

21 - Augustine: Sacramental Theology

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.
~ 1 Corinthians 4:1 ~

I. Introductory Principles Concerning the Sacraments

A. Where does sacramental theology belong?

B. Terms and Definitions

1. Means of grace

2. Sign

3. Seal

C. Two errors to avoid

1. Sacerdotalism

2. Selfism

D. Patristic Sacramental Theology

1. Terminology

“As, therefore, in a certain manner the sacrament of Christ’s body is Christ’s body, and the sacrament of Christ’s blood is Christ’s blood,’ in the same manner the sacrament of faith is faith. Now believing is nothing else than having faith; and accordingly, when, on behalf of an infant as yet incapable of exercising faith, the answer is given that he believes, this answer means that he has faith because of the sacrament of faith, and in like manner the answer is made that he turns himself to God because of the sacrament of conversion, since the answer itself belongs to the celebration of the sacrament.”

Augustine, *Letter to Boniface*, 98.9

2. Development

3. Ceremony and Superstition

II. Brief Outline of Augustine's Views on the Sacraments

A. Baptism

B. Lord’s Supper

III. Analysis of Augustine's Views on the Sacraments

A. Massively influential, but not infallible

B. Sometimes the future can sully the past

C. Controversy can clarify, but it can also confuse

D. Warfield and “what could have been?”

IV. Profiting from the Sacraments in the Life of the Christian

A. Word

B. Christ

C. Spirit

D. Faith