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Worship and Public Engagement

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Richard J. Mouw

Calvin Worship Symposium 2016

A17 Worship and Public Engagement

That corporate worship must equip us for serving God's purposes in the world, certainly means that we must attend to the social-political-economic dimensions of our lives as citizens. How do we structure our congregational patterns with this in mind without making our worship "too political"? What are the proper ways of preaching, praying, singing, and catechizing about the obligations of citizenship? We will focus in this workshop on preaching during times of political controversy, on the use of "patriotic hymns," and other practical—but challenging—concerns that emerge in our efforts to be biblical faithful in planning worship.

I. Ronald Thiemann: local congregations should function as "'schools of public virtue,' communities that seek to form the kind of character necessary for public life."

II. *Catechesis*.: the multi-faceted churchly task of oral instruction.

III. "Seasons" of addressing issues of public life

IV.. "Political" sermons?

V. Attending to national/cultural context: "Patriotism" in worship

VI. How we pray, what we say by way of illustrating important matters