Theology & Worship Entrance Exam Study Guide

The Ph.D. Entrance Exam in Apologetics and Culture will consist of essay questions in two parts, each part approximately 3 hours in length.

The exam will be closed book, so you will not be allowed to use any resources other than the writing instruments you bring with you and the writing paper and instructional materials that will be provided in your exam folder.

Applicants are expected to be prepared to write for 90 minutes on any of the following questions. Essays will be assessed according to the following criteria:

**Relevance and Argumentation**
- Students should give careful attention to the question and outline refined arguments. Student should incorporate & critically interact with relevant resources related to the field.

**Writing Mechanics**
- Students’ responses should be intelligent, and precise. Reasonable arrangement of paragraphs and ideas should enhance a reader’s understanding. Responses should be focused, and vocabulary varied. Responses should contain very few grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors.

**Awareness of Relevant Scholarship**
- Students should show awareness of seminal sources, major figures and pivotal events related to the field and incorporate and properly interact with resources related to the question.
Reading List:


Questions:

1. Build a basic theology of corporate (local church) worship, with reference especially to (a) any biblical principles which apply; (b) which ordinances and elements should be part of a regular corporate worship service; and (c) expectations for worship leaders.

2. Construct a basic theology of individual worship, with reference to (1) the nature of worship “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24), (2) making a “living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1), and (3) includes the spiritual disciplines and devotional practices.

3. Argue for a basic theology for the use of *music* in worship. What models does the Bible give us for the use of *music* in worship? What role(s) does worship music serve in corporate worship today? Explain how contemporary practice(s) and biblical models relate to one another.
4. Provide a treatment on unity and diversity in relationship to stylistic decisions for corporate worship practices, including but not limited to music selection. How much diversity should the local church demonstrate in its worship music? Consider both chronological diversity and diversity across contemporary cultures (and subcultures) in your response.

5. Provide a treatment of the culturally contextual and potentially cross-cultural nature of corporate worship. How does cultural context affect corporate worship? How does your understanding of Christian worship interface with international cultures, or even subcultures in your native city, state, or country? Explain where there is continuity and discontinuity across cultures in Christian worship.

6. Describe the way liturgy functioned in specific historic examples of Christian worship, and the ways it is still important today in certain traditions. Articulate your understanding of liturgy, and argue either for or against its importance/presence in Christian worship today.

7. Describe and evaluate the regulative and normative principles, in reference to their origin in church history, their biblical basis, and their application to contemporary worship.

8. Explain your own theology of baptism and the Lord’s Supper and how such a theology affects local church practice.

9. Provide a brief history of the development of Christian worship through history, including the debates about the use of music in worship.

10. Discuss different elements of corporate worship through the lens of the transcendental concepts of truth, goodness, beauty and unity. For example, explain how acts of prayer can serve to recognize God’s goodness and facilitate Christian unity, or how musical worship can both proclaim truth and display beauty.