

Lecture 20- Sacraments, Weddings & Funerals, & Resources

And as our Lord Jesus Christ, not content with having once offered his body and blood upon the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, has also destined them to us as nourishment for eternal life, so grant us of thy goodness, that we may receive this great blessing with true sincerity of heart and ardent desire, and endued with sure faith, enjoy together his body and blood, or rather himself entire... that we may no longer live in ourselves, and after our own will, which is altogether depraved, but he may live in us, and conduct us to a holy, happy, and everlasting life, thus making us truly partakers of the new and eternal covenant, even the covenant of grace.

From John Calvin, for use in the dispensing of the Lord's Supper, in "Forms of Prayer for the Church."

Key Concepts

- Sacraments – Administration in context of corporate worship
- Weddings and funerals
- Finding worship resources

Lecture Objectives

- Leading a wedding or funeral service
- Look at the use of the sacraments in worship
- Understanding Calvin's view of Christ's true presence in the Lord's Supper

Preliminary Questions

- What do you think is most important to remember when leading a funeral service? What about a wedding service?
- What is the best way to set the tone for a coming to the Lord's Supper, if it is to be a "celebration" (and not just a remembrance)?
- How would you encourage people to "remember their baptism", and what does that mean for you?

Sacraments, Weddings & Funerals, & Resources

I. The Sacraments Considered

- A. Signs and seals of the covenant of grace
 1. Drama of redemption
 2. Means of grace and growth
 3. Made effectual by Holy Spirit
 4. Context of corporate worship and connected to Word (Overseen by elders)
 5. Received by faith
 6. Close connection yet distinction between sign and thing signified
- B. Baptism as covenant entrance
 1. Circumcision - Baptism
 2. Acts 2:38; Colossians 2:11-12
- C. Lord's Supper as covenant renewal
 1. Passover - Lord's Supper
 2. Matthew 26; I Corinthians 11; I Corinthians 5:7

II. The Administration of Baptism

- A. Baptism by water - sprinkling or pouring (immersion valid but not necessary)
- B. Covenant sign of our union with Christ and ingrafting into Him
- C. In context of worship service
 1. Explain the meaning

2. Reading of Scripture
 3. Vows of parents and congregation and recipient if believer
 4. Prayer
 5. Elders present and assisting
 6. Congregation remember baptism
 7. Singing of praise and celebration God's grace
- D. Paedo-communion (infant) vs. Credo-communion (young age)
- III. The Administration of the Lord's Supper
- A. Commune with Christ through bread and wine (grape juice acceptable)
 - B. Feeding upon Christ to be strengthened in our faith
 - C. Past - present - future dynamics represented in Lord's Supper
 - D. Weekly preferable – sensitivity to history and contextual dynamics
 - E. Covenant meals in the Bible
 1. Genesis 13; Exodus 12 and 24; Leviticus 1
 2. Matthew 26; Revelation 3:20; Revelation 19
 - F. In context of worship service
 1. Explain the meaning
 2. Reading of Scripture
 3. Fencing of the table (Book of Church Order 58-4)
 4. Repentance and confession of faith
 5. Profession of faith
 6. Prayer of thanksgiving
 7. Singing before, during, and after options
 8. Elders present and serving
 9. Options: rows, come forward, large circle
 10. Horizontal side - right relationships with one another
 - G. Christ's presence in Lord's Supper
 1. Calvin – “true presence” (Calhoun) – Harmony of Gospels 3:136:
It is a mistake “to imagine any other kind of eating than that which draws into us the life of Christ by the secret power of the Spirit, and which we obtain by faith alone.”
 2. The Holy Spirit “unites things separated in space” through the vehicle of the Lord's Supper and by His descent effects communion with the whole person of Christ in lifting us up to heaven
 3. “Sursum Corda”: “Lift up your hearts!” – “We lift them up to You Lord!”
Westminster Shorter Catechism

#91: How do the sacraments become effectual means of salvation?

The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them; but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

#92: What is a Sacrament?

A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ; wherein, by sensible signs, Christ, and the benefits of the new covenant, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.

#93: Which are the sacraments of the New Testament?

The sacraments of the New Testament are, Baptism, and the Lord's supper.

#94: What is baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

#95: To whom is baptism to be administered?

Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.

#96: What is the Lord's supper?

The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.

#97: What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's supper?

It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's upper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.

IV. Weddings (see Appendix J)

V. Funerals: Part one and two (see Appendix K)

VI. Finding Resources (see Appendix L)

VII. A Philosophy of Worship for a Local Church

A. What is the overall philosophy of ministry of the local church?

B. How does the worship of the church relate to the overall ministry?

C. What does the Bible command for worship?

1. Defining the regulative principle of worship

2. Applying the regulative principle of worship

D. What is personality and heart worship expression of the L.C.?

1. Handling multiple personal preferences

2. Worship expressions that "feel" like our church family

3. How does musical expression reflect this personality?

E. How will we express "reverent joy" in our worship?

F. How will we make worship "intelligible" to our context?

1. Will the covenant children and new believers understand?

2. Will unbelievers present be unnecessarily confused?

G. Does our worship promote the "unity and purity" of the church?

H. Does our worship draw on the "richness of the past" and the "freshness of the present" each week?

I. How will our worship use the giftedness of our congregation?

J. Will our worship engage the whole person: heart, mind, will, emotions and body?

K. Is our worship Christ-centered, Word-centered, Gospel-Centered, and grace-Centered?

L. Does our worship service promote a "lifestyle of worship"?