

The Major Themes of the Bible Applied to Everyday Life Sacraments

1. What are sacraments?

“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.” (WCF 27.1)

2. What is a sign?

3. What is a seal?

4. What are the two sacraments of the Christian Church?

5. Why do we have only 2 sacraments (as opposed to the 7 of the Catholic Church)?

6. What do the sacraments do? How?

7. What is the difference between the validity and the efficacy of the sacraments?

8. What were the two signs in the Old Testament that preceded the sacraments?

The Lord’s Supper

9. How is the Lord’s Supper linked to the Passover?

10. What is the Lord’s Supper? In what way are the elements the body and blood of Christ?

11. In what manner should believers come to the table? (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

12. Who can partake of the Lord’s Supper?

13. Do you evaluate your heart before coming to worship on Sunday mornings and taking the Lord’s Supper? What does this look like?

Baptism

14. What is Baptism?

- It is a sign that one is in covenant with God, set apart from the world, with all the blessings, privileges, and responsibilities. It is for adults and their children.

15. How does the Covenant relate to adults and children?

A. The People of the Covenant: adults and their children

Adamic: All of Adam’s children were implicated in Adam’s fall.

Noahic: God made special provision for Noah’s family.

“But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.” (Genesis 6:18)

Abrahamic: Abraham’s offspring would be blessed.

“I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.” (Genesis 17:7)

Mosaic: The children of adults were involved in the covenant.

“for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.” (Exodus 20:5-6)

Davidic: God promised David’s line would be Israel’s dynasty through all generations.

“The LORD swore an oath to David, a sure oath that he will not revoke: “One of your own descendants I will place on your throne-- 12 if your sons keep my covenant and the statutes I teach them, then their sons will sit on your throne for ever and ever.” (Psalm 132:11-12)

- All of the people in covenant with God were not necessarily saved, but set apart from the world. They enjoyed all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of covenant life that others did not have.

16. How is baptism related to circumcision?

B. The Sign of the Covenant: the relationship between circumcision and baptism

“In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:11-12—NIV)

- This is Paul’s shorthand way of saying, “you were circumcised when you were baptized.”

Paul’s statements in 1 Corinthians reflects this structure as well:

“For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.” (1 Cor. 7:14)

- Because the parent is in covenant with God, the children are viewed as holy, or set apart from the world; they are therefore the *rightful* recipients of the initiatory sign.

Consider the following questions:

1. When a person believed in the God of Abraham and trusted in Him in the OT, what happened?

He was circumcised

2. What was the outward event that represented a clean heart in the OT?

Circumcision

3. What was the outward sign that represented entrance into the covenant community in OT?

Circumcision

- Just as the New Covenant with Christ was not something totally new, but found its roots in the Old Testament, the same is true for baptism.
- The **sacraments** of the New Testament were preceded by **signs** in the Old Testament.
- For example, The Lord’s Supper fulfills Passover as a *bloodless* sign—due to Jesus’ final sacrifice there was to be no more blood. In the same way, the sacramental sign of circumcision was replaced by the sacramental sign of Baptism. Baptism fulfills circumcision as a *bloodless* sign.

1. When a person believed in the God of Abraham and trusted in Him in the NT, what happened?

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2. What was the outward event that represented a clean heart in the NT?

Baptism

3. What was the outward sign that represented entrance into the covenant community in NT?

Baptism