

Catechetical Sermon, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 25, "The Sacraments"**

Scripture Lesson: 1 Corinthians 10:1-22

<b>Lesson Aim</b>	To understand what the Sacraments are and how they function in the life of the Christian.
<b>Steps to Learning</b>	Read the <a href="#">Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 25</a> and <a href="#">1 Corinthians 10:1-22</a> . Discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
<b>Discuss</b>	<p><b>Discuss as a family: What has been your understanding of the Sacraments? Why do they seem so difficult to understand?</b></p> <p><b>How do we define the Sacraments?</b> Question and answer 66 of the Heidelberg Catechism is good to memorize. To summarize this answer: A Sacrament is something we can see, feel and touch that symbolizes (signifies) and validates (seals) Christ's work for us and in us through faith. It is a means through which God gives us grace.</p> <p><b>The Reformed and biblical understanding of the Sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper stands in contrast to the Evangelical and Roman Catholic understandings. What are those and what is unique about the Reformed understanding?</b> To simplify, Evangelicals understand the Sacraments merely to be signs and Roman Catholics understand them to impart grace necessarily merely by receiving them. The Reformed understand that the Sacraments actually work to impart grace as they are received by faith. The Belgic Confession of faith summarize" the Scriptures by teaching that the "Sacraments nourish and sustain our faith."</p> <p><b>What does Paul teach in 1 Corinthians 10 about the way in which the Sacraments work?</b> Paul speaks of the Israelites' experience in the desert, how the cloud, the sea, the manna and the water from the rock provided earthly benefits. Yet, as Israel received these things from the hand of God by faith, there worked as Sacraments.</p> <p><b>"The rock" is especially an example of an Old Testament Sacrament. How so?</b> Paul says that "the Rock was Christ." He doesn't mean that the rock literally was the preincarnate Christ following them around. Rather, Paul teaches that Christ was connected to the rock sacramentally. Paul is using a figure of speech here called "metonymy," where the name of the thing signified (Christ) is transferred to the sign (the rock). As the Israelites drank from the rock, receiving the physical benefits through faith, they received the grace of God, which strengthen their faith in the God who provides.</p>
<b>Bible Reading</b>	<a href="#">Psalms 104-110</a> (Reading through the Psalms)