**Worship and the transformation of public life**

1.Prosper of Aquitaine formulated the relationship of worship, doctrine, life and life together in an unforgettable way:

*Lex orandi* (the rule of worship), *lex credendi* (the rule of faith), *lex vivendi* (the rule of life) and *lex convivendi* (the rule of life together) are inter-related and interdependent and determines each other.

2.All dimensions of life and life together are determined and transformed by what we pray and what we believe, e.g. individual, marriage, family, friendship; church; work; broader society (civil society; political life; economic life; ecological life; cultural life).

3.The Holy Spirit is God at work in the world. The Holy Spirit transforms individuals, the church, society (including nature). The Spirit works through worship and faith.

4. Through worship the Spirit transforms us to conform to the kingdom life of justice, peace and joy in Jesus Christ (cf. Isaiah 32: 15 – 20; Romans 14:17 etc.)

5. Five verbs demonstrate this transformative work of the Spirit through worship. When we say worship transforms public life, we actually mean that the Spirit whom we worship and the Spirit who works in and through worship is transforming us, the church and broader society.

5.1 Worship helps us to **remember** the vision of a new society (commandments; feasts; holy communion; baptism – Luther: Worship is God’s herhalingskursus/refresher course, because humans are forgetful beings; Geoffrey Wainwright, *For our salvation*: see, hear, taste, smell, touch)

5.2 Worship helps us to see and **long** for the new society. Worship enables us to see, and to be lured by what we see. In the worship service, amongst others in sermons, we learn to see. Scripture functions like glasses, spectacles, lenses through which we look and learn to see differently, to see in a new way, from a different perspective, namely the perspective of God’s gracious reign over all of reality. Prayer helps us to see the new reality that is already there in Christ, that we believe in, but that we do not see yet. Prayer removes the coverings that prevent us from seeing the reality as it is renewed and transformed by Jesus Christ. Prayer removes our anxieties and helps us to see in the presence the first signs of the new age, of the victory that has already been won. Prayer opens our eyes and our hearts to see ourselves and others and the events of our history in the light of that which is coming ahead of us, in the light of the future.

5.3 Worship as liturgy helps us to **pray** for the new society: thank God for reality and actualization of new society; plead; protest for (*pro testari*); protest against; appeal

5.4 Worship helps us to **work** for the new society: solidarity, deeds of justice and suffering

5.5 Worship helps us to **wait** for the new society (*Why we cant wait* – Martin Luther King; *The hastening that waits* – Nigel Biggar on Barth’s ethics; urgency and patience; agents/activists and recipients; no arrogance; no anxiety)

*Nico Koopman,* [*nkoopman@sun.ac.za*](mailto:nkoopman@sun.ac.za)*; 021-8083254*