

## Worship Which Sustains Us

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Several years ago Michael Kinnamon shared this experience in one of his books:

[In 1987] my family and I were in India where I taught for the summer semester at the United Theological College in the city of Bangalore. During our four months in that city, we attended St. Mark's, a congregation of the Church of South India....St. Mark's celebrates holy Communion every Sunday, but it does so in a rather time consuming, some would say tedious, way. Everyone lines up in the central aisle and comes forward, perhaps ten at a time, to a railing around the table; and since the church is large, the line can take a half hour. After a few times there, we couldn't help but notice that lots of people simply leave after the sermon. "Why do they leave?" we asked a friend at the church. "Oh," he said, "those are probably former Methodists or Presbyterians. They don't take communion every week. And besides, it takes so long!" Then he turned the question around: "Why," he asked, "do you stay?" But before we could answer, he said, "Oh, yes, you are Disciples. You are the people obsessed with eating the bread."<sup>1</sup>

Being obsessed with bread is a fair "accusation" for Disciples of Christ. When our fellow Christians think about Disciples we can be pleased if they name us as a people "obsessed with bread." It is both a description of our practice and a prescription for our life of faith. We are a people who meet weekly to "eat the bread." But we are also a people who are continually stretching toward a deeper and deeper understanding of what it means to embody the faith nurtured by that eating.

The identity of faith people is fundamentally shaped by their worship. The ancient Latin expression, *lex orandi, lex credendi* ("the law of praying [is] the law of believing")<sup>2</sup> names the identity formation

character of worship well. Our praying, our worship shapes our believing. Sociologically we are shaped by what or who we worship. Theologically, we are shaped through our act of worshipping God, Creator and Redeemer of us all.

Through the last 50 years there has been much written about how we as Disciples experience and practice worship. This article is not intended to summarize or even review those who have offered very perceptive and articulate reflections on our life of worship. Rather, this reflection will offer some perceptions about where we find ourselves today in our experience and practice of worship. In light of our defining identity as Disciples and our past practices what is happening in our contemporary life of worship?

#### *Values Shaping Disciples Worship*

The worship of Disciples over the generations and today is basically characterized by four primary values: liturgical freedom and flexibility; unpretentiousness<sup>3</sup>; reasonableness; and democratic leadership (leadership given by both lay and ordained). These values are grounded in our origins and are sustained through their shaping influence upon the particular worshipers of particular generations down to today.

The liturgical freedom and flexibility of Disciples worship is a treasured experience among Disciples. We have no authorized order of worship; no prayer book; no required service books. William Blakemore notes that this value emerged in our frontier origins where our Presbyterian ancestors modified their worship to fit their context. For "as [they] moved out onto the frontier they could carry with them only as much cultural heritage as could be contained in a very few books and in their own heads. Often the Bible was the *only* book available to the frontier family. Prayer books were scarce. On the frontier more than elsewhere [people] were dependent upon the Bible. They were also more dependent upon themselves for the wording of prayers by which to express their devotion and needs, and for the words by which to express their understanding of the meanings of Scripture."<sup>4</sup> Our heritage of this cultural context of the frontier and the adaptation to it also includes Alexander Campbell's belief that, beyond the naming of certain elements in worship, the New Testament did not give any specific order for worship. Given such absence each congregation was to order its worship as it wished.<sup>5</sup> Thus, to this day Disciples have no *prescribed* printed liturgies.

This value of liturgical freedom and flexibility is the ground of much liturgical “experimentation” in current Disciple life. The primary form of this “experimentation” is the phenomenon of more and more Disciples churches moving toward offering two distinct worship services, traditional and contemporary (variously named). The contemporary (or praise) service in many Disciples churches includes bands, praise choruses, informal dress, media clips, briefer “sermons,” and sometimes communion by intinction. For some Disciples churches the historic time of traditional worship (11:00 hour) has now moved to an earlier time and the contemporary service is offered at the 11:00 hour. This occurs for various reasons. In some churches the contemporary service has a larger attendance and so the later time fits the needs of the majority of worshipers. In other churches the later time is offered for the convenience of the cohort of worshipers and their life styles (young adults, families with children, etc.).

Our historic value and practice of liturgical freedom and flexibility has a dual edge. It can serve us well as we attempt to witness to our faith in the particular language and communication modes of the context in which we find ourselves. It provides the looseness with which to allow the Spirit of God to move in new ways in our worship; novelty often brings freshness and openness to our journey of faith. However, liturgical freedom and flexibility can also leave us open to the seduction of cultural idolatry. While we do need to be contextual, we must continually struggle to discern whether our cultural adaptation in our worship is turning us to cultural values in place of gospel values. In our contemporary culture the drive for religious experience which is embedded in some of our liturgical experimentation can degenerate into a “truth for me” experience. The focus upon “my” experience can easily keep me (us) from worshipping the God who comes to us, more often than not, from beyond us with a word of challenge and critique. Thus, the challenge that faces us as we live out our historic value of liturgical freedom and flexibility is the challenge of balance attained through continual critical self reflection upon our worship practices.

A second value characterizing Disciples worship is its unpretentious nature. Historically, the Disciples emphasis upon New Testament worship as the model of worship has shaped our worship through fairly basic forms. For the early Disciples worship was constituted by the basic forms named in Acts 2:42: teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer.<sup>6</sup> These basic forms remain the core of Disciples worship. Various mediums are used for

“teaching”: scripture, sermon, hymns, litanies. Various orders of worship are used for the practices which flesh out the forms. But primarily Disciples have been hesitant to layer worship with ritualistic elements which hide these basic bones. In tension with high liturgical churches, the Restoration principle inserts into Disciple ethos a value for the unadorned worship of meeting for teaching, breaking of bread and prayers.

With that said, much of contemporary Disciple worship has modified this simplicity of basic form. Borrowing from our brothers and sisters in higher liturgical churches, most Disciple churches now use processions, acolytes, clergy robes and stoles, paraments in liturgical seasonal colors. Symbolic liturgical gestures of the lighting of candles, lighting of the Christ candle, processing in the communion elements, symbolic chalice and paten on the Table, the lifting of the bread to be broken, processing out the light of Christ, and veiling the cross on Maundy Thursday are becoming more familiar in Disciples worship. These practices augment the four basic forms of worship. For some, they deepen the expression and experience of our worship; for others, they cloud the basic simplicity of unadorned worship of God.

A third value of Disciples worship is reasonableness. This value is placed in its historic context of the influence of John Locke upon Disciples by William Blakemore.

[Locke's] influence on Disciple worship was to contribute a mood, a reasonable and sensible attitude, which has protected the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) from extremes. This sedate but not inflexible attitude has meant that pietism did not become a dominant motif in Disciples worship. For the same reason, despite the tremendous pressures to succumb to revivalism, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) did not give way to this form of enthusiasm as normative for Christian worship. Furthermore, while Disciples have insisted on orderly worship, they have resisted the moods, manners and pretensions of formalism. At the same time, the members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are today recognizing the claim of the “liturgical renaissance” that there is a “shape of the liturgy.”<sup>7</sup>

Disciples have always experienced their faith as inclusive of their mind. Their worship has been shaped by that experience. The hymns, prayers, sermons through which worship occurs have been “mind-full.”

This value presents a challenge in our contemporary culture. Ours is a culture in which experience is often understood as analogous to a “high.” The stimulation of a media saturated world creates a desire for more and more sensation. The worst thing that can be said about an experience is that it was boring. Reasonableness does not connect to a psyche that is shaped by this desire for a religious “high.” As noted previously, many Disciple churches are attempting to modify their worship to meet the need for experiences less shaped by reasonableness and more by emotional involvement. In several contemporary worship services, praise choruses have taken the place of hymns. These choruses are constituted by repetitive simple assertions which engage people’s emotions and avoid ideas which invite thinking about God. The Disciples historic value of reasonableness is certainly being tested in our present culture.

The value of reasonableness, however, does not need to be seen as an exclusive value. Disciples have the possibility of experiencing ourselves as whole people, created by God with both a mind and a heart. Many Disciples churches are working to modify their worship to intentionally engage both the mind and the emotions as we praise God and listen to God’s Word for us. Some of the inclusion of symbolic gestures mentioned previously is a move beyond the mind. Communication through bodily enactment offers expressions of meanings which cannot be reduced to words. Just as dance is grounded in emotions, so symbolic liturgical action is an embodied expression clothed in feelings. Banners, sculpture, stained glass windows, liturgical dance, all which were not typical of Disciple churches 50 years ago, are quite typical today and are signals that Disciples churches are seeking a balance of mind and heart in their worship life.

A fourth value which has shaped Disciples worship is our deeply engrained democratic ecclesiology. This value shapes our worship. From our beginning worship did not depend upon having an ordained minister to lead us. Leadership in worship has always been given by both lay and ordained. From the prayers which are offered to even the sermon (“teaching”) which is given, as well as the institution of the Lord’s supper, worship leadership can be given by any participant by virtue of being a follower of Jesus. In a sense, then, Disciples worship at its heart is not “professionally” dependent. This

gives a certain character to Disciples worship which is a deep value. (In our contemporary context this value is being slowly nipped at. This dynamic will be addressed subsequently.)

### *Centrality of the Lord's Supper*

We are certainly a people “obsessed with bread.” In Disciples worship the Lord’s Supper is central. Alexander Campbell asserted that the action of God in the Lord’s Supper “inscribes the image of God upon every Christian’s heart.”<sup>8</sup>

In a series of articles in *The Christian Baptist* in 1825, Campbell presented a carefully argued case for weekly communion based on the interpretation of scripture and the practice of the early church.... Beyond a legalistic following of the apostolic pattern in having weekly communion, Campbell and early Disciples saw the Lord’s Supper as the central, even essential, element of Christian worship. Campbell argued, “that the nature and design of the breaking of bread are such as to make it an essential part of Christian worship” and Paul taught that the “design or the primary object of the church to assemble in one place was to observe the Supper.”<sup>9</sup>

For the early Disciples this apostolic pattern of meeting for the Supper every week was the definitive characteristic of worship.

While various meanings reside in the act of partaking of the Lord’s Supper, three have been historically fundamental to Disciples identity.

Ordinance. One, Disciples have historically understood this act as an ordinance. “Ordinance” for Campbell “referred to ‘commemorative’ or ‘monumental’ institutions which were appointed – ordained – by God to be perpetual declarations of God’s saving action in Jesus Christ on behalf of sinful creatures. Each ordinance served to convey ‘a special grace peculiar to itself; so that no one can be substituted for another, or neglected, without the lack, or loss, of the blessing in the Divine will and grace connected with it.’”<sup>10</sup> Campbell and the early Disciples avoided using the word or concept of “sacrament” because it conveyed the idea of being “mysterious” and therefore “is to be handled only by the clergy.”<sup>11</sup>

In our contemporary worship life the word and concept of sacrament is becoming more and more common. Our involvement within the ecumenical dialogue has opened up ways for Disciples to understand sacrament in its definitive meaning, as an outward and visible sign of an inward grace. While we are learning to speak of both the Lord's Supper and baptism as our sacraments, there is still present among us a resistance to embracing the underlying metaphysical understanding of mystery which restricts the "handling" of the sacraments to clergy only. The understanding of sacrament within Disciples worship still retains much of the concept of ordinance. Sacrament is a sign of God's saving action through Jesus Christ. Its nature is commemorative.

With that said, as Disciples use the term "sacrament" with more frequency, it is important for us to be mindful of what it means to name the Lord's Supper and baptism as "sacraments." Is our use of "sacrament" synonymous with its meaning in Catholic and some Reformed traditions where its nature requires the clerical apostolic succession authority for it to be experienced as a sacrament? Without much church wide discussion we seem to be living into a more and more clerical sacramental posture. The increasing commonality of two practices signal a growing shift in that direction: the practice of ordaining ministers to "Word and Sacrament" and the practice of the ordained minister doing the Words of Institution in the communion liturgy. These two practices are intertwined. The more we ordain ministers to "Word and Sacrament," the more we will find that it is the ordained minister who is offering the Words of Institution. And the more it is the ordained minister who gives the Words of Institution in Disciples worship, the more we will live ourselves into a belief that the Lord's Supper needs an ordained person to make it valid. This is the position Alexander Campbell was trying to avoid in his advocacy for the concept of ordinance.

*Act of Remembrance.* A second meaning of the Lord's Supper which is fundamental for Disciples is its nature as an act of remembrance. The words of Jesus, "Do this in remembrance of me" (I Corinthians 11:24) is understood by many Disciples to be the purpose of communion. Indeed, the words are carved into the front of many Disciples communion tables.<sup>12</sup> Essentially this understanding of the Lord's Supper is grounded in the Reform tradition as it finds its tension with the metaphysical concept that at a certain moment in the liturgy a transformation takes place. For those who claim the Reformed heritage, the elements do not become the real presence of Christ in the

sense of bread and wine becoming the body and blood of Christ. For Disciples, because the values received at the Table are spiritual and not metaphysical, no “special consecration is necessary for the person who is to handle the bread and cup. The celebrants need no special power.”<sup>13</sup> Remembering the life, death and resurrection of Jesus through the symbolic elements of bread and cup only requires the breaking of bread and words of the story, the story of the Last Supper. Here in this act of breaking bread, Christ becomes spiritually present by virtue of memory. As William Blakemore notes: “the role of remembrance is not that it brings the Lord into our presence, but that remembrance opens our eyes to him into whose presence we have already been brought by faith. Remembrance completes in us the work begun by faith.”<sup>14</sup>

*Open Table.* A third understanding of the Lord’s Supper which is embedded in Disciples identity is the concept of the open Table. Given Disciples’ birth out of an experience of the gated Table, Disciples hold deeply the importance of an open Table. The Table is not a test of fellowship. Indeed, since the Table belongs not to us but to the Lord, his invitation to all to come and eat is nearly universally adhered to by Disciples. No one has to hold any particular understanding of the Lord’s Supper nor affirm any specific doctrine nor to even live in any certain way in order to come to this Table. The recognition of all of us as sinners levels the field when we join with each other in this meal hosted by the Lord.

Several practices of Disciples worship in contemporary life continue these fundamental meanings of the Lord’s Supper. Yet, several practices do modify the traditional way in which the Lord’s Supper has been experienced by Disciples. One practice exemplifying modification is the placement of the Lord’s Supper within the liturgy. Early Disciple churches of Campbell, Walter Scott, and others followed the pattern of the early church in placing the Lord’s Supper after the “teaching” (scripture and sermon). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century “churches began to emphasize preaching over sacrament and made the sermon the culmination of the worship service.”<sup>15</sup> In our contemporary context many Disciple churches have returned to the pattern of the early church and the early Disciples church of sermon - communion. This placement of the Lord’s Supper as the climax of the worship service restores the Lord’s Supper to the essential role it has in worship.

Another evolving Disciple contemporary practice in the liturgical ritual of the Lord’s Supper is in the leadership at the Lord’s Table. As noted previously it is more and more common now for the

minister to offer the Words of Institution. In this modification of Disciples historic practice the issue at stake is a question of who presides at the Lord's Table. Historically, lay persons have presided at the Table. To this day there are still many Disciple churches where the ordained minister sits as one of the congregation as elders and deacons stand at the Table. However, this practice is slowly changing in fundamental ways. In more and more Disciple churches the presider is becoming the ordained minister. The visible symbol of the minister standing in the center flanked by two elders on each side as she or he "presides" is undercutting the fundamental concept of non-ordained persons presiding at the Lord's Table. The issue here is not the presence of elders or the non-ordained offering leadership at the Table. That practice is still solid in Disciple life. The issue is the belief we embody in our practice and the perception our practice teaches. The elder is too often experienced here as a helper for the minister. The minister offers a theological statement about what the Table means and "institutes the Table act"; the elder offers a prayer and distributes the elements to the deacons. The perception of who is "presiding" shifts from elder to minister.

Several Disciples churches have moved to this practice of including the minister at the Table for good reason. The sharing of leadership between elders and ordained minister at the Table pictures a dynamic understanding of church leadership. The church depends upon the leadership of both lay and ordained. However, given Disciples strong value of democratic life, we need seriously to consider how we can practice a deeper equality of Table leadership. For instance, the church in which I participate, Crestwood Christian Church in Lexington, draws upon both clergy and lay Table leadership. The Table liturgy begins with a theological statement given by an ordained minister. He or she then sits down. The elders then come to the Table and give the Words of Institution and a prayer. Or consider another example of balanced clergy-lay Table leadership. At the Disciples church in Georgetown, Kentucky, the elders and ordained minister all three come to the Table. The responsibilities of leadership (the prayers and the Words of Institution) are alternately given by the three persons. On one Sunday one of the elders gives the Words of Institution and the other elder and the minister offer prayers. The next Sunday the minister gives the Words of Institution and the two elders offer prayers. The third Sunday the second elder gives the Words of Institution and the minister and elder offer the prayers. In this practice the leadership offered by lay elders and ordained minister are truly shared.

Another modification of the liturgical acts of the Lord's Supper in some contemporary Disciples practice is the incorporation of symbolic action and images. In 1987 Frank Burch Brown reflected upon the typical style in which Disciples experienced the Lord's Supper liturgy.

[Let us] look honestly at what happens during communion. Consider the relatively perfunctory character of most of our communion prayers, the efficiency and speed with which we like to see the bread and wine distributed, the scarcity of ritual gestures, especially in the absence of any loaf to break or any vessel from which to pour. Consider how very little tactile and substantive quality there is to the mass-produced bits of cracker or bread so popular now. One can hardly imagine their ever having been part of one loaf, though we are asked to see them as symbolic of the one body of Christ broken for us. Consider, too, how the dominant visible sign on the table itself is seldom the bread or the wine (or juice) but a shining, metallic container that, layer by layer, will break down into the trays holding the bread and tiny cups of liquid. The elements of the Supper emerge not from anything associated with the fruit of God's earth or with human flesh but from a cool and impassive object. Think, finally, of the utterly passive role usually played by most of the congregation. Although these believers are all declared to be priests before God, here they frequently play the part of inactive recipients, neither speaking, standing, nor kneeling. As they partake, they sit facing forward, row on row unable to see their co-communicants or to respond directly to those who hand them the food that supposedly celebrates their oneness in the Lord. And the food itself? There is precious little to taste or see. "Take, eat" seems more like "Take, nibble...." No wonder God, whose signs of bounteous grace these elements are and whose sacrificial love they represent, can seem at such a time more absent than

present, more merely remembered than fully recognized.<sup>16</sup>

This description pictures the style in which most Disciples observed the Lord's Supper twenty years ago. Some of it still accurately describes today's experience in many Disciples churches. However, many Disciples churches have taken specific steps to change several parts of this picture. In many Disciple churches today a chalice and paten are on the communion Table; many Tables have a pitcher and one whole loaf of bread.<sup>17</sup> In many Disciples churches the communion liturgies include the symbolic act of the Fraction. As the Words of Institution are given a loaf of bread is held up and broken; the juice is poured from a pitcher into the chalice.<sup>18</sup> Seeing the loaf broken and hearing the juice flowing into the chalice engages worshippers with their eyes and ears. As an embodied ritual act this symbolic action reaches deeper into our ways of apprehending meaning than just hearing the Words of Institution. These visible symbols and symbolic gestures signal a move toward visual images which historically Disciples have been hesitate to use given the tension with Catholic use of icons and other images. However, we are living in a visual culture and visual images in our sanctuaries and embodied symbolic actions are needed for today's worshippers who find meaning in visual and embodied communication.

### *Baptism*

Alexander Campbell understood baptism as an "embodiment of the gospel" which expresses God's acceptance of us through the forgiveness of our sins.<sup>19</sup> As Clark Williamson has said, baptism "is a sign of God's grace toward us and a way of our saying 'yes!' to that grace."<sup>20</sup> From the beginning Disciples have held that immersion was the form by which we would practice baptism. Immersion was the form given in the New Testament and thus it is the form in which Disciples experience the deepest meaning. The early church practice of believer's baptism has also been from our beginning in the Restoration movement the normative practice for Disciples.

In contemporary practice these beliefs are still very prevalent. For many years Disciples churches practiced closed membership, which meant that immersion was considered to be so important that all Disciples needed to be immersed. While there are today still some Disciples churches which continue to practice closed membership, most

Disciples churches have become open membership churches. Our presence in the ecumenical conversation has helped us see that other forms of baptism can well “be a sign of God’s grace toward us and a way of our saying ‘yes!’ to that grace.” In the move toward open membership, most Disciples churches, however, still continue to baptize only by immersion. Open membership is rejection of the “re-baptism” required by closed membership, not a rejection of immersion as our normative practice. Disciples bring to the ecumenical dialogue a witness for the power of immersion as a baptismal form which theologically embodies and most vividly expresses the experience of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

While Disciples churches continue to practice believer’s baptism, the cultural context in which we live is testing our commitment to that practice. In the fluidity of denominational loyalty, Disciples churches are receiving (through open membership) many people who have been christened as infants. Some of these people are parents who seek baptism for their infants. And some of these people are children who have been christened, and therefore are already baptized. What does this reality in which we live, as well as our theological acceptance of the validity of infant baptism, say to our understandings and practice of believer’s baptism?<sup>21</sup>

One of the theologically grounded practices which is presenting itself as a dilemma in our contemporary culture is communing at the Table as a post baptism event. This practice is theologically grounded in the linkage between baptism and communion. Our cultural dilemma comes when we experience more and more children among us who were baptized as infants and come to the Table to partake. This act highlights the exclusion of non-baptized children. One of the current problems Disciples are now facing in the dialogue about communing non-baptized children is that the discussion is primarily taking place without considering our theology of baptism. The discourse revolves around the theology of a welcoming Table for all and around the psychological and sociological dynamics of exclusion. But little is being discussed about what baptism means and how our understanding of God’s activity in baptism links to the Table. Rather, it seems that by leaving the theology of baptism out of the conversation we can decide on whether to commune non-baptized children on the basis of only what the Table means. This is often the case when the decision to commune non-baptized children is left up to the parents, a situation which is happening in many Disciple churches. It is questionable whether parents reflect upon the meaning of baptism

when they decide to allow their children to partake of the Lord's Supper. As a church we need to reflect upon our understanding of baptism as it relates to the Lord's Supper.

*Conclusion*

Worship is the heartbeat of the life of faith. For Disciples, as a people "obsessed with bread," it is in and through worship that we find our sustenance for living life as faith people. However, as true of all Reformed traditions, Disciples reject the idea that worship is an act which saves us. Worship is not a work which we do to win God's favor. Rather it is a response we offer to God in light of God's grace given us day by day. In his reflection upon communion William Blakemore asserted that communion is not about "doing good works [so that] we might become fit for heaven...." Rather "communion is ...participation in heavenly and divine things that by its bestowal of grace makes us a little more fit for earth."<sup>22</sup> Thus it is that worship is not about making us fit for heaven. The by-product of our worship of God is the feeding of our souls. And so, as we conclude our worship each week we leave with the sustenance we need for another week of witness and service in the world. Indeed, worship makes us a little more fit for earth.

End Notes

<sup>1</sup>Michael Kinnamon, "A People Obsessed with Bread" (Lexington: *Lexington Theological Quarterly*, 1993), 7.

<sup>2</sup>Frank Burch Brown, "Style and Substance in Christian Worship," in *Interpreting Disciples: Practical Theology in the Disciples of Christ*, ed. L. Dale Richesin and Larry D. Bouchard (Ft. Worth: Texas Christian University, 1987), 62.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, 59. Brown names liturgical freedom and flexibility and ritual which is unpretentious as characteristic of Disciples.

<sup>4</sup>William Barnett Blakemore, "Worship Among Disciples," in *The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): An Interpretative Examination in the Cultural Context*, ed. George G. Beazley, Jr. (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1973), 117.

<sup>5</sup>Rick Harrison, "Early Disciples Sacramental Theology: Catholic, Reformed and Free," in *Classic Themes of Disciples Theology*, ed. Kenneth Lawrence (Ft. Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1986), 84.

<sup>6</sup>William B. Blakemore, "Worship and the Lord's Supper," in *The Revival of the Churches: The Panel of Scholars Reports*, Vol. III, ed. William B. Blakemore (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1963), 233. Blakemore notes that "fellowship" was interpreted as *koinonia* which in Paul's time included offering.

<sup>7</sup>Blakemore, "Worship Among Disciples," 119-120.

<sup>8</sup>Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist* (August 1, 1825): 175, cited in Mark Toulouse, *Joined in Discipleship: The Shaping of Contemporary Disciples Identity* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1997), 151.

<sup>9</sup>Harrison, 56.

<sup>10</sup>"A Word to the Church on the Lord's Supper (1991): A Report of the Committee on Theology," in *The Church for Disciples of Christ: Seeking to be Truly Church Today*, ed. Paul A. Crow, Jr. and James O. Duke (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1998), 141. Citations from Alexander Campbell are from *Millennial Harbinger* (December 1855), 678.

<sup>11</sup>Howard Short, *Doctrine and Thought of the Disciples of Christ* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1951), 33.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>14</sup>Blakemore, "Worship and the Lord's Supper," 247. For an excellent analysis of Campbell and Stone's understanding of the spiritual nature of the values in the Lord's Supper and the theological understanding of "remembering," see Rick Harrison, "Early Disciples Sacramental Theology," 72-81.

<sup>15</sup>Toulouse, 158. See also *Thankful Praise: A Resource for Christian Worship*, ed. Keith Watkins (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1987), 16. Toulouse draws on the 1991 "Word to the Church on the Lord's Supper," *General Assembly Business Docket*, and asserts that the link between Word and the Lord's Supper is that "the Word prepare[s] the heart to be receptive to the meaning of the sacrament."

<sup>16</sup>Brown, 60-61.

<sup>17</sup>The practice of having one loaf recovers a belief of Barton Stone. He wrote: "In the Lord's Supper there should be but one loaf, to represent the Lord's body that suffered on the Cross — two or more loaves destroy the very idea of the ordinance, as not representing the one body of Christ suffering and dying." *Christian Messenger* (September 1828):261-262, cited in Toulouse, 156.

<sup>18</sup>“Both Campbell and Stone agreed that the loaf must be visibly broken during the Lord’s supper.” Toulouse, 157. As Campbell said, “If a loaf is put upon the table, cut or broken, ...the primary idea in the supper is not represented by the partakers. There is no representation of *the breaking of the body* of Jesus....There can be no exhibition of the breaking of the body of Jesus, if the loaf is broken before the disciples assemble around the Lord’s table.” *The Millennial Harbinger* (April 1834): 96, cited in Toulouse, 157.

<sup>19</sup>Toulouse, 142. For an excellent summary of the beliefs and practices of the founders regarding baptism see Toulouse, 139-144.

<sup>20</sup>Clark Williamson, *Baptism: Embodiment of the Gospel, The Nature of the Church: Study Series 4* (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, 1989), 37; cited in Toulouse, 142.

<sup>21</sup>For an excellent articulation on Disciples historic beliefs in dialogue with our contextual life, see “A Word to the Church on Baptism,” from The Disciples Commission on Theology. The report was affirmed at the 1987 General Assembly in Louisville. It can be found in Williamson’s *Baptism: Embodiment of the Gospel*, 46-60. See also Toulouse’s discussion on “Baptism Among Disciples Today” which draws on the report to reflect on issues of Disciples contemporary theology and practice of baptism, 144-148.

<sup>22</sup>Blakemore, “Worship and the Lord’s Supper,” 249.