BCRC Family Worship Guide

November 9, 2025

Preparing for Morning Worship

This Sunday morning, Pastor Kern will preach on a pastor's calling from 1 Corinthians. Take some time to read and think about this text as we approach the preaching of God's Word.

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5 (English Standard Version)

For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Preparing for Morning Worship

This Sunday morning, Pastor Kern will preach on a pastor's calling from 1 Corinthians. Take some time to read and think about this text as we approach the preaching of God's Word.

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5 (English Standard Version)

And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Songs, Hymns and Spiritual Songs

...Address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.
Ephesians 5:19-21

Holy, Holy, Holy

Forever

Our Great Savior

How Firm a Foundation

In Christ Alone

Approaching Worship

Before coming to God's house to hear His Word, prepare yourself and your family with prayer. The Puritans said we should dress our bodies for worship and our souls with prayer.

Pray for:

- *The conversion of sinners*
- *The edification of saints*
- *The glorification of God's triune name*
- *Listening ears and understanding hearts*
- *An outpouring of the Spirit's conviction, quickening, humbling, and comforting power to work through God's ordinances (Preaching, prayer, sacraments) in the fulfillment of His promises.*

-from *"The Family at Church"* by Joel R. Beeke

Liturgy Focus

Prelude

Call to Worship

Gathering Hymn

God's Greeting

Song of Adoration

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Song of Assurance

Pastoral Prayer

Offering

Children's Blessing

Sermon

The Lord's Supper

Song of Response

Parting Words

Doxology

Postlude

Being in God's presence is a terrifying event! That is typically not something we advertise on our sign out front to describe our worship. However, this is true nonetheless. Moses asked to see God's glory, and he was only allowed to see the back of God in the protection of the cleft of the rock. Isaiah's response to God's presence was, "Woe is me." When was the last time you said these words when you came to worship? Yet, this is exactly what we are called to do in the Confession element of our worship service. In our Reformed tradition it is customary to read the Law during the service.

The law functions in two ways. First, it serves as a Call to Confession. Jonathan Cruse says it this way— "The law discovers and uncovers the sinful pollutions of our nature, heart and lives." Second, the law functions to show us how to live. Cruise says, "It's God's rulebook for life. It's a big rulebook too. The law is not merely the Ten Commandments, although that is a comprehensive summary of it. The law is really anything and everything in Scripture that commands."

The law can come before the confession as the Call to Confession or after the assurance of pardon as our response to live lives of gratitude. So even though you might not hear the 10 Commandments read each week as a specific element, you are hearing the law in one of these contexts mentioned above.

Preparing for Evening Worship

This Sunday evening, Pastor Milgate will preach on our union with the resurrection of Christ from 1 Corinthians. Take some time to read and think about the following texts as we approach the preaching of God's Word:

1 Corinthians 15:20-26 (English Standard Version)

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

HEIDELBERG

CATECHISM

WEEKLY

Lord's Day 45

Q & A 116

Q. Why do Christians need to pray?

A. Because prayer is the most important part
of the thankfulness God requires of us.1
And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit
only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly,
asking God for these gifts
and thanking God for them.2

1 Ps. 50:14-15; 116:12-19; 1 Thess. 5:16-18

2 Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-13

Lord's Day 45

Q & A 117

Q. What is the kind of prayer
that pleases God and that he listens to?

A. First, we must pray from the heart
to no other than the one true God,
revealed to us in his Word,
asking for everything God has commanded us to ask for.1
Second, we must fully recognize our need and misery,
so that we humble ourselves in God's majestic presence.2
Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation:
even though we do not deserve it,
God will surely listen to our prayer
because of Christ our Lord.
That is what God promised us in his Word.3

1 Ps. 145:18-20; John 4:22-24; Rom. 8:26-27; James 1:5; 1 John 5:14-15
2 2 Chron. 7:14; Ps. 2:11; 34:18; 62:8; Isa. 66:2; Rev. 4
3 Dan. 9:17-19; Matt. 7:8; John 14:13-14; 16:23; Rom. 10:13; James 1:6

Q & A 118

Q. What did God command us to pray for?

A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically,1
as embraced in the prayer
Christ our Lord himself taught us.

1 James 1:17; Matt. 6:33

Lord's Day 45

Q & A 119

Q. What is this prayer?

A. Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.
For the kingdom
and the power
and the glory are yours forever.
Amen.1

1 Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4

Going Deeper: The Reformed Doctrine of Ordination

The Reformed doctrine of ordination is rooted deeply in Scripture and is shaped by the covenantal structure of redemptive history. It draws from both Old and New Testament texts to understand the nature and purpose of ordination within the church. Ordination is the formal act of setting apart a person to the ministry, particularly to the offices of elder or deacon, through the laying on of hands and prayer. In Reformed theology, ordination is seen as an act of God through the church, where those called by God are formally recognized and equipped for service.

ORDINATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: THE TYPOLOGICAL PRIESTHOOD

The biblical concept of ordination begins in the Old Testament, where the Levitical priesthood is established as a mediatorial office between God and His people. Exodus 28 and Leviticus 8 provide detailed descriptions of the consecration and ordination of priests under the Old Covenant. Aaron and his sons were set apart for the priesthood through a ceremonial process that involved anointing, the laying on of hands, and the offering of sacrifices. This priesthood was part of the Mosaic covenant, and the Levitical priests served as mediators who offered sacrifices and interceded on behalf of the people.

The function of the Levitical priesthood was deeply typological. The priests were mediators between God and Israel, but their role pointed forward to the ultimate mediation of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest. As Hebrews 7:23-28 explains, the Levitical priests were limited by their own sinfulness and mortality, requiring a continuous line of priests to intercede for the people. In contrast, Jesus, being sinless and eternal, offered the perfect sacrifice once for all and now continually intercedes for His people at the right hand of the Father.

Going Deeper: The Reformed Doctrine of Ordination

CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY: OLD AND NEW COVENANT ORDINATION

In moving from the Old to the New Covenant, there is both continuity and discontinuity in the biblical understanding of ordination. The continuity lies in the fact that God continues to set apart specific individuals for leadership and service within the community of faith. Just as the Old Covenant priesthood was instituted by divine appointment (Exodus 28:1), so too the New Covenant offices of elder and deacon are established by God's calling and the church's recognition of that calling (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9).

However, there is significant discontinuity in the function of the office. In the New Covenant, the office of priest as mediator has been fulfilled in Christ. Hebrews 10:11-14 states that Christ's priestly work is finished, and He has made a perfect and final atonement for sin. Therefore, the role of New Covenant ministers is not to offer sacrifices or mediate between God and His people in the same way the Levitical priests did. Instead, ordained ministers now function as shepherds, teachers, and overseers (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4), pointing the church to Christ and nurturing the body of believers through the ministry of the Word and sacraments.

ORDINATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

In the New Testament, the focus of ordination shifts from the priestly office to the pastoral office. Christ, after His ascension, gave gifts to His church, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the purpose of equipping the saints and building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13). These roles emphasize teaching, shepherding, and overseeing the congregation, rather than priestly mediation.

Going Deeper: The Reformed Doctrine of Ordination

1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9 provide clear qualifications for those who are to be ordained as elders (pastors) and deacons. These passages emphasize character, spiritual maturity, and the ability to teach sound doctrine. The role of elders, in particular, is to shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight and guarding the church against false teaching (1 Peter 5:1-4). Their authority is not derived from personal power or status but from the Word of God, which they are called to faithfully teach and apply.

The act of ordination in the New Testament is most clearly seen in passages such as Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 4:14, where individuals are set apart for ministry through prayer and the laying on of hands. In Acts 6, the apostles ordain deacons to serve the physical needs of the church, freeing the apostles to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word. In 1 Timothy 4:14, Paul reminds Timothy not to neglect the gift he received through the laying on of hands, a clear reference to his ordination to ministry.

THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF ORDINATION IN THE CHURCH

The Reformed doctrine of ordination holds that those who are ordained are called to serve the church through the ministry of the Word, sacraments, and discipline. Elders (pastors) are tasked with preaching the Word, administering the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and providing spiritual oversight. Deacons, on the other hand, are called to care for the physical needs of the congregation and to administer mercy to those in need (Acts 6:1-6).

Ordination is not merely a human act but a divine calling that is recognized and affirmed by the church. As Paul writes in Ephesians 4:11-13, Christ Himself gives pastors and teachers to the church for the purpose of equipping the saints and building up the body. Ordination, therefore, is both a recognition of God's calling and an act of setting apart those whom God has called for specific service in the church.

Going Deeper: The Reformed Doctrine of Ordination

Additionally, the laying on of hands in ordination is seen as a symbolic act representing the conferral of authority and the church's prayer for the Holy Spirit's empowerment in the life of the ordained individual. This practice is rooted in both Old Testament examples, such as the ordination of Joshua (Deuteronomy 34:9), and New Testament practices (Acts 13:2-3; 1 Timothy 4:14).

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS AND THE OFFICE OF MINISTER

One key aspect of Reformed theology is the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, which affirms that every Christian has direct access to God through Christ and is called to serve Him in the world (1 Peter 2:9). This doctrine does not undermine the necessity of ordination but clarifies its role. While all believers are "priests" in the sense that they offer spiritual sacrifices of praise and service to God, the office of elder (or pastor) is a specific calling for those who are set apart to shepherd and teach the church.

This distinction is important because it underscores that the ministry of the Word is a public office that requires formal ordination, training, and recognition by the church. It is not a role that anyone can assume, but one that is entrusted to those whom God has called and equipped for this purpose.

CONCLUSION

The Reformed doctrine of ordination is grounded in a careful exegesis of Scripture and reflects both the continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Covenants. While the Levitical priesthood served a mediatory role in the Old Covenant, pointing forward to Christ, the New Covenant office of elder focuses on shepherding, teaching, and nurturing the body of Christ. Ordination in the New Testament is a recognition of God's call and the church's formal setting apart of individuals for the ministry of the Word, sacraments, and pastoral care. Through ordination, God continues to equip His church with faithful pastors and teachers who lead the flock by pointing them to Christ, the ultimate Shepherd and High Priest.