

CONFESSING OUR FAITH

westminster larger catechism

Q 161. How do the sacraments become effectual means of sanctification?

A The sacraments become effectual means of salvation, not by any power in themselves, or any virtue derived from the piety or intention of him by whom they are administered, but only by the working of the Holy Ghost, and the blessing of Christ, by whom they are instituted.¹

1. 1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 8:13, 23; 1 Cor. 3:5–7; 1 Cor. 1:12–17; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Cor. 6:11.

Q 162. What is a sacrament?

A A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his church,¹ to signify, seal, and exhibit² unto those that are within the covenant of grace,³ the benefits of his mediation;⁴ to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces;⁵ to oblige them to obedience;⁶ to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another;⁷ and to distinguish them from those that are without.⁸

1. Gen. 17:7, 10; Ex. 12; Matt. 28:19; Matt. 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor. 11:22–26. 2. Rom. 4:11; 1 Cor. 11:24–25. 3. Rom. 15:8; Ex. 12:48; Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:27, 29. 4. Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 10:16. 5. Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:27. 6. Rom. 6:3–4; 1 Cor. 10:21. 7. Eph. 4:2–5; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Cor. 10:16–17. 8. Eph. 2:11–12; Gen. 34:14.

Q 163. What are the parts of a sacrament?

A The parts of a sacrament are two; the one an outward and sensible sign, used according to Christ's own appointment; the other an inward and spiritual grace thereby signified.¹

1. Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; Titus 3:5; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4.

Q 164. How many sacraments hath Christ instituted in his church under the new testament?

A Under the new testament Christ hath instituted in his church only two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper.¹

1. Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 11:20, 23; Matt. 26:26–28.

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