

PT 522		8
Reformed Spirituality		Sacraments
WSC / 2025		Manna

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## What is a Sacrament?

Rom 4.11 - “*He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith*”

### God’s Grace is Signified and Sealed (LC 162; SC 92)

- A. Sign: Represents & Exhibits
- B. Seal: Confirms & Applies (communicates)

### Efficacy & Error

- A. Error of understating: Remembrance (“Memorial” view)
- B. Error of overstating
  - 1. Automatic Grace (R.C.) - *ex opera operato*
  - 2. Sacerdotalism (B.B. Warfield): Makes the means of grace the cause of grace
    - a. The Church & Clergy end up replacing Christ
    - b. Church is defined as the “extension of the incarnation”
- C. Reformed: Efficacy
  - 1. Christian has direct access to Christ by the Spirit
  - 2. Efficacy is by the blessing of Christ, the work of Spirit, and by faith

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## Baptism

Gal 3.27 - “*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*”

### What is Baptism?

- A. Washing with Water: Cleansing from Sin & Ingrafting into Christ (SC 94; Gal 3.27)
- B. The Sign & Seal of God’s Commitment to Us
  - 1. Union with Christ: *ingrafting* (*cf. LC 165*); in his death & resurrection (Rom 6.3,5)
  - 2. Communion with Christ: partaking of the benefits of covenant of grace (SC 35)
- C. The Sign & Seal of Our Commitment to God

## Baptism as a Means of Grace for Growth

### A. "Improving our baptism" (LC 167 How is our Baptism to be improved by us?)

"...this duty is to be performed by us all our life long, especially in the time of temptation, and when we are present at the administration of it to others; by serious and thankful consideration of the nature of it, and of the ends for which Christ instituted it, the privileges and benefits conferred and sealed thereby, and our solemn vow made therein; by being humbled for our sinful defilement, our falling short of, and walking contrary to, the grace of baptism, and our engagements; by growing up to assurance of pardon of sin, and of all other blessings sealed to us in that sacrament; by drawing strength from the death and resurrection of Christ, into whom we are baptized, for the mortifying of sin, and quickening of grace; and by endeavoring to live by faith, to have our conversation in holiness and righteousness, as those that have therein given up their names to Christ; and to walk in brotherly love, as being baptized by the same Spirit into one body."

### B. Identity & Duty

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## The Lord's Supper

John 6:54 - "*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

<sup>55</sup>*For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.*"

## What is the Lord's Supper?

LC 168 *The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ, his death is showed forth; and they that worthily communicate feed upon his body and blood, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace; have their union and communion with him confirmed; testify and renew their thankfulness, and engagement to God, and their mutual love and fellowship each with the other, as members of the same mystical body.*

### A. Symbolizes how the New Covenant was purchased

1. Sign: Represents Christ's body & blood (Mt 26.26; 1Cor 11.26; Heb 7.24; 9.22)
2. Seal: Confirms & applies the benefits of Gospel, to our spiritual nourishment

### B. Must not be abused

1. Importance of Decorum (1Cor 11.20-21,33)
2. Importance of Discernment (1Cor 11.27-29)

## Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace

### A. Eating Spiritual Food

1. Nourishment (Jn 6.53)
2. We eat & drink by faith (Jn 6.54-56)

### B. Eating & Drinking for our Benefit: to our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace

1. Confirms our union with Christ (1Jn 1.3)
2. Confirms our communion with God (Rev 3.20)
3. Confirms our obligations & engagement to God

### C. What about Doubt?

LC 172. One who doubts of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it, and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity: in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed, for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labor to have his doubts resolved; and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, that he may be further strengthened.

1. Those who Doubt... and should not
2. Those who do *not* Doubt... but should
3. Those who do *not* Doubt... and should not (but be encouraged)

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### What is Doubt?

#### A. What Doubt is **not**:

1. Doubt is not unbelief (willful & deliberate refusal)
2. Doubt is not always bad (but Doubt *is* always serious)

#### B. What Doubt is

1. To be in "two minds" or to have a "divided heart" (Os Guinness, *Doubt* 17)  
- the heart is in suspension between faith and unbelief; the desire to *affirm* or to *negate*
2. Spectrum:

← unbelief	← unstable	<u>unsure</u>	→ sure	→ assured
skeptical		<b>doubt</b>		belief