

Sunday Evening, March 10, 2024  
Romans 4:11  
CHAP. XXVII. - *Of the Sacraments.*

1. Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace. They were directly instituted by God to represent Christ and his benefits and to confirm our relationship to him. They are also intended to make a visible distinction between those who belong to the church and the rest of the world, and solemnly to bind Christians to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.
2. In every sacrament there is a spiritual relationship, or sacramental union, between the visible sign and the reality signified by it, and so it happens that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.
3. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them. Neither does the efficacy of a sacrament depend on the piety or intention of him who administers it, but rather on the work of the Spirit, and on the word of institution, which contains (together with a precept authorizing its use) a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.
4. There are only two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel: baptism and the Lord's supper. Neither sacrament may be administered by any person except a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained.
5. With regard to the spiritual realities signified and exhibited, the sacraments of the Old Testament were essentially the same as those of the New Testament.

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- I. Sacraments Are Signs and Seals of the Covenant of Grace Sect 1, Rom. 4:11
  - A. The Purpose of Biblical Signs
    1. A Sign as Picture to Remind of God's Truth  
Jos. 4:6; Gen. 9:12-15; Exo. 31:13, 17
    2. A Sign as Picture to Illustrate God's Truth 1 Ki. 11:29
  - B. The Purpose of Sacraments as Signs Exo. 12:13
  - C. The Purpose of Biblical Seals  
Gen. 31:44, 45; Est. 3:12; Jud. 6:17f; Isa. 7:11; Lk. 2:12
  - D. The Purpose of Sacraments as Seals Rom. 4:11
- II. Sacraments Are Gifts from God for His Church Sect 1, 4 and 5
  - A. God Has Instituted the Sacraments
    1. Sacraments Instituted By God and by Christ
    2. Sacraments Instituted Is Application of the Regulative Principle of Worship  
Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23; Lk. 22:19-20

- B. God Has Instituted Only Two Sacraments sect 5  
Col. 2:11–12; 1 Cor 5:7, 8; 1 Cor. 5:7–8
  
- C. God Has Instituted the Sacraments for His Church sect 4  
1 Cor. 4:1; 11:20, 23; Eph. 4:11,12; Heb. 5:4; 1 Cor. 11:30

*Quotes*

“It seems to me that a simple and proper definition [of sacrament] would be to say it is an outward sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences the promises of His good will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith; and we in turn to attest our piety toward Him in the presence of the Lord and of His angels and before men.”

John Calvin

“Whenever God gave a sign to the holy patriarchs it was inseparably linked to doctrine, without which our senses would have been stunned in looking at the bare sign. Accordingly where we hear the sacramental words mentioned, let us understand the promise, proclaimed in a clear voice by the minister, to lead the people by the hand wherever the sign tends and directs us.”

John Calvin

"We do not (or should not) administer the elements to ourselves. They are given to us; we receive them. And as we eat the bread and drink the wine physically, so spiritually by faith we feed on Christ crucified in our hearts. Thus, in both sacraments we are more or less passive, recipients not donors, beneficiaries not benefactors."

John Stott in *The Cross of Christ*