

In Catholic tradition, a sacrament is defined as:

An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, instituted by Christ for our sanctification.

Catholic theology recognizes seven sacraments, viewed as essential channels of grace throughout a believer's life

Are Sacraments Biblical? What Does Scripture Say?

While several of these practices are derived from scriptural events, the classification and number of sacraments as defined by the Catholic Church are not explicitly laid out in the Bible. The Bible emphasizes faith, grace, and obedience, but not rituals as a requirement for salvation.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (ESV)

Let us now examine each sacrament in light of Scripture:

1. Baptism

Baptism is indeed commanded in the Bible. However, biblical baptism is always preceded by personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. It is an outward declaration of inward transformation—a testimony that one has died to sin and been raised to new life.

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.

Acts 2:38 (ESV)

We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death... so that we too might walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4 (ESV)

□ Infant Baptism: Not Biblical

Nowhere in Scripture do we see infants being baptized. Children in Scripture are blessed, not baptized:

Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:14 (ESV)

Baptism, as a command, requires understanding, repentance, and faith—which infants do not possess.

2. Confirmation

In Catholic doctrine, confirmation is viewed as a strengthening of baptismal grace. While the Bible does show examples of believers receiving the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands (Acts 8:14–17), this experience was not institutionalized as a separate sacrament.

Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:17 (ESV)

However, the true sealing of the Spirit comes by faith:

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13 (ESV)

Thus, the biblical seal comes not through oil or ceremony, but by faith and the indwelling Spirit.

3. The Holy Eucharist (Communion)

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper during Passover:

This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me... This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

1 Corinthians 11:24-25 (ESV)

Communion is not a ritual for obtaining grace but a memorial and proclamation of Christ's death:

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:26 (ESV)

The grace of God is received through faith in Christ's finished work on the cross, not through the physical elements themselves.

4. Anointing of the Sick

This practice is biblical when done in faith:

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

James 5:14 (ESV)

However, healing ultimately comes not from oil or ritual, but from God's mercy and the atoning blood of Christ:

By his wounds you have been healed.

1 Peter 2:24 (ESV)

5. Penance (Confession)

Confession of sin is biblical, but the authority to forgive sins belongs to God alone, not to priests.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 (ESV)

Who can forgive sins but God alone?

Mark 2:7 (ESV)

In John 20:23, Jesus does give the apostles a unique authority as foundational witnesses, but this should not be generalized as priestly authority over all believers. All Christians are a royal priesthood:

You... are a royal priesthood... that you may proclaim the excellencies of him...

1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

6. Holy Orders

While God does appoint pastors, elders, and leaders in the church, Scripture teaches that every believer is a minister, equipped by the Holy Spirit:

And he gave... shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry...

Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV)

Not all are called to formal leadership, but all are called to serve. Paul, though not among the original apostles, became a mighty servant by God's grace alone:

I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV)

7. Matrimony

Marriage is indeed honored by God, and it reflects the mystery of Christ and the Church:

This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:32 (ESV)

However, marriage is not a means of grace for salvation. Salvation is personal, and it comes through faith alone in Christ.

Do We Need Sacraments to Be Saved?

No sacrament—whether baptism, communion, or marriage—saves a person. Only faith in Jesus Christ can save:

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...

Acts 16:31 (ESV)

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven... by which we must be saved.

Acts 4:12 (ESV)

The Call to Break Free from Tradition

Dear reader, God is calling you out of religion and tradition and into a personal relationship with Him through His Word and His Spirit.

You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.

Mark 7:8 (ESV)

The Holy Spirit is our teacher:

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.

John 16:13 (ESV)

The Urgency of Salvation

We are living in the Laodicean church age—the final period of the Church before the Rapture. Time is short.

Behold, I am coming soon.

Revelation 22:12 (ESV)

Have you surrendered your life to Christ? If not, now is the time.

A Prayer of Repentance

If you are ready to follow Christ, pray this sincerely:

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that I am a sinner and in need of Your mercy. I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins and rose again. I turn from my sin and ask for Your forgiveness. Cleanse me by the blood of Jesus and make me new. I confess Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and I surrender my life to You. Fill me with Your Spirit and help me to walk in obedience. Thank You, Lord, for saving me.

Amen

Next Steps

If you've truly repented and believed:

1. Turn away from sin.
2. Read your Bible daily, with the help of the Holy Spirit.
3. Join a Spirit-filled, Bible-believing fellowship.
4. Be baptized by full immersion in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38).
5. Grow in your walk with God, letting His Word guide you.

God bless you and keep you in the truth.

What Is a Sacrament—and Is It Found in Scripture?

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