

Created for Worship

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Part 6: "Corporate Worship in the Sacraments"

Preview

What is the difference between a sacrament and an ordinance?

- *Sacrament* from the Latin "sacrae," to consecrate, "sacramentum," an oath of allegiance. God's action is emphasized. Promises signified/sealed. Grace applied by the Spirit to believers through a visible word.
- *Ordinance* meaning ordained or commanded by Jesus. The believer's obedience is emphasized. Christ's commands are enacted as remembrances and public testimonies of faith.

Our EFCA confession/statement of faith blends both:

The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Watch video

If we only debate the sacraments, we can miss the blessings

The Biblical story of the sacraments goes back to the very beginning

- The gospel was first announced in the Garden (Gen 3:15)
- It was formalized in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1-4)
- Then illustrated in a covenantal ceremony, with God taking both parts (Gen 15:7-12; 17-18)
- Then finally in the tangible sign of circumcision (Gen 17:9-10)

"The sacraments are the visible Word." – Augustine

"God, knowing our faith is feeble, in His exceeding kindness props it up on all sides." - Calvin

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The Old and New Testaments highlight two sacraments/ordinances:

- OT Circumcision & NT Baptism: Initiation into the covenant community
- OT Passover & NT Lord's Supper: Continuing participation in the covenant community

Both sacraments point to this reality: We belong to God, He has made a way for us

- They are a sign and a seal of God's promises to us, not our promises to Him (Rom 4:9-12)