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VIII

When after the war the dialectical theology under the leadership of Barth, Brunner, Thurneysen, and Gogarten came to the fore, Harnack felt that a movement had begun whose language he did not understand. A new terminology was employed, strange ideas were presented, everything was foreign to a man like him. In 1920 when he heard Barth speak, his reaction was that the lecture contained not one sentence, not even one thought, in which he could join.²⁸⁾

In 1929 he wrote in a letter, "I never could have thought that a speculation might still arise among us for which I possess no antennae."²⁹⁾ Here one can sympathize with Harnack. Who of us has not felt that he was suddenly transported into a pathless wilderness abounding in grotesque, almost frightening rock formations when he began reading Barth's writings? But it was no longer Harnack, the brilliant historical scholar and man of the world, but the dialectical school which dominated the stage when he died.

In conclusion, if somebody had said to Harnack that he was a rationalist, he would, one imagines, have denied that the charge was justified and would have declared that he was not a rationalist but a historian. But one can easily see that Harnack did not write objective history, but permitted his judgments and evaluations to be colored by certain canons and considerations which had been suggested by human reason, such as: Miracles do not happen, Jesus was merely a man, everything miraculous must be eliminated from the Christian religion, the Bible is a human production. An appropriate closing sentence is the word of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 1:23, 24: "We preach Christ Crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

W. ARNDT

Circumcision and Baptism

The Bible does not speak very frequently on the meaning or the purpose of Holy Baptism and less frequently on the meaning and the purpose of Circumcision, and still less on the mutual relation of the two sacraments or on a comparison of Circumcision with Baptism. What little the Bible has to say on the points could be quoted in very short time. (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1.)

But the question assigned for this paper seems to ask for more than just the quoting of those few Bible passages; for this is to

28) *Ibid.*, p. 532.

29) *Ibid.*, p. 534.

be a conference paper. We as a conference of Lutheran theologians want to safeguard ourselves at the very outset against the suspicion of wasting time on "trifling questions" ("unnuetze Fragen"); we want it clearly understood that we do not mean to carry our theology any farther than those things for which we have Scriptural warrant.

Our whole answer to the question as to the mutual relation of Circumcision and Baptism may be summed up in the short sentence: Circumcision and Baptism are, respectively, an Old Testament and a New Testament sacrament. They are alike in being both sacraments; they differ in belonging, the one to the Old Covenant, the other to the New Revelation.

But this does require a little further elaboration; we shall speak of the word *sacrament*, of the various definitions of this term, of the points of similarity of Circumcision and Baptism, of their points of difference, of the main difference, and finally we shall have a few quotations of opinions of theologians who have gone into this matter in great detail.

The word *sacrament* has not by any means always had the same meaning; nor do all people that use the word at present take it in the same sense. With the ancient Romans *sacramentum* meant a soldier's oath of allegiance, his vow of faithfulness; or it meant the sum of money deposited by two men entering upon a court case; in general, it signified that by means of which a person obligates himself; later, it meant any vow or oath. *Sacramentum* is derived from the verb *sacrare*, to render sacred. Notice the close connection between the words *sacrament* and *sacrifice*, both sacred acts.

Since the word *sacrament* does not occur in the Bible, we cannot insist on one particular meaning as the only correct one; the best we can do is to follow the various changes of meaning through the centuries. And if in our own time other communions have established a usage differing from our own, we cannot dispute their use of the word as unbiblical, but must be content to define what we mean when we use the word. The Reformed use differs from the Lutheran, and the Roman Catholic from both.

As to the number of the sacraments—for this has a distinct bearing on the meaning of the word—there have been counted, in different times, in different communities, and in different respects, two, three, four, seven, and more than seven. Among Roman Catholic theologians the number varied until the twelfth century, when the sacred number seven came into general acceptance, which was definitely fixed at the Council of Florence in 1439. A certain Jesuit writer (Scherer) proves that the number of sacraments must be seven, "because no man so far has cursed by fewer than seven sacraments." And the Roman Catholic Church to this day

curses everyone who teaches that there are fewer than seven sacraments. According to the definition commonly accepted among us, there are, of sacraments at present in force, only two, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

By a loose definition the word *sacrament* may mean any sacred act, less loosely, one ordained by God. Many of the Reformed churches have the same number of sacraments as we, but an erroneous definition when they describe a sacrament as "an outward ceremony of the Church, ordained as a visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; specifically, a holy rite regarded as a sign of the union of the soul with God." (Winston.) We fully subscribe to the fine definition of our Synodical Catechism: "Question 269. What do we mean by a Sacrament? Answer: A sacred act, ordained by God, wherein He by certain external means, connected with His Word, offers, conveys, and seals unto men the grace which Christ has merited." According to this definition there are only three things belonging to a sacrament: The command of God, a visible sign, and the promise of grace. Where any of these three is missing, there is no true sacrament.

Some dogmaticians have insisted on a four-point definition, adding to the three points named also a "heavenly treasure" ("das himmlische Gut"), the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and the Holy Trinity in Baptism. But that becomes untenable when you consider that there is no "heavenly treasure" common to all sacraments and that even in the two New Testament sacraments this heavenly treasure is not present in the same sense.

In the above Lutheran definition of our Synodical Catechism, showing what all sacraments have in common, we have already indicated in what points Circumcision and Baptism are alike. Circumcision and Baptism are parallel in these points that both are sacred acts ordained by God, both have to do with some external element, and both have the promise of God's grace. Compare Dr. Arndt's *Fundamental Christian Beliefs*, page 51: "In our Lutheran Church a sacrament is defined as a religious rite which is instituted by God Himself and includes the use of some definitely prescribed outward means and confers the forgiveness of sins." Another current definition of the word *Sacrament* is "the visible word"; that might seem to imply that some word of God must have been used in the administration of Circumcision. While this has been assumed, as the following quotation from Edersheim will show, still there does not seem to be any conclusive proof. Even so the definition might be accepted as applying to Circumcision in this sense that the very act of Circumcision performed before the eyes of people who were well acquainted with the command and the promise of God concerning Circumcision would bring to

their minds very vividly such words of God. In their hearts the external act would be "connected with God's Word." Edersheim says, speaking of the circumcision of the son of Zacharias and Elisabeth: "We can scarcely be mistaken in supposing that then, as now, a benediction was spoken before circumcision, and that the ceremony closed with the usual grace over the cup of wine, when the child received his name in a prayer that probably did not much differ from this at present in use: 'Our God and the God of our fathers, raise up this child to his father and mother, and let his name be called in Israel Zacharias, the son of Zacharias. Let his father rejoice in the issue of his loins and his mother in the fruit of her womb, as it is written in Prov. xxiii. 25, and as it is said in Ezek. xvi. 6, and again in Ps. cv. 8, and Gen. xxi. 4'; the passages being, of course, quoted in full. The prayer closed with the hope that the child might grow up, and successfully 'attain to the Torah, the marriage-baldachino, and good works.'"¹⁾

Baptism and Circumcision are alike in the three vital points of our definition of a sacrament; we do not need to give proof for that with regard to Baptism; let us then proceed to find the Scripture references on these three points with regard to Circumcision.

The rite of Circumcision was a sacred act ordained by God. In Genesis 17:10 we read (God speaking to Abraham): "This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations." Circumcision was instituted by God; the action commanded is the surgical removal of the foreskin; the promise of God's grace lies in the words: "It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt Me and you"; and that covenant includes the full measure of God's grace for time and for eternity. This promise of God's grace is stated a little more fully in verse 7: "And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." Truly, a gracious promise; and also a promise of God's full grace to all those receiving Circumcision.

And the meaning? Circumcision was meant not only as an indelible marking of all those who belonged to God's people, but obviously it is a sign of the necessity of purification for all who wish to be counted among God's people. God had already told

1) Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Vol I, pp. 157 f.

Abraham: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed"; and the covenant was to be an everlasting covenant, hence not only earthly, temporal blessings were intended, but spiritual; the coming Savior was to be born of Abraham's children's children through natural generation, or procreation, so far as the line of His ancestors was concerned; not only that, but also personal faith in Him required purification, emphatically indicated in Circumcision. Fairbairn says: "It is to be held, then, as certain in regard to the sign of the covenant, as in regard to the covenant itself, that its more special and marked connection with individuals was only for the sake of more effectually helping forward its general objects. And not less firmly is it to be held that the outwardness in the rite was for the sake of the inward and spiritual truths it symbolized. It was appointed as the distinctive badge of the covenant, because it was peculiarly fitted for symbolically expressing the spiritual character and design of the covenant. It marked the condition of everyone who received it, as having to do both with higher powers and higher objects than those of corrupt nature, as the condition of one brought into the blessed fellowship of God and therefore called to walk before Him and be perfect. There would be no difficulty in perceiving this nor any material difference of opinion on the subject if people would but look beneath the surface and in the true spirit of the ancient religion would contemplate the outward as an image of the inward. The general purport of the covenant was that from Abraham, as an individual, there was to be generated a seed of blessing, in which all real blessing was to center and from which it was to flow to the ends of the earth. There could not, therefore, be a more appropriate sign of the covenant than such a rite as Circumcision — so directly connected with the generation of offspring and so distinctly marking the necessary purification of nature — the removal of the filth of the flesh — that the offspring might be such as really to constitute a seed of blessing. It is through ordinary generation that the corruption incident on the Fall is propagated; and hence, under the Law, which contained a regular system of symbolical teaching, there were so many occasions of defilement traced to this source and so many means of purification appointed for them. Now, therefore, when God was establishing a covenant, the great object of which was to reverse the propagation of evil, to secure for the world a blessed and blessed-making seed, He affixed to the covenant this symbolical rite — to show that the end was to be reached, not as the result of nature's ordinary productiveness, but of nature purged of its uncleanness — nature raised above itself, in league with the grace of God, and bearing on it the distinctive impress of His character

and working. It said to the circumcised man that he had Jehovah for his bridegroom, to whom he had become espoused, as it were, by blood (Ex. 4:25) and that he must no longer follow the unregulated will and impulse of nature, but live in accordance with the high relation he occupied and the sacred calling he had received."²⁾

A few special questions with regard to Circumcision are: What about the practice of circumcision among nations other than the Jews, in cases in which plainly the custom could not have been copied from the Jews? "There is no need for going into the question whether this ordinance of circumcision was now for the first time introduced among men or whether it already existed as a practice to some extent and was simply adopted by God as a fit and significant token of His covenant. It is comparatively of little moment how such a question may be decided. The same principle may have been acted on here which undoubtedly had a place in the modeling of the Mosaic institutions and which shall be discussed and vindicated when we come to consider the influence exercised by the learning of Moses on his subsequent legislation—the principle, namely, of taking from the province of religion generally a symbolic sign or action that was capable, when associated with the true religion, of fitly expressing its higher truths and principles. The probability is that this principle was recognized and acted on here."³⁾

"Circumcision has been practiced among classes of people and nations who cannot reasonably be supposed to have derived it from the family of Abraham—among the ancients, for example, by the Egyptian priesthood and among the moderns by native tribes in America and the islands of the Pacific. Its extensive prevalence and long continuance can only be accounted for on the ground that it has a foundation in the feelings of the natural conscience, which, like the distinctions into 'clean' and 'unclean,' or the payment of tithes, may have led to its employment before the times of Abraham and also fitted it afterwards for serving as a peculiar sign of God's covenant with him. At the same time, as it was henceforth intended to be a distinctive badge of covenant relationship, it could not have been generally practiced in the region where the chosen family were called to live and act. From the purpose to which it was applied we may certainly infer that it formed at once an appropriate and an easily recognized distinction between the race of Abraham and the families and nations by whom they were more immediately surrounded."⁴⁾

2) Fairbairn, *Typology of Scripture*. Vol. I, p. 271.

3) It must not be overlooked that Fairbairn presents the Reformed view and hence his use of the term *symbolical* cannot be sanctioned by us.

4) *Op. cit.* Vol. I, p. 269.

That the grace offered, conveyed, and sealed to the recipients of Circumcision was indeed no other grace and no less a grace than that conveyed in Baptism, that the two sacraments are alike in this point also can be proved not only positively, but also negatively. If any man among the Israelites did not choose to receive Circumcision, he was not subjected to some fine or minor punishment or any form of punitive correction, but we read Gen. 17:14: "And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My covenant." Circumcision made a person a member of the theocracy and a sharer in all the prerogatives and privileges which the physical Israel as the nation from which the Savior was to be born possessed.

The wealth of the promise of grace given in Circumcision is also attested in Rom. 4:11, where the Apostle Paul says of Abraham, "he received the sign of Circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith."

So much for the likenesses.

Now for the differences between Circumcision and Baptism. Both sacraments have indeed been instituted by God, but the former only for a stated time, to the coming of Christ, the latter to be used until the end of the world. When the former was abrogated and another instituted in its place, the former is marked as less good, the latter as better. Both sacraments had an earthly element. But that of the Old Testament was grievous, it had very prominent, unmistakable features of the heavy burden of the Law. Both sacraments did indeed proclaim God's grace, but the Old Testament sacrament only as a promise to be fulfilled in the future, whereas Baptism offers God's grace on the basis of Christ's work finished, accomplished, and completed.

The most important difference between the two sacraments undoubtedly is this, that Circumcision belonged to the Old Testament and Baptism belongs to the New Testament, with all that this distinction implies. What does it imply? As great a difference as there is between the image and the reality; as great as the difference between what we see in the mirror and ourselves, with body and soul. As the Passover Supper gave the meat of the lamb as a symbol of Christ (who was to come), whereas the Lord's Supper offers and gives the true body and blood of Christ, the Real Presence: so Circumcision emphatically showed the need for purification and pointed dimly forward to the Savior who was to accomplish that purification, but Baptism is the washing of regeneration, our sins have been washed away in our Baptism, as many as have been baptized have put on Christ. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

by a new and living way, which He has consecrated for us . . . and having an High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful that promised." Heb. 10:19 ff.

In connection with the discussion on the differences, we may add a little on the relation of these two sacraments. I shall again quote from Fairbairn's classic *Typology of the Old Testament*: "The bearing of all this on the ordinance of Christian Baptism cannot be overlooked, but it may still be mistaken. The relation between Circumcision and Baptism is not properly that of type and antitype; the one is a symbolical ordinance as well as the other.⁵⁾ And both alike have an outward form and an inward reality. It is precisely in such ordinances that the Old and the New Dispensations approach nearest to each other and, we might almost say, stand formally upon the same level. The difference does not so much lie in the ordinances themselves as in the comparative amount of grace and truth respectively exhibited in them — necessarily less in the earlier and more in the later. The difference in external form was in each case conditioned by the circumstances of the time. In Circumcision it bore respect to the propagation of offspring, as it was through the production of a seed of blessing that the covenant, in its preparatory form, was to attain its realization. But when the seed in that respect had reached its culminating point in Christ and the objects of the covenant were no longer dependent on the natural propagation of seed, but were to be carried forward by spiritual means and influences used in connection with the faith of Christ, the external ordinance was fitly altered, so as to express simply a change of nature and state in the individual that received it."⁶⁾

I am indebted to a brother for another quotation elaborating the relation of Circumcision and Baptism. It is from Clandish in the *Homiletic Commentary*. "Abraham is circumcised on the eve of his becoming the father of the Messiah — when the Holy Seed is to spring from him; and all the faithful are to be circumcised till the Holy Seed come. Hence one reason why the introductory seal of the covenant is superseded and another sacrament has been ordained in its place. Circumcision significantly pointed to the future birth of Christ, who was to be of the seed of Abraham.

5) Fairbairn here, apparently, does not speak of the Reformed view, which we reject, that the significance of Baptism is merely symbolical, but of what Luther treats in the fourth point of the section on Baptism in the Small Catechism, What does such baptizing with water signify? — Ed.

6) Fairbairn, *Typology of the Old Testament*, p. 274.

The birth being accomplished, the propriety of Circumcision as a sacrament ceases. Any corresponding rite now must not be prospective, but retrospective; not looking forward to the beginning of the Messiah's work, as the righteousness of God, when in His birth He was shown to be His Holy One and His Son by His miraculous conception in the Virgin's womb — but looking back to the end of His work, in His burial, and He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by His resurrection from the dead.

"Such a rite, accordingly, is Baptism, as explained by the Apostle when he says: 'We are buried with Him,' etc. Rom. 6:4. Our Baptism signifies our engrafting into Christ, as not merely born, but buried and risen again. It refers not to His entrance into the world, but to His leaving it. It is the symbol, not of His pure and holy birth merely, but of the purifying and cleansing efficacy of His precious blood shed upon the cross and the power of His resurrection from the dead to His life and glory. . . . Both Circumcision and Baptism denote the purging of the conscience from the dead works or from the condemnation and corruption of the old nature through the real and living union of the believer with Christ — with Christ about to come into the flesh, in the one case; with Christ already come, in the other."⁷⁾

Finally, let me quote to you two sections translated and copied from Chemnitz' *Examen Concilii Tridentini* and from the other renowned Lutheran theologian Gerhard in his *Loci Theologici*. And you will not find it hard to agree with me that we have much reason to be thankful for the clear, concise, and logical writings of our own Lutheran theologians as compared with those of the Reformed Church.

"In His Word God has at all times, from the beginning of the world, proclaimed His will concerning the redemption of mankind, concerning the reconciliation of grace, and concerning the reception of believers into eternal life through faith for the sake of the sacrifice of His Son, the Mediator. He also added to the Word certain divinely instituted external signs, by which He would seal and confirm the promise of justification by faith more clearly. Therefore the institution and the use of the sacraments did not begin in the time of the New Testament; but the fathers in Old Testament times, even before the giving of the Law, had certain signs or sacraments of their own, divinely instituted for this use, which were seals of the righteousness of faith. Rom. 4. Now, although God is the same, the Mediator is the same, grace, righteousness, the promise, faith, and salvation are the same, nevertheless those external signs or seals were at one time changed,

7) Clandish, *Homiletic Commentary*: Genesis, p. 358. The reader must bear in mind that Clandish, too, is a Reformed theologian.

others having been substituted for them by divine institution, as from time to time the manner of proclamation was made clearer; which was at first like a lamp burning in a dark place; afterward the Morning Star followed, until finally, when night had passed, the Sun of Righteousness rose. Thus there followed upon the patriarch's signs the rite of circumcision, and only when Circumcision was abrogated, did the sacraments of the New Testament follow through the institution of the Son of God. Now, because that change in signs has been attacked by the objections of heretics, especially of the Manichaeans, people began, not uselessly, to inquire and to dispute concerning the agreement and similarity of, and concerning the difference between, the sacraments of the Old and the New Testament. And the matter in itself is clear, just as the bases are handed down in Scripture. But the name *sacrament*, which is used, sometimes in a wide sense, sometimes in a narrow sense, makes that doctrine confused to some extent. Afterwards the disputations of the scholastics *de opere operato* completely confused and destroyed that doctrine. And these disputes gave to Luther the occasion, as in the book *De Captivitate Babylonica*, to begin a more diligent study from the Scriptural sources concerning the similarity and dissimilarity of the sacraments of the Old and the New Testament. Lest we should have to fight after the manner of the Andabatae (gladiators who fought in helmets having no openings for vision) in the dark, the status of this controversy shall be shown.

"These principles are clear and, I think, beyond controversy between our papal adversaries and us, namely, that to the righteous in Old Testament times grace, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life were offered, shown, given, and conferred by God for the sake of the coming sacrifice of His Son, the Mediator. For that the righteous in Old Testament times were saved is positive from the Scriptures. For nobody is saved without the grace of God. That is promised and given only for the sake of the blessed Seed. And also this is beyond dispute, that there is no other grace and also no other faith by which the just are saved in the Old Testament times than now in the New Testament times. For we have the same spirit of faith, 2 Cor. 5.

"That grace, also, by which Abraham was justified and by which David was saved is an example of justification and salvation of all times. Rom. 4. Therefore the question remains, in what way, that is, by what means, instrument, or organ, God offered, showed, gave, and conferred grace and salvation in Old Testament times. However, it is certain that those fathers had the word of promise concerning the blessing through the coming Seed.

"They also had certain external rites added and fastened to this promise of grace by divine institution.

"And I do not know definitely whether the papists would want to admit that even the word of promise was such a means or instrument in Old Testament times. The discussion at this place is concerned with the sacraments, to which that promise of grace has been fastened by divine institution. And at least among the old church writers this axiom concerning Circumcision, the sacrament of the Old Testament, was common and clear: that children in Old Testament times were freed from original sin through Circumcision. Also Beda quotes from the fathers this belief, which is not unknown to the scholastic writers: the sacraments of the Old Testament, observed at the proper time (*suo tempore custodita*) conferred eternal life. In Lombard's time this belief began to be called into question. And even Hugo, who lived about that time, disputes very obscurely and waveringly (as Gabriel tells) that the salvation of the just is the same in the Old and in the New Testament. Therefore it was meant by those words that the Old Testament sacraments justified indirectly and *ex consequenti*, as though through the mediation of the New Testament sacraments. The scholastics even attribute this opinion to Lombard that through the Old Testament sacraments God by no means conferred grace on believers, even when they used them in faith and love; because he held that they were prescribed only as a burden and a yoke, not for justification.

"By these disputations of Hugo and Lombard a μήλον ἔριδος (apple of discord) was thrown into the discussion; and this was eagerly and avidly seized upon by the mass of scholastics. And when the doctrine of the *opus operatum* was fabricated, they invented this distinction between the sacraments of each Testament, that through the former (Old Testament sacraments) grace was only signified, but not shown and conferred, even to those who received them in the proper way (rite); while through the latter (New Testament sacraments) grace is truly shown and conferred, even if there be no good interior motive in the recipient.

"But because some of them saw that it would be absurd to say that grace was not conferred on the just in the Old Testament, they fancied that the Old Testament sacraments conferred grace, not *ex opere operato*, but *ex opere operantis*, that is, through a kind of merit arising from the piety of the recipient, which they state thus: they say that every act of virtue produced by love (*charitate formata*) is meritorious; and the observance of the Old Testament sacraments, they say, is an act of obedience. For precepts were given concerning sacraments of this kind, and therefore they say their observance was a fulfillment of these precepts; and that, therefore, by reason of the virtue of obedience, as by a kind of merit, the faithful at that time received grace in the observance

of the sacraments. Now, this view directly and point-blank opposes Paul, who in Rom. 4 expressly teaches and affirms that Circumcision did not justify Abraham *ex opere operato*, or through a kind of merit; but that it was a seal or assurance of the righteousness of faith, which has this property that it is the blessedness of that man to whom as to one who believes, not one who works, God according to His grace imputes righteousness without works, Rom. 4." 8)

The scholastics put away out of the sacrament both the promise, by which the grace of God is offered and given, and the faith, by which the promise is accepted. They take the sacrament out of the Sacrament, they substitute our work for God's work; they change good into merit, the promise into a commandment.

Gerhard quotes Bellarmine's six distinctions between the sacraments of the Old and the New Testaments and designates as the most important this one: that the Old Testament sacraments were types of the New Testament sacraments. Col. 2:16, 17. Heb. 10:1. Augustine: "The sacraments of the Old Testament foretold the coming Christ; while the New Testament sacraments proclaimed the Christ who has appeared; in the Old Testament sacraments there was promised truth, in those of the New Testament there is revealed truth; in the former there is a significance of promise, in the latter accomplished facts." In the Passover there was the type of the flesh and blood of Christ, in the Lord's Supper there is the real substance, as through the medium of the bread and wine the true body and the true blood of Christ are given. To this principal and primary difference between the sacraments there is added another of the external sacramental symbols, which is not the same in all sacraments, but peculiar to each, just as also the sacramental act is peculiar to each sacrament.

"Though we deny that, beyond these differences, there is a difference in the principal purpose of the sacraments, which is to offer, show, give, and seal grace, yet we grant that 'as the revelation in the New Testament is clearer, the light of faith greater, and the measure of grace more rich, so also through the New Testament sacraments the grace of Christ is bestowed more clearly, more plainly, more perfectly, and more richly; for now that the mystery of the Redemption has been accomplished, truth succeeds the types, the body follows upon the shadows.'" (Chemnitz.)

The reasons for our position regarding the purpose of the Old Testament sacraments and our position that there is no difference in the principal purpose of the sacraments in the Old and the New Testaments: 1. The Gospel promise of grace applies equally to

8) Chemnitz, *Examen. Pars Secunda. De Sacramentis. Sectio II. De Differentia Sacramentorum Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, p. 236 sq.

the Old as well as to the New Testament. And since sacraments are nothing more than visible words, external rites added to the promise of grace, signs in which the promise of grace is vested, how can this same power be denied the Old Testament sacraments, since also the medium of receiving the benefits of Christ on our part is the same in the Old as in the New Testament, namely, the Word and the sacraments? 2. To the divine institution of Circumcision there was added the promise of grace: Gen. 17:7. Circumcision, therefore, was a means by which grace was offered and given and sealed to the believers; for: a. Gen. 17:7 is a Gospel promise, and since the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, Rom. 1:16, therefore, the sacrament with such a promise could not be inefficacious; b. it is clear from many Scripture passages that forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life were bestowed on those who received this sacrament in faith (Lev. 26:12; Jer. 31: 33, 34; Matt. 22:32; 2 Cor. 6:18); c. God Himself promises to enter an agreement with Abraham and his descendants, Gen. 17:10; so He, so to say, inscribed this agreement in Abraham's flesh; d. God calls this Circumcision in the flesh an eternal treaty, and since such a pact with God cannot be made by an unregenerate man, therefore Circumcision was an efficacious medium of regeneration and grace; e. if the despisers of Circumcision were to be cast out of the assembly of the Church, Gen. 17:14, then Circumcision must necessarily be the means by which the circumcised were taken into the assembly of the Church and into the number of heirs of eternal life; cf. Baptism, John 3:4; f. Deut. 30:6; children were to be circumcised, as that was the only way in which their hearts could be circumcised, hence circumcision must be a beneficial (*salutaris*) means by which the hearts are circumcised. (Etc., etc.; 14 reasons in all.)⁹⁾

"Each sacrament has a certain specific material and formal principle of its own through which it is what it is and is distinguished from all others, concerning which it can and also should always be judged from its own words of institution. For since each sacrament follows the nature of its own Testament: the Old Testament has only the shadow of future things, *i. e.*, figures and signs of Christ, who in His own time must be revealed as about to suffer and die; the New, however, is freed from such figures and shadows and offers Christ in person, now as having been manifested and having suffered and died for us, according to Col. 2:16, 17; Heb. 10:1, 2; hence the primary and principal difference between the sacraments consists in this, that the Old Tes-

9) Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*. Locus Decimus Octavus. *De Sacramentis*, pp. 175—208.

tament sacraments were prophecies of the coming Christ, but the New Testament sacraments are proclamations of the manifested Christ; i. e., the former were figures and shadows, not the body itself and the express and living image, while the latter truly contain the very body and the complete image, no longer shadows and figures; just so the very substance of the sacraments was other than and different from those of the New Testament sacraments.

"From all these facts we gather that Old Testament sacraments differ from those of the New Testament not only materially, but also formally. The *materia* or *objectum* is the earthly and the heavenly element; the *forma* is the sacramental act. The earthly element in Circumcision is the foreskin; in the Passover it is the flesh and blood of the Passover lamb; in Baptism it is the water; in the Lord's Supper it is the bread and wine; that these are not all the same, but different, is perfectly evident. The heavenly element, that is, the God-Man Christ, in the Old Testament sacraments is pointed out and foreshadowed by means of sacramental types and figures as still to be manifested in the fullness of time; but in the New Testament sacraments He is proclaimed and given in person through the sacramental symbols as through the proclaiming media or organs. This is clear not only from the institution of each sacrament, but from the nature of the case also, since the Old Testament was a period of shadows, but in the New Testament the figures of the Old Testament reach their completion and fulfillment in the manifested Christ; hence there is no more space for them. And that argument is unchanged, namely: If Christ had wished to place in the Holy Supper only the image of His body and blood, He would by no means have abrogated the Passover lamb, namely, because the killing, preparing of the latter, and the shedding of its blood signified far more clearly, manifestly, and evidently Christ's passion and death and the shedding of His blood than bread and wine alone could. Furthermore, the *forma*, or sacramental act, is different in each sacrament. The *forma* of Circumcision is the removal of the foreskin according to the command of God; the *forma* of the Passover is the eating of the paschal lamb, chosen, slaughtered, and prepared according to certain rites and the painting of the blood on the lintel and doorposts. The *forma* of Baptism is the washing of a human being, that is, the sprinkling of water or immersion in water done in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the *forma* of the Lord's Supper is the manducation of the body of Christ with the consecrated bread and the drinking of His blood with the consecrated wine. To these principal heads of differences there can be added certain other secondary ones, namely, that the Old Testament sac-

raments applied only to the Israelites, the New Testament sacraments, however, to the Church gathered from Jews and Gentiles; that the former were to last up to the advent and ministry of Christ, these to the end of the world, 1 Cor. 11:26, because these are greater in power, better in usefulness, and easier in performing. But these and similar distinctions are secondary and of smaller moment."¹⁰)

And finally, if you do not object to an application of what we have heard to our own lives and official duties, I may add this: We have just seen how much clearer, brighter, richer, and more glorious are the sacraments of the New Testament. Do we realize for ourselves and do we bring home to our hearers all the wealth of God's grace that is entrusted to our weak hands in Holy Baptism and in the Holy Eucharist? Are we in danger of becoming professional, casual, or cold in our administration of Baptism to little children or of the Lord's Supper to our communicant members? If we could by God's grace catch a fresh realization of the unspeakably great love that has given us these mysteries of the House of God, should we not administer them with increased unction and fervor, should we not preach of them with a new and more winsome persuasiveness? Might we not act and speak more for the glory of God?

Hoffman, Ill.

F. R. ZUCKER

Outlines on the Standard Gospels

Maundy Thursday

John 13:1-15

The washing of the feet at the arrival from a journey was an Oriental custom observed for the relief and comfort of the guest, and was usually performed by a servant. Who would bend to this task now in that upper room in the seeming absence of the servant? For all behaved like envious lords, each waiting for the other to humble himself, and none yielding. Yet the feet were washed. Who was the servant? Jesus, in grace and mercy, makes the most of the situation. We behold

The Lord and Master in the Form of a Servant

1. For our justification
2. For our sanctification

1

The Lord and Master is introduced to us again, vv. 1-3, and He identifies Himself, v. 13. See His majesty, v. 1a, 3; Phil. 2:6.

¹⁰) Gerhard, *Loci Theologici*. Locus Decimus Nonus. *De Circumcisione et Agno Paschali*, pp. 220—221.