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From Scripture Reading to Scripture Proclamation: There's a Difference!

Calvin Symposium on Worship

Jeff Barker
Northwestern College

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**Calvin Symposium on Worship 2011
From Scripture Reading to Scripture Proclamation:
There's a Difference!**

*Jeff Barker, Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies;
Northwestern College Dept. of Theatre and Speech*

*Ten assumptions to undergird the renewal of scripture in
public worship.*

1. EXPECTATION: We need a better expectation.

A reasonable analysis of worship worldwide is that we currently expect *readings* of the scriptures...and for those *readings* to be flat or even boring.

A joyous hope for worship worldwide is that the presentation of scripture in worship will be vital, artful, relevant, gripping, moving, convicting, inspiring and memorable.

2. NEED: Christian worship needs the Bible.

Christians, like the Jewish heritage out of which they grew, are “people of the book.”

- a. Revelation. God’s revealing through scripture is a key component in the worshipful dialogue of revelation/response.
- b. Remembering. In worship, we remember God’s actions in history. This happens importantly through the memories held within the scriptures.

3. INTENT: The Bible is intended to be performed.

The entire Bible was created when most people couldn’t read and almost nobody had personal copies of the scripture. The forms of the Bible match the oral culture out of which it grew: stories, plays, songs, sermons and letters. All of these, even the letters, were intended for public speaking, listening, embodying, seeing, feeling. There is a completed value when the intent of these forms is moved from the private quiet to the public aloud. (And these ancient cultures probably played music with their stories!)

So...we need a different word than “reading” to fulfill the intent of the presentational form of scripture.

The best word is performance. Yes, it’s a negative word in many churches—probably most churches. But do we have a better word to express the following concepts?

- a. Preparation. Performance is an artful presentation for which artists and receivers have readied, through rehearsal and through experience. We understand the performance of a wedding by having a rehearsal and also by going to many weddings.
- b. Fulfillment of form. The performance is the fulfillment of the original form which the artist intended. A piece of sheet music finds its intent in the song. A playscript finds its intent when the curtain goes up. A screenplay finds its intent in the film.

4. MEMORIZED: The best place to store the Bible is your heart.

Where better to model memorization than in public worship? Every Sunday. It’s that important.

5. VERBATIM: Precision matters.

Some who speak the Bible from memory suggest that paraphrasing is good enough. It’s not. Let’s be able to proclaim, “The Word of the Lord!”

6. EVERYONE: Everyone has a testimony, everyone joins the song, everyone does a service, and everyone should remember the Bible and speak it.

Who should perform the Bible from memory in Christian worship? Laity and professionals, young and old, individuals and groups. Everyone in the congregation should wonder, “When will I next go onto the platform to perform the Bible?”

This does NOT mean that scripture presentation is a matter of simple rotation. Much of the communication of scripture will go to those best prepared. They will lead the way. But everyone should follow.

7. TESTIMONY: I prefer an earned aesthetic.

This is my personal preference. I recommend that we perform the scripture with a sense of immediacy that comes from ownership of the story. We don’t need to pretend to be characters, at least not full pretense—the storyteller/actor should always be peeking through. We need to tell stories about things that matter to real people: ancient people and us, too, at the same time.

8. FLOW: Bible stories serve the other elements of worship.

The Bible stories should be chosen carefully to coincide with the entire flow of worship.

9. BIG: We need complete Bible portions.

Art is intended to be consumed whole, in one sitting. Can you imagine never watching an entire TV show, or play or movie but only small chunks at a time? Can you imagine never having a sermon preached in its entirety? Let’s perform whole stories, whole letters and even whole Gospels.

10. SIMPLICITY: Keep it simple.

The style of presentation need not be flamboyant or realistic. It can be subtle and evocative. In fact, for worship, it usually should be.

After the Bible is presented, what then?

The Bible is rich artistry. Art doesn’t usually need immediate explanation. It invites silent reflection, or the resonance of a song or other art form. And how will such intentional Bible performance interface with the sermon? What opportunities will present themselves? A Sunday School class for conversation? A bibliodrama class?

A few suggestions and reminders for solo presentation of the Bible during worship

prepared by Jeff Barker (barker@nwciowa.edu)

1. Pray.
2. Read the text.
3. Read the context.
4. Look up words.
5. Read another translation.
6. Read a commentary; talk to the preacher.
7. Travel back in time. (What were the circumstances and motivations behind the writing of this?)
8. Edit the text (let the preacher know).
9. Memorize the text. Even if you're going to read.
10. Check your relationship communication. (Who is talking to whom? Why? Don't hide yourself. Scripture presentation is partly your own testimony.)
11. Rehearse in the worship center.
12. Dress rehearsal. (Get your cue. Practice your movement into position. Speak and move at performance volume on mic).
13. Double-check, or write, or refine intro/conclusion words. For example: "Remember this portion of the story of God as it is written in the book we love."
14. Remember to slow down (but maintain variety).
15. Remember. To. Say. Every. Sound. In. Every. Word.
16. Remember to follow through sentences (energy and projection, especially at the ends).
17. Remember eye contact.
18. Remember to express your joy.
19. Is there any other art to include (image, music, sound, movement, symbol)?
20. Pray.

A brief, annotated bibliography of resources for presenters of scripture

So You've Been Asked to Read Scripture by Harvey Smit
<http://www.faithaliveresources.org/So-Youve-Been-Asked-To-Read-Scripture>

This is a small, helpful pamphlet.

Stop Reading and Start Proclaiming! by Douglas Leal.
Resource Publications, 2006.

The Catholic Church has been developing/publishing lots of resources for "lectors," and this is a recent book by a trained actor; Leal brings an excellent, authentic sensibility to scripture presentation. He speaks against memorizing, which makes me sad.

Story Journey by Dr. Thomas Boomershine. Abingdon Press, 1988.

This started the movement that became the Network of Biblical Storytelling.

The Bible in Ancient and Modern Media: Story and Performance edited by Holly E. Hearon and Philip Ruge-Jones. Cascade Books, 2009.

A fine book at graduate student level. Unpacks the "performance criticism" movement for Bible scholars. Essays on a variety of topics related to scripture presentation.

The Biblical Storyteller and the *Journal of Biblical Storytelling*. <http://www.nbsint.org/store.html>

Periodicals of the Network of Biblical Storytellers filled with articles and guidance for speakers of scripture.

Lector's Guide to Biblical Pronunciations by Joseph M. Staudacher. Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1979.

A tiny pocket guide to pronouncing the unusual words of the scripture text.

Unleashing the Word: Rediscovering the Public Reading of Scripture by Max McLean with Warren Bird. Zondervan, 2009.

McLean's a well-trained actor, and he doesn't urge overdramatization of performance—good for him. His approach is a tad technical, because he's trying to teach beginners. The continuing development of such texts is a good sign and a reminder that we have a ways to go.

Don't overlook the multitude of books on oral interpretation, performance studies and acting.

Some web resources:

<http://www.nbsint.org/>

<http://gotell.org/>

<http://www.oralbible.com/>

<http://www.biblicalperformancecriticism.org/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TerrorTexts/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/AncientPlays/>

http://www.oralitystrategies.org/strategy_detail.cfm?StrategyID=1/

A Christmas scripture/song piece prepared by Lin Sexton, First Baptist Church of Modesto, California

“STILLE NACHT” singer and orchestra in parallel with reader; music is rhythmically free.

SINGER: Silent night ...

READER: But the crowds cried out, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

SINGER: Holy night

READER: Then they spat in His face and struck Him with their fists. Others slapped Him and said, “Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit You?”

SINGER: All is calm ...

READER: When Pilate saw ... that an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands ... “I am innocent of this man’s blood.”

SINGER: All is bright ...

READER: And darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, for the sun stopped shining.

SINGER: Round yon virgin mother and child ...

READER: Near the cross of Jesus stood His mother, Mary.

SINGER: Holy infant

READER: “I am thirsty,” He cried. And they gave Him a sponge of vinegar.

SINGER: So tender and mild ...

READER: And he cried out with a loud voice, “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?”

SINGER: Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace...

READER: “It is finished.” With that, He bowed His head, and gave up His Spirit. (Pause) And we beheld His glory. The glory of the One and only Son.”

(music out)

An Easter scripture/song piece prepared by Lin Sexton, First Baptist Church of Modesto, California

We begin with a reader down left and a singer down right. Each is in a down light. The choir is on stage, but not lit just yet.

The soloist sings (rubato, with minimal accompaniment) one line at a time of EASTER SONG. She has a sweet, almost ethereal voice, and as each line of the song ends, a cello (or organ pedal point if you have no cello) sustains the note until she sings again. This creates tension and a feeling of anticipation.

As you can see, the reader then reads over this held note. The Scripture is from both Luke and John in the Message Bible, and I have omitted portions, but kept the narrative intact.

SOLO: Hear the bells ringing ...

READER: At the crack of dawn on Sunday, the women came to the tomb carrying the burial spices they had prepared. But once inside, they couldn’t find the body of the Master Jesus.

SOLO: They’re singing that you can be born again ...

READER: They found the entrance stone rolled back from the tomb, so they walked in. They were puzzled, wondering what to make of this. The grave clothes were there, but no body. Then, out of nowhere it seemed, two men, light cascading over them, stood there.

SOLO: Here the bells ringing, they’re singing ...

READER: The women were awestruck and bowed down in worship. The men said, “Why are you looking for the Living One in a cemetery? He is not here, He is raised up.

SOLO: Christ is risen from the dead ...

READER: They left the tomb and broke the news of all this to the Eleven and the rest. But the apostles didn’t believe a word of it, and thought they were making it all up.

SOLO: The angel up on the tombstone said “He has risen, just as he said!”

READER: Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together. Jesus entered through a locked door, stood among them, and said, “Peace to you.” Then he showed them his hands and side.

SOLO: Quickly now, go tell his disciples that Jesus Christ is no longer dead ...

READER: The disciples, seeing the Master with their own eyes, were exuberant. Later, the other disciples told him, “We saw the Master.”

SOLO: Joy to the world ...

READER: But Thomas said, “Unless I see the nail holes in his hands, put my finger in the nail holes, and stick my hand in his side, I won’t believe it.”

SOLO: He has risen, hallelujah ...

READER: Jesus focused his attention on Thomas. “Take your finger and examine my hands. Take your hand and stick it in my side. Don’t be unbelieving. Believe.” Thomas said, “My Master! My God!”

CHOIR (now in tempo and kicking big time)
He’s risen, hallelujah, He’s risen, hallelujah
Hear the bells ringing, They’re singing that you can be born again,
Hear the bells ringing, they’re singing
Christ is risen from the dead

The angel up on the tombstone said
He has risen, just as he said!
Quickly now, go tell his disciples
that Jesus Christ is no longer dead
Joy to the world, he has risen, hallelujah
He’s risen, hallelujah He’s risen, hallelujah, hallelujah He’s risen,
hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Performing the Ancient Plays of the Hebrew People

Jars of Oil
(2 Kings 4:1-7; numbers refer to images)

Background

In the fall of 2002, Dr. Tom Boogaart explained to me his theory that the Old Testament historical stories are written in play form. Our college began proving his theory by performing the Old Testament in both simple and elaborate ways. Since that time, we've performed over 30 stories including *David and Goliath*, *Samson*, several Elisha stories, a new musical called *And God Said* using ten Old Testament stories (with music by Broadway composer Ron Melrose), and a contemporary rock musical called *Terror Texts* (now changed to *A Holy Terror*) using six of the grittiest stories (with music by composers Joseph Barker and Heather Josselyn-Cranson). Most of these are in script form at <http://home.nwciowa.edu/barkerplays/>

Jars of Oil

Here's a simple way to get started. Identify the images in the text. Here are images we found in II Kings 4: 1-7.

1. Woman crying out to Elisha.
2. Creditor taking sons.
3. Elisha asking the woman some questions.
4. Elisha prophesying that the woman will get empty jars from neighbors (and we see her do it).
5. Elisha prophesying that the woman will shut door against creditor with sons inside house (we see them).
6. Elisha prophesying that the woman will have sons bring jars and the woman will fill them (they do this).
7. Elisha is alone; woman is filling jars; sons set them aside.
8. Sons have no more jars.
9. The woman's oil runs out, but her jar is full.
10. Woman and sons return to Elisha.
11. Neighbors buy oil from sons/woman pays creditor.
12. Woman serves sons food she has prepared.

Conventions for a very simple enactment:

1. Single reader at one microphone.
2. A sound to cue actors to move to the next image.
3. Image establishes first and then narration describes image.
4. Some music to glue the action together and support moments of most significant change. (We like using vocals without lyrics and some sort of percussion.)

Once you have the key images, you can easily turn it into live theatre. Divide the text into narrator lines and dialogue lines. Have the actors break into live action long enough to speak their assigned character's line of dialogue.

Here's a suggestion for the narrator. Use the narrator to represent the miraculous, but also allow the narrator to get into the midst of the action, representing a support character or empathizing with what's happening in the story. The narrator helps us see what is otherwise unseeable.

In the next column you'll find the verbatim Bible text divided up. The rhythm of narrator/dialogue even looks like a play, doesn't it?

STORYTELLER

[1] Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying.

WOMAN

Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the LORD. [2] And the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

STORYTELLER

[3] And Elisha said unto her.

ELISHA

What shall I do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in the house?

STORYTELLER

And she said.

WOMAN

Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil.

STORYTELLER

[4] Then he said.

ELISHA

Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. [5] And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons. [6] And shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

STORYTELLER

[7] So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.

[8] And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son.

WOMAN

Bring me yet a vessel.

STORYTELLER

And he said unto her

SON

There is not a vessel more.

STORYTELLER

[9] And the oil stayed. [10] Then she came and told the man of God. [11] And he said.

ELISHA

Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt. [12] And live thou and thy children of the rest.

Cain and Abel

Genesis 4:1-16

as directed by Jeff Barker

and presented by Northwestern College touring theatre

Notes: The LORD lines are sung in a triad chord. Syllables in **bold** indicate raise in pitch one a half steps and words in *italics* indicate lowering in pitch one whole step. The actors should create their own rhythm to reflect their interpretation of those sung lines.

The actors are seated on three stools facing the audience. The actors generally may look at one another unless they are characters. In general, characters use off stage focus, placing their scene partners in the space out front of them; we also experimented with some looking at one another on stage, especially at heightened moments in the action – for example when Cain kills Abel. Actor names from the original production are used in this script rather than character names. Actors play narrators, Eve, Cain, Abel and The LORD.

ALEAH

Remember this portion of the story of God as it is written in the book that we love. From Genesis, chapter four.

Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived

DAN

and bore Cain

ALEAH

saying, I have produced a man with the help of the LORD. Next she bore

ANDREW

his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep.

DAN

And Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground.

ANDREW

And Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions.

ALEAH

And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering,

(ANDREW starts humming tonic pitch.)

ALEAH

but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.

(ALEAH joins ANDREW humming the tonic, and then they trail off during the following line.)

DAN

So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

ALEAH

The LORD said to Cain

ALEAH, ANDREW, DAN (sung triad)

Why are you **angry**, and why has your countenance *fallen*? If you do **well**, will you not be **accepted**? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking *at the door*; its desire is for **you**, but you must *master* it.

DAN

Cain said to his brother Abel, Let us go out to the field.

ANDREW and DAN

And when they were in the field

DAN

(raising his hand in a threatening gesture)
Cain rose up against

(ANDREW raises an arm in defense.)

DAN and ANDREW

his brother

ANDREW

Abel

(Both lower their arms.)

DAN

and killed him.

ALEAH

Then the LORD said to Cain.

ALEAH, ANDREW, DAN (sung triad)

Where is your brother **A**-bel?

DAN

He said, I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?

ALEAH

And the LORD said.

ALEAH, ANDREW, DAN (sung triad)

What have you done? **List-en**; your brother's blood is crying out to me *from the ground*! And now you are **curs'd** from the ground, which has opened its **mouth** to receive your brother's *blood...from your hand*. When you till the ground, it will no longer **yield** to you its strength; you will be a **fugitive** and a wanderer *on the earth*.

DAN

Cain said to the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear! Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me.

ALEAH

Then the LORD said to him

ALEAH, ANDREW, DAN (sung triad)

Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold *vengeance*.

ALEAH

And the LORD put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him.

DAN

(standing, taking one step forward)
Then Cain went away

(ALEAH and ANDREW rise and move upstage.)

DAN (continued)

from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

Joshua and Caleb

an edited portion of Numbers 13 and 14

as directed by Jeff Barker and presented by Northwestern College touring theatre

Percussion/hand drumming and vocalization are improvised to supportive the mood shifts. The Glory of the LORD is represented by vocals alone. In this version, the narrator works mostly off to the side of the action. She uses claves to set tableaux in freeze. Specific lines break the freeze.

BRADY: Just as the children of Israel were about to enter the land of promise, they turned to grumbling, and it cost them forty years. Remember this portion of the story of God as it is written in the book that we love. Portions of Numbers 13 and 14.

(Clave. Four actors are frozen in poses of normal life.)

ALEAH: At the end of forty days they returned from spying out the land.

(DAN as Caleb along with MOLLY as one of the other spies enter. DAN raises his hand to quiet the people. DAN and MOLLY play to crowds out front, in the direction of the audience. Others upstage break their freeze to listen.)

ALEAH: Caleb quieted the people and said.

DAN: Let us go up at once and occupy it, for we are well able to overcome it.

(MOLLY pushes DAN out of the way.)

ALEAH: Then the men who had gone up with him said.

MOLLY: We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are.

ALEAH: They brought to the people of Israel a bad report saying.

MOLLY: It is a land that devours its inhabitants.

(All move into tableaux of anguish. Clave sets the pose.)

ALEAH: Then all the congregation raised a loud cry, and the people wept that night.

(Drumming changes to faster tempo.)

ALEAH: And all the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron.

(Actors move out of the pose one at time to come front and proclaim their fears.)

ALI: Would that we had died in the land of Egypt!

KRISTIN: Would that we had died in the wilderness!

ANDREW: Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword?

BRADY: Our wives and our little ones will become a prey.

DAN: Would it not be better for us to go back to Egypt.

MOLLY: Let us choose a leader and go back to Egypt.

(Percussion changes to slow, heartbeat tempo.)

ALEAH: Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces. And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and said.

(Percussion stops.)

ANDREW: The land, which we passed through to spy it out, is an exceedingly good land.

DAN: If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that flows with milk and honey.

ANDREW: Only do not rebel against the LORD.

ALEAH: Then all the congregation said to stone them with stones. But the glory of the LORD appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel. And the LORD said to Moses, "How long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?" And Moses said to the LORD.

BRADY: Please. Pardon the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of your steadfast love, just as you have forgiven this people, from Egypt until now.

ALEAH: Then the LORD said, "The earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD. Turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea." And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,

(Percussion resumes in slow heartbeat tempo.)

ALEAH: "According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, a year for each day, you shall bear your iniquity forty years, and you shall know my displeasure. I, the LORD, have spoken."

ALL: (trailing out as they turn upstage to leave, and ALEAH finishes alone) And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him—the men who brought a bad report of the land—died by plague before the LORD. Of those men who went to spy out the land,

ANDREW: only Joshua the son of Nun

DAN: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh

ALEAH: remained alive.

(Percussive punctuation mark ends the story.)

The Ancient Hebrew Drama Project

The Mission: helping the world see the ancient dramas of the Hebrew people.

helping...

This project calls leaders and artists to assist participants and audiences in rediscovery of the beauty and truth lying beneath the surface of these ancient texts. Much of this truth remains hidden until artists help reveal it, because there is a difference between script and performance.

the world...

These stories are for everyone everywhere. People from oral and tribal cultures are especially encouraged to participate in this project, since they have much to teach people who have been living in primarily textual cultures.

see...

Dramatic art is a full-bodied experience. Hearing is part of the experience, but seeing is crucial to the meaning of playscripts.

the ancient...

This is not a new idea. This project is reclamation rather than adaptation.

dramas...

The texts in reality are plays with dialogue, dramatic structure, and metaphoric gesture. These need actors, designers, directors, open playing spaces and audiences to provide their full impact.

of the Hebrew people...

The historical texts of the Hebrew Bible contain exquisite artistry from the culture of the Hebrew people. This dramatic anthology is older and more expansive than the Greek plays that have been claimed as the world's first major theatrical tradition.

Selected Bibliography

The Bible as Theatre by Shimon Levy. Sussex Academic, 2002.

"Drama and the Sacred: Recovering the Dramatic Tradition in Scripture and Worship," by Thomas A. Boogaart. In *Touching the Altar*, edited by Carol M. Bechtel. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007.

<http://home.nwciowa.edu/barkerplays/>

<http://biblicalperformancecriticism.org/>

Contact:

Jen Sabo, 712-707-7341; Jennifer.sabo@nwciowa.edu

Jeff Barker, 712-707-7093, barker@nwciowa.edu

Philippians 1:1-9a script for eight actors.

Theme phrases of Philippians.

(Performers are assigned to a theme phrase and also to a section of scripture verses according to the same numbering.

Since there is very little movement, the performers can work around standing mics, using either 4 or 8 mics.)

The first four theme phrases are introduced one by one, spoken in their natural rhythm, but with an internal steady beat that continues unheard beneath all of them. Each phrase repeats a couple of times before the next one is added.

The theme phrases undulate in volume, rising to fill in any cracks in sentences with the rise and fall of phrasings of the scripture verses.

After the first four phrases are introduced, verses 1-2 are spoken.

1. Paul and Timothy
2. servants of Christ
3. to all the saints
4. who are in Philippi

8. Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Then phrases 5-8 are introduced, with the first 4 continuing quietly under.)

5. I remember you
6. with joy (sung)
7. sharing in the gospel
8. who began a good work

7. ³I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you,

6. ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.

(“I am confident” is spoken in strong unison by all.)

5. ⁶**I am confident of this**, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

4. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart,

3. for all of you share in God’s grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

(All trail off into silence.)

2. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

(Sudden strong return to the themes here.)

1. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more!

(Then as 1 continues to repeat “and more and more,” throwing her/his arms into the air, each speaker switches from their theme to repeat “and more, and more” until all are in with a grand finish!)

1. The word of the Lord!

ALL. Thanks be to God!
