

Aniol, Scott. *Changed from Glory into Glory: The Liturgical Story of the Christian Faith*. Peterborough, Ontario: Joshua, 2022. 302pp. + 3pp. (front matter) + 44pp. (back matter).

Scott Aniol invites his reader to join him on a unique survey of church history: a history of Christian liturgy. This journey, ambitious in scope, begins in the Garden of Eden, travels through the Scripture to the current age, and concludes with thoughts on how to worship God in the present day.

In his introduction and first chapter, Aniol identifies two common errors regarding how we worship. The first is that we simply do not give worship sufficient thought at all. Here he echoes Tozer: the careless nature of our corporate worship has debased our view of God. Although we commonly assume one's faith shapes one's liturgy, the reverse is also true. As the phrase *lex orandi, lex credendi* states ("the law of prayer, the law of belief"), our liturgy shapes our faith. The second error is that our understanding of worship has been molded by forces about which we remain largely unaware. Aniol offers this historical survey as an antidote against such ignorance.

In his second through fourth chapters, Aniol surveys the history of worship through the OT. Beginning in the garden, he argues that Adam and Eve's primary purpose was to be priests before a sovereign God, a God to whom they owed worship and obedience. The various covenants in the OT all testify to God's intent to restore access to him so that his people can once again worship him properly.

Although he treats a wide range of Israel's liturgy, Aniol shows special interest in Scripture's material on poetry and music. In his chapter on "The Golden Age of Hebrew Worship," Aniol gives special attention to various poetic devices in the Psalms, followed by an exposition of Psalm 96 to show how God views singing as central to the shaping power of liturgy.

But the second reason we sing, which is highlighted when we respond to something that has not yet taken place, is that singing forms us. In other words, when we sing in response to something that has not yet happened, we are in a sense acting out that future reality, and, in so doing, we are formed by it. . . . Good songs don't just express things like joy, praise, thanksgiving, and adoration, they also recount the reasons for those responses, because by also singing the reasons, we are further formed by them as we experience them over and over through the art. (52)

Aniol likewise shows particular interest in the sharp contrast between true worship and pagan idolatry in the OT. Christians have long viewed pagan concepts of God as devolved from the knowledge of the true God; Aniol makes the case that pagan worship is similarly fallen from true worship. And just as true worship helps to shape one's understanding of the true God, so fallen worship reinforces fallen and pagan concepts of God. Part 1 leaves the reader with a key point that Aniol develops for our contemporary scene: God demands that there be a distinction between the forms used for pagan worship and those used for true worship.

In part 2 (chapters 5–7), Aniol traces the development of worship through the NT. Aniol argues that Christ fulfilled not only the OT law but also OT worship—thus establishing the basis for the elements that constitute NT worship. These elements include contributions from the OT (e.g.

Scripture reading, prayer, singing, giving) and elements from Christ's own commands (e.g., baptism and the Lord's Supper).

Aniol concludes his journey through a scriptural history of liturgy with a chapter dedicated to an exposition of Hebrews 12. Aniol argues that there remains a strong continuity between OT and NT worship: "The change of worship between the testaments is not in its essence; the change occurs in the external forms and experience of worship alone" (112–113). But the physical nature of worship (exhibited in the OT) is not permanently removed: "the admonition for corporate worship in Hebrews is rooted in a hope that one day worship as a spiritual reality will become a physical one" (113).

In part 3, Aniol analyzes worship from Catholic Christianity through the dawn of the Reformation. Acknowledging the tentative nature of our knowledge of early Christian liturgy, he nonetheless draws from sources such as the *Didache* and Justin Martyr's *Apology* to construct a basic liturgy of the early church. The development of the various liturgical forms (particularly the annual calendar, as well as a belief that the sacraments were a mysterious activity) began in the early church but grew as Christianity spread and gained dominance over the Roman Empire.

At the close of part 3, Aniol relates two errors in worship that the Reformation would later address: the issue of *ex opere operato* and sacerdotalism. *Ex opere operato* elevated the importance of the act of worship (apart from one's personal devotion or affections), and sacerdotalism resulted in a separate and dominant priestly class (whose task was to perform the worship, sometimes without the participation of the laity at all).

In part 4, Aniol traces how the Reformers sought to preserve the good in liturgy while casting off various heretical doctrines and practices, particularly in the practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Emphasizing the priesthood of the believer, the Reformers produced a great number of hymns intended for congregational singing. For the practice of the ordinances and matters of corporate worship, the great struggle was over the *adiaphora*: "those [liturgical practices] that were neither commanded nor forbidden" (183). The desire to practice doctrinally pure worship was a driving force during this period, but without any controlling authority, groups tended to splinter along both regional and doctrinal lines. Nevertheless, the differing liturgical forms shared a commitment to the authority of Scriptures and a desire to worship in light of who God is and what he had revealed about himself.

In part 5, Aniol argues that new, dominant mindsets emerged from the Enlightenment, forcing the church to contend with errors beyond those within its own heritage. New philosophies exchanged faith for reason. New political systems allowed individuals increased opportunities to exercise person rights and freedoms. Popular culture increasingly appealed to and validated humanity's baser appetites. Liturgical forms tended to follow one of two general trends: a conservative philosophy that sought to maintain and build on the Reformation heritage and a progressive philosophy that was more responsive to cultural trends and to the particular goals of a church.

In part 6, Aniol urges the Church to return to a more scripturally based liturgy, particularly one that draws its forms from its own scriptural heritage. Contemporary worship, Aniol argues, has roots in philosophies and cultural practices foreign to Scripture, leaving it ill-equipped to fulfill God's purpose of liturgy (the worship of God and the making of disciples).

The conclusions to each section are a particularly helpful component of *Glory into Glory*. These summaries make it possible to use the book as a regular resource. If the reader desires to do further research in the middle (e.g., part 4), a quick review of the conclusion of the prior chapter provides an excellent means of catching up with the flow of Aniol's argument.

In his first appendix ("Planning a Gospel-Shaped Worship Service"), Aniol offers his reader an encore of three examples of services that incorporate his philosophy of worship and some of the great hymns received from our Christian heritage. He outlines each example using elements of his proposed "skeleton," within which he provides specific samples: hymn titles, Scripture readings, and even the placement of the sermon within the steps. By giving these concrete examples, Aniol offers the worship leader a clear vision of how to adopt a simple yet flexible method for helping worshipers understand more about what they are doing as they participate throughout the service.

Throughout *Glory into Glory*, Aniol demonstrates vast knowledge of Scripture, ecclesiastical and philosophical history, and varying philosophies of worship. In addition, he regularly provides concrete examples of the consequences of certain choices in worship—making the connection between one's philosophy of worship and one's actual liturgical practices.

A particular strength of *Glory into Glory* is Aniol's exposition of the story of worship through the Old and New Testaments. Some readers may give early pause at Aniol's interpretation of *'avad* and *shamar* in Genesis 2:15 (in chapter 1), but his argument hardly rests on whether these words refer to man's tending of the Garden or to his worship and obedience. (That God created man to worship and obey is hardly a matter of dispute.) Aniol's narrative history of worship—from the Garden to the post-exilic period—in the opening chapter is an especially worthwhile resource.

More importantly, Aniol deals with true worship's counterfeit: idolatry. Evidence of God's hatred of idolatry—not just in the abstract, but in specific forms—begins early in Israel's history and continues past the exile into the NT. Although he does not intend to produce anything close to a "biblical theology of idolatry," Aniol provides a far more scripturally robust treatment on idolatry than Bob Kauflin does in his 2008 work, *Worship Matters*. Nevertheless, Aniol could do more to draw in some of the NT material, particularly with Paul's condemnations against those who would attempt to embrace the worship of the one true God and the worship of idols (1 Cor 10:19–22; 2 Cor 6:12–18). In addition, Aniol does not emphasize a key perspective on idolatry in Scripture: idols are more than humanly created counterfeits; they manifest the work of Satan and his demons (Deut 32:15–17; 1 Cor 10:19–20; 1 John 5:18–21). However much we may view current differences in worship as stemming from a difference in *theological and philosophical worldviews*, differences in worship in the Old and New Testaments were often a matter of *competing spiritual kingdoms*.

At the end of part 2, Aniol's exposition of Hebrews 12 (chapter 7) plays a critical role in summarizing the biblical material in parts 1 and 2. The chapter could easily stand alone as a separate and valuable resource regarding the relationship between worship and doctrine for the early Jewish Christians. Aniol interprets the warnings in Hebrews to be an expression of "the author's concern that his reader not reject Christian worship in favor of that of Judaism. The point is clear: those who refuse to worship Christ will find judgment, but those [who] do worship him will receive forgiveness and life everlasting" (111). However, there remains a strong continuity between the OT and NT worship:

“The change of worship between the testaments is not in its essence; the change occurs in the external forms and experience of worship alone” (112–13).

In recounting the history of liturgy since the early church, Aniol’s material is thorough but accessible. Nevertheless, this section does not always clearly prove how deviations in worship shaped deviations in doctrine, nor that the restoration of worship shaped the restoration of proper doctrine. Of course, it is often more than sufficient to trace the concurrent changes in worship and doctrine (for good or ill) within the various eras. Attempting to prove that one caused the other might be futile. However, it seems that Aniol could give more attention to known (or plausible) causal connections whereby the *lex orandi* shaped the *lex credenda*. His conclusions at the end of the sections do provide a helpful review of how the material is relevant to his thesis, but it is easy to get caught up in the story itself and forget the reason that Aniol is telling the story.

One limitation of *Glory into Glory* is its scope. In most of the historical chapters after chapter 8, Aniol traces the liturgy of *European and American* Christianity. The limitation is natural and somewhat necessary. After all, if we are to investigate the interchange between liturgy and doctrine, the available documentation about Christian doctrine and practice in the West dwarfs similar resources from Asia and Africa. Nevertheless, Christians were worshipping around the world for the same duration of history, and a future edition of the book could be enhanced with an appendix dealing with a similar history.

Another notable feature of his work is that Aniol is particularly interested in the use of music in Christian worship, although he demonstrates a breadth of knowledge across many aspects of liturgy. Nevertheless, some elements could be easily expanded without making the book very much longer. One addition could reference worship and architecture. Since corporate worship often occurs in an established and regular location, some reference to architecture and its relationship to liturgy would be interesting (particularly in light of Western Christianity’s long history of building places of worship in order to have a particular effect on the worshippers). Aniol alludes to such effects but without much development.

Any lengthy treatment of worship must invariably deal with the topic of the worshipper’s emotional state when offering worship. God condemns those for whom worship is merely perfunctory. Likewise, worship that aims for a particular emotional response on the part of man is focused in the wrong direction. Aniol hardly shies away from this issue, providing both a biblical basis for the “heart response” that liturgy provides (51) and discussion of how various people through history (e.g., Jonathan Edwards, Charles Wesley) responded either to a lack of emotion in worship or to emotional excess.

Despite some occasional stylistic issues (e.g., grammar and sentence length), Aniol writes in a clear and direct manner with a flow of thought that is easy to follow. The index will pose some challenges for the reader: the initial printing appears to have many page number errors. However, the book follows a historical order, so a basic knowledge of church history is generally sufficient to find names and events (and for those who need a quick refresher, Appendix 3 supplies a helpful timeline).

Aniol largely delivers on his promise, both in the historical survey he provides and in demonstrating the integral relationship between worship and doctrine. *Changed from Glory into Glory*

unfolds an accessible account of how we got to where we are and provides a roadmap for how worship leaders can borrow the best from our Christian heritage as we fulfill our greatest duty and joy: worshipping God, not as a means of getting his attention or creating an experience for ourselves, but as a means of expressing our gratitude for what he has already done on our behalf.

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