

1: Word and Table: Reflections on a Theology of Worship

Doing Theology in the Doctor of Ministry Program I. The Definition and Necessity of Theological Reflection. Doing theology is defined by some as the proces of faith seeking understanding (Jones,).

The conversation calls me to bring the whole of who I am - intellect and emotion, memory and hope, action and contemplation, wounds and prayer - in order that I may live out our common calling to love God and neighbor. We do not reflect on things within some kind of void but rather we ponder over things in the light of our encounters with real-life situations. Our theological viewpoints are constantly challenged by what we meet in real-life, thereby undergoing constant revision, enhancement and renewal. Often the event in which the individual is involved seems to carry with it an order which is independent of merit or demerit. This indeterminateness seems to suggest that in all living there is an element which may be regarded as random in the sense that it is outside of an orderly pattern of reaping and sowing. To accept all experience as raw material out of which the human spirit distills meanings and values is a part of the meaning of maturity. Most of them have been educated in a climate in which the behavioral sciences, such as psychology and sociology, so dominated the educational milieu that little true theology was being learned. Most Christian leaders today raise psychological and sociological questions even though they frame them in scriptural terms. Real theological thinking â€¦. Without solid theological reflection, future leaders will be little more than pseudo-psychologists, pseudo-sociologists, pseudo-social workers. They will think of themselves as enablers, facilitators, role models, father or mother figures, big brothers or big sisters, and so on, and thus join the countless men and women who make a living by trying to help their fellow human beings to cope with the stresses and strains of everyday living. But that has little to do with Christian leadership because the Christian leader thinks, speaks and acts in the name of Jesus, who came to free humanity from the power of death and open the way to eternal life. To be such a leader it is essential to be able to discern from moment to moment how God acts in human history and how the personal, communal, national and international events that occur during our lives can make us more and more sensitive to the ways in which we are led to the cross and through the cross to the resurrectionâ€¦" Avery Dulles: The subject matter on which theological reflection focuses is not the doctrinal themes of traditional theology like, Trinity, Christology, church and sacraments , but great human problems of the day as, for instance, war, oppression, poverty, pollution, and the breakdown of human community on various levels. The assumption here is that Revelation is to be found not so much in clear directives from the past as in the dimension of ultimacy within our own experience. Theological reflection is perhaps our single most important task after direct care. Theological reflection is taking off the shoes of work and walking more gently and quietly in prayer toward the ever-burning love of God. Moreover, as we view that landscape from within a community committed to Christian ministry, some of the theological meanings lurking within the landscape may emerge. Whitehead and Evelyn Eaton Whitehead: We must discern how we are to be faithful to the gospel and effective in our mission: Theological reflection is an essential tool in this discernment of contemporary ministryâ€¦Theological reflection in ministry involves three sources of religiously relevant information - Christian Tradition, the experience of the community of faith, and the resources of the culture. Stone and James O. Wherever and whenever it occurs, theological reflection is not only a personal but also an interactive, dialogical and community-related process. The voices of others are heard. Some of these voices, like those of the biblical writers, come from texts of centuries past. Others are those of our contemporaries. Still others are our own. These voices offer us food for thought to be heeded or debated or improved upon or set aside as unhelpful. To engage in theological reflection is to join an ongoing conversation with others that began long before we ever came along and will continue long after we have passed away. Theological reflection is the discipline of exploring individual and corporate experience in conversation with the wisdom of a religious heritage. The conversation is a genuine dialogue that seeks to hear from our own beliefs, actions, and perspectives, as well as those of the tradition. It respects the integrity of both. Theological reflection therefore may confirm, challenge, clarify, and expand how we understand our own experience and how we understand the religious tradition. The outcome is new truth and meaning for

living.

2: Theological Reflection | Field | Academics | Divinity School | Vanderbilt University

The future of theology doesn't lie in the agendas and biases of theologians but with the body of Christ and the one who is the Word of God, says the chair of systematic theology at the University of St. Andrews.

It is a theological methodology committed to theological reflection. Therefore, when a new practical theological text on theological reflection is published, it is bound to get noticed. *Theological Reflection for Human Flourishing*: First and foremost, this text is about the process of theological reflection. With the use of specific examples, the authors seek to equip both pastors and other church leaders with the skills to handle issues frequently overlooked by the church. Rather than present theological reflection as a static linear tool, the authors demonstrate the organic and sometimes tense process of doing theological reflection in churches and communities. To best accomplish this goal, the authors stress that the book should be about something specific. In this case, they have chosen the relationship between pastoral practice and public theology. Using their process of theological reflection, the authors used conversations gathered from two groups of pastors and church leaders over a forty-eight hour period. The two groups that the authors highlight are those in church-based pastoral ministry who also work in outside institutions and chaplains and Christians who work in institutions as professionals. Commenting on the isolation felt by members of both groups, the authors use theological reflection to bring these groups into dialogue and increase human flourishing for both. The book is divided into seven chapters that explore theological reflection along with specific case study examples for those interested in practical application. The chapters follow the themes of reflection, description, and engagement. Chapters four and five engage these encounters by way of identifying key themes and using scripture. Chapter six along with the conclusion bring into focus the lessons learned from these encounters with important takeaways for ministers and other Christian professionals. The authors begin with a look at the process of theological reflection and their vision of how it should operate. These are pastoral situations consisting of a boundary line, which a Christian may need to cross in order to determine the best action to take. In chapters three and four, the authors use several encounters gathered from the study that highlight the process of theological reflection. In reflection, the authors bring into focus voices and stories that may never have been described before. Through engaging and exploring these experiences, the authors bring out several themes, which they list and describe. In addition, the role of the minister in the community and the relationship between the secular and the sacred are issues found in the themes presented by the authors. Moving from description to engagement within the Christian tradition, the authors use the Bible as a dialogue partner. Working within the pastoral cycle, the authors recognize that experience is the starting point for theological reflection. The experiences and encounters presented by the authors are brought into conversation with broad themes found in scripture. By use of a thematic approach, the authors acknowledge that, while the Bible is composed of several authors and genres, its account of God is consistent. After exploring these themes, the authors present a concluding commentary about the problems that can occur when one uses scripture. A helpful addition to this chapter is the concluding commentary from Chris Rowland. When using the Bible, theologians must take in account all the particulars of a situation. Essentially what Rowland is reminding us is that interpretation and imagination is important when using the Bible. The challenge, the authors point out, is to demonstrate how the Bible can speak to life outside the church. Moving towards the conclusion, the authors see the end result of the pastoral cycle as a change in practice or belief. In anticipation of future encounters, the authors conclude the book with recommendations on how to handle such situations. To effectively engage in group dialogue and theological reflection, there must be a willingness to challenge established beliefs and practices. The authors believe and emphasize that theological reflection develops self-knowledge and improves skills in understanding encounters. Above all, the authors hope that a critique of theological reflection will encourage others to take the risk of genuine dialogue and expecting the unexpected. A must read for practical theologians, this book should be able to find a home in any practical theology program.

3: What is Theological Reflection? | A Nun's Life Ministry

For my Theology assignment, I will be reflecting on two topics that have given me a better understanding of what it means to be a Christian. Since I was young I have always been taught a basic knowledge of what it means to be a Christ follower but understanding the significance of being a Christian has deepened my knowledge even more.

Reflections on a Theology of Worship Dennis Bratcher There has been a tremendous explosion of interest in many sectors of the evangelical and especially the holiness tradition in the United States in developing a deliberate and purposeful theology of worship, as opposed to simply doing worship in whatever way is most comfortable or familiar, or aims at specific results. There are a whole range of factors in that move, some valid and some driven by the exigencies of the moment. It is no doubt part of a larger social trend to reverse the rampant individualism, self-centeredness, and generic approaches to Christianity that have dominated US culture since the s. In any case, renewed interest in a service of word and table is an emerging fact in the traditionally low church branches of the Holiness Movement and even among Pentecostals and evangelicals in general. Rather than being something that we need to fear, it may actually be the vehicle for a revitalized emphasis on the deeply spiritual dimensions of worship that have sometimes been obscured by more pragmatic approaches to evangelical church services or by more superficial emotional concerns. In this sense the emergence of a "word and table" emphasis may be one of the best signs of genuine vitality in churches today. The concept of the word and table or word and sacrament is an expression drawn from a particular theology of worship that has its roots deep in the early church. A service of the word and table is worship that emphasizes the dual aspects of the spoken word built around Scripture and the embodied Word centered on the celebration of the Eucharist or Communion. This is not a "form" of worship, so the issues are not whether a service of worship is "liturgical" or "contemporary. Rather, "word and table" is grounded in a theology of worship, how worship unfolds from certain ideas about God and his work in the world. This suggests that the concept involves more than any particular service of worship and includes more than certain forms of worship. It is a much deeper way of understanding the nature, purpose, and content of worship. The Word The idea of the word places emphasis on the proclamation of Scripture as the spoken word of God that bears witness to the incarnate Word in Jesus Christ. But it is not simply that it bears witness. The spoken word becomes the living and active word of God so that God speaks anew through the spoken word of Scripture. In this sense, the spoken word becomes a means of grace. The roots of this perspective on Scripture and the spoken word lie in the Old Testament and the experience of the Israelites following the exile. The public reading and explanation of the Torah to the assembled people became an important feature of religious life after the exile. The graphic portrayal of the assembled people of God hearing the Torah read and explained, and then responding in joyful worship as they understood its significance became an important model for the role of Scripture in the community of Faith Neh. As the synagogue became an increasingly important part of religious life during this same period, the public reading and explanation of Scripture even by laypersons became a weekly part of synagogue worship. In his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus highlighted this aspect of reading Scripture in public worship as he read from the Isaiah scroll and added his own comments Luke 4: The early church adopted this model of the public reading and interpretation of Scripture in worship, and it has remained the practice in most Christian churches through the centuries. Some religious traditions have taken this idea and placed almost all the emphasis on a sermon, so that all other activities in a service of worship are only "preliminaries" to the sermon. Unfortunately, this has sometimes led to a neglect of the public reading of Scripture itself. This problem is further compounded by the fact that sermons disconnected from the public reading of Scripture tend to be topical sermons on subjects that may or may not have any relation to a biblical text, or even biblical theology. Often in this way of thinking, especially in churches that are heirs of the revivalist tradition, the most emphasis is placed on the human response to the sermon. This has often created a very rationalistic approach to the Faith. Theologically, that tends, as some of the criticisms from the Reformed tradition have accurately noted, to place undue emphasis on human activity in both the "effectiveness" of the preaching and the need for human effort focused on the "call" to respond at the end of the sermon. At best that is an

unbalanced view of worship. The word, of course, includes the sermon. The word, both in its reading and in its explanation in the sermon, is the word of the risen and living Christ, the speaking of the good news of Jesus the Christ and his reconciling work to the assembled people. This translates into a service of worship focused on Scripture in public reading, in sharing the reading responsively, in singing Scripture, as well as in the sermon or other activities that place Scripture at the center. This does not eliminate the need for human response, but it does not place all of the theological eggs in the basket of a certain kind of response for example, an altar call. A minister of the word, then, is much more than a preacher or a revivalist. It is this dimension that makes the use of a Lectionary common in church traditions and by ministers that deliberately have chosen to apply this theological perspective in worship. The Lectionary is simply a structured way to cover the entire range of the biblical proclamation on a regular basis. The Revised Common Lectionary, used by most Protestant churches that follow a Lectionary, structures a three year cycle of Scripture readings around the seasons of the church year beginning with Advent four weeks before Christmas. The readings are divided into Years A, B, and C, with different portions of Scripture read during services of worship throughout each year. In the three-year cycle of readings, there are readings from all major passages of the Bible. Some churches, such as the Anglican tradition, also have Daily Lectionary Readings that cover almost all of Scripture in a two-year cycle of daily readings. It also affirms that Scripture has an authority that transcends that of the preacher, as important as the sermon might be in explaining the word. Of course, as noted, this does not eliminate the need for explanation of the Scripture, as the model of Nehemiah demonstrates. In modern worship, the sermon or homily serves the role of explication of the Scripture, which suggests that the sermon should always be biblically centered. If it does not focus on the explanation of Scripture, it is not truly a "service of the word. This is one of the advantages of following Lectionary readings and using those texts as the basis for the sermon. There are also other avenues in which the spoken word can be presented to the congregation in worship. Hymns, songs, responsive readings, litanies, and prayers can also give voice to the word. Even the physical environment of worship can "speak" the word, by the use of art, banners, paraments, stained glass, or other symbols and visual representations that portray the biblical story of God. In other words, a theology of worship expressed in word and table involves every aspect of a service of worship. The Table The idea of sacrament or table as a communal celebration of the embodied Word is a crucial corollary to the dimension of the spoken word and arising out of it. This is far more than an act of ritual observance as it has too often been portrayed in "low church" traditions. Behind this also lies a theology of the Eucharist as a means of grace. This is what prevents it from becoming just another ritual. This suggests that, like the "word," the "table" is an important part of spiritual vitality. Especially among heirs of the revivalist tradition, as well as those who have inherited "low church" hostility to rituals and sacramental thinking, a theology of the Eucharist tends to be fuzzy at best. The same attitudes that allowed rejection of greatly unequal emphases on the rituals and priesthood also allowed the imbalance to swing to the opposite direction, an example of the pendulum theory at work. This in turn allowed apathy and indifference to the sacraments and how they might function as viable and dynamic aspects of worship and as means of grace. A restoration of that balance between the use of sacrament and too heavy a dependence on ritual as the carrier of spiritual vitality will require us to re-examine our theology of worship and the role of sacrament in that worship. While exploring this topic adequately would require a good-sized book, there are two basic dimensions of the "table" that we need to keep in mind. Theologically, this relates to the covenant statement, "I will be your God. And yet, what the Eucharist embodies is the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ, who, received in faith, becomes powerfully transformative in all aspects of life, not at one time and place but continually in the life of the believer. It is this dimension that makes the Eucharist a means of grace. At the very least that suggests that from this perspective the act of taking the elements in faith becomes more than simply the action of one who is already totally righteous and worthy. It is not that they must already be righteous to take the elements; it is that they must be willing to allow God to remake and renew them as they accept in faith that work of renewal. It is this understanding of the work of God in the lives of people that we symbolize in the Eucharist that allows the minister to say, "There is salvation in the cup! If we take this seriously as a way to understand the Eucharist, we approach it with a sense of expectation, with a sense of awe, and even with a sense of fear, because we do

not always know what that transformation will entail. And yet we trust God with his work in us. Brad Mercer tells of the experience of taking communion from his pastor father as he was growing up. He noticed that as he served the elements, the hands of his usually composed father were trembling. The magnitude of what was transpiring translated into a profound sense of awe and reverence, and yet at the same time celebration. It is this dimension that suggests worshippers prepare themselves to participate in the sacrament of Communion. Preparation may involve fasting or other personal preparation such as Scripture reading or devotional exercises or other spiritual disciplines. It may involve nothing more than a time of quietness before partaking. It is a wise minister of table who allows this preparation, often in the service of the word before Eucharist. A second dimension of the table is that the Eucharist is also communal and prophetic. Theologically, this corresponds to the covenant statement, "You shall be my people. Yet, the celebration of Passover was far more than simply remembering a long ago event. To celebrate Passover was to confess who one was as a member of this people whom God had created. It was to identify with the group of ragged and hopeless slaves crushed under the tyranny of worldly power from which they could not break free. It is in this identification with the powerless and abused that allows the account in Deuteronomy 6: This identification only made sense because it evoked the deepest level of present human need. Even so, it pointed beyond that need to a celebration of the God who had heard the cries of oppressed slaves and entered history to bring liberation and freedom and hope. Passover was not a mournful look at the past but a joyful celebration of the present and the future that exists and can exist because God was and is active in human history. It was nothing less than a celebration of the God of grace who had entered history to create a people and call them to faithful response to that grace. We recognize that we still cry out to God from our oppression, from the burdens of our own slavery, physical and spiritual, that we still suffer under the tyranny of worldly power that crushes human hope. And yet in Eucharist we celebrate that God is still at work in our world, evidenced by the death and resurrection of the living Christ. Eucharist is communal because through it we identify with the hopeless of humanity throughout history who know their slavery and yet long for deliverance. But through Eucharist we also celebrate the One who creates community, who calls into existence newness and possibility, the One who breaks the chains of oppression whether visible or not, the Champion of the poor and helpless, the Prince of Peace, the Author and Defender of justice, the great "I AM" who brings life and light amid the death and darkness that we ourselves have created. In Eucharist, we acknowledge that we are part of that community that God has called into being from hopelessness, and thereby understand that the purpose of that community is to proclaim that hope that it has itself experienced. To celebrate Eucharist is a profoundly prophetic act, because it acknowledges that the human situation is not the final word. It calls us to look and indeed to move beyond the walls of our hopelessness, to see in God and his grace what we can be and become through him. In partaking of Eucharist, we take into ourselves the Word of life, the very power of God that transforms what was into what can be. No tyranny, from any source, not even death itself, can contain that power. While many churches who have adopted a theology of word and table as the structure of worship take Eucharist or communion every Sunday, some only celebrate Eucharist every other week, or once a month on a regular schedule. Most, however, also feel free to observe Eucharist at other important times in the church year, such as near New Years or Epiphany January 6 or on Maundy Thursday of Holy Week, sometimes as part of a Christian adaptation of Passover see Introduction to a Christian Seder. The Balance of Word and Table In trying to maintain the place of Eucharist, especially in an evangelical context where the preached word has historically been elevated as more important than the table or Eucharist, some have argued that the Eucharist should always take priority. There is some sense in which that is true since throughout most of the history of the Church it is the Eucharist that has historically occupied the center place in worship. However, to support the priority of Eucharist over the spoken word, some also want to argue that Christ is present in the Eucharist in ways that he is not present in the spoken word Scripture or preaching. They would contend that God himself is mystically present in Eucharist, which is therefore a direct manifestation of God, something not true for the spoken word.

REFLECTIVE THEOLOGY pdf

WHAT IS THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION The JCTR has a fancy name - and an important mission! "Theological reflection" means bringing a faith perspective to the realities we look at in order to work for social justice.

5: Humphrey Palmer, Thomas N. Munson. Reflective Theology. Pp. xi + 54s - PhilPapers

Reflection Paper #1 Rhonda Carter Theology D11 LOU April 15, I. Introduction This paper will be written to discuss the two topics I have chosen to write about for my first reflection paper. The topics I chose are spiritual gifts and love.

6: Theological Reflection :: Andrews University

The Dilemma of Religious Knowledge. By Charles A. Bennett, Formerly Professor of Philosophy in Yale University. Edited, with a Preface, by William Ernest Hocking.

An ancient faith in the new world An introduction to americas music Emergence of the speech capacity Women and gender in early modern Wales The Health Service Commission Act, 2001 Gender and identity in Africa Managing planned change The Anatomy Of The Soul La Paraphrase Dans LEnseignement Du Francias (Exploration: Recherches En Sciences de LEducation) Songs of Western birds Dead labor and the political economy of landscape California living, California dying Don Mitchell Generation on the march Breakthrough plus 1 People of the trees Combinatorial Search Life of rabindranath tagore Range of motion as the focus of teaching the overhand throwing pattern to children Greeks, Syrians, Copts, and Armenians use an unknown tongue at Mass. Albert camus the stranger Doram and the Magic Noise Galactic Suburbia 2002 silverado owners manual Computer and on-line catalogs. Charles Courtney, Xavier Godinot, and Qunetin Wodon Democracy in the family History of real analysis Designing a new economic framework New restaurant business plan Shareholders come third Planning Foodservice Facilities and Equipment Skillbook (Management Skills Program) Selected editions Problems with the prayers of the modern Mass A snipe hunt M.E.M. Davis Encyclopedia of spices and herbs Dungeons and dragons monster manual 2 4th edition Part five : Does organizational culture have a future? How investors can make money using mass psychology Qualitative case studies Robert E. Stake Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography, Vol 15 My big brain book