## Vancouver Chinese Evangelical Free Church

English Speaking Congregation

Adult Sunday School

## CHRISTIAN WORSHIP - THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE

## 2020

Course Outline

Christians are saved individually but into the corporate Body of Church for worship. Therefore, corporate worship is one of the most important aspects Christian life. In fact, corporate worship is the only occasion whereby the entire church are spiritually and theologically formed at a high and regular frequency (once a week). It sets the pace not only for all aspects of the collective life and ministry of the church but also undergirds the devotional and ethic life of the individual members.

As modern, or post-Reformation, believers, we often think that we have to cut ourselves loose from the moorage of the First Testament and its sacrificial system in our worship of God because that cult is obsolete due to the final sacrifice Christ made on the cross for humankind. Certainly, there is discontinuity between the First Testament and the Second Testament in the practice of worship; however, the eternal and spiritual principle and structure of worship remain intact. The engagement with God that was first revealed to Israel in the First Testament as a shadow was fulfilled and transformed by Jesus Christ, our Savior and Mediator. Therefore, without the foundation of the First Testament, we cannot understand the worship of Christ and its implications on ours today.

Even though worship is central to their life of faith, few believers have the opportunity to learn the “*what is*” and the “*how to*” of worship from the biblical standpoint. They either inherit the way of worship in the traditions in which they are spiritually born or pick and choose the forms that they find most appealing to their subjective experience.

But what does it mean by (and the purpose of) worshipping God? The goal of this course is to understand the biblical teaching on Christian worship—the dynamic relationship between its theology and practice. The first part focuses on the theology of corporate worship. It begins by looking into the ancient cult prescribed by the LORD for the Israelites so that they could approach and worship him before we seek to understand the way in which the person and work of Jesus Christ has fulfilled and transformed it for our worship. The second part on the practice of worship is based on Marva Dawn’s lecture series on “*Rethinking Worship for the New Millennium* (2000s).” In these ten lectures, Professor Dawn discusses the elements of our present post-modern, post-Christian culture which makes the church’s worship necessary and, at the same time, challenging. Considerations are given to what mistakes, theological fallacies, false gods, and ill-advised directions endanger the worship of the church and how to avoid them; and how to “craft” worship which forms God’s people for their ministries in the world.

**References**

Primary Reading:

1. Dawn, Marva. *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1995.)
2. Dawn, Marva. *A Royal “Waste” of Time: The Splendor of Worshipping God and Being Church for the World*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1999.)
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5. Torrance, James B. *Worship, Community & the Triune God of Grace*. (Downers Grove: Illinois: IVP Academic Press, 1996.)

Secondary Reading:

1. Bruce, F.F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. (Revised: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.)
2. Cherwien, Susan Palo. *O Blessed Spring: Hymns of Susan Palo Cherwien*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997)
3. Chan, Simon. *Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community*. (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic Press, 2006.)
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12. Johansson, Calvin M. *Discipling Music Ministry: Twenty-first Century Directions*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992)
13. Johnson, Darrell. *Centre of Unbroken Praise: Studies in the Dynamics of Worship*. Regent Audio Lecture Series.
14. Jones, Cheslyn, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnofd SJ and Paul Bradshaw, Editors. *The Study of Liturgy*. (Revised Edition: New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.)
15. Kalantzis, George and Marc Cortez, edit. *Come, Let Us Eat Together: Sacraments and Christian Unity.* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2018)
16. Kenneson, Philip D. and James L. Street. Selling *Out the Church: The Dangers of Church Marketing*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997)
17. Lathrop, Gordon W. *Holy Things: A Liturgical Theology*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993)
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19. Martin, Ralph P. *The Worship of God: Some Theological, Pastoral, and Practical Reflections*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.)
20. Marty, Peter W. “*Beyond the Polarization: Grace and Surprise in Worship*.” Christian Century, 115, 9(March 18-25, 1998), 284-287
21. Moule, C. F. D. *Worship in the New Testament*. Grove Liturgical Study No. 12/13 (Combined Volume). (Bramcote: Grove Books Ltd., 1961)
22. Old, Hughes Oliphant. *Leading in Prayer: A Workbook for Worship*, (Grand Rapid, MI: William B, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995)
23. Pfatteicher, Philip H. *The School of the Church: Worship and Christian Formation*. (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1995)
24. Ratzinger, Joseph Cardinal. *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000.)
25. Stewart, Sonja M. and Jerome W. Berryman. *Young Children and Worship*. (Louisville: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1989)
26. *Sundays and Seasons: Worship Planning Guide* (One for each year of 3-year Revised Common Lectionary). (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995-7)
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28. Webber, Robert E. *Blended Worship: Achieving Substance and Relevance in Worship*. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers 1994.)
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30. Westermeyer Paul. *Te Deum: The Church and Music*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998)
31. White James F. *Introduction to Christian Worship*, (Revised Edition: Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.)
32. Wright, N. T. *For All God’s Worth: True Worship and the Calling of the Church*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.)

**Class Schedule**

*The Theology of Worship*

1. First (Old) Testament Teachings on Worship
2. The Sole Priesthood of Christ in Worship
3. The Trinitarian Worship of the Second (New) Testament

*The Practice of Worship*

Marva Dawn’s Lectures Series

1. The Culture in Which the Church Worship (Part I)
2. The Culture in Which the Church Worship (Part II)
3. Wrong Turns, Confusions, and Idolatries (Part I)
4. Wrong Turns, Confusions, and Idolatries (Part II)
5. Taste versus Root (Part I)
6. Taste versus Root (Part II)
7. Development of Christian Worship (Part I)
8. Development of Christian Worship (Part II)
9. Arts and Worship
10. Worship to Form a Missional Community and Conclusions