



importance of *two* of these, for after speaking of the seven pipes in verse two, he asks in the twelfth verse, “what be these two olive-branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?” The two olive-branches are the two natures of Christ, from which all grace flows.

The conditions required in the recipient of a sacrament are by no means productive of efficacy in the sacraments. Faith does not give virtue to a sacrament, but disposes our souls to receive the graces inherent in the sacrament. Protestants think that all the virtue in these sacred rites exists in their own dispositions, and not in the rites themselves. But this is [negated] by Holy Scripture, which teaches that a wrong reception of a sacrament is attended with peril to the soul, which could not be the case if the sacrament had not objective virtue. “Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath eternal life,”¹ but, on the other hand, “Whosoever shall eat this Bread and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.”²

Light and heat are analogous to the virtue in sacraments. Fire is not considered destitute of burning quality because it cannot act on combustible materials; nor are the windows of a room regarded as the cause of light, although they be necessary to insure its admission.

¹ John 6:54

² 1 Corinthians 11:27

From Sabine Baring-Gould’s

The Golden Gate

Fr. Baring-Gould is most famous for his hymn, “Onward Christian Soldiers”.

You may freely copy and distribute this work as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work.

Edited by Fr. Peter Geromel, OHI Th.M.

Traditional Anglican Resources

TraditionalAnglicanResources.com

The Seven Sacraments

By Rev. Baring-Gould

Author of

“Onward Christian Soldiers”

By a Sacrament is meant an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, ordained by Christ to convey grace to the soul.

Sacraments may be generally necessary to salvation, and not generally necessary. Those generally necessary are those which all must receive if they hope for salvation. Those not generally necessary to salvation are those designed for particular persons or states of life, and which are channels of abundant grace, but without which it is quite possible to be saved.

There are seven sacraments: -

1. Baptism..... Matthew 28:19
2. Confirmation Acts 8: 17
3. Holy Communion Matthew 26:26
4. Penance..... John 20:23
5. Holy Unction..... James 5:14
6. Holy Order..... Luke 22:19
7. Matrimony..... Matthew 19:6

Of these two, Holy Baptism and the Holy Communion are generally, that is universally necessary to salvation. Of the other five, Matrimony and Holy Order are absolutely necessary for the continuance of the visible Church; but they are not necessary for all members of the Church. The other three are means of grace, but not of essential necessity. Three of these sacraments confer *character*, that is, they leave an indelible mark upon the recipient, and can never be repeated without sacrilege. These are Baptism, Confirmation, and Order.

Throughout the universal Church of Christ seven has been regarded as the number of

the sacraments. This is the number accepted by the Holy Eastern Church and by the Western Church also. The catechism of the Russian Church teaches as follows:-

Question. “How many sacraments are there? A. Seven, Baptism, Unction with Chrism, (Confirmation,) Communion, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, Unctions with oil.

Question. “What virtue is there in each of these sacraments? A. In Baptism he receives a grace of spiritual growth and strength. In Communion he is spiritually fed. In Penance he is healed of spiritual disease, that is, of sin. In Orders he receives grace spiritually to regenerate, feed, and nurture others, by doctrine and sacraments. In Matrimony he receives a grace sanctifying the married life, and the natural procreation and nurture of children. In Unction with oil he has medicine even for bodily diseases, in that he is spiritually healed.”

The catechism of the [Anglican] Church speaks of only those two which are “generally necessary to salvation,” but the twenty-fifth article [of religion] when speaking of abuses which had corrupted the administration of sacraments, mentions the other five, and calls them sacraments.

The seven sacraments are symbolized in Holy Scripture by the seven-branched candlestick in the temple. The Prophet Zechariah saw a vision of the Church of Christ, and in it was “a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon

the top thereof.”³ Zechariah had been shown a series of visions. One showed him the rebuilding of the Church, another showed him the Priesthood of Christ, and this one exhibits the sacramental system of the Church. The lights are the different estates of Christians, the pipes conveying the oil which nourishes these lights are the sacraments.

1. The little child gathers its sweet innocence, its simple faith and pure love through the channel of *Baptism* distilling the golden oil of divine grace.
2. The youth going forth to battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil, whence does he obtain his strength but through the channel of *Confirmation* distributing golden oil.
3. Those cleaving to Christ, drawing near to Him in the holiest band of *Communion*, they too are quickened by the golden oil.
4. The penitent bewailing lost grace, whose lamp is dying out, he needs the stream of golden oil flowing through *Penance* to quicken the expiring flame of spiritual life.
5. Those who desire to enter on the marriage state need new powers and blessings to sanctify their new condition. And again, through the channel of *Matrimony* the golden oil is bestowed.
6. Those who seek to minister to the spiritual needs of others, need special grace and authority, and lo! Through the channel of *Holy Order* the anointing oil is shed.
7. Lastly the period of sickness and the hour of death have their special trials and needs of grace, and it is supplied through *Holy Unction*.

But Zechariah bids us observe the special

³ Zechariah 4:2, 3