

An honest reflection on church structure, the Holy Spirit, and true worship.

Understanding Liturgy

Liturgy refers to the structured way a church conducts its worship. This may include written prayers, Scripture readings, order of songs, sermons, communion, and other traditions. Most Christian denominations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, and some Protestant churches, use some form of liturgy.

Worship often includes five core elements:

1. Prayer
2. The Word (Scripture reading and preaching)
3. Offerings
4. Praise and Worship
5. The Lord's Table (Holy Communion)

When a church formalizes a guide on how to carry out these elements—especially by writing it down and sticking to it consistently—that becomes its *liturgy*.

Is Liturgy Biblical?

The Bible encourages structure and order in worship.

“But all things should be done decently and in order.”
— *1 Corinthians 14:40 (ESV)*

The early church had patterns (Acts 2:42), met regularly (Hebrews 10:25), and had appointed roles for teaching and prayer (Ephesians 4:11-12). So yes, having a liturgy or structure is *biblical*—when used rightly.

When Liturgy Goes Too Far

The issue arises when liturgy becomes too rigid, replacing the guidance of the Holy Spirit with man-made routines. The Holy Spirit was given to lead the church into truth (John 16:13), not be restricted by fixed schedules.

Some churches plan out all sermons, readings, and themes for

the entire year, leaving little to no room for spontaneity or prophetic insight.

When this happens, even if the Holy Spirit wants to speak something new or move in a unique way—through prayer, prophecy, or revelation—He is hindered by our systems.

“Do not quench the Spirit.”
— *1 Thessalonians 5:19 (ESV)*

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”
— *2 Corinthians 3:17 (ESV)*

A church without spiritual flexibility becomes like a body without breath—externally alive but spiritually dry.

The Danger of Over-Structuring

Jesus warned about replacing God’s work with tradition:

“You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.”

— *Mark 7:8 (ESV)*

The Pharisees had their own religious “liturgy,” but it left no space for God to move. In the same way, when churches allow structure to override the Spirit, it becomes dangerous.

A beautiful sanctuary, an organized service, and great music cannot replace the presence of the Holy Spirit.

“Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.”

— *Romans 8:9 (ESV)*

Good order in the church includes things like:

- Scheduling prayer meetings
- Setting times for worship
- Coordinating who preaches or teaches
- Organizing offerings and communion

But all of this must remain open to the Holy Spirit's leadership. For example:

- If God stirs a word of prophecy—let it be shared (1 Corinthians 14:1, 29-31).
- If there's a call for repentance or healing—pause the routine and follow.
- If the Spirit leads in prayer or tongues—make room for it (1 Corinthians 14:39).

We must allow the Spirit of God to be the true leader of our gatherings—not just our pre-written plans.

Conclusion: Liturgy Should Serve, Not Rule

Liturgy is not evil—but when it replaces the freedom of the Spirit, it becomes a spiritual trap.

Many churches today have polished liturgies but lack spiritual vitality. The life of the Church is not found in formality, but in relationship with the living God, through His Spirit.

Let us return to Spirit-led worship, where structure supports—not stifles—God’s voice.

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.”

— *Galatians 5:25 (ESV)*

May the Lord help us walk in Spirit and truth.

Maranatha — Come, Lord Jesus!

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