There are a number of important doctrines in the Bible which are deduced from many parts of Scripture and cannot be conclusively proven from one or two verses. Exclusive Psalm singing is one such doctrine. Exclusive Psalmody flows directly from the overall teaching of Scripture regarding the worship of Jehovah. The Bible teaches that “the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in holy Scripture.”

When it comes to the elements of worship and the content of praise, we must have a warrant from God’s word. God sets the parameters on what is permissible in worship, not man. In other words, anything that the church does in worship must be proved from the Bible. This proof can be attained by an explicit command of God (e.g., “Do this in remembrance of Me,” Lk. 22:19); or by logical inference from Scripture (i.e., there may not be an explicit command, but when several passages are compared, they teach or infer a scriptural practice); or by biblical historical example (e.g., the change from the seventh day to the first day of the week for corporate public worship).

The Reformed doctrine of worship called “the scriptural law of worship”; “the puritan principle of worship”; or, “the regulative principle of worship” is clearly taught in both the Old and New Testaments. In Genesis 4:3-5 we read that God rejected Cain’s offering of the fruit of the ground, but accepted Abel’s offering of animal sacrifices. Why? Because even though offering fruit is not prohibited, it also was not commanded. Leviticus 10:1-2 records that God killed Nadab and Abihu because they offered strange fire, which God “commanded them not.” The offering of strange fire is not prohibited in Scripture, but it also is not commanded. In Deuteronomy 12:32, in the specific context of avoiding false heathen worship practices, God said, “Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it” (cf. Dt. 4:2; Jer. 7:24,31; 19:5; I Kgs. 12:32-33; Num. 15:39-40). In 2 Samuel 6:3-7 we read of God’s judgment on David’s men who were moving the ark. Why were they judged? God

1. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Chap XXI:1. “It was the application of this principle which enabled the Protestant Reformers to accomplish their great work of reformation. They denied for example the validity of five of the seven sacraments of the corrupt Church, and retained only Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Likewise the application of this principle enabled them to purify the worship of God by ordering it in accordance with God’s will as set forth in His Word. Thus the work of the Reformation had its positive and negative aspects. It involved the rejection of the use of altars, crosses, crucifixes, candles, incense, and a host of other unscriptural practices, as well as the reinstatement of free prayer as distinct from set forms of prayer, the reading and exposition of God’s word, and the congregational singing of the Psalms. Where this principle that what is not prescribed is forbidden is rejected or ignored, purity of worship is imperiled” (M.C. Ramsey, *Psalms Only*, pp. 24-25).

was angry because they did not follow “the due order…as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord” (1 Chr. 15:13-15). Jesus chided the Pharisees for adding to God’s law: “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?” (Mt. 15:9).耶稣告诉法利赛人因为他们自己制定的规则来敬拜，说：“你们遵守我命令的人，因为你们自己的教义教条，就枉然了。”（太15:9）。

耶稣告诉妇女，他们必须用“精神和真理”来敬拜神（约4:24）。耶稣基督在升天前给使徒的命令是：他没有给他们制定自己的教义、政府、敬拜、圣日吗？绝不是！他说：‘你们要遵守我所吩咐你们的一切命令’（太28:20）。耶稣告诉法利赛人因为他们自己制定的规则来敬拜，说：“你们遵守我命令的人，因为你们自己的教义教条，就枉然了。”（太15:9）。保罗说，把命令和教义加入到基督教中是“自我规定的宗教，虚假的谦卑”和“没有价值的放纵肉体”（Col. 2:20-23）。

耶稣说：“你们遵守我命令的人，因为你们自己的教义教条，就枉然了。”（太15:9）。

约翰·沃恩·卡尔多（John W. Keddie）写道：《为什么只用赞美诗？》（Cambridge, England: Scottish Reformed Fellowship, 1978），第8页。人们应该注意，所有加尔文主义的改革者和教会在十六和十七世纪都采取了非常严格的解释。卡尔文的观点可以在他的《教会改革的必要性》（The Necessity of Reforming the Church）中找到。改革信条中的《崇拜的必要性》（That the Sacrifice of the Mass is Idolatry）（1550年）。改革信条也教授崇拜的必要原则，也教授教会的必要性。宽泛的解释可以在乔治·吉利斯皮、威廉·艾姆斯、山姆·拉塞尔德、耶利米·伯朗斯、托马斯·沃森、托马斯·里奇利、托马斯·波士顿、威廉·罗曼、约翰·科顿、托马斯·曼顿、马修·亨利、约翰·欧文、R.L.戴布尼、詹姆斯·H. 波尔德和许多人那里找到。宽泛的解释原则仍然被新教改革教会、苏格兰自由教会在北美、美国改革教会、苏格兰自由教会在北美和其他许多改革教会正式认可。

3 James H. Thornwell, Collected Writings (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1872) 2:163.
4 J.W. Keddie, Why Psalms Only? (Cambridge, England: Scottish Reformed Fellowship, 1978), p. 8. People of Reformed and Presbyterian persuasion should note that all the Calvinistic Reformers and Churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries held to a very strict interpretation of the regulative principle. Calvin’s view can be found in his Institutes I, XI, 4; I, XII, 1 and 3; II, VIII, 5 and 17; IV, X, 1 and 8-17; cf. commentary on Jeremiah 7:31; sermon on 2 Samuel 6:6-12; tract on “the necessity of Reforming the Church”; and, the confession drafted by Calvin for the Reformed churches of France (1562). John Knox’s view is clearly set forth in A Vindication of the Doctrine that the Sacrifice of the Mass is Idolatry (1550). The Reformed Creeds also teach the regulative principle of worship; cf. the Belge Confession (1561) Art. VII, XXIX, XXXII; the Heidelberg Catechism Question 96; The Westminster Standards, Confession 1:6,7; 20:2; 21:1; Shorter Catechism 51; Larger Catechism 108, 109. A strict interpretation of the regulative principle can be found in the writings of: George Gillespie, William Ames, Samuel Rutherford, Jeremiah Burroughs, Thomas Watson, Thomas Ridgeley, Thomas Boston, William Romaine, John Cotton, Thomas Mantone, Matthew Henry, John Owen, R.L. Dabney, James H. Thornwell, John L. Girardeau and many others. The regulative principle is still officially recognized by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, the Presbyterian Reformed Church, the American Presbyterian Church, the Free Church of Scotland, and many other Reformed denominations.
The regulative principle of worship is crucial in understanding exclusive Psalmody, for while there is abundant biblical evidence that Psalms were used for praise in both the Old and New Testament eras, there is no evidence in the Bible that God’s people ever used uninspired human compositions in public worship. Churches which use uninspired hymns in public worship must prove that such a practice has biblical warrant from either a command, historical example or by deduction. In a moment we will examine the standard arguments used by Reformed authors to justify the use of uninspired songs in public worship. It will be shown that these arguments are based on either a faulty exegesis of Scripture, a misunderstanding or perversion of the regulative principle (e.g. praise as a circumstance of worship), or on unsubstantiated speculation (e.g., the hymn fragment argument). We will see that the Calvinistic Reformers, Scottish Presbyterians, French Huguenots, Dutch Reformed and English and American Puritans were biblically correct in maintaining exclusive Psalmody.

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