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ADVANCING THE
CHRISTIAN TRADITION
IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

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ORGANIC LITURGY AS THE CURE FOR BIBLE-ABSENT WORSHIP IN THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH



WARREN. J. ANDERSON

THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The voice sounds frantic, almost shrieking with intensity: "Doctor, we have a serious problem here!" Those listening assume they are witnessing a health-care crisis in the making. The beeping of machinery and the background noise of harried and hurried voices suggest a hospital emergency room. As the scene unravels, it becomes clear that we are, indeed, eavesdropping on a critical situation. In fact, things couldn't be worse. Yet *another* naïve consumer has attempted a major purchase without knowing his credit rating. The obviously drained physician ends the radio commercial with an exasperated sigh: "It's an epidemic!"

In less humorous fashion, the contemporary Christian church faces a similar epidemic when it comes to the use of the Word of God in its services for the community of believers. Twenty centuries since the foundation of the Christian church have witnessed the devolution of the importance of Scripture reading in Christian worship that rivals in its scope the evolution of virtually every sociological concern known to

humankind in that same two-thousand-year span. The New Testament offers examples of Scripture being read in the synagogue (Luke 4:16–21; Acts 13:15), and Paul gives several exhortations to the early church to utilize Scripture frequently (1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:18–19; Colossians 3:16), placing the onus for such activity on the church leaders (1 Timothy 4:13).¹ Acknowledging one such bit of instruction from Paul to Timothy and comparing it to our tendency today, Ron Owens laments that we

still say we love God's Word and base our lives on it, but if we gauge our love and commitment by the amount of time we give to reading it when we gather as God's people there is reason to question our claim. When is the last time you heard an entire chapter read during [a worship service]?²

Certainly, few if any churches today can echo Justin Martyr concerning the practices of the second-century church, where at the beginning of each gathering "the memoirs of the apostles (which are called Gospels) or the writings of the prophets are read *as long as time permits*" (emphasis mine).³ In response to Justin's account, Gary A. Furr and Milburn Price rightly note that given

the clear precedent for the reading of Scripture in worship, and given the importance attributed to Scripture as the "Word of God," it seems curious that in a number of evangelical churches the weekly reading of Scripture is limited to a few verses heard immediately before the sermon.⁴

Richard H. Clossman, too, finds the current state of affairs particularly galling among evangelical churches: "To declare that evangelicals reverence the Scriptures and yet to allow no formal reading of the Bible, or even to include a Scripture passage to undergird the morning sermon, is nothing short of amazing."⁵ Robert Webber, who implies that the example cited here is not an isolated instance, echoes Clossman's sentiments.

I recently attended a large evangelical church where no Scripture was read. In the sermon, reference was made to a passage, but it was not read to the people. Several weeks later, I was being interviewed on the subject of worship with another evangelical pastor. In the course of our conversation the matter of Scripture reading in worship was discussed. To my surprise, he admitted that there were times when he did not read Scripture in worship. The irony is that in both of these churches, the people faithfully bring their Bibles to the worship service, ready to hear the Word of God.⁶

The fact that Webber, because of his busy speaking schedule, has the opportunity to attend numerous worship services in various settings only lends weight to his observations.

Indeed, the problem seems to be greatest among churches that claim, often loudly and frequently, to be lovers of Scripture. Ron Man notes that the churches that are inclined neither to have the word "Bible" in their name nor to trumpet their allegiance to the Word of God " (including Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics) have probably ten times as much actual Scripture in their services (because it is built into their liturgies) than do most Bible-believing, evangelical free churches!"⁷ Man's estimation is probably high. In fact, Constance Cherry recently undertook a yearlong project in which she kept track of the amount of time allotted for different parts of the worship service at a myriad of churches with a number of different denominational affiliations throughout the country. She found that the churches that Man discusses above (what she refers to as churches pursuing "liturgical" worship) devoted 9 percent of their time to the reading of Scripture, while churches employing "blended" and "contemporary" worship did so a mere 2 percent of the time.⁸ Whatever the figure, there can be no doubt that Christ's followers hear the Word read less frequently than in ages past, and no serious Christian can believe that this is a good thing.

THE CASE FOR THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

This heading seems almost laughable; *of course* we should use Scripture in Christian worship, all believers resound in chorus. Perhaps. But if the aforementioned anecdotal and empirical evidence is accurate—and there is no reason whatsoever, given even casual perception, to believe that it is not—then such an apologia must be necessary, if not to assert for the first time then to at least serve as a refresher course. Setting aside, for the moment, that the Bible is replete with exhortations concerning the importance of Scripture,⁹ the following theses serve to establish solid reasons why the Christian church must become more diligent in utilizing God's Word in its services of worship.

Thesis 1: We should use Scripture in worship because, through Scripture, God, through Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, reveals himself to man. In particular, he reveals his salvific intervention in the lives of his children. Hughes Oliphant Old notes:

In the reading of Scriptures we observe a sacred memorial of God's mighty acts of salvation. The fourth commandment charges us to "remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (Exodus 20:8, NIV). Just as Passover was to be celebrated as a day of memorial (Exodus 12:14), so the Lord's Day was to be celebrated as a memorial of God's mighty acts of salvation in Christ.¹⁰

John P. Burgess says that when we use Scripture in this manner—and, particularly, when we do not divorce it from its ecclesiastical *raison d'être*—what results is a "sacramental Word," one that helps to "mediate an encounter with the transcendent."¹¹ To be sure, for those who would know Jesus Christ, and him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2), the reading of Scripture is essential. Moreover, faithful rendering of wide swaths of Scripture helps to paint an accurate portrait of the multi-dimensional Jesus (insofar as our finite wisdom allows)

and militates against excessive caricatures of Christ. As A. Daniel Frankforter attests:

Christians are often inclined to overlook or explain away Jesus' "hard sayings," words that are hard because they refuse to reduce the God of majesty to a "gentle Jesus meek and mild." The Prince of Peace warns that he is armed with a sword (Matt. 10:34). The loving son turns his back on his family, saying, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" (Mark 3:33). The sweet shepherd insists: "If any one comes to me and does not hate . . . even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26).¹²

Here, obviously, those fellowships that utilize a lectionary, in order to allow for a thorough cross-section of Scripture to be read over the course of a three-year period, are at a distinct advantage. Even then, because no one worship service can possibly begin to contain all that can be said about the triune God, F. Russell Mitman suggests putting the words "to be continued" at the bottom of the printed orders of worship, because the God-informed "conversation is to be continued the next time the community gathers again for worship."¹³

Thesis 2: We should use Scripture in worship because, through Scripture, we see the extent of our brokenness and sin. One by-product of making the transcendent immanent is that, in seeing his holiness, we recognize our lack of same. Hence, in evangelical-speak, reading Scripture helps us appreciate our need for a "personal relationship with Jesus Christ." Marva Dawn advocates regular use of the reading of Scripture passages in worship, because they "teach us thoroughly that our nature is helplessly sinful, hopelessly lost. That truth forces us to see that we cannot know the truth entirely, that our eyes are blinded by sin, that our understanding of God is only partial."¹⁴

But the Word does more than that. Once it illuminates our destitute state, it points the way of salvation. Ron Man notes:

[The] Word of God helps to bring us to the point where our approach to God in worship is possible: it teaches us that we are dead in our trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1); it reveals that God has provided for redemption, forgiveness, and eternal life through the work of Jesus Christ; and it presents the opportunity to come by faith into a right relationship with the Father—to “honor him as God” (Romans 1:21).¹⁵

Given this truth, evangelical churches that feel a burden to minister to the lost—“seekers,” in the parlance of megachurches that offer weekend services for those exploring Christianity and midweek services for believers—ought to consider using *more* Scripture, not less, in their services, for, as Mitman suggests, using the Word in worship promotes “invitational evangelism”:

Most people’s first point of contact with a congregation is through that church’s worship services. Doing liturgy welcomes those searching for an alternative to the cultural idols to which they have sold their souls to step into a new life that God offers through Word and Sacrament.¹⁶

If the Word is indeed “sharper than any double-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12), and if God never allows it to return to him void (Isaiah 55:11), then perhaps seeker-sensitive churches that eschew the reading of Scripture, as being a vestige of traditional church practice that actually drives unbelievers away from God, need to rethink their prevailing strategy just a bit.

Thesis 3: We should use Scripture in worship because, through Scripture, character is produced in the lives of believers. M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., attributes to Scripture the power to enact spiritual formation:

We must open ourselves before Scripture receptively. We must listen. We must be ready to respond. When we approach Scripture in this manner, we find ourselves drawn into that life

where our “word” begins to resonate with the Word. We begin to discover that all of the old structures of meaning, value, purpose, identity, fulfillment, and wholeness become turned around, taking wholly new shape. Our life begins to take on new meaning, new values, new purpose, and new identity because we are becoming the “word” God is speaking us forth to be in the world. We begin to live in the world in our relationship with others, the life of the new order of being in Christ. We begin to become participants in kairotic existence.¹⁷

While Mulholland speaks here of a work done in the individual, Dawn extols Scripture reading in worship because of the effect it has on the community, the work done in a corporate setting.

Our primary source for character formation is the Word of God. As God’s people, the Christian community will continually ask how that Word guides us in seeking the truth about our humanity and God’s design for it. What is revealed by the biblical accounts of God’s people in their ethical choices, in their instructions to each other? What virtues are displayed? What commands are issued that we ignore to our peril? How does the Bible give us courage to stand against false values and idolatries in our society because it announces to us the defeat of the principalities and powers? How can the worship of the community especially pass on the narratives and the hope they form us in faith? How does worship invite us to respond to the Word in faithfulness?¹⁸

The worship-renewal movement that has swept across the United States over the past twenty years or so has brought many wonderful blessings to the church. Most would agree with Robb Redman, who writes in *The Great Worship Awakening*, that “leaders from nearly every denomination believe God is refreshing the Church through worship.”¹⁹ But fair-minded critics have noted that, for all its benefits, worship renewal has produced, at times, a tendency among the fervent faithful to “worship the worship.”²⁰ Richard J. Foster, among

many others, has asserted that obedience—as opposed to a warm, fuzzy feeling, an outpouring of tears or other signs of emotion, or any walk-by-sight-not-by-faith manifestation—will be the truest indicator of whether worship has occurred at any given time: “If worship does not propel us into greater obedience, it has not been worship.”²¹ If, then, we want to have effective (and affective) worship, we will help our congregations to obey, and the easiest and best way to help them know how and what to obey is to expose them to God’s truth in Scripture. *Ipsa facto*, good worship should feature regular and frequent use of Scripture. The Word, more than anything else, will mold believers individually and the church corporately, shaping the character of all who come in contact with it.

Thesis 4: We should use Scripture in worship because, through Scripture, experience is both mitigated and validated. Those who concern themselves with the role of experience in worship often have a hard time finding middle ground; either they place too much value upon it, often using it as a litmus test for those who truly believe, or they dismiss it as being self-centered and/or anti-intellectual, often implying that it is the domain of immature believers. To be sure, a strong focus on experience can be problematic. Tom Krauter, in contrasting the response of the Israelites in Ezra 8:4–6 (who found the public reading of Scripture to be an occasion for heartfelt and physical worship) to the worship seen in the body of Christ today, notes, “In many churches more emphasis is placed on experience than on the already written Truth.”²² On the one hand, Scripture mitigates the role of experience and keeps worship from turning into an exercise in narcissism. While on the other hand, Scripture validates experience, in that it shows that the ancient texts of an ancient faith can be relevant today. As Ruth C. Duck points out, since “Scripture often deals honestly and deeply with the realities of human life, its narratives and images can help modern people name their own realities.”²³ (Here, too, it must be noted that one of the mantras of seeker-sensitive churches is that the Christian faith must be made relevant for unbelievers, that those living in 2006 must

find in Christianity something to which they can relate. If Duck is right, and even a cursory examination of Scripture confirms that she is,²⁴ then this constitutes another reason to increase Scripture reading in seeker churches.) In short, Scripture helps us keep our experiences in balance, neither elevating nor denigrating them beyond what is appropriate.

RESPONDING TO THE PROBLEM WITH ORGANIC LITURGY

Having established that the reading of Scripture is very important for Christian worship and that the church does not do it enough these days, let us now illuminate one possible solution, one way to combat the problem. A simple, knee-jerk response might be, “Let’s just start reading a whole lot of Bible verses every Sunday” (could be worse), or “We’ll start using a lectionary” (better), but addressing the situation in this manner alone is akin to correcting a child’s drastic vitamin deficiency by having her pop a Flintstones™ chewable once a day; it won’t hurt, and it’s better than nothing, but changing her diet so that she has opportunity to get those vitamins naturally through the food she eats three times every day is a much healthier way to go. Applying this principle to worship, Mitman has coined the phrase *organic liturgy* to refer to worship services in which all

the individual acts, like the sermon, *grow out of* an engagement with the biblical texts and interact with each other homiletically and liturgically to enable the *leitourgia*, literally the “work,” of the worshiping congregation to take place.

Liturgy is the totality of what happens verbally and nonverbally when the people of God find themselves in dialogue with the triune God who initiates the conversation and seeks to become enfleshed in the event of Word and Sacrament. The interconnectedness associated with an organic approach to liturgy is fundamentally a reflection of the very nature of the church itself, in New Testament images, as the *body* of Christ with Christ at the center and all the members working in harmony.

The whole of worship is a total event of integrally related and mutually dependent acts through which the Word of God seeks embodiment in the community of faith.²⁵

More than just the sum of theme-based parts, organic liturgy, Mitman adds, seeks to explore and put into practice

how biblical texts can be interpreted in all liturgical acts so that these liturgical acts will *grow out* of the texts themselves and be shaped by the texts into an organic whole. It is the inherent unity between the text and the retextualization of that text into a variety of worship expressions that will create an organic unity among all the parts of the worship service.²⁶

In other words, the Scripture passage(s) for the morning dictate all that transpires in that service, which puts the onus on the church leadership actually to have a *scriptural* focus for the service as opposed to a *thematic* focus. In practical terms, any themes expounded upon should derive from Scripture, not vice versa.

Lest the prospect of embarking upon such a journey seem too daunting, Mitman gives two bits of practical advice at the onset. First, don't reinvent the wheel; make regular use of the plethora of resources available to today's worship leaders. "Transposing biblical texts to create an organic liturgy," he notes, "does not necessarily mean that one has to create each expression from scratch."²⁷ Indeed, one of the nice by-products of the worship-renewal movement has been the proliferation of reference materials that if not specifically created with organic liturgy in mind nevertheless serve the purpose well because of their reliance on Scripture for inspiration.²⁸ Second, read the texts aloud, both privately and in ensemble with others. "When we read Scripture aloud, the Word begins to emerge from the words, and that Word will drive the focusing lens of the imagination and become the integrating power that will shape sermon and liturgy."²⁹ There is something metaphysical that transpires when we add our vocal chords to our eyes in the process of reading; the multi-sensory approach

elicits deeper levels of meaning and insights that we miss when we read internally. (For this reason, composition teachers often advocate that their students read their papers aloud before turning them in, so that they might hear, as well as see, what they actually have written.³⁰) Let us now briefly examine how organic liturgy supports two primary elements of most worship services, congregational singing and prayer.³¹

ORGANICALLY LITURGICAL CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

One of the best and happiest results of applying Mitman's principles to congregational singing is the beating of the swords and weapons of the worship wars into plowshares, for content trumps style in organic liturgy. As Marva Dawn acknowledges:

There are many fights in churches these days over what kind of music to use, but I am convinced that most of those fights could be avoided if we faithfully reflected upon the questions given to us by the text before us today. Instead of asking what kind of music will appeal to the world around us, we must ask, What will enable us most deeply to dwell in God's Word? What will best express that Word? How will the Word's beauty and mystery, its infinity and generosity be best conveyed?³²

Dawn's prescription might seem unduly simplistic to those who have been maimed or bruised in the traditional-versus-contemporary fights of recent years, but not all wisdom is esoteric (1 Corinthians 1:27). Those who pursue organic liturgy are free to explore any style of music, from Gregorian chant to rap, that will help the text for that day come alive. Nothing is forbidden, but that doesn't mean that everything is appropriate, and worship leaders must seek discernment when it comes to the selection of music for congregational singing. In doing so, they will embrace the fourth thesis above, for although organic liturgy will not kowtow to experience (for the purposes of this argument, will not respect style-based preferences), it will consider its audience at *some*

level. What is appropriate, stylistically, for a Quaker service with fifty European-American octogenarians in attendance in rural Vermont will differ—significantly—from what is appropriate for a nondenominational church meeting of thousands of African-Americans in a converted warehouse in downtown Los Angeles. What *won't* differ, if organic liturgy is utilized, is that whatever style is ultimately chosen will make sense for that day's Scripture passage, in the context of the church's setting.

Another benefit of taking this approach with congregational singing is that doing so will, over time, help to give a fuller representation of the multifaceted character of the triune God (assuming that the church leadership does not simply camp out on a handful of favorite Scripture passages that reinforce only one dimension of the Trinity). A prevailing criticism of contemporary worship has been that it focuses too much on feel-good aspects of the Christian faith while diminishing the more difficult areas. Organic liturgy combats that tendency and helps us, particularly, to lament. Hughes Oliphant Old says that singing

the blues in church is a matter of honesty. So many of us come to church with a big load of troubles . . . [and from] the standpoint of Scripture, nothing could falsify our worship more than coming to church and acting as though everything were just great. The old theme song of Christian optimism, "God is in his heaven and everything is well with the world," is just not very realistic. There are too many things in this world that are contradicting God's rule. There are too many undercover agents trying to break up God's kingdom. The devil seems to be running wild.³³

Worship leaders that faithfully integrate the vast diversity of scriptural representations of God into their musical selections will help to fulfill the first thesis above, for in doing so, they will present a more accurate portrait than do those worship leaders who focus solely, for example, on God's grace and mercy at the expense of justice.

ORGANICALLY LITURGICAL PRAYERS

For those interested in applying Mitman's principles to prayers in corporate worship, the fertile-ground Psalms often elicit holy-ground prayers. For one, praying the Psalms fosters community within the congregation. Calling prayer a "family convocation" as opposed to a "private exercise," Eugene Peterson lauds the *koinonia*-enhancing power of the Psalms: "All the Psalms are prayers in community: people assembled, attentive before God, participating in a common posture, movement and speech, offering themselves to each other and to their Lord."³⁴ For another, the Psalms help us confess—a sacred action often missing in evangelical church services these days. Peterson puts a brutally honest, if unnerving, spin on this dynamic:

Most of the sins that we do not commit are not because of our virtue, but because we lack either energy or opportunity. We would sin a great deal more than we do if we were only energetic enough and were provided more generous opportunities. It is well to stay in touch with those sins that we would have committed if we had had the chance. The Psalms extend our memory to not only the sins that we have committed but to those we would have if we had not been so tired at the time.³⁵

Indeed, using the Psalms as the source for prayer can lead believers into a deeper understanding of their sin, thus meeting the standard for thesis two above. Moreover, this greater appreciation for our fallen state—in conjunction with personal and corporate testimony concerning how God has worked through, with, and in his less-than-perfect children—can produce a depth of character that extends beyond superficiality. Mark Ashton notes that the Psalms

are the main biblical medium for the expression of human emotion. (Expressions of sorrow and joy, confidence and despair, anger and elation, abound in the Psalter.) *As the psalms have disappeared from our church services, so other expressions of*

human emotion have welled up, some of which are much less healthy than the psalms, and almost all of which are less biblical [emphasis mine].³⁶

And if reinserting the Psalms into our Christian worship helps us to regain a biblical understanding of the role of our emotions, doing so will help us to mold, shape, and strengthen our character, thereby meeting the criterion in thesis three above. Certainly many of the other sixty-five books in the biblical canon can be used well and appropriately as we craft organically liturgical prayers,³⁷ but the Psalms are a very good place to start.

CONCLUSION

Not all epidemics end up completely destroying cultures. Some do damage for a period of time but are eventually tamed by more powerful antidotes. Along those lines, the scourge of Bible-absent worship need not wipe out the contemporary church. A return to Word-centered worship via organic liturgy can restore scriptural health in much the same way that Jonas Salk's polio vaccine effectively countered the impact of that disease. May worship leaders throughout Christendom rise up as modern-day Salks, allowing the Word that is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path guide us in all our worship-leading efforts. Amen.

AUTHOR

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NOTES

1. Philip W. Comfort, "Scripture Reading in the Early Church," in *The Biblical Foundations of Christian Worship*, ed. Robert E. Webber (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1993), 295-96.
2. Ron Owens with Jan McMurray, *Return to Worship: A God-Centered Approach* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 99.
3. Lizette Larson-Miller, "Justin Martyr: The First Apology," in *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship*, ed. Robert E. Webber (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1993), 149.
4. Gary A. Furr and Milburn Price, *The Dialogue of Worship: Creating Space for Revelation and Response* (Macon, Georgia: Smith & Helwys, 1998), 9.
5. Richard H. Clossman, *I Will Stand and Sing: Growing Older in a Baby-Boomer, Praise-Song-Singing, Seeker-Friendly Church* (Elgin, Illinois: self-published, 2005), 4.
6. Robert E. Webber, *Worship Is a Verb* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1992), 48-49.
7. Ron Man, "Worship and the Word," *Reformation & Revival Journal* 9, no. 3 (Summer 2000): 139.
8. Constance Cherry, "My House Shall Be Called a House of . . . Announcements," *Church Music Workshop* 15, no. 1 (January-April 2005): 33.
9. A nice list of several such references can be found in D. A. Carson, "Worship under the Word," in *Worship by the Book*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 45-56.
10. Hughes Oliphant Old, "The Reading of the Scripture Lesson as Worship," *Worship Leader* 10, no. 1 (January/February 2001): 10.
11. John P. Burgess, *Why Scripture Matters* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 38-57, as cited in F. Russell Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture* (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 2001), 9-10.
12. A. Daniel Frankforter, *Stones for Bread: A Critique of Contemporary Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 69.
13. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 35.
14. Marva J. Dawn, *A Royal "Waste" of Time: The Splendor of Worshiping God and Being Church for the World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 67.
15. Man, "Worship and the Word," 140.
16. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 121.
17. M. Robert Mulholland, Jr., *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2000), 71.
18. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 117.
19. Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening: Singing a New Song in the Postmodern Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), xii.

20. I first heard this phrase at a chapel service at Judson College in Elgin, Illinois, circa 1997, from singer-songwriter Tom Shumate, then based in Nashville. Since then, I have seen or heard this phrase in many other arenas.
21. Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 173.
22. Tom Kraueter, *Worship Is . . . What?!* (Lynnwood, Washington: Emerald Books, 1996), 57.
23. Ruth C. Duck, *Finding Words for Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 9.
24. I once had a Sunday-school teacher who asserted that every situation known to humankind could be found in the Bible, and although that is a bit of a stretch, in the context of Duck's comments, her point is well taken. For seekers in the year 2005 wanting to know how to deal with the aftermath of adultery, they can turn to David. For those that have felt betrayed by their families, they can witness the example of Joseph. For those that want to discuss race relations, they can read the account of the Jewish-Christian response to the new Gentile converts in Acts. In other words, Scripture can, indeed, speak at least generally to whatever condition seekers could possibly find themselves in.
25. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 33.
26. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 34.
27. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 72.
28. I have found one such resource, *The Worship Sourcebook*, ed. John D. Witvliet (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), to be extremely helpful in my own ministry.
29. Mitman, *Worship in the Shape of Scripture*, 74.
30. Some speech teachers take it even one step further. Media consultant C. McNair Wilson suggests that public speakers practice OYFOL—On Your Feet, Out Loud—thus adding a body-physical dynamic to the visual and auditory.
31. For organic-liturgy suggestions for drama, consider Francis J. Casey, *Staging the Bible: Readings from Holy Scripture arranged [sic] for Dramatic and Choral Recitation* (Westminster: The Newman Press, 1962), and Michael Perry, *The Dramatized New Testament* and *The Dramatized Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993). For organic-liturgy suggestions for video, consider Robert K. Johnston, *Reel Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000); and the series of books by Larry J. Kreitzer, all with the subtitle *Reversing the Hermeneutical Flow*, and all published in London by Sheffield Academic Press: *The New Testament in Fiction and Film* (1993), *The Old Testament in Fiction and Film* (1994), *Pauline Images in Fiction and Film* (1999), and *Gospel Images in Fiction and Film* (2002).
32. Dawn, *Royal*, 15.
33. Hughes Oliphant Old, "Singing the Blues in Church," *Worship Leader* 9, no. 1 (January/February 2000), 8.

34. Eugene H. Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer* (San Francisco: Harper, 1989), 18.
35. Peterson, *Answering God*, 114.
36. Mark Ashton with C. J. Davis, "Following in Cranmer's Footsteps," in *Worship by the Book*, ed. D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 83.
37. Hughes Oliphant Old has written the magnum opus for organically liturgical prayers. His *Leading in Prayer: A Workbook for Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995) is chock-full of examples of how to effect organic liturgy through invocations, prayers of confession and supplication, prayers of illumination, prayers of intercession, communion prayers, prayers of thanksgiving, benedictions, and doxologies utilizing a wide variety of Scripture.