

Liturgy: The Sacraments

Communion

The Lord's Supper

Family dinner as we know it, with parents and children at a single table, was a Christian invention, not some "natural" form of family life. The family dinner is a reflection of the Eucharistic meal, the meal that welcomed all members of Christ to the table. Opposition to communion of children is pagan and seeks to reverse the revolutionary table fellowship established by the Church. It is an attempt to return to Egypt. – Peter Leithart, *Against Christianity*, p. 103

Too often the Reformed tradition has degenerated into a morbid form of self-analysis that is actually much closer to medieval piety than to the first Reformers. We are trained to stand outside ourselves and adopt a stance of objectivity in order to examine our performance, the strength of our faith, the consistency of our obedience. If our life matches our profession, then we are assured of our standing in Christ. Then we “know that we know” (1 Jn. 2:3). This is not, I think, what the New Testament means when it talks about assurance. “Knowing that we know” means experiencing the assurance that we are in a relationship of love—a “knowing” relationship—with God in Christ through the Spirit. We come to this experience of assurance in the midst of our abiding in Christ, not by standing outside our relationship with Christ and evaluating it as outsiders. We come to that experience as we trustingly, believingly remember and improve our baptisms, hear the Word of our beloved Husband, and feast as His Bride at His table. – Leithart, *The Baptized Body*, pg. 106

1. ~~Paedocommunion~~ Covenant Communion
 - a. All baptized persons are admitted to the Table
 - b. No further requirement is needed of any baptized person to come to the Table
 - c. Not based on our conviction/evidence that children are expressing some kind of faith (although the Bible teaches that children can express age-appropriate faith).
2. Communion as about all the feasts of the Old Covenant in which kids participated
 - a. Many opposed to covenant communion argue that it is unclear whether children participated in the Passover. They tend to draw a 1-1 correlation between Passover & the Lord's supper. This is misguided as the Lord's Supper takes up a number of OT types into itself (not just Passover).
 - b. **Deuteronomy 16:10–17:**
 - c. **Deuteronomy 12:10–12:**
 - d. **Leviticus 22:10–14:**
 - i. Reoccurring theme – circumcised persons can partake of sacramental food.
 - e. **1 Samuel 1:1–5:**
 - i. Likely the Feast of Tabernacles but we don't know.
3. The issue of 1 Corinthians

- a. **1 Corinthians 11:27–29:**
 - i. The argument is that because young children are unable to “examine” themselves and unable to “discern the body” they will eat and drink judgement upon themselves if they are permitted to the table.
- b. Exegetical irony!
 - i. What is the context of 1 Cor. 11:27-29?
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 11:17–22 – a passage entirely about factions & disunity in the church.
 - 1. It is exegetically difficult (if not impossibly) to create an argument for making *divisions* in the church (adults come the table and children don’t) in a passage where Paul is criticizing division in the church.
- c. Broader context of 1 Corinthians 11.
 - i. In 1 Cor. 10 Paul uses Israel’s OT history as an example for why the Corinthians should heed what he is saying and what happened to Israel so that they don’t fall into the same pattern (idolatry + unrepentance = falling under God’s judgement)
 - 1. **1 Corinthians 10:1–6:**
 - ii. Paul draws a parallel between the baptism and Lord’s Supper of the Corinthians and the baptism of the Hebrews into Moses and their eating and drinking of Christ in the wilderness.
 - 1. Who was baptized? » Men, women, and children
 - 2. Who partook of the “spiritual food and drink”? » Men, women, and children.
 - iii. One chapter before 1 Cor. 11:27-29 Paul has given an example of baptism and “spiritual food/drink” from the OT and said this is an example for the Corinthians.
 - 1. In the sake of the “spiritual food/drink” children participated.
 - 2. How is it possible to *not* incorporate this into one’s understanding of 1 Cor. 11?