

The Rule of Worship

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

If worship is to be directed to God for His glory, we must ask Him how He wants to be worshiped. The answer to this question is called the *Regulative Principle of Worship*. The Principle is stated in our confessional documents: the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1.6, 20.2, and 21.1) and the *Westminster Catechisms* (see *Shorter Catechism* answers 50 and 51).

The *Principle* includes three things. We must have a clear biblical revelation for what we offer to God in worship, our worship must include all the things God reveals, and our worship must not include anything outside of what God has commanded.

The primary biblical foundation for the *Principle* is the second commandment: *You should not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments* (Exodus 20:4-6).

When God forbids us to worship Him through images, He is forbidding our worshipping Him according to our imaginations. By forbidding us to worship Him according to human imagination, God requires us to worship Him according to His uniquely divine revelation. Furthermore, we must avoid all occasions that tend to corrupt worship by inventing symbols or introducing liturgical devices and any other thing that would challenge God's proprietary rights in worship.

In addition to the Second Commandment, the Bible gives several reasons why we should worship God only according to His Word. First, Scripture throughout affirms that we are to worship God only according to His Word. Let us consider some examples. In Leviticus 10:1, 2, God strikes Nadab and Abihu dead with fire, because they offered incense with strange fire. God destroyed them with fire because they offered strange fire. They did not use the fire of the altar (for which there was no specific commandment) but brought their own fire. Hence, God enforces the principle that men may not worship Him according to their imaginations.

One New Testament example affirming the *Regulative Principle* is Christ's quoting Isaiah 29:13 in Mark 7:6-8. The Pharisees rebuked the disciples for not observing the ceremonial washings (baptisms). Christ defended His disciples by showing that these ceremonial washings were man-made traditions and thus contrary to God's Word: *Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors me with their lips, But their heart is far away from me. But in vain do they worship me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men." Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.*

Second, the principle flows out of the broader principle of the sufficiency of Scripture as stated in Deuteronomy 4:2: *"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."* God concludes instruction on worship with the same exhortation in Deuteronomy 12:32: *"Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it."*

Third, we understand the reason God carefully regulates His worship when we ponder Who He is and who we are. The very nature of God demonstrates the necessity of Scripture regulating worship (John 4:24; Job 11:7-10; Isaiah 55:9, 10).

Since God is infinite and transcendent, He must take the initiative. He must reveal Himself to us; God must tell us Who He is and what is pleasing to Him. We cannot discover by our wisdom what pleases Him; thus, He comes to us as a self-revealing God in covenant and teaches us how we are to respond to Him. Because God is infinite, He is also sovereign. As the sovereign God, He alone is Lord of the conscience (WCF 20). What one does in corporate worship of necessity binds the conscience. When elders include things for which they have no biblical warrant, they compel worshippers to do that which is not dictated by Scripture; thus, binding their consciences.

Compounding the infinite distance between God and man is our sinfulness. The depravity of man necessitates the *Regulative Principle*. We are born dead in sins and trespasses and possess a remnant of sin. How foolish for us who possess a remnant of sin, which fuels our lusts and vain imaginations, to think that because something pleases us it pleases God. Therefore, we seek to offer to God in worship that which He has revealed is acceptable to Him.

Announcements

- Prayer Meeting this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
- To volunteer to help clean the church property, please speak with Mrs. Pipa or contact the church at info@antiochpca.com.

Vision

Our vision is to see the historic Antioch Presbyterian Church revitalized as a worshipping community to be a blessing to every man, woman, and child in the growing residential hub west of Woodruff and south of Reidville, to the glory of God.

Mission

Our mission as a parish church at the crossroads of Greenville and Spartanburg Counties is the gathering and perfecting of God's people through biblical worship, evangelism, and pastoral care.

Areas of Ministry Focus

Expository Preaching

Biblical Worship

Parish Evangelism

Pastoral Care

Discipleship

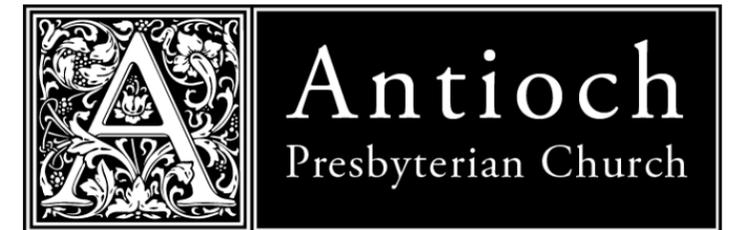
Leadership & Accountability

As a *mission work*, Antioch Presbyterian Church (PCA) is governed and overseen by a *provisional session* of elders serving as a *commission* of Calvary Presbytery. The six men appointed to the *provisional session* are active elders within the bounds of Calvary Presbytery, and they have graciously agreed to serve "above-and-beyond" to encourage the revitalization of Antioch. They include:

Dr. Chipley Bennett, Ph.D. – Ruling Elder, Providence Presbyterian Church
Dr. E. Todd Buchner, D.Min. – Pastor, Reidville Presbyterian Church
Mr. Richard Hollifield – Ruling Elder, Roebuck Presbyterian Church
Mr. William Johnson – Ruling Elder, Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., Ph.D., D.D. – Professor of Systematic & Applied Theology, President Emeritus, Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary;
Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church
Pastor Richard Thomas – Senior Pastor, Mount Calvary Presbyterian Church;
Clerk of Session, Antioch Presbyterian Church

Church Staff

Mr. Zachary Groff – Ministerial Assistant
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. – Organizing Pastor & Moderator of Session



The Lord's Day
October 18, 2020

“The Law and Gospel”
1 Timothy 1:6-11
Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr.

Worship – Sunday, 4:00 p.m.
Prayer Meeting – Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.

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The Lord's Day

October 18, 2020

“The Law and Gospel”

1 Timothy 1:6-11

Meditation

Romans 7:12, 16

¹² So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.... ¹⁶ But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good.

*Call to Worship

*Congregational Commitment

Minister: Congregation, in whom is your confidence?

Congregation: Our help is in the Name of the Lord, Who made the heavens and earth.

*Salutation

*Hymn of Adoration

No. 138A

With All My Heart My Thanks I Bring
ST. PETERSBURG

*Prayer of Adoration & Invocation

*Revelation of God's Will

Exodus 20:1-17

*Confession of Sin & Supplication for Grace

O Lord, the great and awesome God Who keeps the covenant of love with all who love and obey You and obey Your commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled. We have turned away from Your commands and laws. We have not listened to Your Word. We are a people of unclean lips who have forgotten our Christian heritage. We live in a nation of unrighteousness, where Your children are slaughtered in their mothers' wombs for the sake of convenience. Lord, You are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame. Do not deal with us as our sins deserve. For Your sake, O Lord, look with favor upon this congregation and the land in which we live. Send Your Spirit to turn us from our evil ways. We do not make requests of You because we are righteous, but because of Your great mercy. O Lord, hear our prayer, forgive our sin, heal our land. We pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

1 John 1:8, 9

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Offering

No. 136

O Thank the LORD, for He Is Good
(stanzas 1, 2)
CONSTANCE

*Prayer of Thanksgiving & Supplication

Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn of Preparation

No. 169

Master, Speak! Thy Servant Heareth
OTTAWA

*Old Testament Reading

Psalm 119:129-136

*New Testament Reading

1 Timothy 1:1-11

Congregational Response

Leader: Your Word is a lamp to my feet,
Congregation: And a light to my path!

*Prayer for Illumination

Sermon

“The Law and Gospel”
1 Timothy 1:6-11

Prayer of Application

*Hymn of Response

No. 119Q

Wonderful Are Your Statutes, LORD
ST. CRISPIN

*Benediction

*Doxology

No. 226

O the Deep, Unbounded Riches
THAXTED

*Silent Prayer

Main Proposition

When the Law is used properly and not abused, it produces good in the Christian life.

Outline

I. The Abuse of the Law (vv. 6, 7)

II. A Use of the Law (vv. 8-10a)

III. The Relation of Law and Gospel (vv. 10b, 11)

*Congregation standing, unless physically hindered