

# Survey of Christian Theology.7

## The Sacraments





# Logistics & Learning Objectives:



1. Learning Objectives. Participants will gain an understanding of:
  - a. The biblical basis and purpose of the Sacraments
  - b. An overview of the Sacraments of Communion and Baptism.
  - c. Review several earlier topics
2. For more information please visit [studioscriptura.com](https://studioscriptura.com)



# Key Sources:

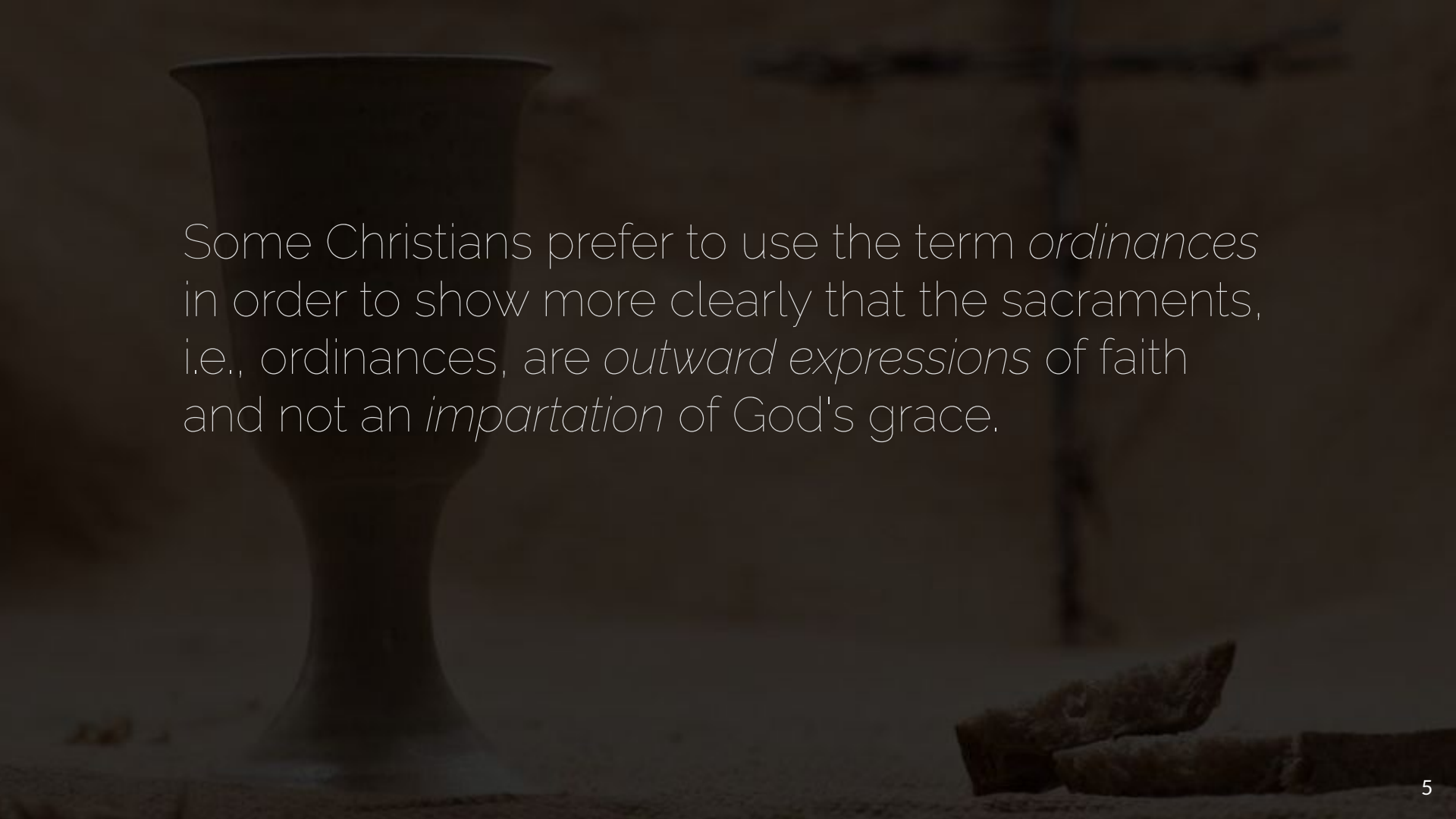
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A dark, moody photograph of a chalice and bread, serving as a background for the text. The chalice is on the left, and the bread is on the right. The lighting is low, creating a somber and contemplative atmosphere.

# What is a sacrament?


A sign or testimony of the beginning of, and commitment to, a new life by grace through faith in Christ.

A dark, moody photograph of a chalice and bread, serving as a background for the text. The chalice is on the left, and the bread is on the right. The lighting is low, creating a somber and contemplative atmosphere.

Some Christians prefer to use the term *ordinances* in order to show more clearly that the sacraments, i.e., ordinances, are *outward expressions* of faith and not an *impartation* of God's grace.



A sacrament is a physical symbol/sign of, and public testimony to, the actual spiritual reality of God's grace. Specifically, our Lord Jesus Christ's death is publicly celebrated with communion and His resurrection and our new life in Him is commemorated with our baptism.



"... it is a testimony of divine grace toward us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety towards Him."

John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

A dark, moody photograph of a chalice and bread on a table. The chalice is on the left, and the bread is on the right. The background is dark and out of focus, showing a cross-like shape. The text is overlaid in white.

Reminder

Reassurance

Reflection



# Baptism

Jesus commands that we baptize those who come to Him in faith and become His disciples. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Baptism is for those who consciously express their faith in Jesus as the Christ. "Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.' So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him." Acts 8:36-38



## Baptism *(continued)*



Baptism is an outward testimony of one's conversion.

"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' Acts 2:37-38

Baptism is the testimony of one beginning their new life of faith *in Christ*. Baptism is the great leveler of us all before the Lordship of Jesus Christ. "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:26-28

The word *baptism* means to *immerse*. It is the avenue of one telling the world that because of their faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are dead to their old life of sin, and have risen to a new life in Christ.

# What About Infant Baptism?

The foundational concept of Jesus' command is to baptize those who believe in Him as Savior and baptism is for that individual to testify to the world of their commitment to follow Him as Lord.

An infant is incapable of making or testifying to a conscious decision of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



## What About Infant Baptism? *(continued)*



Infant baptism has the outcome of indicating that an individual is a Christian by being born into a Christian family. The Bible, however, does not teach this.

Therefore, Christians who base their faith in the authority of Scripture, believe that baptism should take place after one is capable of individually deciding and declaring their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

# Communion

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-26



# Communion *(continued)*



1. Communion is a remembrance of a historic event.
2. The event of the Last Supper and Christ's Crucifixion are clearly presented in the 4 gospel narratives. "Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.'" Matthew 26:27-29
3. As a remembrance, communion is symbolic of the crucifixion.
4. It commemorates the beginning of the New Covenant with God's people and testifies the same to the world.
5. Communion should cause us to look back in awe at His death in our place and to look forward in joyful anticipation of His coming return for us.

# Communion *(continued)*

Communion plays an important role as we grow in grace as Christians:

"But let a man *examine* (test - prove) himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup." 1 Corinthians 11:28

Regular participation in the sacrament of communion is a time for the believer to examine their life and, with the conviction of the Holy Spirit, to see if there are any actions, attitudes, habits, or presumptuous sins of which the Christian needs to repent.

Communion is also a time to refocus our life *from* the crunch of daily activities *to* the Lord's return. Such a re-focusing prompts a reprioritization of how we are investing our remaining time on this earth.



# Some Additional Thoughts on the Sacraments

The early church placed considerable emphasis on unity, as they were the subject of persecution. Therefore, those who participated in the sacraments, rightly administered, were identified as part of the Christian community - the Church.

The expectation of each Christian is to publicly identify with Christ. The sacraments were, and still are, key avenues of publicly expressing one's commitment and faith in Christ. "But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."  
Matthew 10:33





# Some Additional Thoughts on the Sacraments *(continued)*

Ulrich Zwingli (January 1484 - October 1531) was a leader of the Reformation in Switzerland. Among his most notable contributions to the Reformation was his expository preaching as a key part of every Christian service.

Zwingli believed that the purpose of the sacraments was for believers to demonstrate their personal faith and to show that they were members of the body of believers.

The sacraments publicly inform the world that God's grace and forgiveness through Christ are, and continue to be, freely available to all who place their faith in his crucifixion and bodily resurrection for the forgiveness of their sins.

"Sacraments affirm the present faith of individual believers ... The believer, who is located in the present, is able to reflect on what God has done in the past, anticipate what God will do in the future, and deepen his faith and trust in God as a consequence." Alister McGrath



A few slides to review the  
theology topics we have  
covered thus far.



# Our Christian Beliefs - What we've covered thus far

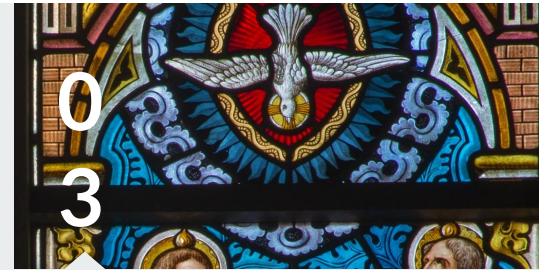


## Doctrine of God

One eternal, spiritual and personal God exists in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). He is the Creator, holy, all-powerful, all-knowing, just, the source of truth, and unchangeable.

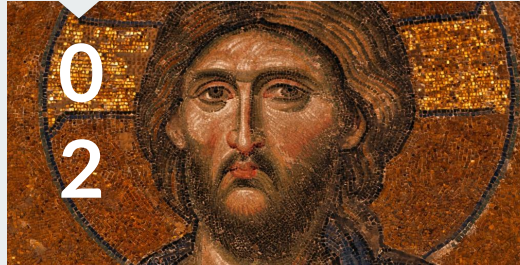
## The Person of Jesus Christ

Jesus is the second Person of the Trinity and is God incarnate. He reveals the character of God to us. Through His crucifixion and resurrection, He is the author of salvation, Son of God, Son of Man, and LORD. He is our Prophet, Priest, and King.



## The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and is the inspiration and illuminator of revelation, the Bible. He is the Church's comforter, sanctifier, and guide.



# Our Christian Beliefs - What we've covered thus far *(continued)*



## The Trinity

God is One and reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Although we are not able to fully comprehend the Trinity, it is the fundamental aspect of the Christian view of God. Human reason comes up short in its ability to grasp the glory of God, which is due to the majesty of God.

## Human Nature & Sin

Man is made in God's image and with free will. Man has abused (and continues to abuse) his free will by being disobedient to God. All have sinned, and sin darkens our mind and our ability to think clearly about life. It perverts our relationships, and the final outcome of sin is physical death and eternal separation from God.



## Salvation *(How do I get to Heaven?)*

The good news is that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus changes things. Through Jesus, God demonstrates His love toward us, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! When one confesses with their mouth that Jesus is LORD and believes in their heart that God has raised Him from the dead, they will be saved!



# The Nature & Attributes of God

Because God is transcendent, we can never use human words or human intellect to fully comprehend Him. Our words, and the following attributes, cannot provide an exhaustive understanding of God. But as we seek to understand God by looking at His nature and attributes, we differentiate God from all others. As in every area of theology, we must let the Scripture be our guide and not allow our minds to slip into the selfish motive of stating: "Well this is who God is to me."



## God is: Spirit

"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is *Spirit*, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." John 4:23-24



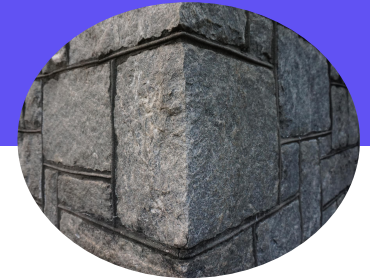
## Transcendent

No limitation can be assigned to God's essence. "God perceives and acts everywhere." (Hodge) "O Lord, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, Who have set Your glory above the heavens!" Psalm 8:1 "The Lord is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens." Psalm 113:4



## Eternal

God is the unmoved mover from before time. He exists outside the constraints of space and duration. "Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever You had formed the earth and the world, Even from *everlasting* to everlasting, You are God." Psalm 90:2 "The high and lofty One Who inhabits eternity" Isaiah 57:15



## Immutable

"For I am the Lord, I do not change" Malachi 3:6 God's unchangeable nature is a comfort to all in this ever-changing and perishing world. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." James 1:17

# The Nature & Attributes of God *(continued)*

The definition of God penned in the "Westminster Catechism": "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth." As we seek to understand God by meditating on His attributes, it would be haughty and arrogant to think we can ever truly and fully describe God in our words and fully understand who God is in our current human life. We do, see through a glass darkly. And know only in part. 1 Corinthians 13:12



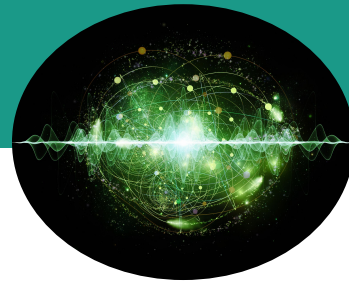
## All-Powerful

God speaks and it is done; "Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light." Genesis 1:3 "Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great *power* and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You." Jeremiah 32:17



## All-Knowing

God knows all that was, is, and is to be. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." Hebrews 4:13 "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good." Proverbs 15:3



## Self-Existent

"And God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.'" Exodus 3:14 "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself." John 5:26



## Creative

"In the beginning God *created* the heavens and the earth...And God said, 'Let there be light' Genesis 1:1,3 "God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did." Romans 4:17

# The Nature & Attributes of God *(continued)*

What is God really like? God is not far off and hidden. Not only does He desire for you to meet Him, but He desires to meet you. We get to know Him through His Word, prayer, and meditation on His word - and as we more fully grasp His attributes, we should seek to make Him known to the world!



## Just

When we regard God as the author of moral excellence in his dealings with His creatures, we conceive of Him as just. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Genesis 18:25 "For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth." Psalm 96:13



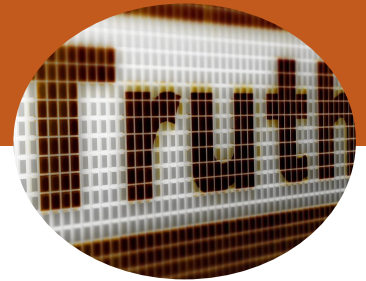
## Light

"God is *light* and in Him is no darkness at all." 1 John 1:5 "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." John 8:12 "The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light." Revelation 21:23



## Good

God's disposition is to promote happiness; to exercise kindness towards the miserable, the dilapidated, and disenfranchised. "No one is *good* but One, that is, God." Matthew 19:17 "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good!" Psalm 118:1



## Truth

God is the source of truth, He really is what and who He declares Himself to be, and He can be relied upon in all things. "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the *truth*, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6 "Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." Psalm 31:5

# The Nature & Attributes of God *(continued)*

"Our aim in studying the Godhead must be to better know God. Our concern must be to enlarge our acquaintance, not simply with the doctrine of God's *attributes*, but with the living God Himself, whose attributes they are." -J.I. Packer

"Am I a God near at hand," says the Lord, And not a God afar off? Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?' says the Lord; 'Do I not fill heaven and earth?' says the Lord." Jeremiah 23:23-24



## Merciful

Compassion and forgiveness toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish. "The Lord is *merciful* and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy." Psalm 103:8



## Jealous

God is fiercely protective and vigilant over His name and over those He watches. "For I, the Lord your God, am a *jealous* God" Exodus 20:5 "I will be jealous for My holy name." Ezekiel 39:25



## Love

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is *love*." 1 John 4:7-8 "And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16



## Holy

God is free from all aspects of moral evil and is the ultimate of moral excellence. "Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are *holy*." Revelation 15:4a "Exalt the Lord our God, And worship at His holy hill; For the Lord our God is holy." Psalm 99:9



It is important to know what the Bible teaches about how we outwardly display our inward beliefs.

The sacraments of baptism and communion have been universally accepted since the time of the New Testament church.

It's important to review previous classes so you continue to build precept upon precept.

A photograph of a man with a beard, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, with his hands clasped in prayer. The photo is tilted and has a white border.A close-up photograph of a hand raised in prayer, with fingers spread. The background is blurred, showing a person's face and a brick wall.

So What



As an adult, have you been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to testify that Jesus is your Lord and that He has raised you to new life?

Do you regularly, and in the community of the Church, partake of communion to examine your life and to show forth your belief in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins?

When will you carve out time to review previous classes of FiDE?

Now What

