

A Study on the Ethical Significance of Worship in Korean Churches

- Perspectives on Justice and Liberation*

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21050/CSE.2024.60.07>

* This paper is written with the financial support of Seoul Theological University.

한국교회 예배의 윤리적 중요성에 관한 연구: 정의와 해방의 관점

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본 논문은 한국 교회 예배와 윤리적 삶의 관계를 성찰한다. 먼저 예배와 정의의 근본적인 연관성을 살펴본다. 성서는 예배가 세상에서 정의를 행하는 것과 관련이 있다고 말씀한다. 기독교 예배는 삶에서 정의를 행하는 것이다. 이런 점에서 한국 교회에서의 예배는 사회 정의 문제에 제한적으로 관여하는 것으로 보인다. 한국 교회는 정의와 해방의 관점에서 예배와 삶의 연결을 재정립하기 위해 예배 실천의 쇄신이 필요하다.

한국 교회 예배의 갱신은 한국 기독교인들의 삶의 방향성과 정의 실현의 가능성을 반영한다. 한국 교회 예배의 갱신 중 하나인 예배의 토착화는 정의와 해방의 삶에 기여할 수 있다. 더욱이 한국 교회 예배는 설교와 성찬의 균형 잡힌 예전 예배가 필요하다. 이러한 접근 방법을 통해 한국 교회는 궁극적으로 사회 정의를 적극적으로 추구하는 윤리적 삶을 향해 나아갈 수 있다.

주제어: 한국교회 예배, 도덕적 자아, 토착화, 정의, 해방, 성찬, 예배갱신

I. Introduction

Christian worship has an intrinsic relationship with the Christian life. Donald Saliers notes that “Worship is something Christians do together, not just because of religious duty, but because it is their way of remembering and expressing their life unto God.”¹⁾ Christian worship shapes the lives of Christians, allowing them to appreciate their existence and express their roles within the communities in which they live. It is an essential dimension of moral life within the community. Therefore, just as the ministry of the church cannot be separated from the community, worship - a core aspect of the ministry - cannot be separated from the community, particularly in the pursuit of justice for its members.

Christian worship symbolizes the collective journey in pursuit of justice and liberation. In this paper, I will first examine the relationship between worship and justice, particularly within the context of the Korean Church. Next, I will explore a pathway for the renewal of worship in Korea, focusing on justice and liberation from male-centered worship practices. To facilitate this renewal, I will propose the inculturation of worship, which can contribute to evangelization and promote a just way of living. Furthermore, Korean worship services should strike a balance between preaching and Holy Communion. For Korean Christians to embody God’s love and justice, they require a liturgical

1) Donald E. Saliers, “Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings,” *Liturgy and the Moral self*. E. Byron Aderson, Bruce T. Morrill, eds (The Liturgical Press Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, 1998) 17.

spirituality that emphasizes justice. All Korean Christians serve as living sacrifices, both in worshipping God within the church and in pursuing justice in the world.

II. The Intrinsic Relationship between Worship and Justice

1. The Scriptures Indicate an Intrinsic Relationship Between Worship²⁾ and Justice

The intrinsic relationship between worship and justice is evident in the Bible, particularly through the essential characteristics of worship. In the Old Testament, the prophet Amos states that God despises worship that is not accompanied by justice.

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and cereal offerings, I will not accept them, and the peace offerings of your fatted beasts I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps, I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (RSV Amos 5:21-2)

In Isaiah 1:10-17 and Micah 6:6-8, the prophets deliver messages similar to those in Amos 5:21-24. It is important to note that these prophets

2) Worship and liturgy are broadly synonymous, "liturgy embraces all the formal worship of a corporate Christian community." Matthew Cheung Salisbury. *Hear My Voice, O God: Functional Dimensions of Christian Worship*. A Pueblo Book: Liturgical Press, 2014, XVII.

cautioned against ritualistic worship that lacks genuine ethical living during the Old Testament period. Kathleen Hughes states, “The prophets (Amos, Isaiah, and Micah) remind us that there is an intrinsic relationship between cult and conduct—that worship is an expression of, and not a substitute for, social responsibility.”³⁾ I concur with her assertion that worship is an expression of, and not a substitute for, social responsibility. Furthermore, I believe that worship serves as a ritual commitment to social justice, which encompasses liberation from oppressive economic and political conditions. Justice establishes the proper relationship between liturgy and the practice of daily life.

In the New Testament, an intrinsic relationship between worship and justice is evident. In Romans 12:1-2, Paul discusses spiritual worship, which is holy and pleasing to God.

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (RSV Romans 12:1-2)

In this passage, Paul states that true spiritual worship involves presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice, which means living in accordance with God’s will in this world. Worship cannot be considered genu-

3) Kathleen H. Hughes, R.S.C.J., “Liturgy and Justice: an Intrinsic Relationship,” *Living No Longer for Ourselves: Liturgy and Justice in the Nineties*, eds. Kathleen H. Hughes, R.S.C.J. and Mark R. Francis, C.S.V. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 37.

ine if the worshiper does not align their life with God's will both inside and outside the church. The phrase living sacrifices an intrinsic relationship between worship and justice. All Christians are called to be living sacrifices, not dead sacrifices that are incapable of action, both in worshipping God within the church and in pursuing justice according to God's will in the world.

2. Christian worship is essentially connected to the Christian life and the pursuit of Justice.

Worship requires time, space, and community.⁴⁾ Worship is always conducted within a specific community. All communities on Earth require justice and peace. Christians who worship God in a communal setting are called to pursue justice for their community through their worship of God. Kathleen Hughes states, "Liturgy and justice have an intrinsic relationship to one another precisely because liturgy places us before the Just One, to whom we say 'Amen.'"⁵⁾ Worship and justice are fundamentally interconnected, as worship brings participants before the Just One within a community that demands justice. The Bible's Just One calls us to justice and love mercy (Micah 6:8). Justice entails acting with love, which includes caring for the vulnerable.⁶⁾

The ministry of the church cannot be considered complete without

4) Donald E. Saliers, "Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings," 17.

5) Kathleen H. Hughes, 51.

6) The Bible calls for justice by emphasizing the importance of caring for socially underprivileged individuals, including orphans, widows, the poor, and strangers (Zechariah 7:10).

erving the community in which it is located.⁷⁾ Worship is the pinnacle expression of the church's spiritual life and a direct participation in its mission and ministry.⁸⁾ Therefore, worship should be integrated into just liturgical spirituality and equitable liturgical structures.⁹⁾

III. The Relationship Between Worship and Justice in Korea

1. The Church and Social Justice in the Korean Context

It can be said that the Korean Church has made significant contributions to Korean society and its people. Christianity in Korea has experienced rapid growth, and I believe there are at least three reasons for this phenomenon. First, the Korean population is notably religious. However, when Christianity, particularly Protestantism,¹⁰⁾ arrived in Korea, traditional religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism had lost much of their influence. As a result, many Koreans became interested in Christianity. Second, when Christianity was introduced to Korea, the nation was in a precarious state. Many Koreans sought a new path to save their country and turned to the church for guidance. Third, the Korean Church has consistently supported the Korean people

7) Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice*. (IVP Books, 2007), 149-150.

8) James L. Empeur, S.J. and Christopher G. Kiesling, O.P., *The Liturgy That Does Justice*. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 15.

9) Ibid. 21.

10) The Roman Catholic Church began in Korea in 1785, followed by the establishment of the Protestant Church in 1884.

during times of suffering, including under Japanese rule, during the Korean War, and throughout military regimes. This commitment has attracted many educated individuals to the church.

I cannot assert that all churches in Korea have actively pursued justice and liberation. It is true that the Korean Roman Catholic Church did not engage with the Korean populace until the 1960s. However, it has played a significant role in the civil rights movement since the 1970s. During the Japanese colonial period, the Korean Protestant Church served as a hub for the independence movement against Japan. Throughout and after the Korean War, it played a crucial role in caring for war orphans and refugees. During the military regime, the National Council of Churches in Korea (KNCC) collaborated with the Roman Catholic Church to lead the human rights movement; however, most Protestant churches were more focused on the growth of their local congregations than on these broader issues.¹¹⁾

2, Worship and Justice in the Korean Church

Korean Church has actively advocated justice in Korea. The KNCC Hall and *Myeongdong* Catholic Cathedral serve as symbols of the human rights movement in the country. However, establishing a connection between worship and justice within the Korean Church can be challenging. During the military regime, a prayer meeting was held ev-

11) Many leaders of the Korean Protestant Church came from North Korea during the Korean War. They believed that the military regime in South Korea would protect them from communism in North Korea.

ery Thursday evening at 5 PM in the KNCC Hall on Jongno Street in Seoul, focusing on the improvement of civil rights in Korea. *Myeongdong* Catholic Cathedral frequently held masses to support the advancement of civil rights and to remember those imprisoned for their efforts in this cause.

However, the worship practices of local churches have not been integrated into 'a just liturgical spirituality and just liturgical structures,' nor do they inspire worshippers to pursue justice. One characteristic of the Korean Protestant church is the spiritual revival meetings that emphasized repentance until the 1960s. I believe that this focus contributed positively to the lives of Korean Christians. However, after the 1970s, the theme of these meetings shifted towards personal and economic blessings. Sunday worship in Korean churches also centers on invoking God's blessings for those in attendance. Consequently, this form of worship fails to transform worshippers into agents of justice within their communities. This is why I feel a pressing need for a renewal of worship in the Korean church

IV. The Renewal of Worship in the Korean Church

1. The Goals of Worship Renewal in the Korean Church

Paul F. Bradshaw notes that one of the fundamental aims of the Liturgical Movement was to integrate liturgy and life, bringing daily experiences into the liturgy and offering them to God, while allowing the liturgy to flow back into everyday life.¹²⁾ I believe that the renewal of worship in the Korean Church is necessary to achieve this same goal.

In Korea, Christians are expected to uphold a higher standard of moral living than non-Christians and to pursue justice. However, many Korean Christians have struggled to meet these expectations and to embody a higher moral standard than their non-Christian counterparts.

In Korea, it is often said that Christians do not differ from non-Christians in their pursuit of a just life. Korean Protestant churches hold three public worship services each week: Sunday morning worship, Sunday evening worship, and Wednesday evening worship, along with daily morning prayer meetings. Many Korean Christians participate in these Sunday and Wednesday services, as well as the daily morning prayers. However, these worship services do not seem to bring about significant transformation in the lives of Korean Christians. Kathleen Hughes argues that liturgy has the power to transform both Christian life and community.

We do not celebrate the liturgy of order to think about ideas, however worthy, but to place ourselves in contact with the person and work of Jesus Christ and to submit to Christ's redemptive action in our lives. Liturgy is less a matter of the head than of the heart, an experience less of formation than of transformation, if we let God had God's way with us. The liturgy has a unique potential for inviting transformation in the Christian community.¹³⁾

12) Paul F. Bradshaw, "Spirituality in the Modern World, VI. Liturgy and Spirituality," *The Expository Times* 89: 292-296. July, (1978) 293. Cf. Donald E. Saliers, "Afterword: Liturgy and Ethics Revisited," *Liturgy and the Moral self*. E. Byron Aderson, Bruce T. Morrill, eds (The Liturgical Press Collegeville, Minnesota: A Pueblo Book, 1998), 209.

13) Kathleen H. Hughes, "Liturgy and Justice: An Intrinsic Relationship," 45-46.

Christian worship has the potential and responsibility to transform the lives of believers in the pursuit of justice. Consequently, if a worship experience does not inspire participants to act justly, it must be reformed to incorporate 'a just liturgical spirituality and just liturgical structures.' This transformation is essential to enable worshippers to be changed through worship and to engage in acts of justice. This is the primary objective of the renewal of worship within the Korean Church,

2. Worship That Embodies Justice and Liberation in the Korean Church

Worship embodies justice to the extent that its rituals, symbols, words, and leadership elevate the value and dignity of humanity in all its diversity, grounded in the one baptism shared by all Christians. However, within the Korean Church, a patriarchal and hierarchical structure persists. While Korea does not face significant racial issues, women and children are traditionally expected to obey male adults. It is a reality that the leaders of the Korean Church are predominantly male. Pastors, who are primarily men, hold responsibility and authority over worship, from planning to leading. Additionally, some denominations in Korea still do not permit the ordination of women.

Furthermore, the image of God as the Father is deeply ingrained in the worship and prayer practices of many Korean Christians. This perception has contributed to the justification of male dominance over women and the subordinate status of females within the church. Many Korean Christians frequently refer to God as times within a single

prayer. Once established, this image shapes and interprets experiences in masculine terms, reinforcing the patriarchal and hierarchical structure of the Korean Church. Additionally, women are often excluded from leading Sunday worship services. To renew worship practices, leadership roles in the Korean Church should be shared among the entire congregation, from planning to execution. Furthermore, worship leaders and those leading prayers must use inclusive language. This will be a crucial first step toward revitalizing worship in the Korean Church.

3. The Inculturation of Worship in the Korean Church.

The inculturation of worship¹⁴⁾ is one of the most significant aspects of renewing worship in the Korean Church. Mark R. Francis, C.S.V., notes that there is a strong connection between the inculturation of worship and the pursuit of justice.¹⁵⁾ James L. Empereur and Christopher G. Kiesling state that “a liminal liturgy (a liturgy that does justice) will be one that is truly inculturated.”¹⁶⁾ They mean that the symbols of liturgy are connected to the lives of the poor and the oppressed.¹⁷⁾ However, the inculturation of worship in the Korean

14) Tim Lomax proposes six models for developing inculturated worship in his book, *Creating Missional Worship*. (Church House Publishing, 2015) 23-43.

15) Mark R. Francis, C.S.V., “Liturgical Inculturation in the United States and the Call to Justice,” *Living No Longer Ourselves: Liturgy and Justice in the Nineties*. Eds. Kathleen H. Hughes, R.S.C.J. and Mark R. Francis, C.S.V. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991) 84-85.

16) James L. Empereur, S.J. and Christopher G. Kiesling, O.P., *The Liturgy That Does Justice*. 34.

17) Ibid.

Church encompasses rituals, worship texts, hymns, symbols, architecture, and the church calendar, among other elements.

In the process of inculturating worship within the Korean Church, many practices have been adopted by shamanism. These practices include all-night prayer meetings, services focused on physical health and material blessings, and fervent prayers that lead participants into highly emotional or ecstatic states. This topic is debated; some critics label it as syncretism and caution against the associated dangers, while others argue that it represents the genuine inculturation of Christianity into the cultural forms most familiar to Koreans.

Tongsungkido, a form of fervent intercessory prayer, is an integral part of Korean worship. The Korean community is often eager to engage in *Tongsungkido*, as it serves as a profound expression of one's relationship with God.¹⁸⁾ People can accomplish many things through *Tongsungkido*, such as healing the sick and fostering a strong community. Good communities are closely connected to the Holy Spirit. *Tongsungkido*, through the Holy Spirit, helps to build the community into the Body of Christ. In this context, *Tongsungkido* is associated with the act of loving one's neighbor. Engaging in *Tongsungkido* for others is a moral act, as it reflects the kind of people we are.¹⁹⁾ Practicing *Tongsungkido* for others allows us to better understand how God is glorified through our just actions in the world.

18) Mark Labberton, *The Dangerous Act of Worship: Living God's Call to Justice*. (IVP Books, 2007) 129.

19) Harmon L. Smith, *Where Two or Three are Gathered: Liturgy and the Moral Life*. (Cleveland, Ohio: 1995) 37.

Healing services in Korean churches require a more balanced and culturally relevant approach. These services are predominantly characterized by charismatic healing rather than sacramental healing.²⁰⁾ The growth of the Korean Church is often attributed to the popularity of charismatic healing services. A notable example is the Rev. David Yonggi Cho's²¹⁾ Full Gospel Central Church, which has strongly emphasized the importance of its ministry. He has successfully treated a significant number of patients, leading many to congregate at the church. Rev. Cho asserts that the causes of disease can include human sin, the influence of evil spirits, and divine curses.²²⁾ His healing ministry is rooted in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues, and the expulsion of demons (evil spirits) from individuals in need of healing, all performed in the name of Jesus.²³⁾

20) Charles W. Gusmer, *And You Visited Me: Sacramental Ministry to the Sick and the Dying*, (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984), 157. According to Gusmer, there are three types of church ministry for the sick: pastoral ministry, charismatic ministry, and sacramental ministry.

21) Rev. Yonggi Cho (1936-2021) developed a preaching formula known as the three-fold blessings of God, which is based on III John 1:2: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in health; I know that it is well with your soul." Rev. Cho interprets the threefold blessings of God as follows: (a) "all may go well with you" signifies business or material prosperity; (b) "that you may be in health" refers to good health or longevity; (c) "well with your soul" indicates protection from evil spirits. Boo Woong Yoo, "Response to Korean Shamans by the Pentecostal Church", in journal of *International Review of Missions*, Jan. (1986), 74. See Rev. Cho's ministry. Jaeshik Shin, "Communism and Capitalism, and Conservatism and Consumerism: Some Contexts and Contents of Korean Protestantism" *Madang* Vol 28. (Dec. 2017) 99-100.

22) Kwang-il Kim, *Psychoanalytic Interpretation of Korean Traditional Culture*. (Seoul: Lyomunsa Ltd, 1988), 477.

23) Ibid.

While the charismatic healing process emphasizes physical, psychological, or spiritual ailments, sacramental healing is less focused on direct physical or emotional cures. Instead, it at a deeper spiritual conformation with Christ through the healing power of the paschal mystery.²⁴⁾ In this regard, the Korean Church has a limited understanding of sacramental healing. I believe that the Church should embrace both charismatic and sacramental approaches. Sacramental healing represents the visible, tangible, and incarnational aspects of the Church, while charismatic healing highlights the invisible, intangible, and pneumatological dimensions. Given that most Korean Churches have minimal experience with sacramental healing, the integration of sacramental healing services is an important task for the Korean Church.

The goal of inculturating worship is to help Korean people, including Korean Christians, connect with God during worship or when attending services in a Korean church. This process of inculturation contributes to both evangelization and a just way of living. Evangelism is closely linked to the just living of Christians. Mark R. Francis argues that evangelization loses much of its effectiveness without inculturation.²⁵⁾ In Korea, there has been a tendency among educated individuals, particularly the younger generation since the 1980s, to perceive Christianity as a Western religion and to reject it. Because Christian worship has not been inculturated within the Korean church, it remains an experience that feels foreign to many Korean Christians.

24) Ibid. 158-59.

25) Mark R. Francis, C.S.V., "Liturgical Inculturation in the United States and the Call to Justice," 87.

Western culture has significantly influenced Korea since it was introduced by missionaries. Korean Christians experience Western Christianity through worship every Sunday, while they navigate Korean culture on the other days of the week. This duality may contribute to the gap between worship and everyday life within the Korean Church. Kathleen Hughes states, “We must worship the same God on Sunday and during the week; the equality we know at the table of Christ’s body must be celebrated at all our tables. Daily, we must more deeply embrace the demands of every spoken ‘Amen.’”²⁶⁾ To achieve this, inculturated worship is essential.

Furthermore, an inculturated church year can play a significant role in promoting justice. John F. Baldovin, S.J., suggests that the liturgical year serves as a calendar for a just community.²⁷⁾ He also emphasizes the importance of culturally adapting this calendar.²⁸⁾ I believe that the historical adaptation of the calendar is essential for fostering a just community. For instance, the commemoration of the March 1st Movement, which protested Japanese rule in 1919, and National Liberation Day, which celebrates independence from Japan on August 15, 1945, are observed by all Korean churches. However, the Korean church should also incorporate other significant historical events and traditional festivals, such as Seollal (Lunar New Year) and Chuseok (Harvest Festival in the fall), into its liturgical calendar. I am confident

26) Kathleen H. Hughes, “Liturgy and Justice: An Intrinsic Relationship,” 37.

27) John F. Baldovin, S.J., “The Liturgical Year: Calendar for a just Community,” *Liturgy and Spirituality in Context: Perspectives on Prayer and Culture*, ed. Eleanor Bernstein, C.S.J. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 104-105.

28) *Ibid.*, 104-105.

that an indigenous liturgical year, rooted in Korean culture and history, will inspire worship and encourage congregants in the Korean church to actively pursue justice. By embracing an indigenous church year, the Korean people may come to view Christianity as their own religion, empowering them to advocate for justice within their communities. Therefore, the inculturation of worship is a vital component of a faith that seeks to promote justice.

4. Worship that maintains a Balance Between Preaching and Holy Communion

Korean Protestant worship is primarily centered around preaching, with other elements of the service supporting this focus. Typically, Holy Communion is observed four times a year. However, I believe that Christian worship should strike a balance between preaching and Holy Communion, as this approach aligns with both biblical teachings and traditional practices for worshipping God in the church. Achieving this balance will enable worshippers to engage in a genuine liturgical experience that embodies justice and inspires them to pursue justice in their lives after the service.

The Eucharist is the most distinctive element of Christian worship. It is also the most widely practiced form of worship among Christians, celebrated daily and weekly in millions of congregations and communities around the globe. Partaking of the bread and wine during the Eucharist signifies the experience of Christ's presence within the gathered community and the world. The Eucharist is a feast in which we,

alongside the risen Lord, embody the hope we have for a righteous realm where Christ's sacrificial love dismantles barriers among humanity and between humanity and God.²⁹⁾ Therefore, what we consume at the Table of the Lord implies a partnership between God and humanity, as well as a responsibility to nurture, prepare, and share with one another. The bread and wine at the Lord's Table not only call for self-sacrifice but also emphasize the importance of caring for the people of the world and the environment in which we live.³⁰⁾ This makes us accountable for ecological well-being.³¹⁾

Worship invites individuals to live in accordance with God's will of love and justice through the act of preaching. James L. Empereur and Christopher G. Kiesling assert that preaching is a liturgical act that embodies justice.³²⁾ This form of preaching encourages worshippers to align their lives with God's will of love and justice. Similarly, Holy Communion serves as a liturgical act that promotes justice, inviting participants to embody justice as a living sacrifice, much like Christ. Sri Lankan priest Tissa Balasuriya views Holy Communion as a paradigm for just relationships, particularly as a model for mutual sharing and social liberation. He also highlights the distortion of the sacrament into a rite that affirms rather than challenges the evils of clericalism, consumerism, racism, sexism, and colonialism. Balasuriya calls upon the church

29) L.H. Stookey, *Eucharist*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993). 22.

30) Kendall Vanderslice, *We Will Feast*. (Grand Rapids: Michigan, 2019), 162-165.

31) James D. Bratt, ed. *By the Vision of Another World.: Worship in American History*. (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 209.

32) James L. Empereur, S.J. and Christopher G. Kiesling, O.P., *The Liturgy That Does Justice*. 94.

to renew its Eucharistic practices to better express the love and justice of Christ.³³⁾

Furthermore, in the context of worship, congregants experience God's love and justice while practicing righteous living every Sunday. Paul J. Wadell, C.P., observes that the Eucharist serves as a training ground for moral vision.³⁴⁾ Consequently, it is essential for the moral lives of worshippers that preaching and Holy Communion are integrated into the Sunday service. When preaching and Holy Communion are combined in weekly worship, congregants are inspired to pursue justice and to experience God's love and justice through these sacred practices.

V. Conclusion

Worship has an intrinsic relationship with justice. It is the most significant event that occurs in the church and shapes the lives of worshippers. Christians spend a considerable amount of time in church for worship. Therefore, it can be said that worship has the potential to transform Christians' lives, enabling them to pursue justice within their communities. For Korean Christians, worship is a central aspect of their faith journeys. However, worship in the Korean church often fails to promote justice and liberation. Consequently, I believe there is a pressing need for a renewal of worship practices in the Korean

33) M. Procter-Smith, *In Her Own Rite*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 149.

34) Paul, J. Wadell, C.P., "What Do All Those Masses Do for Us? Reflection on the Christian Moral Life and the Eucharist," *Living No Longer for Ourselves: Liturgy and Justice in the Nineties*. 162.

church. To achieve this, both clergy and laity must embrace a just liturgical spirituality. The inculturation of worship, along with a balanced emphasis on preaching and Holy Communion, is essential for empowering Christians to embody God's love and justice in Korea.

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논문투고일: 2024년 10월 29일

심사개시일: 2024년 11월 17일

게재확정일: 2024년 12월 18일

• **ABSTRACT** •

**A Study on the Ethical Significance of Worship in Korean Churches:
Perspectives on Justice and Liberation**

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This paper examines the relationship between worship in Korean churches and ethical living. First, I explore the fundamental connection between worship and justice. The Bible indicates that worship is intrinsically linked to the pursuit of justice in the world. Christian worship should encompass the practice of justice in daily life. In this context, worship within the Korean church appears to have limited engagement with social justice issues. Therefore, the Korean church requires a renewal of its worship practices.

The renewal of Korean church services reflects the trajectory of Korean Christians' lives and the potential for justice. The indigenization of worship, a key aspect of this renewal, can cultivate a life rooted in justice and liberation. Furthermore, Korean church services require a balanced liturgy that integrates both preaching and communion. Through this approach, the Korean church can ultimately progress toward an ethical life that actively pursues social justice.

Key words: Korean Church Worship, Moral Self, Inculturation, Justice, Liberation, Communion, Worship Renewal
