

SACRAMENTS AND THE CHURCH

THE SACRED WORKS THAT SPARKED 95 PROTESTS

*"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand,
and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."*

~ Romans 5:2

1. Introduction

- a. A preface to the series on Luther's 95 theses of protest against Catholic excesses
- b. To understand their context, understand sacraments (religious works)
- c. Sacraments are the heart of all religion, and have no place in the church
- d. We are stewards of the mysteries, which are not the sacraments - 1 Cor 4:1

2. What are Sacraments

- a. 1 of the 4 parts of the CCC concerns sacraments – what they think is the mystery
- b. Sacraments are the sacred mysteries communicated through rituals/works/services
- c. Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing the Sick, Holy Orders, Matrimony
- d. Protestants, Baptists, and others have limited it to 2: baptism and the Lord's supper
- e. "An outward visible sign of an inward grace", "a means of grace", "holy mysteries"
- f. Saving grace is conferred, confirmed, or testified in sacraments – w/o them you lack
- g. Speaking or acting contrary to the sacraments is ... sacrilege.

3. Sacraments Contrary to Grace

- a. They are contrary to the body of Christ and the dispensation of God's grace freely to all
- b. → Romans 11:6 – If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise...
- c. → Col 2:19-22 – They were beguiled by unrevealed mysteries, rites, and ceremonies!
 - i. To charm, to divert, to delude by things that are pleasing or flattering.
 - ii. Baptist "symbolic acts of obedience..." are signs. Jews required signs – 1Co 1:22
 - iii. Putting the gospel in symbols, allegories, and shadows is hiding the gospel.
- d. The mystery has been revealed → Rom 16:25, Eph 3:4, 3:9
- e. We are justified by faith (without works), and have access (means) by faith – Rom 5:2
- f. We do not need to eat the body of Christ to receive grace, we are the body of Christ.
- g. We do not need to be anointed with oil to receive the Spirit – 1 Cor 3:16, Eph 1:13
- h. There is not a special gift given to "priests"; we all have the same access Eph 2:18, 3:12
- i. The mystery of marriage is Christ and the church – not a means of grace – Eph 5:32

4. Sacraments Contrary to Faith

- a. The sacred things in this dispensation all received by faith, not performance of a rite.
- b. Christ finished work or continual sacramental works; sufficient grace or more grace; faith without works or faith alone; God's word or the ordination ceremony.
- c. Crucified to the world or there is more of this world that can help us – water, oil, etc.
 - i. Gal 6:14 – Our glory is in Christ's cross – our faith is in that – it is our only means of grace.