



A Brief History of Christian Worship

By James F White

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Most histories of Christian worship are written as if nothing significant in liturgical history ever happened in North America, as if cultural diversities were insignificant in the development of worship, and as if most of what mattered were words the priest or minister addressed to God. This book is a revisionist work, attempting to give new direction to liturgical history by treating the experience of worship of the people in the pews as the primary liturgical document. It means liturgical history written facing the other way--that is, looking into the chancel rather than out of it. Relishing the liturgical diversity of recent centuries as firm evidence of Christianity's ability to adapt to a wide variety of peoples and places, Professor White shows that this tendency has been apparent in Christian worship since its inception in the New Testament churches. Instead of imposing one tradition's criteria on worship, he tries to give a balanced and comprehensive approach to the development of the dozen or more traditions surviving in the modern world.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

James F. White holds the Bard Thompson Chair of Liturgical Studies at Drew University. He previously taught at the Perkins School of Theology for twenty-two years and was professor of liturgy at the University of Notre Dame until 1999. He has served as president of the North American Academy of Liturgy and received its Berakah Award. He also chaired the editorial committee of the Section on Worship of the Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church. Dr. White holds an A.B. from Harvard, a B.D. from Union Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. from Duke University.

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