

Discipleship: An Introduction to Systematic Theology and Apologetics

The Doctrines of Redemption: Key Protestant
Reformation Doctrines

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Key Protestant Reformation Doctrines

1. **Authority:** Scripture

2. **Sacraments:**

- 2 vs 7
- Protestant division over the LORD'S Supper and Baptism

3. **Salvation:**

- The Fall
- The Atonement
- The Role of the Holy Spirit
- Common Grace vs Saving Grace
- Regeneration
- Conversion (Faith and Repentance)
- Justification (Faith vs Works and Grace vs Merit)
- Adoption
- Sanctification
- Death and the Intermediate State
- Union with Christ
- The Doctrines of Grace
- Other Topics of Interest?

What are the 7 Sacraments?

The seven sacraments are:

1. The Eucharist
 2. Baptism
 3. Penance
 4. Confirmation
 5. Marriage
 6. Ordination
 7. Extreme Unction
- Peter Lombard (1100 – 1160) was the first to list the 7 sacraments.
 - The Council of Trent (1545 – 1563) codified them as official Roman Catholic doctrine.

2 versus 7 Sacraments – What is a sacrament?

- Sacrament is derived from the Latin word *sacramentum* (a military oath of enlistment)
- Augustine described a sacrament as a visible promise.
- Alternately a sacrament may be thought of as a visible sign of an invisible grace.
- Because God is beyond our ability to fully understand He has established physical signs to illustrate his promises and to comfort and strengthen our faith in the promises.
 - Baptism = God forgiving our sin by washing away our guilt
 - Lord's Supper = Christ nourishes us spiritually just as food and drink nourish us physically
- A sacrament is only a foretaste of experiencing the actual promise.
 - Free of sin and fellowshiping in heaven with Jesus

2 versus 7 Sacraments – Sacrament versus Ordinance

- Some Protestants (especially Baptists) have been reluctant to use the word sacrament preferring the word ordinance.
 - Roman Catholics believe baptism and the eucharist actually **convey grace** without requiring faith from the person receiving them.
 - Ordinance refers to Christ ordaining baptism and the Lord's Supper.
 - **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19)**
 - **Do this in remembrance of me. (1 Corinthians 11:24-25)**
- Many other Protestants have been willing to use the term sacrament without endorsing the Roman Catholic position.
- In general Protestants have used the words interchangeably when referring to baptism and the Lord's Supper because they have always been clear to explain what they mean. So there is no doctrinal difference between ordinance and sacrament among Protestants. **However**, the Protestant understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper has always been doctrinally different from the Roman Catholic view.

The Reformation (16th century)- Historical Review

- June 15, 1520, the Pope warned Luther with a papal bull that he risked excommunication unless he recanted 41 sentences drawn from his writings, including the *Ninety-five Theses*, within 60 days.
- August 1520 Luther writes ***To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*** – calls on the nobility to make the reforms Rome refuses to make.
- September 1520 Johann Eck posts the Bull throughout Germany.
- October 1520 Luther writes ***On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*** – Attacks the Catholic interpretation of the Sacraments.
- October 1520 Luther receives the Papal Bull declaring it condemns Christ and a Bull of the Antichrist.
- November 1520 Luther writes ***On the Freedom of a Christian*** – lays out justification by faith alone It was published with an open letter to Pope Leo X.
- December 10, 1520 (60 days after receiving the Bull) Luther lead several hundred professors and students outside the Wittenberg city wall and burned the Bull under a large oak tree along with several books of canon law and some of Eck's writings.
- April 16 – 18, 1521 Luther before the Diet of Worms

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

- In 1520 Luther wrote a book entitled *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*.
- While many other people have written extensively on the subject of the Sacraments, Luther's work essentially once and for all established the basic Protestant understanding that there are only two sacraments.
- *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* was written in a similar format to Luther's 95 Thesis and included nine sections containing 230 Paragraphs/Thesis/Points.
 1. Introduction and Indulgences – 18 paragraphs
 2. **The Eucharist** – 79 paragraphs
 3. **Baptism** – 48 paragraphs
 4. Penance – 20 paragraphs
 5. Confirmation – 3 paragraphs
 6. Marriage – 27 paragraphs
 7. Ordination – 17 paragraphs
 8. Extreme Unction – 11 paragraphs
 9. Closing Comments – 7 paragraphs

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

- Luther saw a true Sacrament as meeting two criteria:
 1. A Sacrament was clearly commanded by the New Testament for all believers.
 2. A Sacrament was uniquely Christian.

Sacrament	Clearly Commanded by the NT	Uniquely Christian
The Eucharist	YES	YES
Baptism	YES	YES
Penance	NO	NO
Confirmation	NO	NO
Marriage	NO/YES	NO
Holy Orders	NO	NO
Extreme Unction	NO	YES

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Introduction and Indulgences:

1.1 Like it or not, I am compelled to learn more every day, with so many and such able masters vying with one another to improve my mind. Some two years ago I wrote a little book on indulgences, which I now deeply regret having published. For at the time I still clung to the Roman tyranny with great superstition and held that indulgences should not be altogether rejected, seeing they were approved by the common consent of men. Nor was this to be wondered at, for I was then engaged single-handed in my Sisyphean task. Since then, however, through the kindness of Sylvester and the friars, who so strenuously defended indulgences, I have come to see that they are nothing but an fraud of the Roman flaterers by which they rob people of their faith and fortunes. I wish I could convince the booksellers and all my readers to burn up the whole of my writings on indulgences and to substitute for them this proposition: Indulgences are a Swindler's Trick of the Roman flaterers.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

The Eucharist:

- While Luther distanced himself from Rome he remains at odds with many Protestants. This will be addressed as division among Protestants.

2.1 Now, about the Sacrament of the Bread, the most important of all sacraments:

2.2 Let me tell you what progress I have made in my studies on the administration of this sacrament. For when I published my treatise on the Eucharist, I clung to the common usage, being in no way concerned with the question whether the papacy was right or wrong. But now, challenged and attacked, no, forcibly thrust into the arena, I shall freely speak my mind, let all the papists laugh or weep together.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Baptism:

- While Luther tried to distance himself from Rome he remains at odds with many Protestants. This will be addressed as division among Protestants.

3.1 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to the riches of His mercy has preserved in His Church this sacrament at least, untouched and untainted by the ordinances of men, and has made it free to all nations and every estate of mankind, nor suffered it to be oppressed by the filthy and godless monsters of greed and superstition. For He desired that by it little children, incapable of greed and superstition, might be initiated and sanctified in the simple faith of His Word. Even today baptism's chief blessing is for them. But if this sacrament were to be given to adults and older people, I think it could not possibly have retained its power and its glory against the tyranny of greed and superstition which has everywhere laid waste to divine things. Doubtless the wisdom of the flesh would here too have devised its preparations and worthiness's, its reservations, restrictions, and I know not what other snares for taking money, until water fetched as high a price as parchment does now.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Baptism:

3.2 But Satan, though he could not quench the power of baptism in little children, nevertheless succeeded in quenching it in all adults, so that scarcely anyone calls to mind their baptism and still fewer glory in it. **So many other ways have they discovered of ridding themselves of their sins and of reaching heaven.** The source of these false opinions is that dangerous saying of St. Jerome's – either unhappily phrased or wrongly interpreted – which he terms penance "the second plank" after the shipwreck, as if baptism were not penance. Accordingly, when men fall into sin, they despair of "the first plank," which is the ship, as though it had gone under, and fasten all their faith on the second plank, that is, penance. This has produced those endless burdens of vows, religious works, satisfactions, pilgrimages, indulgences, and sects, from this has arisen that flood of books, questions, opinions and human traditions, which the world cannot contain. So that this tyranny plays worse havoc with the Church of God than any tyrant ever did with the Jewish people or with any other nation under heaven.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Baptism:

3.3 It was the duty of the pontiffs to abate this evil, and with all diligence to lead Christians to the true understanding of baptism, so that they might know what manner of men they are and how Christians ought to live. But instead of this, their work is now to lead the people as far astray as possible from their baptism, to immerse all men in the flood of their oppression, and to cause the people of Christ, as the prophet says, to forget Him days without number. (Jeremiah 2:32) How unfortunate are all who bear the name of pope today! Not only do they not know or do what popes should do, but they are ignorant of what they ought to know and do. They fulfill the saying in Isaiah 56: "His watchmen are all blind, they are all ignorant. The shepherds themselves knew no understanding. All have declined into their own way, every one after his own gain."

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Penance:

- Initially Luther accepted Penance (confession) as a sacrament though he took much umbrage with what he saw as the corruption of the sacrament by Rome.

4.1 We come in the third place to the sacrament of penance. On this subject I have already given no little offense by my published treatise and disputations, in which I have amply set forth my views. These I must now briefly rehearse, in order to unmask the tyranny that is rampant here no less than in the sacrament of the bread. For because these two sacraments furnish opportunity for gain and profit, the greed of the shepherds rages in them with incredible zeal against the flock of Christ; although baptism, too, has sadly declined among adults and become the servant of avarice, as we have just seen in our discussion of vows.

4.2 This is the first and chief abuse of this sacrament: They have utterly abolished the sacrament itself, so that there is not a vestige of it left. For they have overthrown both the word of divine promise and our faith, in which this as well as other sacraments consists.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Penance:

They have applied to their tyranny the word of promise which Christ speak in Matthew 16:19, "Whatsoever you shall bind," etc., in Matthew 18:18, "Whatsoever ye shall bind," etc., and in John, the last chapter, (John 20:23) "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them," etc. In these words the faith of penitents is aroused, to the obtaining of remission of sins. But in all their writing, teaching and preaching their sole concern has been, not to teach Christians what is promised in these words, or what they ought to believe and what great comfort they might find in them, but only to extend their own tyranny far and wide through force and violence, until it has come to such a pass that some of them have begin to command the very angels in heaven and to boast in incredible mad wickedness of having in these words obtained the right to a heavenly and an earthly rule, and of possessing the power to bind even in heaven. Thus they say nothing of the saving faith of the people, but babble only of the despotic power of the pontiffs, while Christ speaks not at all of power, but only of faith.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Penance:

- Luther changed his mind later in his ministry once he came to see the Book of James as a legitimate book.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:16)

1. James 5:16 does not require confessing our sins to a priest.
2. It does not require an enumeration of every sin (impossible because of the Fall and the pervasiveness of sin).
3. Rome elevated penance to a blasphemous necessary work for salvation which meant trusting in Christ's work on the cross by faith in Christ alone was somehow inadequate.
4. There was no clear command from Christ for the sacrament of penance.

2 versus 7 Sacraments - *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

Penance:

- The Catholic tradition of listing the number and kinds of one's sins in regular, private confessions became standard practice after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.
- 50 years ago, many Catholics would not have thought of accepting the Eucharist until after they'd cleansed their souls.
- Between 1965 and 1975, according to the National Opinion Research Council, the proportion of Catholics who confessed monthly fell from 38 percent to 17 percent. A 1997 Roper poll found only 10% confessed once a month.
- The program of renewal for the church that emerged from the Vatican II council said almost nothing about penance and reconciliation. The church's emphasis after Vatican II (1965) seemed to be less on guilt and damnation and more on love and forgiveness. The sacrament was given its current kinder, gentler name—reconciliation. This seemed to reduce the stakes: If priests rarely talked about going to hell anymore, why bother confessing to them?