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Printed in the United States of America

04 03 02 01 00 7 6 5 4 3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Dawn, Marva J.

A royal "waste" of time: the splendor of worshipping God
and being church for the world / Marva J. Dawn.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-8028-4586-X (pbk.: alk. paper)

1. Public worship. 2. Public worship — Sermons.
3. Sermons, American. I. Title.

BV15.D39 1999

264 — dc21

99-19405

CIP

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A Royal "Waste" of Time

*The Splendor of Worshipping God
and Being Church for the World*

Marva J. Dawn

WILLIAM B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING COMPANY
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN / CAMBRIDGE, U.K.

Don't Let the People Cop Out of Witnessing

I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised . . .

Psalm 18:3

Exalt the LORD our God,
and worship at his holy mountain;
for the LORD our God is holy.

Psalm 99:9, NIV

Only those who believe in God can *worship* God! Since the term *worship* has to do with the *worthiness* of the One who is worshiped, certainly only those who know and acknowledge that worth can genuinely ascribe it and proclaim it. That is why the misunderstanding concerning the difference between worship and evangelism that is so prevalent in present-day conflicts concerning worship is so dangerous.

My earlier book about worship, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down*, has been criticized for not saying enough about evangelism, and yet its basic thesis is that the reaching out of witness and caring is the result of the formation of the believers' and the community's character. Worship is, of course, only one of the formative agents, but its importance is so subtle that it is often

missed unless we separate the issues carefully and read the instructions of the Scriptures faithfully and devotedly.

The ultimate well-being of the Church is gravely sabotaged by the fact that throughout the United States and in other countries controversies over worship rage as pastors and other leaders ask such questions as "How can worship be made more exciting for people in these postmodern times?" or "What style of music should we use to make our worship appealing to the 'unchurched'?" Perhaps you think I am overstating the case by calling it sabotage, but I encourage you to read this chapter prayerfully and with diligent reflection to ask with me — in the midst of our postmodern, post-Christian (sometimes anti-Christian) society — what it means to be the Church, what corporate worship is and how God's people conduct it, and what it means for followers of Christ to reach out to our neighbors in caring and evangelism if we are truly being Church. It is crucial for us to comprehend that arguments about appealing to unbelievers by means of a particular style of worship betray a serious confusion between worship and evangelism, to the severe detriment of both. Therefore, let us investigate carefully here the necessary distinctions so that we can be more faithful in our Churchbeing.

Churchbeing

Let us use this new word, *Churchbeing*, because words like *community* and *church* are misused, overused, abused, and confused. Churches think they're a "community" because that is what the word *church* suggests, without realizing how much the technological milieu hinders us from really caring for each other with the gutsy, sacrificial love of genuine community. Moreover, when we find out how much effort it takes truly to be the kind of community the Bible describes, we are often not willing to involve ourselves in that much struggle and suffering.¹ In our overly entertained and blatantly consumerism-oriented culture (see Chapter 7 again), with little concern for serving the common good, many "churches" have become, in George Hunsberger's masterful phrases, "vendors of religious services and goods," instead of "a body of people sent on a mission."²

1. See Marva J. Dawn, *Truly the Community: Romans 12 and How to Be the Church* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1992; reissued 1997).

2. See George R. Hunsberger, "Sizing Up the Shape of the Church," in *The Church Between Gospel and Culture: The Emerging Mission in North America*, ed. George R. Hunsberger and Craig Van Gelder (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996), pp. 333-46.

To be truly the Church instead of merely a collection of religious shoppers means, primarily, for every single member of a genuine community to realize that the triune God has loved us first and called us to be his own — and to be his instruments. Freed by the gospel, each of us responds to God with lives that glorify him, and we exercise our gifts to upbuild and extend the Christian community. Corporate worship by us is possible only because God has first summoned us to it and gives us himself in it. We respond with praise and thanksgiving, openness to be transformed and to grow spiritually, and renewed commitment to serve him in the world. Such worship in which we encounter God and are changed by his presence both comes out of Churchbeing and deepens it; it forms the Christian community to be an alternative society, living in the image of Christ according to the values of God's kingdom.

The description in the preceding paragraph is extremely important, for only if we truly understand such Churchbeing do we have the personal and corporate resources to resist, and not be incapacitated by, our idolatrous and consumerist culture. Then we Christians can really rediscover again and again the profound Joy of being God's people, and we will participate with rich gladness in the rhythm of being nurtured by worship and then sharing our faith and love with our neighbors.

Let us keep that rhythm in mind lest we confuse worship and evangelism. Put simply, we must remember that worship is *for God*, in contrast to evangelism, which is *for the unbeliever*.

Typical Results of the Confusion

Many churches have been torn apart because of conflicts generated by this serious confusion between worship and evangelism: that worship ought to be designed to appeal to the unbeliever or "unchurched" and therefore should make use of a certain kind of accessible "style." Deep at the root, the disagreements arise because declining numbers have put congregations and denominations in a great panic over how to attract new members. Many pastors, lay leaders, and national church officers seem to be thoroughly disdaining God's own instructions when they accept the false advice of marketing gurus to "throw out the traditions" of their churches in order to "appeal" to the world around them and thereby "grow." Speaking about the way television distorts the meaning of worship, William Fore reminds us of John Kenneth Galbraith's insistence that

the basic purpose of advertising is to get people to buy something they don't need. Apparently, the purveyors of the electronic church think the

values of the gospel are so obscure that only the hard sell can move them off the shelf. Slogans, pop songs, glad names, bad names, stacking the cards, the bandwagon — every technique basic to advertising is part of the stock-in-trade of the electronic church, which is, indeed, selling something people *don't* need — a superficial, magical God.³

The result of this hard sell on television and also in many churches is often a push for a worship style that lacks theological substance, invites passivity, and fosters an easy-listening consumerism that provides neither music nor words that will help worship participants remember deep truths.⁴ One dire consequence of adopting this quick-fix technique is that *the real problems* — namely, *failure to educate* concerning the meaning and practice of worship, *failure to understand* the real idolatries that keep people from participating in the Church, and *failure to equip* the priesthood of all believers for outreach to the world — *remain unaddressed*.

As you read these pages, keep in mind that I am convinced that we *should* be using new music and new worship forms; however, we use them not to attract people, but because they are faithful in praising God and forming us to be his people. If we choose a certain musical style or other elements simply to appeal to those outside our walls, then we are forcing worship to bear the brunt of evangelism, which is instead the task of all believers. Don't misunderstand: good worship *will be* evangelistic, but that is not its primary purpose, for it is directed toward God, not toward the neighbor. No passage in the Scriptures says, "Worship the Lord to attract the unbeliever." Rather, in countless texts we are commanded, invited, urged, wooed to worship the Trinity because God is worthy of our praise. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, *worship* can actually be done only by those who recognize that worthiness.

Furthermore, the worship service is part of the entire educational process of the Christian community by which God's people are equipped to introduce others to his worthiness. Evangelism or sharing is done by all of us who realize that everyone around us needs God's grace. Out of our love for

3. William F. Fore, *Television and Religion: The Shaping of Faith, Values, and Culture* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987), p. 88.

4. It is essential that church leaders ask better questions of the church marketers, rather than merely accepting advice from the gurus that might not be biblically faithful. Let me direct your attention to an extraordinarily helpful book by Philip Kenneson and James Street called *Selling Out the Church: The Dangers of Church Marketing* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), an excellent exposé of the problems with church marketers and the false notions that they are propagating in churches.

God and our love for those neighbors, we are eager to serve them and pass on the witness of faith. Evangelism happens in our daily lives, our regular encounters, our simple conversations and carings — or at evangelistic events, which have a focus different from that of worship — in order that we can bring others with us to worship God. Evangelism is the means; worship is the end.

The Difference between Worship and Evangelism

The difference can be illustrated easily. When leading worship seminars, I usually hold up an 8" × 10" school picture of my husband, to whom I've been joyfully married for 110 months and 21 days today (as I write this). I tell the audience all about Myron — what a wonderful elementary school teacher he is, how magnificently beautiful are the gardens he grows, how gently he cares for me in my plethora of physical handicaps — all this to introduce him to the listeners, as in evangelism. But is that how I will talk to him when I arrive home after several days away teaching? No, then I will speak to him words of adoration and love, listen to what he tells me about his work (how he has intervened in the world), talk with him about my own work (how might I have been more faithful?), sort out problems with him, and so forth — as in worship. Our conversations will be in the language of mutual intimacy and growth for the purpose of strengthening our relationship, rather than in the idiom of introduction.

Worship is the language of love and growth between believers and God; evangelism is the language of introduction between those who believe and those who don't. To confuse the two and put on worship the burden of evangelism robs the people of God of their responsibility to care about the neighbor, defrauds the believers of transforming depth, and steals from God the profound praise of which he is worthy.

Of course, the distinction is not total, for if believers worship with gladness and passion, anyone not yet a part of the community certainly will be attracted to the One who is the object of their worship. But to focus the worship on evangelistic introduction deprives believers of deeper nurturing toward Churchbeing and deprives God of the intimate and involved worship due him from the Church.

Practicing Christly Gestures

Usually persons who object to the kinds of distinctions I am trying to make for the sake of deeper Churchbeing do so by pointing to Willow Creek in Barrington, Illinois, and the enormous numbers of people it attracts to its Sunday morning events. Let us be very clear about what precisely Willow Creek is doing, for Bill Hybels, its founding pastor, himself emphatically declares that their programs on Sunday mornings are not the congregation's *worship* services (which are held on Wednesday evenings for the seriously committed believers).

What Willow Creek does on Sunday mornings it does extremely well. Its dramas and music are professionally performed; the sermons provide good teaching. The auditorium is perfectly well appointed; the acoustics and instruments are superb. Certainly I would not criticize Willow Creek's sense that they are doing what God has given them to do.

The problem is that many congregations try to imitate them by turning their Sunday morning worship services into such evangelistic events — without adequately understanding the difficulty of moving people from the passivity of those events into the activity of Churchbeing, from the surface into the life itself. How will they encourage those who have been spectators of fine performances to become involved in the *liturgy*, the "work of the people"? I am told by critics that such performances are necessary for people in our television and cyberspace culture, but the very problems of that culture are thus transferred to the churches — for faith is not merely intellectual assent to doctrinal positions or an expression of emotions, as we will see more deeply in Chapter 29. Faith is a lived language, and it cannot be learned unless one participates in it and practices it. If one's introduction to Christ comes from a polished performance, how will that person have the courage to live his or her own awkward, stumbling version of the Christ-life?

Brett Webb-Mitchell offers the felicitous image of "Christly gestures" and emphasizes that people cannot learn them if they do not engage in them. In the *New Oxford Review*, Webb-Mitchell told three stories about handicapped persons participating in worship and about learning the meaning of church rites, such as infant baptism. He stressed that these gestures unite us — able and disabled, male and female, young and old — and then concluded as follows:

What these three stories have in common is the practice of particular gestures that not only enable us to communicate with one another, but, even more powerfully, shape and nurture our perspective on God in Christ. Ges-

tures are learned and become part of our nature as we grow into the Christian community. . . . We might want to consider the gestures being acted out by the members of Christ's body as God's way of crafting us into the ways of God.⁵

In a chapter for a book on *Human Disability and the Service of God*, Webb-Mitchell elaborates further his image of gestures to remind us all of the importance of learning in a community of believers the art of Churchbeing. He explains that "Teaching the gestures of the body of Christ is like initiating someone into the practices of a craft." This designation "craft" could be applied to various occupations such as furniture making, the visual arts, boat building, and teaching and/or performing with musical instruments. "In medieval Europe, the term was even used to characterize intellectual enquiry, as in the liberal arts; this was considered the craft of the free person."

In the craft tradition, an apprentice must first learn from a mentor. Since the apprentice is not a "tabula rasa,"

the apprentice may hold certain interpretations or judgments, some of which will need to be eradicated or transformed. Or, there may exist certain desires which must be drawn out of the person and into the good that is known only in the practice of the gestures of the body of Christ. The mentor needs to understand that the apprentice has both a potential and need for learning these virtuous gestures as a member of Christian community.⁶

If all Christians understood that they themselves and those to whom our churches reach out need such mentoring, such practiced learning of the craft of Churchbeing, they would not settle for mere entertainment and passivity.⁷

As Webb-Mitchell's emphasis on learning the Christly gestures underscores, churches' "seekers' services" do not address the root problems of our times because they *remove the responsibility of witness and nurturing from all the people of God*. Since statistics show that most people come to believe in Christ through friendship with someone committed to him and since growing in faith requires deep mentoring both to eradicate false under-

5. Brett Webb-Mitchell, "A Protestant View of Physical Gestures in Church Life," *New Oxford Review* 62, no. 8 (October 1995): 20-21.

6. Brett Webb-Mitchell, "Crafting Christians into the Gestures of the Body of Christ," in *Human Disability and the Service of God: Reassessing Religious Practice*, ed. Nancy Eiesland and Don Saliers (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), p. 276. See also Brett Webb-Mitchell, *Christly Gestures: The End of Christian Education* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, forthcoming).

7. See the emphasis on a need for new catechumenal processes in Chapter 20 below.

standings and to develop truly Christian perspectives, it is essential that the gospel be specifically incarnated in caring individuals rather than only proclaimed in performances, no matter how polished they might be. The gospel has always been incarnated — as in Christ, so in human beings who have died to themselves and risen again to life engaged in by the power of the Holy Spirit.

To be the sort of people who will gladly fulfill our responsibility for witness and mentoring and nurturing care we need meaty worship — worship that engages us deeply in an encounter with the God whose splendor is illimitably beyond our understanding, worship that shakes us out of our narcissism and consumerism, worship that disciplines us and thereby equips us for the work of the kingdom in witness and vocation and suffering.

Why Is Our Witness So Weak?

Once in a seminary class, after I had emphasized that evangelism was the work of all the people and not of the worship service, one class member protested, "But the people don't do it."

"That doesn't prove that the biblical model is wrong," I responded. It merely points out again how much our churches are failing in Churchbeing.

The pervasive and powerful confusion in our society between evangelism and worship has severely hampered the necessary paradigm shifts of Churchbeing. When and how will our congregations begin to equip the people for both worship and witness? It will require great catechumenal training, intensive mentoring, for our churches are in severe trouble. Many congregations and denominations have failed for decades or perhaps even centuries to teach people what worship is and to educate members to be witnesses; to care for their neighbors, and to minister to the world around them as active parts of the Body of Christ.

Why don't Christians talk about their faith with their neighbors? Charts in sociological studies as well as personal conversations and class discussions all convince me of the same thing: each person has one or several of certain common reasons or rationalizations for not doing so. Different studies highlight alternate excuses, and the reasons vary according to an individual's personality, so the following list of explanations is not in any particular order by proportion. Here, however, are some of the most common hindrances to the witness aspect of Churchbeing and some beginning responses (of course, these are too brief and noncontextualized) of how truly being the Church would solve the problem:

■ “I don’t know enough. My neighbors ask tough questions that I can’t answer.” In genuine Churchbeing we are all continuing to grow, so you will learn more answers as you go. Also, you are part of an entire community that can help you with the tough questions.

■ “I’m not skilled enough. Evangelism should be done by a professional.” To tell others how God has changed your life does not require skill, for God has promised that the Holy Spirit will give us wisdom and words for witness. What is most required is genuine love for your neighbor — and God gives you that love, too.

■ “I don’t have enough time. It takes all my efforts just to get by.” Giving witness to your faith is not an added-on job. The original Greek version of Matthew 28:19 literally says, “while you are going, be making disciples.” Helping others to know how Christ has changed your life happens while you are at work, when you chat with your neighbors, whenever you assist someone else in a crisis, all the time. (And maybe we should also ask if you are needing too much to get by — as discussed in Chapter 7.)

■ “I’m not brave enough. I’m afraid of rejection.” That’s good — then you won’t trample on people’s feelings, and you’ll be very sensitive to their concerns and fears. But some of your fear will be taken away when you think about the perfect love of God for you and pass that love on to the persons with whom you converse.

■ “I’m not bold enough. I am a very timid and shy person.” Are you afraid to talk with people you know well about whatever makes you most excited? God is not necessarily asking you to talk with complete strangers — though he might ask that of persons less shy — but simply to let your Churchbeing affect your daily conversations.

■ “I’m not sure enough. It is very difficult for me to share my faith.” It is actually very helpful to those who do not yet know God to discover that no one knows God perfectly and that no one’s faith is completely mature. Share your wrestlings, your confusions — and in the process invite your neighbor to discover with you all the intricacies of the basic truth you know, which is that God has manifested his love for you in the death and resurrection of Christ on your behalf.

■ “I’m not strong enough. I’m afraid of how people might respond.” What is the worst thing that someone could do to you? We don’t even live in a

country where people could kill us for our faith, so what other responses might we get and how could they really hurt us? Whatever responses we might receive won’t change in the slightest the fact that we have been faithful in trying to introduce the person to God.

■ “I don’t have any non-Christian friends or neighbors.” This is a serious problem shared by many Christians. Genuine Churchbeing will open us up to look for those who need our love and care and friendship. However, we don’t become their friends in order to make them a target for our evangelism practice. We love them for God’s sake and see what happens in our friendship.

■ “I don’t have a friendly church. Where would I take guests to worship?” This is another serious problem shared by many Christians. Let us keep asking what we ourselves can do to become more welcoming in our daily lives and to make our congregations more hospitable⁸ — and especially how we can involve our young people in this vital ministry.⁹

■ “TV preachers have given evangelism a bad name.” This is true — all the more reason that our neighbors need to see in you a Christian who is not consumed by greed or sexual passions, a Christian who is trustworthy and faithful, a Christian who speaks of God with integrity and gentleness.

■ “We can’t talk about faith anymore in our culture. This is a pluralistic society.” By God’s grace, faith talk is being welcomed back these days into the public square, as evidenced by more openness in television programs and movies. Moreover, pluralism does not mean that we back down on what we believe, but that we offer it as a gift, with respect and gentleness, with openness to hear the truth claims of our partner in conversation (see Chapter 30).

Some of the other reasons why Christians are not willing to talk about their faith are not usually admitted and verbalized. Perhaps the most prominent of these is that Christians, too, are enfolded in our culture’s passivity, its “Low Information-Action Ratio.” Television and the Internet overload us

8. I’ve suggested many ideas to practice and questions to consider in *Truly the Community*.

9. On the importance of involving our children in Churchbeing, see Marva J. Dawn, *Is It a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church’s Children* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997).

with tons of information that we cannot or will not act on because its immensity paralyzes us and too much entertainment lulls us. It takes genuine Churchbeing to shake us out of this societal sloth.

Similarly, perhaps we don't talk about our faith because it hasn't really grabbed hold of all of our lives. Perhaps we are merely religious consumers ourselves. Then may God evangelize us! Let us pray that we will become astonished afresh by the immensity of the Father's grace and mercy toward us. Let us pray that Christ will give us a new vision of himself, a previously unknown and invigorating sense of his overwhelming love, and deepened commitment to participating in his marvelous purposes in and for the world. Oh, that the Holy Spirit will fill us with such renewing joy that we can say with the apostles, "we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20)!

The Example of the Early Church

We can see the interrelationships of worship and witness most clearly in Acts 2. A very important progression takes place in that chapter, which we can summarize in the following points:

1. The believers were gathered (for worship?) when the amazing gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out (Acts 2:1-4).
2. The coming of the Spirit caused such a sound that crowds gathered and wondered what was happening when they heard their native languages (vv. 5-12).
3. The crowd was divided between those who wanted to know more about what was happening and those who merely sneered (vv. 12-13).
4. Peter gave an evangelistic address that thoroughly recounted the history of Israel and God's grafting on of the Gentiles into the covenant promises (vv. 14-36).
5. The result of his address was conviction and a desire for change (v. 37).
6. Peter gave further instruction about first steps of repentance and baptism, urged those who were interested to receive God's promises and gifts, including forgiveness and the Holy Spirit, and added other "arguments and exhortations" so that the people could be saved from "this corrupt generation" in which they lived (vv. 38-40).
7. Three thousand responded to his invitation and were added to the Christian community through their baptism (v. 41).
8. The new believers, along with the more mature, became deeply devoted

- in all the aspects of Churchbeing (vv. 42-47). The Greek phrase translated "devoted themselves" accentuates that they *continually* were devoted to these seven things: careful instruction in the Scriptures, committed and caring community life, participation in the Lord's Supper, persevering and communal prayer, the experience of signs and wonders, selling their possessions and sharing the proceeds with any who had need, and regular worship in the temple and in their homes.
9. The result was that God was glorified, they experienced great gladness, and they were formed to be generous (vv. 46-47a).
 10. Because the believers became such Churchbeing people, they had favor with all the people. The result in the world was that their neighbors who observed them and how they lived were also, by the Lord's grace, added to the community (vv. 47b-c).

In a culture just as pagan and anti-Christian as ours (both Romans/Greeks and Jews were opposed to this new "Jesus movement"), the early Christians did not try to figure out how to attract their neighbors. They did not try to control the process. Instead, they simply practiced Churchbeing, so that the Lord could do his work of adding new believers.

The more I study this text, the more I am convinced that the reason churches ultimately lose members is that our community life does not offer enough warrant for belief. I worry about congregations that focus on having "exciting" worship services because this merely fosters our society's self-gratification and does not welcome believers into the disciplines of the alternative lifestyle of Churchbeing. We might attract lots of consumers if our worship services are merely entertaining, but, unless we continually increase the emotional hype, we cannot expect consumers not to turn away to other diversions when the difficulties of being a Christian surface — or else we merely continue contributing to their shallowness.

Evangelism is not the task of the corporate worship service, but it is not the sole task of individual believers either. It is the result of our community life, of the evidence given by our thorough Churchbeing that life in relationship with God and with each other is much more grace-filled and fulfilling and true than any other possibility.

As George Lindbeck insightfully notes, pagan converts in the first centuries of the Church did not first understand the faith and then decide to become Christian converts; rather, they first decided and then came to understand (see Chapter 20 concerning the Church's catechumenal processes). Lindbeck comments, "More precisely, they were first attracted by the Christian community and form of life." In contrast, today "the churches primarily

accommodate to the prevailing culture rather than shape it."¹⁰ The confusion of evangelism and worship this chapter criticizes is ultimately dangerous to the kind of Churchbeing that will truly benefit our neighbors.

An Example of an Evangelistic Event

Though I work diligently to erase the prevailing confusion of evangelism and worship that has led many congregations to reduce worship to whatever is appealing, I am not opposed to evangelistic events — provided there is excellent follow-up with personal incarnations of the gospel. One good example of the kind of event that can serve Churchbeing well is presently being offered by the Mennonite congregation to which I belonged during the years that I was working on my doctorate in South Bend. Periodically this church sponsors an eight-week series of evening events called "Soup for the Soul." These evenings begin with a light supper of soup, bread, and fruit. After the meal there is a short devotional, fellowship and sharing, and particular activities for adults and children. These programs not only give time for informal fellowship, among the members of the congregation, but also provide the opportunity to invite friends, neighbors, and co-workers who might enter into the congregational life in this informal way before participating in the more formal Sunday morning worship context. Furthermore, the "main event" of the evening gives the Mennonite members and their visitors the opportunity to consider how their faith connects with their work, their travel, their interests and hobbies, and so forth.

Other possibilities for sharing the life of the congregation with the watching world include small groups, elder groups, prayer meetings, Bible study gatherings, and other such neighborhood or office events. But the most important entry point into the congregation is *you*. How can we equip congregation members to understand that the biblical picture of church growth is through the Spirit-empowered and grace-filled witness of believing saints?

Hospitality for Those Interested

When churches offer a course for new members, we usually give classes on our congregation's vision and plans for the future, on the history and theol-

10. George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), p. 132.

ogy of our denomination, on our church's structure and ties to the larger Church, on our congregation's purpose and belief statements, on our parish's history and present outreach and ministry, on stewardship in all of life, on the requirements and possibilities of membership — but I rarely see on the outlines of such courses a specific session devoted to the meaning and practice of worship. We have failed for years to teach people what worship is all about.

Let's begin with our children — teaching them the gestures of worship in our homes,¹¹ in our worship services,¹² and in our congregation's educational opportunities by means of such programs as "Logos"¹³ and "Children in Worship."¹⁴ Meanwhile, we can use Sunday morning adult forums, explained-liturgy services, evening classes, and new member mentoring to help their parents learn the purposes and practices of worship.¹⁵

Worshiping is indeed a trained skill, especially in a culture that is consumer oriented. To move people away from the worship of themselves and various idolatries pervading our society requires a deliberate educative practice. What a gift it would be to our neighbors if every person in our congregations were skilled in the gestures of worship and prepared to be hospitable to strangers who might join us in exercising them! In my twenty years of being a

11. See especially chapter 5, "The Heart of God Revealed in Worship," in Dawn, *Is It a Lost Cause?*, pp. 64-88.

12. For example, see Chapter 22 of this book and the appendix of Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), for ideas concerning children's sermons and worship.

13. "Logos" is a midweek school program involving worship skills along with Bible teaching, games and sports, and common meals. For information contact the Logos System Associates, 1405 Frey Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

14. "Children in Worship" is a Sunday morning "children's church" program for children up to fourth grade that actually engages them in worship practices and in learning about the Church year. For information contact Professor Sonja Stewart, Western Theological Seminary, 86 E. 12th St., Holland, MI 49423, telephone (616) 392-8555. See also *Young Children and Worship* by Sonja M. Stewart and Jerome W. Berryman (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989).

15. Several congregations have reported to me that they are using *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down* for classes concerning worship. Audio cassettes of several of my lectures on worship (for lay people and for clergy) and explained-liturgy worship services are available from Dottie Davis, tape ministry coordinator, Christians Equipped for Ministry, 10918 NE 152nd Ave., Vancouver, WA 98682, telephone (360) 892-3618. These tapes don't have to be purchased; they can be simply borrowed and returned. Videotapes of my course on "Worship for Postmodern Times" will be available from the Regent College bookstore (1-800-663-8664) in Vancouver, B.C., after the summer session, 1999.

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worship guest more than half the weeks each year when I'm on the road for speaking engagements; *only once* has the person sitting next to me leaned over and said, "Let me show you how our worship goes so that you can participate." This elderly gentleman in New Orleans now always sits next to me in my mind and reminds me to make sure that those around me are enabled in every imaginable way to participate as fully as possible.

Part of our congregation's training for Churchbeing must be to nurture in all the members a spirit of hospitality. May the infinitely welcoming triune God teach us all to embrace our neighbors with the fullness of his love through our care and witness. Then, if they are drawn to worship the Trinity, may we each greet them warmly with graceful assistance and gentle mentoring and kindred ardor for all the ways in which God will teach us about himself through our corporate praise.