Liturgy for the Meantime

On Beauty, Justice, and Worship

Ted A. Smith

In the New Jerusalem, justice and beauty come together in glory. The city is just: God is on the throne, and the kings of the earth come to pay homage. Those who weep find comfort, the thirsty receive water, and the forces of injustice are so thoroughly vanquished that there is no need to close the gates of the city. The city is not only just, but also beautiful: Those unclosed gates are made of pearls, the street is translucent gold, and, at the center of it all, the One on the throne shines with a beauty so radiant that the whole city is illuminated. The wonder of the city is not just that it features both beauty and justice. It is that in the glorious presence of God any distinction between the two burns away. The beauty of God is just, and the justice of God is beautiful (Revelation 21–22).

So it is in the New Jerusalem. But in a workaday meeting of a worship committee, beauty and justice more often jostle for priority. Sometimes proposals for beauty are resisted in the name of justice, as when a member objects to the purchase of new paraments on the grounds that the money should be spent for the poor. Sometimes proposals for justice are resisted in the name of beauty, as when revisions of a hymn for more inclusive language meet opposition because they are ungainly—not because the objector disagrees with the theological and ethical motives behind the change, but simply because she believes they make the hymn less beautiful. In the fullness of God's time, justice and beauty may embrace so closely as to become one. But in the meantime, and especially in this time, they stand in tension.

The tension between justice and beauty can be so pervasive that it comes to feel natural, given, universal, and unchanging. But it has emerged in time, a product of human choices. And it has emerged especially in Western Europe and North America, and most acutely among Protestant Christians. It has emerged through two deep shifts that help to define late modern society: the ascendance of ethics as the primary content of religion and the differentiation of religious, aesthetic, political, economic, and other "spheres" of life. These developments are not by any means total. Exceptions abound, and reversals are already under way. But these twin developments go a long way in explaining how "justice" and "beauty" have become keywords for us—the kind of words that might frame an issue of *Call to Worship*—and how the church has come to experience tensions between justice and beauty in its liturgy.[1]

In the first moves of this essay I try to account for the tensions we often experience between beauty and justice. I try to describe the ways in which justice came to be so essential to some Christian traditions and the ways in which beauty came to be defined over and against justice. I try to explain why the conflict between beauty and justice plays out *within* the church, and not only between the church and other institutions. I then look at the main way that Reformed Christians have coped with the tension between justice and beauty: by making beauty a means to other ends, especially to the end of justice. I want to argue that this instrumental account of beauty leaves our worship impoverished. I also want to resist alternatives that seek to dissolve the difference between justice and beauty or to reverse their priority,

Ted A. Smith teaches ethics and preaching and directs the Program in Theology and Practice at the Divinity School of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

making justice a means to the end of beauty. In the end I invite the church to live more deeply into the tension we experience between beauty and justice. That tension is not necessary or natural, but that does not mean that it can or should be wished away. It arose in time out of some of the deepest currents in Jewish and Christian traditions. Our task is not to dissolve it, but to understand it in ways that open up new space for faithful discernment and vibrant worship—and even to see the tension as itself a form of witness, a groaning prayer for the New Jerusalem, an embodiment of our refusal to settle for anything less.

The Religion of Justice

It is hard to overestimate the significance of ethics in the lived stuff of contemporary Protestant Christianity in the United States. One sees the ascendance of ethics in core practices like preaching. The last 200 years have seen a steady shift from preaching about doctrine to preaching about how to live in this world. Even when preachers take on doctrinal themes, we often conclude by asking, "So what?" . . . And then answering that question in the key of ethics, by applying doctrine to everyday life. A sermon feels incomplete to most of us unless it makes some connection to questions of "real life," by which we mean the choices of our earthly lives. That we ascribe the greatest reality to these choices and that we feel the need for ethics to complete a sermon, underscores the essential role that ethics has come to play in contemporary Christianity.

Denominational struggles tell the same tale. Doctrinal disputes cut deep divisions between and within denominations in the United States as late as the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversies of the early twentieth century. But all the most divisive debates in recent decades have clustered around issues in ethics. Debates about the ordination of women, racial equality, and sexuality all have doctrinal dimensions. But they have arisen and gained their defining significance as questions of ethics. That we need to remind ourselves that "theology matters"—and we do, and it does—only underscores how struggles over ethics have come to define denominational identities.

In the end I invite the church to live more deeply into the tension we experience between beauty and justice. . . . Our task is not to dissolve it, but to understand it in ways that open up new space for faithful discernment and vibrant worship—and even to see the tension as itself a form of witness, a groaning prayer for the New Jerusalem, an embodiment of our refusal to settle for anything less.

Even theological studies often are made subject to ethical concerns. A loose form of pragmatism cuts across many contemporary theological movements that hold that the right doctrine is known by the good results it produces in this world. With the rise of historical and critical methods, and the on-the-ground fact of enduring pluralism, we have lost widely accepted criteria for what would count as accurate speech about God. While the same skepticism and pluralism mark our ethical debates, we seem to have more confidence in our evaluations of the earthly effects of our beliefs. We scarcely know how to argue about a doctrine like the Trinity without turning the conversation to ethics. Arguments about what is true tend to get transfigured into arguments about what is good.

One can read this as a kind of secularization at work within Christianity itself. It does not bring the end of Christianity, but it transforms Christianity into something that is primarily about relations between humans and other members of the created order. It shifts the emphasis to that which can be observed, to this-worldly relations. God remains in the picture, but primarily as the one who establishes norms and then gives motives for ethical action. There are important exceptions to this shift, and not only among pastors and academic theologians. Fidelity to creeds and care for church buildings—two wide and deep currents in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—cannot be reduced to ethics. But each of these pieties regularly faces ethical challenges. If

lived American Protestantism cannot be reduced to ethics, it also cannot be imagined apart from defining commitments to ethics, and especially the forms of ethics that can be distinguished from personal piety, the social forms of ethics whose watchword is justice.

The rise of justice as the core content of modern Protestantism should not be seen only as a form of secularization. It also should be seen as a working out of some of the deepest commitments in Jewish and Christian traditions. The prophet of Isaiah 58, for example, offered an ethical critique of fasting, railing against a liturgical form that had become oppressive and then redefining it with justice at its core. Speaking in the voice of the Lord, the prophet says:

> Is not this the fast that I choose:
> to loose the bonds of injustice,
> to undo the thongs of the yoke,
> to let the oppressed go free,
> and to break every yoke?
>
> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
> and bring the homeless poor into your house;
> when you see the naked, to cover them,
> and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
> (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Jesus picks up this theme when his public ministry begins. If he always was up to more than justice, he never was up to less. Just so, Christians confess that the reign of God brings the fulfillment of ethics, not the negation. The rise of justice to define much of modern Christianity is not only a story of secularization; it is a story of deep and costly faithfulness.

The Beautiful Against the Good

If one historical process has seen justice move to a central place in religious life, a second, intertwined process has produced an idea of beauty that is defined over against justice, especially the justice associated with the church. Sociologist Max Weber described this process as the differentiation of spheres of society and named it as a constitutive feature of modernity. The emergence of modern nation-states depended on a separation between political and religious spheres, for instance, and modern market economies had to differentiate themselves from political, religious, and domestic spheres. Weber described a process in which each of these spheres slowly "rationalized" itself toward the pursuit of its own core value. This rationalization intensified differences between spheres. The domestic sphere, for instance, became oriented more and more to nurture even as the economic sphere shook off every distraction from the goal of gain. Because each sphere asserted its own goal as ultimate and because the goals defined themselves in opposition to one another, the spheres became distinct to the point of becoming incompatible. Modern people live across and between the spheres, experiencing the contradictory demands they place on us. We live, Weber writes, in a kind of disenchanted polytheism.[2] We serve the goal of gain at work, of nurture at home . . . and when we plan worship we must decide to serve justice or beauty.

The cleft between a religious sphere oriented toward justice and an aesthetic sphere oriented toward beauty runs especially deep. But the religious and aesthetic spheres have not always been so divided. Religions of the world, Christianity not least among them, have stimulated and sponsored an enormous range of artistic activities. Exactly that early connection made religion *the* sphere against which art had to define itself in order to emerge as a freestanding sphere in its own right—even as a rationalizing religion of justice sought to distance itself from the distractions of beauty. The tensions we experience between beauty and justice, then, are not accidental. They are hard-wired into the meanings those words have for us.

The justice of what Weber called "ethical" or "prophetic" religion came to be defined largely in opposition to aesthetic values like beauty. The iconoclastic impulse has always been especially severe toward visual arts. It has led Christians and Jews to insist on some distinction between what was most definitive about religion—truth, justice, the name of God, or something else—and the appearance of beauty. The second commandment insisted that no graven image, no matter how beautiful, could be identical to God. Second Isaiah presented the Suffering Servant—beaten, shamed, and ugly—as God's own. That long tradition has taken violent forms, like the icon-smashing halberds of Oliver Cromwell's army. But it also has taken forms that can feel like modest common sense, as when the

PC(USA)'s Directory for Worship acknowledges the appropriateness of "creative expressions in architecture, furnishings, appointments, vestments, music, drama, language, and movement," so long as they "awaken us to God's presence." But "when they call attention to themselves, or are present for their beauty as an end in itself, they are idolatrous."[3] Beauty can never be an end in itself for the religious sphere that we have inherited, for beauty's secondary status is one of that sphere's defining characteristics.

The divorce between aesthetic and religious spheres involved petitions from both sides. Even as influential religious traditions distanced themselves from art, significant artistic productions gradually declared their independence from religion. The rationalization of the aesthetic sphere meant that it pursued a goal proper to itself—like beauty—rather than the goals of ethics, politics, religion, or any other sphere of life. Art wrenched from its religious context, Theodor Adorno writes, "is magic delivered from the lie of being truth."[4] "Art for art's sake" came to define the purpose of at least high art, and so of the aesthetic sphere. Autonomous art cast itself as indifferent or even hostile to ethics and religion. Bad things, even ungodly things, could be beautiful. In the 1857 collection of poems he entitled *Les Fleurs du Mal—The Flowers of Evil*—Charles Baudelaire both theorized this movement and became its icon. His "Hymn to Beauty" sang praise to a beauty undefined by relation to God or good:[5]

> What matter if you come from heaven or hell,
> O Beauty! Monster huge, alarming, pure!
> If with your eyes, your smile, you let me dwell
> In loved Infinity unknown before?
>
> From Satan or from God, seraph or fiend,
> What matter if – fairy with velvet eyes,
> O rhythm, fragrance, light, my only queen! –
> You make the world less grim, time faster fly?

It mattered not to an increasingly self-sufficient aesthetic sphere whether beauty served the God of justice. All the better if it did not. And, as Weber saw, the beauty of an autonomous aesthetic sphere came to offer its own brand of salvation. The museum became a kind of cathedral, complete with priesthood, canon, ritual, and hushed experiences of awe. An emancipated aesthetic sphere promised beauty as a value independent of any other, the ground and meaning of life. With this assertion the tension between religion and art broke out into open hostility. Art's relations have been most antagonistic with those "prophetic" traditions that emphasize the justice of God. Beauty and justice became rivals, and their rivalry became one of the constitutive features of modernity.[6]

A Tension Within the Church

The rivalry between justice and beauty runs right through the church. One might think that a congregation would stand clearly within the religious sphere and so orient itself exclusively to justice. But the "spheres" of which Weber wrote are not quite identical with on-the-ground institutions like my home congregation, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, or the major art museum in the town where I live, Nashville's Frist Center for the Visual Arts. Actual institutions—like individuals—usually find themselves pulled between different spheres.

If museums rarely take up explicit religious confessions, they often do the work of ethical religion. When the Frist Center displays works from some long-disrespected group or finds a way to open its doors to people otherwise excluded, it serves the claims of justice.

Just as institutions identified with the aesthetic sphere often serve justice, institutions identified with the religious sphere often serve beauty. Mark Chaves' landmark study of U.S. congregations found that most congregations devoted more time, energy, and money to worship and religious education than to any other work. In performing those two tasks, "congregations generate as a by-product more artistic activity than either social services or political activity." Although many congregations understand themselves to be primarily about ethical matters, Chaves concluded, they "facilitate art, and perhaps, on occasion, even beauty, more commonly and more intensively than they pursue either charity or justice."[7] That analysis fits St. Andrew's, which strives for a vigorous outreach program but still devotes more time and money to the creation of sermons, music, and other cultural forms. Museums work for justice, and congregations produce beauty. The rivalry of religious and aesthetic spheres, then, plays out not so much between institutions as *within* them. The Frist Center must decide how to balance

the demands of justice and beauty in its daily work. And so must St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.

Coping with Conflict: Beauty as a Means to Higher Ends

Worshiping communities cope with the tension between beauty and justice in a variety of ways. In a small but growing number of congregations, beauty simply takes the field, with any ethical purpose clearly secondary. But more often beauty plays some kind of subordinate role. It might be an afterthought, as when a worship planning team designs the liturgy with justice in mind and then tries to make it as lovely as possible. Beauty also can appear as something important but derivative—a good defined in terms of justice, as when a church that believes in egalitarian patterns of authority sees seating patterns that reflect those beliefs as the most beautiful ones, or when fair-trade standards come to define what makes coffee taste good. Here the quality of beauty does not just serve justice but is defined by its association with justice.

The most common relationship casts beauty as a means to the end of justice, or some other ethical end. Reformed Christians especially have tended to resolve conflicts between the aesthetic and religious spheres by making the aesthetic *instrumental* to ultimate religious goods. Beauty, once banished, regains legitimacy as a means to higher ends.

Older Reformed theologies tended to make beauty instrumental to truth. John Calvin, for all his iconoclasm, did not despise the beauty of the material world. He famously described the world as a "dazzling theatre . . . full of proofs of heavenly providence." Illumined by the Word of God, the beauty of the world testified to the glory of God. Calvin made room for beauty but not as an end in itself. It served as a means to the higher end of true knowledge of God, so Calvin placed this discussion of beauty in Book I of the *Institutes* on the knowledge of God the Creator.[8]

Puritan "plain style" preaching extended this basic vision to make rhetoric—beautiful speech—instrumental to the communication of true doctrine. Plain-style preachers *did* make self-conscious use of rhetorical devices, but they followed the strict division between rhetoric and dialectic proposed by Peter Ramus, Regius professor of eloquence and philosophy at the University of Paris in the sixteenth century. The Ramist system made rhetoric, in historian Perry Miller's words, "severely secondary to logic."[9] Beautiful speech was not evil. Even God made use of it to accommodate divine truths to fallen minds. But rhetoric was as distinct from truth as ornamental lace was from the body of a gown. It was tacked on, secondary. And it was suspect. It could lead just as easily to error as to truth. Whatever value rhetoric had was gained by association with the truth it made persuasive.[10]

The rise of ethics did not change the instrumental role of beauty. It simply changed the end for which beauty was a means. The great nineteenth-century revivalist Charles Grandison Finney made the dynamic especially clear. "*Religion is the work of man*," he said in 1834. "It is something for man to do."[11] Finney overturned older Calvinist notions of waiting for God to work a revival. Gospel results did not depend on special interventions of God, Finney said, but on using the right "measures" for the work. Finney defined "measures" expansively, as whatever ministers needed to use to accomplish "the great end of their office, the salvation of souls."[12] Measures included things like preaching, music, liturgy, architecture, dress, doctrine . . . and beauty. Finney made beauty subordinate to the goal of moving people to make decisions to vote for God as governor of the universe. The goal was specifically Christian, but its focus on observable human action made the road to other kinds of ethics very short. The "new measures" revivals set down an enduring habit of mind and action: Beauty had value because of its ability to move people to take certain kinds of action. That pattern did not have to change to

Reformed Christians especially have tended to resolve conflicts between the aesthetic and religious spheres by making the aesthetic *instrumental* to ultimate religious goods. Beauty, once banished, regains legitimacy as a means to higher ends.

accommodate very different kinds of actions. Beauty could be used to move people to choose Jesus, quit drinking, support women's rights, march for peace, take a stand for biblical morality, buy Tide, like Ike, or take any number of other actions. If once beauty was a means to ends of human knowing, today it is more often a means to ends involving human action. In churches that have come to define themselves by their pursuit of justice, then beauty has become a means to justice.

I believe that churches have lost much in thinking about beauty primarily as a means to justice. Of course, beauty always escapes to play a larger role: A church might refine some liturgical practice with an eye toward a just end, but over time the beauty in that practice comes to be appreciated for itself. And when the sense of justice shifts or the liturgical practice no longer seems to do its instrumental work, our attachment to the beauty of the form can give it some inertia that keeps it from changing right away. Once-instrumental practices hang on for us as beautiful, treasured relics. But even when beauty escapes, our thinking about it does not.

It is at the level of thinking about beauty that I believe we have suffered the greatest loss. Through centuries of neglect we have let Christian aesthetic vocabularies fall into disrepair. And when we try to borrow vocabulary from an autonomous aesthetic sphere, we often find it shot through with hostility to religion in general and Christianity in particular. I hear this impoverishment in conversations with the students I teach. It is especially clear in contrast with the riches of conversations about ethics. When I teach a class in ethics, students bring to the class a host of concepts and commitments. They might disagree, but they can argue about justice. However, when I chair a meeting of the worship committee, we all have less with which to work. We can talk about "what worked"—instrumental language—and we can evaluate the service by (contested) norms of justice. We can even evaluate the service according to the norms of various liturgical traditions. But conversations about beauty have a hard time gaining much traction. When they do take off, they usually spin quickly into the ditch of individual or cultural relativism: Well, that's beautiful for you or for your culture, but not for me and mine. At this point justice reasserts itself in the form of a demand to respect each individual and culture. Critical deliberation stops. We can have complex, intelligent, and thoroughly theological disagreements about questions of ethics, but we don't have much to say, especially theologically, about aesthetics.[13]

The loss is not only conceptual. In the long run, subordination of beauty to ethics robs beauty of the power that made it useful in the first place. As the liturgy is rationalized toward just ends—as the beauty in liturgy is increasingly defined by its relation to justice—the distinction between beauty and justice wears away. Beauty loses its otherness and the power that came with it. As beauty is assimilated to justice, it loses its power to make us lose ourselves. For justice demands reflexivity, self-consciousness, and the ability to consider ourselves from the perspective of others—the very opposite of a loss of self-control. And so liturgy that has been thoroughly reformed as a means to justice often feels as if it is teetering on the edge of a very well-run committee meeting. Instrumental beauty has a shelf-life, and too often our worship seems to be happening after the sell-by date.

Two Temptations

The poverty of instrumental beauty can tempt us to respond in ways that cheat both justice and beauty. In particular, we might find ourselves tempted to try to negate the two historical shifts that have defined the problem we face. We might try to reverse the development of ethical religion by making justice subordinate to beauty. We might try to dissolve the conflict by undoing the differentiation of justice and beauty. Both temptations should be resisted.

Consider the first temptation: the desire to reverse the priority of the spheres, to elevate beauty and make ethics lesser and derivative. Two of the sharpest critics of modernity—Friedrich Nietzsche and Michel Foucault—are sometimes read as making this kind of move. But when these two thinkers have been appropriated for theology, they have almost always been deployed for ethical ends; therefore, their critiques have been assimilated with relative ease. A much stronger challenge has come from individuals and congregations that begin to pursue beautiful liturgy for its own sake, leaving ethical and doctrinal questions aside. Flickers of this challenge appear in movements for liturgical renewal, emergent worship, and, perhaps most significantly, the migration of

Evangelicals to Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox churches and forms of worship.[14]

There is something saving in these moves, I think. It can be good to insist on the integrity of beautiful liturgy, on its value as an end in itself. But that should not lead us to ignore the very real commitments to justice that run through every faithful expression of Christianity. The liturgical renewal movements of prophets like Isaiah, Amos, and Paul all had ethical commitments that could not be reduced or subordinated to other goods.

Moreover, acknowledging that beauty is a treasure in its own right and that it supplies its own criteria for judgment does not mean it has no other effects for which it is responsible. The pursuit of beauty for its own sake still has social consequences and still has questions to answer from the sphere of ethics. Twentieth-century liturgical reforms in some Catholic churches, for instance, had the effect of taking power away from lay women and giving it to male priests. The priestly reformers might have wanted to clean up what they saw as the kitschy clutter of shrines to focus attention on the majesty of the altar. They might have been driven by the purest reasons of liturgical and aesthetic theology. But that would make the social consequences of reform unintentional, not irrelevant.[15] Even so, Evangelicals might set out on the trail to Canterbury, Rome, or Byzantium seeking only the beauty of holiness. But this would not change the fact that such movements often grow out of and solidify changes in class status.[16] As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu noticed, "art and cultural consumption are predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfill a social function of legitimating social differences."[17] If beauty should not be reduced to ethics, the inevitable social function of beauty demands that ethics retain its own voice in the conversation.

It also can be tempting to see the differentiation of justice and beauty as a fall from some earlier, holistic, liturgical Eden. We might find ourselves longing for an undifferentiated society (be it Patristic, Orthodox, Medieval, or something else entirely) in which the good is the beautiful is the true. Such fantasies depend on severe reductions of the historical record. They also forget the real good that differentiation has done. As philosopher Jürgen Habermas argued, the differentiation of spheres has kept the instrumental reason of the economic and political spheres from consuming all of life. "Art for art's sake" helped create a kind of firewall that has protected the aesthetic sphere from complete integration into systems of domination. Religious institutions have benefited from that firewall even as they have tried to find ways to erect their own.[18]

The tensions between justice and beauty create problems, but they are problems worth having.

Moreover, fantasies of fusion between beauty and justice forget the very good reasons why Jewish and Christian traditions worked so hard to distinguish between them. If the differentiation came to its sharpest form in the modern period, its roots are much older. Those roots are as basic as the insight that a very attractive leader might not be a good person. They are as old as the second commandment, as deep as the cross, and as enduring as the hope for a kingdom not of this world. The tensions between justice and beauty create problems, but they are problems worth having.

Conflict, Discernment, and Witness

Late modern Christians have inherited a deep set of tensions between beauty and justice. I have argued that we can no longer resolve those tensions by making beauty always instrumental to justice, and that we should refuse to wish those tensions away in the dream of an undivided whole or to resolve them anew by reversing priorities and making justice always instrumental to beauty. Refusing these resolutions means that conflict will endure, and calling for the revival of a theological vocabulary proper to beauty means hoping that the conflict sharpens.

Such conflict could become destructive. An unresolved dialectic also can open up an especially rich field for conversation. It makes room for a wide range of faithful responses but without slipping into irrationalism or relativism. Reasons still can be given, arguments still can make sense, and large areas of provisional agreement still can be found even as ideals of justice and beauty renew their contentions.

At its best, an unresolved tension between justice and beauty prevents the idolatry of either pole, both the old idolatry of images and the new idolatry of issues. It acknowledges that we do not plan liturgy in and for the New Jerusalem, but in very earthy cities and for the meantime. It demands discernment. If neither beauty nor justice will let the other offer a final answer to the question, then we are thrown to prayer, and silence, and tentative plans, and liturgies that rely on grace for their completion. Such worship offers a witness of its own. Living in the tensions between justice and beauty, the church can receive and share the gift of worship that points beyond them both.

Notes

1. Sociologist Max Weber named the tension early and precisely, writing that "ethical religion, especially if it preaches brotherly love" stands in "a strong polarity with the sphere of art." Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, trans., Ephraim Fischoff (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991 [1922]), 242. See also Max Weber, "Science as a vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans., H.H. Geerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), esp. 147-148.
2. Weber, From *Max Weber*, 148.
3. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), *The Book of Order, The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II, 2005-2007* (Louisville: Office of the General Assembly, 2005), W-1.3034.a.
4. Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*, trans., E.F.N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005 [1951]), 222.
5. Charles Baudelaire, "Hymn to Beauty," in *Selected Poems*, trans., Joanna Richardson (London: Penguin, 1975 [1857]), 57.
6. Weber, *Sociology of Religion*, 243.
7. Mark Chaves, *Congregations in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 201.
8. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans., Ford Lewis Battles, ed., John T. McNeill (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960 [1559]), I.5.8, I.6.2. See also Susan E. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Thought of John Calvin, Studies in Historical Theology 3* (Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1991).
9. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1961), 325.
10. See Ted A. Smith, *The New Measures: A Theological History of Democratic Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chapter one.
11. Charles Grandison Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, ed., William G. McLoughlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960 [1835]), 9, emphasis original.

    I should acknowledge that it is a bit contentious to include Finney in a section on Reformed theology and worship. In both belief and practice Finney deviated from Reformed norms of his day and ours. But for better or for worse, his New School brand of "Presbygationalism" has had definitive influence on existing congregations across many Reformed traditions.
12. Ibid., 181.
13. The poverty of at least this worship committee's conversation continues in spite of the huge resurgence of theological aesthetics as both an academic field and a congregational project. It is not that the committee is ignorant of that work, but that theological aesthetics has a hard time escaping the orbit of cultural relativism and the demands of justice. While I know that rich aesthetic deliberation is happening elsewhere, I do not think it has become anything like the norm among mainline Protestants in the United States.
14. See Robert E. Webber, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail: Why Evangelicals Are Attracted to the Liturgical Church* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985).
15. See Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), chapter six.
16. For hints of this strong association between class and the appeal of "liturgical" churches, see Harry Boonstra, "Review: Evangelicals on the Canterbury trail: Why Evangelicals are attracted to the liturgical church," *Reformed Worship* 3 (March 1987). A more complete study of this association is still needed.
17. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans., Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984 [1979]), 6.
18. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, trans., Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985).