

Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church
Foundations Class
Week 7 - April 18, 2021 - The Sacraments (and Our Theology of Children)

I. Means of Grace — *Inward* work through *outward* means by the Spirit of Christ

Acts 2:42-47 — “**42** And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. **43** And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. **44** And all who believed were together and had all things in common. **45** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. **46** And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, **47** praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

A. Outward Means of Grace (v. 42)

Fellowship as Structuring Principle

1. Word
2. Sacraments
3. Prayer

B. Inward Effects of Grace

1. Salvation (vv. 44, 47)
2. Awe (v. 43) Praise (v. 48)
3. Joyful Unity (vv. 44, 46)
4. Generosity (vv. 44-45)

C. Introductory Word regarding sacraments: True means of grace, but...

(See attached) *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapters on Sacraments, Baptism, and Lord's Supper*

II. Sacraments

Acts 2:36-41 — “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.’ **37** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ **38** And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ **40** And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ **41** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”

A. Baptism

1. Bold preaching (v. 36)
2. Humble response (v. 37)
3. Repentance (v. 38)
4. Faith (cf. Acts 16:30-31)
5. Holy Spirit (v. 38)
6. Water baptism (v. 38; cf. Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-12)

Excursus: Covenant Children

1. Old Testament — Genesis 17:1-14

“When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, **2** that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.”

3 Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, **4** “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. **5** No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. **6** I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring

after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. **8** And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

9 And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. **10** This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. **11** You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. **12** He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, **13** both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. **14** Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.”

a. Abraham saved by Lord’s mercy (cf. Genesis 12, 15)

b. Abraham’s offspring included in God’s promises (vv. 7, 12, 14)

c. Sign/seal of covenant (vv. 10, 11, 14)

d. Eternal/everlasting covenant (vv. 7, 8, 13)

e. Summary: Circumcision in Old Testament: sign/seal of eternal salvation. Applied to Abraham on basis of faith he already exercised. Applied to Abraham’s children on basis of promise God made to them.

2. New Testament *Promise* — Acts 2:39

“For the promise is for you *and for your children* and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

3. Book of *Acts*

a. Lydia

Acts 16:14-15 — “One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. **15** And after she was baptized, *and her household as well*, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.”

b. Paul/Silas to Philippians jailer

Acts 16:31-34 — “And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you *and your household*.” **32** And they spoke the word of the Lord to him *and to all who were in his house*. **33** And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he *and all his family*. **34** Then he brought them up into his house and set food before them. And he rejoiced *along with his entire household* that he had believed in God.”

4. Jews and *Gentiles* — Acts 2:39 (again); cf. Colossians 2:11-12

“For the promise is for you and for your children *and for all who are far off*, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

B. Lord’s Supper

Westminster Confession of Faith

Chapter 27, Of the Sacraments

I. Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and his benefits, and to confirm our interest in him: as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the Church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.

II. There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified; whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.

III. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of the Spirit, and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.

IV. There be only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospels, that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord: neither or which may be dispensed by any but a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained.

V. The sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New.

Chapter 28, Of Baptism

I. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible Church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, or his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life: which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his Churchy until the end of the world.

II. The outward element to be used in the sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.

III. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring or sprinkling water upon the person.

IV. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one or both believing parents are to be baptized.

V. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.

VI. The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in his appointed time.

VII. The sacrament of Baptism is but once to be administered to any person.

Chapter 29, Of the Lord's Supper

I. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his Church unto the end of the world; for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death, the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other, as members of his mystical body.

II. In this sacrament Christ is not offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sins of the quick or dead, but a commemoration of that one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross, once for all, and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same; so that the Popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominably injurious to Christ's one only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect.

III. The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to declare his word of institution to the people, to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but to none who are not then present in the congregation.

IV. Private masses, or receiving this sacrament by a priest, or any other, alone; as likewise the denial of the cup to the people; worshipping the elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.

V. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ; albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly, and only, bread and wine, as they were before.

VI. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common-sense and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament; and hath been, and is, the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries.

VII. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.

VIII. Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament, yet they receive not the thing signified thereby; but by their unworthy coming thereunto are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to their own damnation. Wherefore all ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with him, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and can not, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto.