

# **What is the Scriptural Practice for Selecting Soloists and Musicians for Our Special Services, Such as, Weddings, Funerals, Anniversaries, etc.?**

[Delivered at Spring Pastoral Conference of the Minnesota District at Red Wing, Minnesota,  
April 20-21, 1971]

*by Edward W. Lindemann*

When the Lord Jesus Christ encouraged His disciples then and now to pray “Our Father which art in heaven hallowed be “Thy name,” He was making His disciples aware of some very important spiritual gifts and responsibilities. First, they were to understand that through faith in Jesus Christ they were the children of God and as such they were the bearers of His name. As the children of God, the disciples of Christ are to realize that they may with all boldness and confidence bring their prayers and petitions directly to the throne of the almighty God in Jesus’ name, because the wall of sin which separated them from the heavenly Father has been broken down by the redemptive work of the incarnate Son of God; Jesus Christ has paid the ransom price for sin with His holy, precious blood and His innocent sufferings and death on Calvary’s cross.

But such gifts bring with them certain responsibilities. As the children of God, we, the disciples of Christ, have been made the bearers of His name. God’s name is not only every word by which we know Him, such as: Jehovah, Lord, God, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Jesus Christ, Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, etc, but God’s name is also every thing by which He has made Himself known unto us in His Word, for Jesus says, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (Jn. 1:18) and again “I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world” (Jn. 17:6). Moses was made aware of this most important fact when he received the law of the Lord on two tables of stone. For as he received those two tables of stone we read in Exodus 34:5 “And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.” Again after the Lord God had instituted the Aaronitic blessing He said, “And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.” (Numbers 6:27).

God’s name, His Word, is indeed holy all by itself. We can do nothing to make it holy or more holy or whatever. But, as Luther says, “we pray in this petition that God’s name be holy *among us*.” This is the delight of every Christian: to have God’s name holy among them. As the children of God, the bearers of the heavenly Father’s name, this is our sincere desire. And thus we ask, “How is this done?” And the answer comes to us in Luther’s words, founded solidly on the Scripture, which say: “When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God lead a holy life according to it.” We notice that the answer is two-fold: first, the Word of God, the revealed name of God, the Scripture, the Bible, must be taught in its truth and purity. It is for such pure and truthful teaching of the Word of God for which we have been contending, and for which we must continue to contend as long as the Lord give us breath. These last days are full of false prophets, misguided zealots, hypocrites and errorists of all kinds who are urged on by the devil himself; and the old evil Foe has ever had as his hellish desire to question the Word of God, to weaken the Christian confession, and thereby prevent God’s name from being holy among us.

But, as Luther appropriately and Scripturally points out in the first petition, it is simply not sufficient to make a good confession, to preach and teach God’s word in its truth and purity,

to contend for the truth, but, as the children of God, we must endeavor, by the Holy Ghost Who lives in us, to lead a holy life according to that pure word, to have and promote practices which are in full agreement with our Scriptural confession. Not to do so would, in the final analysis, put us in the same position as a number of the pharisees in New Testament times of whom Jesus Christ said, "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me."

Such true and vigorous practice of God's word by His children will indeed make them different. They may stand out like 'sore thumbs' in this pseudo-ecumenical society of ours. But such 'sore thumbs' have received the "Balm of Gilead" which makes them perfectly acceptable to the heavenly Father. Thus the Christian will not only preach the Word of God in its truth and purity but he will practice what he preaches. For he is "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) and as such he heeds the admonition of the Savior when He says: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. 5:16). That does not mean that the whole world or even every member of our Christian congregations is going to rejoice as the true confession of God's Word shines forth in Scriptural practice. Regardless of the reaction, however, the Christian also knows that he is "the salt of the earth" and "if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?"

With such an understanding of our position as the children of God in this wicked world, we proceed to the question immediately before us: "*What is the Scriptural practice in selecting soloists and musicians for our special services, such as: weddings, funerals, anniversaries, etc.*"

It is taken for granted that these "special services" referred to in our question are worship services. If they are not worship services, if they are not dedicated to the praise and honor of the Triune God, then they have no business in our churches. Our wedding services seek out, in particular, the blessing of the Triune God upon the betrothed, and, as such they are worship services. Our funeral services are held, in the main, to impart the comfort and solace of our gracious heavenly Father to the bereaved, and as such they are worship services. Our anniversary services are held to thank and praise the one true God for all the grace and mercy which He has bestowed upon the celebrants, and as such they are worship services. We repeat for emphasis: we look upon these "special services" as worship services in the fullest sense of the term!

Now concerning such worship services our Lord Jesus Christ has something to say. Speaking to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well He said: "the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (Jn. 4:23-24). Here is Scriptural instruction for Scriptural practice in any and all worship services, namely, true worshippers are to worship the Triune God in Spirit and in truth!

There are many so-called "worshippers," but not all worshippers are true or genuine worshippers. This Samaritan woman, her forefathers, her country-men were worshippers too, but Jesus told her: "Ye worship ye know not what" (Jn. 4:22a). The Samaritans worshipped at Gerizim, but no revelation was given to Gerizim; they didn't have the truth. Therefore, this woman and her fellow worshippers at Gerizim were not true or genuine worshippers.

The true worshipper has two most important ingredients which are an integral part of his worship, namely, spirit and truth. Both are necessary for a full understanding of true worship. It is not enough that genuine worshippers worship in a genuine way, or, as some have put it, to be sincere in their worship. Many put their hearts and souls into their worship and yet are only false, self-deceived worshippers! Jesus here describes what the genuine way is. It is spirit as opposed to the old ceremonial laws and the traditions of the elders; it is spirit as opposed to Jerusalem or

Gerizim in particular or any definite place in general; it is spirit which has been instilled by the Holy Spirit Himself, as St. Paul tells the Romans, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14); "The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16); "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit Itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

Now, of course, worship motivated by the Holy Spirit would naturally also be offered in truth. But so that there is no misunderstanding the Lord Jesus Christ says "in spirit and in truth." In truth! not simply truly, i.e., sincerely, but in truth! in God's revealed Truth! Jesus says: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (Jn. 14:6). The man born blind understood that it was only in such truth that a man was able to worship God; for he told the Pharisees, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (Jn. 9:31-33). This man then was cast out of the Synagogue, but Jesus found him and said unto him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is He, Lord, that I might believe on Him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped Him;" (Jn. 9:35-38). It is this truth, the truth of God's incarnate Word, revealed through the work of the Holy Spirit and worked by Him in the heart of each individual which makes a worshipper a true worshipper.

Both the "spirit" and the "truth" are necessary for true worship; they form a unit, one concept, without which it is impossible to worship the one, true God.

And is it not just such worship that the people of God in the Old Testament engaged in? Noah, who "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8), and of whom it is said that he "was a just man and perfect in his generation" (Gen. 6:9), and that he "walketh with God" (Gen. 6:9), built an altar and sacrificed thereon when he emerged from the ark. The worship of this man was a sweet-smelling savor in the nostrils of the Lord; (Gen. 8:20-21).

Was Abraham's worship, of who the Scripture saith, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," was his worship any less full of spirit and truth? Nor was that of his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob, who continued to build altars unto the Lord and to sacrifice thereon.

Does not the psalmist pray that his worship be full of such spirit and truth when he says: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer, (Ps. 19:14); and "I will declare Thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." (Ps. 22:22) And psalms 111:1 and 112:1, as well as many others, carry out the same thought when they say: "Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation;" "Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments."

Does not this same spirit and truth in worship reveal itself in the New Testament worshippers when, for instance, we are told: "And all that believed were together, ...continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people (Acts 2:44a, 46, 47a)? Paul also writes to the Ephesians "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to

the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:18b-20).

Truly, the true and genuine worshippers in both the Old and New Testaments worshipped the Triune God in spirit and in truth. And is it not our Christian desire as latter day members of the New Testament Church to also worship the Triune God in spirit and in truth? We want all of our worship services to redound to the praise and glory of God's holy name, to make melody in our hearts unto the Lord, to praise God with one accord, and to have our worship accepted by our Lord and Savior.

But whom shall we select to lead us in such worship services? In our regular Sunday and Festival worship services we select those whom we have trained, called, and installed for this particular purpose; we select those who profess to be one with us in doctrine and practice; even in an emergency we choose one from the congregation who shall lead us in worship in the place of our regularly called pastor. We call ministers of the Gospel who are responsible also to lead us in true worship. These called ministers may have any number of assistants with whom certain portions of the worship service may be entrusted, but of all of them the regularly called minister should be able to say with all verity and uprightness of conscience, "Let the words of *our* mouths, and the meditation of *our* hearts, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, *Our* Strength, and *our* Redeemer." (Ps. 19:14 in the plural). The called minister will select or will promote the selection of assistant leaders for the worship service, i.e.: organists, soloists, choir members, choir directors, trumpeters, brass band ensembles; in short, any one who is in some way directly responsible for the carrying out of this worship service, who are one with him and the congregation in doctrine and practice with a Spirit motivated desire to worship the Triune God in spirit and in truth.

Such practice applies whether it is a regular worship service or a special one. It is such practice that we find in the Scripture, For whom did King David select to assist him in leading the people in worship when he brought up the Ark of the Covenant from Obededom to Jerusalem? Did he select the best soloists and musicians from among the Philistines? Had someone heard of a beautiful singer among the Moabites who was then imported to sing praises unto the Lord? Not at all! We read in I Chronicles 15:16, 22, 28: "And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy. "And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was for song: He instructed about the song, because he was skillful. "Thus all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals making a noise with psalteries and with harps."

When King Solomon was faced with setting up a worship service for the dedication of the temple, whom did he select for singers and musicians to lead the congregation in praising God? Did he call up a relative from Sheba? Did he send for the trumpeters from Damascus? We read in II Chronicles 5:11-13a: "And it came to pass when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) "It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord." He too appointed the Levites, as did his father. Those whom the Lord had set aside as ministers before Him were wisely chosen to lead the congregation in worship. Was the Lord satisfied with such worship? We continue reading in II

Chronicles 5:13b-14: “then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.” Can we do better than to follow the practice set here by both King David and King Solomon, and which was accepted by the Lord God in such a magnificent way?

To whom shall we turn when selecting singers and musicians for special services? To our own people, of course! To those who are one with us in faith. To those who worship the Triune God in spirit and in truth! Especially to those within our own church body who have been trained and set aside for this very purpose!

In selecting soloists and musicians for our special services must we not also take into consideration the Scriptural principles of church fellowship? If these principles of church fellowship are to mean anything, must they not be put into practice? I personally find it most difficult to find any ‘loop-holes’ in the Scriptural principles of church fellowship which might allow me in good conscience to select a soloist or musician to lead me in worship or to be a co-leader or assistant in worship who is not one with me in confession and practice. For these Scriptural Church Fellowship Principles state in part A, 6 “We may classify these joint expressions of faith in various ways according to the particular realm of activity in which they occur, e.g., pulpit fellowship, altar fellowship, prayer fellowship, fellowship in worship, fellowship in church work, in missions, in Christian education, in Christian charity. Yet insofar as they are joint expressions of faith they are all essentially one and the same thing, and are all properly covered by a common designation, namely, church fellowship. Church fellowship should therefore be treated as a unit concept, covering every joint expression, manifestation, and demonstration of a common faith. Hence Scripture can give the general admonition “avoid them” when church fellowship is to cease, Rom. 16:17. Hence Scripture sees an expression of church fellowship also in giving the right hand of fellowship, Gal. 2:9, and in greeting one another with the fraternal kiss, Rom. 16:16; on the other hand, it points out that a withholding of church fellowship may also be indicated by not extending a fraternal welcome to errorists and by not bidding them Godspeed, II John 10, II. Cf. III John 5-8.”

In part B of the Principles of Church Fellowship the matter of exercising such church fellowship is taken up. We quote arabic 1 and 2 under part B: “In selecting specific individuals or groups for a joint expression of faith, we can do this only on the basis of their confession. It would be presumptuous on our part to attempt to recognize Christians on the basis of personal faith in their hearts. II Timothy 2:19; Rom. 10:10; I John 4:1-3; I Sam. 16:7.

“A Christian confession of faith is in principle always a confession to the entire Word of God. The denial, adulteration, or suppression of any word of God does not stem from faith but from unbelief. Jn. 8:31; I Peter 4:11, Jer. 23:28, 31; Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18, 19. We recognize and acknowledge as Christian brethren those who profess faith in Christ as their Savior and with this profession embrace and accept His entire Word. Compare Walther’s “Theses on Open Questions,” Thesis 7: “No man has the privilege, and to no man may the privilege be granted, to believe and to teach otherwise that God has revealed in His Word, no matter whether it pertains to primary or secondary fundamental articles of faith, to fundamental or non fundamental doctrines, to matters of faith or of practice, to historical items or other matters subject to the light of reason, to important or seemingly unimportant matters.”

We understand from these Scriptural Church Fellowship Principles that, if we desire to remain faithful to God and His Word, if we desire to have His name holy among us, we dare not join with those who are not one with us in confession and practice. That being true, how can we select such a one to lead us in worship? Would not the selection of such a soloist or musician not

in fellowship with us be a simple case of unionism? Indeed, it may appear to human ears that such a one has the ability to provide wonderful leadership for such a special worship service; it may appear that one not in confessional agreement and practice can do the job,—and do it well. But that is not the point at all!

Humanly speaking, there is nothing wrong with an ox and an ass pulling a plow together either. It is possible for such a team to do the job well. But the Lord God said to the Israelites: “Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together,” Deut. 22:10. The reason for this was that the ox was considered a clean animal, whereas the ass was unclean. The apostle Paul applies this to the Corinthians in his desire to have them rid themselves of errorists. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.” In commenting on this verse and the context our sainted Professor John P. Meyer in his book entitled “Ministers of Christ” says: “If believers and unbelievers are yoked together in some common venture, it will always be at the expense of the truth. If the unbeliever would accept the truth, he would cease to be an unbeliever. He may vary the shade of his error, but no matter whether it is an error of the deepest dye, or whether it shows only faintly, it remains an error, and error by its very nature is hostile to the truth.

“In speaking about unbelievers, Paul does not have in mind some weak brother. The minds of true believers may be tinged with deep and dangerous delusions, but since they are in all humility, prayerfully seeking the truth and are willing to be instructed by the Word of God, they are not unbelievers. The Corinthians knew what to do in the case of weak brethren; Paul had devoted several chapters in his first epistle to this problem. Here he has in mind unbelievers, men who take a firm stand on some error of theirs.

“Were they out-and-out unbelievers, men who rejected the Gospel in toto? Paul will deal with the disturbers of the peace in Corinth at length in the last main part of this epistle, chapters 10-13. Thus a more detailed investigation of their particular case must be deferred to some later time. One thing may be mentioned now. In comparing himself with them, Paul points out that they claim to be “ministers of Christ” (11:23). Yes, in their own estimation their work for Christ was superior to that of Paul. Ironically, Paul calls them superfine apostles (11:5). They pretended to preach the gospel in a more perfected form than Paul. But the warning which Paul addressed to his Galatian churches would apply in the present case also: they preached another Gospel which is not another. (Gal. 1:6,7). Paul does not question, their sincerity when they claim to preach Christ—they were deceivers who themselves had been deceived—nor does he question their general ability. He does not call them theological nincompoops, but because of the error with which they adulterated the pure Gospel, he calls them unbelievers in spite of the fact that they professed allegiance to Christ.

“We can well imagine how difficult it must have been for the Corinthians to swallow this bitter pill. There had come to them men who were devout, who devoted themselves to the cause of the Gospel, who would present the Gospel in an attractive, fascinating way. They themselves felt that they had been greatly enriched spiritually and edified by the warm and eloquent presentation of these excellent apostles. And now Paul bluntly calls them unbelievers, and warns his readers against cooperation with them not even making an exception for cooperation in externals. Of course, he is not speaking about business affairs, social, economic, or political projects. He is speaking about church work and things that have to do with church work, about which he had said in the previous section that, if offense is to be avoided, then, among other things, it must be done in a holy spirit, with the word of truth, with the implements of righteousness. Hence, any cooperation with adulterators of the Gospel of justification or with

violators of the Holy Spirit of the truth must be avoided. Not to do so would result in a mismatched yoke-fellowship with unbelievers.

“That Paul is here not ranting against persons, but in holy indignation is denouncing the treacherous errors which they espouse, is clear from his statement of the reasons with which he motivates his warning, vs. 14b-16a.”

Perhaps it is a bitter pill for us to swallow also, but to select those soloists and musicians not in fellowship with us to lead us in worship is not Scriptural practice but results in a mismatched yoke-fellowship with unbelievers even though the individuals themselves may be former members, trusted friends, close relatives, or people with a personal confession not much, if any, different from our own. The public confession, i.e., their church membership or affiliation, and their practice of what they say they believe are the determining factors in selecting soloists and musicians for special worship services.

But perhaps someone will contritely confess: Okay, soloists not in fellowship with us cannot be selected to lead us in worship. They are leading in a hymn of prayer or praise to God, and with such we cannot hope to join and still think our worship to be genuine, i.e., offered in spirit and in truth. But an organist or a trumpeter is a little different.”

Are the Scriptural principles which govern the selection of a musician leading in worship different from those of a soloist? They can be if an organist considers himself, a robot, or at best, some kind of hired hand who is simply told what keys to press. But is that what an organist considers himself, and is that what we, expect of our organists? In his column entitled “A Lantern To Our Footsteps” (Northwestern Lutheran, Nov. 24, 1968), Professor Schuetze wrote:

“If he, i.e., an organist, were told that his function is merely a mechanical, manual manipulating of certain keys and nothing more, he might justly complain that his role is completely misunderstood.

“The organist has every reason to say that his role is to assist the congregation in worship. We properly expect that he should choose appropriate music, so that his playing may edify. As much as possible, he is to fit the music, to the spiritual message it accompanies. Yes, we want him to play the organ to the honor and praise of God.

“But can an instrument whose sounds are not meaningful words, be used to praise God? Read psalm 150. This is the psalmist’s invitation: ‘Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise Him with the psaltery and the harp. Praise him with the timbrel and the dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise Him upon the loud cymbals: praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals;’ Vs3-5. Trumpet, lute, and harp, timbrel and cymbals, strings and pipe are all to be used in praising God. Certainly we can add: Praise God upon the organ, with its many voices that can whisper and shout, that can sooth and arouse, that can carry the congregation along as it sings hymns to God.

“Isn’t this what we really expect of an organist? Indeed, we want him to assist us in worship, to use the organ for edification and praise, The organist then is more than a hired hand; he is ministering to God’s people as they sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, as they make melody in their hearts to the Lord.

“If this is what we want our organist to do, if this is his role, then it should be evident that only he who can truly join us in meaningful worship of God should be asked to serve. We

will look for someone who shares our faith in Christ, who confesses His truth faithfully and fully. Unless he does that, the “avoid” of Scripture (Rom. 16:17) should be heeded.”

And doesn't the apostle Paul's question, “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle” also apply to this situation? Will we put a sign on the organist's or trumpeter's back stating “This is a robot” or “This fellow is not leading us in worship, he's simply pressing keys or blowing notes!” The point is: Will the confession be clear if the musician is not one with us in doctrine and practice?

To be sure, the practice of selecting soloists and musicians who are one with us in confession and practice for our special services may indeed provide some trying circumstances for us. We may be sorely pressed to accept someone who is not in fellowship with us. Ideally we will be consulted early enough so that time can be given to proper instruction in this matter. (In this connection we should take the opportunities provided in Young Peoples Organizations, Ladies Aids, and various other organizations in the congregation to expound the principles of worship). But no matter how difficult the situation might be, we ought to keep in mind the ideas expressed by Dr. Theo. Graebner who wrote over 50 years ago. Writing in the “Lutheran Witness” on “Two Types of Lutheranism” he said: “How shall we strengthen those American Lutherans let me say, also those merger Lutherans (for there are such)—who are aware of the ‘life-and-death struggle’ which is going on, and who come out openly on the side of the right? Surely, by maintaining in our own body an unbroken front against the incursion of the lodge-evil and of unionism. Let synodical officials perform their duty; but, above all, let us be awake to our responsibilities. Better a thousand times a Missouri Synod of only 10,000 souls, but faithful, than a body of a million, honey-combed with the lodge-spirit and infected with unionism—that lethal leprosy of the Church. Let us stand firm no matter what the losses in membership and outward influences our stand may entail; the Lord must look out for that, it is none of our business. A Missouri Synod growing lax in practice, refusing to see the stealthy influence at work, afraid to testify, afraid to bring offenders to book, afraid to lose a congregation here or there, which dispenses itself from obedience to the Word of God,—a Missouri Synod growing effete, smug, and spineless, boasting of numbers while it permits dry rot to destroy its inner life, would not only be the kind of Church which Christ shall spew out from His mouth, but would bring down others into ruin and prove a traitor to all Lutheranism. This is the plain lesson of the facts...”

Without detailed comment we simply say: “Too true, Dr. Graebner, too true! And may the Lord preserve us!”

At the same time may the Lord also preserve us from a spirit of legalism. Let us approach these special worship services and the selection of worship leaders from an evangelical point of view. Our purpose is not to hurt or offend, but we are interested in remaining faithful to the life-giving Word of God which has been entrusted to us poor earthen vessels. Therefore, we will instruct our people accordingly. We will also promote the Scriptural worship practice of congregational singing, which, not too long ago, was the practice among many of our congregations and still is the practice among many. And as such congregational singing is encouraged and carried out, the need for soloists will disappear.

Perhaps our need for organists will never disappear (although I have heard congregations do an admirable job accappella, and I have also used tape recorded organ music many times myself). Generally speaking, however, a congregation has its own regular organist or organists, and it would seem only right and proper that those who have been selected for regular worship services are also selected for special worship services (or at least that they first be contacted and



give their blessing to an alternate organist). Perhaps a congregational resolution to that effect will solve that problem also.

A suggested use for musical artists not in fellowship with us is to employ them during the reception, although this is hardly practical for a funeral service. But when these musical artists are asked to perform at the reception after the special worship service, the sting may be removed and all will have ample opportunity to applaud their efforts.

In conclusion, let us call to mind the fact that we poor sinners have been made the children of the heavenly Father through faith in Christ Jesus, and that we seek to worship Him in spirit and in truth in eager anticipation of joining the angels round about the Throne of God who were revealed to the beloved John as saying: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing," and who were then joined by all risen saints in the great refrain: "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." (Rev. 5:12-13)