

“Foundations of Faith”
King of Kings Lutheran Church
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Two Great Gifts from God

- 1) Given at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry:

Matthew 3:13-17, ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

The 1st Gift: _____.

- 2) Given near the end of Jesus’ public ministry:

Matthew 26:26-29, ²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸ for this is my blood of the ^[c] covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

The 2nd Gift: _____.

THE TRUTH OF GOD’S PRESENCE: THE SACRAMENTS

- 1) What is a Sacrament?

- Commanded by God
- Connected to an earthly, physical element
- Delivers God’s forgiveness of our sins (*a means of grace*)

a) A visible expression of the Gospel

b) Another way to know the Gospel is for me personally

- 2) What are the two Sacraments given by Christ?

a) Baptism (commanded by Jesus, connected to water, promises forgiveness of sins)

b) Lord’s Supper (commanded by Jesus, connected to bread and wine, promises the forgiveness of sins)

- 3) Other church bodies define other rites as sacraments by human decree, even though these rites do not have the scriptural promise of the forgiveness of sins.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is God coming to you and claiming you. It is God marking you through washing and, through washing, cleansing you from your sin. It is God breathing into you His Spirit and new life. It is God's promise of covenant love now established with you and announced to all beings, seen and unseen. Baptism is your assurance that you are His.

What scripture says about Baptism:

Matthew 28:19-20, ¹⁹ *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰ *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

- In Baptism we are marked with the name of God.
- By God giving His name to us, He formally establishes and announces His new covenant relationship of love and forgiveness with us.
- Baptism is not all. It is only the beginning. We spend a lifetime conforming our new life to Jesus' life and way.

John 3:1-6, *"Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." ³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*

- Through Baptism we are born again, not of our body but of our spirit.
- This happens not because of the water but because of the Holy Spirit. However, God has chosen that this new birth happens with water by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:36-39, *"³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." ³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."*

- Through Baptism, we receive from God the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- This promise of gifts from God through Baptism is for adults and children.

- Many church bodies turn this gift inside out by making it a new law – something we do for God rather than something that God does for us.
- Baptism is all about grace: washing, forgiving, restoring life through the giving of His spirit.
- Baptism is something God does for us. It is not something we do for God. He does the washing, forgiving, giving and promising.

Galatians 3:26-27, *“²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on (clothed yourselves with) Christ.”*

- Through Baptism we are officially adopted into the family of God.
- Through Baptism we are covered in the grace and forgiveness of Jesus.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22, *“²¹ And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²² and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”*

Romans 6:1-4, *“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”*

- Through Baptism Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross becomes ours, and His resurrection from the dead becomes our resurrection into a new life that will not end.
- Our eternal life begins at Baptism. We no longer have to live afraid of death.
- We are to daily remember our Baptism and use it as an opportunity to choose again to turn away from our sin and to Jesus.

Why must we also baptize babies?

- a) God tells us to!
 - See both **Matthew 28:19** and **Acts 2:39**.
 - Some may say Jesus didn’t specifically say “babies” when giving the command to baptize. He also doesn’t specifically say *you* are to be baptized either, but you were. Why? Because all nations means *all!*
- b) All people are born sinful by nature and are in need of salvation.
 - **Psalms 51:5**, *“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”*
 - There is no Biblical support for claiming children are born innocent and held unaccountable until some later age (a so-called “age of accountability” is not found in scripture).

- c) The example of Old Testament circumcision at eight days of age.
- Circumcision marked the child as God's child. God did not wait for the child to grow up and claim Him. He claimed the child and commanded the parents to then raise the child knowing their Heavenly Father.
- d) Babies are able to receive a blessing whether they are able to ask for it or not.

Luke 18:15-17, *"¹⁵ Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. ¹⁶ But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁷ Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."*

- e) Babies can have a saving relationship with God through faith even if they cannot yet express it on their own because faith comes from God, not from us.

Psalms 22:9, *"Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts."*

OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT BAPTISM:

- 1) What about pre-born or newborn babies who die before Baptism?
- 2) Can we be saved even if we are not baptized? (See **Luke 23:43**)
- 3) How should we baptize? Submerge, sprinkle, etc.?
- 4) If someone is baptized in a Christian church with a Biblical baptism do they need to be re-baptized if they become a Christian later in life?
- 5) Does being baptized automatically save every person who is baptized?
- 6) Think about this phrase: Baptism is necessary for salvation, but it is not absolutely necessary!

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

What scripture says about the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion):

Matthew 26:26-28, ²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17, ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

1 Corinthians 11:23-29, ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.²⁸ Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself."

SUMMARIZING SCRIPTURE'S TEACHING ON THE LORD'S SUPPER:

- 1) Words mean things. "Is" means is!
 - a) The Biblical (and therefore Lutheran) view: "Is" means reality. We cannot explain how Jesus is present with His body and blood in the sacrament, just that He is present! The key phrase that described this is "_____."
 - b) The Roman Catholic definition of Christ's presence is **transubstantiation** (the changing of substances), transferring from bread and wine into flesh and blood.
 - c) The Reformed view (which includes most other Protestant bodies) is this: the finite cannot bear or contain the infinite. Therefore, the Lord's Supper is only symbolic – a

representation of Jesus' body and blood. Such a view conflicts with the deity of Jesus. He is capable of anything!

Colossians 2:9, *"⁹For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily."*

d) The Lord's Supper is not a placebo (something without actual power).

2) What happens in the Lord's Supper?

a) Jesus _____ himself for us. (Like the burning bush in Exodus)

- He comes to where we are.
- He is able to do this because He is not only all man but also all God!

b) We receive the _____ of sins.

- Notice who is gathered around Jesus that night.
- The Supper is for sinners. If you are one who trusts in Christ, then come!

c) We are invited to _____ (*or commune*) at His table.

- In Bible times, to eat at someone's table was to announce a desire to be friends with them, to be in community with them. This is why Jesus kept getting in trouble with the authorities – because he ate at the tables of "sinners."
- Likewise, Jesus reaches out to us in grace and forgiveness, and invites us to accept His friendship (**John 15:15**) by eating at His table.
- This is where the term "communion" comes from.

d) We are all joined together as _____.

- We are the Body of Christ as we partake of the Lord's Supper together.
- We dare not look down on the others that Jesus has invited to His table.

e) There is a responsibility of _____ that comes along with the privilege of receiving this Supper.

Key phrases from **1 Corinthians 11:27-29**-

- Whoever eats or drinks in an **unworthy** manner (that is, does not believe that Jesus is truly present in the bread and wine; not how good or bad you have been).
- One ought to **examine himself**.
- Anyone who eats or drinks **without recognizing** the body of the Lord.

So that we may eat and drink in a worthy manner, we are to examine ourselves for what? A recognition of the presence of the Lord with His body and blood. This happens through simply believing that what Jesus has said is true!

3) When is a person rightly prepared to receive this Sacrament?

“Fasting and other outward preparations serve a good purpose. However, **that person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words: given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.** But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words *for you* require simply a believing heart.” – Martin Luther, Small Catechism

The above implies a belief in our need for forgiveness because we are sinners. So, it is of great importance to confess and repent of our sins as part of our preparation for the Lord’s Supper. If we don’t have sins that need to be forgiven, we don’t need Jesus or His Supper. But if we have sins (and we do) then we need to repent of them. However, such preparations are not a way of making ourselves worthy! Only faith in the words of Jesus created by the Holy Spirit can make us worthy. Rather, these preparations simply prepare our hearts and minds to benefit from the Supper in the fullest way.