

## Physical Aspects of Worship

### I. Symbolism: Jay Allan Kays

#### 1. Introduction

1) Worship is full of symbolism which reminds us of something else.

2) Association with:

A. Objects: Cross, Communion Table, Pulpit,...

B. Places: Church Buildings

C. Time: Sunday, Lent, Good Friday, Christmas,...

D. Action: Bowing to pray, Baptism, Communion, Giving,...

3) It comes to represent something else. It becomes a symbol.

A. Symbol and its meaning are two things, not one:  
Need to be kept separate.

B. Symbol is a media:  
It communicates something.

C. Symbol is actually work rather than merely signifying something:

Sacraments are more than symbols. God does something through them for us.

D. Symbols are abused including sacraments.

a. Symbol and meaning become fused into one.  
b. Implication

a) Anything we do in action must be accompanied by faith.

b) We can't eliminate symbols:  
Symbol is necessary. God uses these physical things for spiritual purposes.

#### 2. Use of Symbol

1) To express our thoughts and feelings:

Bow our head, kneeling: Humility

2) To recall thoughts and feelings:

Words <--> Thoughts <--> Feelings <--> Actions

Inter-relationship between all these.

3) To communicate thoughts and feelings to others.

A. Words, hug, handshakes,...

B. Our relationship to God. Our own devotional life.

3. Symbols have to do with senses.

1) Senses are more primitive than thoughts:

We can sense more than what we can put in thoughts.

2) Senses grasps things immediately as a whole.

Thought divides things in part.

3) Communication of feelings come more directly when it's made through senses than through thoughts process introduced.

The more directly connected symbols to senses, the more vivid they are.

4. Principles using Symbols

1) Something heard is more vivid than one merely described.

2) Something seen is more vivid than something merely thought.

Jesus' washing the disciples' feet.

3) Touches are more vivid than speech.

Jesus' touching the leper for healing: Expression of love.

4) Things we do is more vivid than something we merely think.

Practice praying out loud.

5) In speech, particular and concrete examples are more vivid than generalization.

A. Sermons need illustration and more concrete language.

B. Strength of charismatic worship and liturgical worship.

II. Physical Aspects of Worship

## 1. Use of Time

### 1) Christianity takes time seriously.

A. God created time. He chose certain time.

B. Time: Linear - Beginning and End  
Bible in history.

C. Early church

a. Worship in frame of historical events.

### 2) Time: Indication of our priorities

Who is more significant and what is more important.

### 3) How do we spend and mark our time?

A. Israel: God's action in history

B. Early Church

a. Resurrection of Christ.

a) Sunday worship

creation in Christ.

1. First day of creation - We are now a new

2. Day of Worship, not of rest.

b) Easter

1. Passover tradition

2. Began with the pilgrim in Jerusalem.

1) Lent

Forty days preparation not  
counting Sundays: Importance of number forty in the Bible.

b. Christmas

a) Began in 4<sup>th</sup> c.

Egyptian Jan 6 Replacing Solsite.

Replacing the pagan feast.

b) Advent: Forty days-->Four weeks

c) Celebration of incarnation.

c. Each day structured.

a) Morning and evening devotion.

b) Three times: 9 a.m., 12 p.m. 3 p.m.

C. Length of service

a. Typical Catholic: 45 min.

b. Charismatic/Pentecostal: 2 - 3 hr.

c. Evangelical: 1 - 1/4 hr.

2. Use of Space

1) Holy Places:

Specific places, monuments

A. Because God does something, not because of the place itself:  
Event is crucial, place itself indifferent.

B. Christian Community:

Need places for worship.

2) Architecture

A. What is it?

: Organization of place is called architecture (White).

B. Relationship between architecture and worship

a. It reflects and shapes the worship.

b. Forms and styles of worship influence spaces, or vice

versa.

C. Worship as activity: Requires typical places.

a. Emphasis

a) Pulpit

b) Altar

c) Baptism

b. Absolute necessities: Five Liturgical Spaces (White)

Spaces,...

- a) Congregational Spaces
- b) Movement Spaces
- c) Choir Spaces, Instrumentalists Spaces, Dancing

- d) Baptismal Spaces
- e) Sanctuary Spaces

- 1. Area: Around the Altar table.
- 2. Most conspicuous.
- 3. Role for the service

- 1) Not for domination.
- 2) Should not be:

Too high or overscaled  
Closed  
Remote

c. Three or Four Liturgical Centers

- a) Baptismal Font or Tank
- b) Pulpit
- c) Altar Table
- d) Presiders' Chairs

d. Practical Criteria for Architecture (White)

a) Utility: How functional it is?

- 1. Allow movement
- 2. Acoustics: Balanced for music and preaching.
- 3. Inaccessible balconies: Problem

b) Simplicity

- 1. Restrain and discipline what is absolutely necessary for worship.
- 2. Before building the church building, first think about what kind of worship you will be doing.

c) Flexibility

- 1. Forms of worship change. Let's not lock to one form.

d) Intimacy

building.  
days.

1. Old house church: Best
2. Smaller congregation and smaller
3. People are looking for intimacy in these

### 3. Use of Sights

- 1) Color: Different colors by liturgical seasons.

Advent & Lent: Purple, Gray  
Easter: White, Yellow, Gold  
Pentecost  
Maunday Thursday: No Color

- 2) Textures

Choir Robes

- 3) Banners, Posters, Placards
- 4) Bulletins: Impression of the church
- 5) Screen for graphics, Words
- 6) Projectors: Slide is better.
- 7) Stain-glass windows:

Abstraction vs. pictures or figures  
Less time-bound

- 8) Objects

Palm Branches, Candles, Stars, Crown of thorns, tongues of fire, manger, Cross, flowers, hymnals, baptistery, open-Bible Table, Offering plates, Communion Table

- 9) Appearances

A. Decorations

Better have one small decorating committee.

B. Keep them Clean, neat, landscaping

