (**2 Tim. 3:16**).¹⁷

In summary, we see that **1)** creation displays God's order; **2)** providence displays God's order, and **3)** Scripture displays God's order. God is not a God of confusion. Everything He creates and governs and breathes out is a display of His perfect order and harmony. That's **our doctrine**.

II. Our Duty

Because God is not a God of confusion, it follows that our duty is to make sure that public worship is done decently and in order. Consider how Paul shows us what orderly worship looks like.

1. Orderly worship limits the exercise of the gifts

We have a duty in worship to limit the exercise of gifts. Look at **v.27-28** "If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. ²⁸ But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God." Notice **first** the quantity of gifts is limited—only two or at the most three can speak in tongues. Likewise he limits the quantity of prophecy or preaching in **v.28**. **Second**, notice

¹⁶ LCQ. 4. How doth it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

A. The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.

¹⁷ "...from the nature of things taught in the Scriptures...these things are such that they could not be delivered by the devil or impious persons because the Scripture's precepts are deadly to them. And these things could not be delivered by angels or honest person because it does not belong to these to lie and to claim divinity for their own precepts." *Ibid*, pg. 134

a sequence is commanded—in tongues(v.27), in revelation(v.30¹⁸) and in prophecy (v.31)—meaning they were not to speak simultaneously but one at a time. v.32 specifically says that “the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.” No one can claim that when the Holy Spirit comes upon them they are controlled by an irresistible impulse and cannot keep silent. The Holy Spirit doesn’t destroy the self-control of His people. The prophets of the OT were “calm and self-possessed”¹⁹ and so are the prophets of the NT.²⁰ **Third**, intelligibility is again required. v.28 “...if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.” The **general principle** is this: though all Christians are given spiritual gifts, not every gift is to be practiced during public worship. Order must be maintained so that everyone can be built up. This is remarkable because the Holy Spirit who has given everyone a gift requires that some of His gifts not be practiced in public worship.

2. Orderly worship tests what’s being taught

Look at v.29 “Let two or three prophets speak, *and let the others weigh what is said.*” Beloved, as listeners you have a duty when the Word is being preached to weigh or judge or discern what’s being said.²¹ Paul says “Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21). John says “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to

¹⁸ Regarding v.30 which says “If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent.” I understand this to mean that if a prophet who is sitting receives a fresh revelation, that he is to wait until the first is silent before he begins. So v.30 could read “If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent [*before the other begins*]” Hodge makes a compelling case for this. See Charles Hodge, *A Commentary on 1 & 2 Corinthians*, (Carlisle, PA.,: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint 2018), pg. 302. In summary, if the one interrupted the other, this would 1) seem to contradict Paul’s call to order and 2) the truth that the spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets (v.32).

¹⁹ Hodge, pg. 303

²⁰ “This being the case, there was no necessity why one should interrupt another, or why more than one should speak at the same time. The one speaking could stop when he pleased; and the one who received a revelation could wait as long as he pleased.” *Ibid*, pg. 303

²¹ Some commentators limit this duty to the other prophets. I agree that it is especially incumbent for other pastors to guard the doctrine of the Church, but I don’t see how this can be limited to them based on other Scriptures (cf. Acts 17:10-15; 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21; 1 John 4:1)

see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 **John 4:1**). Beloved are you weighing what’s being said against the Scripture? He’s certainly not calling us to have an overly critical spirit. But He is calling us to test the men who are speaking to us against the touchstone of Scripture. There is no infallible pope or prophet or pastor that is living today. Orderly worship concerns itself with sound doctrine. Are you teaching your children how to discern what is being taught? Are you speaking with them about Sunday’s message? Are you examining their powers of discernment?

3. Orderly worship has clearly defined roles for men and women

Look halfway through **v.33** “As in all the churches of the saints, ³⁴ the women should keep silent in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be in submission, as the Law also says. ³⁵ If there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.” It seems clear that women were also engaged in the chaos that was happening in Corinth. In addition to multiple tongue speakers, and multiple prophesyings, women had entered the fray. Paul already dealt with the first two, so this is his opportunity to speak to the third. Paul is not saying that women can’t speak at Church. The kind of speaking that is prohibited for women is the preaching of the Word in public worship. Paul makes this particularly clear to young Timothy when he instructs him how the Church of God should conduct itself: “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man” (1 **Timothy 2:12**). When Paul says in **v.35** that “...if there is anything they desire to learn, let them ask their husbands at home...” he’s not saying that women can never speak to their pastors. He’s only talking about the order of public worship.²² Apparently some situation broke out in Corinth where women were speaking publicly during worship—Paul’s say that is shameful (**v.35**) because it is contrary to men and women’s roles. Calvin says it like this: “Paul’s reasoning...is simple—that authority to teach is not suitable to

²² Beyond this we see the duty of gospel conversations to take place in the home, especially between spouses . See Van Mastricht, pg. 199

the station that a woman occupies, because, is she teaches, she presides over all the men, while it becomes her to be under [submission].”²³

4. Orderly worship requires a catholic spirit

A catholic spirit—lower case “c”—is the person who is able to be generous hearted with those whom they disagree with. To have a catholic spirit is not to be a liberal. Liberals aren’t concerned with orthodoxy. To have a catholic spirit is to be able to separate the person from their doctrines, and to love them in spite of standing disagreements.²⁴ The opposite of a catholic spirit are those who behave as if “we are the only ones.” Paul rebukes the Corinthians for this arrogant attitude. Look at v.36 “Or was it from you that the word of God came? Or are you the only ones it has reached?” In other words, ‘Did you write the Scripture? Or as Charles Hodge says “Are you the mother church?”²⁵ Apparently they were so infatuated with themselves that they had no regard for other churches. It is wrong for a Church to be an island unto itself. I regret that our Church used to be like that. Paul is rebuking anyone of us who are filled with pride and contempt for other churches. This type of spirit spreads like gangrene in an assembly. Let it not be found among us. For not only does it taint worship but in the end it will cause us to turn on each other and devour one another.

5. Orderly worship recognizes apostolic authority

Paul says in v.37 “If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.” The test of someone's true spiritual status is what they do with the Apostle’s Words. If they are truly spiritual they must acknowledge these are not

²³ John Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries Vol. XX*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: BakerBooks, 2009), pg. 468

²⁴ Websters 1828 dictionary defines catholic in this way “Of a free heart, not narrow minded, partial or bigoted;”

²⁵ Hodge, pg. 305

the words of men, but the Word of God.²⁶ Paul's apostolic authority was questioned especially by the Corinthians. After all, they saw him in the flesh, and compared with other men, he didn't seem spectacular. But as an apostle of Christ and as being one inspired by the Holy Spirit, His teaching was infallible and without error. So to refuse to obey His Word is to refuse to obey God.²⁷ That's why he can say in **v.38** "If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized." Meaning, if one rejects the Apostle's words as God's words, he cannot be recognized as a Christian. The Apostle John says in **1 John 4:6** "We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us." The general principle for us is that orderly worship depends upon the writings of the prophets and the apostles. It is our duty to go to the Apostles to learn how we should conduct ourselves in worship.²⁸ This is why much of evangelicalism is in such disarray today, because the apostolic word is being set aside. It's not enough to simply say one is Christian.²⁹ Christian worship must be determined by the apostolic Word or it is not worship done decently and in order.

So those are **our duties**. If we are to have orderly worship, we must **1)** limit the exercises of the gifts; **2)** weight or test what is being taught; **3)** have clearly defined roles for men and women; **4)** have a catholic spirit towards each other and other churches; **5)** recognize and obey apostolic authority.

²⁶ 1 Thessalonians 2:13

²⁷ Hodge, pg. 306

²⁸ The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (**Eph. 2:20**).

²⁹ Isaiah 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them" (KJV)

III. Our Delight

This world is out of control

Through history, there have been particular time periods marked by a particular characteristic. The so-called Enlightenment was called the Age of Reason. Rationalism was characteristic of that age—that man through his own reason unaided from Divine revelation could solve his problems. Then there was the Industrial Age where there was a massive shift from agrarian society to more urban society. Invention was the characteristic of that age—that man through technology could improve his life, and not doubt there were wonderful improvements. The 1960's marked the age of hedonism—where man pursued pleasure as his chief end. Loved ones, what characteristic do you think most marks the world today? I think it's disorder, confusion, chaos. The world is out of control. Our government is out of control, both conservatives and liberals have failed. Our economy is out of control, they can't print money fast enough. Our school systems are out of control, math and history are no longer math and history but evidences of systemic and institutional racism. Our sexual ethic is out of control. there were 23 different types of genders/sexualities according to one website.³⁰ We live in a society where the headlines are more ridiculous than the Babylon Bee. Satire only suffers in a society that has lost control.

Peace is the fruit of order

And because our age has lost control we have no peace. It's interesting in our passage that Paul says God is not a God of confusion but of peace. Now *why* does Paul contrast confusion *with* peace? Why didn't he say 'God is not a God of confusion *but of truth*?' Because truth is the *cause* of order, but peace is its effect.³¹ The Puritan Thomas Watson said that "Peace is the quiet of everything

³⁰ <https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/list-of-sexualities>

³¹ Confusion is the rotten fruit disorder. But peace is the happy harvest of ordered life.

in its proper place.”³² Beloved, when do you have peace in your life? When your spirit is properly ordered after resting in the things of God. When do families have peace? When fathers and mothers are faithful in their stations God calls them to. When do societies have peace? When the citizens and magistrates order their lives after God’s holy, righteous and good law.

Sin is disorder

You see, no peace can be found apart from the God of peace. Our main problem in the world today is *not* crooked politician. It’s *not* vaccine mandates. It’s *not* inflation. It’s *not* censorship. It’s *not* socialism. Our main problem is always the same. Sin is disorder. Sin is chaos. Sin is lawlessness (1 **John 3:4**). There can be no order, no control, no peace in this world until sin is dealt with.

The Prince of Peace

Beloved that is why Jesus Christ came into world, to restore order, to restore control, to restore peace. This is what was prophesied about Him. “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, *Prince of Peace*.”³³ God brought peace into the world, when He sent His only begotten Son, who is called the Prince of Peace. The coming of peace was announced at His birth. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth *peace* among those with whom he is pleased!”³⁴ And this peace is what Jesus promises for all who hope in Him. **John 14:27** “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

³² Thomas Manton, *The Works of Thomas Manton*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2020), pg. 425

³³ Isaiah 9:6

³⁴ Luke 2:14

A different peace

How is Jesus' peace different from the peace that the world gives? Because His peace can give you peace with yourself, peace with one another, and peace with God.

1. **How does Jesus give you peace with yourself?** When we receive Him by *faith alone*, He sprinkles our conscience clean with His own blood. **Hebrews 9:14** says that when He offered Himself up to God, He purified our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. Beloved you have been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Though your sins were like scarlet, they are now as white as snow. Therefore you can turn any accusation that the devil throws against you into praise. "Yes I know that I am a great sinner, and that I deserve death and hell, but wha of it? I will never be condemned because I belong to Him who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf."

2. **How does Jesus give you peace with one another?** When we were born again, His Spirit immediately started producing fruit in our spirits. "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control;"³⁵ After the new birth we have a divine love in our spirits, a divine patience, a divine self-control that we didn't not have before, and that is why followers of Christ can have peace with one another.

3. **How does Jesus give you peace with God?** Because at the moment of justification the moment we first trusted in Jesus Christ—all our sins were imputed to Him, and all His righteousness was imputed to us. And this ended the war between God and us. **Romans 5:1** "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Peace with God. What a thought! That though you and I have been the most miserable of all sinners, God would not longer be wrathful at us. God

³⁵ Galatians 5:22-23

would not longer sentence us to hell. All punishment taken away, and laid upon the Son.

My sin, O the bliss of this glo-rious thought
 My sin, not in part, but the whole
 Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
 praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul

Loved ones that's what the gospel does. It re-orders our entire lives. It brings us out of darkness into the light. The lost are found, the blind can see.

The peace of worship

What does that have to do with public worship? Our worship services should not reflect the disorder of sin, but the peace of Christ. Our worship should be shaped by the gospel. Happiness and rest and peace are what all men pursue.³⁶ The world can not meet these demands. But our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ can. And they will get a sense of that when peace and order is what characterizes our worship. This ought to be the one place on earth where the confusion of this world cannot touch, where we experience a peace that passes all understanding.

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden,
 and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me,
 for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
 and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-29

³⁶ Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards Vol. 2*, (Carlisle, PA.: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), pg. 92

