



# TRINITY CHURCH

## WAYZATA

Engage TCW  
Membership Course

# Covenant Theology

**Covenant: A relationship God establishes and guarantees by His word.**

- Gen. 6:18 But I will establish my **covenant** with you...
- Ps. 105:8 He remembers his **covenant** forever...
- Matt. 26:28 for this is my blood of the **covenant**...
- Heb. 12:24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new **covenant**...



# God's covenants are: Unilateral, Bilateral, & Forward-looking

- **Unilateral:** God declares Himself to be God and makes promises
  - God initiates: (e.g.) Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go...” (Gen. 12:1)
- **Bilateral:** God requires the person/people to respond with faith
  - We respond with: Belief or Unbelief
  - As evidenced by: Obedience or Disobedience
  - And met with: Blessing or Curse
- **Forward-looking:** Fulfillment comes in the future



## God's covenants include:

1. The Covenant of Redemption (John 17)
2. The Covenant of Works (Gen. 2; Hos. 6; Rom. 5)
3. The Covenant of Grace (Gen. 15; Jer. 31-32)

*Administered through the covenants with people who served as the covenant mediator; i.e. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and Christ*



Gen. 15:5-18 And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” 6 And [Abraham] **believed** the Lord, and [The Lord] counted **it (his faith)** to him as **righteousness**... 18 On that day the Lord made a **covenant** with Abram...



TRINITY CHURCH  
WAYZATA

## God's covenants are made with people and their children

1. Adam: Gen. 2 “Be fruitful and multiply...”
2. Noah: Gen. 6:18 “you, your sons...”
3. Abe: Gen. 17:7 “you and your offspring...”
4. Moses: Deut. 6:6-7 “teach them diligently to your children”
5. David: 2 Sam. 7:12 “I will raise up your offspring...”
6. Christ: Jer.31-32 “for you and for your children (Acts 2:39)



**The people to whom God has made promises make up the *covenant community*.**



- Old Testament: The Nation of Israel
- New Testament: The International Church (all local churches)

Acts 2:38-39 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 ***For the promise is for you and for your children*** and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”



**TRINITY CHURCH**  
WAYZATA

## God's covenants have signs and seals

Rom. 4:11-12 11 He received the **sign** of circumcision as a **seal** of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, 12 and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Signs & Seals help us "see" God's promises and know they're from Him

- Adam: Tree of Life (Gen. 2)
- Noah: Rainbow (Gen. 9:14-17)
- Abraham: Circumcision (Gen. 17)
- Moses: Sabbath & Passover (Ex. 31:12-13)
- David: Offspring as king (2 Sam. 7)
- Christ: Baptism & Lord's Supper (Matt. 28 & 26)



## NT Signs & Seals: Baptism and The Lord's Supper

**Baptism**, in the New Testament, is the sacrament (or ordinance) that represents the **unilateral** aspect of the covenant of grace; as Circumcision did in the Old Testament.

- Eph. 4:4 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

**Communion**, in the New Testament, is the sacrament (or ordinance) that represents the **bilateral** aspect of the covenant of grace; as Passover did in the Old Testament.

- 1 Cor. 11: 26 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Both Baptism and Communion represent the **forward-looking** aspect of the covenant of grace; as both Circumcision and Passover did in the Old Testament.

- **Heb. 11:39-40** <sup>39</sup> And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, <sup>40</sup> since God had provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.
- **Luke 22:16-18** 16 For I tell you *I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*” 17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. 18 For I tell you that from now on *I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.*”

# One Church honoring Two Views

## Covenantal

Q. 95. To whom is baptism to be administered?

A. 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.

(Reformed Confession)

## Baptistic

Q. 101. To whom is Baptism to be administered?

A. Baptism is to be administered to all those who actually profess **repentance** towards God, **faith** in, and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ; and to none other.

(Baptist Confession)

# One Church honoring Two Views

## **Covenantal Continuity**

- God never said to stop applying the covenant sign to covenant children.
- Covenant children are part of the covenant community (1 Cor. 7:14; Eph. 6:1-3; Mark 10:14).
- God's promise "is for you and for your children..." (Acts 2:39)
- Infants and young children are considered members of a household and the Apostles made a practice of baptizing whole households (Acts 16:15; 33).

## **Covenantal Discontinuity**

- There are no commands in the NT to baptize children.
- Children are not part of the covenant community; only those who profess faith (Jer. 31:34).
- The NT order is "repent and be baptized.." (Acts 2:38)
- There's no proof infants or young children were present when the Apostles baptized whole households (Acts 16:15; 33).

# One Church honoring Two Views

## **Theological Agreement**

- Baptism doesn't save!
- Spiritual baptism is what matters
- Children must believe to be saved
- Supported by historical evidence
- Children should be believers before they begin to take Communion.

## **Theological Agreement**

- Baptism doesn't save!
- Spiritual baptism is what matters
- Children must believe to be saved
- Supported by historical evidence
- Children should be believers before they begin to take Communion.

## **The Lord's Supper: the sacrament (or ordinance) of communion with Christ**

- Instituted at Passover (Matt 26; Mark 14; Ex. 12)
- Christ is the true Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7)
- Christ fulfilled the OT sacrificial system (Heb. 10:1-7)
- The Lord's Supper is a meal of friendship

## **Four Views on the Body & Blood of Christ in the Supper**

1. Roman Catholic: Transubstantiation
2. Lutheran: Consubstantiation
3. Reformed: Spiritual Presence
4. Zwinglian: Memorial

# The Reformed View: Christ is present spiritually

## Spiritual Food & Drink in the OT

- 1 Cor. 10:1-4
  - For I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, 2 and all were **baptized** into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 and all ate the same **spiritual food**, 4 and all drank the same **spiritual drink**. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.
  - Exodus 16: **Manna** was the Spiritual Food
  - Exodus 17: **Water** was the Spiritual Drink

## Participation & Preparation (fencing the table)

- 1 Cor. 11:29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

The **Bread** represents Jesus' body (1 Cor. 11:24)

The **Cup** represents Jesus' blood (1 Cor. 11:25)

Our participation is our profession of faith (1 Cor. 11:26)

- We should take it seriously (1 Cor. 11:27-30)
- We should partake together (1 Cor. 11:33)
- We should keep it special (1 Cor. 11:34)
- Little children should wait to partake (1 Cor. 11:28; Ex. 12:26)
- Baptism should precede Communion (Matt. 28:19).



**TRINITY CHURCH**  
**WAYZATA**

Engage TCW  
Membership Course