

## The Seven Sacraments: Are They Biblical?

### Where are the Seven Sacraments in the Bible?

1. Many Non-Catholics believe in “the Bible alone” (Latin *sola Scriptura*)
2. Many Protestants: reject the seven sacraments as unbiblical “traditions of men”
3. Is this true? Are the sacraments in the Bible?

### 1. Baptism in the Bible

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him.” Jesus answered him, “*Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born again (or “anew”), he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “*Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*” (John 3:1-5)

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 shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children...*” (Acts 2:38-39)

[The jailor said to Paul and Silas:] “Men, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and *he was baptized at once, with all his family.* Then he brought them up into his house, and set food before them; and he rejoiced with all his household that he had believed in God. (Acts 16:30-34)

### 2. Confirmation in the Bible

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, with instruction about baptism, *the laying on of hands*, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (Hebrews 6:1-2)

Philip [the deacon; cf. Acts 7] went down to a city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the multitudes with one accord gave heed to what was said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs which he did. For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice; and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city... *But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women....*

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them *Peter and John*, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; *for the Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.* Then *they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.* (Acts 8:5-17)

### 3. The Eucharist in the Bible

Jesus said: “I am the bread of life. *Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.* This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man might eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and *the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.*” The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, *and I will raise him up at the last day.* For my flesh is real food, and my blood is real drink.... *This is the bread which comes down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died;* he who eats this bread will live forever.” Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” (John 6:48-58)

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said: “*This is my body* which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “*This cup is the new covenant in my blood.* Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me...” *Whoever, therefore eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord.* Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why some of you are weak and ill, and some have died. (1 Corinthians 11:23-30)

### 4. Confession in the Bible

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you...” Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” And when he had said this, *he breathed on them,* and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*” (John 20:19-23)

Therefore *confess your sins to one another,* and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit. (James 5:16-17)

### 5. Anointing of the Sick in the Bible

And Jesus called to him the Twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over unclean spirits... So they went out and preached that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and *anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.* (Mark 6:7, 12-13)

Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray? Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. *Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders* (Greek *presbyteroi*) *of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;* and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed... (James 5:13-16)

## 6. Holy Matrimony in the Bible

And the Pharisees came up and in order to test him asked, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” He answered them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to put her away.” But Jesus said to them, “For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female’. ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. *What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.* And in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. And he said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.” (Mark 10:1-12)

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. *Wives*, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the Church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. *Husbands*, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her with the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it and cherishes it, as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” *This is a great mystery* (Latin *magnum sacramentum*), and *I mean in reference to Christ and the Church...* (Ephesians 5:21-32)

## 7. Holy Orders in the Bible

And [the LORD] said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, *you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel*, and worship afar off. Moses alone shall come near to the LORD; but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him. And he [Moses] rose early in the morning, and built *an altar* at the foot of the mountain, and *twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel*. And he sent *young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD*. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar.... And Moses took the blood and threw it on the people, and said, “Behold, *the blood of the covenant* which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.” (Exod 24:1-11)

### *Old Covenant Priesthood*

Moses

The 1: the High Priest, Aaron

The 3: Aaron, Nadab, Abihu

The 12: Twelve Pillars/“Young Men”  
of the Twelve Tribes

The 70: Elders of Israel/the Sanhedrin  
(Exodus 24)

### *Jesus and His Disciples*

Jesus

The 1: Peter, chief of the Apostles

The 3: Peter, James, and John

The 12: Twelve Apostles  
of the Twelve Tribes

The 70: Appointed and Sent Out  
(Mark 6; Luke 9-10)

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*Old Testament Priesthood*

Aaron: High Priest

Sons of Aaron: Ministerial Priests

Levites: priestly Assistants

*New Testament Leaders*

“Bishops” (*episkopoi*) (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

“Priests” (*presbyteroi*) (Titus 1:5-6)

“Deacons” (*diakonoi*) (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

*Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had their name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins; it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and for the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless. (Revelation 14:1-5)*