

As we will see with issues relating to the theology of the church, the theology of worship has inherited some problems from the Enlightenment and its first generation offspring, the modern era.

Evangelical issues involving worship seem to be rooted in the conflict between the Enlightenment emphasis on reason and the nineteenth-century romantic stress on emotion. The emphasis on reason during the Enlightenment resulted in a heady form of worship. Worship assumed the nature of a lecture hall, where the primary emphasis was given to the sermon. This intellectual worship was challenged by revivalism...[which] clashed with the older worship, which was directed more toward the mind. One evangelical group located the meaning of worship in the shaping of the Christian mind; the other evangelical stream pointed to the meaning of worship in the experience of the heart. This conflict of style has continued in the twentieth-century debate about traditional versus contemporary worship. Traditional worship seems to be hanging onto modernity while contemporary worship has capitulated to pop culture. In either case the debate continues to rage about style with little concern for a biblical theology of worship.²

An accurate, biblical theology of worship has as its centerpiece the reenactment and recitation of God's saving acts and deeds throughout history and our relationship to him as a covenant people. The biblical basis for this truth is found, in part, in Deuteronomy 7:6, when God enters into a covenant relationship with Israel and they become "a people holy to the Lord, chosen to be his people." In the New Testament there is a new covenant, ratified by the blood of Christ, through which we the church enter into a unique relationship with him and become "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (I Peter 2:9).³

Another problem inherited from the Enlightenment and the modern era is a loss of understanding of the order of worship. The earliest description of New Testament worship is found in the book of Acts where, according to Luke, the early Christians

² Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 99.

³ All biblical references are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version.