

**REFORMED SACRAMENTAL PIETY IN ENGLAND 1590-1630**

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### Short Abstract

England in the late-Elizabethan and early-Stuart period saw a surge of pastoral writings intended to provide lay-readers with information and advice about sacraments. Using sixty-four such texts from the period 1590-1630, this thesis analyses the conceptions of sacraments offered by cleric-authors to their audience. As a group these works had two structural features in common. First they were concerned to outline the 'qualities' of a 'worthy' receiver of the Lord's Supper, foremost amongst which were knowledge, faith, newness of life and repentance. Second they tended to divide the concept of worthiness into three temporal chunks comprising the times before, during, and after the Supper.

Using these rubrics as guidelines the thesis compares and contrasts the content of the corpus. In opposition to stereotypes of puritans neglecting sacraments, it is found that sacraments were presented by Reformed English clerics as highly efficacious entities, which truly communicated something to the believer. The importance of faith to the Reformed conception of sacraments is affirmed, with the caveat that the dominance of this concept did not prohibit clerics from extolling the sensuous or ceremonial aspects of sacraments. It is further contended that sacraments continued to be seen as spurs to moral amelioration, occasions for charity, and a demonstration of community – and that receiving sacraments did not become a wholly individualised enterprise.

Building on this analysis the thesis offers three broader conclusions. Firstly it is shown that sacraments played a key part in the quest to gain assurance of salvation. Secondly it can be seen that in England there was a way of extolling sacraments and their use which is not usually thought about – a species of 'sacramental piety' which used mainstream Reformed ideas about sacrament to urge believers to comfort and increased Godliness. Thirdly it is contended that key Reformed theological distinctions were often submerged by the contingencies of pastoral writing.

## REFORMED SACRAMENTAL PIETY IN ENGLAND 1590-1630

### Long Abstract

The thesis investigates the attention shown to the role of the sacraments in this period's pastoral literature. It assesses works of sixty-one authors who took the theologically intricate subject of a sacrament, and attempted to render it sensible and useful to the Christian men and women who partook of it. The analysis hinges on sixty-four printed works which have this as their avowed task. The texts range from the shortest and plainest of Catechisms to many hundred-pages worth of academic prose through many intermediate possibilities. Although the authors of the texts were nearly all late Elizabethan and early Stuart divines of one hue or another, they are a wide-ranging set, comprising obscure country pastors, university clerics, bishops, royally-sponsored ministers and preacher-poets. Some of these men are clearly part of the self-styled godly; others, less so.

The corpus of texts is coherent in three ways. Firstly, the works were all published in the period 1590-1630 in England. This timeframe springs firstly from the sources themselves. From my searching of the short-title catalogues, the numbers of sacramentally-focussed, practical texts, sorted by decade, are as follows:

1570-79: 1  
1580-89: 7  
1590-99: 4  
1600-09: 12  
1610-19: 22  
1620-29: 23  
1630-39: 7

Thus the results of this search suggest that the first three decades of the seventeenth century saw a boom in practically-focussed sacramental literature, agreeing with Ian Green's assessment that the Jacobean decades were the ones in which the godly book trade really took off. Although this suggests that 1600 might be the most appropriate starting date, I have instead chosen 1590 for historiographical reasons. The 1590s have become a key decade in terms of our understanding of the English church. In these years, a new concern with the personal life of faith emerged from the ruins of the Presbyterian campaign, exemplified by the popularity of William Perkins' brand of practical divinity. Also in the 1590s emerged an alternative style of 'avant-garde' churchmanship in opposition to the godly model. Beginning in 1590 thus allows a serious engagement with the historiography of the English church.

All the texts of the corpus emanated from English presses. Originally it had been hoped to treat Scottish texts too, but constraints of space and time made it unlikely that justice could be done to all the material.

Secondly and most importantly, the texts in this corpus all undertake to some degree the same exercise: advising on how to prepare for and partake of sacraments in practice. The contemporary terms for this practical perspective were 'devotion' and 'piety', the preoccupation with which lends the sample many common features: a concern with the laity's sacramental perspective; an attention to 'worthiness' required of the participant in the Lord's Supper; using sacraments not only as objects of knowledge but as spurs to adoration

of God, strengthening of faith and neighbourliness towards other Christians; the provision of contemplative and meditative aids to achieve the same.

Thirdly, the corpus disregards authors from outside the mainstream of Reformed theology such as Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes. This criterion grew out of a core argument of the thesis as it developed: namely that authors of conventional conservative Reformed theology could nevertheless posit some extremely high evaluations of sacraments when writing in a pastoral context. This was not the same as the high sacramentalism which could emerge from authors who already had departed some way from Reformed norms.

Two structural features of the sample in particular are especially prominent, and have been utilised to shape the thesis. One feature is the concern of authors to conceive of the 'worthy' receiving of the Lord's Supper in terms of three temporal stages – advising on how to prepare for it, how to behave during it, and how to reflect upon it afterwards. A second feature is the discussion of what qualities are required of a communicant that he might receive the Lord's Supper 'worthily'. Investigation of this question reveals a threefold pattern: authors for the most part specified 'knowledge', 'faith' and 'newness of life' as necessary qualities. This pair of tripartite models has been employed as means to interrogate the content of the sample and form three core chapters.

The thesis is couched in two overlapping historiographical contexts. The first is the history of the Reformed intellectual tradition, conceived as a Europe-wide theological movement as it progressed through various stages: from first, then second generation reformers in the mid and then late sixteenth century, to its gradual institutionalisation and progression into the period of seventeenth-century 'orthodoxy'. The second context is that of the English 'long reformation' – albeit my small temporal chunk of it.

In the context of the Reformed tradition, (or, more accurately, in one of the intersections between it and the English context) a particularly pertinent question is that of the relation of sacraments to assurance of salvation. The puritan quest for assurance has been oft explored in relation to predestination, and to a perceived encroaching voluntarism in Reformed thought, but rarely, it seems, in relation to the sacraments. The thesis suggests that this has been an oversight. In the context of the English Reformation, the opportunity to assess sixty-one clerics operating around the turn of the seventeenth century on the subject of the sacraments is an opportunity to comment upon unity and division within clerical opinion.

Hence the thesis addresses two questions. Firstly sacraments are considered in light of the school of thought which posits that Reformed thought veered towards the practical syllogism, towards an encroaching voluntarism which threatened to self-subvert the take on grace, faith and life espoused by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century reformers. Secondly, in the more insularly English context, the thesis reconsiders the hallmarks of what we might call 'sacramental piety' – to reconsider the impulses which caused people to allot a high status to sacraments and thus think about the division and unity of the Jacobean church. The answers to these two enquiries, based on the evidence from my sample, will form two parts of a final, concluding section.

A third theme which runs through the thesis is the extent to which a strictly theological interpretation of these sacrament teachings could be subverted by pastoral purpose. I show that while much of what my authors say about issues such as sacramental efficacy and assurance is theologically entirely consistent with Reformed norms, this theoretical orthodoxy was often undercut by the tones, structures and rhetoric employed by authors in

order to treat the sacraments in a useful way for a lay audience. This idea is summarised in the third and final portion of the conclusion.

The methodology for the three core chapters is the construction of a horizontal analysis of all sixty-four texts, comparing and contrasting them on an issue-by-issue basis. The different currents of thought evidenced in the sample as a whole are pinpointed and described, whilst keeping in mind the issue of typicality. In practice this has involved a process of assessing what each text has to say about any given issue, evaluating what proportion of texts make similar points, and thus creating a thematic analysis. It is akin to Ian Green's method of mass textual exegesis in his *Christian's ABC or Print and Protestantism*, or to Anthony Milton's strategy in *Catholic and Reformed*. Where appropriate comment has been offered in passing upon any notable developments as my time period progresses, but the analysis of change is not a motor of the thesis. Indeed, a recurring theme throughout the entire corpus is an essential similarity between texts throughout the period concerned.

An introduction sets out the historiographical parameters of the thesis and introduces the primary material which comprises the corpus. Chapter One introduces the content of the texts by elucidating the dominant structures which shaped them: namely, the concept of requisite 'qualities' of a worthy communicant; and the dissection of that worthiness into three temporal segments.

Chapter Two – 'Knowledge' – enquires what people were meant to know about sacraments in order to communicate worthily. It comprises an introduction to the knowledge requirement, examining the different ways in which authors described sacramental knowledge, and the ways that different genres of text address the problem of ensuring adequate knowledge. Six overlapping conceptions of sacraments are discussed: sacraments as badges of Christianity, sacraments as memorials of Christ's sacrifice, sacraments as analogies to teach and assure, sacraments as seals (of God's grace and of the covenant), sacraments as instruments of grace, and sacraments as means of communion with Christ. It is posited that Reformed sacramental ideas did not, as is often thought, divorce sacraments from the idea of grace, and, further, that an efficacious conception of sacraments permeated sacramental discourse.

Chapter Three focuses on what the authors said about the actual functioning of sacraments, and about faith, which was universally ascribed a significant role at this point. It considers the definition of faith; how faith figured as both an enabler of, but also as a rival to, sacramental efficacy; and how faith-based sacraments could be related to their sensual and ceremonial character. It is shown that, although the dominant rubric of receiving sacraments by faith was largely an ethereal notion, sensual and ceremonial versions of sacramental functioning were never completely eclipsed.

Chapter Four addresses issues of human behaviour and Godliness as discussed in the context of sacramental advice. It looks at the stipulation made by authors that worthy communicants find within themselves, particularly after receiving, repentance and a 'newness of life'. This thematic slice of the corpus is used to investigate the balance between individual and communal conceptions of sacrament, and also to probe the relationship between sacraments and good works. It becomes clear that sacraments in the emerging Reformed tradition were neither completely individualised, nor completely divorced from the economy of moral effort.

## PREFACE

The origins and evolution of this thesis strongly influenced its final aims and must be briefly explained. I began with one interesting text, *Godly Meditations* by Christopher Sutton.<sup>1</sup> To this I added some suitable companion texts whose own sacramental content served to highlight the idiosyncrasies of Sutton's work. From this rather small collection of texts I wrote a Master's thesis, the basic contention of which was that Sutton's eucharistic views seemed to set him apart from what I assumed (and what some investigation seemed to confirm) to be the mainstream godly approach to sacraments. Sutton's meditations, if anything, seemed less godly and more 'avant-garde conformist', and became still less conventional as it transpired that the book was actually based on an Italian Jesuit text, which Sutton had re-worked for an English audience.<sup>2</sup> I was thus left with a small corpus of texts concerning sacraments, one of which seemed quirky and worthy of comment.<sup>3</sup>

At the onset of the doctoral thesis I added more texts. Whereas my original companion texts were chosen as being broadly representative of Calvinism in England (therefore contrasting nicely with Sutton's text, which was not), I now tried to contextualise *Godly Meditations* more systematically by searching for works whose purpose closely matched Sutton's own. This purpose I took to be: presenting sacraments in a practical manner to a lay audience. Using this 'sacraments in practical context' moniker as the overriding criterion for inclusion, my collection grew to include around sixty texts, including communion handbooks akin to Sutton's, but also catechisms, 'Godly-living treatises', tracts and sermons.

Any historical study is driven by its sources, but this corpus of texts – in many ways disparate but commonly presenting practical guidance about sacraments – serves as an especially powerful determinant of the thesis, in that all three core chapters constitute a large-scale commentary upon that corpus. One side of this study is thus an extended meditation upon a body of literature dealing with practical sacramental theology, in which my concerns are the concerns of the texts themselves.

The other side of the study is my attempt to make this corpus of literature speak to two broad issues. My M.A. thesis had tried to use Sutton and his book to comment upon scholarly

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<sup>1</sup> Sutton, C., *Godly meditations upon the most holy sacrament of the Lordes Supper* (1601).

<sup>2</sup> L. Pinelli, *Briefe Meditations of the Most Holy Sacrament and Preparations for Receving the same*. ed. & tr. Henry Garnet (London, 1600).

<sup>3</sup> C. Jones, 'The Godly Meditations of Sutton' (Birmingham Univ. M.A. Thesis, 2006).

debates concerning the make-up of the English Church in its Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. The current thesis attempts the same task, this time using my more extensive and thematically unified assemblage of texts. I also attempt to make these texts speak to the trajectory of Reformed Protestantism as a whole. There has been a persistent allegation that the second and third generation of Reformed thinkers backtracked somewhat from what are thought of as the core ideas and methodologies of their forebears such as Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer and Martyr. One aspect of this slippage concerns the degree to which pastors thought one could be assured of one's salvation. I realised that nearly all of my sacramental texts had something to say about assurance, and that I might therefore use my English material as a route into a more broadly continental question.

A third theme runs alongside these two historiographical threads, concerning the extent to which writers, on a number of subjects, could stick to the letter of Reformed orthodoxy in a technical sense, even whilst the weighting and comforting tone of their arguments seemingly transgressed that same orthodoxy. The truth of some Reformed tenet would be stated in one paragraph, only to be subtly qualified, or retracted, or even undermined altogether in subsequent words.

My thesis thus became twin-engined. It is driven by the unfolding of the texts themselves, but also by a desire to investigate these three questions, one English, one Reformed, and one formal. The structure of the thesis tries to allow these two projects to co-exist. The introduction begins broadly, by posing the two key historiographical questions and introducing the third 'theology vs. piety' idea. The second part of the introduction, moving inwards towards the texts, reviews the corpus of literature itself.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BCP</i>	<b><i>Book of Common Prayer (1559)</i> sourced online at:</b> <a href="http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1559/BCP_1559.htm">http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/1559/BCP_1559.htm</a>
<i>Bullinger Decades</i>	T. Harding (ed.), <i>The decades of Heinrich Bullinger, minister of the church of Zurich</i> (5 vols. Cambridge, 1849-1852).
<i>Calvin Institutes</i>	H. Beveridge (tr.) <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i> by John Calvin (Edinburgh: 1845) quotations sourced online at: <a href="http://www.reformed.org/books/index.html">http://www.reformed.org/books/index.html</a>
<i>DNB</i>	The <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> online edition: <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com/">http://www.oxforddnb.com/</a>
<i>HJ</i>	Historical Journal
<i>P&amp;P</i>	Past and Present
<i>SJC</i>	Journal of Scottish Theology
<i>SJT</i>	Scottish Journal of Theology
All biblical citations from Lloyd E. Berry (ed.), <i>The Geneva Bible</i> . (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).	

# INTRODUCTION

## I. Historiographical Background

### *Reformed Orthodoxy, Assurance and the Sacraments*

The core of this study is a description of the attempted cultivation, by clerical authors, of a brand of ‘sacramental piety’, which they hoped to plant in the hearts and minds of lay readers.<sup>4</sup> This historiographical review begins by assessing how the notion of this pastoral sacramental project sits alongside scholarship examining the nature of Reformed Protestantism, particularly as it progressed into what Richard Muller has called the first phase of ‘early orthodoxy’, a period which stretched from the 1560s, in which decade Reformed doctrine was codified across Europe, to 1618-40, marked by the seismic Synod of Dort and its aftermath.<sup>5</sup> The term ‘Reformed’ is used throughout this study in preference to ‘Calvinist’. It describes ‘an emerging religious tradition which, despite its debt to John Calvin, was always very much more than a product of his life and work in Geneva’.<sup>6</sup>

Previous studies of Reformed sacraments themselves form a baseline to this investigation. However, the main focus is upon a debate about the degree to which the orthodox period adhered to, or diverged from, the spirit of the first-generation reformers. Within this debate, the issue of assurance of salvation is of particular interest, as this thesis contends that evidence from English sacramental thought and practice can be brought to bear on this particular question.

The bulk of scholarship on the Reformed sacraments centres upon the individual theological outlooks of various key Reformers. Thus we have important studies of the sacramental theology of Calvin, Zwingli, Martyr and Beza.<sup>7</sup> There are also assessments of the broader

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<sup>4</sup> The phrase is E.B Holifield’s. See below ‘The Sacraments in England 1590-1630’.

<sup>5</sup> R. A. Muller, *Post Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: the rise and development of Reformed orthodoxy, c.1520 to c.1725*. (4 vols. Grand Rapids, 2003), Vol.1 p.4.

<sup>6</sup> G. Murdock, *Beyond Calvin : the intellectual, political and cultural world of Europe's Reformed churches, c 1540-1620* (Basingstoke, 2004), p.14.

<sup>7</sup> B. Gerrish, *Grace and gratitude: the Eucharistic theology of John Calvin* (Edinburgh, 1993); P. Stephens, ‘Zwingli’s Sacramental Views’ in E. J. Furcha and H. W. Pipkin (eds.), *Prophet, Pastor, Protestant: The Work of Huldrych Zwingli After Five Hundred Years* (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1984), pp.155-169; J. C. McLelland, *The Visible Words Of God: an exposition of the sacramental theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli*,

role of sacraments within Reformed society, such as Elwood's appraisal of the development of Reformed eucharistic theology in France.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Rorem, Wandel and Bierma have all made attempts to analyse the sacramentology of key Reformed documents: respectively, the *Consensus Tigurinus*, Calvin's *Institutes* and the *Heidelberg Catechism*.<sup>9</sup>

Some areas of our knowledge concerning Reformed sacraments are well established by this body of literature. Notably, there is a recognition that Reformed sacramental thinking was multi-faceted, containing both confrontational and constructive threads. This emphasis on the breath and potential positivity of Reformed sacramental doctrine stands in contrast to earlier views which tended to concentrate only upon the obvious problems that sacraments posed for Reformed thinkers, such as the corporeality of the Eucharist or infant Baptism.<sup>10</sup> It is true that some Reformed sacramental ideas were vehemently anti-Catholic and anti-Lutheran; inveighing against transubstantiation and consubstantiation accounted for a great deal of Reformers' output on sacraments, as did writing against eucharistic sacrifice and the five Roman Catholic sacraments considered false.<sup>11</sup> On the other flank, the Reformed wrote consistently against Anabaptism.<sup>12</sup> But there were also aspects of Reformed theology which were positive rather than reactionary in character. Elwood, for example, describes the work of the early French Reformer and influence on Calvin, Guillaume Farel, who made a major theological contribution to the Reformed theory of the Eucharist by formulating the *Sursum*

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A.D. 1500-1562 (Edinburgh, 1957); J. Raitt, *The eucharistic theology of Theodore Beza: development of the Reformed doctrine* (Chambersburg, 1972).

<sup>8</sup> C. Elwood, *The body broken: The Calvinist Doctrine of the Eucharist and the Symbolization of Power in Sixteenth Century France* (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>9</sup> P. Rorem, *Calvin and Bullinger on the Lord's Supper* (Bramcote, 1989); L.D. Bierma, *The doctrine of the sacraments in the Heidelberg Catechism: Melancthonian, Calvinist, or Zwinglian?* (Princeton, 1999); L.P. Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation* (Cambridge, 2006).

<sup>10</sup> The presence, however, remains a live topic. See R.A. Muller, 'From Zurich or from Wittenberg? An Examination of Calvin's Early Eucharistic Thought', *Calvin Theological Journal* 45:0:2 (2010), pp.243-255. On infant Baptism see P. Miller, 'The Puritan Theory of the Sacraments in Seventeenth-Century New England', *Catholic Historical Review* 22 (1937), pp.413-414.

<sup>11</sup> Against transubstantiation see for example Bullinger, *Decades* bk.5 serm.6. For Calvin's sacramental writings against the Lutherans and consubstantiation, see J.N. Tylenda, 'The Calvin-Westphal Exchange: The Genesis of Calvin's Treatises against Westphal' *CTJ* 9 (1974), pp.182-209. For the split between Zwingli and Luther on the Eucharistic presence see A. Barclay, *The Protestant doctrine of the Lord's Supper; a study in the eucharistic teaching of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin* (Glasgow, 1927). For Calvin against the sacrifice of the mass see *Institutes* b.4 ch.18. On the five 'false' sacraments see *ibid.* ch.19. For Peter Martyr's engagement in Eucharistic controversy, see his *Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist* (ed. & tr.) J. C. McLelland (Kirksville, MO, Truman State University Press, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> See T. George, 'The Presuppositions of Zwingli's Baptismal Theology' in J. Furcha & H. W. Pipkin (eds.), *Prophet, Pastor, Protestant: The Work of Huldrych Zwingli After Five Hundred Years* (Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1984), pp.71-87.

*Corda*.<sup>13</sup> Attention has also been drawn to the way in which Reformers such as Calvin and especially Martyr developed the theory of sacraments as ‘visible words’, thus integrating sacramentology with the typically Reformed preoccupation with the preaching of the gospel.<sup>14</sup> Wandel and Gerrish’s works both develop the idea that Calvin’s entire theology, in its overarching concern with the knowledge and revelation of God, might be considered sacramental in character.<sup>15</sup> Even Zwingli, typecast by contemporary Lutherans and many historians since as a sacramentarian, has been shown to have contributed key elements to Reformed sacramental thinking, particularly in relation to the covenant and to the idea of the corporate body of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Gerrish has developed a useful and influential rubric for understanding the various strains of sacramental thought within the variegated Reformed movement. He does so in terms of a key determinant: the nature of sacramental signification, an Augustinian motif taken up eagerly by the Reformers. Calvin’s *Institutes*, for example, endorses and explicates Augustine’s definition of a sacrament: ‘a visible sign of a sacred thing, or a visible form of an invisible grace’.<sup>17</sup> Gerrish posits three possible interpretations. First, Ulrich Zwingli, reacting against Luther’s insistence on the reality of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist, adopted a position which Gerrish terms ‘symbolic memorialism’. This position held that the sign was utterly divorced from the thing signified (or *res*); its value was purely commemorative. Sacraments were thus powerful aids to further remembrance of, and reflection upon, one’s salvation in Christ. Second, and contrastingly, the position characteristic of Calvin himself is termed ‘symbolic instrumentalism’. According to this view the sign conveyed, and was in some sense a cause of, the thing signified. Sacraments were thus instruments through which God’s saving grace in Christ was communicated to the recipients. Third, somewhere between these two approaches lies ‘symbolic parallelism’, which is associated above all with the Zurich reformer Heinrich Bullinger. This approach maintained a difference between sign and thing signified by distinguishing sharply between outward and inward realities, but without disjoining the two. In sacraments people outwardly received signs which reflected an inward

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<sup>13</sup> Elwood, *The Body Broken*, p.43.

<sup>14</sup> R.S. Wallace, *Calvin’s doctrine of Word and Sacrament* (Edinburgh, 1953); J.C. McLelland, *The Visible Words Of God: an exposition of the sacramental theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli, A.D. 1500-1562* (Edinburgh, 1957).

<sup>15</sup> Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation*; Gerrish, *Grace and Gratitude*.

<sup>16</sup> Stephens, ‘Zwingli’s Sacramental Views’.

<sup>17</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, bk.4 ch.14.1.

reception of grace; the two were not the same, but neither were they separate.<sup>18</sup> The importance accorded by Gerrish to signification as a determinant of sacramental theology fits well with Rorem's account of Calvin and Bullinger's sacramental accord in 1549, and with Bierma's study of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which stresses that the wide appeal, acceptance and range of interpretation of this document resulted from its politic *silence* on signification.<sup>19</sup>

Our understanding of the sacraments is not, however, so satisfactory when we move away from the sixteenth century into the seventeenth, the age of orthodoxy. This period has enjoyed far less elucidation by scholars than the years of the mid-sixteenth century when the movement was born. For many years what theological investigation there was concerned a quest for a 'central' dogma – such as predestination, or Christology.<sup>20</sup>

However, at least one influential paradigm has been created for understanding orthodox-era theology. The 'Calvin versus the Calvinists' concept, coined by Hall in an important article, posited that the second and third generations of the Reformed tradition steered away from the insights and methods of earlier reformers. Hall and other academics portrayed an intellectual tradition transforming itself but contradicting its own origins in the process. The alleged culprits in this 'slippage' theory were the generation of 'Calvinists' who followed Calvin: such as Theodore Beza in Geneva, William Perkins in England and New England Puritans of the seventeenth century. Such figures are seen as beginning a decisive move away from Calvin, not only by developing a harder stance on doctrinal matters such as predestination and the atonement, but also by reviving scholastic methods which preceding generations were thought to have shunned.<sup>21</sup> The question of continuity or discontinuity between Calvin and his successors was foreshadowed in a nineteenth-century American dispute about the

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<sup>18</sup> B. Gerrish, 'The Lord's Supper in the Reformed Confessions' in Donald K. McKim (ed.), *Major Themes in the Reformed Tradition* (Grand Rapids, 1992), pp.245-258. Summary of three 'symbolic' interpretations of the sign p.253.

<sup>19</sup> Rorem, *Calvin and Bullinger*; Bierma, *Doctrine of the Sacraments* p.23.

<sup>20</sup> See R.A. Muller, *After Calvin: studies in the development of a theological tradition* (Oxford, 2003) Ch.1 p.26.

<sup>21</sup> B. Hall, 'Calvin against the Calvinists' in Gervase Duffield (ed.), *John Calvin: A Collection of Distinguished Essays* (Grand Rapids, 1966), pp.12-37; B. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); P. Miller, 'The marrow of Puritan divinity' in idem., *Errand into the Wilderness* (Harvard, 1956) pp.48-98. For a survey of the trend see Muller, *After Calvin*, ch.1.

meaning of the Reformed Eucharist. The Reformed thinker Charles Hodge expressed a common opinion that Calvin's eucharistic theology with regard to the presence was too high and 'impossible'. Calvin's error had been corrected – commendably, in Hodge's view – by the Westminster divines and also the Swiss-Italian seventeenth-century theologian Francis Turretin.<sup>22</sup>

Yet for all that the eucharistic presence is a recurring issue in the primary literature examined here, the main engagement of this thesis with the 'Calvin versus the Calvinists' school is not with a directly sacramental question, but with another issue on which the orthodox Reformed movement allegedly backtracked. That issue is assurance of salvation, a question begged by the dramatic reorientation of the *ordo salutis* effected by the major reformers. Augustine's pessimistic anthropology, together with Luther's dramatic interpretation of St. Paul, placed Protestants of all hues within an economy of salvation in which man's moral efforts were marginalised and faith played the major role. Salvation was by the grace of God through faith alone. What is more, in many Reformed formulations, this salvific fate was predestined from time immemorial. But how might a believer know if he or she was possessed of the sort of faith that saved? And what should Protestant pastors do when confronted by members of their flock tortured by this doubt? In this context, Kendall argued that maturing English Calvinism reneged on its heritage by attempting to separate the phenomenon of saving faith from the assurance of that saving faith. For Calvin, he argued, faith and assurance were inseparable – if you had the right sort of faith, you would know it. But in the thought of English divines influenced by Beza and Perkins, this link was slowly loosened. Saving faith, in Kendall's view, was dissected into a recognisable sequence ending in outcomes, or 'fruits', the attainment of which soothed troubled consciences. But in proof-testing one's election retrospectively in this manner, these fruits of faith could easily be misconstrued as seeds: as causes, rather than results. Kendall called this 'preparationism', whereby believers 'prepare' themselves for grace by attaining to its sanctifying fruits. Ultimately the accusation is one of

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<sup>22</sup> C. Hodge, Rev. of J.W. Nevin *The Mystical Presence. A Vindication of the Reformed or Calvinistic Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* (Philadelphia, 1846) in *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review* 20:2 (1848) pp.227-278. Discussed in Bierma, *Doctrine of the Sacraments* pp.1-4.

voluntarism, an allegation that human effort, technically expelled from the scheme of salvation, re-entered it through the back door.<sup>23</sup>

Neither the ‘Calvin versus the Calvinists’ theory in general, nor Kendall’s particular version of it, have stood unopposed. The weightiest response to Kendall has been from Beeke, who contested Kendall’s reading of Calvin and his followers, seeing continuity where Kendall had seen divergence.<sup>24</sup> At a more general level, Muller has long criticised theories which seek to compare the mature thought of the Reformed movement with the thought typical of its instigation. He has argued convincingly that the overwhelmingly different contexts of writers separated often by more than 100 years render theological comparisons futile.<sup>25</sup> Yet the validity, or otherwise of such comparisons notwithstanding, historians and theologians have not ceased to discern within the Reformed world –especially the Anglo-American Reformed world – a very real anxiety about personal salvation and the assurance thereof. The much debated thesis of Max Weber concerning soteriological angst has focussed scholarly attention on the psychological ramifications of predestination and assurance, as have the publication of spiritual diaries such as that of Nehemiah Wallington (and previously, Richard Rogers), and several studies of the character of New England Puritanism.<sup>26</sup>

### ***The Sacraments in England 1590-1630***

Sacraments have featured tangentially in various long-standing debates concerning conflict and consensus in the English Church in this period. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians, in an attempt to understand the origins of the English civil wars, posited an ‘Anglican’ establishment in the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, besieged by ‘puritan’ and ‘Calvinist’ radicals who triumphed briefly in the political breakdown of the mid-seventeenth

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<sup>23</sup> R.T. Kendall, *Calvin and the English Calvinists to 1649* (Oxford, 1979). ‘Preparationism’ particularly with regard to John Cotton p.113.

<sup>24</sup> J.R. Beeke, *Assurance of Faith: Calvin, English Puritanism and the Dutch Second Reformation* (New York, 1991); idem., *The quest for full assurance : the legacy of Calvin and his successors* (Edinburgh, 1999). See also P. Helm, *Calvin and the Calvinists* (Edinburgh, 1982).

<sup>25</sup> See Muller, *Reformed Dogmatics* vol.4 p.383.

<sup>26</sup> M. Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism with other writings on the rise of the West* (tr. & ed). S. Kalberly (Oxford, 2009); M.M. Knappen (ed.), *Two Elizabethan Puritan diaries* (Chicago, 1933); P.S. Seaver, *Wallington's world: a Puritan artisan in seventeenth-century London* (Stanford, 1985); N. Pettit, *The heart prepared : grace and conversion in Puritan spiritual life* (Yale, 1966); Miller, ‘Marrow of Puritan Divinity’.

century.<sup>27</sup> This model of the church prior to the Civil Wars gave birth to the contention that there were two sacramental outlooks in existence: an Anglican high view and a puritan low view. This idea was evident, for example, in the influential theological survey of Horton Davies, who allotted the Anglicans and the puritans separate sections when it came to their sacramental theology.<sup>28</sup> It was also obvious from the very title of *Anglican and Puritan* by New, who stressed that these two groups were ‘decisively separated’ chiefly over the ‘practical efficacy of the sacraments’, going on to add that for Anglicans, sacraments ‘formed the heart of worship; for puritans, they were peripheral’.<sup>29</sup>

The thesis that clerics were in some fundamental way either enthusiastic or cautious about sacraments does make some sense in the light of two developments within the late-Elizabethan and early-Stuart Church: namely, the battles fought over church structure and over perceived idolatry. The radical portion of the church advocated structural fragmentation – first in the form of Presbyterianism, then, once this was defeated politically, realised in clandestine semi-separatism, before fully fledged congregationalism arrived in the mid-seventeenth century. This radical appetite for structural change resonates with the view that puritans had an exclusive view of sacraments as the litmus test of a particular congregation’s Godliness, whereas the established church was naturally eager to present sacraments as inclusive celebrations of Christian community.<sup>30</sup> Regarding idolatry: the much-documented puritan campaign against ceremony in Elizabeth’s reign, culminating in the Millenary Petition presented to James I, contrasts sharply with the sacramentalism and concern for the fabric of the church of the ‘avant-garde conformists’.<sup>31</sup> Against this backdrop, it seems natural that puritans were anti-ceremony and therefore anti-sacrament and that Anglicans were of the opposite persuasion.

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<sup>27</sup> S.R. Gardiner *History of England from the accession of James I to the outbreak of the civil war, 1603-1642* (10 vols. 1883-4)

<sup>28</sup> H. Davies, *Worship and Theology in England from Cranmer to Baxter and Fox* (5 vols. Princeton, 1961-75), vol.2, pp.291, 300.

<sup>29</sup> J.F.H. New, *Anglicans and Puritans: the basis of their opposition 1558-1640* (1964), pp.64, 68.

<sup>30</sup> Miller, ‘The Puritan Theory of the Sacraments’ p.411; P.Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (1988) p.177-181. A recent attempt to analyse the Jacobean church in terms of ecclesiology is C.W.A. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church: the Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603-1625* (Cambridge, 2005).

<sup>31</sup> P. Lake, ‘Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and avant-garde conformity at the court of James I’ in L. Levy Peck (ed.), *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.113-133.

This conception of sacramental thinking, in which sacraments were either esteemed or marginalised, has proved remarkably enduring, despite the fact that the generalised binary model of the church from which it derives has been ceaselessly questioned, modified and re-orientated in almost every conceivable way since the inception of revisionism in the 1970s. As the church itself has been reinterpreted, views of sacraments have stayed largely the same. For example, the high/low view of sacraments was relatively unaffected by the first wave of revisionism, signalled particularly by the early work of Collinson, in which the Calvinist puritans were re-cast from radical insurgents to establishment conservatives.<sup>32</sup> The Anglicans of the old narrative underwent the reverse journey, as historians such as Tyacke and Lake transformed them into, respectively, ‘Arminians’ or ‘avant-garde conformists’ – a radical but increasingly ascendant minority whose anti-Calvinist theology pitted them against Collinson’s puritan mainstream.<sup>33</sup> In Collinson’s account, the significance afforded to the logocentrism and ‘visual anorexia’ of puritanism strengthened the case that sacraments were poorly esteemed by this portion of the church. Sacraments were secondary in religious life to the word preached, and, in their sensuality, whiffed dangerously of idolatry and ceremoniousness.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, the revisionist work upon the opponents of puritans, particularly that of Peter Lake, reaffirmed that sacraments were extremely important to the entire theological outlook of figures such as Hooker, Andrewes and many leading lights of the Laudian church who espoused the ‘beauty of Holiness’.<sup>35</sup>

If the first wave of revisionism left the high/low sacramental paradigm unchanged and even strengthened, the same can be said for the preoccupation of some scholars in the 1980s and 1990s when describing the fault lines of the church in relation to the doctrine of predestination. Rival views presented predestination as both a divisive and unifying force amongst Elizabethan and early-Stuart clerics; but with regard to the sacraments, both sides of the argument essentially stressed that if puritans were predestinarians, they could not also be sacramentalists, as the grace of predestination and that of the sacraments were in competition.

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<sup>32</sup> P. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967); idem., *Godly People: essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (1982); idem., *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford, 1982).

<sup>33</sup> Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*; idem., ‘Lancelot Andrewes’; N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: the rise of English Arminianism c.1590-1640* (Oxford, 1987).

<sup>34</sup> Recently it has been suggested that Collinson overstated his case on ‘visual anorexia’: T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991), p.136; S. Hardman-Moore, ‘For the mind’s eye only: puritans, images and ‘the golden mines of scripture’ *SJT* 59 (2006).

<sup>35</sup> P.Lake, ‘The Laudian Style: Order, Uniformity and the Pursuit of the Beauty of Holiness in the 1630s’, pp.161-185; K. Sharpe *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (1992).

As Tyacke put it: ‘the grace of predestination and the grace of the sacraments were to become rivals for the religious allegiance of English men and women during the early seventeenth century’.<sup>36</sup>

Although the effect of this scholarship upon sacramental understanding has been negligible, its effect upon nomenclature has been considerable. The term puritan has survived to describe the ‘hotter sort of Protestant’, although it can no longer be used to denote exclusively those outside of the institutional and doctrinal mainstream of the church.<sup>37</sup> Describing such a mainstream as Anglican has become increasingly rare. By one measure – self-identification with the English Church – practically every cleric bar the most extreme of Presbyterian separatists appears an Anglican. By another – theology – there seem to have been no Anglicans at all; figures in the mainstream who were once considered as such by virtue of their distance from both Catholicism and continental Protestantism, like the brother-bishops George and Robert Abbot, or bishop Joseph Hall, or Thomas Morton, are now reckoned to have been just as essentially Reformed in doctrine as Perkins or William Bradshaw. Partly in response to such difficulties, the category of ‘Godliness’ has been enlisted to describe the make-up of zealous Protestants whose task was purification, not merely of the institutional church, but of official doctrine, and personal morality.<sup>38</sup>

The binary aspects of the scholarship highlighted here demonstrate how the polarising tendencies in the way we think about this period at large have reinforced a dichotomous view of the sacraments in particular. This is not to suggest that attempts to model the Elizabethan and early Stuart Churches have been purely dichotomous and lacking in nuance – for this is clearly not the case. The emergence of ‘godly’ currency to describe English Protestantism is one clear instance of a dichotomous view of church politics in the Elizabethan and early

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<sup>36</sup> Tyacke, *Anti Calvinists*, p.10. Opposing views to Tyacke’s are offered in G. Bernard, ‘The Church of England c.1529-c.1642’, *History* 75 (1990), pp. 183-206 and P. White, *Predestination, policy and polemic : conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992).

<sup>37</sup> The term is found in Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, p.27

<sup>38</sup> In this study, ‘godly’ or ‘Puritan’ authors are taken to be those who subscribed, in most particulars, to the ever-evolving creed of Reformed Protestantism as it was experienced in England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – a ‘Calvinist’ mainstream which actually owed as much to Martyr, Bucer, Bullinger and Beza as it did to Calvin. Broadly speaking, it espoused the fundamental correctness of predestination, virulent anti-Catholicism, and the preaching of the Word to foster an ever-deepening relationship between the individual and God.

Stuart periods being transcended. ‘Godliness’ was about more than single issues dividing two sides, it was a widely shared mindset which sought to purify ecclesiology, doctrine, liturgy, and morality – all in a never-ending effort to make the English, literally, more like God. There are many more examples of the basic Anglican/puritan paradigm and its variations being made more complex and surpassed. To name but a few: Fincham’s work on ‘godly bishops’ strikes at a Calvinist/Episcopalian duality; Milton’s work on polemic has made us look behind the polarising impulses of religious writings; Haigh and Walsham have both assessed the church’s relationship with popular culture in this period, offering, respectively, Catholic survivalism and Protestant appropriation of pre-existing cultural materials as models for understanding religious change.<sup>39</sup> What can be said, however, is that such increasing sophistication of our understanding has but rarely been applied to the sacraments, a fact lamented as recently as 2007 by Fincham and Tyacke, who write that ‘a false dichotomy has been created between puritan or ‘godly’ sacramental teaching on the one hand, and that of an alleged ‘mainstream’ on the other’.<sup>40</sup>

There are, however, two noteworthy studies which have brought some nuance to the topic. First, E.B. Holifield’s 1974 book, *The Covenant Sealed*, considered the phenomenon of ‘puritan sacramentalism’, which Holifield discerned throughout the seventeenth century in both Old and New England. To ‘puritan sacramentalism’ Holifield ascribed four meanings:

- (1) the efforts of Puritan theologians to use conventional themes as a defence against Baptist attacks on infant baptism;
- (2) the attempts of a small group of Puritan intellectuals to re-evaluate conventional Reformed doctrines of sacramental efficacy either by affirming baptismal regeneration or by otherwise stressing the importance of baptism for salvation, or by ascribing converting efficacy to the Lord’s Supper;
- (3) the reaffirmation of a distinctively Calvinist doctrine of the Lord’s Supper within Puritanism;
- (4) and finally, the growing inclination among a significant number of

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<sup>39</sup> K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990); A. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed. The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (1995); C. Haigh, *English Reformations: religion, politics and society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993); A. Walsham, *Providence in early modern England* (Oxford, 1999).

<sup>40</sup> N. Tyacke and K. Fincham, *Altars restored: The changing face of English religious worship, 1547-c.1700* (Oxford, 2007), p.109. Examples of studies of which this might be a just complaint include C.W. Dugmore, *Eucharistic doctrine in England from Hooker to Waterland, being the Norrisian prize essay in the University of Cambridge for the year 1940* (1942); C.J. Stranks, *Anglican devotion: studies in the spiritual life of the Church of England between the Reformation and the Oxford movement* (1961); K. Stevenson, *Covenant of Grace Renewed: The Vision of the Eucharist in the Seventeenth Century* (1994) and idem., *The mystery of baptism in the Anglican tradition* (Norwich, 1998).

Puritan ministers to encourage a widespread sacramental piety through baptismal sermons and eucharistic meditations<sup>41</sup>

This thesis is most obviously indebted to Holifield's final observation, which points both to a corpus of sacramental pastoral literature and to the 'sacramental piety' promoted therein. These are the topics pursued in the following analysis, by means of a larger and denser corpus of literature and narrower geographical and chronological bounds. In addition to providing an impetus for the very topic and materials examined in the present work, *The Covenant Sealed* is also an important analytical foundation – for although the language of Anglican and puritan is not abandoned, Holifield does question the orthodox view by proposing that a relatively elevated estimation of the sacraments could spring from the 'puritan' wing of the church. While it is perhaps problematic to dub any part of this a 'reaffirmation' of 'Calvinist' doctrine, Holifield's subversion of the high / low dichotomy is a stance which finds much support in this thesis. Especially convincing and influential is the explication of the third point. Holifield narrates an evolutionary process in which the Lord's Supper gradually transcended its psychologically subjective, didactic and introspective dimensions, moving as the seventeenth century progressed to an understanding that stressed this sacrament's objective power, sensory possibilities, and capacity to convert.<sup>42</sup> These elements are all present in the corpus of primary material examined here.

Second, a recent monograph from Brian Spinks has considered sacraments, ceremonies and Stuart Divines, an account especially notable for the use it makes of Gerrish's semiotic categories to analyse the sacramental theology of various English and Scottish divines. Spinks expands on Gerrish's threefold schema by noting that even in the sixteenth century, intermediary and hybrid positions were emerging.<sup>43</sup> In this semiotic focus, Spinks has moved decisively away from the Anglican/puritan school of sacramental investigation.

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<sup>41</sup> E.B. Holifield, *The covenant sealed: the development of Puritan Sacramental theology in old and new England* (1974) p.ix.

<sup>42</sup> Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed*, pp.51-61.

<sup>43</sup> B.D. Spinks, *Sacraments, Ceremonies and Stuart Divines: sacramental theology and liturgy in England and Scotland 1603-1662* (Aldershot, 2002).

Historians have also long tried to uncover parish-level experience of the Reformation, an enterprise which began in earnest after the Second World War with a spate of local research facilitated by the opening up of record offices. The broad swathe of scholarship which attempts to uncover religious practice is of interest, as we shall shortly see, insofar as it comments upon the sacraments, but is also relevant to this thesis in its own right, in two particular ways. Firstly, insofar as the method of this study is to effect a large scale exegesis of like-minded religious texts, it draws upon scholarship on the nature of Protestant communication and print in this period of English history. In this regard much is owed to the work of Ian Green, whose classifications of popular religious texts and analysis of the transmission of religious ideas by them, have deeply influenced the method of this study.<sup>44</sup> Secondly, the analysis of ‘plaine mans’ religion has included investigations of the effects that the predestinarian character of Reformed religion had upon the parish.<sup>45</sup> In addition to the work of Kendall, significant contributions to the study of ‘troubled consciences’ in the parish have since been made by Haigh, Winship and Dixon – all of whose works help shape the way this thesis tries to integrate sacraments into the assurance question.<sup>46</sup>

Sacraments have occasionally featured directly in the course of investigating ‘plaine man’s religion’. For example Judith Maltby and Don Spaeth have noted the essential orthodoxy of ordinary parishioners during and after the civil wars – an embrace of the established procedures of the church which included an attachment to its liturgy and sacraments.<sup>47</sup> Haigh, whilst less persuaded of Protestantism’s hold on the religious lives of the ordinary, has also investigated sacraments at a parish level, focussing especially on the extent to which exclusion from the Lord’s Supper affected, or failed to affect, community disputes in the

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<sup>44</sup> I. Green, *The Christian’s ABC: catechisms and catechising in England c. 1530-1740* (Oxford, 1996); idem., *Print and Protestantism* (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>45</sup> The phrase is indelibly linked with a famous contemporary work religious anthropology: A. Dent, *The plaine mans path-way to heauen. VVherein euery man may clearly see, whether he shall be sauued or damned. Set forth dialogue wise, for the better vnderstanding of the simple* (1601). Recently it has been employed in C. Haigh, *The plain man’s pathways to heaven : kinds of Christianity in post-reformation England, 1570-1640* (Oxford, 2007).

<sup>46</sup> Haigh, *The plaine mans path-way*; M.P. Winship ‘Weak Christians, backsliders, and carnal gospellers: assurance of salvation and the pastoral origins of Puritan practical divinity in the 1580s’. *Church History*, 70:3 (2001), pp.462-81; L. Dixon, ‘Calvinist Theology and Pastoral Reality in the Reign of King James I: the Perspective of Thomas Wilson’, *The Seventeenth Century* 23:2, (2008), pp. 173-197.

<sup>47</sup> J. Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (1998); D. Spaeth, ‘Common prayer? Popular observance of the Anglican liturgy in Restoration Wiltshire’ in Susan Wright (ed.), *Parish, church and people: local studies in lay religion, 1350-1750* (1988).

early seventeenth century.<sup>48</sup> In a Scottish context, Todd has noted widespread lay-enthusiasm and emotionalism surrounding sacraments.<sup>49</sup> More specifically Boulton has investigated the frequency of reception of the Lord's Supper in London Parishes.<sup>50</sup> Perhaps the most important work in this vein, and an important foundation for the present work, is an article by Arnold Hunt which uses evidence from pastoral writings to investigate eucharistic practice amongst the laity. Hunt shows that it was a widely held clerical opinion that people did not communicate frequently enough, often failing to attain even the minimum frequency specified by the prayer book, which specified that 'every Parishioner shall communicate, at the leaste thre tymes in the yere, of whiche Easter to be one'.<sup>51</sup> Hunt also points out that many pointedly pre-reformation communal functions of eucharistic practice seem to have survived at a parish level, serving to reinforce social distinctions and providing an opportunity for charity.<sup>52</sup>

## II. The Texts

### *Assembling the Texts*

This thesis is based upon sixty-four texts by sixty-one authors, all of which emanate from English presses in the period 1590-1630. The texts all offer some form of practical guidance on the subject of sacraments, although they vary in genre, tone, length, authorship and provenance – from the shortest and plainest of catechisms to many hundred-pages worth of academic prose through all the intermediate possibilities.

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<sup>48</sup> Haigh, *The plaine mans path-way*; idem., 'Communion and community: exclusion from communion in post-Reformation England', *JEH* 51 (2000).

<sup>49</sup> M. Todd, *The culture of Protestantism in early modern Scotland* (2002) p.26.

<sup>50</sup> J.P. Boulton, 'The Limits of Formal Religion: The Administration of Holy Communion in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart London', *London Journal* (1984), pp. 135-154.

<sup>51</sup> BCP 'The order for the Administration of the Lords Supper or Holy Communion'.

<sup>52</sup> A. Hunt, 'The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England', *P&P* 161 (1998) pp.39-83.

There were two stages to the search. The first involved following up works encountered in secondary literature. The second involved making online searches of EEBO, and the English Short Title Catalogue website run by the British Library. Any title containing the word ‘sacrament’ was considered for inclusion, as was any titular reference to ‘Baptism’ or to contemporary terms for the Eucharist, such as the ‘Lord’s Supper’ or ‘communion’.

The two major criteria which guided the search were as follows:

(1) 1590-1630 England<sup>53</sup>

The occurrence of the sources themselves leads naturally to a 1600-30 timeframe. From searching the short-title catalogues, the numbers of texts fitting my criteria, sorted by decade, are as follows:

1570-9: 1

1580-9: 7

1590-9: 4

1600-9: 12

1610-9: 22

1620-9: 22

1630-9: 7<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Originally I had hoped also to treat Scottish texts, of which I unearthed around a dozen. But constraints of space and time made it unlikely that I would be able to do justice to the additional material, especially given that a whole new layer of context – the structural and cultural differences between the English and Scottish Churches – would have to be accommodated in an already complex structure. With the same logic I have also resisted treating the handful of relevant and influential foreign texts which appeared in translation on the English presses, with the notable and odd exception of Sutton’s work, which, although in part a translation of Pinelli, must on account of Sutton’s numerous additions, subtractions and changes of emphasis, be considered more English than Italian.

<sup>54</sup> These data are compiled from the main corpus of texts.

The general sense is that the first three decades of the seventeenth century saw a boom in practically-focussed sacramental literature, agreeing with Ian Green's assessment that the Jacobean decades were the ones in which the godly book trade really took off.<sup>55</sup> Emblematic, perhaps, of this spate is the publication in 1601 of Christopher Sutton's *Godly Meditations*, which seems to be the first 'communion manual' published in English. Four similar works followed in that same decade; three more during 1610-19, and a further five during 1620-29.<sup>56</sup>

Although this points to the aptness of beginning in 1600, the earlier limit was taken back to 1590. A small part of the reason for this is that Thomas Sparke's treatise of 1597 is rich and interesting.<sup>57</sup> But the more substantial reason is that the 1590s were a key decade in the English historiography outlined above: especially the parallel developments of a brand of 'godly' piety on the one hand, and an alternative model of English churchmanship on the other.<sup>58</sup> The chosen timeframe also provides a suitable window through which to assess the selected sources in the light of the Europe-wide debate about the development of Reformed religion as it entered into the period of early orthodoxy. 1590-1630 encompasses the transition from the first to the second generation of reformers and the fall-out from the 1618 synod of Dort – making texts from this period well-placed to shed light on European developments.

The argument of this thesis is in one sense anti-chronological: it is less concerned with charting change throughout its chosen period and more with demonstrating that sacramental

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<sup>55</sup> Green, *Print and Protestantism*, pp.181-82.

<sup>56</sup> T. Tymme, 'The Court of Conscience' in idem., *A silver watch-bell* (1605), pp. 220-275; W. Tye, *A matter of moment* (1608); T. Tuke, *A fit guest for the Lords table* (1609); W. Bradshaw, *A direction for the weaker sort of Christians* (1609); F. Dillingham, 'A Preparative', in idem., *A silver locke, which beeing opened with a golden key, gives a passage to the treasures of a heavenly life* (1611), pp.39-78; R. Bruch, 'A Short and Plaine Treatise', in idem., *The life of religion* (1615), pp.251-287; R. Hill, 'A communicant instructed', in idem., *The pathway to prayer and pietie* (1615), [separate pagination]; R. Preston, *Duties of communicants* (1621); T. Field, *A Christians preparation to the worthy receiving of the blessed sacrament of the Lords Supper* (1622); R. Jenison, *Directions for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper* (1624); H. Tozer, *Directions for a godly life especially for communicating at the Lord's table* (Oxford, 1628); W. Pemble, *An introduction to the worthy receiving of the sacrament* (1633). Pemble's work was posthumously published.

<sup>57</sup> T. Sparke, *The high way to Heaven* (1597).

<sup>58</sup> See above, 'The Sacraments in England 1590-1630'.

texts throughout the period shared a common theological and pastoral gene pool. This is reflected in the assembled texts to the extent that any work which was in circulation throughout the period is considered, even if that work was reprinted, or a later edition of a much earlier work.

## (2) Sacraments in practical context

In *Godly Meditations*, first published in 1601, Sutton took the theologically intricate subject of the Lord's Supper and attempted to render it sensible and useful to the Christian men and women who partook of it.<sup>59</sup> The corpus of texts assembled here are all to some degree undertaking the same exercise: advising practically on how to prepare for and partake of sacraments. The contemporary terms for this perspective were 'devotion' and 'piety'. Nicholas Hunt, for instance, proposed to consider 'the gospel sacraments, together with the exercise of devotion'; Bayly and Robert Hill's considerations of sacraments were both included in the course of larger 'manuals' treating, respectively, the *Practise of Piety* and the *Pathway to Prayer and Piety*.<sup>60</sup> This concern with practice, piety and devotion when discussing sacraments is the most important shared characteristic of the texts. Many common features spring from it: a concern with the laity's sacramental perspective; an attention to 'worthiness' required before, during and after receiving; using sacraments not only as objects of knowledge but as spurs to adoration of God, strengthening of faith and neighbourliness towards other Christians; the provision of contemplative and meditative aids to achieve the same. The primary corpus is above all a collection of texts exhibiting this nexus of features.

Adhering to this criterion meant consciously avoiding overtly polemical sacramental texts which had relatively little to say about practical lay involvement with the sacraments. By way of example one may turn to John Denison's work. *A Heavenly Banquet* is presented as a twin enterprise: firstly it is a 'The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper, set forth in seven Sermons, with two Prayers before and after the receiving', but secondly there is also 'A justification of

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<sup>59</sup> Sutton, *Godly*.

<sup>60</sup> N. Hunt, *The devout Christian communicant instructed* (1628), A4r; L. Bayly, *The practise of pietie directing a Christian how to walke that he may please God* (1613) pp.600-790; Hill, *Pathway*.

Kneeling in the act of receiving'.<sup>61</sup> Here we have two aspects of writing: first writing which, although academic, maintains a sense of usefulness to the partaker of the Lord's Supper, and second, an engagement with a divisive issue in the Elizabethan and Jacobean Churches – kneeling. Denison is aware of the distinction, and clearly prefers writing in the former mode, albeit whilst failing to avoid the latter: 'The principall of my taske', he wrote, 'is matter positive, and the controversie about Kneeling, is handled but *breviter*, and *obiter*'.<sup>62</sup> Denison is as good as his word, the kneeling section constitutes only around a quarter of the work's total length. The desire to bring pastoral writing out of the shade of controversy is a typical impulse among the authors, especially with reference to the quarrels over kneeling or transubstantiation. Sutton, for example, complains that

With discourse of controuersie nowe a long time, no lesse learned, then large writing, we have had in our English tongue· but all this while, we have not much extant appertayning to the substance of the misterie it selfe, and our Christian devotion towardses the s[a]me.<sup>63</sup>

For the purposes of assembling the primary texts, works which expressed sentiments like these were retained – even if, like Denison, they touch on polemical points. In truth, the horror with which Protestants viewed transubstantiation meant that very few texts indeed refrained from pointing out Popish errors concerning the elements. But all the texts in the corpus are pastoral primarily and 'controversial' or 'polemical' only in passing – to borrow an image from Featley, the texts sail the 'waters of *Shiloah* that runne softly' rather than the 'waters of strife' (in which Featley was also well versed).<sup>64</sup> Works whose entire focus was upon some intra-Protestant strife, such as Francis Johnson's *Briefe Treatise against Anabaptists* (1609) or solely a piece of anti-Catholic propaganda, such as Thomas Morton's *Catholique Appeal* (1608), were discarded.<sup>65</sup> This criterion of not being, first and foremost, polemical, also rules out Book V of Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.<sup>66</sup> Of interest are texts orientated primarily towards partakers of sacraments, rather than those which look mainly outwards to other polemicists.

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<sup>61</sup> J. Denison, *The heavenly banquet: or The doctrine of the Lords Supper* (1619). The title page of the 1619 original is lost, but the extended title cited appears on the 1631 re-print.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, sig.A3v.

<sup>63</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, sigs.A5v-6r.

<sup>64</sup> D. Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis: or, The hand-maid to private devotion presenting a manuell to her mistresse furnished with instructions hymnes and prayers. ...* (1630) sig.A4v.

<sup>65</sup> F. Johnson, *Briefe Treatise against Anabaptists* (1609); T. Morton, *Catholique Appeal* (1608).

<sup>66</sup> G. Edelen and W. S. Hill (eds.) *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker: Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity, Preface Books I-IV, and V* (Vol.II) (1977)

### (3) The Reformed mainstream

Whereas the span of dates and criterion of practical focus guided the search from the outset, during the formulation of the main arguments of the thesis a third criterion emerged which was then applied to candidate texts and authors. This was the criterion that texts and authors should be broadly representative of the mainstream of Reformed churchmanship rather than, to take Tyacke or Lake's popular formulations, representative of 'Arminianism' or 'avant-garde conformism'. The most important justification for this boundary involves the theological thrust and scope of the thesis. A core contention in the following analysis is that consistently weighty claims were made for the sacraments, in pastoral settings, by authors whose theological grounding was firmly and conventionally Reformed in character. Such writing deserves attention not because authors were plotting an overhaul of Reformed theology with regard to the strictures of sacraments or salvation – but rather because they lauded sacraments *from within the constraints of* and sometimes *despite* – their conservative and conventional theology. Much of the thesis is concerned with showing how this happened. Figures such as Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes, John Cosin, John Buckeridge certainly espoused their own highly significant views about sacraments during the timeframe of this study. Hooker's *Laws* includes large sections on sacraments; Andrewes sermons, especially those preached at St. Giles Cripplegate in the 1590s, together with his posthumously published *Preces Privatae*, provide devotional material on the subject, as does Cosin's *A collection of Private Devotions* and the sermons of Buckeridge.<sup>67</sup> Such figures all held the sacraments in high esteem – but a largely unsurprising esteem given their dissatisfaction with Reformed theology as it had been codified across Europe in the 1560s and 70s and applied in England. Such authors are qualitatively different from those assembled here, who were mainly concerned with deepening the English church's identification with Reformed norms, than with the converse. In the conclusion of this thesis it is contended that the texts assembled here showcase a second and hitherto overlooked route to sacramentalism: a route *through* Reformed norms rather than around them. A comparison between the two parallel styles of high sacramentalism would be extremely instructive, but is beyond the scope of what is documented here. The same argument reinforces the decision to stop the study at 1630, as

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<sup>67</sup> See *Works of Richard Hooker*, Book V; F. E. Brightman (ed. and tr.) *The Preces Privatae of Lancelot Andrewes* (1903); J. Cosin, *A collection of private deuotions: in the practise of the ancient church Called the houres of prayer* (1627); Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge and avant-garde conformity at the court of James I'. Relevant Andrewes sermons include that preached at St. Giles Cripplegate on Isaiah VI.6-7 in 1598, found in P. McCullough, *Lancelot Andrewes: selected sermons and lectures* (Oxford, 2005) pp.138-45, together with all the Lent, Good Friday and Easter Material found in volume two of J. P. Wilson and J. Bliss (eds.), *The English Theological Works of Lancelot Andrewes*, 11 vols., (1841-54).

there would be an obligation to analyse texts from the 1630s against William Laud's program of political and ceremonial reform of the church of England, which is one factor too much for the present enquiry.

### III. Overview of the Corpus

#### *Focus, genre and character*

There are a wide range of genres on display. Four basic categories of text are represented: catechisms; godly-living manuals; treatises; and sermons. Interlaced with this generic spectrum is the further distinction of focus. For example, works could focus completely on the Lord's Supper, or Baptism, or on both of the sacraments. Sometimes the entire text is devoted to such a subject, whilst other texts contain one sacramentally-focussed portion within a much more wide-ranging work.

Catechisms account for twenty-one – just over a third – of the texts. Six confine themselves to explicating one or both of the Reformed sacraments. Slightly different are the fifteen instances of what Green has called 'pre-communion questionnaires', that is, catechisms which present themselves as containing essential information necessary before receiving the Lord's Supper, admittance tests such as Edward Fenton's *So short a Catechisme that whosoever cannot or will not learne, are not in any wise to be admitted to the Lords supper* (1622).<sup>68</sup> Such forms concentrated on making sure that the would-be communicant understood the basics of the sacrament he was about to receive, but usually they also attempted to instil a broader knowledge of Christian essentials too. Of this constituency, Stephen Egerton's catechism is distinctive: it is a popular compendium of different forms, one of which is marketed as a pre-communion form.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Green, *ABC*, p.79. See also pp.35-8.

<sup>69</sup> S. Egerton, *A briefe methode of catechizing... The same points are also contracted, & a forme of examining communicants added; with graces before and after meate* (1615).

‘godly living manuals’ – again the classification is Green’s – were books aimed at assisting the layman in all the practical aspects of Christian life.<sup>70</sup> They were typically very large, containing upwards of 500 octavo pages. Bishop Bayly’s *Practice of Piety* is the most famous example, but the thesis also draws from Richard Rogers’ *Seven Treatises*, Daniel Featley’s *Ancilla Pietatis*, as well as the less well-known works of John Brinsley and John Downname.<sup>71</sup> Although a large range of subjects were discussed – from the deeply personal realms of prayer and knowing one’s estate, to advice on the Christian way to manage families and households – this thesis concentrates on discrete sections of these works which deal with the role of sacraments in godly living. In accordance with their aspiration to detail Christian life in its entirety, all four of these works discuss both of the Reformed sacraments, although many more words were devoted to the Lord’s Supper than to Baptism.

The twelve ‘sacramental treatises’ in the corpus differ from ‘godly living manuals’ in that they are works devoted in their entirety to sacraments. Four of the twelve treat both sacraments, three treat Baptism only and the remaining five concentrate on the Lord’s Supper. Some authors such as William Attersoll or John Denison aimed to provide comprehensive doctrinal explanations of the Reformed sacraments, whilst others made more specific points, such as Cornelius Burges’ tract on baptismal regeneration.<sup>72</sup> They are best viewed as parenting the thirteen representatives of the sub-category – ‘communion preparations’. These latter were also sacramental treatises, but they were written with the express intention of assisting would-be partakers of the Lord’s Supper to prepare themselves for that event. Sutton seems to have been the first to publish a book of this kind in 1601, although a lay and practical perspective on sacraments was a common enough theme of clerical writing by the turn of the century. What made Sutton and his emulators unique was the gathering of such material into a compendious form comprising mixtures of doctrinal instruction, meditations, prayers, devotional prose and sometimes verse.

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<sup>70</sup> Green, *Print and Protestantism*, p.346.

<sup>71</sup> Bayly, *Practise*; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, R. Rogers, *Seven treatises containing such direction as is gathered out of the Holie Scriptures* (1603); J. Brinsley, *The true watch, and rule of life* (1619); J. Downname, *A guide to godlynesse* (1622).

<sup>72</sup> W. Attersoll, *The new covenant* (1614); J. Denison, *Banquet*; C. Burges, *Baptismall regeneration of elect infants* (1629).

The ten sermons can also be split into two groups. The four works of John Denison, John Randall, the unrelated Samuel and Henry Smith together with John Dod's *Brief Dialogue* are homogenous treatises derived from selections of sacramentally-focussed sermons.<sup>73</sup> Henry Smith's *A Treatise of the Lords Supper in Two Sermons* has the fewest constituent parts, Randall's *Three and Twentie Sermons* the most. The remaining works are single sermons expounding sacramental practice or doctrine, taken in all cases from published compendiums of wide-ranging sermons.

Two further texts resist instant classification. *The elements of the beginning* (1619) is an anonymously-authored combination of catechetical and prose reflections on preparing for the Lord's Supper.<sup>74</sup> John Boys' *An exposition of al the principal Scriptures used in our English liturgie together* (1610) is a (favourable) commentary upon the Prayer Book rubrics, and as such, contains relevant sections on Baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>75</sup>

Some twenty-eight texts are 'sacrament-specific', in that either one or both of the Reformed sacraments is the overriding focus of the entire text. Although sometimes these texts were bound with other works (such as Thomas Wilcox's *Treatise on the Supper* which came coupled with a dissertation on fasting by Thomas Cartwright), or with each other (such as the Bradshaw-Arthur Hildersham coupling), they may all be thought of as discrete texts which dealt exclusively with the sacraments and which were prefaced, marketed, sold and bought accordingly.<sup>76</sup> These twenty-eight texts become thirty-two when the four works of Thomas Draxe, John Jewel, Hill and Thomas Tymme are added.<sup>77</sup> These four are all instances of a

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<sup>73</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*; J. Randall, *Three and twentie sermons, or, Catechisticall lectures upon the sacrament of the Lords Supper preached monthly before the Communion* (1630); H. Smith, *A treatise of the Lords supper in two sermons* (1591); S. Smith, *Christs Last Supper or the doctrine of the Sacrament of Christs Supper, set forth in five sermons* (1620); J. Dod, 'A Briefe Dialogue concerning preparation for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper', in idem., and R. Cleaver, *Ten sermons tending chiefly to the fitting of men for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper* (1610), pp.1-18.

<sup>74</sup> Anon., *The elements of the beginning of the oracles of God Containing the whole grounds of Christian religion, in a short catechisme for yong children, and a larger method of catechising* (1619).

<sup>75</sup> J. Boys, *An exposition of al the principal Scriptures used in our English liturgie together with a reason why the church did chuse the same* (1610).

<sup>76</sup> T. Wilcox, *The substance of the Lords Supper Shortly and soundly set foorth*, bound with T. Cartwright, *Two Treatises* (1610); A. Hildersham, *The Doctrine of communicating worthily in the Lords Supper Delivered by way of Question and Answer, for the more familiar instruction of the simple*, bound with Bradshaw, *Direction*, (1609).

<sup>77</sup> T. Draxe, 'An appendix or necessary addition' in idem., *The lambes spouse or the heavenly bride...Whereunto is annexed an exact preparative to the Lords Supper* (1608), pp.L4r-M8r; J. Jewel, 'A

sacrament-specific adjunct to a more wide-ranging work, the former being specifically noted and advertised on the frontispiece of the latter. To take the example of Jewel: a compendium of his sermons was published in 1603, ‘whereunto is added a short treatise of the Sacraments, gathered out of other sermons, made upon that matter, in his Cathedral Church at Salisburie’.<sup>78</sup>

The remaining texts cannot be said to be sacrament-specific in the same way, usually because they are extracts from a parent text which was broader in scope. This is true of the extracts from godly living manuals already discussed, of single sermons taken from much larger published collections and of the ‘preparation catechisms’. This division between ‘sacrament-specific’ and ‘non-sacrament-specific’ becomes useful when authorial intent is considered.

To some extent, differences of genre and focus are relatively unimportant as far as the arguments of this thesis are concerned. The analysis of the sources centres upon the theme which they all, to a large extent, address: practical approaches to the sacraments. A comparison, for example, of the way in which two authors approach the topic of why faith is necessary for the receiving of the sacraments, need not flounder because one source is a catechism and the other a treatise, or because one document is a sacramental treatise in its own right whereas another is a sermon drawn from a wider collection. Difference of form need not imply a difference of content. Nor is it the case that the features of a certain category are unique to that type of text. The theme of worthiness before communion, for example, is addressed in the vast majority of works – the ‘communion preparations’ are unique only in that they are books wholly dedicated to communicating that theme. Similarly ubiquitous, unsurprisingly, was the task of scriptural exegesis, which was by no means the sole province of the sermons.

Some use may be made of the focal and generic distinctions between texts. It quickly emerges, for example, that the devotional literature penned about the Lord’s Supper far

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Treatise of the Sacraments’, in idem., *Certaine sermons...Wherunto is added a short treatise of the sacraments, gathered out of other his sermons, made upon that matter, in his cathedrall church at Salisburie* (1603), [separate pagination]; Hill, ‘Communicant’ in *Pathway*; Tymme, ‘The Court of Conscience’ in *Watch-Bell*.

<sup>78</sup> Jewel, ‘Treatise’, title page.

outweighed that written about Baptism and although form did not necessarily affect content, there are instances where it clearly could. The most obvious example of this is the issue of length. Authors of short, pre-communion catechisms, and to a lesser extent the preachers of sacramental sermons, had of necessity to render their message into a few key points, whereas the unrestricted treatise form allowed for expansion. This is a less mundane observation than it may seem, for one of the contentions of this thesis is that there often existed a gap between an author's understanding of a subject and the impression that a reader of one his works might glean about the that same topic. If – as was often the case – an author's full position was one involving nuance, subtlety and clarification, then the complete message might well be difficult to achieve in an attenuated form. Authors who were essentially like-minded might well communicate subtly different messages by virtue of having chosen different formats. It is with such possibilities in mind that two sets of different works penned by the same author are included in the corpus. The London cleric Stephen Denison published both a catechism and a doctrinal treatise on the subject of Sacraments, whilst the more obscure Northamptonshire minister Richard Preston wrote a sacramental catechism and two treatises, one focussed on doctrine, one focussing on the 'duties' of communicants.<sup>79</sup> It is hoped that these 'duplicates' will be useful in assessing the role of form throughout the thesis.

That one work might be counted 'more doctrinal' than another draws attention to two further points. The first is that a spectrum exists between texts which were penned, as Perkins hoped of his catechism, 'such as the simplest may easily learne' and texts of a more scholarly bent, replete with learned references to Latin and Greek and perhaps garnished with classical references.<sup>80</sup> Whereas the former clearly constitute prime examples of practical sacramental writing, it might be argued that some of the latter, with their scholarly vocabulary, do not bear comparison. John Denison's sermon-made-treatise *The Heavenly Banquet* can be taken as emblematic of this problem. Over 350 pages long, it comes complete with Ramist diagram, consistent Latin and Greek marginalia as well as a full-blown deployment of scholastic terminology as he assesses the Lord's Supper in terms of 'Efficient', 'Materiall' 'Formal' and 'Final' causes.<sup>81</sup> Yet for all the learning on display, Denison's avowed task, as stated in the

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<sup>79</sup> S. Denison, *A compendious catechisme* (1621); idem., *The doctrine of both the Sacraments to witte, Baptisme, and the Supper of the Lord* (1621); R. Preston, *Short questions and answers* (1621); idem., *The doctrine of the Sacrament* (1621); idem., *Duties*.

<sup>80</sup> Perkins, *The foundation of Christian religion gathered into sixe principles* (1591), A3v.

<sup>81</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*. Diagram inserted before first folio. 'Causes' listed in contents, A7r.

preface to 'the Christian Reader', is one of piety, not abstraction: 'If in this discourse upon the Sacrament, thou finde that which may helpe to build thee up in Christ (which is indeed my hope and desire) imbrace it, and make use of it'.<sup>82</sup>

This, then, is the second point: that fairly technical theology could co-exist with a pastoral purpose. The more academic texts of the corpus marry doctrinal intricacies with a concern for the lay reader's personal religious life. This mixture comes across on the title page of Attersoll's *The New Covenant* where five aims are stated:

Truth itselſe plainly proved  
Doctrin of the Reformed Churches clearely maintained  
Errors of the church of Rome ſoundly convinced  
Right maner of Receiving of them [ie. the ſacraments] comfortably declared  
And ſundry doubts and difficult Questions decided<sup>83</sup>

This co-existence is in itself an item for consideration in this thesis; Chapter One suggests that the proximity of technical doctrine and practical advice may be traced to the Reformed reluctance to separate knowledge from practice. As Randall put it in the preface to his collected sermons, it was to be hoped that 'our knowledge and our practice may quote and second one another; our knowledge may direct our practice, and our practice may exercise and confirme our knowledge, by continuall ſenſible and lively practice.'<sup>84</sup>

Unsurprisingly there was a basic correlation between scholarliness and length. Authors such as Gawton or Fenton who self-confessedly took aim at the unlearned, or even the illiterate (for catechisms could be learnt and memorised), produced simple works which were extremely short.<sup>85</sup> By contrast, learned tracts like Sparke's *The High Way to Heaven* (1597) covered over 350 pages quarto. But this correlation was not a hard and fast rule. Theophilus Field's communion preparation demonstrates high learning in less than seventy pages; Richard Coxe's catechism, despite being less than forty pages long, nevertheless offers

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<sup>82</sup> *ibid.*, A6r-v.

<sup>83</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, title page.

<sup>84</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.3.

<sup>85</sup> R. Gawton, *A short instruction for all such as are to be admitted to the Lords Supper* (1612); Fenton, E., *So shorte a catechisme that whosoever cannot, or wil not learne, are not in any wise to be admitted to the Lords Supper* (1622).

answers to some questions which are in excess of 200 words long as he seeks to put the full nuance of his case.<sup>86</sup> Equally lengthiness did not guarantee a highly academic style: the point of the huge works of practical divinity by men like Downname or Rogers was to instruct the laity for whom literacy could be assumed but university learning was not.

### *Authors*

Although the authors of the texts were all late Elizabethan and early Stuart divines, they are a wide-ranging set, comprising obscure country pastors, university clerics, bishops, royally-sponsored ministers and preacher-poets. Some of these men were clearly part of the self-styled godly; others, less so.<sup>87</sup> Two authors, of the texts *Elements of the beginning* and *Motives to Godly Knowledge*, remain anonymous.<sup>88</sup>

There is a very large difference in years between the earliest and latest living authors considered. For example, Bishop Jewel (1522-1571) died some twenty-eight years before Brinsley (1600-1665) was born. Such discrepancies are due to the fact that the span of 1590-1630 refers not to the active lifetimes of people but to the publication dates of texts. Therefore older works published or re-published posthumously appear alongside the works of living authors. Other authors who were mainly active either before or during the early part of the period under consideration here include the famous Edward Dering (d.1576), Henry ‘Silver-tongued’ Smith (d.1591), Perkins (d.1602) and Wilcox (d.1608), but also the less well-known Coxe (d.1596) and George Estey (d.1601). At the other end of the spectrum, Brinsley, along with Burgess and Samuel Smith, all lived until 1665 and thus saw the Restoration – Smith lived to be eighty-one. The most represented generation is that which attended university in the 1580s and 1590s, there being fourteen representatives in the former, and twelve in the latter decade. The generation educated in subsequent decades is understandably less represented, having had less chance to reach maturity in print by the cut-

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<sup>86</sup> T. Field, *Preparation* (1622); R. Coxe, *A short catechisme. Very necessary, for the plaine understanding of the principall points of Christian religion* (1620), e.g. B4r-v, B8r-v.

<sup>87</sup> Appendix C sets out information about these authors.

<sup>88</sup> Anon., *Elements*; Anon., *Motives to godly knowledge with a briefe instruction very necessary to bee learned and understood of every one before he be admitted to pertake the Sacrament of the Lords Supper* (1613). Of the author of *Elements* there is no hint. For the author of *Motives* see Appendix C.

off point of 1630. Henry Tozer, who proceeded B.A. and M.A. from Exeter College Oxford in 1623 and 1626 respectively, was educated the latest, and published his *Directions for a Godly Life* relatively early in his life in 1628.<sup>89</sup> Three notable figures – Rogers (1551-1618), Dod (1560-1645) and Hildersham (1563-1632), as well as the lesser known Eusebius Pagit (1546/7-1617) – lived through large portions of both the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries.<sup>90</sup>

This group of authors was active over the length and breadth of England and sometimes abroad. Robert Jenison ministered in Newcastle; Lewis Thomas in Glamorganshire; William Tye had livings in Kent. Two bishops – John Thornborough and George Webbe – were connected to the Irish Church, both securing the bishopric of Limerick. Jewel of the earlier writers, and Jenison amongst the later, both experienced exile: Jewel in Zurich during the Marian persecution, Jenison, following ejection, in the Baltic port of Danzig. Featley spent time as chaplain to the English ambassador in Paris. Samuel Page combined his religious vocation with a military career, serving as a naval chaplain.

Although over a quarter of ministers (nineteen) spent at least some time in London, the two most common locations in these varied lives are the university cities of Oxford and Cambridge, at one or both of which the vast majority had been educated. Fifty-one out of sixty-one authors can be confirmed as having at least graduated B.A. from an Oxbridge college, and most M.A. Some authors, such as William Pebble and Toner, continued their university careers and penned their devotional works as practicing academics, as did John Willoughbie, who in an epistle to King James declared himself ‘a Scholler by profession, (though the meanest amongst ten thousand)’.<sup>91</sup> Randall’s posthumously published work classified him as ‘sometimes fellow of Lincolne Colledge in Oxford’.<sup>92</sup> As befitting an age in which the learning of the clergy is known to have increased, only one author, the Sussex clergyman John Frewen, seems not to have been a graduate of one of the universities.<sup>93</sup> By far the most commonly attended college was Christ’s Cambridge, which produced thirteen

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<sup>89</sup> Tozer, *Directions*.

<sup>90</sup> Pagit’s catechism was published under the name of R. Openshaw, *Short questions and answeares conteining the summe of Christian religion* (1617). See Appendix C.

<sup>91</sup> J. Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn[on kyrio-Jeuchariston A treatise of the supper of the Lord]* (1603), intro., p.3.

<sup>92</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, title page.

<sup>93</sup> Appendix C.

authors of texts in the corpus – nearly one quarter. This was the college of influential godly churchmen such as Dering, Hildersham and Rogers. It also produced Perkins, whose influence can be traced in some of the younger Christ's graduates. Thomas Tuke, Draxe, and Hill, for example, were all to translate works of their mentor.<sup>94</sup> The works of Jenison and Brinsley – two graduates not of Christ's but of Emmanuel College, another Cambridge hotbed of godly clergy – also cite Perkins as an influence.<sup>95</sup> Aside from these Perkinsian connections, Dod quoted Brinsley, Samuel Page cited William Crashawe and Preston recommended Attersoll's work as a proof-text against transubstantiation.<sup>96</sup>

Some authors can be identified as seeking or opposing further reform to the Church of England. The corpus contains several authors intimately connected with Elizabethan reformism, notably Dering and, more militantly still, Wilcox, one-time collaborator with the notable advocate of Presbyterianism and scourge of the episcopate John Field. The reformist temperament of Hildersham and Egerton can be neatly measured from the fact that they worked together on preparing the Millenary Petition in 1603. Sparke was a representative of the 'puritan' faction at the ensuing Hampton Court Conference of 1604, although later in life he conformed to the established church. Other ministers, however, either outright indulged in or flirted with separatism for much of their careers. From the turn of the century onwards Bradshaw was steadfast in urging ministers to heed only their own consciences and not conform, a standpoint visible in the careers of Dod, Brinsley, John Gere, and Jenison. In the sacramental sphere, a dissatisfaction with the current regime occasionally manifested itself in the careers of some authors: Downname was presented to the consistory courts in 1602 for administering the Lord's Supper to non-kneelers; Richard Sibbes got into trouble early in his Cambridge days for denouncing too acerbically the use of the sign of the cross in Baptism; John Thornborough was retrospectively praised by the late-century puritan Richard Baxter for not employing the same ceremony in his services.

Baxter's endorsement of Bishop Thornborough's sacramental practices cautions against an overly dichotomous view of the English Church in this period in which radical puritans

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<sup>94</sup> See DNB; Appendix C.

<sup>95</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, B3r; Brinsley, *Watch*, A6r.

<sup>96</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.3; S. Page, 'The Supper of the Lord' in idem., *Nine sermons upon sun[drie] texts of scripture* (1616), p.28; Preston, *Doctrine*, margin p.211.

battled Conformist bishops. The curious career of Bishop Webbe also counters any such simplistic paradigm: a contributor (with Rogers, amongst others) to the famous godly manual *A Garden of Spirituall Flowers* in 1616, Webbe found favour with the Laudian regime and was promoted to the bench.<sup>97</sup> It is, however, fairly reasonable to suggest that the five bishop-authors considered here were more satisfied with the church's theology and rite than were some of the godly figures mentioned in the previous paragraph.<sup>98</sup> We might also reasonably ascribe the label 'conformist' to Sutton, who held preaching stalls at both Lincoln Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and Boys, a dean at Canterbury who spent the bulk of a scholarly career justifying in print the prayer book rite. There were also, as will be seen in Chapter Three, slightly more authors willing to defend 'establishment' practices such as kneeling and the sign of the cross in print, than there were attackers – and no shortage of authors willing to inveigh against the dangers of schism in theory or practice.<sup>99</sup>

### ***Pastoral Intent***

This assemblage of texts coheres around the task of rendering sacraments explicable and useful to lay readers. Although writing about sacraments necessarily entailed some doctrinal discussion, these texts all accompany this with a desire to be practical. Preston, for example, described such a balance when introducing his catechism as 'opening and explaining both the nature and also the use of both the Sacraments of Christ his Institution'.<sup>100</sup> Under this broad criterion of practicality, many topics arose. Hunt, in his preface 'to the curteous reader', promised to impart the following: 'Divine knowledge to resolve and satisfie the scruples of thy conscience, touching ceremonies, mysteries, premeditation, preparation, the present disposition of thy minde, or practice, after thy communicating'.<sup>101</sup> Yet however doctrinal, learned, or comprehensive in scope, the texts in this corpus are all united by a further emphasis on utility. Dedicating his tractate on Baptism to his patroness, Robert Cleaver, for example, wrote that he, 'descerning it to bee usefull for your comfort, deemed it also

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<sup>97</sup> R. Rogers *et al.*, *A Garden of spirituall flowers planted by Ri. Ro., Will. Per., Ri. Gree., M.M., and Geo. Web* (1616).

<sup>98</sup> These are Jewel, Lake, Thornborough, Bayly and Field.

<sup>99</sup> See below, Ch.3.

<sup>100</sup> Preston, *Short*, A2v.

<sup>101</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, A8r-v.

beneficiall for the information of many others'.<sup>102</sup> It is this pastoral intent to offer 'information' about sacraments, thereby providing 'comfort', which will now be examined.

One way in which authors tried to make sacraments a greater practical part of everyday piety was by using the Lord's Supper as an occasion to enhance the godly knowledge of the lower and less learned echelons of society. This was the avowed task of pre-communion catechisms, which tended to insist in their very titles that the Lord's Supper was an occasion at which a minimum standard of knowledge was required. The anonymous *Motives*, for example, declared itself 'very necessary to bee learned and understood of every one before he be admitted to partake the Sacrament of the Lords Supper'.<sup>103</sup> The target audience here – 'understood of every one' – is rather general; so too is that of Gawton ('for all such as are to be admitted'), and Geree ('to be knowne or had by all'), Coxe ('Meet to be practised of all Christians before they bee admitted'), Webbe ('all that are desirous to heare sermons and to receive the Sacrament with comfort') and Egerton, which is simply 'for communicants'.<sup>104</sup> Despite their generality, however, various features of these texts mark them as 'downwardly meditating'. The author of *Motives*, together with Geree and Egerton, all advertised their forms in the title as 'briefe' and, at just nine, sixteen and nine pages (*octavo*) long respectively, were good to their word. Gawton's catechism is professedly 'short' and is dedicated to his parish, as is that of Webbe.<sup>105</sup> The remainder of the forms all acknowledged in their titles that they aimed at the unlearned, children, servants, or some combination of these. William Horne addressed the 'unlearned sort'; Perkins and Giles Whiting the 'ignorant'; Fenton those 'whosoever cannot, or wil not learne'.<sup>106</sup> Stephen Denison and Crashawe aim at families: the former targeting 'children and servants', the latter 'all religious

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<sup>102</sup> R. Cleaver, *The patrimony of Christian children: or, a defence of infants baptisme* (1624), A4r.

<sup>103</sup> Anon., *Motives*, title page.

<sup>104</sup> Gawton, *Short*, title page; J. Geree, *A catechisme in briefe questions and answeres containing such things as are to be knowne or had by all such as would partake the sacrament of the Lords Supper with comfort* (1629); Coxe, *Catechisme*, title page; G. Webbe, *A briefe exposition of the principles of Christian religion Gathered out of the holy Scriptures, for the benefite of all that are desirous to heare sermons and to receive the Sacrament with comfort* (1612); Egerton, *Method*, title page.

<sup>105</sup> Gawton, *Short*, dedicated 'to the people of Redburn in the countie of Hartford', A2r; Webbe, *Exposition*, dedicated to his 'Deare and well-beloved Hearers and Congregation of Steeple Ashton and Semington, in Wiltshire', A2r.

<sup>106</sup> W. Horne, *An easie entrance into the principles of religion set down for the preparatio[n] of the unlearned sort to the right receiving of the holy Supper of our onely Sauour Iesus Christ* (1610); Perkins, *Foundation*, title page; G. Whiting, *Short questions and answeres to be learned of such as be ignorant, before they be admitted to the Lords Supper. Whereunto are added certaine observations necessarie to be used of everie Christian* (1593); Fenton, *Shorte*, title page.

families and monethly communicants in the kingdome'.<sup>107</sup> Dering's famous form was for 'householders'.<sup>108</sup> The fullest description of a lowly target audience is given by Francis Inman in his epistle 'to the Christian Reader' which prefaces his *Light to the Unlearned*. This bears quotation at length:

The cause of my brevitie is this: There be many poore servants and labourers; many that are of trades and manuall Sciences; many aged Persons of Weake and decaied memories: Of these, some never learned so much as to reade, some very little, and the most of them have, or will have, small leisure to learne long discourses: the world, or other vanities, taking up their thoughts and cares. Yet all these have immortal soules, to remaine after a few daies, in eternal joyes, or in endlesse paines. Of these care must be had: and the rather, because many of them have little care of themselves. To these, the longest tractates being displeasing, I direct the shortest. For, better a little well learned, then a greate deale not learned at all. In which, I comprehend much matter in few words: and draw together, into the narrowest space, those things, which I judged needful, for them to know unto salvation...<sup>109</sup>

Inman's targeting of people in 'trade' or 'manuall' work, those of weak memory, the illiterate, the busy, and the vain, are all recurrent emphases in the primary literature. His pragmatic assertion 'better a little well learned, then a greate deale not learned at all' expresses well the predominant mood of most introductions to corpus texts.

This insistence upon proper knowledge prior to partaking in the Supper can be read both ways. Either the Lord's Supper was a means to a (greater) end: the furtherance of general Reformed knowledge. Or the Supper was such a notable occasion that authors considered it imperative to enhance the average receiver's understanding of it, in order that the sacrament not be abused. Gawton's epistle to his parish, in which he hoped that when 'I shall examine you before you come to the Lords Table, I may not find you so ignorant, as formerly I found you, & your families' seems to support the former view.<sup>110</sup> Inman, who ended his preamble with the hope that the receiver might 'by this meanes come better prepared to the Lord's

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<sup>107</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, title page; W. Crashawe, *Meate for men, or, a principall service of the sacraments...For the use of all religious families and monethly communicants in the kingdome when they come to the Lords table. Written by way of briefe questions and answers, for the ease and benefit of the simple* (1629).

<sup>108</sup> E. Dering, *A briefe and necessarie catechisme, or instruction for housholders. Not onely of them throughly to be understood, but also requisite to be learned by hart, of all such as shall bee admitted unto the Lords Supper* (1605).

<sup>109</sup> F. Inman, *A light unto the unlearned* (1622), pp.ii-iii.

<sup>110</sup> Gawton, *Short*, A2v.

Table' was more in line with the latter interpretation.<sup>111</sup> The merits of this relationship between sacraments and knowledge (and also between sacraments and faith) are explored throughout this thesis. For now, it may be noted that authors were certainly seeking to cultivate greater lay piety – especially that of the unlearned – through the sacraments and though the Lord's Supper in particular.

Sometimes, from the body of the texts themselves, it can be seen that authors sought to promote sacraments as aids to greater and more widespread piety. The published brace of sermons by Henry Smith, for example, begins by announcing that: 'Seeing everie one receiveth, and few understand what they receive; I thought it the necessariest doctrine to preach of the Sacrament'.<sup>112</sup> Rogers' *Seven Treatises* takes the matter further. In his third treatise, entitled 'of the meanes whereby a godly life is holpen [sic] and continued', he reflects that

Sacraments, which (of the two) are more darkely seene and found to be helps to godlines, then the word, among the most part of those who are partakers of them: both because men have seldomer use of them, then of other doctrine; and also, for that they be not so fully instructed in the same.<sup>113</sup>

Sacraments then, for Rogers, were only 'darkely seen' as aids to 'Godlines' compared to the Word, two possible reasons for this being that they were rarer, and less well understood, parts of worship. He added that 'Baptisme is lesse seene and perceived to be an helpe, then the Lords supper'.<sup>114</sup> It is clear from how Rogers proceeds that he considers this under-utilisation of sacraments unsatisfactory. He purposed: 'to shew the Christian reader, how the Sacraments are meanes and helps to set him forward in a godly life (as too few doe make them)'.<sup>115</sup>

This pastoral project, whereby sacraments were made 'meanes and helps' towards a 'godly life', is perhaps glimpsed most clearly in the prefatory material of the 'sacrament-specific

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<sup>111</sup> Inman, *Light*, p.ii.

<sup>112</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.1.

<sup>113</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.217

<sup>114</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *ibid.*

works', for in such texts authors wrote directly and solely about sacraments and often began by explaining why they felt compelled to do so. Some authors dedicated their works to patrons as practical aids to personal piety. Tozer addressed his *Directions* to his pupil, Lorenzo Carey, with the express wish:

to invite you to a due consideration of those holy duties therein contained, that by a seasonable knowledge of the same, your actions may bee the more carefully ordered, and Gods name in the faithfull practice thereof more fully glorified<sup>116</sup>

This desire that a gentle or aristocratic patron might profit religiously from sacramental books was commonly expressed. Samuel Smith, addressing Sir Ferdinando Dudley, hoped by his collated sermons on the Lord's Supper to add 'but one graine to your godly care of a Christian life'; Preston wrote to Lady Alice Pemberton that if his work 'may be any small meanes to further you to the right understanding of the Lords Supper, & to build you up towards the Kingdome of heaven' then he should 'gain that I most desire'; Hill hoped his patron would 'receive much comfort' by his work.<sup>117</sup> Across the corpus of texts, these various dedications and epistles cannot be described as uniformly pious in their tone – there was also, as was usual, a fair amount of scraping and flattery, as clerics scabbled for favour and further preferment. Some authors aimed very high indeed: the obscure Oxford academic John Willoughbie dedicated his *Mnemosyne*, perhaps somewhat optimistically, to the King in 1603, whilst Tye and John Denison addressed Prince Henry and the Duke of Buckingham respectively. But interwoven with the flattery is what seems to be a genuine intention to enhance the devotional lives of their patrons. In his book on the Lord's Supper, Francis Dillingham concluded his epistle to 'Elizabeth S. John and Mistres Elisabeth Beecher' rather sternly with the 'hope, that you will endeavour your selves to be worthie receavours of so great a mysterie'.<sup>118</sup> 'This catechetical tracte', wrote Hunt to Sir John Cooke, 'though it cannot enrich your coffers, happily it may your consciences unto such knowledge of Sacred mysteries, as doe transcend in value and worth, the Indian pearles and Arabian gold'.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, A3r.

<sup>117</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, intro. 5r; Preston, *Doctrine*, A[2]2v [irregular pagination, two consecutive A folios]; Hill, 'Communicant', M2r.

<sup>118</sup> Dillingham, 'Preparative', pp.41, 42.

<sup>119</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, A4r-5v.

That a genuine dialogue was taking place between clerics and patrons is especially implied by the dedications in works by Dod and Stephen Denison. Dod's sermons-cum-treatise upon the Lord's Supper was addressed to Anne Cope, wife of Sir Anthony Cope. The Cope family, whose patronage afforded the non-conforming Dod a welcome degree of protection from the ecclesiastical authorities, were familiar with his preaching, and the epistle revealed that the 'matter therein contained' was 'much of it delivered in your hearing'.<sup>120</sup> Stephen Denison, in dedicating his doctrinal work to 'Mistresse Thomasin Owefield', together with the God-fearing parishioners of 'Kree-Church London', confirmed that mistress Owefield had established:

a monethly Lecture to be preached the first Saturday in every moneth, before the Sacrament being administered upon every first Lords day in the same moneth, and have settled meanes for the meintayning of the said Lecture, not for a yeare or two yeares, but for a thousand yeares, if the world would continue so long<sup>121</sup>

The gushing praise which followed ('thus you are a benefactrice to our Parish, to God's Church, and to my selfe') does at least seem grounded in a genuine act of sacramental evangelism.<sup>122</sup> Even Field, whose biography reveals him to be perhaps the most incessantly careerist and obsequious of the authors considered here, would have us believe that his sacramental treatise sprang from theological and devotional exchanges with his patron, Frances, Duchess of Lennox, to whom he began his epistle: 'Most excellent Lady, The special grace your Grace did mee, when not long since, you were pleased to Discourse of the Blessed Sacrament, hath emboldened mee...'<sup>123</sup>

Although many works were dedicated to gentle or aristocratic patrons, authors were quite explicit that their brand of sacramental piety was aimed at a broad section of society – the very fact that all these works were published and sold obviously attests to this.<sup>124</sup> But often

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<sup>120</sup> Dod and Cleaver, *Ten Sermons*, A2v. The epistle was written by John Winstone.

<sup>121</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, A3r, 3v.

<sup>122</sup> *ibid.* A3v.

<sup>123</sup> Field, *Preparation*, A2r.

<sup>124</sup> Two extreme cases are of interest. The bookseller Augustine Matthews makes the unlikely claim that he had to beg the permission of Field to publish, the author exhibiting 'too much bashfullnesse': Field, *Preparation* A3v. Contrastingly, William Bradshaw's claim that the author (known to us to be Hildersham) of the tract he couples with his own demanded anonymity as a condition is credible. Hildersham, *Doctrine*, A3r-v.

authors expressed a specific hope that their sacramental meditations, whilst focussed upon a notable, would be transmitted thereby to those in the social ambit of their betters. ‘My meaning was and yet is’, wrote Attersoll to Sir John Shirley, ‘that it should first come unto your view, and from you & for your sake to the use of the Church of God’.<sup>125</sup> The epistle by John Winstone in Dod and Cleaver’s work spoke of the ‘religious care for the preparing both of your selves, and of those that depend on you’, which was necessary for worthy receiving of the Supper.<sup>126</sup> The bookseller Augustine Matthews, enlisted to write a general preface to Field’s work, wrote that ‘I was perswaded, that some of the *Meaner* sort of people might reape some ghostly comfort and Instruction by *This*, as *Others* of the *highest ranke* had done before’.<sup>127</sup>

Even when this concept of social transmission was not invoked, many epistles to patrons betray an author’s concern for the sacramental piety of the parish. ‘Wee finde our people come to the Lords Table, though not children in yeares, yet in understanding’, bemoaned Richard Capel, editor of Pemble’s posthumously published *An introduction*, in an epistle to John Baker. ‘Their grieffe is, that this Sacrament doth them little good’, he continued.<sup>128</sup> Preston claims in the prefaces of two of his sacramental works, to be benefiting the whole church of God, whilst Stephen Denison, after his tribute to Mistresse Owefield, implores ‘my Christian brethren and parishioners...to read over these Sermons diligently, and to read them to your families, that they may be acquainted with the Doctrine of the Sacraments’.<sup>129</sup> Perhaps the most direct intrusion of public welfare into a private dedication occurs in Dillingham’s epistle, which begins: ‘The carelesse comming of many (Right Worshipfull) to the holye supper of the Lord, is lamentable to thinke upon’.<sup>130</sup>

The community-mindedness of authors is further evidenced by works which were specifically dedicated to congregations. To the case of Stephen Denison’s parish already noted may be added those of Charles Richardson, who dedicated his sacramental catechism ‘To the Christian audience of St Katherines by the tower’ and Robert Jenison, who addressed his

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<sup>125</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, 8r.

<sup>126</sup> Dod and Cleaver, *Ten Sermons*, A2v.

<sup>127</sup> Field, *Preparation*, A3r.

<sup>128</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, A2v.

<sup>129</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, A8r-v; idem., *Duties*, A4r-v; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, A3v-4r.

<sup>130</sup> Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.41.

communion preparation ‘*To My Christian Hearers of the Parishes of S.Nicholas and All-Saints, in New-Castle upon Tine, especially to the yonger and ruder sort of them*’.<sup>131</sup> Bradshaw, who introduced *The Doctrine of Communicating Worthily* by Hildersham alongside his own work, wrote that Hildersham’s book was written ‘for the direction of his owne people, in the worthie receiving of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, at what time hee was first called unto them’.<sup>132</sup> Randall’s sermon-cum-treatise clearly derived from his tenure as ‘pastor of Saint Andrewes Hubbart in little Eastcheape London’, whilst Dillingham implied that his own work too was conceived at parish level: ‘I thought good to publish this Preparative to the Lord his holy Supper, that not onely my own people might have benefit by the same, but divers others also’.<sup>133</sup> The catechism of Pagit addressed itself not to a congregation but to civic authorities: ‘to the Worshipfull Master Mayor, the Bayliffes, the Aldermen, Burgesses, and all the rest’.<sup>134</sup> Alongside these ties between texts and specific communities, half of the thirty texts which we might call ‘sacrament specific’ spoke directly to the laity at large, by means of an epistle to the ‘reader’.

Having introduced the prefatory material in which cleric-authors often voiced their intentions, some of its shared features may now be listed. One defining theme is stressed in this analysis as it was by authors: usefulness, or practicality. Found inside Preston’s *Doctrine* was, according to the general preface: ‘doctrine, backed with reasons, pressed on the conscience with applications able to move affections’.<sup>135</sup> Often the practicality of a text centred upon its perceived usefulness in preparing a communicant for the Lord’s Supper. Samuel Smith’s comments were fairly typical in this regard: he claims to have ‘laboured to prove the great necessity of a godly preparation’, but further, to have provided ‘the meanes to be used to Communicate worthily’.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> C. Richardson, *The doctrine of the Lords supper By way of question and answer, gathered out of 1. Corint. chap. 11. ver. 23. to 33* (1616), A2r; Jenison, *Directions*, A2r.

<sup>132</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, A2r-v.

<sup>133</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, title page; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.42.

<sup>134</sup> E. Pagit, *Short*, sig.A2v. The officials in question are possibly of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis. The almost identical (1609) form ascribed to Richard Jones is addressed to ‘To most of the godfearing of cardif’. For issues surrounding Pagit/Jones see Appendix C.

<sup>135</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, A5r.

<sup>136</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, intro., 4v.

Overlapping with the intention to be practical was the intention to provide for the unlearned, and integral to this was the adoption of easy style. Thus Bradshaw praised Hildersham's 'plaine and familiar handling of the matter' in hand; Preston counted the 'plaineness' of his *Doctrine* 'the best eloquence'; as did Tye, who reflected in his epistle to Prince Henry that when handling the subject of sacraments whilst 'abroad' 'by publicke preaching' – an exercise which formed the basis for his venture into print – many had 'rejoyced at the plaine and easie order' with which Tye had conducted his discourse.<sup>137</sup> Just as the task of communicating to the laity at large led authors to laud simplicity of style, it also often caused them to disown (at least in principle) writing which indicated controversy or polemic – the 'nice curiosity of our times', as Preston put it.<sup>138</sup> John Denison, as previously noted, avowed that 'the principall of my taske is matter positive, and the controversie about Kneeling, is handled but *breviter*, and *obiter*'.<sup>139</sup> Sutton was extremely vehement about this prioritisation of devotional over polemical content. His epistles both to his patron and to the 'Christian Reader' related what Sutton saw as a veritable scandal, namely that, at least as of 1601, a 'heape of volumes' had treated eucharistic controversy, whereas 'we have not much extant appertayning to the substance of the misterie it selfe, and our Christian devotion towards the same'.<sup>140</sup> Even Burges' tract on Baptism, one of the texts which matches Sutton's criteria the least, declares his work to be 'Polemically: yet usefull', and such as was 'fit to commend to the care of all Ministers of every degree, as being necessary to bee diligently and fully explicated to the people'.<sup>141</sup>

A third recurrent feature concerns motivation: authors usually offered some insight into why they felt compelled to write practically about sacraments. A desire to dispel unacceptably Catholic sacramental notions was cited by several authors, including Bradshaw, who warned his patroness to 'take heed (good Madam) lest in their withdrawing of you from the damnable sinne of profaning this holie Sacrament, you be not by misconstruction brought unto the wicked and superstitious adoration thereof'.<sup>142</sup> The introduction to Preston's *Doctrine* of 1621 revelled in the author's concern to combat popery, claiming the reader will perceive 'a true Protestant spirit breathing, as if the times too much charitableness toward Popery, had,

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<sup>137</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, A2v; Preston, *Doctrine*, A8r; Tye, *Matter*, A3r.

<sup>138</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, A8r.

<sup>139</sup> J. Denison, Banquet,

<sup>140</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, sigs.B8r, A6r.

<sup>141</sup> Burges, *Baptismall*, intro, 3r-v.

<sup>142</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, A3r.

by a certaine antiperistasis, inkindled the godly authors devotion against it, so much the more'.<sup>143</sup> This avowed anti-Catholic purpose is reinforced by Preston's own dedication to Alice Pemberton, in which he rails against 'the idolatrous sacrifice of the Masse'.<sup>144</sup> It can also be seen in the rather learned epistle of Tuke to Lorenzo Carey, the first three quarters of which is concerned with Catholic error on the question of the presence.<sup>145</sup>

However, even when authors admit that the perils of Catholicism occasioned them to write, they do not depict this as a sole or overarching motivation. A closer look at Bradshaw and Tuke makes this point. Bradshaw certainly warns of 'superstitious adoration', but he also cites profanation as a peril. The danger would be that withdrawing from one error might lead to the converse. Tuke, in ending his epistle, also tries to chart a middle course, inviting his readers to 'safely saile betwixt the erroneous doctrines of some, and the profane practise of others, as between two dangerous and almost inevitable Rocks'.<sup>146</sup> Richard Capel makes the same point when introducing Pemble's treatise: 'we leape from one extreame to another...from superstition to prophanenesse, from bad to worse'.<sup>147</sup> What these writers called profanation – portrayed as an opposite error to superstition, in which sacraments are esteemed too little instead of too much – others called carelessness, half-heartedness or neglect. In the corpus of texts this perceived neglect was at least as much of a motivation for writing as was the spectre of popery. We have already noted Dillingham's scorn for 'careless' coming to the Lord's Supper.<sup>148</sup> Sutton laments that 'the devotion of most is but Soe, Soe'.<sup>149</sup> 'There is no parcel of Gods word more holesome and heavenly then the Sacraments', reflected Attersoll, continuing 'neverthelesse, there is no ordinance of God more neglected of us, nor less regarded among us'.<sup>150</sup>

In fact, authors claimed they were stimulated to write above all because of a range of sacramental errors which they diagnosed amongst the laity. Some authors were concerned

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<sup>143</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, A[2]5v. The 'too much charitableness' of the *times* might be a reference to the Spanish Match controversy.

<sup>144</sup> *ibid.* A5r.

<sup>145</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, A2r-4r.

<sup>146</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, A4r.

<sup>147</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, A2v.

<sup>148</sup> See above n.131.

<sup>149</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, B8r.

<sup>150</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, A1r.

about the neglect of Baptism. Henry Greenwood for instance complained that Baptism was a ‘heavenly’ sacrament ‘seldome made right use of’.<sup>151</sup> The main concern, however was the Lord’s Supper. Several authors offer in their introductions a fairly detailed typology of imperfect receivers of that sacrament. Tye identified people who did not care about the Supper, and people who did not know about it; in his own words, the ‘Atheist, who is wont, to presume to the Lordes holy Supper, not caring what he doeth’ and ‘the blinde ignorant sort, which are wont thither to flocke (it is a wonder to see) not knowing what they doe’.<sup>152</sup> Dillingham opined that ‘some come onely for fashion, some for feare of Lawe, some come to drink wine, others come because they are of that age which lawe doth require: but few (it is to be feared) come for conscience unto God’.<sup>153</sup> To Tye’s atheist and ignoramus, then, Dillingham adds some further types: the ‘fashionable’ receiver, the law-fearing, the opportunist drunk (or possibly simply impoverished), and the god-fearing. Another parish ‘type’ was identified by Attersoll: those who received only at Easter.<sup>154</sup> Richardson provided his own typology of inadequate receivers. He posited three deficiencies: of knowledge, grace and preparation. These afflictions resulted, respectively, in those who are ‘ignorant, and understand nothing at all of the true use of the Sacrament’, those who are ‘notoriously wicked...no better than filthy *dogges and swine*’ and those that ‘for want of due preparation, come many times to the Lords Supper, without that reverence required’.<sup>155</sup> We might also note Tymme’s epistle ‘to the reader’ before his *Court of Conscience*, which reads:

I doubt not but thou hast a hearty feeling and sorrow for thy sins, with a detestation and loathing of the same, and doest earnestly desire to be reconciled unto Christ, and to be assured of the forgiveness of thy sinnes, and consequently of thy salvation: which by no better meanes thou canst accomplish, then by preparing thy self rightly and worthily to receive the holy Sacrament of the Supper of our most blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>156</sup>

Tymme’s assessment is slightly more positive than the preceding comments: he presents the laity not as a cohort of unworthy receivers but as a flock of needy souls who could and should benefit from sacraments. The possibility of repentance, union with Christ and assurance,

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<sup>151</sup> H. Greenwood, ‘A Joyfull Tractate of the most Blessed Baptisme’ in idem., *Greenwoods workes contayned in five severall tractates* (1616), Y4v.

<sup>152</sup> Tye, *Matter*, A2r.

<sup>153</sup> Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.41.

<sup>154</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, A1v.

<sup>155</sup> Richardson, *Doctrine*, A2r-3v.

<sup>156</sup> Tymme, ‘Court’, p.228.

which Tymme here seems to promise to the reader via knowledge of the sacraments, feature heavily in this investigation. For now we may observe that the wish to correct or cultivate sacramental practice was a pastoral project rooted firmly in the religious realities of the parish.

The existence of a shared pastoral project to instruct the laity in sacramental piety might be further glimpsed by considering the popularity of texts which had this explicit purpose. Some works in the corpus boast some robust publishing figures. Sutton's *Godly Meditations* of 1601 was reissued at the very least a further four times in the span of this survey (1613, 1616, 1622, 1630) and another five times before the century was out (1635, 1641, 1658, 1672, 1677). Other works to go through multiple editions in the chosen timeframe are those by Bradshaw and Pemble. The prefatory material to the texts themselves also occasionally hints at an increasingly active marketplace for sacramental literature. John Denison, in addressing his *Heavenly Banquet* to Buckingham in 1619, apologises for repeating the endeavours of his predecessors – 'such worthy lights'.<sup>157</sup> Writing one year later, Samuel Smith felt it necessary to 'confesse, that many of Gods worthy servants have taken paines in this kinde'.<sup>158</sup> The introduction to Field's *A Christian's Preparation* of 1622 acknowledges the possible peril of overexposure: 'For howbeit I knew that divers *Learned* and *Godly Divines* had written upon the *same subject*, & that eating too much *Manna*, hath made the world *sicke* of a *surfeit*'.<sup>159</sup>

The most direct comment upon the commercial realities of buying and selling sacramental literature comes in the introduction to Preston's *Doctrine* of 1621. Matthews' preface tries to emphasise with potential buyers, supposing that the title might 'somewhat affecteth thee, yet neverthelesse thou art not over willing to part with thy silver to purchase it, unlesse thou must have some good ground to buy a good penny-worth'. The writer of the forward continues: 'Sticke not, gentle Reader, to bestow two or three groates upon a booke handling so worthy a subject as this present Tractate doth'.<sup>160</sup> This aggressive promotion might suggest that by 1621 the market for such works had overheated; then again, it might suggest that booksellers saw the topic of the Lord's Supper as an excellent opportunity for profit.

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<sup>157</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, A3r.

<sup>158</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, A2v.

<sup>159</sup> Field, *Preparation*, A3v.

<sup>160</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, A[2]4v.

#### **IV. Outline of the Thesis**

Chapter One lays the foundation for the three core chapters by introducing the content of the primary texts. It is contended that clerical authors were deeply concerned with the topic of preparation and examination for the Lord's Supper, in order that partakers might not receive 'unworthily'. This led them to outline certain qualities necessary for 'worthy' reception – such as knowledge, faith, newness of life, and repentance – and, relatedly, to advocate that godly engagement with the sacrament should occur before, during, and after it.

The core chapters of the thesis each develop the analysis of one aspect of this organising rubric. In Chapter Two, the requirement of knowledge is dissected, as is the requirement to be properly prepared and examined before partaking of the Lord's Supper. Different sections deals with the overlapping ways in which sacraments were presented: as badges, as memorials, as analogies, as seals, as instruments and as means of communion with Christ. Chapter Three centres on the requirement of faith, and the associated stipulation that a communicant conduct themselves 'worthily' during the administration of the sacrament itself. We consider what faith was thought to be; how it figured as both an enabler of, but also as a rival to, sacramental efficacy; and how faith-based sacraments could be related to their sensual and ceremonial character. Chapter Four looks at the stipulation made by authors that worthy communicants find within themselves, particularly after receiving, repentance and a 'newness of life'. This thematic slice of the corpus is used to investigate the balance between individual and communal conceptions of sacrament, and also to probe the relationship between sacraments and good works.

Taken as a whole, these chapters present a theological investigation into what Reformed sacraments were, and what they were not, in the period examined here. If sacramentology was governed by theories of the sign, how was this presented by clerical authors? How did sacraments relate to the concepts of grace and faith? What was thought of their sensual and ceremonial qualities, or of their communal dimensions? My conclusions in such matters run through the three core chapters. The conclusion contains two specific sections reflecting the two broad aims of the thesis. The first section is an integrative project joining two previously

distinct topics of investigation: sacraments on the one hand, and, on the other, the issue of assurance of salvation in the emerging Reformed tradition. 'Styles of English sacramentalism' considers what the sacramental output of so many clerical authors might tell us about the make-up of the English Church in the late-Elizabethan and early-Stuart periods. The conclusion ends with a third passage examining the extent and processes of pastoral deviation from theological norms.

## CHAPTER ONE: PREPARING FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER IN ENGLAND

For I have received of the Lord that which I also have delivered unto you, to wit, That the Lord Jesus in the night that he was betrayed, toke bread. And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my bodie, which is broken for you: this do ye in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also he toke the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the Newe testament in my blood: this do as oft as ye drinke it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye shal eat this bread, & drinke this cup, ye shewe the Lords death til he come. Wherefore, whosoever shal eat this bread, and drinke the cup of the Lord unworthily, shal be guiltie of the bodie & blood of the Lord. Let a man therefore examine him self, and so let him eat of this bread, & drinke of this cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his owne damnation, because he discerneth not the Lords bodie. For this cause many are weake, and sicke among you, and many slepe. For if we wolde judge our selves, we shulde not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastned of the Lord, because we shulde not be condemned with the worlde. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tary one for another. And if any man be hungrie, let him eat at home, that ye come not together unto condemnation. Other things wil I set in order when I come <sup>161</sup>

This section of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians may well be thought of as the archetypal communion manual. Both the Apostle, and his emulators in the period under consideration here, sought to educate their readers about the Supper's original circumstances, uses, and effects. Paul's account is one of only four direct scriptural references to the Supper – the others being in the three synoptic Gospels.<sup>162</sup>

Judging from the content and focus of texts examined here, one of Paul's most important and far-reaching points was the one about the danger of eating and drinking unworthily and so bringing damnation on oneself. Four texts under consideration – those penned by John Dod, Theophilus Field, Arthur Hildersham, and William Pemble – allude in some way to the concept of worthy receiving in their titles.<sup>163</sup> A further two titles by Stephen Egerton and William Tye echo Paul's advice that a man 'examine himself' in order to avoid such a fate, whilst the headings of works by John Brinsley, William Horne, Samuel Smith, John Frewen,

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<sup>161</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23-34.

<sup>162</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26-31; Mark xxiv. 22-40; Luke xxii. 7-23.

<sup>163</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.1; title pages of Field, *Preparation*; Hildersham, *Doctrine*; Pemble, *Introduction*.

Robert Hill, and John Jewel reflect a perceived need to prepare oneself for the supper.<sup>164</sup>

These three ideas – worthiness, preparation, and examination – are all present in the full title of William Bradshaw’s work from 1609, which reads: *A direction for the weaker sort of Christians shewing in what manner they ought to fit and prepare themselves to the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ: with a short forme of triall or examination annexed. Grounded upon 1. Cor.11.23.-30.*<sup>165</sup>

The concepts of worthiness, preparation and examination permeate the vast majority of texts in the corpus, with only the baptismal texts of Robert Cleaver, Cornelius Burgess and Richard Greenwood untouched by such considerations.<sup>166</sup> This chapter will assess how the corpus of texts assembled here addressed the questions raised by Paul’s account. Why did worthy receiving matter? What constituted worthy, and unworthy receiving? How could the former be ensured, and the latter avoided? And what was meant by ‘preparation’ and ‘examination’?

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Worthy receiving of the Lord’s Supper mattered primarily because the efficacy of the sacrament depended on it. More often than not, authors hedged their descriptions of sacraments and what they did with a proviso such as ‘worthily’ or ‘unto the worthy receiver’. Hildersham, for instance, wrote that ‘every one that commeth worthily to this Sacrament doth receive & apply Christ to himselfe for the nourishment and comfort of his soule’, whilst Samuel Page preached that ‘the Bread of this Supper, by the vertue of the Spirit which commeth to it, is Bread of life, and is the Instrument to convey to every worthy receiver the force of the holy-Ghost’.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Title pages of Egerton, *Method*; Tye, *Matter*; Brinsley, *Watch*, Horne, *Entrance*, S. Smith, *Supper* and J. Frewen, *Certaine choise grounds, and principles of our Christian religion with their severall expositions* (1621). Hill, ‘Communicant’, M8r; Jewel, ‘Treatise’, A1r, [second alphabet].

<sup>165</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, title page.

<sup>166</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*; Burges, *Baptismall*; Greenwood, ‘*Tractate*’. Although authors liked to treat the two Reformed sacraments as a pair, this proved difficult in practice. Whilst it was necessary to point out how would-be communicants should prepare for their participation in the Lords Supper, infants could not be instructed prior to Baptism. Pastorally-focussed writings about the Lord’s Supper could, and often did, comment upon Baptism in passing, but the reverse situation was often nonsensical.

<sup>167</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine* 34; Page, ‘Supper’, 33. See also Downname, *Guide*, ‘The Sacrament of Baptism is to the worthy receiver... powerfully conveyed to the worthy receiver’, p.494.

It may be noted that Apostle's original account does not actually mention worthy receiving; he dwells only on its bleak opposite. Many works in the corpus pursued the Apostle's negative route into the question of worthiness by focussing primarily upon *unworthiness*, by which Paul claimed a receiver become 'guiltie of the bodie & blood of the Lord'.<sup>168</sup> This 'guilt' was expounded in several ways. Some authors linked it to the treachery of Judas and the Jews, making unworthy receivers complicit in Christ's death. As John Denison explained, 'if we receive the Sacrament unworthily, oh wretched men that we are! For we joyne with Judas and the Jewes, being guilty of the body and bloud of Christ'.<sup>169</sup> Another approach was to say that an unworthy receiver was guilty in that he failed, in Hildersham's words, to judge 'so highly and reverently of this his holy ordinance... as he ought'.<sup>170</sup> 'In not receiving him with that reverence', echoed Henry Tozer, 'we offer especiall disgrace and indignity unto Christ'.<sup>171</sup> According to Pemble, an unworthy receiver was guilty not only of negligent irreverence, but of positively affronting the very body and blood of Christ: 'He that profaneth and abuseth this holy Sacrament, doth in a speciall manner offer contempt unto the body and bloud of Christ'.<sup>172</sup> One could thus become guilty of the body and blood of Christ by a shared culpability for Christ's death, by a general lack of due reverence, and, worse still, by an affront to Christ's very body and blood.

The Apostle's point about not 'discerning' properly the Lord's body was another factor of worthiness susceptible to different explications.<sup>173</sup> Most commonly, 'not discerning' could be a failure to esteem highly enough the representation of the Lord's body in the sacrament. This may be appreciated by quoting Hildersham's aforementioned catechism question in full. An unworthy receiver was guilty of the body and blood because:

he discerneth not the Lords body, nor judgeth and esteemeth so highly and reverently of this his holy ordinance (whereby the same is represented and offered

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<sup>168</sup> 1. Cor. xi. 27.

<sup>169</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.210. Also see Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.55 and H. Smith, *Treatise*, pp.68-69.

<sup>170</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.7. See also Estey, G., 'An Exposition upon the Lords Supper' in idem., *Certaine godly and learned expositions* (1603), p.7.

<sup>171</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.51.

<sup>172</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.32.

<sup>173</sup> 1. Cor. xi. 29.

unto us) as he ought; but accounteth it as common bread and wine, which the wicked as wel as the godly have title unto: which is far greater dishonour and contempt done to God, then could bee done to any King, if his picture or armes, that hang up in some publike place, should be spet upon, or pulled downe, or broken and trampled on by any of his subjects.<sup>174</sup>

This version of failing to discern the Lord's Body, then, was a case of chronic *underestimation*. The Lord's Body was truly 'represented and offered' to us in the sacrament, and to doubt this by accounting the symbols 'common bread and wine' was a sin of royal proportions.<sup>175</sup> But authors cautioned that communicants could also fail to discern correctly by falling into the opposite trap: superstitiously *overestimating* the bare elements of bread and wine. 'They doe not discerne Lords Body', cautioned Pemble, 'who...mistake the shadow for the substance, ignorantly supposing nothing else is to be looked after.'<sup>176</sup> Christ's body was certainly represented in the Supper, but to say that it was definitively there was, as Pemble goes on to put it, 'carnall outward ceremoniousnesse'. The notion of a 'carnal' presence was anathema to the sacramental writers considered here as to virtually all Protestants. Enforcing what they saw as the correct understanding of Christ's sacramental presence was of paramount importance to many authors, and the Pauline injunction about not discerning the body was a prime opportunity to expand on this theme. A middle way of correctly discerning Christ's body was advocated, whereby a communicant might, in the words of Dod:

discerne betweene the elements, and Lords body and blood: taking every thing in it owne nature and kinde: not confounding the signe with the thing signified, nor putting no difference betweene the Sacramentall and common bread.<sup>177</sup>

Featley formulated this same *via media* in terms of avoiding two dangerous foes:

*Sacramentaries* viz the *Papistes*...The one denying the signe, the other the thing signified. The one offereth thee a shadow without the body, the other the body without the shadow, and consequently neither of them giveth thee the true Sacrament to whose nature and essence both are requisite. The Sacramentarie would robbe thee of the *Jewell*, the Papists of the *Casket*.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.7-8.

<sup>175</sup> See also Draxe, 'Appendix', sig. M5r-M7r.

<sup>176</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, pp. 60, 62.

<sup>177</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p. 12.

<sup>178</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p. 84

Dod and Featley made a proper and correct estimation of the Lord's body in the sacrament a key aspect of the knowledge necessary to a communicant's worthy preparation, as did nearly every other author.<sup>179</sup>

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What exactly did worthy and unworthy receiving consist of, besides correctly discerning Christ's body? A dominant way of thinking about worthiness was to break the concept down into the things expected of communicants before, during, and after receiving. Thus, under the heading 'Things required in worthy Receiving', Hildersham's answer was threefold:

...first, a diligent and carefull preparation of themselves, before they come to receive it. Secondly, a reverent and attentive disposition of body and mind in the receiving of it. Thirdly, an unfained indevor to feele, and find in themselves the fruit of it, after they have received it.<sup>180</sup>

Similarly, at the beginning of his first chapter headed 'Three sorts of duties are to be performed of every worthy Communicant: and three things especially are to be looked into', Robert Jenison wrote that

There must be an antecedent disposition in the receiver, and a performance of such duties as may prepare him. There must be a right behaviour in the performance of this holy action. There are duties to be performed after.<sup>181</sup>

George Webbe's catechism offers a little more detail about the different stages of worthiness. Prior to receiving, communicants 'must try and examine themselves', picking up on Paul's injunction that a man 'therefore examine him self'.<sup>182</sup> The catechism continues:

Q. How must we be disposed in the present act of receiving?

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<sup>179</sup> For example 'discerning correctly' is a staple of required knowledge in Geree, *Catechisme*, sig. A2r-v and Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig. A2r.

<sup>180</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.2.

<sup>181</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig. A5r.

<sup>182</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 28; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig. D3v

A. We must present our selves with reverence before the Lord, letting our Senses and Faith awake on the meditation of Christs bitter passion and his merits for us, in the Sacrament represented unto us.<sup>183</sup>

And still in the context of worthiness:

Q. What shall a true Receiver feele in himselfe after the receiving of the Sacrament?

A. The encrease of his Faith in Christ, the encrease of sanctification, a greater measure of dying to sinne, and a greater care to live in newnesse of life.<sup>184</sup>

These examples are representative of the whole corpus. Worthiness involved preparation before receiving by examination or trial; reverence and apt demeanour during receiving; and afterwards the worthy receiver is bound to find the fruits of receiving, termed, not untypically by Webbe, as ‘newnesse of life’.<sup>185</sup> Pemble analysed *unworthy* receivers according to the same threefold framework, identifying ‘the ignorant’ (before), ‘the superstitious’ (during) and the ‘unreformed of life’ (after). Elsewhere he implores that ‘men would duely consider how fearefull a sinne they commit when they come unpreparedly and unreverently thereunto.’<sup>186</sup>

Not every text apportiones the requirements of worthiness so neatly. For example, examination was not exclusively associated with the time before communicating. It was sometimes taken to be a continual necessity, needful during and after receiving as well as beforehand. ‘I gather that it is not ynough for us to have proved, and approved our selves before we come’ wrote Thomas Tuke, continuing that ‘we ought also in the *very act* of receiving, or in the very time thereof to approve our selves’.<sup>187</sup> John Donne’s Christmas Day sermon of 1626 was clearly preached after a communion service earlier in the day, and assesses the requirements of worthiness retrospectively:

...for this Epiphany, this Christmas-day, this manifestation of Christ which you have had in the most blessed Sacrament this day, as you were prepared before by that which was said before, so it belongs to the thorough celebration of the day, and to

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<sup>183</sup> *ibid.*, sigs. D4r-v.

<sup>184</sup> *ibid.*, sig.D4v.

<sup>185</sup> Other examples of authors explicitly dividing worthiness into duties before, during and after are Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig. M7r; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig. B8r-v; Rogers, *Seven*, p.218; anon., *Elements* sig. D3r.

<sup>186</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p. 21, 33.

<sup>187</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.155-156.

the blessednesse of worthy, and the danger of unworthy Receivers, to presse that evidence in you[r] behalf, and to enable you by a farther examination of your selves...<sup>188</sup>

Some writers focussed primarily on just one temporal aspect of worthiness. Frewen, for example, made little or no mention of the times during and after receiving, and seems to have equated worthiness almost entirely with prior preparation, stating simply that ‘Wee must prepare our selves beforehand, for the worthy receiving of the Lords Supper, by examining’.<sup>189</sup> Indeed, it is fair to say that more attention was paid to the need for worthy preparation – explicitly demanded by Paul – than to the corresponding obligations of worthiness during and after the ceremony. Drawing on the gospel of Matthew, many authors likened proper preparation to an obligatory garment for wedding guests.<sup>190</sup> ‘To eat and drinke unworthily, is to eate and drinke unpreparedly, or to come to the Sacrament without the wedding garment’, wrote Stephen Denison.<sup>191</sup> Another favourite way of illustrating the utter necessity of preparation was to invoke a royal presence. Richard Bruch asks rhetorically of his readers if ‘seemeth it a light thing unto us that we are the invited of a King?’, whilst Tozer spoke of the need to don our ‘best apparell’, ‘when invited by a King to his Princely Table’.<sup>192</sup>

Although worthiness was not explicitly divided into three temporal slices in every text, a division of this sort was often achieved in implicit fashion. This can be seen in two ways. First, many texts featured accompanying prayers and meditations provided for use before and after reception, and devotional material for use during it. Thomas Wilcox was typical in providing a ‘Prayer to be said before a man repaire to the partaking of the Lords Supper’ and ‘A prayer to be privately used, after the publike exercises of the Church; as the preaching of the word, & the administration of the Lordes Supper shall be ended’.<sup>193</sup> Christopher Sutton’s work contains similarly titled prayers, and further provides ‘Certaine Meditations upon

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<sup>188</sup> J. Donne, ‘Sermon Preached at S.Pauls upon Christmas day, 1626’ in Potter G.R., and Simpson G.M, (eds) *The Sermons of John Donne* (10 vols., 1953-62), v.7 p.280.

<sup>189</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p. 363.

<sup>190</sup> Matt. xxii. 11-14.

<sup>191</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.140. See also J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.102-103; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.140; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.70; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, pp.157-176; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.122; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.2; Hunt, *Devout*, p.100; Jenison, *Directions*, sig. A5v; Preston, *Duties*, p.23; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.51; Sutton, *Godly*, p.31; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.55.

<sup>192</sup> Bruch, ‘Treatise’, pp.251-252; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.48-49.

<sup>193</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.79-88.

some special sayings of holy Scripture to be used when you are about to communicate', while Bruch provides prayers for all three stages.<sup>194</sup> The inclusion of prayers and meditations in this fashion implies that 'worthy receiving' entails correct behaviour before, during, and after the ceremony.

Second, even when authors depicted worthiness as a solely antecedent phenomenon, the programme of prior preparation and examination which they prescribed, often had the effect of propelling worthiness into the present and future realms of partaking too. We can begin to see how this was so in Richard Coxe's catechism, which enquires:

Q. That we may be worthy Communicants of this Supper, how must we prepare ourselves unto it?

A. Wee must first try and examine ourselves concerning the doctrine of the sacrament, whether we doe rightly understand or conceive of it or no. Secondly, concerning our manners and life, whether we be fit to receive it at the time appointed.<sup>195</sup>

On the next page Coxe expands the stipulation about 'our manners and life' into ascertaining 'if we have Faith and Repentance'.<sup>196</sup> Coxe therefore equates worthiness with the prior ascertaining of three qualities within the would-be communicant: knowledge, faith and repentance. This grouping was, as we shall see, extremely prevalent in the corpus of texts, and it is this commonly prescribed cluster of necessary qualities which, albeit they were assessed prior to receiving, ensured that worthiness was a concept which governed the past but also present and future of receiving. How exactly was this so?

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<sup>194</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, contents, sig. B11v; Bruch, 'Treatise', pp.279-282. The most extensive set of meditations and prayers is in Hunt, *Devout*, pp.216-312. Other material to this effect in anon., *Elements*, D3v-5v; Bayly, *Practise*, pp.739-791; J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.275-282; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig. S3r-S4r; Downname, *Guide*, pp.920-925; Tye, *Matter*, sig.E3v-6v.

<sup>195</sup> Coxe, *Catechisme*, B5r.

<sup>196</sup> *ibid.*, sig. B5v.

It is necessary first to question what was meant by the two terms ‘preparation’ and ‘examination’. Authors often used these synonymously, as has this chapter until now. The two terms are probably best understood, however, as encompassing three meanings between them. First and most specifically, ‘examination’ and ‘preparation’ were sometimes employed in a specific sense to mean ‘catechising’. This usage occurred most obviously in actual catechisms. Egerton’s *A Briefe Methode of Catechising* (1615) was a collection of different forms, one of which was described as ‘a forme of examining communicants’.<sup>197</sup> Horne’s catechism claimed to be ‘An easie entrance into the principles of religion set down for the preparatio[n] of the unlearned sort to the right receiving of the holy Supper of our onely Sauour Jesus Christ’.<sup>198</sup> The need for a specific catechising or ‘triall’ before receiving was also acknowledged by the authors of preparation treatises such as Richard Preston, who lectured in his *Duties*: ‘let all Gods [sic] Ministers learne hence a lesson. *None can come unto God but they must first know God*, therefore it becometh them to Catechize such as purpose to receive, that triall may be made of their knowledge’.<sup>199</sup>

Second, in contrast to the specific examination of a catechumen, ‘preparation’ seems on occasion to have been deployed as a more general concept which described a communicant’s spiritual journey in the days or weeks leading up to a communion service. This is evident in John Randall’s *Three and twentie sermons* published in 1630, a posthumous series of lectures clearly designed to stimulate a extended period of study and reflection upon the Lord’s Supper. Randall writes in the first, introductory sermon that:

My course god willing shall be this: every next Sabbath, before the Communion Sabbath, I will treat of some points or other touching the Lords Supper, as they shall offer themselves in their due order; some preparation must needs be made, the weake dayes cannot conveniently be spared, because of worldly affairies, that which is made the morning wherein you are to receive, is good, but not sufficient there is required some time of respite for Meditation, betwixt your hearing and receiving, therefore it is fittest to begin the Sabbath day before...<sup>200</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Egerton, *Methode*, title page.

<sup>198</sup> Horne, *Entrance*, title page.

<sup>199</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.59.

<sup>200</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.3.

This long-term view of preparation can also be discerned in those texts which provided pre- and post- communion prayers. Nicholas Hunt, for example, not only provides prayers for before and after receiving and meditations for during the same – but constructs also an entire ‘communicant’s exercise’, a large compendium of prayers to assist communicants in their day to day piety, containing for example ‘A Morning Prayer’ and ‘An Evening Prayer’.<sup>201</sup>

Thirdly and most significantly, ‘preparation’ and ‘examination’ – and sometimes the terms ‘trial’ and ‘prove’ also – could refer to a process labelled by Bruch as an ‘inquisition’, whereby a man can ‘examine whether his owne heart bee holie or hollow, his love false, or unfained, his wares, his workes good, or adulterated, his coine base or currant’.<sup>202</sup> This inquisitive version of examination/preparation was a communicant’s internal search for certain ‘qualities’ necessary for worthy communicating, such as the set of knowledge, faith and repentance which we noted in Coxe’s catechism. The idea, as Tuke put it, was thereby to ‘know our estates, & discern our harts’. An introspective moral stock-take was important, Pemble explained in somewhat dour terms, because ‘a carelesse regard of ones spirituall estate, throwes a man every moment upon a thousand unexpected dangers. Hee that knowes not how bad he is assuredly he cannot tell how bad he shall be’.<sup>203</sup>

This type of soul-searching could obviously lead to introspection. Authors made much of Paul’s dictate that men examine *themselves*. Speaking of examining one’s faith, Bradshaw writes that:

The person that is to make this triall, is a mans selfe, in and upon himselfe. Let a man therefore, (saith the Apostle) examine himselfe, and so let him eat, &c. And the reason thereof is evident; for it is not possible, that another man should be able to trie the soundnes of our faith, which is known only to God and our owne consciences.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.235, 249.

<sup>202</sup> Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.254.

<sup>203</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.42.

<sup>204</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, 115.

Similar sentiments were expressed by several other writers.<sup>205</sup> Field, Hunt and John Boys all did so by using to great effect the negative image of a ‘busie bishop’. Boys, for example, expounded Paul’s word ‘himself’ to indicate that ‘we must not be busie Bishops in other mens Diocesses, but meddle with our owne businessse: we must not breake our neighbours head with the *Pharisie*, but smite our owne breast with the *Publican*.’<sup>206</sup>

The precise methodology of ‘inquisition’ advocated by sacramental writers will be considered in due course. For now it is enough to note that a majority of authors seem to have considered that an important part of their remit was outlining such a methodology. Stephen Denison provided sections on ‘how to try knowledge’, ‘how to try faith’, ‘how to try repentance’ and ‘how to try charity’; Bradshaw offered several pages on the ‘manner of the triall’, and Bruch provided a section on the ‘manner of examining’.<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, forty-five texts offer some thoughts as to what qualities were necessary in a worthy communicant.<sup>208</sup> This sometimes involved at the outset an analysis of the correct authorities – God’s Word, the Holy Spirit, and God’s Law – which might guide our examination. Tuke for example rejected the straw men of examination ‘by the standards of the world’ and by ‘the church of Rome’ before extolling trial by ‘the Word of God’.<sup>209</sup> Some longer and more elaborate texts also by way of introduction delved into the problematic nature of self-knowledge. ‘Silver-tongued’ Henry Smith preached about man’s deceitful heart, warning his ‘beloved’ auditors that ‘we may not beleeeve our selves before we have examined our selves: for we are false hearted; the notablest cosiner that deceiveth most, for one time that he deceiveth others, ten times deceiveth himselfe.’<sup>210</sup> Bruch made the same point, stating that ‘rules’ of examining were necessary to alleviate uncertainty, for ‘the heart of man is deceitful above all things, how

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<sup>205</sup> e.g. Bruch, ‘Treatise’. p.257; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.377; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig. M7r; Tymme, ‘Court’, p.237.

<sup>206</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.9; Hunt, *Devout*, p.157; Boys, *Exposition*, p.109. Luke xviii. 9-14.

<sup>207</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.144-149; Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.71-75; Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.260.

<sup>208</sup> Anon., *Elements*; Anon., *Motives*, Attersoll; Bayly; Boys; Bradshaw; Bruch; Cox; Crashaw; S. Denison, *Compendious*; S. Denison, *Doctrine*; J. Denison; Dering; Dillingham; Dod; Draxe; Egerton; Estey; Field, Theo; Fist; Frewen; Gawton; Gere; Hildersham; Hill; Hunt; Inman; Jenison; Pagit; Pemble; Preston, *Doctrine*, Richardson; Rogers; Sibbes; Smith, H; Smith, S; Sparke; Sutton; Tozer; Tuke; Tye; Tymme; Webbe; Whiting; Wilcox.

<sup>209</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.37, 40, 53. Word and Spirit as guides invoked by Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.3. For the Law as a guide see Preston, *Duties*, p.25-26.

<sup>210</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.76.

shall he be able to finde out of the corruptions thereof, that is not taught out of the word, to know when his heart is upright, and when it is corrupt?'.<sup>211</sup>

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This all poses two questions. What qualities were communicants typically expected to find within themselves in order to receive worthily? And how did these qualities imply a threefold temporal division of worthiness?

Knowledge, faith and repentance – the three prescribed qualities we have already met in Coxe’s catechism – were widely considered absolutely fundamental to ensure a worthy receiving of the Lord’s Supper. Bradshaw demanded that ‘every man’ be ‘grounded in the doctrine and knowledge’ of the fundamental tenets of the Christian religion. He continued that ‘ignorance indeed well may be the mother of Popish devotion, but it is the very stepdame of all true Christian pietie, and...the very mother of all prophanenesse, and irreligious impieties in the Church of God’.<sup>212</sup> Hill wrote that knowledge was necessary because it was ‘the eye of the soule’, whilst Tye cautioned that even ‘a plaine simple man, that can never a letter upon the booke’, must nevertheless ‘come furnished with...knowledge, before hee can eate and drinke the Lords Supper’.<sup>213</sup> Of the forty-five texts which specify qualities for worthy receiving, knowledge is stipulated by thirty-six.

The requirement that a communicant search himself for, and find, faith, was even more prominent, appearing in forty-four of forty-six cases.<sup>214</sup> Hildersham outlined its importance, stating that ‘No man can receive this Sacrament worthily unlesse he have a true justifying faith, and be undoubtedly assured that Christ with all his merits doe belong unto himselfe’.<sup>215</sup> For Dod, the most important aspect of preparation was to assess ‘whether wee be of the

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<sup>211</sup> Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.254.

<sup>212</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.6.

<sup>213</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.11; Tye, *Matter*, sig. B6r-v.

<sup>214</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.77-78.

number of the faithful, and have in us the life of grace: for otherwise wee are utterly unfit to be partakers of the Lords Supper'.<sup>216</sup>

The third grace, repentance, was specified thirty-three times out of forty-six, and was defined by Thomas Tymme as 'a true misliking of evil, & a burning love and affection to goodnesse'.<sup>217</sup> Similarly, for Thomas Draxe it was a matter of 'whether he repent of all his knowne sinnes, and have a care and resolution to do those things that please God'.<sup>218</sup> Jenison stressed the mutual dependency of knowledge, faith, and repentance:

Now true Faith, as it is grounded upon sound and saving knowledge so it is, and must be accompanied with true Repentance, and with the fruits thereof, especially Charitie.<sup>219</sup>

Jenison's mention of 'charity' brings us to the other 'qualities' or 'graces' stipulated. Although one text, Martin Fist's catechism, prescribes just two requirements and another, by Tuke, offers eight, most specified a number in between.<sup>220</sup> In some instances a precise count cannot be made, either because the author does not specify qualities in explicit fashion, or because the author chooses to organise his required qualities in one or more layers of categories and subcategories, which makes the counting of them somewhat ambiguous.<sup>221</sup> Other qualities such as 'Love' were mentioned twelve times; 'Charity', eleven; 'Reconciliation', seven; 'desire' or 'hunger' to receive, four; and 'newness of life, three'.<sup>222</sup>

How might we go about organising all these various qualities for the purpose of analysis? One obvious grouping is the trio of knowledge, faith, and repentance, which, as the above citation from Jenison shows, were tightly bound up with one another. We may also discern a cluster of qualities such as Love, Charity, Reconciliation and Newness of Life which all

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<sup>216</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.2.

<sup>217</sup> Tymme, 'Court', p.243.

<sup>218</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig. M7r.

<sup>219</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig. A5v.

<sup>220</sup> M. Fist, *A briefe catechisme of Christian religion; conprised into a short volume* (1624), sig.C6v; Tuke, *Guest*, pp.60-106.

<sup>221</sup> In the former category are: Preston, *Duties*, Sparke, *High*; H. Smith, *Treatise*; Sutton, *Godly*; R. Sibbes, 'The right receiving' in Grosart, A.B., (ed) *The Works of Richard Sibbes* (7 vols. 1962-4), vol.7 pp.61-74. In the latter are: Boys, *Exposition*, Bruch, 'Treatise', Bradshaw, *Direction*, Field, *Preparation*, Estey, 'Supper'.

<sup>222</sup> See below, Ch.4.

pertain to Christian behaviour and morality. John Gere, for instance, defines ‘love’ as ‘a gracious affectation of the heart whereby we wish and endeavour good to all especially to the godly’.<sup>223</sup> Richard Gawton stresses the fraternal nature of ‘charity’, defining it as an inclination ‘to love all men unfainedly, even our enemies’. Gawton clearly considers reconciliation to be a part of charity, continuing: ‘and therefore wee are to cut off all occasions of discord and dissention, by reconciling our selves to all such as wee have offended, and freely forgiving all those who any way offended us’.<sup>224</sup> The idea that one’s own faith and knowledge were redundant without practical improvements in our relations with others is also evident in Hildersham’s treatment of ‘Newness of Life’, which he deployed as an umbrella term encompassing Christian love, following the commandments, and a desire to serve:

no man can say hee hath a true faith... unlesse he feele it working in him by love a conscience of all Gods holy commandements; and not onely a desire, but some ability also and strength to do his will, especially in the duties of his special calling.<sup>225</sup>

The various rarer qualities on offer mostly belonged in the same thematic domain, stressing reformation of our worldly behaviour. Such is evident from Bradshaw’s stipulation of ‘New obedience’, or the resolution ‘to amend thy evill life’ demanded by Henry Smith, or Featley’s ‘heart free from malice and all uncharitableness’.<sup>226</sup> These qualities which describe amendment of life – Love, Charity, Reconciliation, Newness of Life and several more – can for convenience be termed the ‘moral’ qualities, although the catch-all term ‘Newness of Life’ or indeed Bradshaw’s epithet ‘new obedience’ are both equally appropriate.

The qualities of knowledge and faith may be contrasted with the moral qualities. Searching oneself to ensure the accuracy and rectitude of doctrinal knowledge, or to decide whether one was in the faith or not, both hinged on analysing an individual’s own relationship with God, apprehending the general lessons of doctrine and applying them to oneself in particular.

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<sup>223</sup> Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A7r.

<sup>224</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.B7r.

<sup>225</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.91.

<sup>226</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.102; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.99; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.88

Hence Hill's definition of faith as 'a miraculous worke of God, wrought in the heart of a regenerate man, by the preaching of the Gospell, whereby he doth apprehend and apply to himselfe particularly Christ Jesus with all his benefits, to the pardon and forgiveness of all sinnes'.<sup>227</sup> By contrast with this personal and closed relationship between God and the individual, the qualities of love, charity, reconciliation and the like all pertained to an individual's relationship with his brothers and sisters in Christianity. William Attersoll spelt out the importance of this communality, warning that 'in vaine we shall pretend knowledge, boast of faith, glory of repentance, if we faile in duties toward our brethren'.<sup>228</sup>

Repentance – being sorry for sin – can be seen as a bridge between these one-to-one and one-to-many relationships. Sins were admitted and confessed to God, with whom the ultimate power of remission lay, but the fruits of overcoming sin were necessarily felt in the world. Stephen Denison wrote that 'it is a good evidence of true Repentance, if wee doe as well labour every day to mortifie sinne and corruption, and to die unto it, as we are carefull to renew our petitions for the remission and pardon of it'.<sup>229</sup>

The link between the qualities, and the timing, of worthiness can now be outlined, and the way in which this link determines the shape of present analysis made clear. Although the qualities of 'knowledge', 'faith', 'repentance' and other 'moral qualities' were analysed by authors at all the temporal stages of the sacraments – these attributes were invested with particular time-specific connotations which make the shape of this thesis the most appropriate means of analysis. The requirement of knowledge was strongly associated with the notion that worthy receiving entailed extensive preparation beforehand. Unlike the subjective exercises of searching for 'faith' or other 'inward' qualities, knowledge could be assessed objectively before a communion service by means of catechising. Knowledge, and worthy preparation before receiving, are the subjects of Chapter Two. The requirement of faith was especially associated with worthy receiving during the ceremony itself. This is because, as we shall see, in order to retain as fully as possible the sense that sacraments *did* or *offered* something, writers found it incredibly useful to be able to talk about divine things given by

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<sup>227</sup> Hill, 'Communicant', p.21.

<sup>228</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.545.

<sup>229</sup> S.Denison, *Doctrine*, p.147.

God in the sacrament, and received *by faith*. The role of faith in the functioning of the sacrament, and the concept of worthiness at the very time of receiving are the subjects of Chapter Three. Repentance and the 'moral' qualities stipulated by authors were all essential to the functioning of the Christian community and the godly behaviour of the individual within that community. These qualities were thus associated strongly with the notion that worthy receiving made demands on the communicant after receiving. 'Newness of Life', and post-communion worthiness are the subjects of Chapter Four.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE REQUIREMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

*And there shall none be admitted to the holy communion; until suche tyme as he can saye the Catechisme and be confirmed.*<sup>230</sup>

The Church of England expected parishioners to be well versed in Christian knowledge before receiving Holy Communion. The authors under consideration here agreed wholeheartedly, notwithstanding the ambivalence or even antipathy felt by some (though by no means all) of them towards the established Church. Dering's popular pre-communion catechism describes itself as 'Verie meete to bee knowne of every one, before they be admitted to the Lords Supper'.<sup>231</sup> Frewen, in his first chapter entitled 'All ignorant are to be catechised, regardless of rank', reminds his readers that the primitive church habitually catechised both new converts and children of Christians, before they proceeded to the sacrament, adding that 'Which order (in a comely and commendable manner), hath continued in the Church of Christ, even unto this day'.<sup>232</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse what authors of sacramental literature meant by 'knowledge'. By way of introduction, the chapter will trace the broad development of the Reformation didactic impulse in Europe and England, and argue that the Lord's Supper was simultaneously an opportunity to test fundamental knowledge of all doctrine; but it was also a sacrament needing to be understood in its own right. Pre-communion knowledge was thus of two types: general and sacrament-specific. The bulk of the chapter examines how these types of knowledge were communicated.

### I. The Need to Know: Reformation Didacticism

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<sup>230</sup>BCP, 'The order of the ministration of the holy Communion'.

<sup>231</sup>Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.A2r.

<sup>232</sup>Frewen one of four Sussex ministers delegated to present petitions for reform to the king at Hampton Court. See Appendix C. Frewen, *Grounds*, p.5.

If the inception of the Protestant Reformation was theological revolution, its outworking was an immense didactic project in which the privilege (or burden) of Christian knowledge escaped the custody of the institutional Church, and alighted upon its individual members. Three related Reformation insights were particularly responsible for the imposition of knowledge on European populations in the first century of Reformation: the first was the altered status of the Church and consequent erosion of its authority; the second was the opening-up of scripture, the ultimate source of all Christian knowledge; the third was the rallying call of salvation *sola fide*. The result of this confluence was to transform what had been an elite institution divided fundamentally from the laity and a trusted custodian of all Christian knowledge, into a church of all believers, every member of which had a responsibility to know the foundations of their faith. Thus Martin Bucer ridiculed the notion that ‘the Church gives Scripture its authority’, and age-old calls for the opening-up of scripture to the laity – calls long smothered by the scholastic argument that the unlearned shared vicariously the faith of the learned – were intensified and realised.<sup>233</sup> Translations into European vernaculars began in earnest in the 1520s: Luther’s New Testament was published in 1522; in England Tyndale’s were circulating by 1526; and Lefevre d’Etaples’ French translation of the whole bible appeared in 1530.

But ‘scripture alone’, however scholarly in translation, could not guarantee proper Christian education, partly because complete scriptural memorisation was impractical, and partly because the task of interpretation required guidance. To surmount these difficulties associated with reading the word, exegetes placed renewed emphasis on preaching, an activity which all Reformers agreed upon as one mark of the true Church. They also produced scriptural commentaries, doctrinal aids for the laity, and catechisms to test knowledge of faith. Jean Calvin, for instance, wrote numerous scriptural commentaries, two catechisms, and the archetypal doctrinal handbook of the era in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

The championing of lay knowledge by downwardly-meditating Reformed pastors was only one strand of late renaissance intellectual history, and should not be treated as a dominant uncomplicated narrative. A philosophical complication was that the didactic project ran counter to a growing scepticism as espoused by thinkers such as Bacon and Montaigne, in

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<sup>233</sup> Cited in E. Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford, 1991), p.137.

which earlier humanistic optimism about the value of human thought was replaced by doubts about man's very capacity to know.<sup>234</sup> In accordance with this scepticism, the usefulness of human reason in matters of religion came under review. The Protestant didactic urge was also beset by a profound theological paradox, in reconciling the desire to further knowledge to members of Christ's visible church on earth, with the nagging Protestant suspicion that members of God's true, invisible church, were few and far between. What was the point of educating reprobates?

Despite theoretical barriers, the democratisation of Christian knowledge and its scriptural basis – and communication of the same in various printed and oral vernacular forms – progressed apace in the Reformation's first century. In England the Thirty-Nine Articles stressed the fundamental nature of holy scripture, which contained 'all things necessary to salvation'.<sup>235</sup> Containing such pertinent soul-saving matter, scripture was intended for all believers. Preaching, by which such essential knowledge might be delivered, assumed a vital importance in Elizabethan England. Theologian, Arthur Dent's famous characterisation of the godly minister, stressed the faith-begetting properties of God's word preached:

If we will have heaven, we must have Christ. If we will have Christ, we must have faith. If we will have faith, we must have the word preached. Then it followeth thus, if we will have heaven we must have the word preached.<sup>236</sup>

The Canons of 1604 emphasised the parallel importance of catechising all church members, threatening 'Father, mothers, Masters, or Mistresses, Children, Servants, or Apprentices' with suspension if they refused to learn, and non-Catechising Ministers with excommunication if they refused to mend their ways.<sup>237</sup> And pastoral literature, in which ministers wrote about religion for a lay audience, and upon which this thesis rests, burgeoned in England in the 1580s and 1590s.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> See W.J. Bouwsma, *The waning of the Renaissance, 1550-1640* (2000).

<sup>235</sup> *Articles*, VI.

<sup>236</sup> A. Dent, *The Plaine-Mans Pathway to Heaven* (1601), cited in Haigh, *The plaine mans path-way*, p.17. See also the Thirty-Nine Article's recommendation that homilies 'be read in Churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people': *Articles*, XXXV.

<sup>237</sup> *Canons Of the Church of England* (1604), sigs.L1v-L2v.

<sup>238</sup> See above 'The Texts'.

Writing about the sacraments had always been a significant part of the theological enterprise, and Protestant educators did not ignore the subject.<sup>239</sup> But whereas scholastic disputes on the subject had been highly technical, now, charged with writing for the laity rather than for the schools, reformers had to explain sacraments to the people. Jean Calvin wrote instructionally about the sacraments in *The Institutes* and about the Eucharist in particular in his *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ*.<sup>240</sup> Bullinger discussed both sacraments in his influential *Decades*.<sup>241</sup> Educational works detailing the benefits of the Lord's Supper and explaining how to prepare for it became particularly popular in England at the turn of the seventeenth century, although the French Huguenot minister Yves Rouspeau's *Treatise of the preparation to the holy supper* had already been translated into English by 1570.<sup>242</sup>

The relationship between communion preparation and Reformed didacticism was both specific and general. On the specific level, would-be communicants were preparing for an act of Christian piety. Authors of sacramental literature laboured accordingly to instil in their readers correct knowledge of the Lord's Supper. But few authors restricted themselves to merely imparting eucharistic doctrine. It was tempting and topical to write instructionally about Baptism too and about the nature of sacraments in general. Most authors went much further still, and attempted to distil all the essentials of Christian doctrine – the ultimate source of which was of course the Bible – into their catechisms and sacramental commentaries. Partly this stress on the requirement of an overarching Christian knowledge before receiving reflects the wider Reformed didactic project as the godly seized upon the Lord's Supper as a unique educational opportunity. But there was also a genuine interdependence between understanding one's forthcoming participation in the sacrament and understanding the basic tenets of faith. It was imperative that receivers understood what they were about to receive; but they first needed to understand the conceptual basis of their reception. Hence the Eucharistic knowledge-requirement funnelled the abstract mass of Reformed didacticism into the narrow confines of applied piety.

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<sup>239</sup> Sacraments comprised one of the four books of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, for example.

<sup>240</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, bks.3-4; idem., *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ* (1540).

<sup>241</sup> Bullinger, *Decades*, v. 6-9.

<sup>242</sup> Yves Rouspeau, *A treatise of the preparation to the holy supper of our onely saveour and redeemer, Jesus Christe* (1570).

## II. Names and Definitions

You will understand (Christian Reader) that I have (for the help and furtherance of those that desire to know the Sacraments, and the benefits that we receive by the death and passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ) set forth a very necessary catechism in a very little volume...<sup>243</sup>

For authors like Fist to begin their task of explaining the sacraments, they needed to arrive upon some definitions, which in turn required them to decide on the name or names of what they were defining. The Thirty-Nine Articles proclaimed two sacraments: ‘Baptisme and the Supper of the Lord’.<sup>244</sup> Some authors, in elaborating on what sacraments did or how they functioned, used different names. Baptism could become ‘an honourable badge’ of Christianity or ‘the sacrament of our new birth’; the Lord’s Supper could become ‘a Sacrament of the renewed covenant’.<sup>245</sup> However, for the purposes of referring to the ceremonies themselves, the epithets used in the Thirty-Nine Articles were commonly used. Synonyms for Baptism were only very rarely employed. For the other sacrament, every work in the corpus bar three adopts at some point either the ‘Supper of the Lord’ or the alternative formulation ‘The Lord’s Supper’.<sup>246</sup> Unlike Baptism though, ‘the Supper’, as it was often abbreviated, did go by many other names besides. ‘Communion’ or ‘Holy Communion’ (this latter found in the Book of Common Prayer) were commonly used, as was the simple shorthand ‘the sacrament’.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.A4r.

<sup>244</sup> *Articles*, XXV.

<sup>245</sup> Attersoll, *Badges*, p.150; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sigs.M1r-2v; Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A44;

<sup>246</sup> The three are Donne, ‘S.Pauls’; Field, *Preparation*; Lake, A., ‘A Sermon preached in Wells on Easter Day, Matthew 26 v. 26-8’ in idem., *Sermons with some religious and divine meditations. By the Right Reverend Father in God, Arthure Lake, late Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells. Whereunto is prefixed by way of preface, a short view of the life and vertues of the author* (1629), sigs.Ooo4r-Ppp5v, pp.161-76.

<sup>247</sup> For ‘Communion’ see Anon., *Elements*, sig.D5v; Boys, *Exposition*, p.109; Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.179; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.221; Field, *Preparation*, p.73; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.46; Preston, *Short*, p.5; Sparke, *High*, p.228. For ‘Holy Communion’ see Bayly, *Practise*, p.718; S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.10; Page, ‘Supper’, p.29; Rogers, *Seven*, p.217; Tozer, *Directions*, p.165; Tye, *Matter*, sig.E3v. For ‘the Sacrament’ see; Boys, *Exposition*, p.111; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.4; Donne, ‘S.Pauls’, p.296; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M4r; Field, *Preparation*, p.82; Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.222-224; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.19; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.3; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A5v; Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.53; Lake, ‘Wells’, p.169; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.298; Rogers, *Seven*, p.218; Tuke, *Guest*, p.155.

Eight authors concerned themselves directly with analysing and justifying the names given to sacraments.<sup>248</sup> Bradshaw began by drawing attention to the Roman origin of ‘sacrament’, with its connotations of vows, fidelity and service to the emperor.<sup>249</sup> For the Supper, Boys was content with the fewest names; his scriptural defence of the English liturgy perhaps unsurprisingly opts to defend just ‘The Lord’s Supper’ and ‘Communion’.<sup>250</sup> Sparke offers nine possibilities: the ‘Supper of the Lord’; the ‘Last Supper’; [The Lord’s] ‘Table’; ‘the sacrament of his body and blood’; ‘the Eucharist’; a ‘memorial’; a ‘sacrifice’; ‘Synaxis’; ‘Communion’.<sup>251</sup>

Apart from ‘Synaxis’, most of Sparke’s choices all appeared in the considerations of the other seven authors mentioned and in the corpus as a whole, although with varying degrees of popularity. The first three –together with a choice of both William Attersoll and Hunt – ‘the breaking of bread’ – were used ubiquitously. Such terms were expressly biblical and needed little justification, although Tozer and Hunt’s didacticism did lead them to explain that the Lord’s Supper was both A supper and instituted by the Lord!<sup>252</sup> Sparke’s ninth epithet, ‘Communion’, also falls into the ubiquitous category, as do Attersoll and Randall’s references to Christ’s ‘Will’ and/or ‘Testament’. ‘Communion’ spoke to the popular emphasis upon sacramental union between God and man; references to wills and testaments reflected the tendency to locate the sacraments within a legal context of covenants between those same parties.<sup>253</sup>

Attersoll specified six names for the Supper: the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; the communion; the Lord’s Supper; the breaking of bread; the table of the lord; the testament or the will of Christ.<sup>254</sup> He added that he was not ignorant of alternative names coined by the ancient fathers, but determined to ‘content my selfe with expounding such termes and titles as

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<sup>248</sup>Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.279-292; Boys, *Exposition*, p.112; Crashawe, *Meate*, sigs.B3r-4r; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.37-38; Preston, *Short*, pp.5-6; Randall, *Sermons*, sigs.D2r-G1r; Sparke, *High*, pp.228-229; Sutton, *Godly*, f.182v.

<sup>249</sup>Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.21-22.

<sup>250</sup>Boys, *Exposition*, pp.112-113.

<sup>251</sup>Sparke, *High*, pp.228-229.

<sup>252</sup>Tozer, *Directions*, p.7; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.93-94. More academically, John Denison refuted the ‘Rhemists’ who alleged that the ‘Lord’s Supper’ was too lowly a name: J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.12-13.

<sup>253</sup> See below ‘Seals’.

<sup>254</sup>Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.279-280.

are penned in the worde of God, and pointed out by the Spirit of God'.<sup>255</sup> Such self-imposed limits might explain why Attersoll, unlike Sparke, does not include 'the Eucharist' in his list. Crashawe, Hunt and Preston did include this Greek-derived term, however, pointing out the meaning: thanksgiving.<sup>256</sup>

Some alternative names were rarer and controversial. From a Protestant perspective there was nothing inherently dubious about referring to 'the body and blood of Christ' if such statements were properly explained – and in their combined 932 pages Attersoll and Sparke certainly did have chance to explain – but the reason for this formulation's comparative rarity is evident: it raises the vexed question of whether and how Christ's body and blood were in the sacrament. Questions to the effect of 'why the bread and wine are called the body and blood of Christ even though they are not' were a catechetical staple, so it was preferable not to foreground the issue unnecessarily unless one had time and inclination to do the subject justice. The looming shadow of transubstantiation thus linked the relatively pedantic exercise of naming sacraments to the altogether more fraught business of naming elements.

Other potentially problematic names for the Supper, requiring thorough explanation if they were not to sound too Catholic, were Sparke's 'sacrifice' and Hunt's 'liturgie' and 'oblation', all of which carried overtones of propitiatory sacrifice and ceremony.<sup>257</sup> The least caution of all was perhaps shown by Sutton in his *Godly Meditations*. The Jesuit origins of the book show clearly in vocative epithets such as 'O Divine Sacrament', 'O Pure Misterie', 'O Venerable Misterie', and 'O Laudable Misterie'.<sup>258</sup> Again, it is no surprise that in Hunt and Sutton's weighty, lengthy works we find more variety than in brief catechisms, which tended to confine themselves simply to 'the Lord's Supper' or 'the Supper of the Lord'. The only pre-communion catechism to dwell on the issue of alternative names was Crashawe's *Meate for Men*, which gave three: the Eucharist, Communion, and the Lord's Supper.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> *ibid.*, p.280.

<sup>256</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B3v; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.104-105; Preston, *Short*, p.5. 'Eucharist' also justified in Field, *Preparation*, p.73; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.14; Tymme, 'Court', p.253.

<sup>257</sup> 'Sacrifice' listed by Sparke, *High*, p.228, and defended by Bayly, *Practise*, p.688. 'Liturgie' listed by Hunt, *Devout*, p.95; 'Oblation' listed by Hunt, *Devout*, pp.95-96.

<sup>258</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.182v.

<sup>259</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sigs.B3r-4r.

What definitions of sacraments did authors propose? It may be helpful to begin with some examples:

### ***What is a Sacrament?***

A Sacrament is an outwarde and visible signe, whereby GOD sealeth up his grace in our hearts, to the confirmation of our Faith [Jewel].<sup>260</sup>

A Sacrament is a seale and pledge of those benefits of my salvation, which I receive by Christ [Whiting].<sup>261</sup>

### ***What is Baptism?***

Baptisme is a Sacrament whereby is sealed to us, our receiving into the Covenant of Grace, our ingrafting into Christ, and our regeneration by the Holy Ghost [Inman].<sup>262</sup>

The Sacrament of Baptism is to the worthy receiver, a notable meanes to inable us unto the duties of a godly life. First, because thereby we are sacramentally ingrafted into the body of Christ, and made members of his body spiritually by faith, as wee are outwardly initiated, entered and admitted by the Congregation, as members of the Visible Church... [Downname].<sup>263</sup>

### ***What is the Lord's Supper?***

A seale of the promise of the Gospell, instituted by Christe himselfe, wherein God doth seale unto all those that doe worthilie receive it, all the benefites & blessings, which his own Sonne hath merited for us through his obedience, by giving up his body unto death, and by powering forth and shedding of his bloud [Willoughbie].<sup>264</sup>

A most certaine union and communion with whole and full Christ himselfe [Sparke].<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>260</sup>Jewel, 'Treatise', p.2.

<sup>261</sup>Whiting, *Short*, p.8.

<sup>262</sup>Inman, *Light*, pp.6-7.

<sup>263</sup>Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>264</sup>Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.2.

<sup>265</sup>Sparke, *High*, p.138.

Sacraments were clearly considered to be complex and multipartite things. In the above extracts we can note at least six features: (1) an emphasis on signs and signification; (2) a soteriological vocabulary (*salvation, grace, regeneration*); (3) the efficacy of the sacrament depending on the worthiness of the receiver; (4) a stress on membership of the Church, the body of Christ; (5) the enabling role of faith in sacraments; (6) an emphasis on the union of God (or Christ) and Man. Addressing the broad scope of authors' sacramental theology by examining such themes will be the task of the remainder of this chapter. But first it is worth noting the ways in which authors constructed and deployed definitions for these multipartite phenomena – if they did so at all – within the overall structures of their work. This reveals further the complex nature of sacraments and the consequent difficulty of defining them.

The scale of the task faced by pastors seeking to educate their flocks about such complexities is captured nicely in Randall's vast work, which proposes to present the doctrine of the Lord's Supper under 'six Heads: First the names or titles that are given to it. Secondly the institution or ordination of it. Thirdly, the nature of it. Fourthly, the parts of it. Fifthly the power of it. And lastly, the use of it'.<sup>266</sup> It took Randall twenty-three sermon-length lectures just to deal with 'names'; the rest of his project lay incomplete at his death. 180 sermons, then, might presumably just be adequate.

Defining a sacrament was to attempt to explain its essence, to ask the question: *what is?* But some authors, particularly those who wrote lengthy sacramental works as opposed to short catechisms, do not perform this basic task. Why not?

Part of an explanation is that the evident complexity of a sacrament affected the very task of asking *what is*. Since it was a premise of many authors that sacraments were composed of many elements, the concept of a sacrament was often subdivided into its constituent parts. When this division was relatively simple – for example into two – a concise definition could emerge. Robert Hill was typical in bifurcating the sacrament according to an Augustinian

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<sup>266</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, sig.D2r.

commonplace: ‘Augustine saith, *A Sacrament is a visible signe of an invisible grace*’.<sup>267</sup> Some authors echoed Augustine by couching their definitions in terms distinguishing between sign and grace. Pagit’s catechism, for instance, addresses Baptism in terms of ‘the signe that may be seene’ and the ‘grace that can not be seen’, and proceeds to tackle the Lord’s Supper in the same manner.<sup>268</sup> Other binary models included outward/inward and body/spirit, both of which feature in Bradshaw’s definition: ‘in every Sacrament there are these two things to bee considered. 1. The outward bodily signe 2. the spirituall matter, that is mystically shadowed by the signes, and yet, after a sort, hidden and locked up in the same’.<sup>269</sup>

But when conceptual divisions became more complex than a binary division, this mitigated against raising a rhetorical *what is* question and answering it in a concise definition. Crashawe’s catechism is such an example of diminishing clarity. Crashawe elaborately divides his sacramental definition into three, asking what it is ‘in regard of God’, ‘in regard of Christ’ and ‘in regard of us’.<sup>270</sup> Still further along this path were works such as John Denison’s, which are entirely structured by subdivision. Denison presents his ‘doctrine’ of the Lord’s Supper under three headings: ‘the time of institution’, ‘the causes of constitution’ and ‘the care that is to bee had for the due celebration [of the sacrament]’ – all with plentiful sub-categories besides.<sup>271</sup> His thoughts as to what a sacrament *is* emerge en route; for example in the course of considering ‘The Efficient cause or Author of the Sacraments’ [who is Christ] he declares that ‘the Sacraments are an especiall part of Gods worship; they are military badges, whereby wee publiquely professe our selves to be the soldiers & servants of Jesus Christ’.<sup>272</sup> Such an attention to the institution and authorship of the sacraments was a common tool with which sacraments could be broken down into smaller parts. Lake’s sermon expounds upon Matthew’s account of the very first Lord’s Supper, directing his hearers/readers first to ‘the author’ of it, and then to the ‘manner’, announcing under the former heading that ‘Christ instituted the sacrament of the New, that because we have alwayes so much need of grace, wee might never be without meanes thereof’.<sup>273</sup> Henry

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<sup>267</sup>Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.13.

<sup>268</sup>Pagit, *Short*, sig.D3v.

<sup>269</sup>Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.23.

<sup>270</sup>Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.A6r.

<sup>271</sup>J. Denison, *Banquet*, diagram inserted between sigs.A8 and B1.

<sup>272</sup>ibid.

<sup>273</sup>Lake, ‘Wells’, p.164; Matt.xxvi.26-30.

Smith's sermon and Wilcox's treatise also provide definitions in the course of analysing authorship and institution – but none offer a single definition.<sup>274</sup>

The ubiquity of the authorship/institution approach reminds us that many texts were acts of scriptural exegesis first and foremost. Exegesis, especially when it concentrated on the scriptural particulars of individual sacraments, could be conducive to the production of definitions. But it was also fundamentally obstructive to the same in that defining sacraments – asking *what is* – was rarely an exegete's primary purpose.

There was, then, a second explanation for the failure of some authors to ask *what is*: namely, that illuminating the essence of a sacrament was not always an author's primary concern. Exegetically-focussed texts are in fact part of a whole family of works in which authorial intention is not centred squarely on providing definitions. For example, the pastoral question of what a Christian's duties were before, during and after receiving the Lord's Supper drove the works of Richard Preston and Bayly. Various components of a definition emerge throughout these works. For instance, Preston stated:

In this Sacrament God offers, and exhibits Christ, and his benefits to every faithfull Communicant: Not onely generally as the word doth, but also particularly, therefore hee sayth, *Take thou this, eate thou this, &c.* But in the word hee speakes, and offers Christ onely generally to all that believe, and repent.<sup>275</sup>

These words occur in the course of discussing one the duties necessary before receiving – making sure one has correct knowledge. The statement occurs not as a frontal attempt at definition, but rather because Preston is trying to show that a key component of the necessary knowledge is to recognise that God ordained the sacrament 'to shew us the Lord his Death'; thereby Preston proceeds to refute some Catholic arguments.<sup>276</sup> Many catechisms also couched their enquiries into the sacraments from the perspective of the believer. Fenton was typical in introducing the sacraments by stressing their role (alongside preaching) in increasing faith:

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<sup>274</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, pp.2-3; Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.1-2.

<sup>275</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.71.

<sup>276</sup> *ibid.*

Q. How is this faith increased & made strong in us?  
A. By hearing the same worde preached and using the Sacraments.<sup>277</sup>

In a similar vein, the anonymous *Elements of the Beginning* enquires ‘Why were yee baptised being an infant?’<sup>278</sup> Dering’s form asks ‘what strength of fayth doe we finde in the use of the Lords Supper?’<sup>279</sup> Other authors had different priorities still: Jenison explained sacraments in the course of explaining the covenant.<sup>280</sup> Brinsley does so in the context of the theme of assurance.<sup>281</sup> In all these works *elements* of definitions occur as and when the overarching structure dictates, but are not gathered into one whole.

What of authors who did offer definitions? Given the complexity of sacraments, concision was often difficult to achieve. Tozer’s attempt in chapter one of his *Directions* to assess ‘what a sacrament is’ resulted in this:

a sacrament is an outwarde visible signe of an inward and invisible grace, ordained by God, whereby he doth seale unto us his covenant of grace made in the bloud of Christ, & we againe testifie our faith and piety towards him: so that it is both a signe in respect of the thing signified, & a seale in respect of the covenant sealed unto us.<sup>282</sup>

Sparke’s definition was similarly long, and necessarily so, according to the author, who declared that ‘there is nothing in this definition that can be omitted’.<sup>283</sup> And because definitions were usually complex and long, they required complex and long explanations. It took Tozer the rest of the chapter to explain all the issues his definition raises, and the entirety of his next chapter to complete his definition of the sacrament he was focussing on, the Lord’s Supper.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3r.

<sup>278</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.A3v.

<sup>279</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C5v.

<sup>280</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.A7r-v.

<sup>281</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, p.174.

<sup>282</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.1.

<sup>283</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.193.

<sup>284</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, pp.1-6.

Authors of shorter works, such as catechisms, faced fewer problems in offering definitions. Because they aimed for memorable brevity, catechists could offer a concise and unadorned definition without worrying unduly about further elaboration. Authors such as Stephen Denison's did straightforwardly ask 'what is a sacrament?', 'what is Baptism?' and 'what is the Lord's Supper?'.<sup>285</sup> There was a difference between offering explanation and fact: for some authors definitions were unsatisfactory retreats from the fullness of explanation, while for others they were simple statements of what had to be learnt. Yet even the simplest catechisms could approach the subject indirectly. Gawton's catechism took an extremely tangential route into sacramental definition. His appraisal of a sacrament's salvific functions was introduced via the questions 'Why is Baptism administered but once in our lives?' and 'Why is the Supper of the Lord Administered often?'.<sup>286</sup>

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This chapter now considers in detail six different models of sacramental explanation and extended definition present in the corpus of texts: sacraments as badges; as memorials; as analogies; as seals; as instruments; and as means of communion with Christ.

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<sup>285</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, pp.5, 7. So do Egerton, *Methode*, pp.15-16; Fist, *Catechisme*, sigs.A5r, B2r, 7r. Hunt, *Devout*, pp.40-41, 88-89; Preston *Short*, p.1; Webbe, *Exposition*, sigs.C7v, 8r, D1v.

<sup>286</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6r.

### III. Badges of the Christian Profession and Tokens of Church Membership

Sacraments were commonly discussed as badges of a believer's faith. In this vein an earlier version of Attersoll's *The New Covenant* was entitled *The Badges of Christianity*.<sup>287</sup> Fourteen other authors employed the same image – Dering's catechism was typical in stating that sacraments 'serve also as a badge of our profession, whereby we differ from other people which be heathen'.<sup>288</sup> Others described sacraments as 'cognizances' or 'marks' of Christianity to make the same point.<sup>289</sup> These terms seem to have been used fairly synonymously and frequently appeared in conjunction. Hunt, for example, stated that the first 'end' for which sacraments were ordained was 'to be the badges of our profession, and cognizances of our Christianity, and markes of difference to distinguish us by from all ungodly sects and hereticks'.<sup>290</sup>

The connection between sacraments and Christian allegiance was illustrated in several ways. Attersoll offered ornithological insight, suggesting that Christians receiving the Lords Supper were united – 'birds of a feather'.<sup>291</sup> A more scriptural approach demarcating functions of sacraments was to employ the language of discipleship. Wilcox, for example, wrote that by receiving the Supper, 'as by a badge or cognisance, we are knowne to be Christes Disciples'.<sup>292</sup>

The two most common metaphors for explicating Christian allegiance, however, were military and professional. The word sacrament itself had a military connotation which was an obvious starting point. As Tozer pointed out, the word 'doth properly signify an oath, whereby soldiers bound themselves unto their Generall'. Tozer continued, 'whence it is taken to signifie that obligation whereby we tye ourselves...to Christ: for hereby wee, as Christs soldiers first binde ourselves by promise of obedience to fight under the Lord's banner

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<sup>287</sup> Attersoll, *Badges of Christianity* (1606).

<sup>288</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C5r; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.104; Boys, *Exposition*, p.113; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.77; Bruch, 'Treatise', p.269; Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.20; Crashawe, *Meate*, sigs.A8r-v; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.24; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.10; Downname, *Guide*, p.396; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.L5v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.19; Hunt, *Devout*, p.36; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.62; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.60 and idem., *Duties*, p.87; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.10.

<sup>289</sup> Cognizances: Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.77; Crashawe, *Meate*, sigs.A8r-v; Hunt, *Devout*, p.36. Marks: Attersoll, *Covenant* p.104; Hunt, *Devout*, p.36; Bayly, *Practise*, p.715; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C3v; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.122.

<sup>290</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.36.

<sup>291</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.104.

<sup>292</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.10.

against the world, the flesh and the devill'.<sup>293</sup> This idea of military demarcation had featured heavily in Zwingli's stance upon sacraments, and its place in the canon of Reformed sacramental thought was confirmed when Calvin incorporated the emphasis into the *Institutes*.<sup>294</sup> Similar reflections upon the original Latin meaning of 'sacrament' were made by John Denison, Bradshaw, Draxe and John Preston.<sup>295</sup>

The language of profession was also prevalent. Richard Preston and Bayly were typical in speaking, respectively, of 'badges of our profession' and of a 'publike marke of profession, which distinguished Christians from all sects and false religions.'<sup>296</sup> These sentiments accord with the twenty-fifth of the Thirty-Nine Articles, which described sacraments as 'badges or tokens of Christian men's profession'.<sup>297</sup> Talking of a profession allowed authors to cast the receiving faithful as servants of Christ, most notably by referring to sacraments as 'liveries' of Christ. Downname called the Lord's Supper a 'badge and livery whereby we are known to bee Gods servants; and therefore coming to doe him service, we ought not to cast it off, when the rest of the family put it on'.<sup>298</sup> 'Profession' was also used in the active sense of 'professing' or 'making profession'. According to Pemble, 'in the Sacrament wee make publike profession of our obedience to Christ, giving up our names in his honourable service'.<sup>299</sup> Hildersham wrote that 'in this Sacrament, we professe our selves to be fellow members (as with the whole Church of Christ, so) especially with those Christians with whom we do receive'.<sup>300</sup> Tozer combined the military and professional images, stating that in receiving sacraments 'we put on the cognisance & Armes, the colours and marke of Christ, by professing our faith in him, that so it may appeare unto the world to whom wee doe belong'.<sup>301</sup>

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If dwelling upon the way sacraments defined Christian allegiance was one approach to how sacraments functioned as 'badges', a neighbouring approach was to consider sacraments in

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<sup>293</sup>Tozer, *Directions*, pp.2-3.

<sup>294</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, bk.4.13.

<sup>295</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.24; Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.21-22; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.L5r; Preston, *Doctrine*, sig.F2r.

<sup>296</sup>Preston, *Doctrine*, p.60; Bayly, *Practise*, p.715.

<sup>297</sup>*Articles XXV*.

<sup>298</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.396. See also: Cleaver, *Patrimony*,p.20; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.72; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.26.

<sup>299</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.26

<sup>300</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.13.

<sup>301</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.3.

the context of what it meant to be part of the church. In contrast to the relative straightforwardness of the former language, which dwelt on sacraments as signs of Christianity in general, to pursue the latter route was to traverse the more contested theological terrain of what was meant specifically by ‘the Church’ and how sacraments might figure in this meaning.

One way of thinking about the church was to distinguish between ‘visible’ and ‘invisible’. The visible church was the earthly and discernible cohort of Christ’s followers. The invisible church referred to the invisible congregation of saints – the ‘true’ church comprising God’s elect across all time. In more radical Reformation thought there emerged the line of thinking which suggested these two entities should correlate precisely; to this end stringent efforts were made to deny sacraments to all but the most assuredly elect – a policy which echoed the Donatist controversy of the fourth century. Although this strand of thought certainly existed in mainstream Reformed thinking, it was mainly subservient to a more pragmatic Augustinian ecclesiology which accepted that the discernible church on earth would forever be mixed of sinners and saints – on which view sacraments were for all.

Before assessing how conceptions of sacraments fitted into these ecclesiological parameters, it is worth drawing attention to the language used to link sacraments to notions of the church. In the first place, some authors spoke of sacraments in connection with ‘admission’ or ‘entrance’. Baptism was more obviously connected with such themes than was the Lord’s Supper and twelve of the thirteen authors who used this language dwelt upon Baptism as they did so.<sup>302</sup> Baptism, according to Perkins’ catechism, was a sacrament ‘by which wee have our admission into the true Church of God’.<sup>303</sup> Similarly, for Tye, it was the means by which ‘the Lord first of all doth admit us into his Church and family’.<sup>304</sup>

Although it was also possible to present the Lord’s Supper as a sacrament of admission or entrance (as did Brinsley, for example), this sacrament was for the most part seen as confirming the initiation offered in Baptism, rather than duplicating it.<sup>305</sup> Hence Geree described Baptism and the Lord’s Supper respectively as ‘entrance’ and ‘growth’ in ‘Christ

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<sup>302</sup> See Table 1 below.

<sup>303</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1v.

<sup>304</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D1r.

<sup>305</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, p.185.

signified’, whilst Hildersham spoke of ‘a Sacrament of our first entrance into Gods favor’, and of ‘another Sacrament of our nourishment & perseverance in the state of grace’.<sup>306</sup>

The difficulty in analysing such statements from an ecclesiological point of view will already be clear: not all authors had the same thing in mind when they spoke of sacraments – especially Baptism – in connection with admission and entrance. We may note two interpretive problems in particular. First, the thing into which we have entry or admission varies significantly across the examples. It is possible that Perkins’ ‘true Church of God’ and Tye’s ‘Church and family [of the Lord]’ amount to the same thing, but what of Geree’s ‘Christ signified’, or Hildersham’s use of ‘God’s favour’? What was meant by phrases such as ‘the congregation of saints’, ‘the covenant of grace’ and God’s ‘corporation’?<sup>307</sup> Second, there are differences as to whether this admission or entrance is objectively conferred by Baptism, or merely signified in some way. This typically Reformed question of how reality could be said to lie behind signs is posed, for example, by the difference between the utterances of Coxe and Stephen Denison on Baptism. For Coxe ‘Baptisme *is* to us an entrance and admission into the Church of God’.<sup>308</sup> For Stephen Denison, Baptism is a sacrament ‘whereby our entrance into the Church is *sealed* unto us’.<sup>309</sup>

Presenting sacraments as admission or entrances into the church thus involved two variables – the *object* of the admission/entry and the *degree* to which sacraments conferred it. Some examples of the ways in which authors formulated these variables are presented in Table One:

<p><b>Table One: Church membership – the Object and Manner of offering.</b></p> <p>* Describing beholding Baptism, not discussing one’s own; LS = Lord’s Supper; B = Baptism.</p>
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<sup>306</sup>Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A4r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.22.

<sup>307</sup>S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.10; Tozer, *Directions*, p.4; Bayly, *Practise*, p.603.

<sup>308</sup>Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B2v-3r.

<sup>309</sup>S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.5. My italics.

<b>Author/Text</b>	<b>Summary / 'quotation'</b>	<b>Object</b>	<b><i>Manner</i></b>
Bayly*	To behold Baptism is to 'shew thy selfe to be a Freeman of Christs Corporation'.	'Christs Corporation'.	'Shew thy selfe'
Boys	'Baptisme is a Sacrament of initiation and insition, assuring the first receiving into the covenant of grace: whereby men are matriculated and admitted into the congregatio[n], and made members of Christ'.	'Covenant of grace'; 'congregation'.	Assuring the receiving into  Matriculated and admitted
Brinsley	Fifth duty of receiving LS is: 'Beholding them who communicate with us, to stir up our hearts to beare a loving affection, as to them, so to all Gods people, being partakers with us of Jesus Christ, and admitted with us into the same high dignity'.	The 'high dignity' of 'being partakers...of Jesus Christ'.	Admitted into
Coxe	'Because as circumcision was to the Jewes, so Baptisme is to us an entrance and admission into the Church of God'.	'Church of God'.	Is to us an entrance and admission

Crashawe	B is to us 'The Sacrament of our entrance, or admission into the Covenant and Church of God'.	'Covenant and Church of God'.	To us a sacrament of our entrance, or admission
Stephen Denison, <i>comp.</i>	B 'whereby our entrance into the Church is sealed unto us'.	'The Church'.	Sealed
Denison, Stephen, <i>Doc</i>	B 'is the meanes of our admission into the Congregation of Saintes, as Circumcision was unto the Jewes'.	'Congregation of Saintes'	Means of our admission
Downname	By B we are 'outwardly initiated, entered and admitted by the Congregation, as members of the Visible Church, ...so being ingrafted into Christ, we live not our owne life'.	'The Visible Church'	Outwardly initiated into
Draxe	B is 'The sacrament of our new Birth, or of our first admittance, or entrance into the Church, or Christianity'.	'Church'; 'Christianity'.	Sacrament of first admission into
Geree	B and LS respectively 'to have entrance and growth in Christ signified'.	'Christ signified'.	To have entrance and growth in
Hildersham	B 'a Sacrament of our first entrance into Gods favor, and of our regeneration'	'God's Favor'.	Sacrament of our entrance

Jenison	'In Baptism our admission into the true Church of God sealed unto us'	'True Church of God'.	Sealed unto us
Perkins	'Baptisme, by which we have our admission into the True Church of God'	'True Church of God'.	We have admission
Tozer	B 'is called the Sacrament of our Nativity or entrance, because by it we are assured that wee are received into the Covenant of Grace, and so are regenerate and belong to the flocke of Christ'.	'Covenant of Grace'; 'flocke of Christ'.	Sacrament of nativity or entrance, by which we are assured
Tye	By B 'the Lord first of all doth admit us into his Church and family'.	Lord's 'Church and Family'.	Sacrament by which the Lord doth admit us
Whiting	'Q. How is your Faith strengthened by Baptism?  A. By Baptisme I am received into the familie and congregation of the Lorde, and am thereby fully assured, that both my sinnes are forgiven me, and the punishment due the same'.	'Congregation of the Lorde'.	We are received

From this can be learnt a certain amount about the role of sacraments in admission and entrance. In relation to the *object* of admission/entry, some authors speak of the invisible

church of the elect. This would seemingly apply to Boys' and Tozer's 'covenant of grace', Denison's 'congregation of Saintes', and the 'True Church of God' of Jenison and Perkins. Other descriptions, such as Boys' 'congregation' appear to mean 'the church' in a more visible and local sense. Other terms are sufficiently broad ('the church', 'God's Favour') that they suggest neither the visible nor the invisible church. In terms of the *degree* to which entrance/admission is bestowed by sacraments, the same pattern may be noted: positive, negative, and indeterminate emphases. For some authors the sacrament objectively *is* admission or entrance with no further qualification – an example of this would be Tozer's description of Baptism as a Sacrament 'by which...the Lord first of all doth admit us into his Church and family', or Coxe's statement that Baptism 'is to us an entrance and admission into the Church of God'. By contrast, others hedged this objective reality with the language of 'sealing' (Jenison, Denison) or 'assurance' (Boys, Tozer). And again, certain descriptions are too broad to be suggestive, such as Draxe's description of Baptism as 'The sacrament of our new Birth, or of our first admittance, or entrance into the Church, or Christianity'.

From these variables of object and degree can be deduced four possible views about the relationship between sacraments and the church:

- (A) sacraments conferred entry to the invisible church of the elect in an objective manner;
- (B) sacraments signified entry to the invisible church of the elect, but in a less than objective manner;
- (C) sacraments conferred entry to the visible, earthly church in an objective manner;
- (D) sacraments signified entry to the visible, earthly church, but in a less than objective manner.

It is discernible that the first three viewpoints are all represented in the above extracts whereas the last is not. The absence of view D (and the corresponding ubiquity of view C) is not surprising, for equating sacraments with the visible church was inherently uncontroversial.<sup>310</sup> It would be highly surprising to find an author denying the objectivity of this relationship, given the acceptance across the entire Reformation that the two sacraments along with preaching were 'marks' of the church. Nor are the three examples of the view B (Boys, Jenison, Tozer) particularly surprising. Claiming great things for the sacraments on the one hand, whilst simultaneously circumscribing that greatness by undermining the

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<sup>310</sup>Citations in this paragraph from Table 1.

manner of its presence on the other, was the very essence of the Reformed approach to signification. The most striking ‘findings’ are without doubt the views found in Stephen Denison’s *Doctrine* and Perkins’ *Foundation* – both of which seem to embody view A. Denison called Baptism ‘the meanes of our admission into the Congregation of Saintes’ and Perkins deemed it a sacrament ‘by which we have our admission into the True Church of God’. How might these comments, which on face value seem to promote the sacrament of Baptism as an objective means to elect status, be weighed? Certainly, they cannot be interpreted as theological propositions that sacraments conferred election. Indeed elsewhere in *Doctrine* Denison states explicitly that the Lord’s Supper commemorates the shedding of Christ’s blood ‘so that his elect thereby might be redeemed’.<sup>311</sup> In formal theological terms then, Denison can comfortably be read as proposing that Baptism is indeed ‘the meanes of our admission into the ‘Congregation of Saintes’ – but only to those already predestined to election. Although contextual caveats of this sort are not found in Perkins’ *Foundations*, his (and Denison’s) reputation as a wholehearted predestinarian make it clear that neither cleric subscribed to a theology in which sacramental participation could affect soteriological truths. Yet whilst context suggests that these fragments were decisively *not* evidence of theological impropriety, context also suggests that they are testimony to a different trait: the tendency of clerics, when writing in pastoral mode, to sound the most positive things which might be said about sacraments far more loudly than the cautionary caveats which formal theology demanded to be present alongside. Denison’s definition is the first of five simply stated utterances explaining Baptism: in none of these is the force of his statement about ‘meanes of admission into the Congregation of Saintes’ qualified.<sup>312</sup> The caveat, when it occurs, is in a completely different section of the document.<sup>313</sup> Perkins, as we have noted, offers no soteriological clarification at all to his statement about ‘admission’ anywhere in *Foundations*. In this way, both Perkins and Denison can be read as preferring a pastorally profitable gloss to the strict theological interpretation, and thereby promoting sacraments as offering very real access to the invisible church. The way in which this came about – through omission and placement rather than owing to theological deviance of any kind – is considered further in the conclusion<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.86.

<sup>312</sup> *ibid* p.10.

<sup>313</sup> *ibid* p.86.

<sup>314</sup> See conclusion below

Authors also invoked the concept of ‘membership’ as a means of expressing the connection between sacraments and the church. This terminology was used by sixteen authors – five of whom have already been encountered in the previous section.<sup>315</sup> As with the languages of admission and entrance, ‘membership’ was susceptible to a variety of interpretations as regarding object and degree. Of what did one become a member, and how securely did sacraments confer that status? For Cleaver, Downname, Hildersham and Preston the object of membership was in some degree ‘the church’.<sup>316</sup> Others discussed membership of the ‘mystical body’, and seven authors talked of being members ‘of Christ’s body’ or simply ‘of Christ’.<sup>317</sup> The meaning of these corporeal allusions will be considered in due course. Different claims were also made of the strength of relationship between sacraments and membership. For Thornborough a believer ‘*is made a member of Christ in Baptism*’; for Tuke the ‘true and new obedience’ bequeathed to worthy receivers of the Lords Supper ‘doth plainly demonstrate that the obeier is the childe of God, the member of Christ’; for Frewen Baptism is ‘instituted to ingraft us into Christs body, that wee *might* become his members’.<sup>318</sup> The manner in which membership is bestowed by sacraments thus ranged from the objective, to the testimonial, to the possible.

The language of membership had inherently inclusive connotations which made it an important ecclesiological resource for authors to deploy, in their pastoral writings, alongside the aforementioned language of visible and invisible. Whereas this latter discourse tended to portray the church in terms of separation– as something fundamentally divided between believers and non believers– focussing on membership allowed the articulation of a more unifying sacramental ecclesiology centred upon the notion of the Church as the ‘mystical body of Christ’. This language was derived from Pauline writings in Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians, and had been codified into a doctrine holding that Christ was to his Church as a head to a body.<sup>319</sup> The ‘mystical body’ was thus the church; Christ was its head and all

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<sup>315</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.602; Downname, *Guide*, p.494; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M6v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.96; Tye, *Matter*, sig.D2r; Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.16; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.S2v; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.16; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.264; Hill, ‘Communicant’, sig.M6r; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.71-72; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.60; Sutton, *Godly*, f.57r; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40; Tuke, *Guest*, p.113; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.74.

<sup>316</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.20; Downname, *Guide*, p.494; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.13; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.60.

<sup>317</sup> See above, Table 1.

<sup>318</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40; Tuke, *Guest*, p.113. Frewen, *Grounds*, p.264. My italics.

<sup>319</sup> 1.Cor.xii.27; Eph.v.30; Col.iii.12-17.

members of the body were bound unto each other and to Christ. When authors spoke of ‘membership’, it was usually in reference to this idea. For example, nine works propose sacraments which somehow make recipients ‘members of Christ’s body’ or ‘members of his mystical body’.<sup>320</sup> Commonly these images were bolstered by a consideration of the properties of bread itself, which also suggested unity. Richard Preston was typical in writing that ‘wee are all partakers of that one bread; that as the bread which we eate in the Sacrament is but one, though it be made of many graines: So all the faithfull though they be many, yet are they but one mysticall bodie under one head, which is Christ’.<sup>321</sup>

The languages of visibility and membership and their associated ideas did not spring from mutually exclusive theologies, indeed, as we shall see, many authors employed both modes of description in conjunction.<sup>1</sup> However, on the level of language and effect, if not at that of strict theology, there was a very real difference in flavour between the alternative segregated and inclusive ecclesiological analyses presented by authors. Stephen Denison, for instance, is very much in a segregated mindset when writing that Baptism is ‘the meanes of our admission into the Congregation of Saintes, as Circumcision was unto the Jewes’.<sup>322</sup> So too is Tozer when stating that by Baptism ‘we are assured that wee are received into the Covenant of Grace, and so are regenerate and belong to the flocke of Christ’, as is Downname when casting Baptism as an occasion when we are ‘outwardly initiated, entered and admitted by the Congregation, as members of the Visible Church’.<sup>323</sup> Note the exclusive visions of the church on offer – the invisible church of the elect for Denison and Tozer, the mixed visible church for Downname. This exclusivity contrasted with corporate visions of the church as the mystical body of Christ as evinced by other writers. ‘Here in this Sacrament all are one, and one is all’, wrote Tye of the Lord’s Supper. He continued that ‘an especiall end and gift of this Sacrament is, for the multitude of the faithfull, as of many members to make one bodie, and to knit them together in one mutuall relation and love’.<sup>324</sup> Inclusiveness, and a simple certainty of membership, also emerge in Bayly’s judgement that the Lord’s Supper, should

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<sup>320</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.693; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.72; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.S2v; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.4; Downname, *Guide*, p.494; Featly, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.122; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.264; hunt, *Devout*, p.126.

<sup>321</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.75.

<sup>322</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.10.

<sup>323</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.4; Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>324</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sigs.D3r-v.

‘teach Christians to love one another, seeing they are all members of the same holy and mysticall body, whereof Christ is He[a]d’.<sup>325</sup>

If Paul’s corporate imagery allowed an inclusive conception of church membership – it also prompted an optimistic outlook on the issue of how securely, through sacraments, one might possess such a membership. The apostle’s corporate imagery possessed a temporal comprehensiveness which the starker visible / invisible dichotomy lacked.. This is easily glimpsed in the difference between the language of ‘admission’ or ‘entrance’, which both imply initiation *into* a state, and that of ‘membership’, which implies a *state* of Christian being or praxis. The notion of corporate membership as ongoing praxis allowed authors to describe sacraments as relating to a pre-existing membership without speculating on *when* and *how* that membership was attained. For Hunt, Baptism is ‘to acquaint us with our communion and union with Christ, or being members incorporate into Christ our head’.<sup>326</sup> Sutton’s work asserts that the ‘sacrifice of praise’ enacted at the Lord’s Supper gives ‘testimony unto men wee are members of that misticall bodie whereof Christ is the head’.<sup>327</sup> For Hildersham, sacraments are occasions when we ‘professe our selves to be fellow members (as with the whole Church of Christ, so) especially with those Christians with whom we do receive’.<sup>328</sup> All these functions of sacraments – of acquainting, of providing testimony, of professing – connect the receiver, through sacraments, with a membership considered to have been already attained. Furthermore, the ‘membership’ available in sacraments was not confined to the present time of partaking – it was also guaranteed for the future. This can be seen in the tendency of authors to conceive of the Lord’s Supper in terms of past, present and future worthiness, which tied sacramental membership to a progression through time. Dod’s first-person soliloquy, for example, invites the communicant to consider their partaking retrospectively: it is only after I have, with ‘as greate uprightnes as I could, communicated at the Lords table’, that ‘being a member of his mysticall body’ can be confirmed. The same sense that the Supper conferred a continued and even enhanced membership comes across in Draxe’s catechism, in which he lists the third benefit of the Supper as ‘a more firme and neere union with the members of Christ’.<sup>329</sup> Similarly, Frewen held that the effect of witnessing the fraction and libation was to ‘confirme the faith of the

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<sup>325</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.697.

<sup>326</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.71-72.

<sup>327</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.57r.

<sup>328</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.13.

<sup>329</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M6v.

receivers in the participation of the same: to exhort them to due praise and thanksgiving, and to unity and agreement with their fellow members'.<sup>330</sup>

This unifying ecclesiological language, in contrast to the more stark and divisive implications of the visible/invisible metaphor, allowed authors to posit not only a more inclusively-conceived church, but also a different type of linkage between sacraments and the church. In the segregated mode one is either initiated into something through a sacrament, or not. In the unifying mode, by contrast, Christian belonging was something personally subjective, apprehended through sacraments, rather than objectively transmitted or conferred by them. Paradoxically then, when considered as praxis sacraments were separated from, yet simultaneously drawn into, the ecclesiological scheme – separated in that the link between them and church membership was no longer direct, but drawn nearer in that they could personally assure the receiver of membership already attained.

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Two modes of sacramental ecclesiology – the first segregating, the second unifying – thus underlay the discussion of sacraments which designated Christian allegiance and membership. One mode dwelled upon two churches, the visible and invisible, and spoke of definite beginnings and of initiation. It implicitly stressed the divide between elect and damned. The second centred instead upon one church: the mystical body of Christ, voyaging through time, an ongoing Christian praxis. This mode was fundamentally unifying. The point with regard to the theological complexion of the Jacobean church is not so much that these were rival ecclesiologies vying for supremacy and championed by different clerics of different schools – rather, it is that the vast majority of authors held the two expressive possibilities in balance.

One way of achieving this balance was to moderate one conception in the direction of the other. For example, it has been seen how authors writing about sacraments conferring entrance to the invisible church could hedge such statements with the language of assurance

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<sup>330</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.351.

or sealing.<sup>331</sup> In this way the segregating mode was softened. Similarly, authors could couch their discussion in the inclusive and general terms of the ‘mystical body’, but inject some specificity into their discussions by speaking of *initiation into* such a body.<sup>332</sup> In addition, an author might simply switch between modes, as did Tye and Coxe .

In most works both emphases are usually present; although one of them might only be implicit. For example, it was possible to make much of Paul’s corporate metaphors with their overtones of unity, whilst elsewhere affirming the inherently divisive concept of the two-fold and predestined estate of man. Thus in his *Doctrine* Preston could speak of the ‘unity’ with ‘our Bretheren’ engendered by the sacrament, which draws together ‘one mysticall bodie under one head, which is Christ...’ – yet in *Duties* he reminds the reader that the ‘highest and proper cause of our salvation, which is Gods free election, to which onely Grace is tyed’.<sup>333</sup> Conversely, some authors centred their discussions on the concept of sacraments which admitted or entered, but retained elsewhere a corporate emphasis, often through alluding to ‘partaking’ in Christ. Crashaw, for example, describes Baptism as ‘The Sacrament of our entrance, or admission into the Covenant and Church of God’ yet says of post-communion alms-giving that ‘all that come to take part in Christ’ are beholden to give to the poor.<sup>334</sup> Confirmed in the majority of these examples is the extent to which Baptism and the Lord’s Supper were the two sides of the same coin: around Baptism clustered concepts of initiation and soteriological division; around the Lord’s Supper clustered concepts of praxis and unity.

This idea of a balance between two languages of sacramental ecclesiology can only be taken so far on the evidence of this body of texts, for there were some authors who made no discernible reference at all to the role played by sacraments in testifying to Christian allegiance, be this through any of the approaches discussed in this section. Such absences may in large part be explained by genre and scope. The catechisms of Fenton, Gawton and the anonymous *Motives to Godly Knowledge* are all extremely brief forms, intended for memorisation by the unlearned. Such streamlining left no place, perhaps, to describe the nuances of the links between sacraments and Church membership. Other texts which make

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<sup>331</sup> For sealing: Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A7r; Denison, *Compendious*, p.5; Boys, *Exposition*, p.112.

<sup>332</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.264; Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>333</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.104. See also Hunt, *Devout*, pp.53-54 and Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.43.

<sup>334</sup> Crashawe, sigs.A8v, C3v.

little of the theme do so because their subject is narrowly defined. This applies to the sermons of Donne and Page, for example, neither of which tackle the key Pauline passages addressing Christian community. The sermons of Dillingham and Smith do consider Corinthians, but concentrate heavily on preparation, while the treatises of Burges and Willoughby concentrate on elaborate doctrinal discussions of baptismal regeneration and of transubstantiation respectively, which cannot be said to relate in anything other than an opaque way to concepts of Christian allegiance.<sup>335</sup>

#### IV. Memorials

Never did God set so remarkable remembrances upon any thing since the foundations of the world were layed, as he hath done upon the death and Passion of our blessed Saviour... [John Denison, *Banquet*].<sup>336</sup>

A majority of authors afforded the sacraments some degree of memorial role. Sacraments could clearly and uncontroversially be ascribed a memorial character by virtue of a two-stage argument. First, a sacrament was a species of sign, and one function of a sign was to evoke the signified, to 'point' to something else. Jenison spelt this out, writing that 'we must consider that (each Sacrament being a signe) each thing, action, and circumstance is appointed, to signifie and bring to our mind some other spirituall thing or action'.<sup>337</sup> Bayly wrote that signs 'draw our minds to the graces signified', while Estey remarked that 'every sacrament showeth to sence one thing, and signifieth and meaneth another'.<sup>338</sup> Second, because broadly speaking the 'thing signifieth' in both of the Church of England's sacraments was the faithful's redemption in Christ – an historical event and (theoretically at least) *fait accompli* – the evocative element of sacraments naturally became synonymous with remembering. Speaking of the Lord's Supper, Boys thus explained to his readers that this

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<sup>335</sup> More significant perhaps in their overlooking of the theme are the handful of authors who omit the theme despite offering a relatively full and overarching view of sacraments. The catechism of Pagit offers several pages on sacraments without alluding to the theme. This could be to the interiority which characterizes the form – sacraments are discussed in terms of what each of them teaching us about 'the strengthening of our faith' – not in corporate terms. The same interiority characterizes the Corinthian sermons of Sibbes and Thomas: Sibbes, 'Receiving' and L. Thomas, 'Christ's Last Supper' in idem., *Seaven Sermons, or the exercises of seaven sabbaths* (1615), sigs.D3v-E7r.

<sup>336</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.168.

<sup>337</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A8r.

<sup>338</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.762; Estey, 'Supper', f.2r.

sacrament was ‘a representation & memoriall of Christs sacrifice on the crosse’.<sup>339</sup> Frewen recommended that partakers ‘cal to their remembrance the abasing of the Son of God in our flesh, and the most excellent worke of our redemption, made by the price of his body and blood’.<sup>340</sup>

Although Baptism no less than the Lord’s Supper was held to signify mankind’s redemption in Christ, it had less commemorative potential than did the Lord’s Supper. Whilst sombre remembrance might be urged upon a communicant, it could not be expected of an infant. Nevertheless, the memorial functions of Baptism were not entirely neglected by authors. Cleaver in his baptismal treatise stressed that both ‘Baptisme and the Lords Supper...are representations, and for memoriall of the worke of salvation, finished and made perfect’.<sup>341</sup> Cleaver goes on to circumvent the problem of infant memory by stressing that the gift of Baptism is given to the entire Christian community: ‘it is given by the Lord to his people, as a symbole, pledge and representation of his justifying grace, to testifie and seale up the remission of sinnes, washed away by the blood of Christ’.<sup>342</sup> In a similarly collective and communal spirit, Downname seizes on the commemorative potential of Baptism for those in the congregation, who are thereby given opportunity to ‘renew our covenant with God, by calling it afresh to our remembrance, together with his sweet mercies, and gracious promises in Jesus Christ’.<sup>343</sup> Stressing the value of remembering one’s own Baptism, with its covenantal and salvific connotations, was in fact a useful way of alleviating some of the awkwardness involved in justifying infant Baptism. The difficulty of asserting that in Baptism something of salvific value was communicated to an unknowing infant, could be lessened by a temporal sleight of hand whereby that communication extended into adulthood. Hunt makes it clear that the considerable benefits of infant Baptism were all delivered, as it were, via subsequent remembrance. By the ‘instrument’ of Baptism, various ‘graces’ and the ‘fullnesse’ of Christ were ‘powred out for us’, all ‘through a holy remembrance of the order and end of our Baptism, and consideration of our promise made therin, working a carefulnesse of gracious performances’.<sup>344</sup> Attersoll said of infant Baptism that ‘the remembrance whereof, when children come to age, greatly comforteth them in the love and

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<sup>339</sup>Boys, *Exposition*, p.108.

<sup>340</sup>Frewen, *Grounds*, p.354.

<sup>341</sup>Cleaver, *Patrimony*, pp.6-7.

<sup>342</sup>*ibid.* p.19.

<sup>343</sup>Downname, *Guide*, p.396.

<sup>344</sup>Hunt, *Devout*, p.75.

feare of God'.<sup>345</sup> Draxe's catechism is more specific about what this 'comfort' might entail, urging his readers to 'dayly labour to feele and discerne in our selves the proper effect & frute of Baptisme, namely the power of Christs death mortifying sinne, and the power of his resurrection quickning and renewing us.'<sup>346</sup>

The greatest reason to stress the commemorative function of sacraments, however, was the indisputable tie between the celebration of the Eucharist and the historic event of Christ's atoning sacrifice.<sup>347</sup> 'It is an action', wrote Downame of receiving the Eucharist, 'that we doe in remembrance of Christ' adding that we 'are thereby put in minde how much he hath done and suffered for us'.<sup>348</sup> The sacrament was ordained, according to Samuel Smith, 'to keepe in our minds a perfect memory of the death and passion of Christ'.<sup>349</sup> The 'Sacrament, consisting of Bread and Wine lawfully consecrated and distributed', wrote Tozer, was 'instituted by Christ himselfe for a continuall remembrance of the Death & Passion of Christ, and the benefits which wee receive thereby'.<sup>350</sup> What did it mean to have Christ's atonement 'in our mindes?' The answer, according to John Denison, was that faith was strengthened, sin weakened, and the graces of the spirit confirmed.<sup>351</sup> The Lord's Supper then, in Pemble's words 'a perpetuall commemoration of His [Christ's] death and passion unto the end of the world', invited the worthy receiver to dwell upon the drama of the original Holy Week, which in turn was bound to illicit a consideration of his own redemption by faith in Christ.<sup>352</sup> Often this process of remembering Christ's atoning work was urged by authors in the context of denouncing the Roman doctrine of propitiatory sacrifice. Every celebration of the Supper

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<sup>345</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.245.

<sup>346</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M2v.

<sup>347</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.663; Boys, *Exposition*, p.108; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.137; Brinsley, *Watch*, p.182; Bruch, 'Treatise', p.262; Cleaver, *Patrimony*, pp.6-7; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B3r-v; J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.10-11; S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.7; idem., *Doctrine*, p.126; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C5v-c6r; Dillingham, 'Preparative', p.77; Downame, *Guide*, p.498; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M6v; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v; Field, *Preparation*, p.65; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.B8v; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.213; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6r; Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A4r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.24; Hill, 'Communicant', p.18; Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A3v; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.148-149; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B6v; Jones c5r-v, Page, 'Supper', p.33; Pagit, *Short*, sig.D5r; Pemble, *Introduction*, pp.6-7; Preston, *Doctrine*, sig.s1r; idem., *Duties*, pp.6-8; Preston, *Short*, pp.8-9; Randall, *Sermons*, sigs.C2v-D1r; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.B4r; Rogers, *Seven*, p.218; Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.66; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.2; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.57; Sutton, *Godly*, f.37r; Thomas, 'Supper', sig.D4r; Thornborough, *Testament*, pp.2-3; Tozer, *Directions* p.5; Tuke, *Guest*, p.78; Tye, *Matter*, sig.D1v; Tymme, 'Court', p.236; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D1v; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.2.

<sup>348</sup> Downame, *Guide*, p.498.

<sup>349</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.57.

<sup>350</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.6.

<sup>351</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.153.

<sup>352</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.18.

was not a sacrifice in itself but a memorial of the unique all-sufficient sacrifice made by Christ. 'Hence', explained Preston, 'the Lords Supper is called a Propitiatorie sacrifice, not properly or really, but figuratively, because it is a memorial of that Propitiatorie sacrifice, which Christ offered upon the crosse.'<sup>353</sup>

As well as affirming in general terms that the Lord's Supper was a sign invested with memorial power, many of the devotional writers tended to stress the commemorative value of the specific signs used in the Lord's Supper. The elements were ascribed great mnemonic power when combined with the sacramental actions of the minister. From the breaking of bread, pouring of wine, and distribution of the same, the communicant could not fail to be transported inwardly to the scene of the crucifixion. Speaking of the fraction and libation, Sibbes preached that 'thou seest the bread broken, and the wine poured forth. This should stir thee up to be in the same estate, as if thou were upon Golgotha, as the place whereupon he was crucified'.<sup>354</sup> The anonymous *Motives* contended that 'as I see the bread broken, and the wine powred out, so do I behold with the eies of my mind the body of Christ to have bene broken, & his Bloud shed, and am put in mind of my redemption thereby'.<sup>355</sup> After the fraction and libation, the distribution of these elements confirmed and deepened the communicants' conviction that the sacrifice signified was made for them personally. As Pagit's catechism demonstrates, two things were said to be 'principally learnt' in the Lord's Supper:

First, as by the hand and mouth, my bodie receiveth bread and wine, so by my faith, my soule doth feede of the bodie and bloud of Christ...Secondly, all the benefites of Christes passion, and his righteousnesse are as surely sealed by it to be mine, as if I myself had wrought them.<sup>356</sup>

In stressing the capacity of signs to direct the memory to Calvary, authors had to tread a fine line. On the one hand, the memorial efficacy of the sign must not be construed in such a way as to merge the sign and thing signified, for this could lead to accusations that the earthly sign was being lauded instead of that which was signified. On the other hand, it was important to

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<sup>353</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.65. See also H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.43; Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.265-266; Bayly, *Practise*, pp.687-688 and Boys, *Exposition*, p.114.

<sup>354</sup> Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.66.

<sup>355</sup> Anon., *Motives*, pp.8-9.

<sup>356</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.D5r. See also Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C5v-c6a; Sparke, *High*, p.139; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B3r-v.

avoid the opposite extreme and imply that sacraments were nothing more than memory aids, to do so would risk charges of extreme sacramentarianism.

These tensions are well illustrated in the work of Pemble, who uses ‘a right remembrance of Christ’s death’ as an organising rubric.<sup>357</sup> In Pemble’s analysis the concept of ‘right remembering’ is split into two. The first part consists of ensuring that the *object of our* commemoration is Christ and Christ alone. ‘Our hearts & thoughts’, he wrote, ‘must be fixed in the holy Sacrament...not on the Elements and actions of the Sacrament: but on Christ and his benefits’. He continued: ‘all the desires of our soules must be towards him, and to the remembrance of his Name’.<sup>358</sup> The second aspect of Pemble’s discussion is ‘in relation to those spiritual graces of the soule, which are to bee exercised in this commemoration’.<sup>359</sup>

Pemble’s first portion of ‘right remembering’ reminds a communicant to focus on Christ and not the signs, thus ensuring a pious recollection of the Passion and not a fetishisation of the visible signs. The second portion, in which the ‘graces’ of the ‘soule’ are fixed on Christ, ensures that sacramental remembering is not thereby too poorly esteemed. This becomes clear when uncovering exactly what Pemble means by the ‘spiritual graces of the soule, which are to bee exercised in this commemoration’. Pemble asks, rhetorically, if remembrance is to consist ‘in a bare recounting the story of his passion, amplifying the indignity of all circumstances, in curio[us] contemplations about every passage of Christ, from the garden to the grave?’ ‘Is this all?’ he enquires. ‘No, nor halfe’.<sup>360</sup> Pemble’s point is that remembrance must be more than a mere recital of the Passion. Simply remembering Christ and doing nothing more, would make him ‘an object of our Knowledge’ only, when He should also, and ‘principally’, be ‘the object of our Love, our Faith, our Hope, our Joy, our Thanksgiving, our Obedience’. For:

these & other heavenly graces are all to be set a worke, and imployed about this remembrance of Christ in the Sacrament; & it is the increase and exercise of these graces, that our Saviour intended, when he instituted this Sacrament, commanding us

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<sup>357</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.3.

<sup>358</sup> *ibid.*, p.7.

<sup>359</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>360</sup> *ibid.*, p.10.

to observe it in remembrance of him, and by it to shew his death till his comming againe.<sup>361</sup>

For Pemble, remembrance is construed as a lens through which our spiritual appropriation of the sacrament comes into focus. This view mirrors that of Stephen Denison; that we must not employ ‘a slight or historicall remembrance, but...a very serious and deep remembrance, we must ponder these things in our hearts, as it is said of *Mary*...Serious things must be seriously considered’.<sup>362</sup>

Analysing further the argument by which Pemble claims a certain efficacy for sacramentally-inspired remembering, two related features of his reasoning may be found in the corpus at large. First, is the centrality of two passages of scripture: Christ’s injunction at the Supper to ‘do this in remembrance of me’, and Paul’s assertion that in the Lord’s Supper the faithful ‘shew forth the Lord’s death till he come’. Many authors expounded these verses at some point in their works, with the effect of underlining the historical circumstances of the Last Supper and therefore the commemorative potential of the Eucharist. Sutton combined both verses in explaining that the ‘third effect’ of the Supper was that ‘hereby a continuall and constant remembrance of Christ Jesus our Saviour is continued, whereby we shew his death untill he come, and therefore he sayth,...Doe this in remembrance of mee’.<sup>363</sup>

Second, the act of remembering was not passive, associated with mere ‘knowledge’ – rather it was an active spiritual exercise. The sacramental signs are doing more than pointing passively to Christ on the cross; rather, they are active spurs to make the crucified Christ truly ours. ‘Christ is not signified in these signes as in a picture, but exhibited unto us’, wrote Tozer.<sup>364</sup> Hildersham’s catechism was even more explicit on this point, stating that ‘this Sacrament is not ordained to bee a bare and naked signe, or as a picture that puts us in minde of one that is absent, but to bee a seale also, with and by which the Lord doth verily convey and bestowe Christ upon us, and confirme and make sure to us this benefit of his passion’.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>362</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.125.

<sup>363</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.49v.

<sup>364</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.13.

<sup>365</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.35.

‘How can I forget thy bitter death and passion, whereof thou hast instituted so lively a memorial?’, enquired Featley. ‘How can I doubt of thy promises, whereof thou hast given such a seale?’.<sup>366</sup>

The active character of such memorial references makes it inaccurate to label any of the authors considered here as ‘memorialists’, if the word is understood in the sense of considering the sign to be *purely* of memorial value. Indeed, from the evidence surveyed here it might well be contended that teaching on memorialism had moved beyond the notion of the sign as a value-free memorial, and towards a more instrumental interpretation; from a sign which does nothing to a sign that does something.

Sacraments also transcended their memorial character by virtue of their diverse functions. Both sacraments were nearly always presented as having several ordained purposes, and authors nearly always presented the memorial purpose of sacraments – especially of the Lord’s Supper – as one of a number of ‘ends’ for which they were instituted. For Hill, the ends of the Lord’s Supper were: ‘as first, for a commemoration of Christ’s death: Secondly, for the further communication with Christ’.<sup>367</sup> Tuke listed seven ends of the Lord’s Supper. The first being ‘that the death of Christ may be retained in remembrance’, but notions within the remaining six – such as ‘incorporation with Christ our head’ and sealing our ‘spirituall feeding’ upon Christ – make clear that Tuke did not accept that this was the Supper’s only function. The sacraments were always more than purely memorial.<sup>368</sup>

## V. Analogies

Sacraments were frequently described in terms of the ‘analogie’ by which the outward signs were bound unto the inward graces they represented. Sacraments thus had three ‘parts’, as can be seen in Draxe’s catechism:

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<sup>366</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.138.

<sup>367</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.18.

<sup>368</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.78-80.

Qu. How many things are wee to consider in a Sacrament?

Answ. Three, first the outwarde signe or matter. Secondly the thing signified. Thirdly the forme, order and analogy between the signe& the thing signified.<sup>369</sup>

Draxe's 'forme, order and analogy' – that third part of sacraments which bound together sign and signified – had other names besides. Authors such as Hildersham spoke of the 'proportion' between 'earthly creatures' and 'that which is represented by them'.<sup>370</sup> Crashawe mentioned both the 'excellent resemblance' and 'notable correspondence' between bread and wine, and Christ's body and blood.<sup>371</sup> This tripartite diagnosis was close to ubiquitous. The authors already mentioned and several others provide obvious examples of this mode of thinking, in that they explicitly drew attention to the third, binding part of sacraments. Yet in fact this same thinking can be found in nearly every text in the corpus, for it is implicitly present whenever an author addresses the suitability of the earthly elements to resemble heavenly graces. *Why* were water, bread and wine chosen to represent God's spirit, Christ's body, and blood? This question was the practical articulation of the abstract theory of binding analogies. In answering it, authors tended to invoke two types of descriptor. First was the analogy centred on the *inherent properties* of the water, bread and wine, in which outward element and inward grace were tied together by the very suitability of the former to figure the latter. The second type centred on the *applied and dynamic use* of the elements in liturgy, in which outward actions involving the elements were held to figure the inward action of God's grace.

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Much was made of the inherent qualities of water, bread and wine, which made them fit to represent heavenly graces. The water used in Baptism was said, on the scriptural basis of

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<sup>369</sup>Draxe, 'Appendix', sigs.L8v-M1r.

<sup>370</sup>Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.25. See also Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp. 82-3.

<sup>371</sup>Crashawe, *Meate*, contents, sig.A3v.

certain passages of John and 1 Corinthians, to resemble the blood of Christ, or the spirit of God.<sup>372</sup> Stephen Denison made both points in his *Compendious Catechism*:

Q. What agreement is there between water and the blood of Christ?

A. As water washeth away the filth of the body, so doth the blood of Christ cleanse us from sin, which is the filth of the soule.

Q. What between water and the Spirit of Christ?

A. As water reneweth the beauty of things which are foule, so the Spirit of Christ doth regenerate us, and reneweth the beauty of Gods image in us.<sup>373</sup>

Denison's approach was typical: the cleansing and renewing properties of water were appropriate to signal, respectively, the remitting and regenerative properties of Christ's blood and spirit.

A similar exercise was undertaken with regard to the appropriateness of bread and wine to signal Christ's body and blood. Most frequently this analogy hinged on the notion of nutrition found in the sixth chapter of John's gospel: bread and wine nourished the human body as Christ's body and blood nourished the human soul.<sup>374</sup> As Thornborough put it, the sacrament 'doth nourish the inward man of the faithfull receiver, with the very bodie and very blood of Christ unto eternall life'. This occurred 'as truly, and as really, as wee know that bread and wine doe nourish our fraile and mortal bodies in this transitorie life'.<sup>375</sup> The analogy of digestion also linked bread and wine with spiritual benefits. Jenison, for example, noted that 'we become one with him [Christ], and he with us, even as Bread and Wine turne to our Nourishment, and become one substance with us'.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>372</sup>1 John i.7; 1 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>373</sup>Denison, *Compendious*, p.6.

<sup>374</sup>John vi.55.

<sup>375</sup>Thornborough, *Testament*, pp.13-14.

<sup>376</sup>Jenison, *Directions*, sig.C2r.

As well as treating bread and wine as a pairing, it was also common practice to consider their inherent significances separately. Explaining why bread was chosen as the sacramental sign, Boys listed the ‘manifold analogies between it and his body’:

First, as bread is the strength and state of our naturall life; so Christ is for our spirituall being all in all.

Secondly, as bread is loathed of the full stomacke, but most acceptable to the hungry soule; so Christ is most welcome unto such as hunger and thirst after righteousnes.

Thirdly, as bread is usuall and daily; so Christ should be to the Christian: feeding on that bread which came downe from heaven, should be the soules ordinary refectiō.

Fourthly, as bread is made one loafe of many graines; so we that are many are one bread, and one body, because we all are partakers of one bread.

Lastly, as corne is cut downe with the sithe, threshed in the barne with many stripes, torne in the mil with much violence, then boulded & sifted, last of all baked with extreame heate in the oven; and all this, that it may be fit meate for our body: so Christ in his ripe age was cut downe by cruell death, his body was whipped, his flesh rent asunder, his soule was as it were melted in the fierie furnace of Gods anger: and all this, that he might become food for our soule; that we might eate of this bread, and drinke of this cup.<sup>377</sup>

Boys’ first ‘analogy’, concerning physical and spiritual nourishment, is replicated in the works of Attersoll, Bayly, Coxe and Featley.<sup>378</sup>

If human bodies needed bread for growth, human hearts needed wine for cheer. God, explained Downname, had provided for mankind ‘not *bread alone to strengthen mans heart*, but also *wine to make it glad*’. The wine represented ‘the cheering and gladding Wine of his precious Blood’.<sup>379</sup> In contrast to the highlighted attributes of bread, which naturally concerned physical nourishment, the qualities of wine discussed by authors tended to pertain to man’s non-physical life, to his ‘spirits’, as Frewen put it.<sup>380</sup> Wine ‘warmeth’ and ‘comforteth’, wrote Page, thus figuring Christ’s blood which warms and comforts the conscience.<sup>381</sup> Wine for Richardson was ‘the sweetest of all liqueurs’, apt to represent

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<sup>377</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.117.

<sup>378</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant* p.91; Bayly, *Practise*, p.683; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B3r-v, Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp.130-1.

<sup>379</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.298. He also specifies ‘oil’.

<sup>380</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.255.

<sup>381</sup> Page, ‘Supper’, p.37.

Christ's blood which was 'the sweetest drinke of the soule'.<sup>382</sup> Wine 'cherished', 'comforted' and 'refreshed' our countenances, as did Christ's blood our souls.<sup>383</sup> Tozer explained that

as Wine doth cherish and comfort us; satisfie our thirst; purge away many corrupt humours, and maketh us bold and adventurous: so the bloud of Christ revives and gladdens our drooping soules, satisfyeth our spirituall thirst, purgeth us from all our sins, and makes us couragious against all feare of our enemy the Devill.<sup>384</sup>

The blood of Christ, signified aptly by wine, had such restorative effects because wine/blood, more so than bread/body, was evidence of Christ's saving sacrifice, a point emphasised by, amongst others, Bayly, who wrote that: 'by seeing the Sacramentall Wine apart from the Bread, wee should remember how all his precious bloud was spild out of his blessed body for the remission of our sinnes.'<sup>385</sup>

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Thus the inherent properties of the visible elements were considered highly suitable to represent the inward graces. Equally suitable for such a purpose were the 'applied' or 'dynamic' qualities of the outward elements – the very actions which involved them in the liturgy. Thomas' explanation of Baptism, for instance, maintained that sign and signified were bound together by the ceremonial *use* of water. 'This Baptisme', he wrote, containeth these things: the signe, water, the ceremony, the sprinkling of water, and the things themselves viz. the sprinkling, of Christ's blood, and the imputation of his righteousness'.<sup>386</sup>

Thomas was typical in drawing attention to the significance of the 'sprinkling' of water upon the infant. Other baptismal actions considered in the corpus included 'dipping' and

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<sup>382</sup> Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.A5v.

<sup>383</sup> For 'cherish' see Tozer, *Directions*, p.10; Bayly, *Practise*, p.683. For 'comfort' see Boys, *Exposition*, p.117; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.55; Page, 'Supper', p.37; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.5; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.A5v.

<sup>384</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, pp.9-10.

<sup>385</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.683-684.

<sup>386</sup> Thomas, 'Supper', sig.D4v.

‘washing’. Downname offers a particularly involved consideration of what these various actions might mean. God’s grace, he explained, was

... sacramentally signified by the outward washing and sprinkling with water, which serveth to cleanse us from our bodily defilements, by our stay, and (as it were burying) under it, representing our mortification, death and buriall to the same, and our rising out of it, signifying our spirituall Resurrection to a new life.<sup>387</sup>

Was there any practical difference between talking in this way about the actions involving the elements on the one hand, and discussing the qualities of the elements themselves on the other? Downname’s analysis points to two such differences. First, considering the element *as applied in liturgy* expanded the range of illustrative possibilities. The presence of God’s cleansing spirit could perhaps be invoked by water alone, but the concepts of ‘mortification’ and ‘resurrection’ that Downname aims at here are clearly better rendered by the images of submersion under, and arising from, water. The applied uses of water in the baptismal rite were also useful to Perkins and Draxe, both of whom linked the external ‘dipping’ and ‘sprinkling’ with the establishment of a covenant binding the triune God to the baptized party.<sup>388</sup> Second, considering the *applied* elements as signifying *actions* of grace made the analogy between outward and inward specific to a moment of the ceremony itself, leading to a heightened parallelism. In Downname’s assessment, as in that of many other authors, the concurrency of outward and inward is brought to the fore by a stress on action: the washing and sprinkling signifies cleansing; the submersion, mortification of sin; the emergence, spiritual resurrection. The parallel realities of outward action and inward experience could, by such a time-specific stress upon the liturgy, be transferred from the abstract to the personally real. ‘The ministers outward washing with Water in Baptism’, wrote Frewen, ‘is a most certaine signe, seale and pledge, of the inward washing, whereby wee are clensed from our sinnes by the blood of Christ’.<sup>389</sup> Stressing the ceremonial application of the elements in addition to their inherent nature thus both broadened and intensified the scope of analogous illustration.

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<sup>387</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>388</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C2r; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M2r.

<sup>389</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.242.

The ceremonial applications of bread and wine were discussed to similar effect. It was usual to focus on the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine. As the anonymously authored catechism *Motives to Godly Knowledge* put it:

Q. How is your faith strengthened by the Bread and Wine in the sacrament?

A. As I see the bread broken, and the wine powred out, so do I behold with the eies of my mind the body of Christ to have bene broken, & his Bloud shed, and am put in mind of my redemption thereby.<sup>390</sup>

This analogy, in which the fraction figures Christ's bodily death and the libation his bloodshed, derives its intensity from its ceremonial visibility. Some authors – sometimes because they were expounding scriptural mandates such as 'take, eat'; sometimes because they had in mind the performance of the Prayer Book rubric – highlighted other aspects of the liturgy beyond the fraction and libation, which intensified still further the Supper's elemental imagery. The taking of the bread by the minister, its distribution to the congregation, its reception by the communicant – all these actions were opportunities to reinforce the fundamental parallelism between inward and outward. Pemble's systematic account is typical. He imparts significance to seeing the bread and wine 'separated by consecration; seeing them 'broken' and 'powred forth'; seeing the minister offering the elements; and to the time when 'thou receivest and eatest' them.<sup>391</sup> Jenison also offers considerable detail. The minister's setting aside and consecration of the bread and wine represents God setting aside and consecrating of Christ 'for the worke of our redemption'. The fraction and libation signify the death and bloodshed of Christ, 'by which he satisfies God's wrath for beleevers'. The minister's distribution of the elements represents God's offering 'Christ his Sonne, with all the benefits of his death and passion'. Finally, the receiving of the consecrated elements from the minister 'signifie our Faith, which is as the hand, mouth, and stomacke of our soules, whereby we receive Christ'<sup>392</sup> Similarly, Featley's prescribed meditations for the time of receiving focus successively on bread and wine being 'designed and set apart for the Holy communion', 'laid upon the communion table', 'consecrated by the minister', 'broken' and

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<sup>390</sup> Anon., *Motives*, pp.8-9.

<sup>391</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.8.

<sup>392</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.A8v-B1r.

‘powred’; before being ‘given’ by the minister and ‘taken’ by the communicants.<sup>393</sup> Inward truths are adduced from each stage.

The presentation of sacraments as analogies – in both the inherent and applied senses outlined here – served several purposes. For example, the ‘inherent’ likenesses between bread of many grains (and wine of many grapes) and the corporate body of Christ, were, as already seen, marshalled to explain how sacraments pertained to Christian community.<sup>394</sup> More polemically, explanations of how bread was related to Christ’s body by analogy, led very naturally to condemnations of transubstantiation. The ‘applied’ analogies, as we have seen, were of great use when highlighting the memorial function of sacraments.<sup>395</sup>

A further, seemingly obvious and unproblematic use of the sacrament-as-analogy concept is that of presenting a parallelist conception of grace. But the relationship between the two was in fact more ambiguous than might at first be imagined. The signpost of sacrament-as-analogy pointed in several different directions. One of these directions certainly was towards a parallelist conception of grace; to a large degree the two ideas meshed, with the former constituting a highly appropriate means of expressing the latter. But certain aspects of the sacrament-as-analogy concept – particularly the tendency to invoke applied and dynamic relationships between outward and inward – pointed elsewhere, towards a more instrumental conception of sacramental grace, and towards a deep sacramentally-driven personal assurance.

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When authors described how water, bread and wine represented heavenly graces by analogy, whether of the inherent or applied variety, they were for the most part adhering to a particular view of how God, through sacramental signs, conveyed grace to mankind. This view, associated especially, though not exclusively, with Heinrich Bullinger, and dubbed ‘symbolic parallelism’ by Brian Gerrish, held that there were two realities in the sacrament: outward

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<sup>393</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp. 128-31.

<sup>394</sup> See above, ‘Badges’, Ch.2.

<sup>395</sup> See above, ‘Memorials’, Ch.2.

and inward.<sup>396</sup> Outwardly, one received the sacramental sign. Inwardly, one received heavenly grace. These outward and inward processes, as Bryan Spinks has put it, ‘may coincide, but need not’ – they happen in parallel but not necessarily in concert.<sup>397</sup> Bayly provides a typical example of this vein of thought, stating that:

The outward Signes the Pastor gives in the Church, and thou dost eate with the mouth of thy body: the spirituall grace Christ reacheth from Heaven, and thou must eate it with the mouth of thy Faith.<sup>398</sup>

Another assessment of the Supper in this vein is found in Featley’s *Ancilla Pietatis*. After condemning the ‘Sacramentarie’ who would ‘rob thee of the *Jewell*’ and the ‘Papist’ who would withhold the ‘casket’, Featley proposes a parallelist alternative which balanced sign and thing signified:

Lay thou thine hands on both, hold both fast; as thou seest the verity and substance of the one, so beleve the verity and substance of the other. As thou takest the one, receive the other: As thou handlest the one, apprehend the other. As thou feedest with thy mouth on the one, feede in thy heart on the other. And as truly as the one *nourisheth* thy body to a temporal, the other shall preserve thy soule to eternall life.<sup>399</sup>

Parallelism (like so many Reformed ideas) is perhaps best conceived of as a pair of juxtaposed impulses: positive and negative. The positive was that the outward and inward processes happened in parallel. The negative was that the relationship between them was curtailed. The outward portion could not be said to bring about the inward in a direct *ex opere operato* fashion, for this would be to place an obligation on God to work His grace through the sacramental signs whenever they were used, and thus restrict His freedom. Nor could outward and inward be conceived as physically related, for this would stray into the errors of transubstantiation and consubstantiation. A typical Reformed balancing act thus ensued, in which the relation between outward and inward had to be made strong enough to be meaningful (thus avoiding the charge of bare symbolism) yet not so strong as to permit notions of an *ex opera operato* or physical bond.

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<sup>396</sup> Gerrish, ‘Lord’s Supper’, p.253.

<sup>397</sup> Cited in Spinks, *Sacraments*, p.11.

<sup>398</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.684.

<sup>399</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp.84-5.

Reformed thought offered several possible means of expressing this nuanced concept. One might discuss the ‘communication of properties’, whereby the outward element and inward grace could be considered in such a way that, as Field put it, ‘that which *properly* belongs to *one* Nature, is attributed to *the other*’.<sup>400</sup> This ‘communication of properties’ posited a relation by scholastic sleight of hand, whilst maintaining a certain separation of ideas. Alternatively authors could achieve the same effect by pointing out that inward and outward were related insofar as the outward assumed the *name* of the inward (whilst remaining distinct) – a device known as metonymy.

But arguably the most convincing and common way to portray the relation positively without the risk of transgression was to use the ‘sacrament-as-analogy’ concept. A relation grounded in *analogy* scored highly on two related counts. First it was a conceptual relation, an abstract Reformed counterpoint to the scholastic attempts to develop a theory of a substantial relation. Words such as ‘This is my body’, explained Thornborough, were to be understood ‘tropically, not literally, semblably, not simply, figuratively, not properly’.<sup>401</sup> Physicality was thereby duly averted. Draxe explained that if sacraments were properly understood as analogies, then transubstantiation could never stand, for ‘it destroyeth the very nature and forme of a Sacrament, which consisteth in the relation & respect that is betwixt the signe and the thing signified’.<sup>402</sup> Second, and consequently, the realm of the analogy was one in which the relation between outward and inward could be made almost infinitely weighty without any danger of transgressing into territory where too much, either physically or causally, was being claimed for the bond. Likeness upon likeness (or, as Crashawe put it, ‘excellent resemblance’ upon ‘excellent resemblance’) between sign and *res* could be posited.<sup>403</sup> Greenwood provided five likenesses between water and Christ’s Spirit and blood.<sup>404</sup> Stephen Denison and Robert Hill both provided five likenesses which bound bread to Christ’s body, and wine to His blood.<sup>405</sup> Attersoll gave seven and six reasons respectively, whilst in total

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<sup>400</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.57.

<sup>401</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.11.

<sup>402</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M4v.

<sup>403</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, contents, sig.A3v.

<sup>404</sup> Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, p.16.

<sup>405</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.82-88; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.19.

fourteen of the forty-one non-catechetical works provide at least three ‘analogies’ for a specific element.<sup>406</sup>

Before expounding his own analogies, Hunt explained why he and his contemporaries could speak so confidently and at such length about them. It was because the very concept of a relation by analogy was self-regulating:

1. For the analogy & resemblance that the signes have with the thing signified: the bread Cannot be Christs numerically body. 2. It doth but represent the same, for wee see onely bread, which is by representation, and not really Christs body. 3. Christs body is of another kind then bakers bread, hee tooke his naturals (as our Creede teacheth us) of the virgin *Mary*. It must therefore follow that the bread is Christ’s body, and the wine his blood...as one thing is unto another, by analogy, proportion and similitude, somewhat like unto it in many respects.<sup>407</sup>

In a somewhat circular argument, Hunt starts here by positing a relation of ‘resemblance’ in which the bread cannot ‘really *be* Christs body’. And because the bread cannot be Christ’s body (as Christ’s body is clearly ‘of another kind than bakers bread’) the relation between bread and body must be one of infinitely multipliable ‘anology, proportion and similitude’. The parallelist logic of positive relation and negative separation thus interlocked in the concept of sacraments as analogies. This kind of relation, Wilcox explained as he gestured to other instances of figurative language in the Bible, was additionally splendid in its scriptural warrant, and as far from Catholic error as could be:

And this Speech is usuall in the Scriptures, to attribute that to the signe, which is proper and peculiar to the thing signified, by reason of the stretight analogie, proportion, and agreement, which is betweene the signe, and the thing signified; and not in any other respect, of consubstantiation, transubstantiation, or any other such fantasticall dotage.<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, 345-346; Boys, *Exposition*, pp.117-118; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.82-88, Estey, ‘Supper’, fs.3r, 5r; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp. 128-31; Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, p.16; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.19; Hunt, *Devout*, pp.119-125; Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.D1r-v; Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.92-96; Sutton, *Godly*, fs.177v-178v; Tuke, *Guest*, pp.160-165; Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.4-7.

<sup>407</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.119-120.

<sup>408</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.43-44.

A relation of analogy, then, is one which naturally draws together tightly the inward and the outward, yet simultaneously guards against their synonymity: the positive and negative requirements of parallelism are both given due and weighty prominence. Expressed in words, these sentiments resulted in the kind of oscillating prose of which Hunt provides a typical example; a ceaseless movement between relation and separation.<sup>409</sup>

The form adopted by many texts at the point at which they discussed analogies provided further doctrinal protection. It was common, for instance, for catechetical texts to place their discussions of the elemental signs within the close confines of a question which unfolded the outward / inward dichotomy. Pagit, for example, first enquires for both sacraments, ‘what is the signe that may be seene?’, and ‘what is the grace that cannot bee seene?’, and only then moves onto the significance of water, bread and wine.<sup>410</sup> He is typical of many authors in thus juxtaposing a binary conception of outward and inward, with a discussion of the relevance of elemental properties.<sup>411</sup> Sometimes, often in lengthier works, this same structural co-existence was achieved on a greater scale. Tye’s consideration of what is ‘visible and outward’ vis-à-vis what is ‘invisible and inward’ unfolds over several pages.<sup>412</sup> In a tome like Attersoll’s, the concept dominates the entire structure of chapters.<sup>413</sup>

Thus to compare water, bread and wine to grace was to emphasise a highly nuanced conception of outward and inward (and the relation between them) which was the motor of parallelism. The marriage of analogies and parallelism was a theologically placid one: the power of sacraments was unthreateningly contained within relational properties; their efficacy acknowledged yet simultaneously curtailed. However, some aspects of the sacrament-as-analogy view, especially when that analogy concerned an *action*, gestured away

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<sup>409</sup> See also Frewen, *Grounds*, p.242; Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, pp.15-18; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.17; Jewel, ‘Treatise’, pp.8-9, 64-65; Lake, ‘Wells’, p.173; Randall, *Sermons*, sig.Ee4r; S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.159-163; Sparke, *High*, p.224; Thornborough, *Testament*, pp.13-14.

<sup>410</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sigs.D4r-5v.

<sup>411</sup> For similar examples see: Anon., *Elements*, sigs.C4v-5r; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B1v-2v, B4r-v; S. Denison, *Compendious*, pp.5-8. Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sigs.L8v-M1r; Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A4v; Jones, c4r-c5r, Pagit, *Short*, sigs.D3v-5v; Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C2v; Preston, *Short*, pp.6-7; Richardson, *Doctrine*, A5r; Thomas, ‘Supper’, sig.D7r; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.9-10; Tuke, *Guest* pp.68-70; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D1v; Whiting, *Short*, p.9; Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, pp.30-31.

<sup>412</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sigs.D1r-2r.

<sup>413</sup> See also: J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.43, 77; Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.2-3.

from this placidity towards connotations of instrumentality and assurance, as will now be seen.

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In addition to discussing the inherent qualities of the elements and their suitability to figure grace, authors frequently described the way in which the applied use of those elements – in ceremonies such as the baptismal immersion, or the eucharist fraction and libation, for example – were likewise apt signifiers of the heavenly. This process further re-iterated the distinction between outward and inward; it also added depth to the bond between them by positing a relation by analogy that was not only static and inherent, but also vivid and applied. In one sense then, this natural facet of the ‘sacraments as analogies’ concept served to tighten the tie between analogies and the parallelist conception of sacramental grace. Yet in another sense this concentration on the applied (dynamic) relation of sign and *res* by analogy naturally tended away from parallelism and towards a notion of instrumentality.

The instrumentalist strand of Reformed thinking hinged upon a conceptualisation of the sacramental sign which conveyed, and was in some sense a cause of, the thing signified. Thus the sacraments were instruments through which God’s saving grace in Christ was communicated to the recipients – a position somewhat beyond parallelism, which stipulated that inward grace mirrored outward action but was not guaranteed to do so. Dod demonstrates this affirmative approach to instrumentality when he described the Lord’s Supper as ‘not onelie to be sign to signifie and represent, but a seale also to confirm, and an instrument to exhibit Christ with all his merits unto every beleever’.<sup>414</sup>

We have already examined one such feature of ‘dynamic analogies’ which approached such connotations of instrumentality. This was the emphasis upon the undisputable ceremonial concurrency of outward and inward, as glimpsed above in the works of Downname, Draxe,

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<sup>414</sup>Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.12.

Frewen, Pemble, Perkins and Thomas, authors who sought to give full weight to the sacramental analogies contained in Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In these, and other, estimations, liturgical actions such as 'dipping', 'sprinkling', washing', 'breaking' and 'pouring' were the sites at which the inward and outward were obviously bound together.<sup>415</sup> This conception of a ceremonially concurrent outward and inward is widespread, and is reflected in many recurrent features of the corpus of texts. For instance, simultaneity was underlined in the prevalence of the 'as...so' formula with which authors tended to explain why particular elements were suitable to figure grace. Sparke outlined the theory, writing that 'as outwardly we receive the outward element, so inwardly we must seeke to receive also the heavenly thing thereby offered unto us'.<sup>416</sup> This 'as...so' rubric, or a close structural equivalent, was often on display in more specific discussions of the sacramental analogies too. Eusebius Paget's catechism taught that 'as water washeth away the filthiness of the flesh' in Baptism, 'so the bloud of Christ washeth away sinne from my soule'.<sup>417</sup> A right receiver of the Lord's Supper, according to Tuke, might feel that 'as he receiveth, eateth and drinketh the *bread* and *wine*, so *surely* he shall be made partaker of the *body* and *blood* of Christ'.<sup>418</sup> The common motif of 'spiritual' eating and drinking also promoted an understanding of concurrency. Boys, in expounding the words of institution, 'take, eat', provides one colourful and oddly impious example of this, claiming that 'for by the strength of faith wee chew the cud, as it were, and make Christ our owne'.<sup>419</sup>

The immediacy and tangibility of sacramental analogies, as conveyed through these textual and stylistic devices, undermined the negative of the two juxtaposed impulses of parallelism: that outward and inward action could never be said, definitively, to happen simultaneously. With this cautionary note thrown to the winds via the stress upon analogies as applied in liturgy, what remained was just the positive impulse – that outward and inward action do indeed happen in parallel. Unshackled from its restraining twin, this impulse looked very much like the instrumentalist view that sacraments did, or communicated something. Such a

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<sup>415</sup> Other examples of the same trait in relation to Baptism: Anon., *Elements*, sig.C3v; Egerton, *Method*, p.41; Jewel, 'Treatise', p.6; Preston, *Short*, pp.2-3. For LS see: Brinsley, *Watch*, p.182; Dillingham, 'Preparative', pp.74-78; Jenison, *Directions*, a8r-v; Sibbes, 'Receiving', pp.67-68; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.10-12.

<sup>416</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.195.

<sup>417</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.D4v.

<sup>418</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.70.

<sup>419</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.115.

progression from parallelist intent to instrumentalist result is clear from these words of Richard Preston:

as certainly as he receiveth bread and wine into his hands, and afterwards into his stomach, so certainly doth he receive Christ, and all his benefits at the hands of God: for if we have a hand, and stomach to take, receive, and feede upon Christ, when God saith Take, and Eate without all question we receive Christ spiritually, and feede on him<sup>420</sup>

There was a second major feature of the ‘dynamic analogies’ consideration which also pointed somewhat beyond a simple parallelism: the personal settings into which analogical sacramental explanation was often placed. A personal context served to solidify the theological abstraction of a sacramental analogy into something concretely applicable to the partaker, thus validating the concurrency between outward and inward suggested in analogical explanation, and potentially subverting still further the balance between the positive and negative impulses within parallelism, magnifying the former through the lens of subjectivity.

One such species of personal setting, unsurprisingly prominent in catechistically orientated works, and deriving perhaps from the precedent set in the Reformed world by the Heidelberg catechism, is pedagogic in character. Examinees were often invited to state what was ‘learnt’ in a sacrament, or what a sacrament could ‘teach’ them.<sup>421</sup> The answer to such questions was more often than not in some form of sacramental analogy, as in this extract from Pagit’s catechism:

Q. To the strengthening of our faith, how manie things do you principallye learne by Baptisme?

A. First, as water washeth away the filthiness of the flesh, so the bloud of Christ washeth away sinne from my soule.<sup>422</sup>

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<sup>420</sup>Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.187-188.

<sup>421</sup> See for example Q.69, consulted at [www.reformed.org](http://www.reformed.org)

<sup>422</sup>Pagit, *Short*, sig.D4v.

The frequency with which analogies were invoked in this type of pedagogic setting clearly reflects the usefulness of analogical explanation to Protestant educators. Further, though, it demonstrates the potential of the sacraments-as-analogy concept to subvert itself to the extent that it was no longer the counterpart of a nuanced theology of parallelism. The fact that the sacrament *teaches* the recipient adds extra validity to the simultaneity suggested by the ‘as...so’ structure. The device also, in its own right, amplifies a positive impulse – the certainty that a real personal benefit is offered by the sacrament – without voicing any negative restraint.

Still more pervasive and subversive of strict parallelism are instances of sacramental analogies being discussed in a pastoral setting of assurance of salvation. Pagit’s couplet again provides an example of this, in that the sacramental analogy is presented as pertaining ‘to the strengthening of our faith’. Because faith was understood as the agent that grasped saving grace, any increase in its strength was implicitly assuring. Indeed, acknowledging the potency and instructiveness of sacramental analogies was one of the foremost ways in which a relation was posited between sacraments and assurance of salvation.<sup>423</sup> Sibbes mentions both ‘assurance’ and ‘comfort’ when describing the way in which faith is an active agent in the Lord’s Supper. He writes:

When we see the bread and wine taken, he meaneth that hereby we by faith do accept of Christ, and do lay hold of him. Here is the foundation of our comfort, that a Christian man may say of Christ, that he can be assured of nothing so much which he possesseth for his own, as he may be of him.<sup>424</sup>

This same trait of discussing analogies in the overall context of faith or assurance was achieved on a larger scale in some longer works. Brinsley, for example, had the following advice for the time of ‘taking the bread and wine’, and ‘eating and drinking the same’ in the Supper:

...wee are to stir up our soules by faith, to lay hold upon, and to apply to our selves all the merits of Christs passion; and to assure our selves, that all which hee suffered is thus confirmed to be ours, and that by those unspeakable torments of his owne

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<sup>423</sup> See below ‘Conclusion’.

<sup>424</sup>Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, pp.67-68.

Sonne, Gods anger is fully appeased, & his justice fully satisfied for all our sinnes.<sup>425</sup>

That actions involving the elements can be seen as the ‘foundation of our comfort’ (Pagit) or as a means, to ‘assure our selves’ that Christ’s suffering applies directly to us (Brinsley), seals the concurrency of inward and outward, and thus the drift to instrumentalism. The repeated invitation to the reader to interpret the sacramental analogies in relation to grace, faith, and assurance – and to do so with a real and personal confidence – re-affirms emphatically the concurrency of outward and inward. The relation between sign and signified is ratified by positing a clear outcome. It is not merely said that ‘as the body receives the outward sign, so the soul receives inward grace’; to this is added the summation: ‘with the result that our consciences are assured and comforted’. This completion of the equation with a personal promise of assurance or comfort intensifies still further the positive impulse of parallelism, lending it a subjective magnitude with which it dwarves the negative. When analogies were coupled in this way with assurance-seeking, or with Christian pedagogy, the overwhelming weight of the ensuing language thus tended to bury even the clearest of parallelist stipulations. Frewen illustrates the point. For all that he is clear that outward happenings do not guarantee the inward consequences, he rather suggests the opposite in his analogically-inspired definitions of sacraments:

Baptisme is a Sacrament of the new Testament, wherein is signified and sealed unto us, that we are as assuredly washed from our sinnes, by the bloud of Christ, as our flesh is washed with Water, in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost

the Supper of the Lord is a Sacrament instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby is signified and sealed unto us, that we are as assuredly sustained to eternall life, by the body of Christ crucified, and by his blood shed, as wee certainly eate the broken bread at the Lords table, and drinke the wine out of the cup.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>425</sup>Brinsley, *Watch*, pp.184-185.

<sup>426</sup>Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.231, 248.

There were, therefore, at least two ways in which describing applied and dynamic sacramental analogies could subvert the parallelist thought. One was a movement towards instrumentalism, engendered by the implied concurrency of outward and inward. A second, confirmatory of the first, was a drift to the personal and subjective. With regard to the former observation, it has long been recognised that the relationship between the different strands of Reformed sacramental theology was fluid. Bierma's judgement of Calvin and Zwingli's disagreement is insightful: the question was not whether sacraments were analogous signs – the question was whether they were *merely* analogous signs.<sup>427</sup> As Gerrish himself recognises, the theologies of Calvin, Martyr and others besides were constantly striking a balance between parallelism and instrumentalism – so it is not surprising to find in the texts a mode of sacramental expression which reflects this fluidity. What certainly is striking, however, is the extent to which analogical sacramental description was set in an overwhelmingly personal context. On this view sacraments were simple, real, practical aids to assurance rather than abstract, technical, theological entities governed by a complex semiology. The analogical mode not only subverted the strictures of parallelism, it also transcended the theological complexity of sacraments.

## VI. Seals

One way in which sacraments could be presented as more than signs was to describe them additionally as seals. 'God forbid', replied Bishop Jewel's treatise to the suggestion that sacraments might be 'nothing els but bare and naked signes'. 'They are seales of God', he continued, 'heavenly tokens, and figures of grace, and righteousness, and mercy given and imputed to us'.<sup>428</sup> Thornborough was one of several authors who made a similar case, claiming that 'we teach not that Sacraments are called signes, or bare significations onely, but we say, that they be such signes, as doe *exhibite*, & *seale* to us all grace, and promises of Christ, really, truely, and substantially in his body and blood'.<sup>429</sup> For some authors, seals

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<sup>427</sup> Bierma, *Doctrine of the Sacraments*, p.27.

<sup>428</sup> Jewel, 'Treatise', p.8.

<sup>429</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.19. See also S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.208; Dod, 'Dialogue', p.12; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.A6v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.35; Jenison, *Directions*, C1v; Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.65.

were the primary descriptor of a sacrament. Willoughbie, for instance, defined a sacrament as ‘a seale of the promise of the Gospell, instituted by Christe himselfe’; Brinsley called them ‘the Lordes seales, for the fulnesse of our assurance’; Bruch called the Lord’s Supper ‘a seale to confirm our faith’.<sup>430</sup> More common still was to announce, as in Inman’s catechism, that sacraments were ‘holy signes and seales’. Tuke’s variation on this theme was to call a sacrament a ‘*visible* signe of Gods *invisible*& saving grace, or a corporall, visible & outward sign and seale, instituted from above to represent and ratifie Gods grace unto us in Jesus Christ’.<sup>431</sup> This concept of sacrament-as-seal (or sacrament as sign *and* seal) was at the very core of sacramental discourse. Some fifty-four out of the sixty-four texts examined treat sacraments either as an example of a ‘seal’ (noun), or as entities which themselves ‘sealed’ (verb).<sup>432</sup>

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The sacrament-as-seal concept was often deployed in a promissory or legal setting. Sacraments were presented as seals of God’s goodwill and positive intent, in the same way that the imprint on a waxen seal confirmed and ratified the goodwill and intent of a king or prince. The sacraments thus attested to the reality of God’s presence. ‘As in the Kings broad seale, there is imprinted, ingraven, and lively represented the person of his Maiestie’, wrote Preston, ‘so in this Sacrament, which is the Lords seale, is imprinted, engraven, and represented the verie bodie & bloud of Christ’.<sup>433</sup>

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<sup>430</sup>Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.1; Brinsley, *Watch*, p.174; Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.269. John Denison defines sacraments as seals to the word: J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.81. See also Randall, *Sermons*, sig.Cc4r; Sparke, *High*, p.188; Whiting, *Short*, p.8. Other seal-based appellations were: as a ‘seale’ and ‘vow’ Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.20; as a ‘witness’, ‘remembrance’ and ‘seal’, H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.41; as ‘helpes and seales’ Tye, *Matter*, sig.C8v; and sacraments which ‘set out’ and ‘seale’ Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A3v.

<sup>431</sup>Tuke, *Guest*, pp.68-69. For similar see: Anon., *Elements*, sig.A3r; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.14; Bayly, *Practise*, p.672; Boys, *Exposition*, p.111; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.B4v; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.12; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.L5r; Egerton, *Method*, p.15; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3r; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.A5r; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.206; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B5r; Hunt, *Devout*, p.1; Inman, *Light*, p.6; Jenison, *Directions*, A7r; Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.2; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.32; Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1r; Preston, *Doctrine*, sig.G1v; Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.65; Tozer, *Directions* p.1; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.C7v.

<sup>432</sup> The ten exceptions are: Anon., *Motives*; Dering, *Catechisme*; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’; Donne, ‘S.Pauls’; Estey, ‘Supper’; Greenwood, ‘Tractate’; Lake, ‘Wells’; Preston, *Short*; Richardson, *Doctrine*; Tymme, ‘Court’.

<sup>433</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.73.

Sacraments were also said to be as validating as a signature to a document. Christ's proclamation of the New Testament, according to Henry Smith, showed that now 'his promises deserved the name of a Testament, because the seale is set unto them, which before this Sacrament was not sealed, but like a bare writing, without a signet'.<sup>434</sup> Jenison's work begins with a poem containing lines to similar effect:

And lest some doubt possesse thy silly soule,  
That seale-lesse Blancks those Copies prove to bee<sup>435</sup>

A worthy communicant fearing the discovery of 'seale-lesse Blancks' would be a 'silly soule' indeed, but for the unworthy the sealing capacity of sacraments threatened real peril. Sacraments 'sealeth good or evill, as everie other seale doth', warned Henry Smith.<sup>436</sup> John Denison argued that a man 'profaning the blessed sacrament' was tantamount to a 'traytor' offering 'contumely to the Broad seale, upon which the Kings image is stamped', with dire consequences – an argument mirrored in Draxe's work.<sup>437</sup>

Of what were sacraments seals? Jewel, along with many other authors, gave the answer simply as 'God's Promise'.<sup>438</sup> The notion of a sacrament as a seal to a divine promise or, as Hunt puts it, 'God his favour to man-ward', was also expressed via two synonyms.<sup>439</sup> First was 'covenant', such as the one Rogers refers to as existing 'betwixt God and the beleever' which is sealed by the Lord's Supper.<sup>440</sup> Often the parlance was that of the 'covenant of grace', as in these examples from Inman's catechism:

Baptisme is a Sacrament whereby is sealed to us, our receiving into the Covenant of Grace, our ingrafting into Christ, and our regeneration by the Holy Ghost

The Lords Supper is a Sacrament, whereby is sealed to us, the continuance and increasing of the benefits confirmed by Baptisme. *Namely, our remaining in the*

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<sup>434</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.51.

<sup>435</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A4r.

<sup>436</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.82.

<sup>437</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.217. Draxe, 'Appendix', sigs.M5r.

<sup>438</sup> Jewel, 'Treatise', p.7.

<sup>439</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.1.

<sup>440</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.217.

*Covenant of Grace: our further ingrafting into Christ, and regeneration by his Spirit: and so our nearer union and communion with him.*<sup>441</sup>

A second term for the promissory object of ‘sealing’ was ‘testament’. Cleaver, for example, described a sacrament as a ‘seale of ratification, as a testament proved after the death of the testator’.<sup>442</sup> The transferability of this term between the theological and legal realms was obviously useful to authors. Thornborough allowed the metaphor to govern his whole work, as glimpsed through its full title: ‘The last will and testament of Jesus Christ touching the blessed Sacrament of his body and bloud, Signed, Sealed and delivered to the use of all faithfull Christians’.<sup>443</sup>

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In his survey of catechisms, Ian Green identified two contemporary uses of ‘sealing’ vocabulary: the legal sense we have just examined, whereby sacraments sealed, endorsed, or ratified the commitment or promise of God; and an active sense in which sacraments sealed something *to* the receiver, constituting a mode of representation over and above merely signifying.<sup>444</sup> However, this preliminary discussion of the promissory and legal setting of ‘sacrament-as-seal’ shows that the two were far from being mutually exclusive. Inman’s catechism answers, for example, clearly deliberate over a legal concept in the ‘covenant of grace’, but do so in an active way – these things are sealed ‘to us’.

It may be helpful to reflect that the sacrament-as-seal concept suggested an overall process, which could be described by one or all of its constituent parts. The process of sealing had two elements: *something* was sealed to *someone*. In addition, the sealing-sacrament was couched in authors’ chosen imagery. Using this model, Downname’s description of the Lord’s Supper

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<sup>441</sup>Inman, *Light*, p.7.

<sup>442</sup>Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.6.

<sup>443</sup>Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

<sup>444</sup>Green, *ABC*, pp.510-11.

as ‘the Lords seale, wherewith he hath ratified his Covenant of grace and salvation with us’, could be represented visually as follows:<sup>445</sup>

	<i>(1) What is sealed?</i>	<i>(2) Unto whom?</i>	<i>(3) Imagery</i>
Downname	‘Covenant of grace’	‘us’	Legal

Often, as in the case above, the imagery employed was promissory and legal – because God’s promises to mankind and ensuing legal terminology such as ‘covenants’ and ‘testaments’ had always constituted a primary means of understanding salvation and redemption. But alternatives existed: it was common, for instance, to talk rather directly about ‘Christ’ and his ‘benefits’ as the object of sealing. According to Preston, for example, ‘a Sacrament is an ordinance of God, whereby Christ and al his benefits, in certain visible signes& external rites are represented, sealed and most certainly conveyed to every Christian beleever’.<sup>446</sup> Hence:

<i>Author</i>	<i>(1) What is sealed?</i>	<i>(2) Unto whom?</i>	<i>(3) Imagery</i>
Downname	Covenant of grace	Us	Legal
Preston	Christ and all his benefits	Every Christian believer	Person of Christ

Sealing sacraments were not therefore, either legal or active; they were often both. Many sealing sacraments were presented in a legal context, but not all. And to the extent that the concept of a seal implied that *something* is sealed to *someone*, the idea was always an active one. It is this active dimension of sealing that will now be considered.

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<sup>445</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.396.

<sup>446</sup>Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.82-83.

It has already been shown how various legal motifs figured in an active sense when authors spoke of sealing sacraments. ‘The covenant of grace’, in Inman’s catechism, for example, is ‘sealed to us’. ‘Testaments’, too, could be ‘sealed’ by sacraments; Robert Hill, speaking of the Lord’s Supper, highlights the ‘New Testament’, ‘sealed in His [Christ’s] blood’.<sup>447</sup> Bruch employs the same device in relation to promises, writing that ‘this Sacrament is a seale to confime our faith; therefore as we desire to have an assurance of Gods promises sealed up unto us let us come unto this table’.<sup>448</sup> God’s promises – his Word – were made available to humanity through the gospel. God ‘declareth his mercies by his Word’ and ‘sealeth and assureth them by his Sacraments’, wrote Attersoll.<sup>449</sup> Half a dozen other authors likewise posited sacraments as sealing God’s word or gospel unto us, such as Fist, who counselled that ‘sacraments are sacred signes and seales set before our eyes and ordained of God for this cause, that he may declare and seale by them the promise of his Gospell unto us’.<sup>450</sup>

As well as utilising a legal/promissory context, some authors, like Preston, claimed a more direct, Christological application of ‘sealing’ language. ‘This sacrament’, wrote Samuel Smith of the Lord’s Supper ‘doth in regard of God seale unto us Christ and his righteousnesse’.<sup>451</sup> Stephen Denison calls Baptism the ‘signe and seale of our union with Christ, yea of our insition and ingrafting into him’.<sup>452</sup> A related language used was to speak of how the Lord’s Supper sealed ‘union’, ‘communion’, ‘incorporation’ or ‘conjunction’ with Christ. Authors were less reticent than might be imagined to speak in bodily terms of possessing Christ in the Eucharist, provided, of course, that the relation of analogy between the elements and the body and blood was suitably emphasised. ‘*At the Communion*’, wrote Field, God ‘doth passe unto you *under seale*, his owne *body and bloud*; nay, his *whole selfe*’. Field’s comment was also typical:

...and whatsoever *benefit* he wrought for mans salvation: as the *Remission* and pardon of all your sinne; the *Redemption* and deliverance of all your soules and bodies *from eternall punishment* in Hell; *Perfect Friendship*, and *Reconcilliation*

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<sup>447</sup>Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.43.

<sup>448</sup>Bruch, ‘Treatise’, pp.269-270.

<sup>449</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.92.

<sup>450</sup>Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.A6r. See also Rogers, *Seven*, p.217; Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.2; Hill, ‘Communicant’, sig.M4r; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A8r.

<sup>451</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.18.

<sup>452</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.10.

with God; and an *undoubted right* and title to the kingdom of Heaven, with all *the joyes* and blessednesse thereof.<sup>453</sup>

This notion of soteriological benefits deriving from a direct comprehension of, or union with, Christ, lent a directly salvific air to the notion of sealing. For Featley, for example, the bread and wine are ‘pledges of thine everlasting love’, and ‘seales of my eternall redemption’.<sup>454</sup> Authors could even speak of ‘grace’ itself being sealed to a worthy receiver. Attersoll’s definition of a sacrament, for instance, ran thus:

...a visible signe and seale ordained of God, whereby Christ and all his saving graces by certaine outward rites are signified, exhibited, and sealed up unto us.<sup>455</sup>

It is possible to qualify such statements by pointing to the distinction in contemporary discourse between the singular ‘grace’ (usually meaning the prevenient, saving variety) and the plural ‘graces’ (which often meant God-given gifts of human virtue such as patience and humility). However, the fact that Attersoll talks of ‘saving’ graces affirms the soteriological import of his statement. Indeed, authors did not shy away from saying that sacraments sealed specific aspects of the soteriological scheme. Randall instructed his congregation that ‘we must come to be partakers of this Sacrament, the seale of the saving Grace’.<sup>456</sup> Sparke made it clear that sacraments were instituted of Christ:

...not only to figure & represent himselfe and what he hath done for their salvation: but also whereby to offer himselfe with grace necessarie to salvation, and to deliver himselfe with the same, and to seale the communication and deliverie thereof, to every worthy receiver of the outward element or elements, according to his institution.<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.79.

<sup>454</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.121.

<sup>455</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.14.

<sup>456</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, Aa3v.

<sup>457</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.193.

It might be thought that positing sacraments as seals was a relatively simple matter of description and metaphor, another means of conceptualising the efficacy of sacraments. Barclay notes that even Zwingli, renowned (perhaps somewhat inaccurately) for an inefficacious view of sacraments, could acknowledge that sacraments sealed.<sup>458</sup> But ultimately, most of the ways in which sacraments were seals entailed a highly active and efficacious sacramental outlook.

The first way in which this is so, flows from the ease with which sacraments were described as sealing grace. Such an identification led very naturally to a sense of sacraments as sources of assurance. A handful of authors claimed that sacraments sealed ‘assurance of all Gods promises’ (Preston), or ‘assurance of everlasting life’ (Bayly).<sup>459</sup> More common was the claim that ‘assurance’ or ‘confidence’ would be bestowed upon the believer as a *result* of the sacramental sealing. Brinsley, for instance, describes sacraments as ‘the Lordes seales for the fulnesse of our assurance, both of forgiveness, and of his favour in Christes blood’.<sup>460</sup> ‘How can I doubt of thy promises, whereof thou hast given such a seale? How should I distrust my future *inheritance*, whereof thou hast given me this *earnest*?’, enquires Featley.<sup>461</sup> Asked why ‘the Apostle calleth [sacraments] seales of the righteousness of faith’, Egerton’s catechist answers ‘Because thereby God doth assure me (& every faithfull receiver) that Christ is mine, with all his benefits’.<sup>462</sup> The idea that sacraments sealed *for the purpose of assuring* was further confirmed by common assertion that sacraments could seal ‘faith’, or that faith was ‘confirmed’ or ‘strengthened’ as a result of sealing. This was assuring in an indirect way: faith was considered the organ by which saving grace was grasped or received, so any sacramental proof or bolstering of faith widened the subjective path to grace. Consider, for example, Page’s view of the Lord’s Supper:

The Bread of this Supper of the Lord, is the seale of our Faith, in the beliefe of our redemption, wrought & accomplished by Christ, the bread of life.<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> Barclay, *Doctrine*, Ch.4.

<sup>459</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.118; Bayly, *Practise*, p.712.

<sup>460</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, p.174.

<sup>461</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p. 138.

<sup>462</sup> Egerton, *Method*, p.30.

<sup>463</sup> Page, ‘Supper’, p.31.

We can note the same trait in Tye's view that by the two sacraments God has devised two 'helpes and seales to strengthen and confirme this my faith'.<sup>464</sup>

Second, the prevalence of the sacrament-as-seal concept, with its emphasis on sacraments which actively did or conveyed something, was evidence of an instrumentalist understanding of sacraments. Dod makes it clear that the extra level of sacramental logic provided by the sealing concept was key to instrumentalist understanding of sacraments. The Lord's Supper, he wrote:

...is ordained of God not onelie to be sign to signifie and represent, but a seale also to confirm, and an instrument to exhibit Christ with all his merits unto every beleever.<sup>465</sup>

It is the explicit presentation of sacraments as 'instruments' that will now be considered.

## VII. Instruments

The 'instrumentalist' interpretation of sacraments was one Reformed response to the pressing contemporary question of sacramental efficacy. Like memorialism, or parallelism, it was essentially a semiotic theory which sought to clarify the extent to which sacraments could be said to be efficacious by defining the relationship between sacramental sign and signified. Instrumentalism held that the thing signified was in some sense conveyed through the sign, which thus functioned as an instrument. God uses sacraments, explained Calvin, 'as instruments which he has ordained for the unfolding of his spiritual grace'.<sup>466</sup> This neatly circumvented one of the main Reformed objections to the theory of efficacious sacraments: matters of grace were worked by God's spirit and God's spirit alone, and no other avenues of grace could be claimed without the grossest idolatry. By stressing God's ownership and

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<sup>464</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.C8v.

<sup>465</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.12.

<sup>466</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, bk4.11.

instigation of the sacramental ‘instruments’, Calvin – along with a host of Reformed thinkers such as Peter Martyr, Theodore Beza and others – was thus able to retain sacraments in the salvific scheme without undercutting the soteriological prerogatives of the Almighty. Sacraments did something – in the same way that bread nourished, and fire warmed – but only as a consequence of God’s goodwill. This notion permeated though to the assessment of Baptism in the Thirty-Nine articles, that the sacrament ‘is also a sign of regeneration or new birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God, by the Holy Ghost are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed, and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God’.<sup>467</sup> Sacraments were thus effectual, but only through the instrumental sign – by God’s power.

An example of such an ‘instrumental’ definition of a sacrament is provided by Perkins, whose catechism deems a sacrament to be ‘a signe to represent, a seale to confirme, an instrument to convey Christ and all his benefites to them that doo beleue in him’.<sup>468</sup> The same sense of instrumental action is expressed by Hunt of Baptism, and by Preston of the Lord’s Supper. In Hunt’s view, Baptism is ‘an instrument of the holy ghost’ by which ‘in ample manner is powred out for us, with his gifts, faith, hope, charity; sorrow for sinne, and other graces; and of Christs fullnesse we all receive’.<sup>469</sup> For Preston, the Supper is ‘an instrument appointed of God, to convay Christ, and his benefits unto us’.<sup>470</sup> Sacraments were also described as ‘conduits’ or ‘conduit pipes’ to similar effect – Featley, for example, writing of the Supper, gave thanks for the ‘all thy loving mercies contained in this conduit of thy grace’.<sup>471</sup>

The main argument advanced here is that a sense of sacramental efficacy is a pervasive and unifying theme in the corpus of texts; and that instrumentalism was a theological distillation of this sense of efficacy into a semiotic theory. In one sense, as the first part of this argument will note, the capacity of instrumentalism to communicate a sense of sacramental efficacy was problematic for Protestants. This is because although the notion of efficacious

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<sup>467</sup> *Articles XXVII.*

<sup>468</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1r.

<sup>469</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.75.

<sup>470</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.97.

<sup>471</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.139

sacraments was one which the Reformed were happy to approach via qualification and nuance, the concept was also claimed in a more direct fashion by Roman Catholics who invested sacramental elements themselves with grace giving power – anathema to the Reformed. A potential problem with instrumentalist language and imagery, therefore, was that it could permit an affirmation of efficacious sacraments so forceful that a conclusion with a distinctly Roman flavour could emerge more prominently than the very Reformed process of qualification and restraint from which that conclusion had been derived. To prevent instrumentalism from *sounding* like Catholicism required a thoroughly nuanced approach – the full explication of *how* sacraments were efficacious – that not all authors in this sample had the scope to achieve. For this reason, it is contended, explicit avowals of instrumentalist semiotic theory are less abundant in the corpus than one might expect. However, it will then be argued that the *conviction* that sacraments were efficacious – the ‘raw material’ from which instrumentalist theology was constructed – was manifestly present and was at the very core of the period’s sacramental thought.

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The ‘sacrament-as-instrument’ concept, if measured in direct references to ‘instruments’ or ‘conduits’, was neither straightforwardly, nor extensively employed in the texts here examined. When such language was used, it was subject to subtle variation. For instance, it may be seen from the examples above that the question of *what*, exactly, was conveyed by a sacramental instrument depended on the sacrament in question and also varied from author to author: Christ and ‘all his benefites’ for Perkins’; various gifts of the spirit for Hunt’s Baptism; Christ and his ‘merits’ for Dod’s Lord’s Supper.<sup>472</sup> It is also apparent that the concept of instrumentality could be qualified. Perkins, for example, adds the caveat ‘to them that do believe in him’, thus potentially reining in somewhat the instrument’s efficacy.<sup>473</sup> Hunt presents an ambiguity as to whether the sacrament *itself* is an instrument, or whether Baptism is a setting for the work of the instrument of the spirit. In total only fifteen authors speak either of ‘instruments’ or ‘conduits’; all of them replete with caveats and

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<sup>472</sup> See above ns.474, 471, 470, 465.

<sup>473</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1r.

qualifications.<sup>474</sup> Of course one should expect considerable refinement of argument from Reformed authors, especially when their writings bear upon sacramental efficacy, a subject which had always demanded a balancing act from theologians addressing it. But what is surely worthy of further comment is the relative smallness of this number. Fourteen seems low when compared to, for example, the forty who ascribe to the sacraments a memorial role, or the near ubiquity of the ‘sacrament as analogy’ or ‘sacrament as seal’ concepts. The ‘sacrament-as-instrument’ concept – a mainstream thread of Reformed sacramental theology – seems comparatively mute.

This failure to trumpet instrumentality indicates caution in the mindset of devotional writers with regard to the availability of grace in the sacraments. Trent had anathematised the view ‘that grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is not given through the said sacraments, always, and to all men’.<sup>475</sup> The positive Catholic affirmation to the contrary – that sacraments do indeed ‘confer...grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto’ – rested on the concept that sacraments were effectual due to their own, inherent, *ex opere operato* power. In its assertion that sacraments *did* and *conveyed* something, and in its identification (through signatory language) of that something with God’s saving graces – instrumentalism could come dangerously close to this Catholic conception of freely available sacramental grace through inherently efficacious sacraments. Samuel Smith’s description of the Lord’s Supper as ‘a conduit, to convey the grace of regeneration and remission of sins unto the true beleever’ moves perilously close to such a view, for example, although the caveat ‘unto the true beleever’ represents a step back from the brink, rendering the sacrament’s efficacy dependent on the estate of the receiver.<sup>476</sup>

In principle the ready presence of such caveats and qualifications as this should have militated against instrumental sacraments becoming confounded with grace-giving, *ex opere operato* sacraments – for instrumentalism had been crafted by sixteenth-century reformers to contain both an assertion that sacraments did something *and* a restraining note that they did

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<sup>474</sup> Attersoll; J. Denison; S. Denison; Featley; Frewen; Thomas; Bayly; Webbe; Preston; Hunt; Lake; S. Smith; Perkins; Sparke; Draxe.

<sup>475</sup> *The canons and decrees of the sacred and oecumenical Council of Trent*, Trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), p.53-67. Cited online at <http://history.hanover.edu>

<sup>476</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.220.

so without detracting from God's sole prerogative to work grace. As Christopher Elwood puts it, in instrumentality was found 'a resolution to the antinomy of sacramental efficacy and divine power'.<sup>477</sup> This antinomy was safely packaged within the concept of an instrument itself, which implied an efficacious conveyance, but which also implied an *ownership* of that conveyance and a *recipient*. With regard to ownership, for example, John Denison asserts that a sacrament's instrumental power derives from God (or Christ), the author of the instrument, and from Him alone. 'As in humane actions the instrument hath his vertue and activity from the principal agent', he wrote, 'so have these sacred ordinances their vertue and efficacy from Christ, the author of the Sacraments. From him proceeds the influence of Grace'.<sup>478</sup> Extending his thoughts to Baptism, Denison added that 'Wee poure on water in Baptisme, but hee *baptizeth with the holy Ghost*'.<sup>479</sup> Ensuring that the 'principal agent' of sacramental instruments was unambiguously identified to be God was also the idea behind Hunt's deployment of the 'instrument of the holy Ghost' and Preston's insistence that sacraments are instruments 'appointed of God'.<sup>480</sup> God's primacy was also ensured in Christological form whenever a sacrament was identified as an 'instrument' to 'unite' with, 'exhibit' or 'seale conjunction with', Christ.<sup>481</sup>

The inherent efficacy of sacraments could further be limited by careful presentation of the sacramental recipient. As we have seen, authors such as Perkins and Smith render instrumental conveyance contingent upon the partaker. So too does Attersoll, who, expounding the Apostle, wrote that:

This the Apostle declareth. *The cup of blessing which we breake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* Whereby hee meaneth, that the faithful which come conscionably & worthily to the lords table, are joined and united wholly to Christ, by the bread Sacramentally, by faith instrumentally, by the Holy ghost spiritually, and by them almost effectually.

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<sup>477</sup>Elwood, *The Body Broken*, p.70.

<sup>478</sup>J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.27.

<sup>479</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>480</sup>Hunt, *Devout*, p.75; Preston, *Duties*, p.97.

<sup>481</sup>For 'Unite' see Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499. For 'Exhibit' see Dod, 'Dialogue', p.12. For 'conjunction' see Hill, 'Communicant', sig.M4r.

Anything conveyed instrumentally, then, was received only by ‘the faithful which come conscionably & Worthily to the lords table’.<sup>482</sup>

In addition to these two curtailing strategies – one emphasising God’s authorship of instruments, the other stressing their proper reception – there was also the option of focussing instrumentalist language on something other than the sacrament itself, thereby sidestepping the conclusion that sacraments did something of themselves. For Frewen, for instance, it is the senses which are instruments; they are, ‘by the exercise of the sacraments, stirred up to be instruments to helpe our minde and weake Faith’. Such weak faith needs assistance in order to effect an inward (and effectual) reception of Christ:

The outward eating by the instruments of our body, causeth all our sense, our hearing, our seeing, our feeling, our tasting, to helpe our inward eating by Faith: and by the same quickneth, stireth, strengtheneth and increaseth our Faith, that we may eate the body, and drinke the bloud of Christ the more effectually, and fruitfully.<sup>483</sup>

Sparke reached a similar conclusion: that Christ and his benefits were, in the Lord’s Supper, ‘taken and fed on by the instruments of the bodie’.<sup>484</sup> Frewen and Sparke’s writings are examples of an instrumentalist view of sacramental efficacy interbred and hedged with parallelism: the sacrament in the abstract is not held to be an instrument; but when it is bifurcated into outward metaphor (eating bread) and inward reality (receiving Christ), it is acceptable to cast the receiving body as an instrument. The same idea is present when Attersoll talks of being united with Christ ‘by bread sacramentally, by faith instrumentally’.<sup>485</sup> All these types of qualifications amounted to small, tactical retreats from full-blown propositions of sacramental efficacy.

Yet even if the instrumentalist view of sacraments contained, in theological principle, enough nuance in its armoury to prevent confusion with Catholic notions, the frequency of its direct employment was still probably limited by this very fear. The existence of this anxiety is suggested by the clutch of outright attacks on the Catholic stance on grace-full and

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<sup>482</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499.

<sup>483</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.356.

<sup>484</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.201.

<sup>485</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499.

efficacious sacraments, which are prominent even in the primarily non-polemical texts which constitute this corpus. Texts of a more sophisticated bent often confronted the concept of *ex opere operato* directly. Stephen Denison, for instance, contemplating Baptism, made it clear that it ‘doth not wash away sinnes, *ex opere operato*, or by the worke done’, adding that ‘sacraments doe rather confirme grace where it is already, then conferre grace where it is wanting’.<sup>486</sup> Sacraments could be said to communicate grace, but they could not be said to cause it. ‘It is the proper worke of God to confer grace’, wrote Draxe in his lengthy catechism – ‘the Sacraments are signes & seales of grace, but not causes therof’, he concluded.<sup>487</sup> Perhaps the most detailed assault on *ex opere operato* sacraments – and simultaneously a defence of Reformed instrumentalism – was penned in Preston’s giant devotional work, *Duties*. The crux, for Preston, was that Reformed sacraments were ‘voluntary’ instruments whereas popish ones were ‘Physicall Instruments’. A sacrament should be understood as a ‘voluntary’ instrument because ‘it is the will, and appointment of God to use it, as a certaine outward meanes of grace’. Preston continues: ‘it is an instrument, because when wee use it aright, according to *Gods* institution, then God answerable by it conferreth grace unto us’.<sup>488</sup> The conception of sacraments as ‘physical instruments’, by contrast, entailed the distressing claims that to sacraments were ascribed ‘power and efficacie to work, produce, and give grace’, and that ‘the very action of the Minister, dispensing the Sacrament, *Ex opere operato*, giveth grace immediatly, as the moving of the Pen causeth writing’.<sup>489</sup>

Alongside the repudiation of the idea that sacraments could generate grace, various other cautionary notes were sounded about their efficacy. The presiding minister, it was clear, had power to consecrate the elements, but in no way was to be understood as causing or dispensing grace, except in the most metaphorical of understandings. ‘We doe receive the outward elements at the hand of the Minister, but the vertue & power thereof proceeds from Christ’, wrote John Denison.<sup>490</sup> In the Supper, noted Tozer, the minister ‘gives onely the signs’; the gracious benefits are bestowed by God alone.<sup>491</sup> Ministers were properly

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<sup>486</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.39.

<sup>487</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M6r.

<sup>488</sup> Preston, *Duties*, pp.98-99.

<sup>489</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>490</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.27.

<sup>491</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, pp.12-13.

conceived of as ‘stewards and Remembrancers’, pointed out Richard Preston: not, as Pemble put it, as ‘sacrificing Priests’ in the ‘abomination of the Masse’.<sup>492</sup>

The extent to which a minister could affect the efficacy of a sacrament had pastoral implications. Some parishioners worried that the administration of sacraments by a demonstrably ungodly minister might stem the flow of benefits to his unfortunate flock. Some authors addressed this question directly. The answer they gave – that sacramental efficacy was in no way curtailed by the impieties of the presiding minister – hinged on the self-limiting nature of instrumentalist thought: the minister, no less than a sacrament itself, was just a vessel for the flow of divine grace. ‘If Christ the great Physician prescribe a cordiall, though it be given by a leprous hand, refuse it not’, advised Denison.<sup>493</sup> Quite simply, ‘it is not in the Ministers power to regenerate’, preached Greenwood, of Baptism.<sup>494</sup> Yet the unseemly contradiction of, as Preston put it, a ‘graceless man’ conveying ‘grace’ was clearly practically problematic even if theologically resolvable.<sup>495</sup> Asked whether ‘the worthnesse and efficacie of the Sacrament depend upon the goodnesse of the Minister that delivereth it unto us’, Hildersham’s catechism replied ‘No...it dependeth wholly upon the ordinance of God, and upon the truth and power of Christ that did institute it’.<sup>496</sup> He added, however, that ‘it needs make much for the security and comfort of a Christian to receive it from such a one as hee knoweth hath authoritie and commission from Christ to deliver it unto him’.<sup>497</sup>

Any grace contained in sacraments was not dependent on the sacrament itself, or on dispensing ministers. Still less was it somehow contained within the elements. As Page cautioned: ‘the Element is literall, and corporeall, the grace is inward and spirituall’.<sup>498</sup> Burges’ fourth and fifth affirmations on the question of baptismal regeneration deny the efficacy of the outward element by rehearsing two instrumentalist staples – God’s sole authorship of sacramental grace, and its reservation for the elect:

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<sup>492</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.7; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.23.

<sup>493</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.36.

<sup>494</sup> Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, p.20.

<sup>495</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.273.

<sup>496</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.56.

<sup>497</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>498</sup> Page, ‘Supper’, p.31.

That the spirit is not given to all, but to the *Elect* only.

The outward element hath not in it any *physicall* force, either by vertue of the *consecration, institution or administration*, to confer the spirit to any at all: but the spirit is communicated immediatly from Christ himselfe, when the Sacrament is administered, if it then be at all conferred.<sup>499</sup>

Those authors who considered the question of the efficacy of the element – much debated at the Hampton Court conference of 1604 – were all keen to emphasise, like Burges, that outward washing in water, and the grace of regeneration, could by no means be equated except by signification. As Henry Smith preached:

Baptisme is called regeneration, and yet baptisme is a dipping of our bodies in water; but regeneration is the renewing of the minde, to the image wherein it was created: this is not Baptisme, and yet as though Baptisme were regeneration it selfe, it is called regeneration, because it signified regeneration.<sup>500</sup>

Ultimately, as many authors pointed out, sacraments could not objectively confer grace – either through their own power, through the minister, or through the sacramental elements – without demolishing what Hunt and Attersoll both called ‘the brazen pillar of God’s election’.<sup>501</sup> As Preston put it, considering sacraments to be full of grace overthrows the ‘highest and proper cause of our salvation, which is Gods free election, to which onely Grace is tyed’.<sup>502</sup> Speaking of the Lord’s Supper, Frewen dedicates a section of his work to the premise that ‘all that receive the Sacrament, doe not feed upon Christ to eternall life, but only such as are Gods elect’.<sup>503</sup>

One controversy raised by this tension – that of whether or not unbaptized infants were inevitably damned or not, and the consequent relevance of Baptism to salvation – surfaced

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<sup>499</sup>Burges, *Baptismall*, pp.19-20.

<sup>500</sup>H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.29. A related argument was that Christ was not ‘inclosed’ in the bread and wine: Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.B4v.

<sup>501</sup>Hunt, *Devout*, p.54; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.204.

<sup>502</sup>Preston, *Duties*, p.104.

<sup>503</sup>Frewen, *Grounds*, p.298.

intermittently throughout the reign of James I and was a matter of much dissent within Protestantism itself as well as between Reformed and Catholic adversaries. Seven of our authors confront the problem of unbaptised infants directly.<sup>504</sup> All were united in espousing one of the warmer consequences of rigid predestination: that because Baptism did not automatically confer regeneration, death before Baptism could not be said to entail automatic damnation. As Greenwood put it, ‘Alas children, if they be not brought to baptisme, and dye unbaptised, it is not their fault: shall they be damned for their fathers offence?’ If it were true that the unbaptized were damned, then ‘wither went the Thiefe that beleevved’, or ‘the child of David?’ he continued.<sup>505</sup> These two useful examples of evidently saved yet unbaptised souls were also cited, respectively, by Hunt and Stephen Denison.<sup>506</sup> Hunt further provided the example of St Ambrose.<sup>507</sup> On balance, there seems to have been little support for the official Prayer Book line which insisted on the necessity of Baptism to the extent that ‘(if necessitie so require) children may at al tymes be Baptized at home’, and, it was implied, possibly by women.<sup>508</sup> It was from this angle that Frewen offered his view:

And whereas, to colour baptisme by women, there is a necessity pretended, as though if the child dye unbaptized, it doth incur the danger of damnation: the answeere is easie, that the salvation of Infants in this time of the Gospell, is no more tyed unto the outward receiving of the Sacrament of Baptism, then it was unto circumcision in times past. And in the law we read, that it was not lawfull to circumcise a Child until the eight day. And many no doubt departed out of this life before the eighth day, and yet was there never any condemnation imputed unto them.<sup>509</sup>

This puritan rejection of the necessity of ‘outward’ Baptism – in opposition to the hearty defence of the same by figures such Bancroft – translated into explanations of Baptism’s importance which, whilst still looking to regeneration or remission, did so through the familiar Reformed-sacramental lens of ‘assurance’ or ‘teaching’. Hildersham employs both shields, maintaining that:

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<sup>504</sup> Sutton; Lake; Perkins; Thornborough; Thomas; Donne; J. Denison; S. Denison, *Doctrine*; Frewen; Sparke; Hunt; Attersoll; Tozer; Preston, *Duties*.

<sup>505</sup> Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, p.20.

<sup>506</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.57-58; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.15.

<sup>507</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.59-60.

<sup>508</sup> BCP, ‘Baptism, both public and private’.

<sup>509</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.234-235.

by Baptisme wee were taught and assured, that through the merit of Christs passion, and of it onely, wee were first received into Gods covenant and favour, united to him and his Church, and so obtained remission of all our sinnes, and the grace of regeneration.<sup>510</sup>

Another means of talking about Baptism in positive salvific terms without implying automatic regeneration was to describe Baptism as, in Cleaver's phrase, 'effectual to elect infants'.<sup>511</sup> This position retained the inherent ability of Baptism to confer regeneration, but with the familiar caveat that it only did so to children already chosen by God. It is worth noting that ultimately, the difference between this position and the 'conformist' stance of, for example, Bancroft, was essentially one of emphasis. Contributing to the Hampton Court discussion of this very issue, Bancroft said:

that the state of the infant dying unbaptized being uncertain, and to God only known, but if it die baptized there is an evident assurance that it is saved, who is he, that having now religion in him, would not speedily by any means procure his child to be baptized, and rather ground his action upon Christs promise than his omission thereof upon Gods secret judgement.<sup>512</sup>

Here Bancroft essentially concedes that the estate of an infant, both before and after Baptism, is uncertain. Both his view, and those examined in the corpus, share the fundamental premise that Baptism can not be said to confer regeneration and salvation in itself –graces which essentially depend upon, as Bancroft puts it, 'God's secret judgement'. Both also agree, moreover, that the fact of Baptism offers plentiful 'assurance' of salvation', grounded upon the promise of Christ. Baptism was therefore good, but not infallible, evidence of salvation. Conformists like Bancroft focussed on the 'good' and pushed for the utter desirability of Baptism. The more puritan-minded stressed the 'not infallible' and therefore saw positive harm in stressing the necessity of Baptism in any circumstances – a theological instance of what David Como has labelled as a tendency towards 'negative consensus' within godly thought.<sup>513</sup>

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<sup>510</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.21.

<sup>511</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, margin, p.18.

<sup>512</sup> Cited in Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, p.15.

<sup>513</sup> D. Como, 'Puritans, Predestination and the Construction of Orthodoxy in Early Seventeenth-Century England' in P.Lake and M. Questier (eds.), *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), p.85.

Thus a convincing explanation of the relative scarcity of direct references to ‘instruments’ and ‘conduits’ is that Protestants faced difficulties when outlining instrumental sacramental efficacy in an explicit way. They risked a seeming proximity to an unacceptably Roman view of sacramental efficacy and also invited a confrontation with accepted notions of prevenient grace. In pure theological terms these dangers could be guarded against with doses of Reformed nuance and gloss – but one can imagine that pastors may well have thought twice before introducing a concept requiring such intricate qualification into their pastoral works, especially when other concepts (sacraments as badges, sacraments as memorials) were so much more straightforward. Richard Preston’s elaboration on the difference between a ‘physical’ and ‘voluntary instrument’; Samuel Smith’s distinction between ‘conferring’ and ‘conveying’ as a ‘conduit’; Burges’ denial that the element has any ‘physical force’ to convey the spirit coupled and rejoinder that the spirit ‘is communicated immediately from Christ himself’: all these standpoints demanded lengthy and dense argumentation. Their presence in what were still, by their own author’s admissions, predominantly pastoral works, reveals something of the ideal educational standards set by some clergy. But inevitably, the smallest and simplest texts could not indulge such explanatory extravagance. Not one of the three smallest texts of the collection – the catechisms of Fenton, Gawton, and Inman – make mention of ‘instruments’, or ‘conduits’ in their sacramental explanations. Their explanations were directed, in the words of Inman, at ‘many poore servants and labourers; many that are of trades and manuell Sciences; many aged Persons of Weake and decaied memories’.<sup>514</sup> Neither did Horne’s ‘easie entrance’ into religious principles, or Webbe’s ‘brief exposition’ offer much expository opportunity. Webbe claimed to have ‘endeavoured to my power to be plaine, simple, short, and profitable: abstaining from curious and hard Questions, and bringing the Questions and answeres to as few words as I could, for the ease of children and common people’.<sup>515</sup>

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Was instrumentalism, then, simply too complex a concept to be injected into this kind of practical writing? In one sense, the answer is yes. Certainly one method of making the case

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<sup>514</sup>Inman, *Light*, sig.A2r.

<sup>515</sup>Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.A3v.

for efficacious sacraments was with recourse to instrumentalist theory; but this strategy obliged authors to work in the realm of explicit, delicate and potentially dangerous theology. Relatively few authors seemed minded to do so in their devotional works. However, a deeper reading of the sources – especially conducted in the light of all the preceding analysis in this chapter – suggests that below the exposed parapet instrumentalist impulses were vibrantly present. In fact, it can be demonstrated that the raw material of Reformed instrumentalist thinking was mined and employed by the majority of corpus texts; appearing not as irresistible theological argument in itself, but rather as a cumulative construct of expression, emphases, idioms and comforting pastoral imagery.

We may return to Horne and Webbe, whose texts are seemingly quiet on instrumentalism, by way of a starting point. Here are their main sacramental definitions:

Horne:

Q. What benefit have we by Baptism?

A. Incorporation into the visible church, assurance of Gods promise: and that as water washeth away all filthiness of bodie, so by Christ we are washed from all evill of body and soule: teaching us also our new birth.

Q. What doth the Lords Super?

A. Set out the Lords death, seale up Gods promise, and teach us love one another<sup>516</sup>

Webbe:

Q. What is the Sacrament of Baptisme?

A. The Sacrament of Baptisme is an holy action, instituted by Christ: wherein, by the outward washing of Water, is represented and sealed forth unto us the washing away of our sinnes by the bloud of Christ, and the Covenant of grace betweene God and us

Q. What is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

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<sup>516</sup> Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A3v.

A. It is an holy action ordained by Christ: wherein the Bread broken, and the Wine poured out, is delivered to all the faithfull, that they may eate of that Breade, and drinke of that Cup in remembrance of Christs death<sup>517</sup>

Instrumental thinking is perceptibly, if subtly, present here. In Webbe's 'delivery', for instance, exists the assumption of communication, the essence of communion; a two-way relationship between giver and recipient is present. The power of the Supper, for Horne, to 'set forth' the Lord's death implies that the reality of what is offered through sacramental signs is present, and exhibited to the receiver. In addition, each definition retains a sense of activity found in the applied metaphor of Horne's Baptism; in the assertive 'what doth?' of his Supper; in Webbe's repetition of 'holy actions' and invocation of 'washing' and 'delivery'.

These inferences hang on the words, phrases and resultant tones of just two authors and can by no means, in isolation, be taken as evidence of a strong instrumentalism pervading late Elizabethan and early Jacobean sacramental theology. But when explored a little more systematically, and appraised cumulatively, these raw materials of instrumentalist thinking present themselves with a striking consistency. Such materials are perhaps best conceived of as a fundamental conviction which had two principal elaborations. The conviction was that sacraments are efficacious, that they do something. The two principal elaborations were: first, a conviction that in sacraments a genuinely communicative process occurs; and second, a conviction that sacraments contain, and indeed exhibit or present, a holy reality. Thus unfolded, the notion of instrumental – and therefore efficacious – sacraments becomes visible in much of the sacramental discourse examined here.

The first principal expression of instrumentalism – that through sacraments something was communicated to the recipient – figures in the corpus of texts in a fairly direct way. Eight texts, for example, mention *conveyance*.<sup>518</sup> The sacraments 'are as conduits, to convey Gods

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<sup>517</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D1v.

<sup>518</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.78; Downname, *Guide*; p.494; Hunt, *Devout*, p.130; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B6r; Lake, 'Wells', p.169; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.83; idem., *Duties*, p.106; idem., *Short*, p.20; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.120; Thomas, 'Supper', sig.D4v.

graces unto us’, wrote Thomas.<sup>519</sup> Thomas is among the authors already encountered who *do* speak directly of instruments (or, in his case, conduits), so his invocation of conveyance is to be expected. But other authors invoked the concept without directly mentioning instruments. Downname, describing Baptism, speaks of ‘that lively sap of grace which we receive from him’, and goes on to assert that this ‘sap’ is ‘not onely sacramentally signified by the outward washing and sprinkling with water... but also certainly sealed and assured, and powerfully conveyed to the worthy receiver’.<sup>520</sup> Downname does not broach instrumentalism by name; but an adherence to conveying sacraments is nevertheless present. The same can be said of Jenison’s view of the Lord’s Supper, in which he maintains that ‘the benefits and grace we receive in this Sacrament, are conveyed unto us, as on *Gods part, by His Spirit*’.<sup>521</sup>

Some authors spoke of a sacramental ‘delivery’ of grace or benefits.<sup>522</sup> Sibbes, expounding the injunctions to ‘take’, ‘eat’, and ‘drink’, invited his congregation to believe ‘that we are not only in Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, but that Christ is actually delivered; that we seize upon him’.<sup>523</sup> Thornborough, in his treatment of the Lord’s Supper through extended legal metaphor, likewise left his readers in little doubt that ‘the legacy of eternall life’ was genuinely imparted in both of the sacraments:

But let no *faithfull* Christian doubt, whether or no, he had the *Legacy* of eternall life given him; or whether or no, the last will and Testament of Jesus Christ was *signed, sealed, and delivered to his use*, because he is made partaker both of the body and of the bloud of Christ...<sup>524</sup>

These few examples point to the range of ways that communication was presumed in sacraments. The things communicated might vary – grace, graces, benefits of Christ, legacies of eternal life – but the definite sense of godly bestowal towards man was a constant of many texts. The vocabulary of ‘giving’ and ‘receiving’ was prominent – and not merely in the sense that ministers gave, and communicants received, bread and wine. Provided the relationship

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<sup>519</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>520</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>521</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B6r.

<sup>522</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.111; Sparke, *High*, p.138; Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.67; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

<sup>523</sup> Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.67.

<sup>524</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

between elements and *res* was correctly conceived, this enabled the communicant, for Donne, to think himself ‘sure I receive him effectually’.<sup>525</sup>

A concomitant notion to that of instrumental conveyance was that of sacraments containing a definite *reality*; the latter lending validity and substance to the former. Page pointed out a saying of Cyprian: ‘Adest veritas signo, spiritus Sacramento: Truth commeth to the Signe, Truth doth not abolish the Signe, the Spirit commeth to the Sacrament, it doth not extinguish the Sacrament’.<sup>526</sup> One of Calvin’s favourite verbs to encompass this reality was *exhibere*, which, as Bryan Spinks has noted, occurs again and again in the sacramental sections of the *Institutes*.<sup>527</sup> Talking of Christ *exhibited* lent credence to the Reformed notion that reality, or truth, was attached to the sign, present with it. Such is evident in Atteroll’s definition of sacraments as ‘a visible signe and seale ordained of God, whereby Christ and all his saving graces by certaine outward rites are signified, exhibited, and sealed up unto us’.<sup>528</sup> There was an obvious compatibility between the concepts of ‘exhibiting’ and ‘sealing’, for sacraments which ‘exhibited’ truth could hardly fail to confirm and reassure in the manner of a seal. Thornborough meshes the two concepts, describing sacraments as signs which ‘doe *exhibite, & seale* to us all grace, and promises of Christ, really, truly, and substantially in his body and blood’.<sup>529</sup> The rub lies in Thornborough’s ‘really, truly, and substantially’. Because sacraments, with their visible and outward representations of inward grace and tight parallelism between the two, engaged so obviously the beholder’s senses they could be said to exhibit or display an inner truth not just figuratively, but in a true, real, substantial sense. Thus John Denison maintained that the ‘abuse’ of the Lord’s Supper was ‘more heinous and dangerous then the abuse of the Word’ because ‘Christ is herein offered more plainely, applied more particularly, and exhibited more firmly’.<sup>530</sup>

With such affirmations of the sheer representative power of sacraments, we are in the border territory between parallelist and instrumental views of the sign. As far as the motif of ‘exhibiting’ is concerned, the two concepts merge seamlessly into each other. The parallelism

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<sup>525</sup> Donne, ‘S.Pauls’, p.289.

<sup>526</sup> Page, ‘Supper’, pp.32-33.

<sup>527</sup> Spinks, *Sacraments*, p.6.

<sup>528</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.14.

<sup>529</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.19.

<sup>530</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.219.

between inward and outward lends the 'exhibition' its content; the sacrament itself functions as God's instrument to render that content effectual unto the believer. As Dod says of the Lord's Supper: it is 'not onelie to be a sign to signifie and represent, but a seale also to confirm, and an instrument to exhibit Christ with all his merits unto every beleever'.<sup>531</sup>

Although Attersoll and Thornborough speak here of sacraments in general, the most obvious way in which sacraments 'exhibited' was within the Christological context of the Lord's Supper. 'Is Christ then indeed present in this Sacrament?', asks Hildersham's catechism. 'Yes verily', comes the answer. 'Christ himselfe is not onely signified and represented, but truly present, given and received in this Sacrament'.<sup>532</sup> Tuke provides a lengthier explanation:

...we hold and teach, that he is truely & really present, , and not absent from this Supper, but marke how. Not bodily, for his bodie is in heaven, & there shall continue till he come into judgement. How then? I answer. Christ is present in respect of his grace, power[,] majestie and operation, communicating himselfe and all his merites to us truely, but spiritually, and lifting up our hearts unto himself into the very heavens, and there we might behold him (that was our sacrifice of reconciliation) in his coelestial sactauarie, and feede upon him with a lively faith. In one word, hee is present in respect of our faith, which joyneth things that are far distant in place one from another. We do not therefore denie the reall and true presence of Christ, but wee doe onely denie that hee is present in a bodily manner.<sup>533</sup>

Around the lynchpin of Christ's 'reall and true' (but not 'bodily') presence in the Supper, was established not only the notion of a truly communicative sacrament, but also a belief in the reality of the communicated grace, apprehended in the form of Christ himself and his 'merites'. The communication of holy *reality* was firmly expressed in the notion of true, spiritual eating in the Lord's Supper – as was asserted, for example, by Bayly, who wrote that 'ours is the same Supper which Christ administred: so is the same Christ verily present at his owne Supper, not by any Papall Transubstantiation, but by a Sacramentall participation whereby he doth truly feede the faithfull unto eternall life'.<sup>534</sup> Christ here is modelled as both giver and substance of spiritual sustenance, truly feeding faithful souls with his own virtues.

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<sup>531</sup>Dod, 'Dialogue', p.12.

<sup>532</sup>Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.35.

<sup>533</sup>Tuke, *Guest*, pp.183-184.

<sup>534</sup>Bayly, *Practise*, pp.762-763.

Many authors approached the same truth from the perspective of the receiver, by affirming that the faithful really do receive Christ. Sutton treats it as fundamental that communicants receive ‘certainlye *Christ Jesus*’, and ‘truly’, adding that ‘Reallye, to make farther scruple is needelesse curiositie’.<sup>535</sup> Some authors did not follow Sutton’s advice. Stephen Denison, for example, tries to reconcile the statement ‘this is my body’ with the fact that Christ’s ‘true’ body was surely ascended into heaven. In so doing the reality of Christ’s presence is nevertheless affirmed, via a stress on the ‘real’ and ‘true’ ‘offering’ of ‘vertue’ and ‘benefits’:

...the body and bloud of Christ are present in the Sacrament vertyually. For howsoever his blessed body be in heaven, yet the verture and benefits of the same are really and truly offered unto us in the Sacrament.<sup>536</sup>

Sacramental feeding; sacramental exhibiting; sacramental offering: these idioms orbited around the core affirmation of Christ’s ‘real’, ‘true’ presence. A mutual gravity held linguistic idiom and grace-full subject together. In the one direction, the veracity of such linguistic devices depended upon the reality of the inward grace offered. Bread and wine were called ‘body’ and ‘blood’, rehearsed the anonymous authors of *Elements*, because ‘by them the Lordes body and blood are not only represented and offered, but also truely given to the true beleever’.<sup>537</sup> There was nothing to be gained from talking about sacramental feeding, exhibiting or offering if the food exhibited or offered was illusory; a reality had to underpin such statements. In the reverse direction, the very idea of an inward reality occurring in sacraments depended for validity upon the cohort of idioms that circled it and gave it apt expression. Fist asserts that Christ’s ‘body was offered and broken on the Crosse for me, and his blood shed for me, as truly, as I see with mine eyes, the bread of the Lord to be broken unto me, and the Cup distributed’.<sup>538</sup> The idea that the inner self truly apprehended powerful grace in sacraments was thus bolstered by referring to real outward actions.

In combination, these stresses upon communication and upon authenticity constituted a powerful articulation of active, efficacious sacraments. Quite simply, sacraments

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<sup>535</sup>Sutton, *Godly*, f.11r.

<sup>536</sup>S. Denison, *Doctrine*, sig.R2r.

<sup>537</sup>Anon., *Elements*, sig.C5r.

<sup>538</sup>Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.B7v.

communicated reality, as expressed in the words of Wilcox, who wrote that the things signified in the Lord's Supper were 'truly and effectually exhibited unto us'.<sup>539</sup> Or, as Theodore Beza had put it: sacramental signs 'efficaciously signify...what is given by the Lord'.<sup>540</sup> The efficacious character of both sacraments was defended and affirmed in the body of texts, from Burges' explicit intent to 'lay open and make good the efficacy of Sacred Baptisme', to Page's diagnosis of a 'powerfull operation of inward grace' in the Lord's Supper.<sup>541</sup> The Supper in particular was surrounded with rich imagery: not only was it lauded analogically as providing vital sustenance; but it was also often compared to medicine – 'physicke to cure thy soule', as Featley put it.<sup>542</sup> 'Wee come then to the Lords Table not onely for meate', preached Lake,

...but also for medicine; not onely for gold, but also for eye-salve: this water of the Sanctuarie runneth into us as into *mare mortuum*, it maketh us no lesse whole than fruitfull; this is the true pool of *Bethesda*, no sooner hath the Angell descended into it, but whoever entereth it may be cured by it.<sup>543</sup>

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How significant was this notion of authentically communicative, and therefore efficacious, sacraments? On one level to observe these emphases is to state the obvious: virtually all Protestants would have found it preposterous to teach that sacraments did nothing, that they were not transactions between God and man, that they did not impart at least a flavour of the reality they signified. Amongst the Reformed a balance was sought: hence the qualifications and caveats discovered in this analysis; hence semiotic theory itself. The emphasis upon efficacious sacraments glimpsed here might justly be considered as merely part of that contemporary balancing act. This is true enough, but a further case must be made, for the evidence here suggests that prior attempts to assess this balancing act have erred in

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<sup>539</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.12.

<sup>540</sup> Cited in Raitt, ch.3.

<sup>541</sup> Burges, *Baptismall*; intro., 3r; Page, 'Supper', p.37.

<sup>542</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.86

<sup>543</sup> Lake, 'Wells', p.171. Also see Bruch, 'Treatise', p.267; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.58; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M5v; Sutton, *Godly*, f.59r-v. Although authors did not always find virtue in the image, see Henry Smith on Catholics using Christ as a 'potion'; H. Smith, *Treatise*, pp.40-41.

underestimating the depth of commitment to a notion of efficacious sacraments amongst English divines, for whom the concept seems to have been a pervasive one.

Such a view is based partly on the evidence just surveyed: authors who stressed the communicative aspects of sacraments; authors who laid bare the reality behind the instrumental sign; authors who wrote exuberantly about the active potential of sacraments. However, what really marks the stress on efficacious sacraments as genuinely pervasive is the extent to which such emphases appear throughout the different conceptualisations of sacraments. Every idiom in which authors chose to present sacraments – as badges, memorials, analogies, seals, and of course as instruments – was easily compatible with, and was often driven by, an efficacious sacramental outlook.

Sacraments-as-instruments was a concept with efficacy in its DNA. An instrument by its very nature did something. ‘Instruments’ in the corpus of texts are nearly always ‘instruments *to*’ and only secondarily ‘instruments *of*’; the activity they effected trumped the significance of their godly ownership and human appropriation.

The sacrament-as-analogy concept, when the implications of its stress on instantaneous parallelism are worked out, also tended towards a similar view of sacraments which did something. Taking this trait in an abstract sense, and observing how texts such as *Elements* and those by Thornborough and Donne presume a profound transaction between God and man, the confidence of their utterances belies the theoretical restraining note that reception of the heavenly was technically contingent on earthly propriety and heavenly election. ‘Let no *faithfull* Christian doubt, whether or no, he had the *Legacy* of eternall life given him’, stresses Thornborough; ‘the Lordes body and blood’ are ‘truely given to the true beleever’, comforts *Elements*; ‘we have this day received the body and blood of Christ’ preached Donne.<sup>544</sup> The authenticity of God’s sacramental giving was constantly affirmed: we ‘truly receive’; Christ is ‘really’ present and exhibited; we are fed on Him, God ‘truly offers’. The tendency is also ingrained in many common structural presentations of analogies, from the repetition of the ‘as...so’ formula to the affirming use of pedagogic or assurance contexts which surround the expositions of sacramental analogies. The words of Frewen exemplify all these traits and bear

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<sup>544</sup>Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40; Anon., *Elements*; sig.C5r; Donne, ‘S.Pauls’, p.280.

repetition: ‘we are as assuredly washed from our sinnes, by the bloud of Christ, as our flesh is washed with Water’; ‘we are as assuredly sustained to eternall life, by the body of Christ crucified, and by his blood shed, as wee certainly eate the broken bread at the Lords table, and drinke the wine out of the cup’.<sup>545</sup>

The efficacious sense of sacraments which obtained when Reformed semiotics thus overbalanced (albeit assuringly so) is perhaps most obviously observed when sacraments were presented as instruments or analogies. But the same progression is in fact discernable when sacraments were depicted as memorials, or as badges or seals.

The scriptural injunctions to ‘show forth’ Christ’s death until his coming, and to ‘do this’ (the Lord’s Supper) in remembrance of him lent a natural sense of activity to remembering the passion. Authors seized on this. Whilst they always advised that the sacraments – especially the Lord’s Supper – were about *more* than merely remembering; they simultaneously presented remembering as not only a springboard to devotion but as a gateway to engaging with the authentic truth of Christ’s presence in sacraments. It was the ‘increase and exercise’ of ‘heavenly graces’ which God intended when instituting the remembrance of Him. The subject of Christ’s passion inspired elevated language: ‘meditate with thyself, how *precious* and *venerable* is the *Body* and the *Bloud* of the *Sonne of God*’ – and led to certain and confident conclusions: ‘all the benefites of Christes passion, and his righteousnesse are as surely sealed by it to be mine, as if I myself had wrought them’.<sup>546</sup>

The seemingly humdrum designation of sacraments as badges of Christian membership also carried with it this same sense that positive affirmation outstripped restraining impulse. Sacraments conferred a sense of inclusion in a Pauline, corporate model of God’s Church which was assuring in the extreme. The weight of language expressing unity with Christ and fellow Christians that occurred in sacraments obscured the technical theological caveat that the visible church was not the same thing as God’s chosen church of the faithful. Sacraments certainly conferred entrance to the visible church; they possibly conferred entrance to the

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<sup>545</sup> Frewen, *Guide*, p.248.

<sup>546</sup> See above ‘Memorials’.

invisible church of the elect. Being marked, by one's Baptism or by one's participation in the Lord's Supper, as a member of the Church – whatever the precise theological status of this 'membership' or indeed 'church' – had efficacious overtones.<sup>547</sup>

The sacrament-as-seal concept was even more implicated in an efficacious vision of sacraments. Here the language of sealing was itself the restraint which was surpassed by its mighty content: for although something 'sealed' was less definitively communicated than something given, both the active nature of the sealing process itself ('sealed *unto* me', God 'seals to us'), and the salvifically significant gifts said to be sealed (regeneration, justification, etc), meant that a highly efficacious view of sacraments resulted – even if from the perspective of technical theology, nothing unconventional had been said.<sup>548</sup> Indeed, the capacity to call a sacrament a seal as well as a sign was often the bridge from which authors crossed from an equivocal parallelism into a less equivocal instrumentalism. As Perkins put it: 'a signe to represent, a seale to confirme, an instrument to convey'.<sup>549</sup> The charged vocabulary and salvific optimism surrounding the concept of sacraments that 'seal to us' mark it as an especially potent avowal of sacramental efficacy.

### VIII. Communion with Christ

The Book of Common Prayer had two titles for the second sacrament: the Lord's Supper and Holy Communion. Of the eight authors who gave direct consideration to appropriate names of sacraments, five of them recommended 'communion'.<sup>550</sup> Boys gave three reasons for doing so:

It is called a Communion in respect of the common union among our selues, having at that time more specially perfect peace with all men: or a Communion in respect of the publike participation, as being a common messe, not a private Masse proper to

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<sup>547</sup> See above 'Badges'.

<sup>548</sup> See above 'Seals'

<sup>549</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1r.

<sup>550</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.112; Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B3v; Hunt, *Devout*, p.37; Preston, *Short*, p.5; Sparke, *High*, p.228.

one, as the Popish priests use it; or a Communion, as being a signe and seale of our communion with Christ: for his graces are conveied unto us by the preaching of the Word, and administration of the Sacraments.<sup>551</sup>

Boys argues that the term has a threefold significance: it promotes brotherly unity in the Supper; it distinguishes this sacrament from the ‘private Masse’ of Catholicism; and it pertains to the signing and sealing of ‘our communion with Christ’ by which ‘his graces are conveied into us’. Crashawe, Hunt and Sparke all echo Boys’ first point.<sup>552</sup> They are silent on the second; although the idea is raised commonly enough in the corpus. The third idea – of a ‘communion with Christ’ – is repeated by Sparke and Preston. Sparke does so directly; Preston does so indirectly by referring the reader to 1 Corinthians Chapter Ten Verse Seventeen, a key scriptural source for the concept.<sup>553</sup>

What did Reformed authors mean by ‘communion with Christ’? How frequently, and in what ways, did authors allude to it? In addressing these questions it will be argued that the concept offered a means to facilitate further the expression of sacramental efficacy, and also that in its own right it was an example of a language – a Christological and ecclesial language – in which sacraments and their benefits could be described in less equivocal terms than was possible in the majority of Reformed discourse.

It is helpful to start with two uses of the ‘communion with Christ’ concept, provided by Attersoll’s lengthy treatise and Inman’s small catechism. In a section declaring that the ‘second use’ of the Lord’s Supper was to effect ‘our spirituall union and communion with Christ’, Attersoll expounds Paul writing in 1 Corinthians:

This the Apostle declareth. *The cup of blessing which we breake, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* Whereby hee meaneth, that the faithful which come conscionably & worthily to the lords table, are joined and united wholly to

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<sup>551</sup>Boys, *Exposition*, p.112.

<sup>552</sup>Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B3v; Hunt, *Devout*, p.130; Sparke, *High*, p.229.

<sup>553</sup>Sparke, *High*, p.229; Preston, *Duties*, p.117. 1.Cor.x.17.

Christ, by the bread Sacramentally, by faith instrumentally, by the Holy ghost spiritually, and by them al most effectually.<sup>554</sup>

Inman's description of the same sacrament is one in which

is sealed to us, the continuance and increasing of the benefits confirmed by Baptisme. *Namely, our remaining in the Covenant of Grace: our further ingrafting into Christ, and regeneration by his Spirit: and so our nearer union and communion with him.*<sup>555</sup>

There are two slightly different interpretations of 'communion with Christ' on offer here: a narrow and a broad sense of the term. For Attersoll, the concept is invoked as a specific happening in the Lord's Supper, a moment when, in a host of ways, the congregation are 'joined' and 'united' to Christ. Inman, by contrast, appears to stipulate an ongoing sense of 'communion with him'. These two ideas will be taken in turn.

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The idea that a 'communion with Christ' occurs in the Lord's Supper derives, as we can see in the exegesis of Attersoll and several other authors, from 1 Corinthinans 10.16 and also from somatic references in Saint John's Gospel and Ephesians.<sup>556</sup> The Reformed aversion to idolatry of course ensured that this union of flesh and bone could not be straightforwardly physical. The recurrent condemnation of transubstantiation in the corpus of texts confirms this. But if the flesh of communicants did not literally merge with that of Christ in the Lord's Supper – if there was no 'corporall and bodily presence' of Christ in that sacrament, no real or carnal presence – then what exactly did this language mean with regard to the Supper?<sup>557</sup> This question of the presence will receive fuller attention elsewhere; but here, in investigating

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<sup>554</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499. 1 Cor.x.16.

<sup>555</sup> Inman, *Light*, p.7.

<sup>556</sup> 1.Cor.x.15 ; John vi.52 ; Eph.v.30.

<sup>557</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.32.

the presentation of sacraments via the ‘communion of Christ’ motif, it will be useful to outline the question.

Looking further at Attersoll’s words provides a good guide of what authors meant when they talked about being ‘united wholly to Christ’ in the Lord’s Supper. Arguing that Christ’s presence was facilitated ‘by bread sacramentally’, or by ‘faith instrumentally’ or by the ‘Holy ghost spiritually’ were three accepted Reformed formulations. All were means of maintaining the profundity of divine presence in the Supper without committing the mental idolatry of supposing Christ’s flesh actually to be there. Sacraments were ‘infallible signes of the presence of Christ’, as John Denison put it, but they were most comfortably so when that presence was said to be facilitated by analogy, faith, or the spirit.<sup>558</sup> Despite such defensive measures, however, it was still possible for authors to be remarkably affirmatory about the reality of Christ’s presence in the Supper. The more ceremonially minded, like Donne or Sutton, said more by saying less: they advised an end to speculation about the mode of presence, to be replaced with humble acceptance. ‘Referre thy reason, and disputation to the Schoole’, was Donne’s pronouncement on the subject.<sup>559</sup> But even the more puritan-minded of authors could say elevated things about the presence in the Supper. Jenison used the familiar model of analogy to do so, stating that ‘as truly as the Bread and Wine we eat and drinke, are turned into our substance, so assuredly are we changed, assimilated and made comfortable unto Christ and incorporated into him’.<sup>560</sup> In the Supper, wrote Tymme:

God as a good father (after hee hath once brought us into his Church by Baptisme) nourisheth us spiritually with the proper substance of his Son Jesus Christ, applying and making proper unto every one of us the merit of his death and passion<sup>561</sup>

Although mitigated by ‘spiritually’, the term ‘proper substance’ is still surprisingly physical. So too is the claim of Featley that ‘through the Sacrament’ the believer is ‘truly made partaker’ of Christ’s ‘naturall’, as well as ‘mysticall’, body’.<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.47.

<sup>559</sup> Donne, ‘P.Pauls’, p.291.

<sup>560</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.D3r-v.

<sup>561</sup> Tymme, ‘Court’, pp.235-236.

<sup>562</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.137.

Hildersham made the argument that the presence of Christ by faith or spiritual feeding actually far and away *exceeded* the ‘bodily’ presence espoused by Rome: ‘the spirituall presence of Christ, and our feeding on him by faith, is farre more effectuall to the comfort and salvation of our soules, then any bodily presence and feeding could possible be’.<sup>563</sup>

Typically there was, predictably, a catch to such statements: ‘Christ in this Sacrament doeth give the true beleever a sure possession of himselfe’, proclaimed Samuel Smith – thus excluding non-‘true believers’ such as the ungodly and possibly the unregenerate.<sup>564</sup>

Nevertheless, these appraisals of Christ’s presence in the Supper were on the whole more positive than might be expected.

Chapter Ten of 1 Corinthians tied the concept of ‘communion with Christ’ directly to the Lord’s Supper. So did the Geneva Bible’s gloss upon Ephesians Chapter Five verse 30: Christ and his church are joined together ‘by the communion of substance’, and the ‘seal and testimonie thereof is the Supper of the Lord’.<sup>565</sup> Capitalising upon this, it was a common ploy to invoke the concept of ‘communion with Christ’ to facilitate the description of heavenly dispensation in the Lord’s Supper. Sparke, Hunt and Preston use a similar approach to Attersoll’s in this regard. Sparke devotes an entire section to the premise that ‘Christ must be eaten and drunken and there fore there must be a true communion with him’.<sup>566</sup> ‘The blessed sacrament of the bodie and blood of Christ was instituted by him’, Sparke states, ‘to offer to deliver and to seale the delivery, to as many as rightly as they should receive the same, a most certaine union and communion with whole and full Christ himselfe’.<sup>567</sup> Similarly, for Hunt, from the sacrament ‘ariseeth to the believing Christian this sacred union whereby he also hath communion with Christ, participates with Christ in his justice, obedience, and all his benefits’.<sup>568</sup> Preston’s catechism, addressing the question ‘Show me our union with Christ in this sacrament?’, answers:

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<sup>563</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.39.

<sup>564</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.191

<sup>565</sup> Eph.5.30 see margin.

<sup>566</sup> Sparke, *High*, pp.134-144.

<sup>567</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>568</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.132.

As that which we eate and drinke, is turned to flesh and blood, and incorporate into us: So our eating, and drinking this banquet by faith, doeth transforme us (as it were) into Christ, and maketh us flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.<sup>569</sup>

These three excerpts all demonstrate the integration of the ‘communion with Christ’ concept with notions of instrumentality and analogy – with the effect of facilitating an efficacious description of the Lord’s Supper. In Sparke’s ‘deliver’ and Hunt’s ‘giving and receiving’, for example, there may be discerned a sense of instrumental conveyance. Preston’s description of the somatic union between Christ and believer in the Lord’s Supper relies on the analogies between bread, wine, body and blood. This interplay between communion, instruments and analogies can be glimpsed in a dozen works.<sup>570</sup> These excerpts also display the way in which ‘communion’ was seen as a climax to the Supper. For Sparke the ‘most certaine union and communion’ is the concluding benefit ‘delivered’ to the right receiver; for Hunt, ‘participation’ in, and ‘communion’ with, Christ, is the final result of the Lord’s Supper. In Preston’s formulation, the active mental exercise of conceiving of the analogies ‘by faith’ ‘doeth transforme’ the believer into Christ – the end point of the process.

Authors did not shy away from somatic language in describing ‘communion with Christ’ in the Supper. John Denison spoke of incorporation, advising his readers to ‘remember that this eating is more than a bare receiving of Christ: It imports a sound incorporating’.<sup>571</sup> In the Lord’s Supper, according to Webbe, communicants are ‘united unto Christ’; according to Thornborough, Featley and Sutton they are ‘made one with’ him; whilst for Samuel Smith and Sibbes they ‘lay hold on’ Christ. All cite John and Ephesians as evidence.<sup>572</sup> Achieving communion, or incorporation, with Christ in the Lord’s Supper was therefore to acknowledge Christ’s presence in that sacrament – and throughout the primary literature authors did just that. We have seen that ‘Christ’ and his ‘benefits’ were the things delivered by instrumental sacraments. They were also the things shadowed so realistically in analogical sacraments. As previously noted, a somatic, Christological context was integral to the concept of memorial

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<sup>569</sup>Preston, *Short*, pp.8-9.

<sup>570</sup> For ‘communion’ and ‘analogies’ see Tozer, *Directions*, pp.13-14; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.C2r; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.15. For ‘communion’ and ‘instrumentalism’ see Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.116; Page, ‘Supper’, pp.32-33; Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C1r; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.86; Thomas, ‘Supper’, sig.E4r; Lake, ‘Wells’, p.169.

<sup>571</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.147-148.

<sup>572</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*; sig.D3r; Thornborough, *Testament*, Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.130; p.40; Sutton, *Godly*, f.60r; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.5; Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, pp.67-68.

sacraments. Authors set a high premium on directing a communicant's memory and emotions towards the reality of Christ's passion which should then be 'applied' to the receiver. Sacraments, as Crashawe put it, considered 'in regard of Christ', were 'Commemorations of his death, and applications of the vertue thereof unto ourselves'.<sup>573</sup> Gawton's catechism was equally at pains to point out that the 'passion' remembered in the Supper 'pertaines to us':

Q. Why is the Supper of the Lord Administered often?

A. To put us in remembrance of the death and passion of Christ, and to assure us, that the benefit thereof pertaines to us.<sup>574</sup>

Bradshaw likewise used Luke's account of the Supper to promote an active memorialism. Christ instituted this sacrament, he wrote, 'for a perpetuall remembrance and shewing forth of his death and passion in his Church'.<sup>575</sup> Virtually every memorial treatment of the Supper in the corpus of texts focuses in this way upon the reality of Christ's sacrifice remembered in the Supper and therefore the authenticity of the benefits gained by his death.

The relationship between the 'sacrament-as-seal' concept and the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper was also a close one. The concept of sealing sacraments carried assuring legal and personal connotations; making Christ the focus of such a device created considerable impact. Bayly's devotional contemplation for the time after receiving speaks of 'having received these seales and pledges of my Communion with thee'.<sup>576</sup> In addition examples can be cited of many instances when the object of 'sealing' was Christological, even if this was not couched directly in terms of 'communion'. In Fist's catechism, for instance the Lord's Supper offers 'seales of the body and blood of Christ'.<sup>577</sup> Thomas spelt out the salvific implications of it being so; preaching that the sacrament was a seal 'of Christs merits for us'.<sup>578</sup> Similarly for Samuel Smith, the sacrament 'doth in regard of God seale unto us Christ and his righteousnesse'.<sup>579</sup>

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<sup>573</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.A6r.

<sup>574</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6r.

<sup>575</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.137.

<sup>576</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.731.

<sup>577</sup> Fist, *Catechisme*; sig.A6v.

<sup>578</sup> Thomas, 'Supper', sig.E4r.

<sup>579</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.18.

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It will have become apparent during this analysis that the distinction between the two senses of ‘communion with Christ’ articulated by Attersoll and Inman was basically one of scope. The scriptural emphasis upon uniting with the very body of Christ inspired writers from Paul onwards to advocate the merits of a life lived in Christ; the Supper constituted the regular distillation of this ongoing practice into a specific moment of rite. Thus the Supper provided an opportunity to experience ‘communion with Christ’, or at least to relate in a profound way to his presence – but this was not *only* offered in the Supper. The point is demonstrated neatly in Calvin’s *Catechism for Children*. After admitting that ‘receiving’ in the Supper is by faith, the catechist’s answer adds that we ‘recognize that he dwells in us, and that we are united to him by a union the same in kind as that which unites the members to the head, that by virtue of this union we may become partakers of all his blessings’. The next question is ‘Do we obtain this communion by the Supper alone?’ The reply:

No, indeed. For by the gospel also, as Paul declares, Christ is communicated to us. And Paul justly declares this, seeing we are there told that we are flesh of his flesh and bones of his bones — that he is the living bread which came down from heaven to nourish our souls — that we are one with him as he is one with the Father, etc.<sup>580</sup>

Both word *and* sacrament were the means of accomplishing the Pauline declaration about the fleshly indwelling of Christ. There was, deriving from this, a deeply Christological and positive means of viewing Christian life. This is captured well by Frewen, who wrote that: ‘our Lord Jesus Christ, is the fountaine and wellspring of life, and all good things: from whole fulnesse, abundantly floweth sufficient grace and vertue, for the perpetuall satisfying, and refreshing of all such as hunger and thirst after the same’.<sup>581</sup> Given this model of Christ as fountain of all blessings, the communicant could believe, as Sparke wrote, that ‘Christ died for them, and therefore shall nourish and feed them to eternall life, by uniting himselfe most certainly unto them, to that end and purpose’. Thus the sacramental, instrumental and spiritual joining described by Attersoll in the Lord’s Supper, and the ‘further ingrafting’ unto

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<sup>580</sup> Calvin, *Catechism of the Church of Geneva, being a form of instruction for Children* (1545) consulted at [www.reformed.org](http://www.reformed.org)

<sup>581</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.291.

Christ described by Inman, are affirming the same concept from opposite directions. Inman's emphasis is primarily on the ongoing communion with Christ and secondarily on the Supper's role in this; for Attersoll the reverse is true.

We have already examined one significant manifestation of an ongoing praxis of communion with Christ: the portrayal of sacraments as badges and marks of Christian identity. It was common to say that Baptism and the Lord's Supper, respectively, 'admitted' and 'confirmed', membership of the Church. But in addition both these sacraments were often presented as ordinances which marked, or indeed gave and confirmed, a believer's 'membership' in Christ. In Baptism, wrote Bayly, one might behold 'God...grafting another member into his Mystically Body'.<sup>582</sup> The Lord's Supper, for Dod, is a moment in which one can be 'at this very instant, as free from sin in God's account, as Adam was before his fall'; such sinlessness is palpable because in the Supper it is confirmed that the communicant is 'a member of his mystically body'.<sup>583</sup> In Baptism, wrote Downname, 'we are sacramentally ingrafted into the body of Christ, and made members of his body spiritually by faith, as we are outwardly initiated, entered and admitted by the Congregation, as members of the Visible Church'.<sup>584</sup> The fact that the concept of communion with Christ embraced Baptism as well as the Lord's Supper evidently reflects the ongoing nature of that communion.

Considerable attention was given to a sense of ongoing sacramental praxis. Communion with Christ was a lifelong process. Baptism was the start of a journey, the Lord's Supper marked regular peaks along the way. Throughout the primary literature the sense in which the two sacraments were part of this ongoing process of communion is clear. This is not just evident from the presentation of sacraments as badges of Christian identity. As far as memorials were concerned, it was 'continually' remembrance that was called for. When concise definitions of the two sacraments were offered, especially in catechisms, there was often a sense that both were key stages in a broader process. Inman, for instance, conveys this impression in his vision of sacraments as seals, writing that:

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<sup>582</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.602.

<sup>583</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.16.

<sup>584</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

Baptisme is a Sacrament whereby is sealed to us, our receiving into the Covenant of Grace, our ingrafting into Christ, and our regeneration by the Holy Ghost

The Lords Supper is a Sacrament, whereby is sealed to us, the continuance and increasing of the benefits confirmed by Baptisme. *Namely, our remaining in the Covenant of Grace: our futher ingrafting into Christ, and regeneration by his Spirit: and so our nearer union and communion with him.*<sup>585</sup>

Egerton couches the ongoing nature of the sacramental process in Christological terms: Baptism assuring us that our sins are ‘washed away by the sufferings and bloodshed of Jesus Christ’; the Lord’s Supper confirming that ‘by the same Jesus Christ, our soules are nourished to eternall life’. Downame expresses the same sense of progression in instrumentalist terms, writing that of the Lord’s Supper that ‘as Baptisme is called the Sacrament of our initiation and new birth, so this of our augmentation and growth in grace’.<sup>586</sup>

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What is the significance of the presence of the ‘communion with Christ’ theme? To think narrowly first: the various ways in which the Lord’s Supper was said to offer a genuine ‘communion with Christ’ can be viewed in terms of the dynamic explored above with regard to sacramental efficacy. When featured in portrayals of sacraments as memorials, analogies, instruments or seals, the notion of communion with Christ was often the acme of the process in which positive assertion outgrew negative restraint. Communicants were ‘to assure themselves’, according to Sparke, that ‘everie one in particular, that Christ died for them, and therefore shall nourish and feed them to eternall life, by uniting himselfe most certainly unto them, to that end and purpose’. The certainty of this ‘uniting’ bred an ability of sacraments to assure. In one sense, then, ‘communion with Christ’ was a typically Reformed concept in that its positive potential was subject to constraints, even if these were surmounted. For there *were* restraining notes sounded about how communion with Christ should be interpreted. It

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<sup>585</sup>Inman, *Light*, pp.6-7.

<sup>586</sup>Downame, *Guide*, p.494.

was achieved in a spiritual way, or a sacramental way, or through faith. Ultimately, as Preston pointed out: ‘Christ this Olive tree doth not convey his graces to any by vertue of his death, which is as the pipe, but to those that belong to the golden candelsticke of his Church’. Nevertheless, the sense in which Christ, through his sacraments, might ‘convey grace’ was undoubtedly enhanced through the idea of ‘communion’. ‘These sacred ordinances’, wrote John Denison, ‘have their vertue and efficacy from Christ, the author of the Sacraments. From him proceeds the influence of Grace’.

In another sense, however, the possibility of ‘communion’ with Christ was more than a typical Reformed notion of juxtaposed positive and negative. In fact it reflected a much broader Christological and ecclesial concern, whereby inclusive and assuring sentiments could be expressed about sacraments wholly outside any framework demanding balance and equivocation. This is what we have noted with regard to the emphasis upon sacraments as badges of membership of Christ’s ecclesial body. Likewise when sacraments were considered as a species of sign or seal which communicated something, the couching of that something in Christological terms did not merely assist positive Reformed impulses to overcome negative – it enabled the author to transgress such restraints altogether. The following passage written by Tye reveals this. By the breaking of the bread, he writes:

thereby is signified our Union, uniting and growing into one body and nature with Christ (receiving him by faith) even as surely and as certainly as the bread, and wine, which wee eate, and drinke in the Lordes Supper, are united, and grow into one bodie and nature with us. And that therefore, seeing that by faith we become the true members of Christ, Bone of his bone, and fleshe of his fleshe, and doe grow into one body with him, even as *Eve*, being formed, and taking of her substance of the body of *Adam*, her husband, became as it were part of him, nay one flesh with him. That therefore (I say) it must needs follow of necessitie, that wee must take life from, and be governed by one and the self same spirit of Christ, as all the members of one body take life from, and are governed by one, and the same soule.<sup>587</sup>

Tye begins here firmly in the analogical mode. As he continues, the surety of the parallelism suggests a certain efficacy in the sacrament. This is crowned by the process in which receivers become, albeit by faith, ‘true members of Christ’. But after dwelling on the somatic

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<sup>587</sup>Tye, *Matter*, sigs.D1v-2r.

relation between Adam and Eve, Tye changes direction. 'It needs follow of necessitie' that we 'take life from' the 'spirit of Christ'. Divine favour suddenly seems achievable and attainable; made so by the author's tone and recourse to the unifying theology of the body of Christ. John Denison exemplifies the progression, in which Reformed balance first topples, and is then transcended altogether as the believer 'obtain[s] the fruition of Christ':

thus are the bread and wine lively and infallible signes of the presence of Christ in the blessed Sacrament. And as men by a turf in the field, doe take possession of lands, and by award in the Court doe receive an interest in Cobby hold, with their privileges & appurtenances: so the servants of God by these outward elements, doe obtaine the fruition of Christ with all his divine graces and virtues.<sup>588</sup>

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As they sought to impart sacramental knowledge to their readers, authors of pastoral works employed a series of overlapping approaches to describe Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the general principles which undergirded these Reformed sacraments. Running through all these approaches were two unifying, positive ideas about sacraments: instrumentalism, and the reality of sacramental communion with Christ. Instrumental sacraments were active, efficacious things; signs to which reality was really and truly attached; signs through which Christ and his saving benefits were truly exhibited; occasions for the reception of things truly communicated, given and received. Communion with Christ was an inclusive, somatic reality; rendered achievable and attainable through the sacramental idiom in a way that grace, in the abstract, rarely was. It has become a commonplace to suggest that grace was shrunk almost to invisibility in Reformed sacramental schema: cordoned off behind the Augustinian dictum that sacraments are signs, and not causes, of grace; obscured by preference for prevenient grace of predestination. The evidence of this collection of pastorally-focused, sacramental writing, however, suggests a different picture. The consistent recourse to the concepts of instrumentality and *koinonia*, and their concomitant notions, permeate nearly every approach to sacramental writing, to the extent that they actually infuse the whole corpus of literature with a sense that grace, despite all the conditions and caveats, is available in sacraments.

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<sup>588</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.47.

The pervasiveness of this sacramentalism operates at various intellectual levels. Partly it is theological, expressed most prominently through theories of the sign which permitted authors to talk about the exhibition of grace through sacramental memorials, analogies and instruments. In such presentations, the positive efficacious potential of sacraments often outweighed the cautionary elements of the theory. Still in the realm of theology, the Pauline emphasis on the ecclesial body of Christ was also significant in fostering an optimistic and positive sacramental outlook. Yet the import of sacraments must be seen as more than an expression of pure theology. The senses of communication, reality, efficacy and inclusivity explored here are equally, (if not more) the products of language, tone, and a spirit of positive affirmation – all of which constituted a kind of overarching pastoral grammar through which sacramental advice was articulated. Read in isolation and through the lens of technical theology, authors hardly ever said anything out of the ordinary. Yet the cumulative weight of discourse – not only in the sense of different texts with similar meanings, but also in the sense of individual texts which constantly re-affirm the same message – creates a powerful impression of a belief in sacramental potency. Further, these texts are emphatically centred on the communicant rather than upon theological theory, analysing sacraments not only as abstractly efficacious but also as personally relevant.

A consequence of this mixed sacramentalism – both theologically and pastorally derived – is that a characterisation of authors and texts purely according to a theological theory of the sign is no longer tenable. Most immediately this is because the theology at work in sacramental writing encompassed more than just semiotics; but perhaps most profoundly because sacraments themselves encompassed more than just theology. English clerics of this period, when discussing sacraments, were not merely, if even primarily, concerned with propounding a certain theory of sign. Such theories were certainly part of their theological grounding, but the extent to which they were all-controlling is questionable. This issue will constitute part of the discussion about styles of Jacobean churchmanship in the concluding essay.

## CHAPTER THREE: THE REQUIREMENT OF FAITH

### I. The Definition of Faith

Q. In what manner oughtest thou to prepare thy selfe to the receiving of these mysteries?

A. In preparing my selfe to receive the Supper of the Lord, I ought diligentlie to observe these three things.

First, to examine my selfe whether I stand in faith or no, which I shall know, if I feele by hart assured by the spirit of God, that the punishment of my sinnes is fully discharged in Christ, and whatsoever hee hath done, pertaineth not onely to others, but even to mee...

[Dering, *A briefe and necessary catechisme* 1605 ed.]<sup>589</sup>

Participants in the Lord's Supper had to find within themselves a true and sincerely held faith in Christ before communicating. This Pauline message was reaffirmed in the 1573 rubric composed by Dering and John More. The message that it was necessary to examine for faith was similarly enduring – only a handful of authors interested in the Lord's Supper fail to address the requirement.

What was meant by 'faith' : that which Hildersham called 'the mightie & supernatural work of God', an entity which had played the dominant role in Luther's dramatic realigning of Christian soteriology?<sup>590</sup> Definitions were provided at various lengths. Whiting used ten words in his catechism; Geree less than twenty.<sup>591</sup> By contrast authors of larger projects such as Samuel Smith, Tozer and Attersoll devoted large passages, and even chapters, of their works to the subject.<sup>592</sup> The nature of the focus on faith was also shaped by its very relationship to sacraments; by the possibility of glimpsing faith through the prism of sacraments and *vice versa*. The former obtains whenever faith is found listed as a pre-communion requirement; the latter occurs in works such as Brinsley's, which approach sacraments as stages in a lifelong journey of faith and assurance. Given this variation, in

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<sup>589</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C6v.

<sup>590</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.83.

<sup>591</sup> Whiting, *Short*, sig.A4r; Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A5v.

<sup>592</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.64-78; Tozer, *Directions* 93-100; Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.89-95, 530-556.

order to ask what authors meant by faith, it must first be ascertained where and in what context they offered such insight.

Two facets of sacramental discussion in particular invited an analysis of faith. The first and most prominent of these occasions was when faith was discussed as a requisite property of a worthy communicant.<sup>593</sup> Sometimes this was achieved very briefly. Inman, for example, noted perfunctorily that ‘four things are required to the receiving of the Lords Supper. Knowledge of the Grounds of Religion: Faith in Christ: Repentance for our sinnes: Charitie to our neighbours’.<sup>594</sup> Jewel’s reference to the faith requirement in his treatise was similarly unembellished; he noted merely that we should try ‘whether we be the childe of God’.<sup>595</sup> However, in general and when space allowed, authors tended to pause for slightly longer than Inman or Jewel when defining faith in the context of self-examination. Considering the nature of faith at this point invited an author to specify not only what faith was, but also how it could be discerned within an examinee. Hill’s extended catechism does just this, asking first ‘what this faith is’, then ‘why must you examine whether you have this faith’ and then ‘how may a man know whether or not he hath this faith?’.<sup>596</sup> Often self-trying was the organising motif of an entire text and was therefore an author’s primary opportunity to expound on the subject of faith. This situation pertains, for example, to Tye’s preparation treatise in which he considers all the requisite qualities one by one and uses the section on faith immediately to make a major point, in this case that the faith concerned must be ‘that sweet *justifying faith*’. This is defined as a faith ‘which doth not onely know, give consent, and profess: But which is

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<sup>593</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r; Anon., *Motives*, p.11; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.530; Bayly, *Practise*, p.735; Boys, *Exposition*, p.111; Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.7-83; Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.264; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.B5v; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.255; S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.11; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.145; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C6v; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.70; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.2; Downname, *Guide*, p.499; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sigs.M5r-M7r; Egerton, *Methode*, p.16; Estey, ‘Supper’, p.6; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v; Field, *Preparation*, p.52; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r; Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.365-366; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6v; Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A5; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.77-78; Hill, ‘Communicant’, pp.21-22; Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4v; Hunt, *Devout*, p.161; Inman, *Light*, p.7; Jenison, *Directions*, B4v; Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.70; Pagit, *Short*, sig.D6r; Pemble, *Introduction*; Randall, *Sermons*, p.182; Richardson, sig.B7v; Rogers, *Seven*, p.219; Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.72; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.98; S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.64-65; Sparke, *High*, p.170; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.38; Tozer, *Directions*, 5-6; Tuke, *Guest*, p.81; Tye, *Matter*, sig.D5v; Tymme, ‘Court’, pp.235-236; Whiting, *Short*, p.11; Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.67-68.

<sup>594</sup> Inman’s definition is expanded via a footnote, which reads ‘Exod. 12. the posts of every mans house were sprinkled with the blood of the Paschall lamb *so every man must have the satisfaction of Christ, by faith imputed to himselfe. This faith must shew it selfe in the fruits thereof*: Inman, *Light*, p.7.

<sup>595</sup> Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.70.

<sup>596</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, pp.21-22. Jenison also moves immediately from introducing the faith requirement to describing how we know ‘our faith is true’: Jenison, *Directions*, sig.b4v.

further, a grounded and resolved assurance of Gods free promise of Grace in Jesus Christ'.<sup>597</sup> This immediate offering of a substantial definition more typically characterises the faith requirement than does concision.

A second significant point of contact between sacraments and faith, at which a consideration of the latter might be offered, concerned faith's role in the very functioning of a sacrament. Tuke provided a cluster of bodily images to describe faith's enabling role: it was the 'eye' to 'looke', the 'hand which apprehendeth', the 'mouth' to 'receive', the 'tongue' that 'tasts', the 'teeth that chew', the 'throate that swalloweth' and the 'stomacke which digests', the object of all these actions being Christ in the Lord's Supper.<sup>598</sup> Sometimes the description of faith's facilitating role was the very point at which authors offered a fuller definition. Preston's consideration of the 'Doctrine of Faith', for example, arises from the assertion that 'if a man have true faith', then 'as certainly as he receiveth bread and wine into his hands, and afterwards into his stomach, so certainly doth he receive Christ, and all his benefits at the hands of God'.<sup>599</sup>

Some texts adhered so closely to their remit of sacramental exposition that the above occasions were their only opportunities to discuss faith. This applies, for instance, to very focussed catechisms such as those of Richardson and Fist, as well as to some of the more specific treatises.<sup>600</sup> But faith was not merely an offshoot of certain aspects of sacramentology. It was too comprehensive a theme for that; literally a matter of life and death. 'By what meanes shall I escape death? By Faith in Christ', as Pagit's catechism bluntly put it.<sup>601</sup> In accordance with this soteriological importance, most texts paused to consider faith even when not occasioned to do so in either of the two ways noted above. The large godly-living treatises of Downname and Rogers, for example, include discrete sections on faith.<sup>602</sup> Other meditations occurred tangentially during the course of a sermons, treatises, or manuals. Randall's vast set of *Twentie Three Sermons* on the Lord's Supper, for instance, includes no discrete consideration of faith as such, but so vast is the work that the topic

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<sup>597</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D5r.

<sup>598</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.81-2.

<sup>599</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.187, 190.

<sup>600</sup> Richardson, sig.B7v; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r.

<sup>601</sup> Pagit, *Shorte*, sig.C4v.

<sup>602</sup> Downname, *Guide*, pp.40-46; Rogers, *Seven*, Bk.2.

invariably crops up in most chapters.<sup>603</sup> Preston, in his catechism and two treatises on the sacraments, frequently alludes to faith's importance and its role, without ever pausing to provide a concrete definition of the phenomena.<sup>604</sup> Via one of these routes, nearly all authors visited the issue of faith, and the relationship between it and sacraments. Only a handful of texts – considered below – fail to address the topic in a significant way.

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'You say, wee must have Faith so: tell me, what Faith is?' enquired Fist's catechism. The reply ran as follows:

It is not onely a knowledge, whereby I surely assent unto all things, which God hath revealed unto us in his word: but also an assured trust rooted in my heart by the holy Ghost through the Gospell, whereby I make my repose in God, being assuredly revealed; that remission of sins, everlasting righteousnesse, and life is given not to others only, but to me also, and that freely through the mercy of God for the merit of Christ alone.<sup>605</sup>

Fist's answer, which mirrors the twenty-first response in the Heidelberg Catechism, stressed two basic elements of faith.<sup>606</sup> These were knowledge and application: the knowledge of God's offer, through Christ, to remit sin and bestow 'everlasting righteousness'; and a personal conviction, or trust, 'rooted in my heart', that these things were assuredly true and applied 'to me', not just 'to others only'. Faith channelled abstract knowledge of Christianity into repentance and godly life. Faith transformed the raw material of knowledge: it was the 'Queene of all other virtues, with out which our *knowledge* shal profite us nothing at all', according to Samuel Smith.<sup>607</sup> For Boys, faith and repentance '(like Hippocrates twinnes) must goe together hand in hand'; the output, or 'fruit' of faith, according to Bradshaw, 'consists in Repentance & New Obedience'.<sup>608</sup>

Faith, generalised Field, 'consisteth of two things; knowledge and application'.<sup>609</sup> This twin-track approach was acknowledged explicitly in the Heidelbergian fashion by some authors.

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<sup>603</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, pp.36, 108, 197-198.

<sup>604</sup> eg. Preston, *Duties*, pp.17-18, 29, 30, 87-88.

<sup>605</sup> Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r.

<sup>606</sup> *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q.21.

<sup>607</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.64-65.

<sup>608</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.111; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.95.

<sup>609</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.51.

‘True faith’, according to Tuke, was ‘a certaine and particular knowledge of, & confidence in Gods speciall mercy: or a sure apprehension, and application of Christ and his mercies unto ourselves in particular.’<sup>610</sup> Simpler texts like the anonymous catechism *Elements of the Beginning* put the same message more simply:

Q. What do you call true faith?

A. It is the true Knowledge of God in Christ, with assurance of Salvation in him.<sup>611</sup>

Around half the texts examined clearly promoted this approach. God’s gospel contained his unconditional offer of salvation to a miserably sinful and undiscerning mankind – faith was both the knowledge of this fact and an ‘application’, ‘persuasion’, ‘assurance’ or ‘apprehension’ that this pertained personally.<sup>612</sup>

It may be noted that for a substantial portion of authors, the knowledge element of faith (*conscientia*) was somewhat submerged in their definition. In some works *conscientia* was only implicitly acknowledged, or gradually revealed in the course of the discussion. This applies, for example, to the sermons of Henry Smith and to treatises in which the foundational, knowledge-based aspect of faith was, for various reasons, not included clearly in their definitions.<sup>613</sup> The *conscientia* component was also commonly obscured as a result of being absorbed into Christological shorthand. Hill was typical of this trait, describing faith as:

...a miraculous worke of God, wrought in the heart of a regenerate man, by the preaching of the Gospell, whereby he both apprehend and apply himselfe particularly Christ Jesus with all his benefits, to the pardon and forgiveness of all sinnes.<sup>614</sup>

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<sup>610</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.81-82.

<sup>611</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.A7r.

<sup>612</sup> Anon., *Elements* 17r; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.530; Bayly, *Practise*, p.735; Boys, *Exposition*, p.111; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.79; Bruch, ‘Treatise’, p.264; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.259; Dering, *Catechisme*, sigs.B4r-v; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, pp.72-73; Downname, *Guide*, pp.43-44; Estey, ‘Supper’, pp.12-13; Fenton, *Shorte*, sigs.A2v-3r; Field, *Preparation*, pp.53, 64; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r; Gawton, *Short*, sig.A8v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.78-82; Hunt, *Devout*, p.161; Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.B1r-v; and b4v; Rogers, *Seven*, pp.8-9; S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.64-65; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.95-96; Tuke, *Guest*, p.81; Tye, *Matter*, D5r-v; Tymme, ‘Court’, p.235; Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.67-67; Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.91.

<sup>613</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.98.

<sup>614</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.21.

Whilst *conscientia* is clearly present in this definition, it is not as obvious as in, say, that of Fost. For Hill one must know about Christ's 'benefits', the 'forgiveness of sinnes' wrought in man 'by the preaching of the gospell', but the focus is on the application of these truths over and above the knowledge of them. In shorter forms this trait could become more exaggerated still: for Gere, faith was 'a saveing grace whereby wee goe out of ourselves, and rest upon Christ alone for salvation'; for Whiting it is 'a full assurance of my salvation in Christ alone'.<sup>615</sup> For Pagit, faith was just a 'full perswasion and steadfast assurance' whose subject, as established by the previous question, was Christ.<sup>616</sup>

Yet if the knowledge of God's saving promises was presented opaquely in some sacramental writings, this was usually mitigated by the tendency of most authors to expound the requisite 'knowledge' elsewhere in their works, and in so doing make it quite clear what the saving promises of Christ are. Indeed, authors were hardly reluctant to communicate the content of God's salvific promises – expositions of the Apostles' Creed, sometimes prefaced with the Decalogue, thus balancing law and gospel, were commonly provided in these texts, either as part of a discrete section on knowledge or sometimes when considering the *conscientia* aspect of faith itself. However, although the knowledge component of faith was widely acclaimed as necessary, so too was it widely denied to be sufficient of itself for salvation. Faith which was merely assent to credal knowledge was condemned as a 'bare', 'empty' or 'historical', the kind of faith that might be accepted by papists. As Tozer put it, the faith required:

...must not bee onely a generall faith, whereby we beleeve that the Word of God is true, and that God is a just Judge; (for this the Devils themselves beleeve and tremble at it...) but we must go on further to a more speciall kind of Faith; and (which they cannot doe) apply the merites of Christ, and the promises of God made therein, unto our Soules and Consciences...<sup>617</sup>

Paraphrasing Paul on this issue, Henry Smith preached that 'the just beleeve, and applie that they beleeve to themselves'. By contrast, 'the wicked may beleeve like the divels, but their faith is like a gadding hen, which carieth her eggs to other, & never layeth at home, so they

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<sup>615</sup> Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A5v; Whiting, *Short*, sig.A4r.

<sup>616</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.C4v.

<sup>617</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, pp.95-96.

believe that other shall be saved, but not themselves'.<sup>618</sup> Faith was nothing if it remained unapplied.

Articulating the necessity that God's saving promises be personally applied was not without theological and pastoral complications. One issue was that in higher Protestant theology it was conventional to differentiate an assent to knowledge (*assensus*) from a personal trust in that knowledge (*fiducia*), thus creating a tripartite rather than binary model of faith. Such complexity was occasionally reflected in the literature examined here. The distinction between assent and trust is in fact present in the *Fist* form mentioned above, although the author made little of it.<sup>619</sup> The threefold model was pursued more explicitly by Willoughbie, who follows it when outlining the 'usuall formes and names of faith'.<sup>620</sup> A second complication, straddling the realms of theology and pastoral care, was occasioned by the constant interweaving of the concept of 'assurance' into so many of these definitions of faith. Fifteen authors include the term in their definitions: Coxe, for example, described faith as a 'full perswasion and stedfast assurance of the Promise of Christ, wrought in my heart by the holy Ghost'; Featley's definition of a 'lively faith' involved belief in 'Christ's incarnation, life and death' together with 'assurance in the merits of them'.<sup>621</sup> The difficulty with raising the issue of assurance was that it invited an ultra-subjective distinction between the phenomenon of faith, and the phenomenon of feeling that one had that faith, an issue examined further below. Thirdly, as seen for example in Featley's text, many clergymen demanded of their flock a *lively* faith, defined as such by the good works which should flow from it. This raised the potentially sensitive issue of good works and their place in soteriology. Works were not meritorious in themselves, but they were unfailingly produced by true faith. Stephen Denison was typical in quoting Saint James to this effect, writing that 'faith without good workes' is 'but a carcase of faith'. He added that 'however faith alone doth justifie the person, yet workes must necessarily justifie the faith. We cannot justifie our faith to be saving, unlesse it be such a Faith as is fruitfull'.<sup>622</sup>

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<sup>618</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.98.

<sup>619</sup> 'surely assent...assured trust': *Fist*, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r.

<sup>620</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.91.

<sup>621</sup> Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.A74 ; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.88.

<sup>622</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.145-146.

The presence of complications such as these indicates that, in addition to propounding the basic twofold schema of knowledge and personal application, these pastoral theologians usually took matters further, examining questions which arose from the concept of personal faith. How is faith known and discerned? What are the fruits of true faith? The contemporary figure most associated with this anatomisation of faith is William Perkins. Interestingly, the Perkins catechism considered here dissects faith no more nor less than seems to have been average for catechists. In his works dedicated to the topic, however, such as the influential *Mustard Seed* or the *Golden Chain*, observers have rightly noted the wholesale schematisation of faith into various stages and outcomes.<sup>623</sup> The influence of Perkins can be readily seen in other authors. Brinsley, for example, whose *The True Watch* considers sacraments as part of a broader discourse about how to make ‘triall of our estate’, claims to be following in the footsteps of ‘these two holy men of GOD, Maister Greenham and Maister Perkins; whose writings were the first occasions of thinking hereof’<sup>624</sup>. A Perkinsian concern with trying one’s estate may also be discerned in some godly writers known to have been contemporaneous with Perkins at Christ’s, such as Hildersham and Rogers, as well as Estey at Gonville and Caius.<sup>625</sup> A younger generation influenced by Perkins included Hill, Crashawe, Draxe and Tuke, and one of his successors in ministering to the people of Cambridge, Richard Sibbes.<sup>626</sup> The tendency to propose a practical syllogism – a system of inferring faith from its fruits – is undoubtedly most typical of such men on the puritan wing of the Church. Yet in this set of texts it can also be found in the work of Downame, a moderate conformist, and Webbe, whose curious career took him from prominent proponent of practical divinity in *The Spirituall Flowers* to eventual endorsement by the Laudian regime and an episcopal career in Ireland.<sup>627</sup>

Other aspects of the doctrine of faith, such as its salvific function and the means of its acquisition, could be set forth more simply and less equivocally. Faith was agreed to play a pivotal role in salvation since by faith God’s gracious promise to save was grasped. Robert Cleaver reminded his readers of how Paul had expressed this: ‘by grace ye are saved through

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<sup>623</sup> Perkins, *A Golden chaine* (1591); idem., *Graine of Mustard[Seed]* (1597).

<sup>624</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, sig.A6r.

<sup>625</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.80-82; Rogers; Estey, *Expositions*, sigs.C1v-M3r.

<sup>626</sup> See above ‘Authors’.

<sup>627</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sigs.C1v-5v.

faith'.<sup>628</sup> As already seen, the Christological aspect of this doctrine was prominent; authors stressed that the offer of divine salvation was manifested in the person of Christ, and that the task of faith was to apprehend God's promise through Christ. The full case was put by Tye, for whom faith was 'a grounded and resolved assurance of Gods free promise of Grace in Jesus Christ'.<sup>629</sup> Geree stressed faith's function in slightly more abbreviated form: it was 'a saveing grace whereby wee goe out of ourselves, and rest upon Christ alone for salvation'.<sup>630</sup> It was asserted positively that the means by which this faith could be attained were wholly in the realm of God's agency. Faith 'neither comes from Nature from our Parents, nor by humaine instruction from any Teachers, nor by any imitation of them that have it' warned Crashawe.<sup>631</sup> Rather, faith, was 'gotten', according to Whiting's catechism, 'by the outward hearing of the worde of God preached, and the inward working of the spirite'.<sup>632</sup> Or as Frewen put it: 'The ordinary meanes whereby the Holy Ghost doth worke this faith in the hearts of Gods children, is the ministry and preaching of the Word of God'.<sup>633</sup>

In contrast to these elaborate descriptions of faith, a handful of texts are noteworthy for devoting strikingly little attention to the issue. In some cases an explanation for this lacuna is readily forthcoming. The relative silence of Cleaver, Burgess and Greenwood on faith is explained by their concentration on Baptism, a sacrament in which faith's role was problematic. None of these sermons, for example, are on the text of Paul's injunction to the Corinthians to examine before receiving, a passage of scripture which invited discussion of the faith requirement.

If it is understandable that neither Donne, Lake nor Thomas had cause to mention the faith requirement in their expositions of scripture, their failure to consider the role of faith during the Supper itself puts them at odds with the majority of their co-authors.. Page's sermon was in line with the majority stance when remarking that 'gods guests doe...feede upon the flesh, and drinke the bloud of Jesus Christ, by faith in the Sacrament of the Supper of the Lord'.<sup>634</sup>

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<sup>628</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.30.

<sup>629</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D5v.

<sup>630</sup> Geree, *Catechisme*. See also Geneva Bible marginalia.

<sup>631</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.A4r.

<sup>632</sup> Whiting, *Short*, sig.A4r.

<sup>633</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.189.

<sup>634</sup> Page, 'Supper', p.28.

Such statements are not present in the Donne, Lake or Thomas; the closest to an example is an aside in the spirit of *adiaphora* from Donne that on the question of Christ's real presence an inquisitive communicant should 'exercise thy faith onely, here, and leave thy passion at home'.<sup>635</sup> That these three could all preach on one or other of the New Testament accounts of the Supper – Donne was even preaching, in his own words, to a St. Paul's congregation who had 'this very day' participated in the 'holy and blessed sacrament' – without once mentioning that the elements of bread and wine were received by faith, seems to distance them from the dominant godly view: that faith played an important enabling role in sacramental operations.<sup>636</sup> In the case of the noted high-churchman Donne, this distance is not surprising. Of Lewis Thomas' career and inclinations we know not enough to comment; in the case of Bishop Lake the reluctance to push this point perhaps suggest he remained unconvinced by every godly dogma. Yet the occasional marginalisation of faith was not the exclusive preserve of conformity; the certifiably godly Dod gave rather scant attention to faith in his *Brief Dialogue*. Although it was necessary to 'trie whether we have faith or not'; this is as far as the matter was taken.<sup>637</sup>

In all but a handful of cases, however, faith was considered an essential topic of discussion in relation to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Two of the ways in which it was so have been touched upon in this introduction: faith was a necessary precondition for sacramental participation (especially in the Lord's Supper); and faith had a role to play during sacraments themselves. These will be the subject of parts two and three of this chapter. The fourth and fifth parts relate to faith's relationship with the senses and with ceremonies, both themes allegedly downplayed in Protestant sacramentology with its renewed emphasis on faith.

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<sup>635</sup> Donne, 'S.Pauls', p.291.

<sup>636</sup> *ibid.*, p.280.

<sup>637</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.12.

## II. Faith and Sacraments. Who were the faithful?

Sacraments, according to Willoughby, were to be ‘singulalry ministered to every one of the faithfull’.<sup>638</sup> This descriptor was commonly used of those for whom sacraments were intended. Infants receiving Baptism were ‘of the fellowship of the faithful’; the ‘holy Supper belongs to none but to the faithfull and penitent persons’.<sup>639</sup> Distinct occurrences in sacraments were the prerogative of the faithful: signing and sealing concerned the ‘faithfull receiver’, as did the confirmation of the covenant, whilst ‘the precious body and blood of Jesus Christ’ in the Lord’s Supper was distributed to ‘all faithfull Christians’.<sup>640</sup> ‘No faithfull Christian’, according to John Thornborough, should doubt ‘whether or no, he had the *Legacy* of eternall life given him’ and the same confirmed in the Supper. That a partaker of a sacrament should be full of faith was, of course, reflected in the express requirement that examination for faith should precede participation in the Lord’s Supper: communion was intended for the approvedly faithful in the same way that it was intended for the knowledgeable. But faith, as we have seen, was a multifaceted and tricky concept, not susceptible to objective verification. So who were faithful partakers, and what kind and degree of faith were they supposed to possess?

Scripture was ambiguous on the subject of what constituency of people were expected to partake of sacraments. From Paul’s instruction to examine whether ‘ye be in the faith’, together with the Protestant interpretation of his core message that faith and faith alone could procure salvation, arose the possible interpretation that only those with saving faith – God’s elect – should participate. Yet many of the scriptural details of the institution of sacraments did not support such a delimiting view of their purpose. The disciples were told to baptise people of ‘all nations’, mirroring the Old Testament requirement for unrestricted male circumcision.<sup>641</sup> The Lord’s Supper was commanded in the plural: ‘this do ye, in remembrance of me’.<sup>642</sup> Of course these instances hardly constituted watertight evidence for universal sacraments. ‘All nations’ could be construed as all types of people as opposed to literally every man and woman; circumcision superficially admitted only males to the

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<sup>638</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.11.

<sup>639</sup> Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.18; Preston, *Short*, p.15. See also Egerton, *Method*, p.16; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.256.

<sup>640</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.221; Tymme, ‘Court’, p.271.

<sup>641</sup> Mat. xxviii. 19, Gen. xvii. 9-14.

<sup>642</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 25.

covenant; Christ's command to his apostles could be taken as referring only to the chosen.<sup>643</sup> What balance was struck in the literature considered here between the inclusive and exclusive interpretations of faith and sacraments?

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The corpus does contain inferences to the effect that sacraments were for the elect only. Dod phrases the requirement to find faith before receiving the Lord's Supper thus: 'whether wee be of the number of the faithful, and have in us the life of grace'. Draxe's catechism carried the implication that only the elect received, even if some would inevitably err when so doing: 'May not an elect and a true beleever, sometime receive unworthy'?<sup>644</sup> Randall conveyed to his congregation and readers the sense that the Lord's Supper sealed a Covenant of Grace binding God to his elect; it therefore followed that faithful partakers of sacraments had already to be members of this group. Because 'it is so that the Sacrament is an effectuall pledge of the whole Covenant of Grace', it followed that 'we that are faithfull receivers, are Justified and Sanctified'.<sup>645</sup>

However, the position that partakers must be elect was almost impossible to uphold in pure form. The gold standard of being chosen unravels, for instance, in Draxe's admission that even 'elect and true beleivers' might receive 'unworthily'. If even elect receivers were not guaranteed to be worthy ones, this undermined the necessity to discover oneself within the ranks of the chosen in the first place. Dod's seemingly black-and-white stipulation of being elect was lessened in severity by his subsequent provision of a 'particular' examination whereby one's estate might be ascertained. This involved searching for 'Repentance, Knowledge, Faith and Love' in order to 'resolve our hearts' and 'conclude that wee are within the Covenant of grace, and have communion with Christ Jesus, and therefore are in state to be communicants at his table'.<sup>646</sup> Dod, then, might imply that sacraments are for the elect, but he provides the examinee with a means of conceiving of himself as such. Ultimately, if 'faithful' had to mean 'elect', this suggested that both the receiver and his presiding minister had to be absolutely certain of the ultimately unknowable matter of salvation. This was impossible and risked presumptuousness. It was impossible, as William

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<sup>643</sup> Hunt interprets 'all nations' as meaning 'all sorts' of people: Hunt, *Devout*, p.63.

<sup>644</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M6r.

<sup>645</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.208.

<sup>646</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.2.

Bradshaw pointed out, ‘that another man should be able to trie the soundnes of our faith, which is known only to God and our owne consciences.’ ‘No man can search the heart of the king’ and ‘no man knoweth the spirite of any man’, preached Henry Smith, quoting Solomon and Paul respectively. Accordingly, it can be seen that, although authors might *link* the faithful constituency of sacraments with election, they fall short of explicitly reserving the sacraments for God’s chosen.

Thus the corpus of texts does not contain any outright examples of the kind of separatist thinking typical of mid-seventeenth-century debate, when churchmen such as George Gillespie and Samuel Rutherford argued unapologetically that sacraments were reserved for God’s elect.<sup>647</sup> However, the equation of ‘faithful’ with ‘elect’ – the view that believers really should be full of genuine faith – lurked in the background of the sacramental thought analysed here, and had some corollaries which did surface. One outgrowth of it was a concern that partakers of the Lord’s Supper should be able to profess or testify to their faith – to ‘give account of it’ as Lake put it.<sup>648</sup> Lake added that ‘by the laudable orders of our Church, none should receive until they are confirmed; and great pity it is, that so laudable a custome is not observed’.<sup>649</sup> Although Lake’s lamentation for the rite of confirmation – in his opinion bafflingly neglected when it served such evident purpose – seems to have been a lone one, his conviction that communicants should be able to prove their faith to another as well as examine it internally was shared by others.<sup>650</sup> In Baptism the thinking was that an infant unable to make such profession did so via his proxies: parents, godparents and witnesses. Prior to the Lord’s Supper, however, an adult was confronted squarely with faith or its absence with no intermediaries, and was required by many authors to give testimony of faith. Tye considered it necessary for a receiver to ‘make it evident both unto himselfe and unto others that his soule is possessed of a justifying faith before God’.<sup>651</sup> The Essex and Warwickshire minister Samuel Smith, in the course of a section entitled ‘the faithfull only feede on the sacraments’, advises that ministers refuse to admit to the Supper any who ‘can give no testimony of their faith’. In Smith’s desire to ‘barre from so sacred an Ordinance, all such as shoue themselves unfaithful’ is found a further feature of the thinking which

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<sup>647</sup> See Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed*, pp.114-17.

<sup>648</sup> Lake, ‘Wells’, p.172.

<sup>649</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>650</sup> e.g. Pemble, *Introduction*, p.2.

<sup>651</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D7v.

associated faithfulness with election. This was the fear of pollution: a concern that the communication of the faithless might invalidate that of the faithful. Ministers frequently reassured their readers that communicating in the Supper was not tainted by doing so alongside blatant reprobates: ‘no mans sinne can defile an other, or make Gods promise or Sacrament of none effect unto him’ was the verdict of Hildersham and many others besides.<sup>652</sup>

Despite the presence of such fears, it may be deduced from the evidence of voices such as Smith’s – calling rather urgently for the clearly unfaithful to be ejected from communion – that actual expulsions for lack of faith cannot have been common.<sup>653</sup> Indeed, any paranoia about faithless receiving ran counter to other impulses implying that sacraments were for all. Authors expressed the universal availability of sacraments, for example, whenever Baptism or the Supper were spoken of in terms of ‘desire’, or when the invitational nature of the words of institution were emphasised. Baptism was for those who ‘beleeve in Christ’ and who ‘desire it’, stated Crashawe; for Hildersham Christian parents should ‘seeke and desire the Sacrament of Baptisme’ for their Children ‘upon the first opportunitie that God shall offer unto them’.<sup>654</sup> Bayly and Downname included in their works sections about the desirability of attending other people’s Baptisms.<sup>655</sup> ‘Wee are invited to eate’, preached Page of the Lord’s Supper, adding that one should not ‘come not to the Table of this eating without appetite: the Provision heere is very great, and the Maister of the house open handed’.<sup>656</sup> The first prerequisite for receiving the Supper worthily, for Featley, was ‘a fervent desire to partake’.<sup>657</sup> This oft-cited notion that attendance at Baptismal services and especially participation in Holy Communion should, far from being an onerous duty, be heartily desired, rendered the ‘faithfull’ as the gathered congregation in its entirety rather than God’s secretly chosen.

The identification of the faithful with the elect, and the emphasis upon the desirability of sacramental participation and the openness of God’s invitation, thus marked the two poles of opinion on the subject of for whom sacraments were intended. On the one hand Baptism and

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<sup>652</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.9-10.

<sup>653</sup> Haigh, ‘Communion and community’, pp.730-9.

<sup>654</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B2r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.64.

<sup>655</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.600-603; Downname, *Guide*, pp.396-397.

<sup>656</sup> Page, ‘Supper’, p.28.

<sup>657</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.88.

the Supper were for 'God's elect'. On the other hand the celebration of these sacraments was expressly commanded by God. Somewhere between these poles lay a complex centre ground in which sacraments were simultaneously for all, and yet also only for those with saving faith; in which saving faith was given by God, but discerned through internal human reasoning; and in which saving faith was a complex psychological phenomenon resting on doctrinal knowledge, yet also a simple enough entity to be possessed by infants. Such centre ground was arrived at courtesy of a threefold retreat from the link between sacraments and the elect.

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One method of softening the vision of sacraments as the uncontested preserve of the unquestionably elect was to frame faith as a communal and public celebration of Christianity, rather than an exercise in internal soteriological bookkeeping. Posing the question 'How may it appear that the Lord hath ordained this Sacrament should be administred publikely, and not in private?' one of Hildersham's answers was that:

...in the use of the Sacraments, we make profession of our faith, celebrate with praise and thanksgiuing, the remembrance of the great benefit of our redemption; both which duties are then performed in most acceptable maner unto God, when they are done in the most publike and solemne assemblies of his people.<sup>658</sup>

Faith then, as well as being sought privately, was also professed publicly 'in the use of the Sacraments'. As Pemble put it; in the Lord's Supper 'wee make publique profession of our obedience to Christ'.<sup>659</sup> Sacraments were ideally suited for this enterprise; indeed, this was part of their very reason for being. For Hildersham the Lord's Supper was an opportunity to 'make profession' in 'solemne assemblies'; likewise for Downname it constituted a 'profession of faith' and a 'publik dutie'.<sup>660</sup> Sacraments were marks *par excellance* of Christian membership. As Bruch put it, we 'must' eat and drink at the Supper, because 'the sacraments are badges by which we Christians are knowne from unbelievers and idolaters in the use of them, wee must needes communicate, unless we will shew our selves ashamed of the profession of our faith'.<sup>661</sup> It may be recalled that sacraments were routinely cast, as per

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<sup>658</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.43-44.

<sup>659</sup> Pemble, *Short*, p.26.

<sup>660</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.44; Downname, *Guide*, p.396.

<sup>661</sup> Bruch, 'Treatise', p.269.

Bruch, as ‘badges’, ‘marks’ or ‘cognizances’ of Christianity in its most essential form – differentiating Christians from Bruch’s ‘unbelievers’. The public performance of sacraments, wrote Preston, showed ‘that wee have no fellowship with Idolatours, Heretiques, Atheists, prophane and ungodly persons of this world, but that wee take ourselves to bee the children of God, and have fellowship with Christ, unity, love, and friendship with one another’.<sup>662</sup> Preston emphasised that in addition to differentiating professing Christians from unbelievers, sacraments also bound the faithful ‘with one another’; they were, as Fist reminded his readers, ‘bonds of publike meeting’ which required Christians to remember Paul’s words and ‘tarry for one another’.<sup>663</sup>

Citing these commonplace beliefs that sacraments identified and solidified a broadly-defined Christian membership, authors argued strongly that sacraments be celebrated publicly. Frewen and Rogers described sacraments, respectively, as ‘publicke worke[s] of the Church’, and ‘publike helpes to increase godlines’.<sup>664</sup> John Preston’s short catechism stipulates that the Lord’s Supper was to be eaten ‘in the publicke congregation: where many are met together for that end’.<sup>665</sup> This viewpoint entailed denunciations of privately celebrated sacraments. As Boys wrote: the Supper was called a ‘Communion in respect of the publike participation, as being a common messe, not a private Masse proper to one, as the Popish priests use it’.<sup>666</sup>

Hill considered this question of the privately-administered Eucharist in some depth. In his *A Communicant Instructed*, Hill criticized the Catholic order ‘privately to administer this holy communion’ if sufficient conditions of repentance had been met. Such a policy, Hill claimed, had brought about much ‘hurt’ and he outlined several reasons why the ‘best’ Reformed Churches avoided it.<sup>667</sup> One obvious one, as both Hill and Hildersham (another to treat this subject) made clear, was that private celebration ran counter to God’s express intentions that Sacraments be public ordinances.<sup>668</sup> A second problem was that private communion, even when administered to the sick who could not attend Church, implied, as Hill put it, ‘the

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<sup>662</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.173.

<sup>663</sup> See above ‘Badges’.

<sup>664</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.205; Rogers, *Seven*, p.213.

<sup>665</sup> Preston, *Short*, p.17.

<sup>666</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.112.

<sup>667</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’

<sup>668</sup> *ibid.*, pp.34-38; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.45.

necessitie of this sacrament’ and thus cultivated superstition. A willingness to administer communion privately to the sick would be to miscast that sacrament as a soteriologically essential death rite. ‘Parish Priests’, furthermore, faced daily with sick or dying parishioners, would be forced into a state of ever-readiness to celebrate and would be compelled to carry around ‘God in a boxe, with Bell, Booke and Crosse’.<sup>669</sup> A third problem balanced the second: that guaranteed provision for the sick might cause ‘some to neglect it [the sacrament] in health, because they were sure to have it in sicknesse’.<sup>670</sup> The Supper, then, must not be over-esteemed, but nor must it be neglected: this was the delicate Reformed equilibrium which from both directions private communion threatened to destabilise. Hill tried to maintain this balance through pastoral sympathy and reluctance to play God: he heartily disapproved of private communion for the sick, and to this end explains away the plausible thesis that the apostles administered privately to families; but when absolutely pushed he concedes that when faced with a sick man, he ‘dare not...despise a man in such a case’ by withholding communion any more than he could deny him ‘the comfort of the Word’.<sup>671</sup> Hill was perhaps wise to be equivocal, for to deny outright the admissibility of private communion was not a popular position with the ecclesiastical authorities of the 1620s. The books of the recently deceased puritan minister Edward Elton were burnt in 1625 for condemning too vigorously deathbed communion, as were copies of a ‘little book’ of Stephen Denison, who had supported Elton on the subject.<sup>672</sup> This support extended to Denison’s own *Doctrine*, in which he argues that in the case of the sick, God would ‘accept thy will [to receive] for the deede’.<sup>673</sup>

Thus were sacraments and faith yoked together in the ‘publicke’ cause. When sacraments were portrayed as public professions of faith, the faith concerned was presented as universal and inclusive, rather than individual and exclusive. So although ‘faithful’ could mean ‘elect’, it could also denote those to whom an open and generous invitation had been sent: all infants of (even nominally) Christian parents for Baptism; and all the gathered congregation desirous of receiving the Supper. The tension between these two ideals of the ‘faithful receiver’ is neatly illustrated by the caveats added by Hunt to his exposition of Christ’s injunction to

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<sup>669</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.35.

<sup>670</sup> *ibid.*, p.36.

<sup>671</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>672</sup> See Lake, *Boxmaker’s Revenge*, p.86.

<sup>673</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.211.

baptise people of ‘all nations’. ‘That is’, he elaborated, ‘all sorts of people, and all sorts of people professing repentance and faith in Christ: of whom wee may probably hope that they are in Gods covenant’.<sup>674</sup> Sacraments are on this view for ‘all’; but only provided that those comprehended could demonstrate personally-applied faith, repentance and membership of the covenant. Thus the inclusive potential of sacraments and indeed of faith itself were in balance with the exclusive potential of the same; but the snug fit between sacraments as public events and faith as public profession meant that a universalist slant on the faith requirement was always available to the reader.

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A second softening of the faith requirement was provided by various comforting judgements about how faith might be found or discerned within oneself: how one might be convinced, in Hildersham’s words, that one belonged to ‘Christe’s little flocke’.<sup>675</sup> The faithful and worthy grazed within faith’s pastures, the faithless and unworthy without it – but the fences were sufficiently low in places to give the suitably penitent soul a reasonably high chance of clambering in.

One point at which the domain of saving faith might be accessed was at the level of its divine institution. Faith was sometimes styled the gift of God, or the work of the Holy Spirit. Attersoll, for example, referred to ‘a justifying faith, which is a wonderfull gift of God’, as did Samuel Smith.<sup>676</sup> For Webbe faith was a ‘grace of God’; for Geree a ‘saving grace’.<sup>677</sup> Referring to the divine provenance of the gift of faith in this manner diverted the reader’s attention away from the recipients of that gift (Christians such as themselves) and towards the giver (God). Through this lens, the type of saving faith required for sacramental participation could be glimpsed with objective clarity by readers: for albeit their internal attempts to verify faith may be riddled with doubt, nevertheless there could be no questioning the truth of God’s benevolence – he really did bestow faith as a gift. In once sense this switch to the objective appreciation of the giver (rather than the subjective attempts at verification by the receiver) simply reinforced personal subjective doubt: I know certainly that God gives faith, but how do I know he has given it to me? But in another sense it secured against that same doubt by emphasising the sense in which, because faith was above all a powerful prerogative of the

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<sup>674</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.63.

<sup>675</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.80.

<sup>676</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.530.

<sup>677</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.C1v.

almighty, man need not worry because matters were in God's hands, not human ones. 'Hath every man this faith in himself?' enquired Whiting's catechism. 'No, for it is the gift of God, and not of nature'.<sup>678</sup> Similar is the Egerton form:

Q. Is it in our power to believe?

A. No: it is the gift of God to his children, wrought in their hearts by the holy Ghost, through the preaching of the word.<sup>679</sup>

Gawton also attributes faith to the Holy Spirit, which 'worketh [faith] inwardlie in my heart'.<sup>680</sup> In a needful Christian, preached Sibbes, 'the Lord worketh upon his heart a true longing for that righteousness without himself'.<sup>681</sup> The view of faith as a gratuitous divine gift Spirit to an undeserving, sinful humanity incapable of good was hardly novel, and certainly, as will be seen, did not represent an unchecked antinomianism. However, despite its status as an utterly orthodox Protestant commonplace, this recognition of God's faith-giving benevolence could have surprising effect in a text. Two good examples of this are the small catechisms of Inman and Fenton, in which the styling of faith as a gift is magnified by the sparseness and brevity of the forms. Inman defines faith as 'a speciall grace of God, whereby wee apply Christ to our selves: and are assured, through his merits, of our eternall salvation', which is all he has to say on the matter.<sup>682</sup> Fenton is a little more expansive, but still gives a tantalisingly simple answer to the question of faith's origin:

Q. How comest thou by this faith?

A. The holy Ghost doth worke it inwardly in my heart, by the outwarde preaching of his worde.<sup>683</sup>

Faith, quite simply, was worked in the believer by a 'speciall grace' of God, or by the Holy Ghost. Such brief statements may not have been directly assuring to the reader (for what if God had not bestowed this gift of faith upon *them?*); but the simple and prominent

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<sup>678</sup> Whiting, *Short*, sig.A4r.

<sup>679</sup> Egerton, *Method*, p.8.

<sup>680</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.B1r.

<sup>681</sup> Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.71.

<sup>682</sup> Inman, *Light*, p.5

<sup>683</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3r.

acknowledgment of faith as a heavenly prerogative was offered an alternative to the portrayal of faith as a subjective entity within the human psyche. On a formal theological level these concepts rode in tandem – but in many of the texts examined here they were often separated out and the former deployed to considerable effect. The faith-as-gift idea was a particularly suitable concept for small catechisms such as these which aimed to impart a simple message to the less learned.

Yet if the comfortingly deterministic recognition of faith as God’s gift was one bridge by which a reader might clamber to the right side of the faith divide; a more common approach was, by contrast, to cast faith as an entity which definitely *was within* a believer’s control. Authors could create the impression that belief itself was a matter of willpower. The portion of faith which assented to – and wholeheartedly *believed* – the gospel promises was often prominently and rather bluntly presented. In Draxe’s extended catechism, for instance, ‘fayth’ was described simply as ‘A perswasion of Gods favour and mercy in Christ’.<sup>684</sup> ‘What is it to believe in Christ?’ enquired Egerton’s catechism. The answer: ‘to be truly perswaded that he is a saviour even to us’.<sup>685</sup> The same effect obtained in Gawton’s form:

Q. What call you a lively faith?

A. A full perswasion of my heart founded upon the promises of God in the scriptures of my salvation by Christ onley.<sup>686</sup>

This all-important *applicative* part of faith – that which Willoughbie extolled as the ‘most anker-like, a sure, and unremoveable confidence and settled perswasion in God through Christ: against which, the gates of *Hell* shall never bee able to prevail’ – was also sometimes emphasised by its juxtaposition with its counterpart, that is, the knowledge component of faith.<sup>687</sup> ‘Sincere faith’, wrote Bayly, is ‘not a bare knowledge of the Scriptures and the first grounds of Religion... But a true perswasion...a particular application unto a mans owne soule, of all the promises of mercy which God hath made in Christ’.<sup>688</sup> Tye’s ‘sweet,

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<sup>684</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.A5v.

<sup>685</sup> Egerton, *Method*, p.8.

<sup>686</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.B1r.

<sup>687</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.91.

<sup>688</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.735.

justifying faith’ does not only ‘know’; it is, further, ‘a grounded and resolved assurance of Gods free promise of Grace in Jesus Christ’.<sup>689</sup> ‘By Fayth’, Wilcox means ‘not onely a generall believe’ or ‘grounded knowledge’ but ‘an assured perswasion, that whatsoever the Lord hath revealed in his Word, as hee hath done this same for others, so he hath done it particularly for mee’.<sup>690</sup> The impression that a ‘perswasion’ of faith could almost be willed into existence was further enhanced when authors anticipated concerned persons who failed to be persuaded: ‘It is indeed to be desired’, wrote Stephen Denison, ‘that every receiver were fully perswaded of Gods love in particular unto them selves, but this high degree of faith God exacteth not of all’. He added that ‘the Lord putteth a difference betweene babes & strong men in Christ, not expecting the same strength to be in babes, as he requireth to be in strong men’, adding that ‘yea in babes God accepteth the desire of faith for faith, taking the will for the deed’.<sup>691</sup> Similarly, Crashawe’s catechism enquires: ‘How may a man know that he hath true faith?’ and answers ‘His Soule must be inflamed with a holy desire to please God...’.<sup>692</sup> On such views, faith – or at least the vehement belief integral to it – does not seem entirely out of reach.

Faith was made still more accessible by making it measurable. One’s faith could be assessed and affirmed, for instance, in relation to the knowledge upon which it was based. Although knowledge of faith was considered as nothing without persuasion and personal application: the weightiness and memorability of that underlying knowledge could still be invoked to legitimise the persuasion. Pagit’s early catechism shows how this worked. Pagit first defines faith as ‘A full perswasion and steadfast assurance’, and proceeds to explain that it is planted ‘in the heart’, grounded ‘upon the promises of God’, wrought ‘by the Holy Ghost’, and ‘setled’ upon Christ.<sup>693</sup> By faith a believer is ‘assured that all the benefits of Christs passion and his righteousness are as surely mine as if I had wrought them my selfe’.<sup>694</sup> Having thus established faith as a matter of ‘perswasion’ and ‘assurance’, Pagit proceeds immediately with the question ‘How manie articles of the faith are there, and which are they?’ Pagit’s hypothetical catechumen then proceeds to recite and discourse upon the twelve articles of the

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<sup>689</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D5v.

<sup>690</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.67.

<sup>691</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.211.

<sup>692</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.A5r.

<sup>693</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sigs.C4v-5r.

<sup>694</sup> *ibid.*, sig.C5v.

faith.<sup>695</sup> In this catechetical treatment, then, faith is initially presented as something for the individual conscience to grapple with, but ultimately, in the recitation of the articles, becomes a matter of rote learning, despite frequent affirmations of the insufficiency of ‘bare’ knowledge. Similar structural patterns – where knowledge seemingly validated assent rather than vice versa – obtained in many of the short catechetical forms, but also in lengthier works too. In Tymme’s *Court of Conscience*, for example, the author broaches the subject of ‘faith’ as the first of ‘four gifts of Gods grace’ necessary to receive the Supper.<sup>696</sup> After two dense octavo pages about what faith is and its function, Tymme continues by mentioning that ‘every one of us must live by his owne faith, according as wee make our confession in the Beliefe’ – and proceeds to offer a blow-by-blow account of the creed, after which he concludes:

When we shall thus particularly apply all the actions and benefites of Jesus Christ our Lord, and also all his essential qualities unto ourselves, putting our whole trust in him, and in his promises, and distrusting our selves, then may wee come boldly to the Lords Table...<sup>697</sup>

Thus the knowledge component of faith was rendered appraisable, attainable, and confirmatory of the personal persuasion of faith which accompanied it. Both were made species of outcomes. If you have faith, the argument went, this will be the set of propositions you subscribe to, and this will be the character of the way in which you will be persuaded by them.

Also capable of being interpreted as outcomes of belief were the qualities of repentance and newness of life. If one of these qualities is found; then surely faith is present too? ‘Faith and repentance are unseperable companions, & a notable paire of friends’, Dillingham reminded his congregation.<sup>698</sup> ‘Repentance and newnesse of life’ are ‘indeed, the lively marks of a true faith (and of the Spirite of God)’, rehearsed the anonymous *Motives*.<sup>699</sup> Such statements meshed naturally with the concern of authors, already noted, that faith should not be divorced completely from good works, and that the latter must flow from the former for the former to be true. Sparke’s large section entitled ‘what faith the scripture here requireth’ speaks of a

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<sup>695</sup> *ibid.*, sigs.C5v-D3v.

<sup>696</sup> Tymme, ‘Court’, p.235.

<sup>697</sup> *ibid.*, pp.237, 239.

<sup>698</sup> Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.71.

<sup>699</sup> Anon., *Motives*, p.5.

faith which 'bringeth forth by the power of the spirit of sanctification, good works plentifully in her owner'. Sparke adds the necessary caveats – that the whole 'train of good workes' emanating from faith does not justify in itself, and that this train is centred on the 'worthiness of Christ' – but his statements do exemplify the mode of thinking which made faith measurable.<sup>700</sup>

Another Perkinsian contribution to this measurement of faith was the concept of small, or weak, faith. Many authors employed this idea as an additional guide to the potentially unsure reader. Bradshaw summed up the theory fairly typically. Of faith he wrote:

they that have but the least degree thereof, are true Christians, though but weake and imperfect, and have an interest in Christ and his merits, & therein a right into this Sacrament; so that in this triall and examination of our selves, it shall suffice, that we can finde this true and lively faith in us, though in never so small a degree.<sup>701</sup>

Similarly, Sibbes preached that 'if thy faith be weak, if thou hast the least grain of faith, thou must come', having earlier noted that 'This table is provided for them that are weak'.<sup>702</sup> Indeed, it stood to reason that if faith could be true, but weak, then it could be strengthened. Remembering the meaning of one's Baptism and participating in the Supper were both commonly recommended as medicine for weak faith.

Faith, then, even when defined as the saving, estate-determining variety, was finessed by authors to present readers and congregations with opportunities to grasp it. Faith was a gift; it was a simple matter of belief; it was accompanied by gospel knowledge, by repentance, by newness of life, by good works; and even weak faith qualified for sacramental participation. These traits are overwhelmingly present in the texts examined here. In his catechism Webbe employs each and every approach. He first acknowledges faith as a 'Wonderfull Grace of God', before adding straightforwardly that 'we apply Christ unto ourselves in this Faith... When we are verily perswaded by the Holy Spirit, of Gods favour towards our selves in

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<sup>700</sup> Sparke, High, pp.166, 170.

<sup>701</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.78.

<sup>702</sup> Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.72.

particularly, and of the forgiveness of our owne sinnes'.<sup>703</sup> He also proposes that we 'Shall know true faith by the fruits and merits thereof'; admits the possibility of strong and weak faith; and portrays Baptism and the Lord's Supper as occasions on which faith is strengthened.<sup>704</sup> Taken alone these strategies are prosaic snippets of Protestant theology: taken cumulatively and in their settings, they begin to look like promising opportunities to think one's way into a saving faith. As the anonymous *Motives* put it, a communicant could employ 'the motions of my mind, joyned with a willing inclination' to discern within themselves 'tokens of a true (although a weake) faith'. Therefore, it continues 'I beleeeve that as the Lord hath mercifully begunne in mee this good worke; so will he (in his due time) strengthen and encrease the same to a sufficient measure'.<sup>705</sup>

Efforts to ease the rigour of the faith requirement, then, were directed towards the two different versions of faith: the universal and the exclusive. Although there was necessarily some tension between the two, they were also harmonised via the oft-cited distinction that sacraments were open to all but of benefit only to the faithful or elect. The sacramental treatises of Cleaver and Burges both make this point in depth: that Baptism is for all infants, but effectual only for the elect, a point echoed by Downname and Frewen.<sup>706</sup> That Baptism might *not* be effectual in the case of the unchosen enabled authors such as Greenwood to explain away problematic figures such as 'Simon Magus', who had clearly been baptised but was certainly destined for hell, and contrarily 'the Theef that beleeeved' (on the cross) and 'Davids Child', to whom the opposite state of affairs pertained.<sup>707</sup> In the Supper too it was common to cast the sacraments as *effectual* only unto the elect. Hill, for example, pointed out that 'the Heavenly Wine, that is, the bloud of Christ' was 'shed for us and for many more, even all the Elect, for the remission of their sins'.<sup>708</sup> John Denison struck the same chord: 'Could one drop of his bloud have redeemed the whole world, and will not all these torments serve to make a perfect satisfaction to God for the sinnes of the Elect? Yes surely'.<sup>709</sup> The faithless reprobate, on the other hand, receives in Attersoll's words, 'the bare signes without the thinges signified', or still worse, according to the Apostle as here echoed by Draxe and

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<sup>703</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.C1v.

<sup>704</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>705</sup> Anon., *Motives*, p.6.

<sup>706</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, pp.18-19; Burges, *Baptismall*, p.19; Downname, *Guide*, p.494; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.232.

<sup>707</sup> Greenwood, 'Tractate', p.20.

<sup>708</sup> Hill, 'Communicant', p.43.

<sup>709</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.189.

others, 'eternal condemnation'.<sup>710</sup> 'So Christ this Olive tree doth not convey his graces to any by vertue of his death', warned Preston 'which is as the pipe, but to those that belong to the golden candelsticke of his Church'.<sup>711</sup>

In one sense, authors nailed their colours to the mast at this point. By shifting the faith assessment from a human act prior to the sacrament, to a divine act during it, a stronger judgement could be made about the constituency of the faithful. Before the sacrament the invitation to the 'faithfull' could mean the elect, but it could also mean the gathered throng of well intentioned Christians ready to profess faith. Because admission to the sacraments was ultimately controlled by fallible and unknowing men, both had to remain possibilities *because there was no way of knowing* – the benefit of the doubt went to the baptismal candidate, or the potential receiver. At the point of the ceremony itself, however, authors were fairly clear that only the elect, those within the covenant, would benefit. At this point, the faith required for worthy receiving was adjudicated by God himself, which meant there was nowhere to hide: faith inescapably meant faith.

This should not be interpreted as affirming decisively the exclusive view of the faith requirement. Estey wrote that 'faith always striveth against doubting', and indeed, the prospect of faith in these texts was ever modulating from the likely to the unlikely; from the probable to the improbable.<sup>712</sup> God's adjudication of a partaker's faith during the ceremony had a forbidding finality about it, but even here comfort resided in the unknowability of His judgement, and thereby arose the potential to speculate. At just the point at which the faith requirement entered the black-and-white metaphysic of Reformed thinking, it simultaneously cloaked the receiver in comforting ignorance of the divine will, providing a shield against the worst implications and raising the possibility of the best. Authors' meditations for after the Lord's Supper had been received were almost wholly positive. 'It hath pleased thee thereby to increase my knowledge, to confirme my Fayth, to assure me that Jesus Christ thy deare Sonne hath not onely died for me, but also given himselfe to be my spirituall nourishment to eternall life and salvation...', prayed Wilcox.<sup>713</sup> Downname's 'Thanksgiving after the

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<sup>710</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.87; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.A6r.

<sup>711</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.237.

<sup>712</sup> Estey, *Expositions*, C4r.

<sup>713</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.85-86.

Communion' thanks God for 'confirming' his 'covenant unto us, by annexing thereunto the seales thy Sacraments that thereby our weake faith might be strengthened and increased, and wee more and more freed from doubting and incredulity'.<sup>714</sup>

This matter of subjectively reasoning oneself into a state of worthiness was, of course, a question of more than faith alone. As noted, faith was usually one of several requirements for worthiness, alongside knowledge, repentance, and newness of life. Yet it can be argued that the search for faith was the kernel of the search for worthiness. Of all the requirements, it was the one most susceptible to this kind of reasoning. Knowledge, and aspects of moral behaviour could be charted objectively; faith could not be: hence the myriad instances of faith being expressed or inferred in terms of these former qualities; the ultimate unknowable expressed as a knowable. Several authors conveyed this sense that the faith conundrum was the axis of worthiness. Draxe, for one, identifies the worthy explicitly as the 'faithfull themselves': 'They only that firmly beleeeve in Christ hunger and thirst after him, truly repent them of their sinnes, and are thankfull for the great worke of their redemption'.<sup>715</sup> It is the *faith* of the worthy receiver, according to Hildersham, to which Christ is 'given and received' in the Lord's Supper.<sup>716</sup> From faith, suggested Bradshaw, 'doe all other Christian graces flow, and upon it doe they all depend, and according to the growth of it, doe they grow and increase; and they that have but the least degree thereof, are true Christians, though but weake and imperfect'.<sup>717</sup>

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The third retreat from a soteriologically forbidding faith requirement was the working out of a practical difficulty: infant Baptism. The notion of required faith did not tessellate with infant Baptism, for a presented infant could not very well be expected to possess, let alone profess, private or public faith in any easily comprehensible manner. The Baptism of adults converting from heathendom was no problem in this regard; for them the faith requirement could be maintained. 'Such as are of full age, are not to be received unto Baptisme, before such time as they be instructed, and have yielded a confession of a true faith, together with a

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<sup>714</sup> Downname, *Guide*, pp.923-924.

<sup>715</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.A5v.

<sup>716</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.27.

<sup>717</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.78

protestation that they will glorifie God in newnesse of life’, wrote Frewen.<sup>718</sup> But of the infants benefiting from Baptism, one was inclined to ask, as did Crashawe’s catechism: ‘How may that be when they have no faith?’<sup>719</sup> The problem was particularly acute because most authors advocated barring children from the other sacrament – Holy Communion – along with other unsuitable characters such as ‘fooles’ and ‘madmen’. Even the ‘Papists and wee agree that this Sacrament is not to bee given to children, who cannot examine themselves’, declared Pemble; the Supper, noted Featley, was ‘*no food for sucklings, but men in riper years that can examine themselve*’<sup>720</sup> The early Church, admitted Lake and Dillingham in their sermons, had erred in their practice of paedo-communion due to a misunderstanding of John Chapter Six.<sup>721</sup> Admittedly, the exclusion of children and assorted undesirables was not wholly down to their lack of faith. The unrepentant were targeted, as were ‘notorious sinners’. But a lack of ability to examine for faith and to master the knowledge upon which it rested were large parts of the reason for exclusion. ‘*It seemes that this holy Supper belongs to none but to the faithfull and penitent persons*’ concluded Preston’s short catechism after having rejected paedo-communion.<sup>722</sup>

Despite these difficulties, authors, including those representative of the more puritan wing of the Church, all aligned themselves squarely in defence of infant Baptism. Doubtless genuine belief in its propriety was a motivation; but so too must have been the century’s worth of hostility to Europe’s Anabaptists, who were lumped together by Preston together with the ‘*Adiaphorites*’ the ‘*Arminians*’, the ‘*Libertines*’, the ‘*Epicures*’, as ‘horrible monsters of wickednes’.<sup>723</sup> The arguments they used to justify paedo-Baptism, and dismiss the Anabaptist view that Baptism be deferred until faith could be professed, were common ones deployed by the Reformed against the sects. Broadly speaking the twenty-two authors who tackled this problem used two strategies.

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<sup>718</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.238.

<sup>719</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.A5r.

<sup>720</sup> Pemble, *Short*, sig.A2v. Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.129.

<sup>721</sup> Especially John. xi. 53: ‘except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man...’. Lake, ‘Wells’, p.172; Dillingham, ‘Preparative’.

<sup>722</sup> Preston, *Short*, p.15.

<sup>723</sup> idem., *Doctrine*, sig.A3r.

The first strategy was to fall back on the notion of a sacrament as a public mark, as a ‘Badge or cognisance of a Christian’, as Stephen Denison put it.<sup>724</sup> Authors argued from the precedent of circumcision, claiming that as this rite had been ordained of God to incorporate infants to his Old Covenant, so Baptism incorporated infants to the New. ‘We administer it to infants’, wrote Sparke, ‘because it succeedeth Circumcism: which was by Gods ordinance appointed to be ministered to the infants of Jewes, when they were but eight days old’, and because in the New Testament ‘Christ said *suffer little children to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven*’. The ‘covenant made with Abraham’, according to Attersoll, ‘doth no lesse belong to the Children of Christians at this day, then it did appertaine to the children of the Jewes’ – therefore ‘the infants of the Jewes were circumcised...therefore also the children of Christians are to be baptised’.<sup>725</sup> This was the logical counterpart of relaxing and expanding the definition of the ‘faithfull’ with regard to the communion requirement. ‘Infantes are a part of the Church of God’, wrote Jewel, ‘they are the sheepe of Christ, and belong to his flocke. Why should they not beare the mark of Christ?’.<sup>726</sup> Frewen’s stance was typical:

For to be baptised in the name of Christ, is to be enrolled (as it were) entered, and received into the covenant, and family, and so into the inheritance of the Sonnes of God, to be purged also from the filth of sinne, and to be endued with the manifold graces of God, for the glorifying of his Majesty in an innocent life.<sup>727</sup>

There was little arguing with this: Baptism, quite simply, was God’s means of incorporating infants into his Covenant family.

The second main strategy involved confronting the position that faith was needful for Baptism and arguing creatively that infants could indeed be said to have such faith. The circumcision argument was once again useful here, as is enabled authors to suggest that infants had a stake in saving faith by *inheritance*; that is to say, as the ‘seed’ of faithful parents they were automatically included in the covenant of faith which had been promised to Abraham and his ‘seed’. Egerton put it simply:

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<sup>724</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.10.

<sup>725</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.225.

<sup>726</sup> Jewel, ‘Treatise’, p.18.

<sup>727</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.246.

Q. Why are Infants Baptised?

A. Because the Covenant and Promise of God is made to the faithfull, and to their seede.<sup>728</sup>

Greenwood brought in circumcision by challenging the suggestion that unbaptised infants were destined for hell. ‘And what became of all that dyed before the eight day, the day of circumcision?’ he enquired. ‘Though they had not the signe, yet they were borne in the church, and they were within the compasse of the covenant, *I will be thy God and the God of thy seede*’.<sup>729</sup> Sparke adds the Apostle’s weight to the argument, reminding his readers that ‘*Sainte Paule* most plainly teacheth, that if one of the parents be believing, then is the seede holy.’<sup>730</sup>

Infants were also sometimes said to exercise faith by proxy. In the inheritance justification, these proxies were of course the parents, but others could feasibly fulfil this role also. This was the stance of the Prayer Book rubric, in which it was the godparents who answer ‘all this I stedfastly beleeve’. Authors were silent on the question of godparents, of whom many presumably disapproved, but did sometimes consent to the notion that infants appropriated the faith of sureties. Crashawe put it like this: ‘They that be of yeares must professe their owne faith, and desire it [Baptism] themselves. Infants of Beleevers doe it by their Parents, or witnesses & undertakers’.<sup>731</sup> For Hunt, ‘infants have an inclination to faith, potentially and virtually they believe, having (if they belong to God) the seed of faith and all grace in them, and professe faith by their sureties’.<sup>732</sup>

More subtly, infants were said to possess saving faith by virtue of a delayed reaction, whereby their implicit, or dormant faith at the time of Baptism– the ‘seed’ mentioned by Hunt – flowered later in life, at which point the sacrament of Baptism finally made logical and devotional sense as a past grace to be reflected upon. Infants, for Fist, ‘doe beleeve by an

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<sup>728</sup> Egerton, *Methodie*, p.16.

<sup>729</sup> Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, p.21.

<sup>730</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.197.

<sup>731</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B2r.

<sup>732</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.69.

inclination to faith' and should therefore be baptised.<sup>733</sup> The theory is laid out explicitly in the anonymous *Elements*:

Q. Then you thinke your Baptisme Gods seale to you, whereby your faith is further confirmed in the remission of your sinnes, and your heart is more deeply marked with the print of sanctification?

A. Albeit I could not know that when I was baptised, being an infant, yet now, through the grace of my God, I feel not onely my faith further confirmed, but my heart altogether renewed, in consideration of my Baptisme.<sup>734</sup>

Faith was not consciously felt at Baptism; but later in life its significance slowly accrued until the point at which the Baptismal services of others would provide an opportunity, as Downname put it, to 'call to mind what fruits we have found of our [own] Baptism'.<sup>735</sup> All these attempts to make infant faith comprehensible were the counterpart of the attempts to make the faith required for communion attainable; accepting the premise that saving faith was necessary for sacraments, but moulding and shaping that faith to make it familiar, comfortable, and plausible.

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In the stipulation that faith and faithfulness are necessary for sacraments one glimpses the ambiguous relationship between these two entities. On the one hand the emphasis upon the necessity of faith to the sacraments cast the latter as very much subject to the dictates of the former; faith was the crucial, determining factor. On the other hand, authors ensured by various devices that the vast majority of their readership could view themselves as faithful receivers; a careful lowering of the bar, suggesting that participation in sacraments was important above all other considerations. If the doctrine of faith had to be moulded to fit this concern, then so be it.

Thus seen through the 'faith requirement', the ambiguity of the relationship between faith and sacraments is in essence perhaps just a minor philosophical one. If X enables Y, which is the more important? X because it is the enabling factor, or Y because it is the thing worth enabling? If however, we take a broader view by considering the presentation of faith as a

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<sup>733</sup> Fist, Catechisme, sig.B4r.

<sup>734</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.C4r.

<sup>735</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.397.

life-long journey, and sacraments as the complex machines described in Chapter One, then the ambiguous relationship between the two comes into sharp focus and assumes weighty implications.

### III. Faith and Sacraments in Broader Perspective

Faith and sacraments did not intersect only in the specification of communion prerequisites. Faith was more than the subject of any self-examination, however thorough; it was also envisaged as a vital spiritual journey. Sacraments had to be engaged in as well as prepared for; and the ways in which they were thought to function once in process were far from straightforward. This section considers the life of faith, and recalls the actual mechanics of sacraments, and thereby aims to examine further the mutually-enabling relationship between faith and sacraments glimpsed previously. Authors described how many sacramental processes – such as receiving Christ’s body and the communication of benefits – were all accomplished with the utterly essential assistance of faith. But they also told how sacraments helped initiate, confirm and strengthen faith over the course of a believer’s life. How prominent were these two views, and did authors acknowledge and resolve any tension between them?

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One pressing reason why faith had to be proven before sacramental participation was that it played an utterly crucial role during it. In a general sense, faith enabled sacraments and made them relevant because that was the universal role of faith. ‘In the administration or participation’ of a ‘holy action’, wrote Wilcox, ‘without Faith, it is impossible to please him’.<sup>736</sup> But more than this, faith was *specifically* required for sacraments. Over two thirds of authors describe some part of the sacramental process occurring ‘by faith’ or ‘through faith’, or use imagery such as the ‘mouth’ or ‘hand’ of faith to make the same point. Theophilus Field described this:

*necessitie* of Faith, concerning the Sacraments: for they are *both* of them, *Sacramenta Fidei*, Sacraments of Faith: *so called* by the Fathers, because the

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<sup>736</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.68.

*Mysteris* in them contained, are *not* to be *judged* by our *Selves*, nor *discussed* by *Reason*, but to bee *apprehended* and received by *Faith Onely*.<sup>737</sup>

Field's recommendation of faith over and above 'Reason' was not echoed by many authors, but his point that sacramental mysteries were 'apprehended and received' by 'faith onely' certainly was. Faith was deemed to be the agent by which 'is washed away the guiltiness of sinne', as Dering's catechism puts it. He posits that 'that the blood of Jesus Christ being sprinkled upon my soule, by the hand of faith' accomplishes this task.<sup>738</sup> Almost identical forms to this are used by Tye, Featley and Fenton.<sup>739</sup> For Downname, we are 'made members of his body spiritually by faith' in Baptism.<sup>740</sup> Perkins' catechism contends that Baptism unaided by faith fails. The question is posed: 'How commeth it to passe that many after their Baptism for a long time feele not the effect and fruit of it, and some never?' The answer is that

The fault is not in GOD, who keepes his covenants; but the fault is in themselves, in that they doo not keepe the condition of the covenant to receive Christ by faith, and to repent of all their sinnes.<sup>741</sup>

Yet unsurprisingly, given the difficulties of dovetailing the faith requirement with Baptism, faith's most lauded role in sacraments was not in Baptism but in the Lord's Supper, where it was cast as utterly crucial in that sacrament's central drama: the presence, giving, receiving, apprehending, eating and applying of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. 'The body & blood of Christ' according to Willoughbie, 'must be received by faith, the spirituall mouth of our Soules', a point made by seven other authors besides who also talked of 'receiving by faith'.<sup>742</sup> All fourteen texts claimed the body and blood were 'eaten by faith', or at least consumed with the 'mouth' of faith.<sup>743</sup> Tuke expanded the metaphor:

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<sup>737</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.54.

<sup>738</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C5v.

<sup>739</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.C7r; Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.83; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v.

<sup>740</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>741</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C2r.

<sup>742</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.26; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.S2v; Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C2v; Hill, 'Communicant', p.21; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.56; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.113; Tozer, *Directions*, p.9.

<sup>743</sup> Whiting, *Short*, p.11; Sparke, *High*, p.158; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sigs.A5r-v; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.3; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D2v; Page, 'Supper', p.28; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.220; Frewen, *Grounds*; p.304; Preston, *Doctrine*, sigs.G2r-v; Preston, *Short*, p.6; Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.A8v-B1r; Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B8r; Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A5v; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

Faith is the hand which apprehendeth Christ in the sacrament, the mouth that receives him, the tounge that tastes him, the teeth that chew him, the throate that swalloeth him, and the stomacke which digests him.<sup>744</sup>

The Catholic stance on ‘eating’ Christ – transubstantiation – was condemned in the Thirty-Nine Articles as ‘repugnant to the plaine words of Scripture’. The more palatable Reformed alternative focussed upon faith, ‘the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper’.<sup>745</sup> For ‘if a man have true faith’, wrote Richard Preston, then ‘as certainly as he receiveth bread and wine into his hands, and afterwards into his stomach, so certainly doth he receive Christ, and all his benefits at the hands of God: for if we have a hand, and stomach to take, receive, and feede upon Christ’.<sup>746</sup> Faith was utterly essential: ‘without faith we cannot apprehend Christ in heaven’; without faith we ‘cannot be perswaded in our own consciences, that our receiving is acceptable to God’ – thus read two of Preston’s headings.<sup>747</sup> In the first of these is to be found perhaps the loftiest appraisal of faith’s role in facilitating the mystery of participation in Christ through the sacraments: its capacity to elevate the soul heavenwards. ‘When Christ stoopes to our capacities for our instruction: then must wee send up our faith’, advises John Denison.<sup>748</sup> Coxe uses the same imagery as the finishing touch to the Reformed resolution of how Christ’s body was consumed:

Q. Shew me more plainely, how the Bread and Wine represent unto us the body and blood of Christ?

A. ...And although the body of Christ be in Heaven, and wee be on earth, yet through a true and lively faith, which ascendeth and taketh holde of the mercies of God and the merits of Christ Jesus, we goe up into heaven, and he commeth downe to us by his Spirit, which can easily joyne together things that be sundered.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>744</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.82.

<sup>745</sup> *Articles* xxvii.

<sup>746</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.187.

<sup>747</sup> *idem.*, *Duties*, p.81.

<sup>748</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.48-49.

<sup>749</sup> Coxe, *Catechisme*, sigs.B4r-v.

Faith was also an ‘eye’ to beholde what Sutton called the ‘inestimable mystery’ of communion; the ‘onely eye’, for Hildersham, ‘whereby we may discern the Lords bodie, and the hand and mouth whereby wee receive it, and feed upon it’.<sup>750</sup> Around three-quarters of texts made use of one of these arguments. The notion that faith was vital to sacraments truly permeated the discourse.

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But authors also presented sacraments as vital to faith: for its initiation, cultivation, strengthening and confirmation. Faith was often presented as, in the words of Downname, ‘the maine ground of a godly life’.<sup>751</sup> To have faith, preached Dillingham, it is necessary to have ‘joynd a holy and sanctified life’.<sup>752</sup> ‘Newnesse of life’, rehearsed *Motives*, was a mark of ‘true (although weake) faith’.<sup>753</sup> In the attempt to live a ‘Godlie life’ – which Rogers maintained ‘cannot be without unfained faith’ – authors maintained that believers were offered invaluable assistance by sacraments, which were important staging posts on the journey.<sup>754</sup> Baptism initiated the believer into the godly life. We are spiritually ‘born’ in Baptism, wrote Boys; we have our ‘beginning in Chritianitie’.<sup>755</sup> Frewen and Fist speak, typically, of the ‘adoption’ and ‘engfrating’ which occur.<sup>756</sup> Baptism could also be drawn upon throughout adulthood as a spur to Godliness. ‘For every faithfull Christian which hath been baptised, may as long as he liveth, have this benefit thereby, that as by his ingraffing into Christ, he is one with him’ wrote Rogers, adding ‘is not Baptism throughout his life a forcible meanes to helpe him forward in a Christian course, as oft as he doth duely consider it?’<sup>757</sup> This was the ‘profit’ which John Frewen advised should be made ‘of Baptism throughout our life’.<sup>758</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.44v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.79.

<sup>751</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.43.

<sup>752</sup> Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.73.

<sup>753</sup> Anon., *Motives*, p.6.

<sup>754</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.74.

<sup>755</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.112.

<sup>756</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.238; Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.B4r.

<sup>757</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.218.

<sup>758</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.244.

The Lord's Supper built upon Baptism's initial strengthening of faith. The two sacraments were often referenced together as a complementary pair. They were both, for instance, described as 'seals' of faith, by Attersoll, Draxe, and others.<sup>759</sup> 'In the sacraments, according to Thornborough, a 'faithful Christian' is:

...made partaker both of the body and of the bloud of Christ, not onely in Baptism when he is made a member of Christ, but also in the Sacrament of bread and wine, when by faith he feedeth on Christ, believeth in Christ, and is made one with Christ, and Christ with him, abiding in Christ, and Christ in him.<sup>760</sup>

'Faith', proclaimed Tymme, was 'nourished, confirmed and increased in us by the holy Sacraments. For, in the Supper, God as a good father (after hee hath once brought us into his Church by Baptisme) nourisheth us spiritually with the proper substance of his Son Jesus Christ'.<sup>761</sup> Both the sacraments are great helps, wrote Rogers, 'both to the strengthening of faith, and encouragement to godly life'.<sup>762</sup>

The verdicts of Tymme and Rogers point to the most prominent way that sacraments were cast as assisting the life of faith: they 'strengthened' faith; 'nourished' it; 'confirmed' it, and even 'increased' it. 'How is your faith strengthened by Baptism / The Lord's Supper' was a staple of catechisms. Sacraments were, for Sibbes, 'instituted' for the very purpose of strengthening faith; for Attersoll, this was the 'first use' of sacraments.<sup>763</sup> Hildersham sums up the importance of sacraments to this enterprise. A Christian, he says:

...is bound to use all good meanes whereby his faith may be confirmed, quickened, and increased in him, the receiving of this Sacrament is a principall meanes that God hath ordained for the strengthning, reviving and increase of our faith.<sup>764</sup>

Faith, then, was vital to sacraments; sacraments were vital to faith. What is to be made of this reciprocity?

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<sup>759</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.86; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.L5v.

<sup>760</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

<sup>761</sup> Tymme, 'Court', p.235.

<sup>762</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.217.

<sup>763</sup> Sibbes, 'Receiving', p.66; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.89.

<sup>764</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.20-21.

It is tempting to ask if some authors can be said to favour one interpretation of the relationship over the other. Some suggestions along these lines can certainly be made. The weight of argument in works such as Sutton's *Godly Meditations* or Page's sermon, for instance, is definitely on the overriding necessity of coming to the Supper, of accepting God's invitation. There is by comparison little on the faith requirement. The handful of authors who, for whatever reason, are unconcerned by the faith requirement – Sutton, Lake, Thomas, Donne – all rather obviously attract this judgement. Conversely, there are other authors, among whom Samuel Smith is a striking example, whose concern that the faith requirement be properly met seems almost paranoid.

However, this is perhaps to venture down an historiographical blind alley, in which it is implicitly but falsely presumed that faith and sacraments were in competition. Such an assumption has been fostered by the untrammelled dominance of a paradigm which emphasises the battle between predestinarian puritanism and high sacramental Laudianism. Those who presented sacraments as staging posts on the all-important journey of faith would have to be placed in the former camp; those who concentrated on *lessening* the strictures of faith, or who ignored them altogether, in order to make sure that sacraments were celebrated by the many and not just the few, would have to be in the latter. The problem with this conception is that most authors did both. There is little in the corpus of texts to suggest that authors failed to maintain the complex balance between the two: indeed, little to suggest that a malleable two-sided relationship was not the very thing aimed at and prosecuted. For one thing, both positions could be re-formulated quickly to resemble the other. Faith enables sacraments: does this speak to the importance of faith (as much of this section has presumed), or contrarily might it speak to the importance of sacraments, the things it was necessary to enable? The same verbal algebra can be performed if the starting assumption is that sacraments enable faith. It is in fact particularly striking that the potential disharmony between faith and sacraments is scarcely considered at all. Attersoll gives the matter some fleeting attention, but appears unconcerned. On the one hand, he stresses that 'the Sacraments cannot give faith to the faithlesse'. But lest this be seen as categorically stating that faith trumps sacraments, or pre-exists them, he quickly adds that sacraments 'frameth this comfortable conclusion in our hearts. All such as are converted and doe rightly use the

Sacraments, shall receive Christ & all his saving graces’, and also reaffirms that ‘sacraments do confirm faith’.<sup>765</sup>

#### IV. Sacraments, Faith and the Senses

Although the colour, verve and vibrant sensuality of the pre-Reformation Catholic Church can be exaggerated, it is true to say that sacraments were more sensual affairs in Catholic ritual than they became under the Reformed.<sup>766</sup> The Reformed were inheritors and enthusiastic perpetuators of a tradition, distilled through both Testaments of scripture and the patristic canon, which lauded ‘spirit’ over ‘flesh’. The superiority of spirit over flesh was articulated in Reformed writings and creeds; it also informed their pared-down approach to holy architecture and music and fuelled their aversion to idolatry. Promoting sacramental devotion was potentially at odds with this ethereal agenda, for sacraments had undeniably physical and tangible qualities. This problematic physicality of sacraments crystallised in the form of objections to the Roman doctrines of transubstantiation and the eucharistic sacrifice – both of which involved what Protestant authors perceived as an idolatrous conflation of ‘spirit’ and ‘flesh’.

Emphasising the role of faith in sacramental processes was a means by which the problematic connotations of physicality and sensuality could be contained. Binding sacraments to faith helped authors to cast the former as of the spirit, rather than of the flesh. Receiving sacraments was a work, according to Jewel, requiring that ‘wee must open all the inner and spirituall senses of our soule’.<sup>767</sup> Sacraments were ‘nourishment unto our hungrie and thirstie soules’ – food for the spirit, not the body.<sup>768</sup> Bruch cited St Bernard to promote spiritual sacraments over sensual ones: ‘*Christ* may bee toucht but with affection, not with the hand, with the desire, not with the eye, with faith, not with the senses’.<sup>769</sup> Sacraments were thus clothed in spiritual garb to cloak their embarrassing sensuality.

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<sup>765</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.90.

<sup>766</sup> The vibrancy of English catholic ceremonial is proposed most famously in E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580*, 2nd ed. (2005), pp.91-130.

<sup>767</sup> Jewel, ‘*Treatise*’, p.57.

<sup>768</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.184.

<sup>769</sup> Bruch, ‘*Treatise*’, p.277.

However, despising the ‘flesh’ had always been tinged with a certain ambiguity, beginning with scripture itself. In John Chapter Six, Christ’s pronouncement that ‘it is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing’ and his injunction to his disciples to become ‘flesh of my flesh’ seems to render ‘the flesh’ both irrelevant and desirable respectively.<sup>770</sup> Neo-Platonist thinkers took a negative stance on the matter. They cast flesh and spirit as warring forces within man. The physical or ‘fleshly’ aspect of life was a sinful and depraved realm, which had to be suppressed and mastered by the morally superior spiritual realm. On this reading the senses were the minions and messengers of the flesh, to be distrusted and overcome. But there was also a softer interpretation of the dichotomy available, in which the biblical juxtaposition of ‘flesh’ and ‘spirit’ was interpreted as analogous to that between ‘man’ and ‘God’: ‘flesh’ described the inferior state of man’s moral capabilities; ‘spirit’ described divine perfection. On this reading fleshliness was simply the lot of mankind; senses – rather like the capacity to reason – were imperfect but nevertheless God-given faculties. Man could not escape the limits of physical perception. Indeed, myriad parts of scripture present the divine spirit in terms which are manifestly physical: the incarnation itself; the establishment of ceremonial law, the occurrence of miracles, and of course, sacraments, instituted to be earthly signs of heavenly things. These two available views were less competing theories and more different approaches: the first view idealistically separates out superior spirit from inferior flesh; the second pragmatically recognises their interdependence.

The ambiguous nature of the ‘spirit over flesh’ proposition was reflected in the attempted removal of the sensual from Reformed worship, which had mixed results. The iconoclastic transformation of church interiors, the simplification and demystification of rite, and the back-to-basics approach to sacred music reflect a blanket rejection of sensuality. Yet physical and sensual aspects of religion remained, from the didactic use of woodcuts to the persistence of pre-reformation musical forms and beliefs in the miraculous. Complete etherealisation remained elusive.

This section examines the role afforded to the senses in Reformed sacramentology, in view of the dominant rubric of receiving by faith. The evidence from the texts examined here

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<sup>770</sup> John. xi. 53.

suggests that sacraments could not be entirely divested of their physical and sensual character. Certainly, the faith requirement, together with some of its concomitant impulses, was to some extent at odds with the inescapable physicality of sacraments. The need to safeguard the delicate position of sacraments as an interface between spiritual and physical led to the imposition of some severe limitations upon the role of the senses during sacraments. But when authors explored the positive devotional potential of sacraments, the role of the senses in sacramental participation was recognised and even, on occasion, exulted.

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The senses often appeared redundant in Reformed sacraments. This conclusion arose when authors argued that sacraments were plainly spiritual things, and to approach them via the senses in a ‘carnal’ or ‘physical’ manner was unbecoming their proper spiritual function. Sacraments were sabotaged by worldly materiality; the merest hint of earthliness was at odds with their heavenly nature. Featley’s prayer prior to receiving communion pleads that God might ‘Cleare the eyes of mine understanding from all mists of hereticall fancies and carnall imaginations’ and then ‘quicken me with thy Spirit, who wilt feede me with thy flesh’.<sup>771</sup> Sutton’s imaginary receiver described his alienation and despair at the discord between his earthly sensibilities and the spiritual sacrament, wondering how this ‘hard and perverse hart of mine canst...continue earthly, when as thou art fed with the bread of heaven?’. He continues: ‘When at length wilt thou become heavenlie? Howe is it that thou dost remaine sensuall and alienated from the spirit, which art spirituallly conserved?’<sup>772</sup> Bradshaw went further, approaching sacraments with fleshly rather than spiritual concerns not only rendered that participation unprofitable, it led to the outright harm of unworthy receiving. In the grip of ‘prophaneness or sensualitie’, an unworthy receiver of the Lord’s Supper would:

...so satiate and pamper his soule and body with the delights and pleasures of the world and the flesh, that he cannot, nor cares not to taste and relish the spirituall fruit that commeth by this Sacrament, or any other divine ordinance; and therefore brings unto it no other hart nor affections, than unto ordinarie meat & drink, yea often times worse...<sup>773</sup>

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<sup>771</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp.123-4.

<sup>772</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.171r.

<sup>773</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction* 51-2.

Thus sacraments were besmirched, underestimated, and their benefits squandered by anything other than a purely spiritual approach to them and to life itself. ‘Miserable is their error’, wrote Pemble, of those who ‘out of ignorance or a wrong opinion, bend their senses & amuse their thoughts, only upon the things which in this Sacrament are presented unto their bodily eyes, never looking up unto the graces and merits of Christ’.<sup>774</sup> These endorsements of spiritual sacraments reflected an idealistic separation of superior spirit from inferior flesh, of heaven from earth, the kind of duality set forth by Tymme, who inveighed that ‘as long as we live, the flesh will fight against the Spirit, the divell, and the world will make war against us’.<sup>775</sup>

However, most sacramental discourse was conducted not in abstract terms of flesh against spirit, but from the starting point that sacraments, like Christ himself, were an interface between the two. As seen in Chapter One, most conceptions of sacraments, whether as sign, seal, instrument or analogy, operated within this basic assumption that sacraments somehow mediated between God and man, between spirit and flesh, between, as Theophilus Field put it, ‘the *heavenly* with the *earthly*, which are so *inseparably* conjoined by God in a *Sacramental union* that he that goeth about to separate them must needs *run* himselfe a *curse*’.<sup>776</sup> How, then, was the role of the senses in sacraments depicted against this more pragmatic backdrop characterised by mediation?

When authors considered and rejected the Catholic version of sacramental mediation – the doctrine of transubstantiation – they necessarily rejected a certain application of senses in sacraments too. Transubstantiation, described by Sibbes as that ‘gross and *caparnaicall* opinion’ entailed, (its opponents alleged) Christ being ‘eaten really and bodily with the mouth’.<sup>777</sup> It had been enshrined in Catholic dogma (as Protestants, alleging its novelty, were eager to point out) only relatively latterly at the fourth Lateran council of 1215. This ‘strange new learning’, as Jewel called it, was attacked by over three quarters of works to at least some degree; even a tiny catechism such as that of Horne found space to assert that ‘the bread

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<sup>774</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.8.

<sup>775</sup> Tymme, ‘Court’, p.269.

<sup>776</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.54.

<sup>777</sup> Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.68.

then is not Christs body'.<sup>778</sup> In larger texts the doctrine was often disputed at considerable length with an arsenal of different arguments: Attersoll fielded twenty-six separate refutations; Hill, twenty; numbers between two and ten were common.<sup>779</sup>

A relatively common strand running through these arguments against transubstantiation could be classified as 'antisensory'. The 'corporeall', 'bodily', 'carnall' or 'local' presence and apprehension of Christ in the Supper was absurd, injurious to the dignity of Christ and abhorrently idolatrous. For John Denison this presence, if allowed, entailed the body of the Saviour being subjected to the same physical indignities as the communion bread: decay, digestion and devouring by vermin. 'What greater indignity can be offered to that blessed body', raged the author, 'then to expose it to moulding, stinking, yea to be turned into an excrement, and to be devoured of rats and mice?'.<sup>780</sup> This was *anti*-parallelism whereby the similarities between bread and body were denied to counter transubstantiation rather than emphasised to bolster a parallelist notion of sacramental efficacy. Denison's arguments against treating Christ's body as bread were echoed by other authors. Wilcox voiced the impossibility that Christ's body, like bread, should be subject to 'putrification, corruption, and wormes'.<sup>781</sup> Draxe made the same point, adding that wine turns to vinegar which Christ's blood palpably cannot.<sup>782</sup> Preston, amongst others, pointed to the distasteful ramifications of Christ's body physically entering our own: if this were the case 'the members of our body should dismember, and disjoint his body, (which is absurd to speake, but damnable to practice)'.<sup>783</sup> 'Should I dreame that my stinking carkase should be a Sepulcher to bury my Saviour, descending into the caverns of my belly?', enquired Bruch.<sup>784</sup> The point about rats and mice was a standard trope, employed by half a dozen authors.<sup>785</sup> 'What cannibals would they [Catholics] make of Christians, to feede upon man's flesh, which nature itselfe doth

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<sup>778</sup> Jewel, 'Treatise', p.51; Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4r

<sup>779</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.354-366; Hill, 'Communicant', pp.14-16.

<sup>780</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.87.

<sup>781</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.26.

<sup>782</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M4v.

<sup>783</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.220.

<sup>784</sup> Bruch, 'Treatie', pp.277-278.

<sup>785</sup> This was really a sub species of a larger anti-transubstantiation argument which rejected the physical presence on the basis that this seemingly guaranteed the availability and reception of Christ, even when eaten by evident sinners – or, indeed, vermin. There was additionally the opposite problem that many evident saints, such as Old Testament figures, never received in bread in bread and wine and would therefore, if transubstantiation was allowed, have to be excluded from God's family of the faithful.

abhorre?’ asked Samuel Smith.<sup>786</sup> Underlying all these arguments was a flat rejection of the notion that the senses – and the base human bodies which employed them – could apprehend Christ’s real, physical body in the same way that common bread was apprehended. It was simply imperative, as Featly put it, to distinguish Christ’s body from ‘common meate’.<sup>787</sup>

In condemning transubstantiation authors were clear about what the senses could *not* accomplish: physical union with Christ in the Eucharist. This inability was reinforced by stressing what role they *could* usefully perform. Their function should be to confirm the presence of ordinary bread and wine which were really there, rather than the flesh and blood of Christ, which were not, thus usefully smiting Roman dogma with the stick of common sense. ‘Every sacrament’, Estey made clear, ‘showeth to sence one thing, and signifieth and meaneth another’.<sup>788</sup> Transubstantiation therefore stretched credulity; it ‘taketh away all judgement from the senses’, wrote Attersoll, ‘and maketh the Sacrament of truth to be a sacrament of forgery and falsehood’.<sup>789</sup> If transubstantiation were true, then ‘we may not beleeve our eyesight, nor stand to the judgement of our senses’ complained Jewel.<sup>790</sup> ‘If the flesh of Christ should bee in the sacrament, then it should be seene, felt, and received, as flesh, yea, it would taste, as flesh’ wrote Preston, ‘but in this matter every mans owne mouth, and palate, must be his judge’.<sup>791</sup> This straightforward testimony of the senses also debunked the theory that transubstantiation could occur by a miracle, because miracles were thought always to create sensory evidence and this was palpably lacking in the Supper. We are to note’, wrote Stephen Denison, ‘that where God workes miracles, hee doth not deceive our senses, but hee gives evident demonstration of the truth’, such as, for instance, the ‘taste and nature of excellent wine’ received by the wedding guests at Cana.<sup>792</sup> In a similar vein, Hill wrote that ‘every miracle is sensible, as when Moses rod was turned into a serpent...and Christ turned water into wine. But this miracle is not sensible, for I see bread, and taste bread: I see wine, and taste wine, even after the consecration’.<sup>793</sup> ‘If the bread and wine should so miraculously be turned into the very body and blood of Christ’, asked Samuel Smith, ‘how

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<sup>786</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.191.

<sup>787</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp.123-4.

<sup>788</sup> Estey, ‘Supper’, sig.A2r.

<sup>789</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.364.

<sup>790</sup> Jewel, ‘*Treatise*’, p.43.

<sup>791</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.223.

<sup>792</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.122.

<sup>793</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.17.

could it bee, that it should not appeare unto the outward senses?'.<sup>794</sup> When thus recruited to disparage the 'miracle of the mass', the only role remaining for the senses was in fact the thematic opposite of the one from which they had been barred: to apprehend bread and wine, not flesh and blood.

As well as being minimised by the anti-sensual tone of the debate on transubstantiation, the role of the senses in sacraments was also overshadowed by the enthusiastic promotion of the enabling roles of faith and spirit. Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper, for example, was explained with reference to these two ideas. To the question 'How doe you eate Christs bodie, and drinke his blood?', catechisms such as Whiting's answered 'spiritually, and by faith'.<sup>795</sup> Sutton, less cautious than most on the question of the presence, states that the reception of Christ is real only to the 'spiritually minded'.<sup>796</sup> Featly summed up vividly the necessity of approaching the Supper with a spiritual, rather than carnal appetite:

If it [the Supper] meete with a spirituall taste, and appetite, and stomacke purged and prepared, it proveth the food of life, nay of immortality: if otherwise, it turneth into *deadly poyson*: for *hee that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himselfe not discerning the Lord's body*<sup>797</sup>.

Authors also wrote encouragingly about the real possibility of achieving communion with Christ in sacraments, which was achieved, in large part at least, by spiritual means. For Bradshaw, sacraments facilitated communion with 'the very Body and Blood of Christ and all the benefits thereof', which are 'spiritually offered unto the receiver'.<sup>798</sup>

Much of the discourse concerning sacraments, spirit, and faith pointed to the existence of a Reformed world view which had risen above the need for crude sensual apprehension in Sacraments. Illustrations of this sentiment can be found when authors treated the *Sursum Corda*, the point in the eucharistic service at which communicants were invited to 'lift up

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<sup>794</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.204.

<sup>795</sup> Whiting, *Short*, p.11.

<sup>796</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.178r.

<sup>797</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.86.

<sup>798</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.60. See also Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.82.

their hearts’ and so gain communion with Christ. Boys, approvingly citing the ‘Church of Scotland’ as well as the official homily ‘of our own Church’ on the subject, provides a case in point when claiming that ‘the onely way to receive worthily the Lords Supper, is to lift up our mindes by faith aboue all things worldly and sensible, and thereby to enter into heaven, that we may finde and receive Christ, where he dwelleth’.<sup>799</sup> A certain transcendence is proposed here: a believer must bypass ‘all things wordly and sensible’ in order to find and receive Christ. This same transcendence is what Wilcox was talking about when he wrote that:

For, that we may be made partakers of Christ, it is not of necessitie required, that his Body should be really present upon the earth; but it rather behooveth us, by the power of the Holy Ghost, & through Fayth, to mount up into Heaven, and there to lay hold of him, that we may sit with him in the heavenly places, which in this life cannot be performed in any other sort, then in a spirituall manner, & through fayth...<sup>800</sup>

Here is seen the rejection of transubstantiation (Christ cannot be ‘really present upon the earth’) combined with the preference for a faithful and spiritual ascension to heaven. There is a general preference for the ethereal; an admittance that ‘in this life’ the nearest we get to Christ is ‘in a spirituall manner, & through fayth’. Added up, these sentiments loomed large and reduce the significance of the senses. Practically all the works of the corpus, either via their rebuttals of transubstantiation and miracles, or through their championing of the roles of faith and spirit, give grounds to suppose that the senses had been somewhat written out of Reformed sacraments.

It is useful to conceptualise this minimising of sacramental sensuality in a typically Reformed way, that is, as a juxtaposed positive and negative impulse, such as that which was seen to be characteristic of parallelism in Chapter One. In parallelist explanations of sacramental efficacy, it was positively asserted that the outward and inward processes *did* happen in parallel, but it was negatively maintained that the relationship between them was circumscribed. Somewhere in the gap lay the Reformed position. The impulses sketched in this section – spirit over flesh, denial of a physical apprehension of Christ, promotion of ‘spirit’ and ‘faith’ as sacramental enablers and realms of interpretation – all revolve around a similar formulation of positive and negative, this time defining not sacramental efficacy but

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<sup>799</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.118.

<sup>800</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.51.

sacramental mediation between the earthly and heavenly realms. The positive impulse was that sacraments were indeed earthly, or fleshly, or outward manifestations of the heavenly, or spiritual or inward: the negative or circumscribing impulse was that this interface was dominated by, and gained its efficacy from, these latter components of heaven, spirit, and inwardness. It was as if to say: yes, sacraments are a delicate dialogue between spirit and flesh – but the terms of that dialogue are set by the spirit. Viewed in this way, it can be seen that the faith requirement was implicated in maintaining the negative, restraining half of this formulation. Its association with spiritual interpretation, and denigration of sensual apprehension, guarded the inward from conflation with the outward. The faith-images which authors sprinkled liberally though their writings are in this respect guardians of Reformed propriety: eating by the ‘hand of faith’, eating with the ‘mouth of faith’, seeing with the ‘eyes of faith’, rising on the ‘wings of faith’. This imagery guarded against the literal and real apprehension of the divine, constantly cloaking and re-cloaking the communion in metaphor instead.

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However, this process of limiting sensuality was only half the story, because in practice authors sounded the positive notes of sacramental mediation in harmony with the negative ones. Consider, for example, Lake’s appraisal of the eucharistic Bread and Wine:

For though the heavenly part bee the life of the earthly, yet would wee lose ourselves in sounding that great depth, if our thoughts were not guided and stinted by the earthly... by the Elements he hath confined our meditations, that being more distinct, they might be more profitable.<sup>801</sup>

As Lake hints here, there was indeed a theoretical justification for sensuality in sacraments which centred on the unavoidable fact of their earthliness, and what that told us about God’s institution of them. Lake argued that God provided the earthly parts of sacraments to ‘guide’ our heavenly meditations. ‘It is a common and true saying, out of sight, out of minde: now that men might see the goodness of God, he setteth it foorth in the Sacrament before mens

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<sup>801</sup> Lake, ‘Wells’, p.165.

eyes', reflected Dillingham.<sup>802</sup> Upon this foundation that God purposefully created sacraments as earthly manifestations of heaven was built the justification of sensual sacraments. One prominent motif was that of sacrament as 'visible' word'. 'They are as a visible Sermon preaching unto us most lively the promises of God', wrote Attersoll, continuing that 'as the worde wee heare doth edifie and instruct the minde by the outward eares, so do the Sacraments by the eyes and other senses'.<sup>803</sup> The purpose of presenting the sacraments to 'all the senses', was for Willoughbie to be in 'every way sensiblie affected, & assured of the goodness, favour, and mercie of our God'.<sup>804</sup> Such comparisons of word and sacrament legitimised the senses.

Even when sacraments were not directly compared to the word, their sensual character could be upheld as a good in and of itself. The physical fact of sacraments was considered to make them more intense and visceral occasions, in which Christ, in the words of Samuel Smith, was 'offered more effectually and perticularly... crucyfyed a fresh and more lively represented and set forth before his [the receiver's] eyes'.<sup>805</sup> Sensory perception in the Eucharist *could* be trusted and used to devotional effect: for Bradshaw the inner grace is 'of purpose represented to our senses, that we might the better behold it, and be stirred up to praise and magnifie God for it'.<sup>806</sup> Featley wrote that a communicant shared in the 'singular prerogative of Simeon', to '*take into thy hands thy Saviour: To see with thine eyes, and handle with thy hands, yea and taste with thy mouth the Word of life*'.<sup>807</sup> Christ's presence, it was felt, should be perceived with the same certainty that the senses perceive bread and wine. Furthermore, it was not merely Christ's *presence* which could be verified in this way, but one's very union with him. 'By the *Eucharist*', begins Hill, 'hee knockes at *all the gates of our soule*, and seekes entrance by every *sense*'. Thus, he concluded, our 'union becomes more *effectuall* unto us'.<sup>808</sup>

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<sup>802</sup> Dillingham, 'Preparative', pp.85-86.

<sup>803</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, 2.

<sup>804</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.11.

<sup>805</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.17-18.

<sup>806</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.34.

<sup>807</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.82.

<sup>808</sup> Hill, 'Communicant', sig.M7v.

The acknowledgement that a believer may draw some comforting trace of inward grace from outward evidence found its most basic units of expression in the ubiquitous concepts of sacrament as sign and seal. The Augustinian formulation describing a sacrament as a ‘visible sign of invisible grace’ spoke to this, and was often repeated at some length in catechisms such as that penned by Pagit, in which the phrase ‘A signe that may be seene, of grace that cannot be seene’ forms the basis for much of the sacramental interrogation.<sup>809</sup> As already seen, the notion of sacrament as seal also meshed with an acceptance of the sensory. ‘A sensible signe and visible seale of the benefits of our salvation in Christ Jesus’, was how Webbe defined a sacrament.<sup>810</sup> ‘Making us after a sorte to handle Christ with our hands, and to see him with our eyes, to taste him and touch him with our whole body’, wrote Attersoll of sacraments, ‘they do more seale up than the word’.<sup>811</sup>

What is to be made of this enthusiasm for the sensual character of sacraments, and of the fact that this vein of enthusiasm ran alongside an equally prominent one of suspicion and even hostility towards the senses? One obvious and valid conclusion is that here is more evidence of the Reformed parallelist mindset, in which negative and positive emphases feature concurrently. This dialogue both demoted and promoted sacramental sensuality; denying the physical apprehension of Christ but encouraging the apprehension of the outward sign and its ability to confirm inward grace. But although this framework aimed at judicial balance, it might well be contended that upon this topic of sacramental mediation, as upon others, authors failed to impress absolute equity upon the reader, for the reason that the positive impulse lent itself to enthusiastic, reader-friendly and piety-enhancing expression to a degree that the negative impulse did not.

One factor which allowed sensual sacraments to be promoted more readily than abstract ones was the pragmatic theory of compromise upon which the notion of mediating sacraments was based. As Calvin had put it, the institution of sacraments was an act of ‘boundless condescension’ on God’s part. This is the view that men are inescapably ‘animal’ in character, ‘creeping on the ground, and cleaving to the flesh’, and that sacraments are therefore God accommodating himself to man’s capacity by making himself ‘visibly

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<sup>809</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.D3v.

<sup>810</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sigs.C7v-8r.

<sup>811</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.6.

depicted'.<sup>812</sup> Authors made much of this gracious accommodation to human fleshliness. Senses might not be the optimal medium, but God was nevertheless prepared to communicate by them. Would-be partakers of sacraments were urged in no uncertain terms to take advantage of this opportunity, by Sparke for one:

Besides the bare preaching of the worde as it is well knowne and confessed of all, for the better both breading and nourishing of this our faith as an outward good meanes, for the spirite to worke that effect in us , our most gracious and loving GOD, knowing howe slowe to believe we woulde bee, hath left and given unto us visible and palpable Sacramentes, thereby as it were to seale and more particularly to apply unto us all the good promises of salvation in Christ Jesus: as namlie nowe, Baptism and the supper of the Lord to us in the newe Testament.<sup>813</sup>

Sparke's exultation was typical of several other authors, including Tuke, who expressed 'chearefulness & joy' that 'God might visibly represent his invisible gifts to our outward senses, our sight, taste, and touch'.<sup>814</sup>

Sensual apprehension in sacraments was made more concrete by two of the same forces which made the notion of sacrament-as-analogy so effective: the pronounced simultaneity of outward and inward happening, and the contexts of learning or strengthening in which this concurrency was often set. 'Take', expounded Estey, 'not onely into your mouthes but into your hands, representing the soule and faith. Yee' he continued, 'every one of yee, even at this instant...A mervailous strength to faith'.<sup>815</sup> Attersoll creates the same sense of concurrency between physical and spiritual: 'We take the bread and cup into our hands, we eate, we drinke, we are refreshed: so we feed on Christ, whose flesh is meate indeed, & whose blood in drinke indeed, and we are comforted'.<sup>816</sup> Dod, in his introduction to worthy receiving, combines this timeliness of sensual apprehension with its capacity to strengthen and nourish:

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<sup>812</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, bk4.11.

<sup>813</sup> Sparke, *High*, p.182.

<sup>814</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.79.

<sup>815</sup> Estey, 'Supper', sig.A4r.

<sup>816</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.91-92.

...as that bread and wine are made the nourishment of our bodies: so Christ his body and blood are made the nourishment of our soules: And as certainly as the bread and wine are made one substance with us, to strengthen our bodies, and to refresh our hearts, so surely Christ is made one with us, and we with him, and then our soules shall be strengthened and our hearts spiritually revived, either presently in the very act of receiving, or afterwards in our time, when we shall find in most need of comfort.<sup>817</sup>

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In such ways the positive potential of parallel thinking could be stretched to accommodate sensuality. But there is also a stronger judgement that may be reached about the endorsement of, and enthusiasm for, sensual sacraments which occurs in the corpus. At times authors extol the worth of sensual feeling in sacraments with such relish that their writing transcends the framework of perfectly balanced impulses and morphs into unadulterated enthusiasm. Two examples of this trait are provided by Tye and Draxe. Tye speaks of the communicant's body 'sprinkled with the vertue of thy quickening flesh', while Draxe supplied the following advice for a receiver at the very time of administration:

He must reverently behave himselfe, ponder the great mercies of God vouchsafed him, & by the eyes of faith so behold and contemplate all the storie of Christ his passion, as if with his eyes he saw him hanging on the crosse and crucified, and his blood dropping out of his vaines.<sup>818</sup>

Certain phrases – 'thy quickening flesh', 'blood dropping out of his vaines' – seem, by Reformed standards, incautious. But in what circumstances do they appear so? By way of context it is worth remembering that Field and Wilcox in their admonition of 1572 had complained about the phrase 'the body of our Lorde Jesus Chryst which was given to thee' which had been added to the Prayer Book.<sup>819</sup> From within the corpus may also be noted the observation of Randall, who wrote that Protestants do not 'dwell in the grosse and carnall meditation of his wounds and blood-shedding; as the Papists doe'.<sup>820</sup> The words of Draxe and Tye, however, together with those of a good number of other authors, appear at odds with

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<sup>817</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.15.

<sup>818</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.E5v; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M7v.

<sup>819</sup> Cited in Holifield, *The Covenant Sealed*, p.35.

<sup>820</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.53.

such sensibilities. There were graphic descriptions of the passion which could certainly be described as ‘grosse’ or ‘carnall’. Bradshaw and Sibbes comment on Christ’s sweat; Pemble describes Him ‘torne and rent’; Coxe’s *Catechisme* details how bread and wine make us believe ‘more assuredly that Christs body and Blood was rent apart’.<sup>821</sup> Elsewhere, remembering the passion was presented so vividly as to suggest almost a face-to-face confrontation with Christ crucified and suffering, as seen in the above words of Draxe, and in the work and Bayly, who implored his reader to ‘imagine that thou seest Christ hanging upon the Crosse, and by his unspeakeable torments, fully satisfying Gods justice for thy sinnes’.<sup>822</sup> Christ’s pain was dwelt on at some length by Stephen Denison and Richard Preston.<sup>823</sup> There were even occasional implications that Christ’s dead body could be physically apprehended. Sutton’s devotional desire to ‘to take and receive... [Christ’s] bodie into the lodging of my bodie’ was admittedly the result of translation from a Catholic text, but the sentiment was echoed by Attersoll – for whom by faith and the senses we do ‘taste him and touch him with our whole body’ – and Hill, who enquired of his reader:

If Christ’s dead bodie must be wrapped up in a cleane linen cloth and laid in a Sepulchre how must we be prepared to receive the same body crucified, and bloud poured out for us?<sup>824</sup>

References such as these – a shade more ‘bodily’ or, in Randall’s phrase, ‘carnall’ than might be expected – are surprisingly common in the corpus. Assessing such apparently un-Reformed references cannot of course be scientific: there was no set theory of what constituted unacceptable language with which to refer to Christ. This is largely a matter of tone and context. Nevertheless, passionate allusions to the body of Christ are far removed from the cautious and calculated side of Reformed theology with which we are so well acquainted. The pristine example of this passion in the corpus is an extended excerpt from Bayly’s *Practice of Piety*, which describes touching the holy body of Christ, the need to ‘tremble’ as we ‘eate his flesh’, and wishes our ‘mouth closed to his side, that thou mightest receive that precious bloud before it fell to the dustie earth’.<sup>825</sup> Of course, it might and should be objected that such passages are themselves not without restraining context. Authors like

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<sup>821</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.45; Sibbes, ‘Receiving’, p.66; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.8; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.B8r.

<sup>822</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.762.

<sup>823</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.82-83; Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.152-153.

<sup>824</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.160v; Attersoll, *Covenant*; p.6; Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.4.

<sup>825</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.746, 765.

Bayly, spurred with the possibilities of ceremonial moments like the fraction, libation and distribution, consciously aimed at aiding *remembrance*; it could therefore be argued that all bodily and sensual language was theologically innocuous. This is of course true in terms of formal theology, but practically speaking the force of writing like Bayly's must surely have made a far greater impact upon the reader than the conservatism of its pure theological content.

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Thus it proved impossible to jettison the senses in Reformed sacraments. A coalition of sacramental ideas – spirit over flesh, receiving by faith, parallelism, spiritual apprehension of Christ – were brought into being and presented to inquisitive readers. All these concepts had some capacity to quash the sensory potential of sacraments – yet at the same time each allowed space for sensuality to take root. The intellectual mechanism which allowed this flourishing of opposites was the parallelistic impulse in Reformed thinking which simultaneously promoted positive assertion with negative qualification, aided by the historical ambiguities of the flesh versus spirit dichotomy. Yet the arguments for and against the senses actually transcended this framework on both sides. Negatively, there were some totalising arguments which completely ruled out sensuality. Positively, there were emotionally charged and bodily references to Christ's suffering which beckoned the reader towards greater devotion.

It is not straightforward to judge whether the senses were downgraded or upgraded by such arguments. Theoretically the arguments were balanced, reflecting the training and outlook of the authors. Re-appropriation might be the best way to describe what happened to sacramental sensuality in this period: the carnal implications of transubstantiation were decried, but the physical half of sacramental metaphor was embraced as useful, even vital. It must be concluded that the devotional teaching upon Reformed sacraments was far more embracing of physicality and sensuality than has been recognised. The tortuously-achieved theological balance moved decisively towards enthusiasm under the force of devotionally directed argument.

It was suggested at the beginning of this section that physicality, and the physical aspects of sacraments in particular, were retained by the Reformed in an ambiguous compromise; symptomatic of the basic fact that human existence was inescapably fleshly. The high-church sacramentalists – represented only sparsely and ambiguously in the primary literature by clerics such as Donne and Sutton – are seen as coming along and upturning this view, revelling in incarnation for its own sake. But analysis of these texts suggests a revelling in the sensual potential of sacraments by authors who might be described as mainstream godly sorts. With regard to sacramental sensuality, these mature second and third generation Reformers were busy appropriating forms of expression which seemed unserviceable a generation earlier. The following section will consider whether the same can be said of another sacramental issue: ceremony.

## **V. Receiving by Faith and Ceremonies: The Ambiguities of Outwardness**

The familiar history of ‘Laudian ceremonialism’ and puritan opposition to it leads to consideration of the subject of ceremony as a nexus of controversial topics in the official rite, such as the sign of the cross in Baptism, the orientation and lavishness of the communion table or ‘altar’, or the desirability of a kneeling posture when receiving communion. In the literature, however, the term ‘ceremonie’ itself was not reserved for the attack or defence of contested parts of rite. It was also, and more commonly, employed in a neutral sense merely to describe any of the outward parts and circumstances of worship. Bradshaw, for instance, was fairly typical in describing ‘ceremonie’ as ‘certaine outward and bodily signes, which, after a secret and artificiall manner, shadow and represent things spirituall and internal’.<sup>826</sup> For Thomas the ‘ceremony’ in Baptism was the ‘sprinkling of water’. In the Lord’s Supper, the ‘ceremoniall thing’, for Frewen, was the taking of bread and wine.<sup>827</sup>

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<sup>826</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.22-23.

<sup>827</sup> Thomas, ‘Supper’, sig.D4v; Frewen, *Grounds*, pp.252-53.

In other words, ‘ceremonie’ described not only specific moments of rite, but also the general outward parts and circumstances of worship. Controversial topics were included in this, but so too were other parts of sacramental worship. ‘Ceremonie’ comprehended such issues as:

- The words of consecration in both sacraments
- In Baptism :
  - the sign of the cross made with water
  - the application of water to an infant
- In the Lord’s Supper:
  - the arrangement of table (or altar), linen, plate, cup (chalice)
  - the type of bread used
  - kneeling to receive
  - the manner of receiving bread and wine
  - The *Sursum Corda* by which communicants were invited to lift up their hearts to the lord.

As this list suggests, the question of the outward circumstance of worship –sacramental worship in particular – was in fact a broader issue than that of specific ceremonies. While the attention directed by authors towards a topic like kneeling, for instance, was reasonable, it cannot be described as a prominent theme. Other allegedly controversial issues were treated with indifference or, in the case of the sign of the cross in Baptism, scarcely mentioned at all. By contrast, an engagement with the ‘outward’ parts of sacraments as described by Bradshaw was a pervasive feature of the corpus.

There are two vantage points from which to survey sacramental ceremonies and their associated outward action. The first is the established narrative noted initially: of a half-Reformed Church of England under constant pressure from its puritan wing to complete the job by, amongst other things, abolishing its remaining ‘ceremonies’. There is certainly much to support this view: here it resonates with a certain instinctive distrust of the outward evinced by authors when addressing the perceived Catholic menace. The second reference point, however, affords a better approach: the premise that the issue of outward circumstance in worship was intimately connected to the dominant rubric of receiving sacraments with the assistance of faith. Outward ceremony had the potential to be an enabling force in sacramental processes, to facilitate the mediation between divine and mundane at the very moment of participation. This lent ceremony - and indeed all outward matters of sacramental

observation - a similar relation to faith as occupied by the senses: at once both a potential rival to be marginalized and a potential ally to be conscripted into the sacramental system.

With these two reference points in mind, the following analysis seeks to assess the views of authors on issues of outward behaviour and ceremony in Reformed sacraments. It does so by analysing three concurrent yet somewhat contradictory attitudes: rejection, indifference and enthusiasm. First, the impulse to reject ceremony and distrust the 'outward' is considered. Second, the ambivalence of authors on many specific 'ceremonial' issues, especially as found in the official Prayer Book rite, is explored. Thirdly, authors' approval for some aspects of outward ceremony and their conscription into the rubric of receiving by faith is considered, together with some of its ambiguous consequences. In conclusion the inadequacy of explaining these apparent contradictions purely with reference to the strife between puritan sensibility and established Church is considered. It is contended that the mix of attitudes towards ceremony and outwardness becomes consistent when viewed through the lens of dominant Reformed ideas, notably that of receiving by faith.

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When authors considered 'ceremonies' in the abstract, they reached rather the same range of conclusions as when considering sensuality in the abstract: from distrust to a sense of a surpassing superiority to outright hostility – all imbued with anti-Catholicism. Preston and Hunt both deplore the theatricality of popish ceremony which reeked of idolatry. 'Such is the corruption of my sinful nature' read Featley's pre-communion confession, 'that I am more apt to be moved at the sight of a crucifixe or picture of my Saviours bloody passion, than by reading the story of his death in the Evangelist'.<sup>828</sup> Catholics, according to Preston's *Duties*, set forth the Eucharist 'with solemn gestures, apparel, and other ceremonies...and so they make this Sacrament nothing else, but a Pageant Play'.<sup>829</sup> With some vehemence Hunt warmed to the same theme:

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<sup>828</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.102.

<sup>829</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.66.

And so the play is ended; whereat if you had beene present, I meane at the masse; (God forbid you should) you might have seene the Priest bowing, becking and crouching to his breaden God, dallying with it, dandling and dancing it in his hands, till at length jeast turning into earnest; hee chops it into his mouth...

‘A most ridiculous thing to behold’, he concluded – ‘a most absurd thing to believe’.<sup>830</sup> Catholic ritual and its practitioners were, on this view, ‘flat idolatrous’, wrote Draxe, adding that ‘we abho[r] and detest them’.<sup>831</sup> An historical basis for this anti-ceremonialism was provided by Henry Smith: ceremonial observation had been abrogated by the teaching of the New Testament. ‘Sacrifices and Ceremonies are honorably buried with the Priesthood of Aaron. Let them rest’, he commanded.<sup>832</sup> ‘They which retaine Ceremonies, which should be abrogated, reliques of Judaisme, or reliques of Papisme, may be said to violate the sepulchers of the dead, and disturbe the deceased, like the Witch, which presumed to raise Samuell out of his grave’.<sup>833</sup> Ceremonies were thus part of the Old Covenant: ‘legall sacrifices’, or ‘leviticall observations’, in the words of Cleaver and Pemble respectively.<sup>834</sup> It is in Pemble’s *Introduction* that the corpus’ most extended and vehement critique of ‘ceremonie’ may be found, imparting readers to focus instead upon the ‘celestiall and spiritual quality’ of sacraments.<sup>835</sup> Here, ceremonies are described as ‘carnall observations’.<sup>836</sup> When ritual was divorced from its spiritual application, only ‘dead and empty ceremonies’ remained.<sup>837</sup> ‘Carnall ceremoniousness’ in sacramental celebration afflicted ‘papists’, who, with ‘trinkets, and ‘fopperies’, rendered the Supper a ‘Stage-play, or Masking shew: where the poore people are spectators only, understanding nothing at all, but feeding their eyes by gazing upon the outside of empty ceremonies and idolatrous pompe’.<sup>838</sup> Potentially pious Protestants were also hoodwinked by an undue ceremoniousness, their minds reduced either to unthinking stupor or overly outward-sensuality:

They cannot tell how to looke, which way to turn themselves about any holy meditations: many times their minds are like a clocke that's over-wound above his

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<sup>830</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.98-99.

<sup>831</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M3v.

<sup>832</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.53.

<sup>833</sup> *ibid.*,

<sup>834</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.7; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.7.

<sup>835</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>836</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>837</sup> *ibid.*, p.8.

<sup>838</sup> *ibid.*, p.23.

ordinary pitch, and so stands still; their thoughts are amazed at the height of these mysteries, and for the time they are like a blocke, thinking nothing at all: or else their thoughts fall flat on the earth to base and bodily things...<sup>839</sup>

However, Pemble's concentrated and extended assault on ceremony was more the exception than the rule. For the most part, outright criticism of the very principle of ceremony is relatively muted in the corpus of texts, certainly when compared to the fortissimo clamour over the issue arising at the Hampton Court conference.

What of specific ceremonial dislikes? Predictably the rite and ceremony of the popish mass was deplored, as can be clearly seen in the offerings of Hunt, Pemble and Preston above, as well as in the condemnations of transubstantiation explored in the previous section. Preston's *Doctrines* features an extended five-fold dismantling of Catholic practice, in which it is alleged that in Catholicism bread is 'thrust' or 'cramme[d]' into the mouths of Communicants; and 'hangeth...up in a Pixe or a box'.<sup>840</sup> Nor did Christ, according to Preston, ever command communicants to 'heave it above your heads, carry it like a puppet, or a Pageant in your processions', still less did he command 'blind devotion of the people' 'as the Priest doth, saying', before the elevated bread and chalice, 'downe upon your knees, worship him'.<sup>841</sup> Administering in 'printed wafer cakes' instead of bread was likewise to be abhorred, as indeed, for many authors, was the use of unleavened bread *per se*.<sup>842</sup> Boys was another who itemised the unpleasant aspects of Catholic eucharistic ceremonial, rejecting 'the reservation, elevation, circumgestation, adoration of the bread'.<sup>843</sup> As John Denison, and Hill point out, it is not only these actions and materials which were objectionable, but the implication that the priest responsible for them was empowered by them, and by what Denison called the 'bare rehearsal' of *hoc est corpus meum*, to create the body of Christ.<sup>844</sup> This was, for Hill, to create a 'kinde of enchantment to give power to the mumbling of five Latine words'.<sup>845</sup> For such God-making power to be invested in both Priest and spoken word was unacceptable.

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<sup>839</sup> *ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>840</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, pp.171, 173.

<sup>841</sup> *ibid.*, pp.173-174.

<sup>842</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, sig.A5v; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.255; Bayly, *Practise*, p.715; J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.67-68.

<sup>843</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.114.

<sup>844</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*; p.117; Hill, 'Communicant', p.15.

<sup>845</sup> Hill, 'Communicant', p.15.

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It might be imagined that other specific ceremonial issues, in particular the well-known puritan bugbears of kneeling to receive communion, and the making of the sign of the cross in Baptism, would attract similar ire, but this was not the case. The outright rejection of ceremony and outward action in sacraments was in fact a relatively niche sentiment compared to a general attitude of neutrality, which was manifested either in silence or in recourse to the position of *adiaphora*.

In a general sense, authors often warned their readers not to esteem outward things. Hill mentions only one necessary ‘outward’ characteristic for a worthy communicant – ‘a reverent hearing of the Word, and the like receiving of the Sacrament – but ten inward requirements’.<sup>846</sup> ‘How’, asked Wilcox, can ‘outward and corruptible things nourish inward and immortal substance?’<sup>847</sup> But on a range of specific ceremonies too, the overall impression conveyed in the corpus is one of neutrality. In the case of signing the cross in Baptism – deemed idolatrous by puritan opinion – this was achieved by virtual silence. Upon the Prayer Book’s injunction that ‘the Priest shall make a Crosse upon the Childes forehead’ and the defence of the same in the Canons of 1604, the works of the corpus offer no comment at all, save a probably metaphorically-meant aside from Hunt that to baptise was to ‘imprint the cross’ on the ‘foreheads’ of Christians, thus differentiating them from ‘ungodly sects and hereticks, all Turkes, Jewes, and Infidels’ and even the ‘Jacobites’.<sup>848</sup> It is a matter of historical record that some ministers considered here – Bradshaw for example, or Sibbes – clashed with the authorities on this issue, but their scruples do not surface in their devotional works.<sup>849</sup> Authors were also mainly silent on the arrangement of the communion table. Although most reform-minded clergy could probably reconcile themselves to the Prayer Book advice that ‘a fayre whyte linnen cloth’ cover the ‘table’ which should ‘stand in the body of the churche or in the chauncell’ – the same could not be said for the high-church predilection for decorative altar pieces adorned with fine plate, the term ‘altar itself, and the

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<sup>846</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.3.

<sup>847</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, p.82.

<sup>848</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.36.

<sup>849</sup> DNB, *Bradshaw, Sibbes*.

positioning of the same in ‘altarwise’ fashion.<sup>850</sup> Yet authors are quiet on such matters, save for four writers who contest the word ‘altar’ and one – John Frewen – who takes issue with grandiose chalices, explaining that the word merely signifies ‘any common and ordinary vessel to drinke in’.<sup>851</sup>

Whereas some ceremonies were given little attention, others were explicitly allotted a neutral or indifferent status. This applied to the mode of baptizing and the question of kneeling to receive communion. Authors tended to advocate a flexible approach to the administration of the Baptismal water which allowed for considerations of bodily robustness and climate.<sup>852</sup> John the Baptist, Christ himself, and the Apostles had baptised by dipping, but the authors who addressed this matter generally agreed with the Prayer Book that ‘yf the Childe be weake, it shall suffice to powre water upon it’. Draxe speaks of ‘diving, dipping or baptising’; the anonymous *Elements* has ‘dipping, washing or sprinkling’.<sup>853</sup> Stephen Denison provides the most considered analysis of the question, concluding that God ‘stands not upon the quantity of the outward element’; that sprinkling no less than dipping carries the appropriate signification of Christ’s blood; that in any case it could not be concluded that the Apostles ‘did baptize all with dipping’; that many ‘holy Churches’ practised sprinkling; and, most pragmatically, that ‘in cold countries: it might indanger the lives of infants to be dipped naked in could water in some clymates’.<sup>854</sup>

The theory behind such studied ambivalence was that of *adiaphora*: if a particular was not fundamental to worship, it could freely be altered according to circumstance, taste or need. John Denison defended kneeling on these grounds, reasoning thus:

All things indifferent, which are to be used in the service of God, are in the disposition of the Church. The Gesture in the Act of receiving the sacrament is a thing indifferent, and to be used in the service of God. Therefore the gesture in the act of receiving the Sacrament, is in the disposition of the Church.

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<sup>850</sup> BCP ‘The order for the Administration of the Lords Supper or Holy Communion’.

<sup>851</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.268.

<sup>852</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.23-33; Preston, *Short*, pp.2-3; Jewel, ‘*Treatise*’, p.22; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M2r; Hunt, *Devout*, p.46; Sparke, *High*, p.197.

<sup>853</sup> Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.M2r; Anon., *Elements*, sig.C3v. Some authors spoke *only* of sprinkling: Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.62; Egerton, *Methode*, p.15; Thomas, ‘Supper’, sig.D4v.

<sup>854</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, pp.23-24.

Such was the ‘generall judgement of divines, both ancient and moderne’.<sup>855</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, of the nine authors to consider kneeling directly, Denison was in a seven-to-two majority in considering it as indifferent rather than harmful.<sup>856</sup> ‘It is to be observed’, wrote Hunt, ‘that neither kneeling nor any other ceremonie is not simply, and in itself necessary. Of themselves’, ceremonies should ‘binde not the conscience...for the Kingdome of God consisteth not in outward things’.<sup>857</sup> The two authors to demur from this stance – Pemble and Preston – do so, but fleetingly. Pemble, whom it has been noted was an arch anti-ceremonialist, offers caution rather than acceptance, noting that the bowing of the knee will ‘profit little where Godliness is wanting’, and Preston notes during an attack on Catholic practice that ‘the Apostles received it [bread and wine] at the handes of Christ sitting, not kneeling, taking it, not lifting up their hands to it’.<sup>858</sup>

Yet it remained more common to defend kneeling. Indeed, some authors moved beyond mere defence into promotion. John Denison’s approach to the issue was twofold: first establishing that the Church had authority to impose kneeling, and second, showing that it is ‘to be imbraced’.<sup>859</sup> Several authors echoed such enthusiasm. Crashawe wrote that ‘kneeling in the very act of Breaking, giving and Receiving, is not onely lawful but convenient & commendable’.<sup>860</sup> Richard Hill’s ten justification for kneeling clustered around lawfulness but also the desirability of respectful and pious receiving. By kneeling ‘the better wee may lift up our hearts to God’; ‘by this gesture we are moved to receive with greater reverence’.<sup>861</sup> It may be that the majority silence on kneeling was a politic position masking hostility. Nevertheless, of the authors who do broach the issue, kneeling emerges as an unessential yet potentially beneficial practice. On this and other occasions authors could be embracing of ceremony and outwardness.

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<sup>855</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.294.

<sup>856</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.93-94; Attersoll, *Covenant*, sigs.A2r-3v; Crashawe, *Meate*; sigs.C2r-3v; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.72; Field, *Preparation*, pp.65-66; Hill, ‘Communicant’, pp.30-31; Hunt, *Devout*, p.185. Featley almost constitutes a tenth commentator on kneeling – he skirts the issue by advising the communicant to simply ‘prepare thy body by a decent gesture’: see Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.125.

<sup>857</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.198.

<sup>858</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.62; Preston, *Duties*, p.111.

<sup>859</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.293.

<sup>860</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.C2r.

<sup>861</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, pp.30, 31. Splendidly, the tenth reason is that kneeling is retained by the Church of Bohemia, *ibid.*, p.31.

Whilst anti-popery and ambivalence towards the Prayer Book inspired opposition and indifference towards certain ceremonies, there were also sound reasons for authors to embrace formality. Most fundamental was the fact that the ‘outwardness’ of sacraments was inescapably part and parcel of many key Reformed sacramental motifs, as noted when appraising the persistence of sensual apprehension: sacraments were signs: ‘outward signs’ of ‘inward grace’. Or, as Geree put it, the ‘matter of sacraments’ was twofold: ‘inward, which is Christ and his benefits, outward to wit the signes’.<sup>862</sup> When God graciously accommodated himself to man’s carnal capabilities by making sacraments earthly mediations of the heavenly, he also endorsed outward ceremony. ‘We are able’, stressed John Brinsley, ‘by outward signes and actions which we see, to conceive and be put in minde of the inward graces signified thereby’.<sup>863</sup> Outward things and circumstances – words, actions, elements, and people – were the badges of Christianity, the aids to memory, the visible portion of instrumentalist or parallelist theologies, the tangible route to communion with Christ. Large works of scholarship such as the books of Attersoll or Preston took outwardness as a defining concept; so too did the smallest Catechisms like that of Gawton.<sup>864</sup> Materiality – and therefore ceremony and outwardness also – was implicit in virtually every Reformed method of understanding sacraments, even at the same time that explicit corporeality and ceremoniousness were derided.

The inescapable externality of sacraments led authors to construct a set of inescapable requirements for their celebration. Certain parts of sacramental outward performance were considered immutable and essential. Attersoll’s schema for his vast work offers a typology involving four fundamental outward parts in each sacrament: the word, the element, the minister and the receiver.<sup>865</sup> The corpus is fairly united on the necessity of each. Most obvious was the last: a sacrament could not exist without participants, indeed, without what Hildersham rather imprecisely calls ‘a sufficient company of the faithfull’.<sup>866</sup> Around three quarters of works stressed the requirement of the Word, meaning the preaching of the Gospel,

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<sup>862</sup> Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A4v.

<sup>863</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, p.180.

<sup>864</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, Ch. headings; Preston, *Doctrine*, p.85; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B5v.

<sup>865</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, Ch. headings.

<sup>866</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.45-6.

in the ministration of sacraments.<sup>867</sup> The elements of water, bread and wine were also non-negotiable. This was contended against heretics, such as ‘certaine Christians of India’, reported by Greenwood to baptise with fire, and Catholics who were seen as guilty of intolerable meddling with the administration of bread and wine, such as mingling the two and denying the cup to the laity.<sup>868</sup> Against separatists, the requirement that sacraments be conducted by a valid minister was widely emphasised, as was their additional responsibility of examining before communion to ensure the purity of the faithful. Ministers were ‘keepers of his *seale*’, as Samuel Smith put it, God having ‘put as it were a rule and measure into their hands to measure every one by, that so they may know whom to allow, & whom to disallow’.<sup>869</sup>

For many authors some ceremonies were more than requirements born of the inescapably external nature of sacraments. They were promoted as valuable means of fostering devotion and enabling a theology of sacramental efficacy. Noted already is the use made of the spoken words of the *sursum corda* in the communion service, the words ‘lift up your hearts’ intended to encourage contemplation of the heavenly. Still more prominently, breaking, pouring and receiving of bread and wine were seized upon to foster devotion and power a theology of sacramental efficacy. Practically every text draws attention to this moment: even the tiny catechism of Fenton couches the Supper in terms of what happens ‘as I receive the bread and wine into my body’.<sup>870</sup> Very often an author allotted the fraction and libation its own section. Meditations were produced specifically for the time of receiving; instructions were laid down to guide communicant devotion not only during the breaking and pouring, but also the taking, the receiving, and during the actual moment of eating and drinking. Apprehension of the outward was the start of a devotional ascent.

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<sup>867</sup> Rogers stresses the importance of the vernacular: Rogers, *Seven*, p.214.

<sup>868</sup> Greenwood, ‘Tractate’, pp.18-19.

<sup>869</sup> S.Smith, *Supper*, p.191.

<sup>870</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v.

Towards ceremony and outwardness, the corpus of texts demonstrates a range of hostility, neutrality, and enthusiasm. What is the explanation?

Part of an answer is that clerics of different hues had genuinely different views on such matters. The lives, careers and outlooks of men such as Sutton and Donne on the one hand, and zealous godly figures such as Bradshaw and Pemble on the other, were completely different, even opposed. The ranks of the godly were hardly homogenous, since they included bishops like Downname and Webbe alongside those flirting with exclusion like Jenison and Dod. It is readily understandable that Sutton's translation of a Catholic work favours kneeling; and that Jenison and Sibbes decline to offer comment on the same or pronounce their opinion upon altars. Many clearly put into practise what Bradshaw had termed a 'politique subscription' to the status quo.<sup>871</sup>

Authors, then, were inevitably to some extent guided by a combination of conscience and tact on ceremonial matters. Might it be further suggested that many were also guided by the need to prioritise scripture over Prayer Book? Certainly, the feting of the fraction and libation – not in the Prayer Book, but deeply scriptural – perhaps demonstrates that authors saw the Bible as a greater authority than their official rite. However, for all that authors sought biblical justification for their writings, they do not for the most part come across as scriptural literalists in these works. For instance, on the subject of the sign of the cross in Baptism – present in the Prayer Book but only tenuously so in scripture – one might expect a mass condemnation, yet the corpus is silent on the issue. The scriptural case for the Prayer Book edict to kneel at communion was non-existent, yet many authors either ignored this topic, regarded it as *adiaphora*, or even defended the practice. Indeed, on one issue – the Catholic retention of unleavened bread in communion – a handful of authors can be found criticising a practice which clearly *was* scriptural, thus agreeing with the Prayer Book prescription 'that the breade be suche as is usual to be eaten at the table'.<sup>872</sup>

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<sup>871</sup> DNB, *Bradshaw*.

<sup>872</sup> BCP, 'The order of the ministration of the holy Communion'.

Thus the familiar narrative of militant puritans urging a lesser ceremonialism and a greater emphasis on scripture upon the established Church cannot satisfactorily explain the apparent jumble of Reformed responses to sacramental ceremony. However, when in addition the Reformed rubric of worthy receiving is considered, matters come into sharper focus.

There *was* a unified and consistent approach to the externals of worship which simultaneously comprehended rejection, ambivalence and enthusiasm. A minor part of this approach involved the dismissal of ceremony for its own sake, the rejection of Catholic practice and sometimes an indifference to certain ceremonies – either genuine or politically motivated. But the major part was a pragmatic willingness to conscript, where possible, ceremonies and outwardness into the rubric of receiving by faith. Ceremonies such as the *sursum corda* and fraction and libation were enthusiastically promoted because they were supreme opportunities for inward occurrence to mirror the outward ‘by faith’. ‘Lift up’ your ‘mindes by faith aboue all things worldly and sensible, and thereby to enter into heaven’, implores Boys.<sup>873</sup> By the outward elements in the Lord’s Supper, wrote Hunt, ‘wee might bee assured that as outwardly wee are partakers of bread and wine; so inwardly by faith wee participate with Christ and his merits’.<sup>874</sup> Outward ceremonies such as these therefore assisted, rather than undermined, faith in enabling sacramental efficacy.

Authors crafted this position by using a range of highly flexible evidential and argumentative techniques when considering the scriptural mandate for sacramental ceremonies, the elasticity of which allowed them to pick and choose ceremonies in a way which a simple elevation of scripture over prayer book would not. Crucially, authors had recourse to *adiaphora*, a subtle tool with which could be sculpted different gradations of enthusiasm, indifference or criticism. For example: Christ sat, but in so doing he did only what was customary, so it is of no consequence if kneeling, rather than sitting, is customary to us. On the other hand: Christ used unleavened bread, but in so doing did what was customary, so we should use leavened bread which is customary to us. In these two lines of argument, scripture is stretched, but reasonably so, on two axes. First the literal dictates of scripture could be overturned: something Christ did not do – kneeling – could be defended as contemporary practice at the same time that something he did do – use unleavened bread – could be condemned. Secondly, the degree to which the circumstantial nature of the original ‘fact’ should inform

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<sup>873</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.118.

<sup>874</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.124.

contemporary practice is malleable: Christ's posture at the Supper was ascribed little value as a precedent, whereas the original use of 'customary' bread was interpreted as binding. In addition to such strategies, scriptural literalism could be embraced when it suited, as demonstrated when authors insisted that Christ's scriptural instructions for the use of water, bread and wine were not to be altered.

There is a legitimate question to be asked here: why were some ceremonies made acceptable in this way while others were rejected or ignored? Could not ministers have found useful devotional and theological resonance in the elevation of the host, for example, or the making of the sign of the cross in Baptism? At what point did approved outward ceremonial transgress its theological and devotional integrity and become the kind of gratuitous, idolatrous, Roman ceremonial so derided?

One tempting reply would be to defend the consistency of the Reformed appropriation of ceremony by recalling that 'ceremonie' was broadly conceived as all outward parts of worship, and positing that the parts most conscripted were the logocentric and abstract ones such as the *sursum corda*, which fitted most comfortably with Reformed priorities. Yet the most praised aspect of ceremony in the assemblage of texts is the breaking, pouring and taking of bread and wine which, while derived exegetically, was in practice a theatrical event in which communicants were encouraged to draw meaning from physical actions and gestures. Such intent was not too dissimilar from the ceremoniousness at work in the detested mass.

Another possibility might be that Reformed sacramental ceremonial derived validity from the identity of its practitioners and their mode of functioning. The consecration of the elements is an example of a 'ceremonie' for which this might be argued. Authors were keen to emphasise that consecration was achieved, as Hildersham typically put it 'partly by that which Christ himselfe did in the first institution of this Sacrament, and partly by that which the Minister of the word of God and the congregation doe, whensoever this Sacrament is administred according to the institution of Christ'.<sup>875</sup> Collectively this trinity of Christ, minister and congregation, through their blessing, prayers and thanksgiving effected a transformation in water, bread and wine, which became changed in use, if not substance. This process was

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<sup>875</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.50. See also Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A5r; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.277.

presented as contrasting with Catholic practice, in which the priest uttered magical words to cast some kind of spell over the elements. But this line of argument could easily flounder, for it seemed to make the efficacy of the consecration dependent on the right intention of the people and minister. Hildersham, for instance, is forced to deal with the familiar issue of pollution, addressing the question of ‘whether those which are worthy receivers, are deprived of the benefit of the Sacrament, in co[m]municating with them which are unworthy’ and also ‘doth then the worthinesse and efficacie of the Sacrament, depend upon the goodnesse of the Minister that delivereth it unto us?’.<sup>876</sup>

What was true for consecration was true for ceremony in general. When authors defended it they had a problem to surmount; for allotting ceremony a key role in the functioning of sacraments involved ascribing that ceremonial power not to individual words, or magical actions, but holistically to the prayers, actions and worship of all assembled. But if ceremonial efficacy was contingent on all gathered, what happened when those assembled were less than pure or less than focused, less than worthy? This required authors to divest minister and congregation of the responsibility of underwriting the purity of ceremony. It was difficult to do so without something of the magical association remaining. ‘That there may be a Sacrament’, stressed Francis Dillingham, ‘a minister *must recite the words of institution*’.<sup>877</sup>

Ultimately, the rules governing the Reformed endorsement of sacramental ceremony seem to have been pragmatic rather than idealistic. When a ceremony could be used devotionally to illustrate and facilitate preferred Reformed ideas, such as receiving by faith, it was conscripted to that cause. But ultimately the Reformed had to work with what they had, and against what their enemies had. The authors assessed here were not, with one or two marginal exceptions, separatists. Their devotional reflections on sacramental partaking had to centre on the de facto set of rites and ceremonies which existed in the Church at that time, and had to reject the most detested aspects of Catholic practice. It is at this point, therefore, that the framework of ecclesiastical conflict retains its usefulness – in contextualising the inconsistencies which arose from the Reformed pick-and-choose approach to sacramental

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<sup>876</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.11, 55-56.

<sup>877</sup> Dillingham, ‘Preparative’, p.91. Original italics.

ceremonial. But the fundamental point remains that authors made use of ceremony within the confines of a greater concern – that of propounding the rubric of receiving by faith

## CHAPTER FOUR: COMMUNITY, MORALITY AND COMMUNION REQUIREMENTS

### Further requirements of worthiness

Knowledge and Faith were essential characteristics of a worthy receiver, but authors almost always specified other qualities in addition to these. Of the fifty-five texts which itemise worthiness we can also count eighteen recommendations of 'love'<sup>878</sup>, seventeen of 'reconciliation'<sup>879</sup>, fifteen of 'charity'<sup>880</sup> and seven exhortations that receivers should come equipped with evidence of moral renewal in their lives<sup>881</sup>. More widespread still was the requirement of 'repentance', stipulated by forty-six authors.<sup>882</sup> What was meant by all these necessary qualities?

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<sup>878</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r; Anon., *Motives*, p.12 (with reconciliation); Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.506; Bayly, *Practise*, pp.738-9 (with charity); Boys, *Exposition*; Bruch, 'Treatise', p.265; Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B8v; Dod, 'Dialogue'; Downname, *Guide*, p.499; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M7v (with charity); Gawton, *Short*, sig.B7r (with charity); Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A6v; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.94-5 (with charity); Hill, 'Communicant', p.26; Hunt, *Devout*, p.161; Jenison, *Directions*., sig.B3v (with charity); Pagit, *Short*, sig.D6r; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.15; Preston, *Duties*, p.152; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.B8r; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.70; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.104; Tozer, *Directions*, p.111; Tuke, *Guest*, pp.99-100; Tymme, 'Court', p.263; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D4r; Whiting, *Short*, p.11; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.70; Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*.

<sup>879</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r (with love); Anon., *Motives*, p.12; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.545; S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.13 (be at peace with all men); Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.C7v (with charity); Gawton, *Short*, sig.C7r (with charity); Hill, 'Communicant', p.26 (with love); Pagit, *Short*, sig.D6r; Preston, *Duties*, p.28; Rogers, *Seven*, p.219; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.104; Sparke, *High*, pp.209-10. Wilcox, *Substance*, p.71.

<sup>880</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B8v; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.267; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.C7v; Gawton, *Short*, sig.C7r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.94-5; Hunt, *Devout*, p.164; Inman, *Light*, p.7; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B3v; Preston, *Duties*, p.29; Randall, *Sermons*, pp.197-8; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.90; Sparke, *High*, pp.209-10; Tozer, *Directions*, p.109; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D4r (with charity).

<sup>881</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.87; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.102 (New Obedience); Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4v; Anon., *Motives*, p.12 ('to lead a new life in some good measure'); J. Denison, *Banquet*, pp.263-4 (leaving of sin); Fist, *Catechisme*, sigs.C6v-7r (with repentance); Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.B1v-3v (with repentance); Crashawe, *Meate*; Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A6r (new obedience).

<sup>882</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r; Anon., *Motives*, pp.11-12; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.537; Bayly, *Practise*, pp.736-7; Boys, *Exposition*; p.111; Bradshaw, *Direction*, p.95; Brinsley, *Watch*, p.80; Bruch, 'Treatise', pp.263-4; Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.B5v; Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B8v; J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.260; Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C6v; Dod, 'Dialogue', p.2; Downname, *Guide*, p.499; Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.C7v; Estey, 'Supper', sig.B3v; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v; Field, *Preparation*, p.16; Fist, *Catechism*, sigs.C6v-7r; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6v; Geree, *Catechisme*, sig. A6r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.80; Hill, 'Communicant', p.22; Hunt, *Devout*, p.161; Inman, *Light*, p.7; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B1v; Page, 'Supper', p.34; Pagit, *Short*, sig.D6r; Pemble, *Introduction*, p.53; Perkins, *Foundation*, sig.C2v; Preston, *Duties*, p.31; Randall, *Sermons*, pp.197-8; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.B7v; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.70; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.79; Sparke, *High*, pp.208-9; Thornborough, *Testament*, p.38; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.50, 72-93; Tuke, *Guest*, pp.155-6; Tymme, p.243; 'Court'; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D3v; Whiting, *Short*, p.11; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.69; Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.3.

Reconciliation, love, charity and repentance were overlapping terms which collectively promoted two basic and desirable properties in a communicant: a right relationship with God, and a right relationship with one's 'brethren' or 'neighbours'. Reconciliation could cover both elements. Preston, for example, proposes a threefold scheme of preparation involving examination 'of our sinnes past and present, of our reconciliation with God, of our reconciliation with our brethren'.<sup>883</sup> Tozer employed a similar distinction. 'As for our reconciliation', he wrote, 'wee are to examine our selves in those things which concern either God or our Neighbours; because we have and doe often offend both'.<sup>884</sup> The fraternal sense of 'reconciliation' was the more consistently treated. It consisted of forgiving and seeking forgiveness, thereby ending disputes or breaches. Fenton's extremely small catechism made this a condition of communion: 'that if any offence bee between others and mee, that I reconcile myselfe unto them, and forgive them as Christ hath forgiven me'.<sup>885</sup> A communicant should, for Rogers, have 'no swelling, nor rising of heart against any man or woman, no although they be his utter enemies: *but be reconciled to them*, and at peace with them, as he desireth to be with the Lord'.<sup>886</sup>

The requirement of love was similarly directed partly towards God, but mainly towards fellow believers. In the Godward direction, Pemble prescribed as a requirement: 'Love unto Christ, in a holy affection of the soule, carrying us with full desire to the enjoying of him, & making us to preferre our communion with him, before all things that in this world may challenge our dearest respect'.<sup>887</sup> Gere and Downame also mention this necessary expression of love towards God – Downame writing of the need to renew 'our love towards God and our neighbours, and all other saving graces in us'.<sup>888</sup> However, 'love' was mainly considered – as with repentance – in the fraternal sense of mutual reconciliation between men. Bruch gave an extended characterisation of the requirement, demanding that a receiver ask

...first, whether our hearts be upright towards our brethren, as we would that theirs should be towards us; secondly whether we can be content to remit and passe by

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<sup>883</sup> Preston, *Duties*, pp.20-31

<sup>884</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.73.

<sup>885</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v.

<sup>886</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.219.

<sup>887</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.15.

<sup>888</sup> Downame, *Guide*, p.499; Gere, *Catechisme*, sig.A6v.

their offences towards us, as wee would that they should passe by ours towards them: thirdly, whether, where we have given each offence, or done any wrong and injury in word and deede, wee be ready to confesse it, and to make amends'.<sup>889</sup>

It can be seen from the second and third of Bruch's observations that 'love' carried much the same associations of forgiveness and repair of damaged relationships as did reconciliation. These priorities can also be glimpsed in Dod's 'rules' of love:

*Q. What rules are we to observe in love?*

1. If any indignitie or injurie have beene offered us, wee must forgive and forget the same...
2. If wee have done wrong unto others, wee must undoe it again: otherwise our sacrifice and service cannot be accepted.<sup>890</sup>

However, although the demands of love overlapped with those of reconciliation, they were also sometimes slightly broader, encompassing not only the resolution of mutual discord, but the positive hope for the good of others. This is hinted at in Bruch's 'upright' hearts; but is made more explicit by other authors, such as Hunt who wrote that we must 'heartily desire' the 'good' of fellow receivers, 'both of soule and body'.<sup>891</sup> In a similar (if slightly less generous) spirit, Gereë defined love as a 'gracious affection of the heart whereby we wish and endeavour good to all especially to the godly'.<sup>892</sup>

This generality of good-feeling characteristic of love was mirrored by the generality of recipients to whom it was due. Love was a mark of Christianity itself: a 'mark or cognisance by which we are known to be Christes disciples' as Samuel Smith put it; or a 'badge' of the same, according to Tozer.<sup>893</sup> Wilcox's account excellently summarizes the intended liberality of love and its capacity to identify and bind the all believers. He defines love first in terms of forgiveness and reconciliation, but added: 'I meane further by love, which is an inward affection of the heart, the sincere and outwarde testifying of the same, by wordes, deeds,

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<sup>889</sup> Bruch, 'Treatise', pp.265-6.

<sup>890</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.13.

<sup>891</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.179-80.

<sup>892</sup> Gereë, *Catechisme*, sig.A7r.

<sup>893</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.108; Tozer, *Directions*, p.110.

countenances, and other meanes, as the Lord shall give occasion'.<sup>894</sup> Warming further to his theme, he continues, that love should not be expressed:

...to our friends onely, or to our enemies also, which is somewhat more; but generally to all men, though to some in greater measure, as to the Household of fayth, our wives, Children and Parents &c and to some that be yet without and be somewhat further off by nature and kindred.<sup>895</sup>

Yet although subtly different in scope, reconciliation and love were in essence very similar qualities, sharing a core meaning of forgiveness and renovation of relationships. Indeed, the two were frequently used in conjunction. Samuel Smith couples the two qualities together when he prescribes 'love to man, or reconciliation to our brethren'; the anonymous *Elements of the Beginning* defined love as 'being reconciled to them that wee have offended'; whilst the similarly anonymous *Motives to Godly Knowledge* bundles together reconciliation, love and forgiveness, when describing the last precondition of receiving:

Lastly, whether I can, unfeynedly, forgive them that have offended me, seeke their amendment (being a misse) then be reconciled unto them; and so expresse the true testimonies of Christian love towards all, even my very enemies<sup>896</sup>

Reconciliation and love were also similarly treated in that authors presented both of them in the mirror of Christ, using the argument that we could hardly expect of Christ that which we were unwilling to dispense to our fellows. We have already seen that Fenton's examinee reeks reconciliation with others 'as Christ hath forgiven me'; and that Rogers proposes a man be reconciled with his enemy, 'as he disireth to be with the Lord'.<sup>897</sup> Dod's text and *Elements* both pointed out that a similar truth obtained to love, as did Gawton, whose basic catechism noted that 'to love all men unfaignedly, even our enemies' involved 'reconciling ourselves to all such as wee have offended and freely forgiving all those who any way offended us, even as God freely for Christs sake forgave us'.<sup>898</sup> As Jenison pointed out, the requirement to forgive that we might be forgiven was fundamental, embedded in the Lord's Prayer. 'We

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<sup>894</sup> Wilcox, *Substance*, pp.71-2.

<sup>895</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>896</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.104; Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r; Anon., *Motives*, sixth requirement, p.12.

<sup>897</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.A3v; Rogers, *Seven*, p.219.

<sup>898</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.13; Anon., *Elements*, sig.C6r. Gawton, *Short*, sig.B7r.

must also be in love and perfect charity with our neighbours', he wrote, 'as we, our selves in the Lords Prayer desire to be forgiven as wee our selves forgive others'.<sup>899</sup> If the evincing of fraternal love and reconciliation might happily assure us of Christ's goodwill towards us, the absence of it could only signal the converse. 'He is unworthy to receive the bread, that hateth any of his members', wrote Tuke. 'If a man be out of love with his neighbour, his love is crazed towards god himselfe'.<sup>900</sup>

The quality of 'charity' implied needfulness, and as such was a term which directed a receiver's relations to other Christians rather than to God, who could not be said to need anything. In the context of Christian fraternity, charity bore close resemblance to reconciliation and love, implying the same core themes of fraternal forgiveness and good intention. Jenison, as we have seen above, couples 'charity' with 'love'; Tozer equates it to reconciliation.<sup>901</sup> Hildersham's definition of charity, his sixth and final necessary quality for worthy receiving, was fairly typical in linking all three:

No man can be worthy and fit to come unto the Lords table, that doth not unfainedly forgive all that have any way offended him, and cast off al purpose and desire of revenge: 2. that is not willing (in love and obedience to God, and desire to winne his neighbour unto peace) to seeke reconciliation with all such as hee hath beene at variance with, yea though they be his inferiours, and though the offence began on their part: that 3. doth not love all men (even his enemies) and that not in word onely but in deed and truth, being ready by all meanes to doe them good: 4. that doth not beare an intire and brotherly affection to all the godly, abounding so much the more in love to them as hee seeth the graces of God to abound in them.<sup>902</sup>

This four-part appraisal of charity moves through familiar themes: forgiveness; willingness to seek reconciliation (even with 'inferiours'); love for all men; and 'intire and brotherly affection to all the godly'. (Hildersham in this instance, as with Geree above, cannot have felt a contradiction between his third and fourth points; probably in these instances the godly mind entertained hopes that all mankind possessed hints of godliness and were thus worthy of love.) The same close correlation between reconciliation, love and charity was exhibited by

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<sup>899</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sigs.B3v-4r.

<sup>900</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.99-100.

<sup>901</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B3v; Tozer, *Directions*, pp.72-93, 100-131.

<sup>902</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.94-5.

several other authors, and was summarily expressed in Draxe's catechism, which cites Matthew 5 in defining charity as whether one can 'love good men, and wishe well even to his enemies, and seeke daily to reconcile himselfe unto his neighbour, whom he hath wronged or offended'.<sup>903</sup>

Reconciliation, love, and charity – and the right relationships uniting a receiver with God and his fellow believers which such qualities promoted – were not only essential in themselves. They were necessary to receive the Supper worthily. The Prayer Book read: 'Amende your lives, and be in perfect charitie wyth all men, so shal ye be mete partakers of those holy misteries', sentiments which were echoed by many authors.<sup>904</sup> 'Injuries, wrongs, and offences' against our neighbour were, warned Attersoll in his section on reconciliation, 'as poyson to this bankuet'.<sup>905</sup> John Denison stated that the capacity of the sacrament to provide comfort was diminished by disunity amongst the receivers. 'How can the Eucharist be a sacrament of comfort, that is celebrated in discord?' he asked.<sup>906</sup> Indeed, it was posited that a sense of concord and fraternity, of being reconciled to God and fellow man, was fundamental to the very institution and essence of a sacrament. The Supper was ordained, according to Dod, 'as a seale of the mutuall fellowship, and communion of Gods people, as with their head Christ, so with one another'.<sup>907</sup> For Samuel Smith, the ordination of the Supper was for 'this end': 'that it might be a seale of love, and a band or chaine to knit us fast unto another'.<sup>908</sup> In this regard, 'not unfitly is this sacrament called the *Communion*, to shew that there would bee a holy and blessed agreement amongst those that come thereunto yf they come in *love*, with one hart and mind, even as one man'.<sup>909</sup> Smith at this point quotes the apostle: '*We that are many are one bread and one body, because wee are all partakers of one bread.*'<sup>910</sup> Tymme was another whose treatment of love involved a Pauline message of communality, thus rendering the sacrament necessarily communal. We are 'in many waies, and in sundry sorts exhorted to this love and brotherly concord, in the holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ', he concluded.<sup>911</sup> Thus for Dod, Smith and Tymme, love was essential in a communicant

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<sup>903</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.C7v.

<sup>904</sup> BCP

<sup>905</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.545.

<sup>906</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.267.

<sup>907</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.13.

<sup>908</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.108.

<sup>909</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>910</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>911</sup> Tymme, 'Court', pp.264-5.

because unity and fraternity were essential components of the Supper. What these authors concluded under the heading of ‘love’, others deduced elsewhere. Stephen Denison’s *Compendious Catechism*, for example, approaches the communal role of the Supper via a consideration of the ‘peace and charitie’ required in a communicant:

Q. What kind of peace and charitie is required to be in them?

A. It is required of them, that as much as in them lyeth, they be at peace with all men: and also that they come to this holy Supper with unity of judgement and affection.<sup>912</sup>

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The quality of repentance, defined by Richardson as ‘a hearty sorrow for our sins past, and a full purpose to leade a godlie life for the time to come’, also pertained to the ties between man and God and between fellow believers.<sup>913</sup> Repentance faced backwards to acknowledge sin, and forwards to rectify it. Trawling the past to perceive and acknowledge sin was accomplished using the law, that which Field called the ‘*looking glass* of the soule, which showeth every spot and wrinkle’, in which we shall find the soul ‘strangely *deformed* with spots and stains: nay, much *defaced* with byles, ulcers and wounds’.<sup>914</sup> We must ‘humbly confess’, wrote Tuke, that even ‘our purest actions are pudled with sin’.<sup>915</sup> The identification of the soul’s iniquities required, for Boys, ‘Contrition’; Pagit says a communicant will ‘detest and abhorreth’ sin; for Fenton, an examinee should feel his ‘heart inwardly grieved for...sinnes with an hatred and loathing of the same’.<sup>916</sup> ‘Before we presume to come to the Lords table’, wrote Fist in his catechism, we ought ‘to be heartily sorie for our sins: least that we make ourselves guilty of the body and blood of Christ, as *Judas* did’.<sup>917</sup> Yet propelled by this sorrow, a penitent also had to look forward to the amendment of sin. After we have ‘carefully lifted’ our ‘hearts and behaviour’ and confessed sorrow for the sins uncovered, wrote Dod, we must ‘purpose and resolve for ever hereafter (through Gods gracious

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<sup>912</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.13.

<sup>913</sup> Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.B7v.

<sup>914</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.34.

<sup>915</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.92.

<sup>916</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.113; Pagit, *Short*, sig.D6r; Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.B3v.

<sup>917</sup> Fist, *Catechisme*, sig.C7r.

assistance) to reforme both our harts and wayes'.<sup>918</sup> Such a change of 'wayes', which Attersoll called 'a reformation of our life and affections', involved a renewed attention to our relationship with God, but also with others.<sup>919</sup> The truly penitent, according to Preston, after affliction with 'tender harts, even like melting waxe', could not fail to bring forth 'fruites worthie of the amendment of life'. These included care 'not to breake the least of Gods commandments', 'respect unto one, and all', and exhibiting a 'conscience voyd of offence towards God and man'.<sup>920</sup>

Thus the process of being repentant encompassed these poles of sin-centred despair and sin-surpassing optimism. Jenison expressed this in technical theological language, bifurcating his definition of repentance into 'mortification' on the one hand, and 'vivification' on the other.<sup>921</sup> But in most texts these two aspects of repentance found expression in more prosaic form, such as the simple definition of Geree: 'A turning from sinne to God'.<sup>922</sup> This image was also employed by Attersoll, Frewen, Hill, and Gawton, whose definition was: 'a true conversion and turning to God, in an holy life and conversation'.<sup>923</sup> This was the core of repentance: a recognition of sin and a consequent 'cleaving unto God', as John Denison put it.<sup>924</sup> Many authors propounded this basic view. Draxe, for example, defined repentance as 'whether he repent of all his knowne sinnes, and have a care and resolution to do those things that please God'.<sup>925</sup> Dering's influential catechism does not mention 'repentance' by name, but clearly has the motif of 'turning from sin to God' in mind when outlining his second required quality: 'to examine my selfe whether I find my hart inwardlie sorrie for my sinnes, with an inward hatred and lothing of sin, and an earnest desire and a sure purpose, wholie to conforme by selfe to the will of Gods word'.<sup>926</sup>

This basic idea of repentance could, as we have hinted, be stretched thematically to emphasise, at one pole, the sheer ugliness of men's souls in the mirror of the law, and at the

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<sup>918</sup> Dod, 'Dialogue', p.2.

<sup>919</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.537.

<sup>920</sup> Preston, *Duties*, pp.32, 33-6. For the forward temporal orientation of repentance: see also, for the J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.261; Bruch, 'Treatise', pp.263-4; Hill, 'Communicant', p.22.

<sup>921</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B2r.

<sup>922</sup> Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A6r.

<sup>923</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*; pp.537-8; Frewen, *Grounds*, p.326; Hill, 'Communicant', p.22; Gawton, *Short*, sig.B6v.

<sup>924</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.265.

<sup>925</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.C7v.

<sup>926</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.C6v.

other, the necessity of godly reformation of life and manners. In some texts this expansion involved a detailed subdivision of the different parts of repentance. Samuel Smith's extensive treatise provides an example: he recommends a search into 'the many secret lurking-holes' which might be 'unspied', in order to achieve the first stage which is 'to see sin'.<sup>927</sup> This is followed by 'to be humbled by sin', to feel 'godly sorrow' (for the discerning of which are provided four means of enquiry), and 'to leave and forsake sin'.<sup>928</sup> John Denison recommends a similar progression of sighting sin, loathing it, leaving it and 'cleaving unto God', whilst Field lists eight parts of true repentance under three subheadings.<sup>929</sup>

Although similar to the other godly pre-requisite qualities in respect to its Janus-faced nature, repentance was rendered distinctive by virtue of the issues of sin, forgiveness and salvation to which it pertained. This distinctiveness and its implications will be examined in greater detail in the course of this chapter; for now we may simply note that authors ascribed to repentance a certain salvific importance, and that this made it an especially necessary quality in a worthy communicant. 'I have staid the longer upon this point', wrote Field to conclude his treatment of the subject, 'because as there is no salvation without Repentance; so there can be no profitable access to the Lords Table without it'.<sup>930</sup> 'It behoveth Christ to suffer and to rise againe', proclaimed Thornborough, 'that repentance and remission of sinnes might be preached in his name to all nations'.<sup>931</sup> Because the Supper involved true apprehension of Christ, it was impossible that repentance, hard-won by Christ for our benefit, should not attend a worthy receiver. 'Therefore all the wicked, who do not, nor can feede on the body of Christ, are to be put from this holy Table, till by repentance they seeke, and finde Christ; not in the fained repentance of *Iudas*...But in the faithfull, sorrowfull, & devoutly contrite heart of *Peter*'.<sup>932</sup> Thus there were at least three reasons to examine for repentance: it was a good in itself bringing about behavioural reformation; it was a soteriological imperative (as Hill's catechism put it: we repent 'for feare we goe not to Hell'); and it was necessary for the Supper, an occasion of particularly direct exposure to the salvific realm and thus required duties appropriate to it to be fulfilled if unworthy receiving and damnation were to be

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<sup>927</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.82-3.

<sup>928</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>929</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.265; Field, *Preparation*, pp.40-4.

<sup>930</sup> Field, *Preparation*, pp.50-1.

<sup>931</sup> Thornborough, p.38; *Testament*

<sup>932</sup> *ibid.*

avoided.<sup>933</sup> ‘Our sacrificed spotlesse Passeover cannot bee eaten with the sowre leaven of malice and wickednes’, wrote Bayly, quoting Chapter Five of 1 Corinthians. ‘Neither can the olde bottles of our corrupt and impure consciences, retaine the new wine of Christs precious bloud’. ‘Wee must therefore truely repent’, he concluded, ‘if we will bee worthy partakers’.<sup>934</sup>

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The analysis of qualities such as these, and a corresponding emphasis on the right relationships with God and brethren which they connoted, were common facets of the primary literature. In total fifty-five texts set out requirements for communion – but only three of these fail to mention at least one of reconciliation, love, charity and repentance.<sup>935</sup> The theme of improved relationships with God and man was pervasive, even in texts which did not stipulate a set menu of worthiness requirements. Donne, less given than most to formulaic writing, does not anywhere in his sermon explicitly propose pre-requisites for receiving. However, he certainly promoted the quality of reconciliation implicitly, in the course of considering the righteousness of Simeon ‘in the eyes of men’. Jewel’s treatise frequently skirted the issues of sin and sorrow, and also stressed a certain communal moral uprightness in his list of those prohibited from receiving: ‘Let no uncleane or filthy person, no adulterer, no usurer, no cruel exocutioner or devourer of Gods people, offer himselfe to the receiving of this sacrament’.<sup>936</sup>

A modern label for these qualities of love, reconciliation, charity and repentance, which looked both to God and Man with zealous goodness towards each, might be that they are part of the ‘moral economy’. Some contemporary ones were ‘good duties of a godly life’ (Downname) and a ‘reformation of our life and affections’ (Attersoll).<sup>937</sup> The vocabulary of newness was another important descriptor. For Bradshaw both repentance, which

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<sup>933</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, p.23.

<sup>934</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.737-8.

<sup>935</sup> Dillingham, Field, Sutton.

<sup>936</sup> Jewel, ‘Treatise’, pp.72-3.

<sup>937</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.924; Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.537.

encompassed sorrow for sin, and ‘new obedience’, which was ‘a constant purpose and endeavour to obey and please God in all things, for Christs sake’, were themselves encompassed by ‘newnesse of life’, which was ‘a life reformed according to the worde of God’.<sup>938</sup> Likewise Horne’s small catechism prescribed ‘Godly sorrow for our past, and purpose of new life’.<sup>939</sup> Crashawe spoke of ‘a resolution to become new creatures, and to practice new obedience every day more and more’.<sup>940</sup>

In addition to urging a communicant’s amendment – newness – of life as necessary, authors often provided the believer with the appropriate tools to audit his moral status. Most larger texts contain sections in which one or many aspects of godly conduct can be conceptualised and assessed. This was the case when authors had guided communicants in the assessment of knowledge and faith, and we have also noted that it occurred with regard to repentance. In Bradshaw’s work are offered eleven methods of trying ‘new obedience’, in addition to seventeen marks of repentance.<sup>941</sup> Hill lists five ‘properties’ of new obedience, and eight of reconciliation.<sup>942</sup> Mostly such guides involved the reflection of the conscience in the mirror of the law, combined with diligent inner searching, although Jenison made the further suggestion that a man might profitably examine for reconciliation with the help of a ‘faithful friend’, and Tozer proposed ‘seasonable conference and conversation with such as are themselves touched with their sinnes’.<sup>943</sup> By such techniques the treatment of these qualities went beyond an abstract consideration of their constituent parts; rather, authors urged their readers to actually undertake the spiritual exercise of searching for one’s own moral weaknesses and strengths, with advice on avoiding the former and cultivating the latter. ‘How may I stirre up my selfe to be thus obedient?’, enquired Hunt’s catechism.<sup>944</sup> ‘What must we do if there be any breach of love betweene us and others?’, enquired Geree’s.<sup>945</sup> This itemisation and problematisation of morality (or ‘godliness’) had significant ramifications for practical theology.

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<sup>938</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.95-109.

<sup>939</sup> Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4v.

<sup>940</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.B8v.

<sup>941</sup> Bradshaw, *Direction*, pp.103-9.

<sup>942</sup> Hill, ‘Communicant’, pp.25-7.

<sup>943</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B2v; Tozer, *Directions*, p.75.

<sup>944</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, p.167.

<sup>945</sup> Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A7r.

Qualities such as reconciliation, love, charity and repentance simultaneously related an examinee to God and to fellow Christians. The temporal orientation of the moral qualities was also double, relating not only to the time *before* partaking but to the time *afterwards* too. Insofar as they were pre-requisites they faced backwards; insofar as they promoted reformation of self and relationships, they pointed forwards. This is observable in many definitions of repentance, a quality which must, according to Tozer, ‘have respect both unto the time past, and to come’.<sup>946</sup> ‘Repentance’, wrote Estey, ‘or amendment of life...must be: 1. of the whole man 2. alwayes profiting and going forward’.<sup>947</sup> For Boys it is sorrow for sins past but also a ‘resolution to prevent, so farre as we can, all sinne to come’; for Dod penitents must decide ‘whether we purpose and resolve for ever hereafter (through Gods gracious assistance) to reforme both our harts and wayes’.<sup>948</sup> Bayly’s formulation is emphatically clear that repentance carries into the future:

True Repentance is a holy change of the minde, when upon the feeling sight of Gods mercy, and of a mans owne misery, hee turneth from all his known and secret sinnes to serve God in holinesse and righteousnesse, all the rest of his daies.<sup>949</sup>

Such concerns for future, as well as past, conduct are common in the corpus. Sometimes they are communicated at length; sometimes with brevity as in Whiting’s basic catechism, which invited a receiver to try ‘whether he be penitent, and sorie for his sinnes past, purposing to leave them, and to live godlie, endeavouring himselfe to be in brotherly love and charity with all men’.<sup>950</sup> Whiting is typical in looking forward from the vantage point of repentance, although other qualities could also imply ongoing praxis. Stephen Denison stipulated that a true penitent should ‘daily...cleave unto the lord’; Horne recommends ‘purpose of good life’; whilst Draxe’s catechism stresses the ongoing importance of ‘daily’ charity, asking a communicant to examine ‘whether hee love good men, and wis[h] well even to his enimies, and seeke daily to reconcile himselfe unto his neighbour, whom he hath wronged or offended’.<sup>951</sup>

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<sup>946</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.75.

<sup>947</sup> Estey, ‘Supper’, sig.B3v.

<sup>948</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.113; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, p.2.

<sup>949</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.736-7.

<sup>950</sup> Whiting, *Short*, p.11.

<sup>951</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.147; Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4v ; Draxe, ‘Appendix’, sig.C7v.

The association between the moral qualities and the future was often explicit on the occasions when authors dwelt specifically upon the time after sacraments. Meditations, list of duties, considerations, reflections, instructions about what a communicant should feel, and set-piece prayers all catered for the ‘after’ component, and nearly all of these referred to an enhanced godliness. Hildersham, for instance, expressed a typical concern: ‘that wee returne not againe’ to sin ‘as the dogge to his vomit’.<sup>952</sup> For Downname the time after communion required ‘the perfecting of our sanctification’; for Brinsley a ‘further resolution...to leade a holy life’; for Wilcox a communicant should take pains to ensure that he was ‘growing in a sound Fayth, which worketh by love, and bringeth foorth all good workes’ – thus echoing the Prayer Book’s appeal that after communion God might ‘assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy felowship, and do all suche good workes as thou hast prepared for us to walke in’.<sup>953</sup> Sutton’s Protestantised version of Catholic eucharistic meditations, awash with prayers and improving soliloquies intended for the time after receiving, centres squarely on moral exhortation arising from having received. One prayer beseeches ‘that I may daily profit in vertue & godlines’, that ‘I may goe forward in pietie towards God, instruction towards my selfe, charitie towards my neighbour’.<sup>954</sup>

### **Introspection vs. Community: evidence of the moral qualities**

Sacraments were signs and seals of grace to the individual, but they were also badges of Christianity and means of achieving communion with Christ and fellow believers. They were enabled by personally-applied faith, but at the same time were emblems of a more generous and broad definition of ‘the faithful’. This section analyses more fully the polarities of introspection and communal-mindedness in Reformed sacramentology, by considering the methodology, and syllabus, of examination prior to receiving holy communion, especially the ‘moral qualities’ which form the focus of this chapter.

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<sup>952</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.136. See also Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, pp.95-6.

<sup>953</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.924; Brinsley, *Watch*, p.186; Wilcox, *Substance*, p.88.

<sup>954</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.169r.

The process of preparing and examining oneself for participation in sacraments encapsulates much of what we have come to think of as puritan introversion. Authors urged intensive interrogation of the soul. The tone of Hildersham's advice about was fairly typical in the high level of self-absorption prescribed:

Euery one...must sequester himselfe from all other businesse, that might any way distract him, and carefullie set his whole mind and heart upon this worke that he is to goe about, taking some time to examine himselfe, whether those things bee in him, that may make him a worthy receiuer of this holy Sacrament.<sup>955</sup>

Rogers, whose *Seven Treatises* was a foundational text of puritan piety, advised similarly, urging that examinees 'goe apart by themselves, and laying all other things aside, seriously enter into due consideration, what accuseth them, and troubleth their conscience'.<sup>956</sup> Having thus 'taken a *due surueigh* both of thy sins & miseries', advised Bayly, 'retire to some secret place, and there putting thy selfe in the sight of the *Judge* as a *guilty malefactor* standing at the Barre to receiue his sentence'.<sup>957</sup>

It was important that the trial, once begun, was intense. The very word *examine*, noted Boys, 'notes a diligent and exact inquirie, such as Lapidaries and Goldsmiths use to finde out true mettall from counterfeit, good from bad'.<sup>958</sup> To the original Pauline instruction to 'examine' before communicating, Boys added the further biblical cases of the Shunamite searching for Elisha, Mary searching for Christ, and 'the woman for her lost groate' – all examples of what Samuel Smith called a 'narrow search'.<sup>959</sup> The search should be extended and utterly thorough, leaving no corner of the soul uncovered. Sutton's exemplar of an ideal receiver – 'a certaine virgin' – began to prepare herself 'some two daies before' – a period evoked by the story of the Passover, and also suggested by Jenison.<sup>960</sup> 'Thou shouldest sit in judgement of thy selfe', preached Henry Smith, 'and call thy thoughtes, and speaches & actions to give in

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<sup>955</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.2-3.

<sup>956</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.219.

<sup>957</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.717.

<sup>958</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.110.

<sup>959</sup> *ibid.*; S. Smith, *Supper*, p.82.

<sup>960</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.C4v.

evidence against thee’, with the aim of establishing ‘whether thou be a Christian, or an Infidell, a sonne or a bastard, a servant or a rebell, a Protestant or an hypocrite’.<sup>961</sup>

The melancholic potential of such examination can be seen in Pemble’s treatise. After noting that we should ‘take all opportunities that shall bee offered us for the exercise of this duty’ – because we are ‘not at all times alike disposed to this; there are speciall occasions that fit us for it’ – Pemble unfolds a series of hypothetical happenings which might instil a suitable frame of mind for examination – a passage which deserves quotation in full:

Many times one sad accident or other turnes home our thoughts to our selves, and makes us see what we are in other men. The losse of a deare friend, the sound of a passing-bell, the sight of a dying man, hath a strange vertue many times, to compose a disordered heart, putting it into an excellent calmenesse to attend any religious imployment. Sometimes a Sermon hath set us to rights, and sent us home quickned with much holy affection more than ordinary. Sometimes vacation from all businesse, lends many a silent and still houre. Sometimes a fit of naturall melancholy and pensivenesse, makes us apt for inbred speculation. Sometimes a wakefull bed calls upon us to examine our hearts. Many such occasions God offers, if wee were wise to see them, and willing to make use of them. Much were gained in this, and all other Christian practices, by the observation of such seasonable opportunities: if our folly and sloath did not robbe us of so great a benefit.<sup>962</sup>

Pemble’s exhortation to examine did not, however, cease at seizing these ‘seasonable opportunities’. He proceeds: ‘If opportunities will not bee had of their owne offering, then make some’.<sup>963</sup> ‘Spare an houre in a weeke’, he pleads, ‘or a day in a moneth for this businesse’.<sup>964</sup> The plea that communicants make time for ‘inbred speculation’ is sustained, impassioned and practical: Pemble offers advice about how hours employed ‘to talke with a friend, to sport, to doe nothing, to doe evill’ can be ‘turne[d] to a better use’; he considers and dismisses the possible counter-arguments of his readers that one’s everyday ‘industrie’ might wane as godly contemplation waxed.<sup>965</sup> Not all authors consider the circumstances of examining so directly or at such length, but most who paused to consider the matter conveyed

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<sup>961</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.78.

<sup>962</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.48.

<sup>963</sup> *ibid.* pp.48-9.

<sup>964</sup> *Ibid.*, p.49.

<sup>965</sup> *ibid.* p.50.

something of the same senses of intensity, melancholy and solitude. Brinsley and Jenison require that examination be ‘diligent’ in character, the former advising further that ‘the meekest place is, where we may be most secret, and freest from distraction... where we may most freely power out our soules without suspicion of hypocrisie’.<sup>966</sup> Bruch said of preparation that a man should come home ‘by himselfe, and to himselfe, and set in order the thinges of his own house, descending into himselfe’.<sup>967</sup>

It could be argued that the puritan malady of introspection was simply exacerbated by pre-communion examination, which ritualised and amplified the salvific angst in the godly heart. Furthermore, such practices were not solely conceived as prior to receiving. ‘I gather that it is not ynough for us to have proved, and approved our selves before we come’, wrote Tuke, ‘but that we ought also in the *very act* of receiving, or in the very time thereof to approve our selves’.<sup>968</sup> The baptismal service could be a spur to introspection too: Bayly advises those attending a baptism to inwardly ‘prove whether the effects of Christs death *killeth* sinne in thee’.<sup>969</sup> After Holy Communion, close examination of the self was still needful. ‘Consider and bethink our selves seriously’, implored Hildersham.<sup>970</sup>

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Yet this inner intensity notwithstanding, the process of examination was by no means entirely devoid of communal sentiment. It was noted above that the two terms ‘examination’ and ‘preparation’ encompassed between them three separate if overlapping meanings: the specific act of being catechised; a longer-term praxis of reflection and godly exercises in preparation for the Lord’s Supper, and intensive self-analysis structured around the search for specific qualities.<sup>971</sup> All three of these processes could, and did, encourage introspection: whether learning a catechism by rote, or setting aside time each day to meditate and pray, or – as we have just considered – trawling the depths of the soul in order to meet the criteria of

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<sup>966</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, pp.179, 22; Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B6r.

<sup>967</sup> Bruch, ‘Treatise’, pp.258-9.

<sup>968</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.155-6.

<sup>969</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.602.

<sup>970</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.131.

<sup>971</sup> See above, Chapter II.

worthiness. Yet alongside such introspection, examination and preparation retained communal potential.

For example, many works suggest that the pre-communion catechising and the required preparation for this were not exclusively internal and solitary affairs. Most obviously, many of the catechisms considered here were not intended *merely* as abstract volumes of sound doctrine for private edification. Although this was part of their purpose, they were also intended to facilitate interaction between minister and communicant. Thirteen rubrics were ‘requirement’ catechisms, that is, catechisms presented as, in the words of the Dering form, ‘verie meete to bee knowne of every one, before they be admitted to the Lords Supper’.<sup>972</sup> Some of these published texts must have begun life as real works employed by catechising ministers. Indeed, Frewen tells us that this is the case when describing his catechism, *Certaine Choise Grounds*, as a form ‘wherein the people of the parish of Northiam, in the county of Sussex, have beene catechised, and instructed, for the settling of their heartes and mindes, in the mysteries of salvation, and for their better preparation for the Lords Supper’.<sup>973</sup> Likewise the *Compendious Catechism* of Stephen Denison, addressed to the ‘Inhabitants and Parishioners of Kree-Church’, London, must have been rooted in his own pastoral experience at that location.<sup>974</sup> The necessity of ministerial examination implied by the very presence of these catechisms was voiced explicitly by several authors. Hildersham was typical in that, notwithstanding Paul’s command that everyone examine themselves, he nevertheless stressed that the pastor ‘must be diligent to know the estate of his flocke’, and that ‘*the people*’ *must also be ‘willing to have ther lives looked into and their knowledge examined by their Pastor, and to make knowne unto him their spirituall estate’, in order that ‘with comfort and boldnesse, hee may admit them’*.<sup>975</sup>

At the least then, catechisms brought a would-be communicant face-to-face with their minister. There is little indication in any of the primary literature as to whether ministerial catechising before the Lord’s Supper was intended to be one-to-one or conducted more publicly. Hildersham does say in his consideration of ministerial examination that a man must

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<sup>972</sup> Dering, *Catechisme*, sig.A2r.

<sup>973</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, title page.

<sup>974</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, sig.A3r.

<sup>975</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.9-10.

be able to prove his faith and repentance ‘unto the congregation and Minister’, but whether it was also intended that the entire recital of the catechism should also have an audience is unclear.<sup>976</sup> What can be noted is that many sacramental rubrics in the corpus were addressed by their clergymen authors to congregations, families, and professional groups. Gawton dedicated his form to the ‘people of Redburn in the countie of Hartford’; Frewen and Stephen Denison, as we have seen, to their respective Sussex and London parishes; Richardson, to the ‘Christian audience of St Katherines near the tower’.<sup>977</sup> Crashawe ambitiously recommended his catechism to all ‘monethly communicants in the Kingdome when they come to the Lords table’.<sup>978</sup> Other catechisms were intended by authors to be used to prepare families for the Supper. A form could be intended for the family of a wealthy patron, as were the works of Fist and Hunt, but could also be more generally addressed to any ‘Parents and Masters’, who, in the words of Egerton, ‘may with great fruite propoude to their families, especially before the communion’ his catechism.<sup>979</sup> Pagit likewise addressed his form to the ‘patrons of Godlinesse, parents of children: maisters or dames of families’, whilst Dering targeted ‘householders’.<sup>980</sup> Preston wrote his short catechism apparently to his own mother in order that she might guide (despite, one senses, what her son perceives as the natural disadvantages of her sex) the household in the absence of his busy father:

I have therefore...here sent unto you certaine Questions and Answers, opening and explaining both the nature and also the use of both the Sacraments of Christ his Institution, entreating you in the absence of my Father (for in his presence you remaine a learner, not an instructor) you would make it your practise to instruct your Familie in the knowledge of them...<sup>981</sup>

Congregations and families were not the only communities to whom preparation catechisms were dedicated: Draxe intended his for the ‘edification and comfort’ of the drapers of Coventry.<sup>982</sup> Of course, we cannot allot to sacraments a communal character based purely on this fact that many sacramental catechisms were addressed in a communal spirit: such details are in large degree clearly a reflection of the conventions and economics of religious

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<sup>976</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.10.

<sup>977</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.A2r; Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.A2r.

<sup>978</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, title page.

<sup>979</sup> Egerton, *Methode*, p.37.

<sup>980</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.A2r; Dering, *Catechisme*, title page.

<sup>981</sup> Preston, *Short*, sig.A2v.

<sup>982</sup> Draxe, *Lambes*, sig.A2r.

publishing. A published catechism might be dedicated to a collective, but it did not necessarily follow that the said collective were aware of the fact, or that they consumed the text penned in their honour as a group. Yet it is appropriate to point out that whilst learning a preparation catechism might then involve solitary study and memorisation, it could equally involve interaction with one's family and with a minister as the contents of the catechism were disseminated and examined. Sparke's characterisation of the task of the godly minister – a 'catechising of and conference with the people' – in his epistle to Bancroft seems apt.<sup>983</sup>

If learning a catechism before communion was not necessarily an entirely solitary affair, neither was the more extended preparation for the Lord's Supper which authors sometimes prescribed. Such preparation might include daily meditations, prayers and inner searching, and possibly fasting for a period before the sacrament of usually two days or more. Admittedly, the two authors who promote such measures most enthusiastically – Sutton and Hunt – imply that such preparation should mostly be solitary. Hunt pens the first few prayers in his *A communicant's exercise* in the plural, but switches to a particularly intense singular when he reaches 'A praier before the receiving of the Lords Supper', in which the supplicant pledges to 'judge, abhore, and condemme my selfe for mine iniquities', doing so with 'weeping eyes, and humbled, heavy, relenting and bleeding heart'.<sup>984</sup> 'Hee who will doe the thing which he oght concerning this Sacrament', reads Sutton's text, 'must lot out a certaine space of time to himselfe, wherein hee may performe those things which pertaine to the preparation thereof.'<sup>985</sup> However, there is evidence that some ministers attempted to effect a kind of collective and systematic preparation from the pulpit. Five works are treatises assembled from sermons and all of them are heavily concerned with the theme of preparation, as are the free-standing sermons of Donne and Sibbes. The sub-title of Samuel Smith's *Christs Last Supper* reveals this ministerial technique of pulpit preparation:

The doctrine of the Sacrament of Christs last Supper, set forth in five sermons  
Wherein is taught the great necessitie of godly preparation, before men come to the

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<sup>983</sup> Sparke, *High*, sig.A3v.

<sup>984</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.236-318, 299-300.

<sup>985</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.124.

Sacrament. Wherein it doth consist: with the condemnation threatened against the unworthy receiver of the same<sup>986</sup>

Randall certainly perceived his series of preparation sermons as actually constituting part of the godly preparation it outlined. ‘Some preparation must needs be made’, he wrote, for ‘the weake dayes cannot conveniently be spared, because of worldly affairies’.<sup>987</sup> Any preparation made ‘the morning wherein you are to receive, is good, but not sufficient’, because ‘there is required some time of respite for Meditation, betwixt your hearing and receiving’.<sup>988</sup> Therefore, he concludes, ‘it is fittest to begin the Sabbath day before’.<sup>989</sup>

Even when ‘examination’ and ‘preparation’ meant trawling the soul for necessary qualities, authors promoted dialogue and conference with fellow Christians. Rogers recommended ‘the use of company by conference and family exercise’ as an augmentation of private devotion prior to receiving.<sup>990</sup> Frewen recommended that faith be tried by ‘conference’ as well as by hearing of the word and prayer.<sup>991</sup> For the literate to try their pre-communion knowledge, Tye advocated a trip to ‘Pauls church-yarde’ where godly literature proliferated in ‘such abundance’; but to the unlettered he recommended that hours spent ‘idly, vainely, and upon unfruitful workes’ be reassigned to ‘conference and reasoning with others, either at home, or abroad, at one hand, or another’.<sup>992</sup> We may also recall that Jenison and Tozer recommend, in the words of the latter, ‘seasonable conference and conversation with such as are themselves touched with their sinnes’ as a means of trying repentance before communicating.<sup>993</sup>

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<sup>986</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, title page.

<sup>987</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.3.

<sup>988</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>989</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>990</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.21.

<sup>991</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.202.

<sup>992</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.C4r.

<sup>993</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.75.

What was the syllabus of these pre-communion examinations? The qualities of knowledge, faith, and repentance were often framed in such a way as to make searching for them akin to delving into an awesome and awful world of sin, redemption and salvation. The first quality required of a communicant, for Estey, was ‘knowledge’, which he immediately defines as ‘the perceiving of the meaning of truth necessary to salvation’, which is then quickly followed by an outline of the creation and fall into sin.<sup>994</sup> Such cosmic directness in the approach to knowledge – often brought about by the authors’ close adherence to the form of the Creed – was fairly typical of the shorter, catechetical works.<sup>995</sup> We have already noted that the quality of faith was also expounded in an overwhelmingly personal manner. Gawton’s line makes the point:

Q. What call you a lively faith?

A. A full perswasion of my heart grounded upon the promises of God in the Scriptures of my salvation by Christ onely.<sup>996</sup>

Searching for repentance involved a similarly intense meditation upon salvific matters. ‘Thine acknowledgement of sinne must procede from a broken heart’, warned Stephen Denison, ‘it is not sufficient testimonie, barely to say with the lips, I am a sinner as other men are, god forgive mee, and the like’.<sup>997</sup>

However, the fact that inner trial inevitably brought a potential communicant face to face with the *ordo salutis* does not mean preparation centred only upon the self. For one thing, the communal elements within the methodology of examination which we have noted, acted to mitigate the full introspective weightiness of the subjects involved. Thus salvific and sacramental knowledge was apt to be tested by catechising, either with a minister or alongside others; and faith was sometimes required to be testified before a minister and possibly also before the congregation. Several authors, such as Hildersham, Sparke and Tozer suggest that repentance be ‘testified’ too. In this light the instruction to discover within oneself entities such as, for example, ‘the true Knowledge of God in Christ, with assurance of

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<sup>994</sup> Estey, ‘Supper’, sig.B3r.

<sup>995</sup> e.g. Anon. *Motives*, p.2; Gere, *Catechisme*, sigs.A2r-v.

<sup>996</sup> Gawton, *Short*, sig.A8v.

<sup>997</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.147.

Salvation in him' (anon., *Elements*) or the 'certain knowledge of whole mystery of salvation' (Bruch), are rendered less arduous and solitary.<sup>998</sup> We might also note that the qualities of knowledge, faith and repentance could in themselves yield communal impulses when tried. As far as knowledge was concerned, it was widely considered desirable that a communicant's preparation involve the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer – both replete with obvious lessons governing our moral behaviour towards others – and also the Apostles' Creed. Considering faith, as we have seen in the previous chapter, required an examinee to consider and stand in solidarity with, as Hunt wrote in the context of Baptism, 'all of all sorts of people professing repentance and faith in Christ'. Repentance especially was a quality which would express itself outwardly in goodness towards others. Mortification, the inward looking part of repentance which mournfully acknowledged sin's corrupting hold on the soul, was, for Jenison, invalid when 'not accompanied with the conversion of the heart, and innocency of life'.<sup>999</sup>

Sacramental examination also explicitly linked an examinee with the Christian community: in charity, hope, love and, to some extent, repentance. Preparation had to involve the practical business of getting on with others. Establishing one's knowledge, faith and repentance was all very well, remarked Samuel Smith, but 'if love to our brethren be wanting, we may well call the truth of them all into question'.<sup>1000</sup> Considering the corpus of texts as a whole, this basic message of neighbourliness was propounded in equal measure to the more personalised themes of salvation and sin. Small catechisms offered fairly concise directions for an examinee to vet his neighbourly relations before receiving. A typical example is the recital of Fenton's treatment of reconciliation: 'If any offence bee between others and mee' recites the imaginary student, I must 'reconcile myselfe unto them, and forgive them as Christ hath forgiven me'.<sup>1001</sup> Similarly, the anonymous *Motives* enquires 'whether I can, unfeynedly, forgive them that have offended me, seeke their amendment (being a misse) then be reconciled unto them; and so expresse the true testimonies of Christian love towards all, even my very enemies'.<sup>1002</sup> Non-catechetical texts could likewise remain somewhat abstract about exactly what was required: Rogers advises simply that 'no swelling, nor rising of heart

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<sup>998</sup> Anon., *Elements*, sig.A7r; Bruch, 'Treatise', p.264.

<sup>999</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B2r.

<sup>1000</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.104.

<sup>1001</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.B3v.

<sup>1002</sup> Anon., *Motives*, p.12.

against any man or woman' be present in a worthy receiver, whilst Henry Smith preached simply that Christ's commandment 'to love our enemies' be recalled.<sup>1003</sup> Such treatments of neighbourliness might seem concise and unelaborated, but this does not signify neglect of the subject. We see, for example, in Fenton's catechism that the communal theme of reconciliation gets equal prominence with 'true faith' and 'loathing' of sin:

First I must examine my selfe whether I stande strongly in the true faith of Jesus Christ or no.

Secondly, whether I finde my heart inwardly grieved for my sinnes with an hatred and loathing of the same.

Thirdly, if any offence bee between others and mee, that I reconcile my selfe unto them, and forgive them as Christ hath forgiven me.<sup>1004</sup>

The same rule of proportionality between the themes of personal salvation and community relations obtains when authors offer elaborate, rather than concise, deconstructions of requisite qualities. Attersoll's epic *The New Covenant* offers extremely lengthy meditations upon the 'Reconciliation', backing up his points with multiple scriptural and patristic references, in keeping with his prior treatment of knowledge, faith and repentance, which were unfolded in the same way.<sup>1005</sup> More specifically, it can be seen that authors were just as inclined to give detailed advice in the fraternal realms of love, charity and reconciliation, as they were in the reader's personal world of faith and sin. Jenison and Hill, for example, both tackled the question of how we might know that we are in an adequate state of love, charity or reconciliation with our neighbours. They both stressed the relevance of the Lord's Prayer as a method of gauging whether our forgiveness be sound: 'we must...be in love and perfect charity with our neighbours', wrote Jenison, 'as we, our selves in the Lord's Prayer desire to be forgiven as wee our selves forgive others'.<sup>1006</sup> Hunt advised that love was true if we found ourselves able and willing to pray for our enemy. Another thorny issue which authors tackled on their readers' behalf was the matter, here quoted in Stephen Denison's *Compendious*

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<sup>1003</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.219; H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.99. Other fairly basic definitions: Dering, *Catechisme*; Draxe, 'Appendix', sigs.C6r-v; Dod, 'Dialogue', p.2.

<sup>1004</sup> Fenton, *Shorte*, sig.B3v.

<sup>1005</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, pp.537-44.

<sup>1006</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.B3v.

*Catechism*, of what to do if ‘our enemies do hate us for religions sake, and will not be reconciled?’<sup>1007</sup> This was a specific variant of the general question about how to ensure the existence of charity and concord with those palpably willing to reciprocate good intentions, as summed up in Geree’s question: ‘What must we do if there be any breach of love betweene us and others’? Geree’s answer to the general point was typical: ‘Seeke reconciliation and omit not the Sacrament’.<sup>1008</sup> Authors were keen that readers should not invoke the obstinate grudge-bearing of others as an excuse not to receive. This is seen in Denison’s own response: in the face of persistent unwillingness of others to be reconciled unto us, we should not ‘abstain’ but should ‘be ready to passe by any personall wrongs done unto us’.<sup>1009</sup> Hildersham, Crashawe and Tuke went into more detail on this point by offering commentary on the relation of secular law to the neighbourly concord necessarily present in a worthy receiver. All three authors propound, to quote one of Hildersham’s sub-headings, ‘Cautions & rules to be observed in going to law’.<sup>1010</sup> Tuke offered three guides whereby a man might justly go to law: a litigant should not be ‘suing his neighbour for trifles and toies, nor using the law when a remedie may be had without it, nor intending to beggar his poore neighbour by holding him in suite’.<sup>1011</sup> Crashawe recommended that the law should not be used for small matters, that it should be the last resort, and that a man should be ‘ever ready to make a quiet end to some losse’.<sup>1012</sup> The same themes also occur in Hildersham’s advice, which was more extended still, running to five lengthy points. Did involvement in legal proceedings automatically rule out the possibility of exhibiting true charity, and therefore call for abstention? Tuke seems to suggest that a man who goes ‘to law as he ought to...may not receive the sacrament’, although he goes on to exhort the examinee to avoid this possibility in the first place by humbly abandoning one’s grudges, for the longer malice continues, ‘the deeper roote it taketh’, and ‘if thou dost not come because thou wilt not leave thy grudge, thou offendest God’.<sup>1013</sup> Crashawe and Hildersham seem to judge slightly differently: that, as long as the legal proceedings meet the criteria for propriety, a man may receive, because, in the words of the latter, we might be assured that, through the mechanisms of the secular authorities (ultimately sanctioned by God) ‘the Lord hath thus ordered the whole matter’.<sup>1014</sup>

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<sup>1007</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.13.

<sup>1008</sup> Geree, *Catechisme*, sig.A7r.

<sup>1009</sup> S. Denison, *Compendious*, p.13.

<sup>1010</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.107.

<sup>1011</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.103.

<sup>1012</sup> Crashawe, *Meate*, sig.C1r.

<sup>1013</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, pp.103-4.

<sup>1014</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.109.

Thus an examinee's investigation of the moral qualities involved the cultivation of general neighbourly goodwill, but might also cause him to consider specific breaches of charity in his own life and pursue their amendment.

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It is therefore clear that self-examination before participation in the Lords Supper was an exercise both inward *and* outward, encompassing a concern for the believer's soul alongside a concern for the wider community. But beyond this, the practice of examination reveals sacraments to be communal entities in a more profound way which pertained to *purity*.

In Chapter Three we asked who the sacraments were intended for. The answer given was often 'the faithful', but there were both miserly and generous definitions of this term, so that while it could be argued plausibly that sacraments were only for the elect, it could also be reasoned that they were for the benefit of the whole (and mixed) Christian community. With relation to examination, we might hazard a second answer to the same question, which would be that *sacraments were intended only for the correctly examined*. Many authors, in addition to providing an examination of various qualities, also provided an examination upon the validity of the first examination. If this check was passed, then worthy receiving was ensured. Samuel Smith provides an example of how this worked with regard to repentance. Smith offers three pieces of consolation for those struggling to discern this quality in themselves. Firstly, not everyone is the same, therefore the apparent success of your neighbour in finding repentance need not reflect your own failure. Secondly, something as complex as repentance might not be susceptible to human discernment in any case, meaning the adjudication of the success of the exercise could be left to God, a 'most wise and skillfull physician who knoweth well what a potion of Physick will worke'.<sup>1015</sup> Thirdly, and in slight contradiction to the previous point: God would accept our sincere endeavour to repent in lieu of perfect and perhaps unattainable genuine repentance: 'the Lord lookes after the manner, more then the

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<sup>1015</sup> S. Smith, *Supper*, p.92.

measure of any duty, or grace', wrote Smith, 'and so long as wee please not our selves in these poore beginnings, but endeavour after more grace, and *covet after the best giftes*, the Lord doth except both of us and them'.<sup>1016</sup> To those uncertain of the rectitude of their searching, then, labelled 'the weak', Smith offers three consolations: the individuality of the trial, the unknowability of success, and the graciousness of God in accepting our best attempts as valid. This last point, especially, was quite common currency. A requisite quality of a worthy receiver in Stephen Denison's book, for example, was desire to receive the sacrament. But what of the sick, confined to their beds? 'Remember for thy comfort', wrote Denison, 'that God will accept thy will for the deede, the Lord knoweth thy desire after the Sacrament, and he will accept thy desire'.<sup>1017</sup> Tozer conjures a receiver struggling to decide whether he had truly discerned charity. 'If we have a true desire to bee refreshed by the merits of Christ', comforted the author, 'and have a sincere heart before God, hee will accept us according to this'.<sup>1018</sup> Bayly and Draxe made the same point of examination more generally, the latter noting that any that 'come to the Lords Supper without guile and hypocrisie, are worthy in Gods acceptation', the former that:

Though no man living is *of himself* worthy to be a guest at so *holy* a banquet; yet it pleaseth GOD of his *grace* to *accept* him for a *worthy receiuer*, who endeavoureth to receive that holy mystery<sup>1019</sup>

Such reasoning was no more novel than the Prayer Book itself, in which one of the post-communion prayers exhorts: 'and although we be unworthye throughe our manifolde sinnes, to offer unto the any sacrifice, yet we beseche the to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merites, but pardoning our offences'.<sup>1020</sup>

In this way a certain purity of sacramental observation was encouraged: not the perfectionist advocacy of closed communion, demanding that everyone be certifiably in the faith and morally upright, but rather a pragmatic purity arising from making sure that everyone had at least tried hard to examine themselves rigorously, and that the communicating congregation

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<sup>1016</sup> *ibid.*, p.93

<sup>1017</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.211.

<sup>1018</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, p.39.

<sup>1019</sup> Draxe, 'Appendix', sig.M6r; Bayly, *Practise*, p.664.

<sup>1020</sup> BCP 'The order for the Administration of the Lords Supper or Holy Communion'.

were therefore all on the same page, as it were, of sincere preparation. This concept can also be gauged retrospectively, in some telling authorial comments about how a communicant's condition after receiving might be used to assess his worthiness. If, after receiving, a communicant failed to perceive the 'comfort...joy...encrease of grace he hath reaped by the Sacrament', wrote Jenison, he need not fear, *as long as he had tried hard in his examination*.<sup>1021</sup> 'If we have in some measure endeavoured to examine and prepare our selves', he continues, 'then must we not be dismayed, but trust in the mercy of our good and gracious God for acception of our endeavours, and depend on him for a blessing'.<sup>1022</sup> Perhaps the ultimate source of pastoral comfort in this regard was provided by Hildersham and Hill. The latter, for example, presented two scenarios for the time after receiving: either a communicant would feel the comfort of having worthily received, or he would not. If the former, hypothesized Hill, I am 'to be thankfull for it'. But if the latter, 'I must know, that it is because I have not prepared my selfe... wherefore I must goe to God, acknowledge my fault, and desire pardon and comfort for the same'.<sup>1023</sup> Hill, then, takes the evil of improper preparation, evidenced in feelings of unease and lack of fulfilment after receiving, and places it in the comfortable category of a sin which can be immediately repented. Hildersham performs the same feat. 'If wee can finde no...comfort and fruit' from receiving, 'then must wee examine diligently whether wee may not justly charge our selves to bee the cause thereof, because we came not unto it with that preparation of heart as hath beene described'.<sup>1024</sup> This being the case, we must 'presently humble our soules before God in feruent praier and unfained repentance for this our grievous sinne, that so judging our selves for it, wee may not be judged of the Lord'.<sup>1025</sup>

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<sup>1021</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.C5v. My italics.

<sup>1022</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1023</sup> Hill, 'Communicant', p.40.

<sup>1024</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.131-2.

<sup>1025</sup> *ibid.*

## Sacraments, works-righteousness and fruitfulness

It has often been argued that the Reformed branch of Protestantism, as it passed through its second and third generations, began to espouse works-righteousness, or voluntarism, whereby the outward good works of man were presented as reliable evidence of inner salvation. This was a form of soteriological backsliding, a retreat from the high-watermark of Augustinian anthropology, which, as articulated by the sixteenth-century reformers, had downgraded the role played by works and elevated in its place that of faith. Salvation, in the Pauline tradition filtered through Augustine and Luther, was *by* God-given grace, *through* God-given faith which apprehended that grace. Good works were no longer meritorious. ‘By grace ye are saved through Faith (saith *St Paul*) and that not of yourselves’, summed up Cleaver, continuing that salvation is ‘the gift of God, not of workes’.<sup>1026</sup> If a man possessed saving faith then good works would come naturally, but they were fruits, and not seeds, of that saving faith. Under pastoral pressure to reassure their often troubled flock of their election, the Reformed are said to have allowed this strict order of salvation to unravel, one facet of which being that works were presented as evidence of saving faith to such a degree that they were re-invested with soteriological significance – readmitted to the *ordo salutis* by the back door.

The sample literature affords three opportunities to assess this narrative. First, when communicants were told to find within themselves qualities such as love, charity, and repentance, they were essentially being instructed to perform good works. Second, authors offered implicit commentary upon works when discussing repentance, because the relationship between repentance and saving faith had also to be kept in proper and judicious balance if works-righteous implications were to be avoided. Third, when authors offered their readers instructions for the time after receiving the Lord’s Supper, they often reasoned quite explicitly in the style of the practical syllogism, the principal argumentative tool with which the Reformed are said to have re-modelled the *ordo salutis*.

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<sup>1026</sup> Cleaver, *Patrimony*, p.30.

Although almost every author in the course of their sacramental writing urged communicants to perform good works, such incitements to godliness cannot be construed in themselves as instances of works-righteousness. Whilst qualities such as love, reconciliation and charity were promoted, authors were nearly always clear that moral efforts alone had no bearing on salvation. ‘Tell me why wee should doe good workes, since they doe not save’, asked the examiner in Coxe’s catechism.<sup>1027</sup> Perkins is also abundantly clear about the inferior status of good works. ‘God, he wrote, ‘who is perfect righteousnesse it selfe, will finde in the best workes wee doo, more matter of damnation than of saluation’. Therefore ‘wee must rather *condemne* our selves for our good works, than looke to be justified before God thereby’.<sup>1028</sup> This redundancy of good works was similarly echoed in the catechisms of Pagit and Horne – the latter rendering them simply ‘unprofitable’.<sup>1029</sup> Other authors emphasised the same point from the perspective of the moral law, which, they pointed out, was impossible to perform fully, thus rendering works-righteousness unachievable as well as unmeritorious. Webbe, for example, includes a section in his catechism entitled ‘Of the fall of our first Parents: of Mans second estate: of the Law, and our impossibilitie to keepe the same’.<sup>1030</sup> Those evincing works-righteousness were criticized. In the cases of Tuke, Stephen Denison and Samuel Smith this meant an attack on Catholics. Tuke lamented Rome’s teaching that ‘the workes of righteous men do merit eternal life’; Denison criticized the notion that works bring eternal life as a ‘popish conceit’; Smith complained about those who ‘relye upon the merits of Saints and Angels, and so patch and peece out their owne merits with others, denying the free justification of a sinner by Christ alone’.<sup>1031</sup> Randall extended the critique to mal-intentioned Protestant communicants, criticising ‘Pharasitical and justitiarie receivers, that stand upon their own righteousnesse’.<sup>1032</sup>

Tessellating with this denigration of works in the sample were frequent and loudly voiced affirmations that it was faith and faith alone that saved. When works were encouraged, it was generally only in a way proportional to the presentation of saving faith. As Egerton’s catechism put it, ‘works...to be accounted good workes’ were only ‘such as proceed from

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<sup>1027</sup> Coxe, *Catechisme*, sig.A7r.

<sup>1028</sup> Perkins, *Foundation*

<sup>1029</sup> Pagit, *Shorte*, sig.B2v; Horne, *Entrance*, sig.A4r.

<sup>1030</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sigs.B2r-6r. See also Fenton, *Shorte*, sigs.A2r-v and Anon., *Elements*, sig.C8r.

<sup>1031</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.47; S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.95; S. Smith, *Supper*, pp.193-4.

<sup>1032</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.198.

faith, and be done to the glorie of God, & grounded upon the word of God'.<sup>1033</sup> Moral rectitude was thus the fruit of saving faith, not the seed. Indeed, good works which had not the foundation of a secure faith were positively sinful; as Frewen put it, 'there is no worke good, except it proceed from faith'.<sup>1034</sup> In short, God's gift of faith was the only cause of salvation, and from this saving faith proceeded any good works man might be capable of. In this restraining context good works could be extolled. Willoughbie speaks of a faith which is 'accompanied or attended on from every side by all good works, namely, a justifying, a lively, an effectual, a working, and fruitful faith', but it is by this faith, not the attendant works, that we are 'united to Christ'.<sup>1035</sup> For some authors, this idea of works as what we might call an 'inferior necessity' approached the concept of the double covenant, in which the primary undertaking was that by which God had graciously promised to save mankind, which resulted in mankind's secondary undertaking to live godly lives. Tye put it like this: 'as God doth justifie a man by his faith, so a man must justify himselfe by his workes'.<sup>1036</sup> That is 'his faithful actions, and workes must resolve him, and prove unto him, that he is possessed of a true justifying faith, allowed and approved of God, least otherwise he be received with a shadow and wizard of faith'.<sup>1037</sup>

We can see this estimation of works as desirable, but not fundamental, in the corpus' treatment of fasting, a 'work' specific to sacramental celebration. When enquiring as to whether it was necessary 'that we come fasting' to the Lord's Supper, Hildersham answers in the negative. Although it was 'fit for such as may conveniently doe it, without hurt or danger to their health, to come fasting to this Sacrament', to put 'holiness in this' was 'meere ignorance and superstition'.<sup>1038</sup> 'Let none think the bare outward actions and elements are able to sanctifie him', wrote Pemble on the same subject, 'or that he is the better for them, and the ground he treads on for that day'.<sup>1039</sup> Fasting, long accounted a good work in and of itself in Catholic theology, now conferred no sense of 'holiness' and did not 'sanctify'. Such cautionary statements balance the straightforward promotion of good works found elsewhere, ensuring that, in principle, the key Protestant balancing act of works as outcomes rather than causes is maintained.

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<sup>1033</sup> Egerton, *Methodie*, p.9.

<sup>1034</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p. 177.

<sup>1035</sup> Willoughbie, *Mnemosyn*, p.60.

<sup>1036</sup> Tye, *Matter*, D7r.

<sup>1037</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1038</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.119.

<sup>1039</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.24.

Yet despite the formal orthodoxy of authors when presenting the balance of faith and works, the allegations of works-righteousness levelled at the emerging Reformed tradition are not so easily refuted. The argument, as proposed for example by Kendall, is that the encroachment of works-righteousness on the Reformed tradition was gradual and subtle, occasioned by the necessity of unfolding the doctrine of salvation in a personal and pastoral context. Evidence for such works-righteousness then, or voluntarism, would not present itself in obvious disavowals of Protestant orthodoxy on the question of faith and works. Instead, one might look for instances of such orthodoxy being remoulded and transformed under external pressures. The cultivation of sacramental piety was a prime example of a context in which this re-fashioning took place.

We have already noted that the concept of a worthy communicant provided one means by which works were promoted above and beyond the restraining bounds of a faith-centric *ordo salutis*. Love, charity, reconciliation and other like qualities were set forth simply as duties for the time before and necessities for the time after receiving. The treatment of one specific ‘good work’ within this trend serves as a particular example of how the balance between faith and works could be compromised in a sacramental context. This was the ‘work’ of alms-giving. Whereas fasting was cast as desirable but redundant, alms-giving was promoted quite simply as a necessary act by the eight authors who addressed the subject. Giving to the poor was such a specific and evidently scriptural practise, and its taking place after the Eucharist had been so long a ‘custome in the Primitive Church’, that authors did not feel occasioned to be cautious about its status as a work. Indeed, the practise was oft spoken in terms more suggestive of a penitential and sacrificial economy of grace. Boys called it ‘a sacrifice well accepted of God’, whilst Brinsley, Hildersham and Preston referred to ‘the sacrifice of almes’.<sup>1040</sup> For Preston, indeed, alms-giving is showcased as a ‘meanes to show if we are walking worthily’, and posited as a means of actively improving our status with God:

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<sup>1040</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.108; Brinsley, *Watch*, p.185; Hildersham; Preston, *Duties*, p.164.

Giving is like to Tennis play, for, as the Ball that is served, is returned forcibly upon him that served it; so doth God double upon us the good that we have done to others, as Davids Prayers returned into his owne bosome; so doe our Almes.<sup>1041</sup>

Pronouncements such as these, although in one sense thoroughly standard incitements to Christian charity, are significant in the contrast they present with the more careful and qualified stance on works which authors evinced when talking in abstract terms of faith and salvation. Formally works achieved nothing, but practically they were useful, commanded by Christ and comfort could be sought in them.

A similar motif of theological orthodoxy becoming subverted in a sacramental context obtains when the corpus' treatment of repentance is considered. Works-righteous implications could arise when authors discussed the quality of repentance, the virtues and importance of which were often stated with a forcefulness which seemed to render penitence as a meaningful and necessary work in its own right.

Protestants disagreed fundamentally, as Tuke argued, with the Catholic axiom that 'contrition is a meritorious cause of the pardon of sins'.<sup>1042</sup> Accordingly, when authors considered repentance in the abstract, it was made clear that, despite the desirability of repentance, salvation could by no means be bought with the currency of ritualised sorrow. Jewel's attack on the Catholic sacrament of penance encapsulates the nuance of this stance: repentance is presented as 'needfull and requisite', but the 'superstition, and necessitie' which 'many have fondly used and put therein' is criticised.<sup>1043</sup> Rather than being itself a work of merit, repentance was inseparable from true faith which was the only true means of salvation. Boys explained the coupling between faith and repentance at some length, citing Bishop Latimer:

These two (like *Hippocrates* twinnes) must goe together hand in hand. For there is no true repentance without faith; nor lively faith without repentance. *B. Latimer* said well; Lady faith is a great state, having a Gentleman Usher going before her, called *agnitio peccatoru*, and a great traine following after her, which are the good workes of our calling. He that saith he doth repent, when as he doth not beleeve, receiues the

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<sup>1041</sup> Preston, *Duties*, p.165.

<sup>1042</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.47.

<sup>1043</sup> Jewel, 'Treatise', p.97.

Sacrament ignorantly: and he that saith he doth beleue, when as hee doth not repent, receiues the Sacrament irreuerently: both unworthily.<sup>1044</sup>

Faith, here the ‘lady’, is ascribed the superior role to repentance, ‘the gentleman usher’, and to good works generally which constitute the ‘train’. Three quarters of the authors considered here likewise ascribed the greater role in this partnership to faith, in citing faith *before* repentance as a requisite quality of a worthy communicant.

However, on occasion authors could invest repentance with a prominence which threatened to unbalance its relation with faith and transform it into a meritorious action. Bruch, Dod and Webbe are three such authors, notable in that they all listed repentance prominently as the first necessary component of worthiness, placing it before faith.<sup>1045</sup> Field followed the same priorities in his treatise, moving immediately from an exposition of the commandments into a discussion of repentance, without which there is ‘no salvation’ and ‘no profitable accesse to the Lords Table’.<sup>1046</sup> ‘The Law is not onely a looking-glasse’, he continued, ‘but also our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, to the Gospell’.<sup>1047</sup> For all that the outward act of repentance could not in itself be accounted meritorious, the discussion of the topic provided an opportunity to dwell upon the ways in which a communicant might ameliorate his life, and possibly his estate, by recourse to the law and moral activity. Hildersham’s work provides an excellent example of this. Although it was made clear that ‘no man can receiue this Sacrament worthily vnlesse he have a true justifying faith’, without which ‘it is impossible that either this or any other service we do unto God (seeme it otherwise never so good) should bee acceptable unto him or profitable to our selues’ – it was later contended, towards the end of a lengthy exposition of the quality of repentance, that ‘it is not possible that any man should have a true and lively faith and assurance of the forgiveness of his sinnes, that hath not...unfainedly repented’. Further, the process of repentance itself is rendered as a human activity to which it was possible to bring varying amounts of energy and determination, an exercise in which ‘euery man’ should ‘labour and take pains with his owne heart’.<sup>1048</sup> All believers ‘as will receive’ should be ‘penitents, and true converts’, wrote Hunt,

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<sup>1044</sup> Boys, *Exposition*, p.111.

<sup>1045</sup> Bruch, ‘Treatise’, pp.263-4; Dod, ‘Dialogue’, pp.2-13; Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D3v.

<sup>1046</sup> Field, *Preparation*, pp.50-1.

<sup>1047</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1048</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, pp.86-7.

and anyone who found himself not to be so should immediately ‘goe further-off, or sanctify themselves’.<sup>1049</sup> Repentance, then, as discussed in the context of worthy receiving, could acquire connotations of merit obtained by human agency, a process the strictures of the Reformed economy of salvation strictly forbade.

That the stipulation of moral qualities could involve these inadvertent but undeniable breaches of Reformed orthodoxy owed much to the concept of worthiness. From the concept of the worthy communicant came the idea of *necessity* and the inevitable conclusion that aspects of human endeavour, no less than God-given faith, were in some sense essential. But there was also one further dimension to worthy receiving which helped to cultivate works-righteousness in pastoral writings. This was the temporal ploy whereby worthiness – composed of certain necessary qualities – was made susceptible to verification after communion by a process of syllogistic reasoning. It is to ‘the practical syllogism’, together with the sacramental assurance to which this reasoning contributed, that we must now turn.

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<sup>1049</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.175-6.

## CONCLUSIONS

### I. Sacraments and the Reformed quest for assurance

One important, if indirect, way in which sacraments figured in the Reformed quest for assurance, was via their association with faith. Salvation was *sola fide* because to it was ascribed the task of apprehending grace, God's freely dispensed and undeserved favour towards humanity. Although sacraments could no longer be described as means of grace, they *were* posited as fundamentally related to the faith required to apprehend it. Sacraments strengthened faith. Through Baptism, explains the anonymous catechism *Motives to Godly Knowledge*, one's faith is 'strengthened, through the outward sign of water'.<sup>1050</sup> But sacraments were more than a remedy for declining faith; they were also an opportunity for its active exercise, especially in the Lord's Supper. This comes across, for example, in Stephen Denison's exegesis of the scriptural command *to take*:

The thing signified by the peoples taking or receiving the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, is the action of *Faith*, whereby we lay hold of, and apply unto our selves Christ Jesus and all his benefits. ... For the truth is, Christ is not now in the Sacrament to be really touched with the hande of flesh: but with the hand of faith.<sup>1051</sup>

Christ cannot, of course, be touched with the 'hande of flesh' – but the 'hand of faith' is exercised thoroughly. 'By thy faith working in &through the Sacrament; I receive the seede of immortality', wrote Featley.<sup>1052</sup>

This active performance of faith in sacraments led naturally to a double assurance. First is the assurance of faith itself. Communicants were urged by authors like Denison to abide by outward ceremony and employ faith to actuate inward grace. Whether or not this was achieved, faith is invoked and brought to the forefront. Second, the establishment of this enabling faith created assurance of the authenticity of the grace apprehended by it. Such double assurance is apparent, for instance, in Sibbes' sermon, when he asks: what is

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<sup>1050</sup> Anon., *Motives*, p.7.

<sup>1051</sup> S. Denison, *Doctrine*, p.113.

<sup>1052</sup> Featley, *Ancilla Pietatis*, p.138.

represented by the taking, eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper? The answer provided is that

... we are not only in Christ, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, but...Christ is actually delivered;...we seize upon him. When we see the bread and wine taken, he meaneth that hereby we by faith do accept of Christ, and do lay hold of him. Here is the foundation of our comfort, that a Christian man may say of Christ, that he can be assured of nothing so much which he possesseth for his own, as he may be of him.<sup>1053</sup>

One is assured of faith in the action of 'seizing upon' Christ; one is assured of grace in that 'Christ is actually delivered'.

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A second indirect route by which sacraments offered assurance of salvation was via their associations with an inclusive ecclesiology. Randall made a common and basic point that 'the Sacraments rightly administered' were one infallible mark of the 'true visible Church of God'.<sup>1054</sup> Baptism, in particular, was seen as representing admission to the visible church. For Downname it was an occasion whereby we are 'outwardly initiated, entered and admitted by the Congregation, as members of the Visible Church'.<sup>1055</sup>

Of course, the more knowledgeable of the Reformed parishioners perhaps knew that the visible church, mixed of sinners and saints, conferred no certainty of salvation: it was the *invisible church of God's elect* that mattered. Interestingly, there was potential for an *association*, at least, between sacraments and the invisible church, which seems to have been a serviceable argument in the assurance-quest. In the Lord's Supper, wrote Jenison, God 'nourisheth and preserveth us in the *true Church* after our admission into it by Baptisme'.<sup>1056</sup>

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<sup>1053</sup> Sibbes, 'Receiving', pp.67-8.

<sup>1054</sup> Randall, *Sermons*, p.304.

<sup>1055</sup> Downname, *Guide*, p.494.

<sup>1056</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.A8r. My italics.

But more significantly, sacramentally-derived assurance flowed naturally from the wellspring of Pauline, corporate, imagery. For Thornborough a believer ‘is made a member of Christ in Baptism’;<sup>1057</sup> for Tuke worthy reception of the Lord’s Supper ‘doth plainly demonstrate that the obeier is the childe of God, the member of Christ’.<sup>1058</sup> This language of membership is immediately unifying and overarching, and to a large extent bypasses the binary conception of the church as either visible or invisible. What it does allude to, instead, is what Bayly calls that ‘holy and mysticall body, whereof *Christ* is He[a]d’.<sup>1059</sup> As was demonstrated in Chapter Two, two sacramental ecclesiologies – one binary and exclusive depicting either a visible or invisible church, and one inclusive in outlook and emphasising via Pauline imagery the simple and ongoing fact of corporate participation in God’s kingdom – were held in tension by the majority of sample authors, with the latter offering comfort to the unsure believer.

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A third methodology of sacramental assurance is furnished by remembering that sacraments never lost their direct association with grace. In the corpus can be counted at least five ways in which a relationship between grace and sacraments was posited, and assurance therefore derived, many of them resting on the Augustinian dictum that a sacrament was an ‘outward sign of inward grace’. First, as has been noted in the discussion of inclusive ecclesiology, sacraments were badges of Christianity, frequently said to signal membership of the ‘covenant of grace’ or of the ‘congregation of saints’. Second, sacraments were seals of salvific benefits: ‘such signes, as doe *exhibite*, & *seale* to us all grace’, in the words of Thornborough.<sup>1060</sup> The three most powerful associations between sacraments and grace, however, presented the former as analogies, as instruments, or as means of communion with Christ.

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<sup>1057</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.40.

<sup>1058</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.113.

<sup>1059</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.697.

<sup>1060</sup> Thornborough, *Testament*, p.19.

A real and personal connection between the worthy communicator and Christ's saving sacrifice was presented vividly when sacraments were depicted as analogies in which the senses apprehended the outward reality of sacramental sign at the very same time as the inward man apprehended inward grace. 'The ministers outward washing with Water in Baptism', wrote Frewen, 'is a most certaine signe, seale and pledge, of the inward washing, whereby wee are clesned from our sinnes by the bloud of Christ'.<sup>1061</sup> 'As I see the bread broken', rehearsed the catechist of *Motives to Godly Knowledge* 'and the wine powred out, so do I behold with the eies of my mind the body of Christ to have bene broken, & his Bloud shed, and am put in mind of my redemption thereby'.<sup>1062</sup> This concurrency of outward and inward, made possible by tying both to specific ceremonial moments such as the dipping, fraction and libation, took the commonplace depiction of sacraments as didactic analogies to a personally real level. At the time of receiving, advises Pemble, 'think on Christ, that living Bread, that gives life unto thy soule, and by his merits preserves it from eternall death'.<sup>1063</sup>

A similarly strong conviction that Christ's salvific benefits were *pro nobis* obtained when the sacramental sign was viewed, 'an Instrument to convey Christ, & his benefits to us', as Preston put it.<sup>1064</sup> An instrumentalist conception of the sign stressed genuine communication with man: 'These Sacraments are as conduits to convey Gods graces unto us', preached Thomas.<sup>1065</sup> Sometimes instrumentalist language could progress still further into the realms of conveyance of grace, when, for example, drawing upon Matthew 9:20, ministers talked about the transfer of 'vertue' between the sacramentally-present Christ and the believer. In the words of Henry Smith:

Christ hath not instituted this Sacrament for a fashion in his Church to touch, and feele, and see, as we gaze upon pictures in the windowes; but as the woman which had the bloudie issue, touching the hemme of Christes garment, drew vertue from Christ himselfe because

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<sup>1061</sup> Frewen, *Grounds*, p.242.

<sup>1062</sup> Anon., *Motives*, pp.9-10.

<sup>1063</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.8.

<sup>1064</sup> Preston, *Doctrine*, p.86.

<sup>1065</sup> Thomas, 'Supper', sigs.D4v-5r.

she beleueed: So Christ would that we touching these signes, should draw vertue from himself, that is, all the graces which these signes represent.<sup>1066</sup>

Yet perhaps the most powerful ‘direct’ route to grace offered in sacramental discourse derived from the awesome Christocentric imagery in which sacramental grace was often couched, and the resulting conviction that a worthy partaker could gain communion with Christ. ‘The thing signified’ in the Lord’s Supper, according to William Tozer, is nothing less than ‘the Body and Blood of Christ, with the benefits, which wee receive therby’.<sup>1067</sup> The idea that in the Lord’s Supper we have real communion with Christ was the climax of all sacramental associations with grace; knowing the benefits Christ procured for humanity, discerning him – indeed communing with him, really and truly in the Lord’s Supper – was assuring in the extreme. The logic is clear in Hunt’s work, which may be recited:

...in heart he really receiveth Christ, resteth on Gods promises as touching remission of sinnes, righteousnesse, and salvation by Christ. On this giving and receiving of Christ in the Sacrament, ariseth to the believing Christian this sacred union whereby he also hath communion with Christ, participates with Christ in his justice, obedience, and all his benefits.<sup>1068</sup>

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Sacramental assurance was also offered via a concern with receiving the Lord’s Supper ‘worthily’ – or, more scripturally, with Paul’s injunction to avoid receiving it ‘unworthily’ – which did positive harm. According to John Denison, *unworthy* receiving rendered us ‘wretched men... For we joyne with Judas and the Jewes, being guilty of the body and blood of Christ’.<sup>1069</sup> Conversely, *worthy* receiving of the Lord’s Supper, in these texts, authenticated its salvific potential. The faithful who come ‘conscionably & worthily to the lords table’, wrote Attersoll, ‘are joined and united wholly to Christ, by the bread Sacramentally, by faith instrumentally, by the Holy ghost spiritually, and by them al most effectually’.<sup>1070</sup> For

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<sup>1066</sup> H. Smith, *Treatise*, p.2.

<sup>1067</sup> Tozer, *Directions*, pp.9-10.

<sup>1068</sup> Hunt, *Devout*, pp.131-2.

<sup>1069</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, p.210.

<sup>1070</sup> Attersoll, *Covenant*, p.499.

speculative communicants eager to ensure such benefits, authors created easy-to-follow recipes for *worthiness*, slicing it into easily digestible portions. ‘What’, asked Webbe’s catechism, ‘shall a true Receiver feele in himselfe after the receiving of the Sacrament? The encrease of his Faith in Christ, the encrease of sanctification, a greater measure of dying to sinne, and a greater care to live in newnesse of life’.<sup>1071</sup> It was then tempting to construe these fruits as seeds; using their presence as evidence that the whole process had been carried out worthily. Brinsley advised the communicant after the time of receiving to ‘try what increase of joy and comfort wee feele wrought in us by the Sacrament, in our further assurance of Gods love and favour in Iesus Christ: and so what further resolution we find to leade a holy life, *which will certainly follow in us if we have been partakers aright.*’<sup>1072</sup> There was, of course, a sting: ‘If we perceive not this working, then we are wisely to consider, whether God may not justly deprive us hereof, for want of care in our preparation...’<sup>1073</sup> Here is surely what we might call the sacramental syllogism, played out in the temporal realm after receiving communion: ‘The Lord’s Supper worthily received has the power to convey God’s grace to me; I know that I have received worthily; therefore God’s grace has been conveyed to me’. The analysis of the assurance problem in current scholarship has failed to consider this sacramental syllogism alongside the practical one.

The analysis of this sacramental syllogism may be broadened further to embrace fully the daily pastoral problems of which such reasoning was both symptom and cause. As has been pointed out by Winship, Haigh and Dixon – and indeed by contemporary classifiers such as Arthur Dent – the maturing English Reformation presented late Elizabethan and Jacobean clerics with a different typology of problematic parishioners from that found a generation earlier.<sup>1074</sup> Popish adherences and basic knowledge deficiencies were on the wane; by 1600 most men and women believed, but only problematically so. The stark Reformed metaphysic gave parishioners problems which required pastoral remedy.

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<sup>1071</sup> Webbe, *Exposition*, sig.D4v.

<sup>1072</sup> Brinsley, *Watch*, p.186. My italics.

<sup>1073</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1074</sup> Haigh, *The plaine mans path-way*; Winship ‘Weak Christians’; L. Dixon, ‘Calvinist Theology’; Dent, *The Plaine-Mans Pathway*.

For instance, there were at least two types of troubled conscience. First there were weak Christians, saved without knowing it, pessimists who could find no fruits of saving faith in their lives.<sup>1075</sup> Conversely, there were complacent hyper-godly optimists who thought themselves evidently so much more saved than everyone else.<sup>1076</sup> For the former, ministers lowered the bar for salvation, comforting that the least evidence of a godly life was evidence of a saving faith; for the latter, they raised it, cautioning that it was possible for hypocrites to be superficially sanctified. There were at least three types of ‘untroubled consciences’ too, of whom the works-hypocrite was one. There was also what Leif Dixon has called the ‘average’, and therefore apathetic, Jacobean believer, who wondered a little about the next life but pursued it with such limited interest as to threaten to make a mockery out of the whole process.<sup>1077</sup> To these pastors directed necessary and hearty exhortations to godliness. A still worse version of this figure were those identified by Arthur Dent as ‘antilegon-the-cavalier’, the half-heartedly religious, who cheerfully assumed they possess saving faith despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary; who were worryingly unconcerned by their sin; and who therefore badly required a stern dose of the Law.<sup>1078</sup>

The thrust of recent research has suggested that pastors could hardly ignore this varied array of half-Reformed, un-Reformed or overly-Reformed consciences in the parish, and that they therefore became flexible in their teachings on faith, works and assurance. The syllogistic flirtation with works was at least as much about this flexibility as it was about a high theological shift into scholastic logic.

This thesis suggests that pastors wrestling with troubled consciences could ill afford to ignore the sacraments, for salvific doubters and non-doubters were likely to be sacramental doubters and non-doubters too. Weak, pessimistic Christians became glass-half-full receivers. They could be worthy doubters, such as a creation in Sutton’s dialogue who feels himself ‘unworthy’ to communicate often ‘because I fall dayly into many sinnes’.<sup>1079</sup> Contrariwise there were receivers who thought themselves so worthy of the sacrament that they eschewed

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<sup>1075</sup> Winship, ‘Weak Christians’, p. 470.

<sup>1076</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>1077</sup> Dixon, ‘Calvinist Theology’, p.184.

<sup>1078</sup> Dent, *Plaine –Mans Pathway*.

<sup>1079</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.161.

the communion of others. As much can be seen in frequent ministerial reassurances that, in the words of Hildersham, ‘no mans sinne can...make Gods promise or Sacrament of none effect vnto him’.<sup>1080</sup> Ministers lowered the bar of worthiness to the former and raised it for the latter; doubtful receivers got the carrot; potential separatists got the stick.

The terrifying figure of the superficially sanctified works-hypocrite became, in sacramental context, the spectre of the superficially worthy receiver. ‘We finde by lamentable experience in *Judas*’, warned Sparke, ‘that he bringing unto this table, though never so much shew of pietie, knowledge, honestie, and goodness, yet for that he came as an hollow hearted hypocrite’.<sup>1081</sup> There were half interested, thoroughly average partakers too. Though sacraments are ‘meanes and helpes to set him forward in a godly life’, wrote Rogers, ‘too few’ do make them so.<sup>1082</sup> Finally for Antilegon the cavalier with his half-hearted and carefree approach to godliness, we find crass partakers of the Lord’s Supper worryingly unburdened by their evident sin. Such were the flock of St. Katherine’s, London, of whom their pastor Richardson commented ‘notoriously wicked, holding their sins in their right hand...yet they will presume to sit as guests at his Table’.<sup>1083</sup>

Sacraments were therefore mirrors of the pastoral problems created by the Reformed soteriological metaphysic. Moreover, sacramental teaching was an especially vital means for pastors to keep their diversely troubled and troubling flock on the same page of Godliness. The Lord’s Supper represented a regular opportunity to bolster fragile faiths, rein in enthusiastic ones, inveigh against apathetic or absent belief and caution against hypocrisy. Writing about and fostering sacramental piety gave authors a large and suitably subtle toolkit for just these tasks.

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<sup>1080</sup> Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.10.

<sup>1081</sup> Sparke, *High*, pp.213-4.

<sup>1082</sup> Rogers, *Seven*, p.217.

<sup>1083</sup> Richardson, *Doctrine*, sig.A3r.

## 2. Species of English Sacramental Piety

The sacramental writing examined here assists our understanding of the post-Reformation English church in that it is quite clearly revealed that there was more than one species of sacramental piety nurtured by Elizabethan and Jacobean clerics. The theological materials contained within this corpus of texts can profitably be described as being of two broad types, from which a variety different styles of sacramental devotion were cultivated. Firstly there were what we might call the ‘objective’ materials of Reformed sacramental theology, characterised by a focus on the sacraments themselves and the unquestioned working of the divine through them. Secondly there were what we might call subjective materials, characterised by a focus on the sacraments as they related to the communicant, engaging his/her heart, mind or morality. These objective and subjective styles may be plotted on three axes: the role allotted to the sacramental sign; the nature of the relationship between sacraments and faith; and the verifiability of grace.

The concept of sacramental sign, for instance, was rendered objectively by the language of instrumentalism, and subjectively through the logics of memorialism and parallelism. When authors such as Thomas wrote straightforwardly that ‘sacraments are as conduits to convey Gods graces vnto us’, when Wilcox affirmed that in sacraments the things signified were ‘truly and effectually exhibited unto us’, whenever authors stressed the authentic communication from God to man which was effected in sacraments, then the capacity of sacramental signs such as bread, wine and water to channel divine power to believers was affirmed and extolled.<sup>1084</sup> Memorial and analogical (parallelist) conceptions of sacramental sign worked differently. The focus was upon sacraments as they intersected with human faculties: the power of the sign lay in its ability to direct the memory to Calvary, or the intellect to the analogy between element and grace. When Pemble described the Supper as an awesome and monumental remembrance of Christ’s passion, the sacramental signs of bread and wine become relevant not because they convey anything objectively, but because they are loci around which orbited all the ‘spiritual graces of the soule, which are to bee exercised in this commemoration’.<sup>1085</sup> It is the emotional faculties of man which apprehend the sign and

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<sup>1084</sup> Thomas, ‘Supper’, D4v-D5r. Wilcox, *Substance*, p.12.

<sup>1085</sup> Pemble, *Introduction*, p.14.

enable it. Likewise the ‘as...so’ analogies fundamental to the parallelist conception of the sign, relied on the human mind to acknowledge the power and veracity of the image. ‘The bloud of Christ washeth away sinne’ from the soule, ‘as water washeth away the filthiness of the flesh’, but the activating force in this happening was the intellect which had to grasp the analogy.<sup>1086</sup> Interestingly, both the objective and subjective version of the sacramental sign could be marshalled to promote a link between sacraments and grace. The objective use of instrumentalist semiotics rendered grace conferrable through sacraments; the subjective use of memorialist and parallelist approaches encouraged the heart and intellect to seize hold of the salvific promise of grace. The first narrative is passive in terms of what the receiver does, but objective in its promise of grace; the second is active in what the receiver does, but ultimately subjective in its promise of grace.

The directness or indirectness with which one characterised the relationship between sacraments and grace had a concomitant effect of how the role of faith in sacraments was perceived. For clerics like Sutton, or perhaps Lake, inclined to place the emphasis on the objective and direct availability of grace via instrumentalism, the correct role for faith was simply that of believing in the objectivity and infallibility of God’s promises. Believers cannot always know *how* God performs these promises – ‘to make farther scruple is needlesse curiositie’, warned Sutton – but there was no *need* to know.<sup>1087</sup> Faith, when allied to an objective vision of sacramental grace, had simply to believe and accept. We might recall Donne’s advice to those seeking to explain the mystery of how bread and wine exhibit body and blood: ‘exercise thy faith onely, here, and leave thy passion at home, and referre thy reason, and disputation to the Schoole’.<sup>1088</sup> By contrast, when the subjective vision of sacramental intercourse was propounded, faith assumed a far more active role. Faith played an utterly essential enabling role in many Reformed conceptions of sacraments, which were, as Field put it, ‘to bee *apprehended* and received by *Faith onely*’.<sup>1089</sup> Indeed, the concept of receiving by faith incorporated and appropriated pre-reformation emphases upon ceremony and senses.

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<sup>1086</sup> Pagit, *Short*, sig.D4v.

<sup>1087</sup> Sutton, *Godly*, f.11r.

<sup>1088</sup> Donne, ‘S.Pauls’, p.291.

<sup>1089</sup> Field, *Preparation*, p.54.

Finally, sacraments in their objective and fully gracious guise, accepted as such by an undoubting and passive faith, led naturally away from syllogistic attempts to ascertain whether one had partaken worthily. When the emphasis was upon God's performance of his gracious promises through sacraments, worthiness was very little under human control. But in the subjective view of sacraments as entities which are seized upon by man's conscience and faith in order to lay hold on grace, the verifiability of worthy receiving becomes a matter of this human agency. That both implications might happily co-exist is delightfully demonstrated by Jenison's instructions for after receiving the Supper, which read thus:

...each must examine himselfe what comfort, what joy, what encrease of grace he hath reaped by the Sacrament. If we feele, then must we either accuse our selves, for want of sufficient preparation before, and then fly to God for pardon &c. Or if we have in some measure endeavoured to examine and prepare our selves, then must we not be dismayed, but trust in the mercy of our good and gracious God...<sup>1090</sup>

Here an unsatisfactory feeling after receiving is first addressed as though it is completely a matter for the receiver, whose degree of worthiness of receiving is within his own control. It was the believer's own fault, for 'want of sufficient preparation'. But in the extra layer of consolation which ensues, the supposition is switched entirely, with ultimate control over worthiness reassigned to 'our Good and gracious God alone'. Communicants could thus choose from two alternative ways of regulating their worthiness: either through trusting entirely on God or by acting for himself. The former was ultimately made possible by the objective view of sacraments, the latter by the subjective.

Given that the historiography of the English post-reformation Church has become naturally suspicious of binary paradigms, the proposal that an objective/subjective distinction aids our understanding of the period requires justification. This division absolutely cannot be made into a model of clerical allegiance or a means of 'defining' the Church. What the distinction demonstrates is the complexity and richness of Reformed sacramental ideas in the period, within which appeared both unity and division. Even if the detail varied, clerics were for the most part united by a shared Reformed tradition of sacramental theology. But from these

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<sup>1090</sup> Jenison, *Directions*, sig.C5v.

various shared threads, and on the loom of practical Protestant print, it was possible to weave more than one style of sacramental piety. The subjective possibilities of sacramental piety, in particular, constituted a style of sacramental devotion which is not usually thought about, one which was propounded for the most part by godly authors traditionally reputed to hold the sacraments in low esteem. The model proposing that there were ‘avant-garde conformists’ interested in the sacraments, and puritans who were not, is utterly unsustainable. To borrow one of Diarmaid MacCulloch’s formulations about the English post-reformation church, this sacramental literature demonstrates latitude and the extent of variation which could be encompassed within that latitude.<sup>1091</sup>

### **3. The tension between theological and pastoral priorities**

This thesis has frequently drawn attention to a prioritisation of pastoral, over theological, priorities when explaining sacraments to a lay audience. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper saw a collision of the natural and supernatural worlds which naturally invited a pastoral approach. In sacraments believers were confronted directly with the awesome possibilities of salvation or damnation. Rather as studies of the period’s funeral sermons have found an unsurprising preference to preach on the probability of election rather than the possibility of election, so clerical authors were inclined to write charitably about unbaptised infants or the sincere believer who could not find in himself all the qualities needed to prepare for communion.<sup>1092</sup> When authors such as John Denison eschewed ‘controversie’ in favour of ‘matter positive’; or when Preston proposed a ‘doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lordes Supper, opened in a plaine and familiar manner...thorowly applied, that God church and people may thence reape great benefit’ – they did so with a full sense of their audience, the delicacy of their task.<sup>1093</sup>

The notion that theological standards might ‘slip’ in the face of a pastoral challenge is not new. As noted above, there is a long-standing allegation that Reformed authors encouraged

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<sup>1091</sup> D. MacCulloch, ‘The Latitude of the Church of England’ in Lake, P., and Ken Fincham (eds.), *Religious politics in post-reformation England: essays in honour of Nicholas Tyacke* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp.204-13.

<sup>1092</sup> See, for example, L. Dixon, ‘Predestination and pastoral theology: the communication of Calvinist doctrine, c.1590-1640’ *Unpublished D.Phil Thesis*, (University of Oxford, 2006), ch.5.

<sup>1093</sup> J. Denison, *Banquet*, sig.A3v; Preston, *Doctrine*, title.

sylogistic thinking so that anxious believers might take comfort in good works which could be read as evidence of saving faith. This thesis has contended further for the existence of a parallel 'sacramental syllogism': 'The Lord's Supper worthily received has the power to convey God's grace to me; I know that I have received worthily; therefore God's grace has been conveyed to me'. The potency of this resource meant that pastors of troubled consciences could ill afford to ignore sacraments and the rubric of worthy receiving, which could be orientated to address a wide variety of problematic parish situations.<sup>1094</sup> One conclusion, then, is that the theology of sacraments was prone to generous pastoral reinterpretation and adaptation.

However, syllogistic reasoning was not the only mechanism by which pastoral writing could depart somewhat from strict theological rectitude. This thesis has described numerous other instances of pastoral sacramental texts being seemingly at odds with the formal theological propositions to which their authors would subscribe. The following analysis will attempt to describe more fully this characteristic of the corpus.

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Pastoralia began to edge away from theological strictures when pastors worked with concepts which were inherently uncontroversial but proceeded to claim - often repeatedly and at some length - the very most that might be claimed within the safe boundaries of that subject. This resulted in the affirmation weighing much more strongly than the theological propriety which characterised the original concept.

Take, for example, the inherently commonplace and straightforward association between sacraments and the *visible* church, which we saw authors explore when they considered sacraments as badges. Whereas linking sacraments to the *invisible* church needed some theological precision, it could comfortably be said that sacraments acquainted believers with

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<sup>1094</sup> See above pp.264-67.

their membership of Christ's mixed and visible church – the 'family and congregation of the Lorde', as Whiting put it.<sup>1095</sup> We saw that most authors did indeed air this idea – and we may also note just how much authors made of it in their rhetoric, and how heavily the association between sacraments and belonging to Christ weighed in the corpus at large. When Tye wrote that 'an especiall end and gift of this Sacrament [of the Supper] is, for the multitude of the faithfull, as of many members to make one bodie, and to knit them together in one mutuall relation and love'; when Hildersham wrote that by the Supper we 'professe our selves to be fellow members (as with the whole Church of Christ, so) especially with those Christians with whom we do receive'; when Tuke contended that participation 'doth plainly demonstrate that the obeier is the childe of God, the member of Christ' – on all these occasions the reader might well have been forgiven for seeing the comforting link between sacraments and the church first, and the fact that this was the visible rather than the invisible church, second.<sup>1096</sup>

Similarly potent promotion within 'safe' confines occurred when authors considered a memorial approach to sacraments. All Reformed churchmen were surely agreed that Christ's passion happened once and once only; only Catholics blasphemously claimed to crucify Christ again and again, in mass upon mass. There was nothing meritorious in the sacramental present – rather, Reformed sacraments pointed *backwards* to the one truly meritorious event of the passion. Yet the seriousness with which remembering was urged – not 'a slight or historicall remembrance, but...a very serious and deep remembrance' – combined with the active way in which communicants were urged to take possession of Christ crucified via their memories, created a sense in many texts of a powerful and present graceful experience, captured in Tozer's words: 'Christ is not signifie'd in these signes as in a picture, but exhibited unto us'.<sup>1097</sup>

Another placid concept exploited to the full by authors was that of the sacraments as seals. Because the concept of 'sealing' was inherently intermediary – something sealed always had to mean less than something definitively given – authors could and did make extremely grand

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<sup>1095</sup> Whiting, *Short*, p.9.

<sup>1096</sup> Tye, *Matter*, sig.D3r; Hildersham, *Doctrine*, p.13; Tuke, *Guest*, p.113 and see above pp.81-95.

<sup>1097</sup> Tozer; *Direction*, p.100. See above pp.95-101.

claims about exactly *what* was sealed: ‘God’s Promises’, ‘our regeneration’, ‘our continuance in the covenant of Grace’, ‘Christ and all his benefits’.<sup>1098</sup> The collective impact of such statements was greater than the theological justification by which they were permissible. When authors, motivated by the need to make sacraments a useful, meaningful and assuring part of lay devotion, put their positive message in terms of safe concepts and imagery, they often did so with such relish that the positive message far outweighed the placidity of the medium.

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Pastoral and theological imperatives moved slightly further apart when authors explained sacraments in terms of concepts and images which were theologically difficult and nuanced just as they were pastorally compelling. On many occasions this resulted in a failure to uphold strict Reformed balances between positive assertions and negative restraints. Such caveats were not necessarily absent altogether, but this particular form of writing, in which the priority was the edification and piety of the reader, often gave occasion for restraints and caveats to be submerged.

When authors considered Sacraments as badges, for example, they mostly considered the fairly straightforward links between sacraments and the visible church. But they sometimes ventured also down the branch of sacramental ecclesiology which related Baptism and the Supper to the *invisible* church – the community of saints who were elect and predestined as such. Practically every Reformed churchman of this period accepted predestination, and would therefore have denied that sacramental participation could in any way alter an estate. Therefore although sacraments might certainly be spoken of in relation to the invisible church or its synonyms, there had logically to be restraining caveats when the relationship was described. And indeed as seen above, such qualified statements were deployed: for Tozer Baptism ‘*assured* that wee are received into the Covenant of Grace’; for Jenison the true church of God was ‘sealed’ to us by sacraments – all implying that election was a prior fact

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<sup>1098</sup> See above pp.118-26.

of which sacraments allowed a particularly reassuring glance.<sup>1099</sup> Hence a positive (through sacraments we glimpse our membership of the elect) was coupled with a restraining negative (*but* only if our election is already sure). However, we also noted two instances of positive assertions about Baptism – Denison’s ‘meanes of our admission into the Congregation of Saintes’, and Perkins’ sacrament ‘by which we have our admission into the True Church of God’ – standing unchecked by appropriate theological qualification.<sup>1100</sup>

This same trait also occurred, on a larger scale, when sacraments were considered as analogies. Certainly, authors often espoused a principled parallelism: for all that outward bodily action and inward spiritual action occurred together; there was no compulsion for them to happen in concert. However, such equivocation was not consistently maintained. First, the prevalence of the ‘as...so’ motif created a vivid sense of the inevitable simultaneity of inward and outwards typified by Tuke: ‘as he receiveth, eateth and drinketh the *bread* and *wine*, so *surely* he shall be made partaker of the *body* and *blood* of Christ’.<sup>1101</sup> Second, the situation of analogical explanation in the personal contexts of ‘learning’ and ‘assuring’ attached deep psychological import to sacramental analogies.<sup>1102</sup> In both cases, the positive message of parallelism, of such obvious pastoral use, rang loud and true when writing pastorally about sacraments; caveats and qualifications were muted.

By such processes these pastoral writings about sacraments could deviate in *implication and impression* from theological norms which should have governed large swathes of sacramental theology. Writing usefully about the sacraments for a lay audience seems to have entailed the stretching and occasional subversion of theological stances on sacraments as they related to issues like the ecclesiology, the nature of signification, and the communication of grace. The sense that, ultimately, sacraments were always limited by certain soteriological norms such as predestination was never wholly absent – but did often fade quietly into the background.

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<sup>1099</sup> See above, Table One, pp.84-87.

<sup>1100</sup> See above, pp.89-90.

<sup>1101</sup> Tuke, Guest, p.70 and see above pp.114-15.

<sup>1102</sup> See above pp.115-17.

This waning of soteriological governing principles and waxing of the positive potential of sacraments was further facilitated when authors revelled in images and concepts which had little to do with soteriology and provided alternatives to its strictures. When sacraments were considered in ecclesiological setting, for example, we noted that authors adopted various formulations about how sacraments related to the communities of the elect and the damned – but we also noted the great emphasis given to the Pauline language of Christ’s ‘mystical body’, into which sacraments unambiguously united all believers. In case participation in the Supper caused a believer to question his or her membership of the elect, an author could point reassuringly to the concept of the mystical body instead, characterised by inclusiveness and a simple certainty of membership. As Bayly had put it, the Lord’s Supper, should ‘teach Christians to love one another, seeing they are all members of the same holy and mysticall body, whereof Christ is He[a]d’.<sup>1103</sup>

A similar ‘bypass’ was effected when discussing the pre-communion requirement of faith. A prolonged investigation into the *saving* faith deemed necessary to receive was a nuanced, doubt-inducing and difficult exercise. Authors certainly advised their readers on how to undertake this task but they also, to comforting effect, supplemented this difficult conception of faith with a broader and less soteriologically charged idea: faith as a communal and public celebration of Christianity. It was not that the difficulties of examining for saving faith were disregarded or neglected – but it was the case that when alternatives to this mode of thinking presented themselves, authors capitalised on the opportunity to present the best possible outcome for their readers. Professing faith certainly meant ‘trying whether or no’ a believer ‘had the *Legacy* of eternall life given him’, but it could also mean professing ‘that wee have no fellowship with Idolatours, Heretiques, Atheists, prophane and ungodly persons of this world, but that wee take ourselves to bee the children of God, and have fellowship with Christ, unity, love, and friendship with one another’.<sup>1104</sup>

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<sup>1103</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, p.768; and see above pp.91-3.

<sup>1104</sup> See above pp.170, 174-6.

The primacy of pastoral rather than theological priorities in these texts was often greatly advanced by the way in which authors arranged and structured their ideas. It was persuasive, for example, to conclude on a high note. For instance, the motif of achieving ‘communion with Christ’ through sacraments was a convincing enough image in its own right, but it also lent credence to preceding images. Sparke, for instance, devotes a section to showing that ‘Christ must be eaten and drunken and there fore there must be a true communion with him’ – the powerful image of communion is a climax to previous descriptions of sacramental eating and drinking.<sup>1105</sup> Something similar can be seen on a smaller scale in the way that Preston uses communion imagery to round off in emphatic fashion his description of receiving by faith:

As that which we eate and drinke, is turned to flesh and blood, and incorporate into us: So our eating, and drinking this banquet by faith, doeth transforme us (as it were) into Christ, and maketh us flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone.<sup>1106</sup>

A second pastorally effective use of form was the use of lists to nurture a feeling of attainability. The concept of worthiness was dissected into the manageable chunks of knowledge, faith, and newness of life. These were in turn dissolved into lists: knowledge was often itemised according to the Creed; faith was discussed in terms of saving knowledge, personal application, but also of its many fruits; sin, repentance and moral amelioration were laid out according to the Decalogue. Hence although it was frequently remarked that ‘bare’, ‘empty’ or ‘historical’ knowledge was insufficient, and that saving faith was a work of God and not man, and that ‘there is no true repentance without faith’: however difficult the apprehension of these qualities was said to be – when divided and itemised readers were presented with a plausible recipe for their attainment.

A structural device was also involved in planting the seed of instrumentalism. In this case authors consistently and repeatedly sounded two notes in close proximity to each other, creating a convincing harmonious effect. One note was that sacraments definitely contained Christ’s ‘real’ or ‘true’ presence. The second was sacraments genuinely communicated what

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<sup>1105</sup> Sparke, *High*, pp.134-44.

<sup>1106</sup> Preston, *Short*, pp.8-9.

they contained, via ‘sacramental exhibiting’, ‘sacramental participation’, or ‘sacramental feeding’. When sounded together proposed realities of the gift and the giving reinforced each other. ‘Ours is the same Supper which Christ administred: so is the same Christ verily present at his owne Supper’, wrote Bayly, affirming the reality contained in sacraments. He proceeds: ‘not by any Papall Transubstantiation, but by a Sacramentall participation whereby he doth truly feede the faithfull unto eternall life’.<sup>1107</sup> Assertions of Christ’s ‘real and true’ presence were orbited by constructions such as ‘sacramental exhibiting’, ‘sacramental offering’ and ‘sacramental feeding’ in such a way that the proposed realities of the gift and of the giving reinforced each other.<sup>1108</sup>

If the project of sacramental pastoralia could move authors a surprising distance from their formal theological views, it followed that they occasionally approached a distinctly unreformed position. The clearest example of this is the appreciation shown for the role of sensuality and ceremony in the performance of sacraments. For all that authors were quick to condemn ‘prophaneness or sensualitie’ in the abstract they were equally quick to conscript the senses to the practical Reformed exercise of receiving sacraments by faith. Most authors endorsed an account of sacraments in which Christ ‘knockes at *all* the *gates* of our *soule*, and seekes entrance by every *sense*’ – indeed, they more often they expounded this concept at some length for their devotional purposes.<sup>1109</sup> A similar stance emerged on ceremonies. Whilst a condemnation of ‘ceremonie’ or ‘carnall observations’ in worship was a common feature of the corpus, outright hostility was by no means the only possible stance. There was also a general ambivalence or silence towards practices such as kneeling for communion or making the sign of the cross in Baptism, and an acceptance or even enthusiasm for many ‘outward’ or ‘ceremonial’ facets of sacramental worship which aided the believer in worthy and correct participation. There should be ‘chearefulness & joy’ that ‘God might visibly represent his invisible gifts to our outward senses, our sight, taste, and touch’.<sup>1110</sup>

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<sup>1107</sup> Bayly, *Practise*, pp.762-63.

<sup>1108</sup> See above pp.142-43.

<sup>1109</sup> Hill, *Communicant*, sig.M7v and see above pp.204-211.

<sup>1110</sup> Tuke, *Guest*, p.79 and see above pp.211-225.

The distance created between pastoral statements made about the scope of sacraments, and strict Reformed theological judgements about that same scope, fits with an image of late Elizabethan and early Stuart Protestantism coming to terms with a transition: from a set of propositions to educate people with, to an established creed which had already won the minds of England but had yet to fully capture hearts. It was certainly important that people had correct theological understanding of sacraments, but not as important as ensuring that sacraments were used as aids to devotion, spurs to piety, and as a remedy for all sorts of troubled consciences.

**APPENDIX A: AUTHOR-TEXT**

Author Last Name	Author First Name	Short Title	Edition <sup>1111</sup>	Pub. Date <sup>1112</sup>	Possible time of writing / comments
anon		<i>Motives to Godly Knowledge</i>		1613	
anon		<i>The Elements of the Beginning</i>		1619	
Attersoll	William	<i>The New Covenant, or, A Treatise of the sacraments</i>	2(a)	1614	First ed.1612. <i>New Covenant</i> is a revised and expanded version of a previous work, <i>Badges</i> , from 1606.
Bayly	Lewis	<i>The Practise of Pietie</i>	3(ft)	1613	First ed. 1612
Boys	John	<i>An Exposition of Al the Principal Scriptures</i>	2(ft)	1610	First ed. 1609
Bradshaw	William	<i>A Direction for the Weaker Sort of Christians</i>		1609	
Brinsley	John	<i>The True Watch, and Rule of Life</i>	8(a)	1619	8 <sup>th</sup> addition is the first to treat sacraments (Title page).
Bruch	Richard	<i>Short and Plaine treatise</i>		1615	
Burges	Cornelius	<i>Baptismall Regeneration of Elect infants</i>		1629	
Cleaver	Robert	<i>The Patrimony of Christian Children</i>		1624	

<sup>1111</sup> All are first known editions unless stated otherwise. (ft)=subsequent edition used because full text was available; (a)=subsequent edition used because it contains more about sacraments.

<sup>1112</sup> Dates in *italics* represent posthumous publication.

**APPENDIX A: AUTHOR-TEXT**

Author Last Name	Author First Name	Short Title	Edition <sup>1111</sup>	Pub. Date <sup>1112</sup>	Possible time of writing / comments
Coxe	Richard	<i>A Short Catechism</i>		1620	d.1596
Crashawe	William	<i>Meate for Men</i>		1629	d.1626
Denison	Stephen	<i>A Compendious Catechisme</i>		1621	
Denison	John	<i>The Heavenly Banquet</i>		1619	
Denison	Stephen	<i>The Doctrine of both the Sacraments</i>		1621	
Dering	Edward	<i>A Briefe and Necessarie Catechisme</i>		1605	d.1576
Dillingham	Francis	'Preparative' in <i>A Silver Locke</i>		1611	
Dod	John	'Dialogue' in <i>Ten Sermons</i>		1610	
Donne	John	'S. Pauls' in <i>Sermons</i>		n/a	Preached in 1626
Downname	John	<i>A Guide to Godlynesse</i>		1622	
Draxe	Thomas	'Appendix' in <i>The Lambes Spouse</i>		1618	
Egerton	Stephen	<i>A Brief Methode of Catechizing</i>	22(a)	1615	First ed.1594.
Estey	George	'Exposition upon the Lords Supper' in <i>Certaine Godly and Learned Expositions</i>		1603	d.1601
Featley	Daniel	<i>Ancilla Pietatis</i>	2(a)	1630	First ed.1626
Fenton	Edward	<i>So Shorte a Catechism</i>		1622	First ed.1582
Field	Theophilus	<i>A Christians Preparation</i>		1622	
Fist	Martin	<i>A Briefe Catechisme</i>		1624	

**APPENDIX A: AUTHOR-TEXT**

Author Last Name	Author First Name	Short Title	Edition <sup>1111</sup>	Pub. Date <sup>1112</sup>	Possible time of writing / comments
Frewen	John	<i>Certaine choise grounds</i>		1621	
Gawton	Richard	A Short Instruction		1612	
Geree	John	A Catechisme in Briefe Questions		1629	
Greenwood	Henry	'Joyfull Tractate' in <i>Workes</i>		1616	
Hildersham	Arthur	The Doctrine of Communicating Worthily		1619	
Hill	Robert	'Communicant' in <i>The Path-way to Prayer and Pietie</i>		1615	Re-issuing and expansion of an earlier work, <i>Christ's Prayer</i> , of 1606.
Horne	William	<i>An Easie Entrance into the Principles of Religion</i>		1610	
Hunt	Nicholas	<i>The Devout Communicant</i>		1628	
Inman	Francis	<i>A Light unto the Unlearned</i>		1622	
Jenison	Robert	<i>Directions for the Worthy Receiving of the Lords Supper</i>		1624	
Jewel	John	'A Treatise of the Sacraments' in <i>Certaine Sermons</i>		1603	Original compiled at some point whilst Bishop of Salisbury 1560-71
Lake	Arthur	'Wells' in <i>Sermons</i>		1629	Sermon, must have been preached between 1616 (appointment to Wells) and 1626

**APPENDIX A: AUTHOR-TEXT**

Author Last Name	Author First Name	Short Title	Edition <sup>1111</sup>	Pub. Date <sup>1112</sup>	Possible time of writing / comments
					(death).
Page	Samuel	'Supper' in <i>Nine Sermons</i>		1616	
Pagit	Eusebius	<i>Short Questions and Answers</i>		1617	Composed 1570? See <i>DNB</i> Pagit.
Pemble	William	<i>An introduction to the Worthy Receiving</i>	4 (ft)	1633	d.1623
Perkins	William	<i>The Foundation of Christian Religion Gathered into Sixe Principals</i>		1591	
Preston	Richard	<i>Duties of Communicants</i>		1621	
Preston	Richard	<i>The Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper</i>		1621	
Preston	Richard	<i>Short Questions and Answers</i>		1621	
Randall	John	<i>Three and Twentie Sermons</i>		1630	d.1622
Richardson	Charles	<i>The Doctrine of the Lords Supper</i>		1616	
Rogers	Richard	<i>Seven Treatises</i>		1603	
Sibbes	Richard	'The right receiving' in <i>Workes</i>		1629	
Smith	Henry	<i>A Treatise of the Lords Supper</i>		1591	
Smith	Samuel	<i>Christs Last Supper</i>		1620	

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Author Last Name	Author First Name	Short Title	Edition <sup>1111</sup>	Pub. Date <sup>1112</sup>	Possible time of writing / comments
Sparke	Thomas	<i>The High Way to Heaven</i>		1597	
Sutton	Christopher	<i>Godly Meditations Upon the Most Holy Sacrament of the Lordes Supper</i>		1601	
Thomas	Lewis	<i>Seven Sermons</i>		1615	
Thornborough	John	<i>The Last Will and Testament</i>		1630	
Tozer	Henry	<i>Directions for a Godly Life</i>		1628	
Tuke	Thomas	<i>A Fit Guest for the Lords Table</i>		1609	
Tye	William	<i>A Matter of Moment</i>		1608	
Tymme	Thomas	'Court of Conscience' in <i>A Silver Watch-tower</i>		1605	
Webbe	George	<i>A Briefe Exposition of the Principles of Christian Religion.</i>		1612	
Whiting	Giles	<i>Short Questions and Answers</i>		1593	
Wilcox	Thomas	<i>The Substance of the Lordes Supper</i>		1610	
Willoughby	John	<i>Mnemosyn</i>		1603	

**APPENDIX B: TEXTS BY GENRE**

Genre	Author / Text	Focus	Relationship (if any) of portion of text considered to parent text
Catechism (sacrament-specific)	Draxe	<i>Both Sacraments</i>	'Appendix' is adjunct to <i>Lambes Spouse</i>
	Fist		
	Hunt		
	Preston, <i>Short</i>		
	Hildersham	LS only	Bound with Bradshaw's <i>Direction</i>
	Richardson		
Catechism (pre-communion form)	Anon.	General doctrine and godliness	
	Coxe		
	Crashaw		
	S. Denison, <i>Compendious</i>		
	Dering		
	Fenton		
	Frewen		
	Gawton		
	Geree		
	Horne		
	Inman		
	Pagit		
	Perkins		

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<b>Genre</b>	<b>Author / Text</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Relationship (if any) of portion of text considered to parent text</b>
	Webbe		
	Whiting		
Catechism (misc)	Egerton		
Godly Living Manuals	Bayly		Sacramental excerpts considered within the manuals
	Brinsley		
	Downname		
	Featley		
	Rogers		
Treatises	Attersoll	Both sacraments	
	S. Denison, <i>Doctrine</i>		
	Jewel		'Treatise' within collated <i>Sermons</i>
	Sparke		
	Burges	B only	
	Cleaver		
	Greenwood		'Tractate' within Greenwood's <i>Workes</i>
	Estey		LS only
	Preston, <i>Doctrine</i> .		
	Thornborough		
Wilcox			

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Genre	Author / Text	Focus	Relationship (if any) of portion of text considered to parent text
	Willoughbie		
Communion Preparations	Bradshaw		
	Bruch		‘Treatise’ within larger godly living manual <i>Life of Religion</i>
	Dillingham		‘Preparative’ within <i>A Silver Locke</i>
	Field		
	Hill		‘Communicant’ within Godly living manual <i>Pathway</i>
	Jenison		
	Pemble		
	Preston, <i>Duties</i>		
	Sutton		
	Tozer		
	Tuke		
	Tye		
Sermons (collected)	J. Denison		
	Dod		‘Dialogue’ within <i>Ten Sermons</i>

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<b>Genre</b>	<b>Author / Text</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Relationship (if any) of portion of text considered to parent text</b>
	Randall		
	H.Smith		
	S.Smith		
Sermons (single)	Donne		All parts of collated editions. See primary bibliography.
	Lake		
	Page		
	Sibbes		
	Thomas		
Miscellaneous	Anon.	General	
	Boys	Liturgical commentary	

**APPENDIX C: AUTHORS**

<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Anon	[Author of <i>Motives</i> ]				Described as a 'faithfull minister', by the printer William Bladon <sup>1114</sup>
Anon	[Author of <i>Elements</i> ]				
Attersoll	William	d.1640	Cambridge: Clare (BA 1583), Peterhouse (MA 1586)	Minister at Isfield, Sussex from 1600	Prolific devotional writer into old age.
Bayly	Lewis	c.1575–1631	??	Bishop of Bangor from 1615	Bishopric secured under patronage of Marques of Buckingham
Boys	John	<i>bap.</i> 1571, <i>d.</i> 1625	Cambridge. (BA Corpus 1590, BD Clare 1600)	Canterbury, where he was a Dean	Protégé of John Overall while at Cambridge. Career stagnated under Bancroft but promoted by Abbott.
Bradshaw	William	<i>bap.</i> 1570, <i>d.</i> 1618	Cambridge, Emmanuel (BA 1593, MA 1596)	Cambridge, Kent, London, Newhall Derbyshire	Influence of Chaderton. Met Cartwright on Guernsey. Prime mover in post-HCC puritan discontent. Renowned for counselling troubled consciences.
Brinsley	John	1600–1665	Cambridge: Emmanuel (BA 1620, MA 1623)	Yarmouth	Acquaintance of Hildersham. On the fringes of the church in the 1620s and 1630s, finally ejected at the restoration.

<sup>1113</sup> All information from *DNB* unless otherwise stated.

<sup>1114</sup> Anon., *Motives*, sig.A3r

**APPENDIX C: AUTHORS**

<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bruch	Richard		Cambridge: St John's (Matr. 1579)	Kensington (according to preface of <i>Life of Religion</i> )	Also translated devotional works by Johann Erhard, a Lutheran pastor.
Burges	Cornelius	d. 1665	Oxford: Lincoln (BA 1616, MA 1618)	London ministry from the 1630s	Future parliamentarian
Cleaver	Robert	1561/2- ca.1625	Oxford: St Edmund Hall (BA 1581)	Oxfordshire	Collaborator with John Dod
Coxe	Richard	d. 1596	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1582); Oxford: St. John's (MA 1584)	Norfolk	
Crashawe	William	bap.1572- 1625/ 6	Cambridge: St John's (BA 1592, MA 1595, BD 1603)	Yorkshire, London	Produced editions of William Perkins' work
Denison	John	1569/ 70- 1629	Oxford: Balliol (BA 1594, MA 1600, BD1607, DD 1611)	Berkshire	Politically well-connected, chaplain to Buckingham
Denison	Stephen	d. 1649	Cambridge: Trinity (BA 1603, MA 1606)	London	Notorious London minister
Dering	Edward	1540- 1576	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1560, MA 1563, fellow 1560-70)	Cambridge, London, Kent	Formative puritan
Dillingham	Francis	d.162	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1587,	Bedfordshire	Prolific writer

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<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		5	MA 1590)		
Dod	John	1560-1645	Cambridge: Jesus (BA 1576, MA 1580)	Cambridge, also the Midlands	Archetypal well connected puritan
Donne	John	1572-1631	Oxford: Hart Hall	London and abroad	Famous poet, diplomat, minister and former recusant
Downame	John	1571-1652	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1593, MA 1596, BD 1603)	London	London minister and lecturer. In trouble in 1602 for administering communion to non-kneelers
Draxe	Thomas	d.1618/19	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1595? BD 1609)	Warwickshire	Translated Perkins for consumption in Geneva
Egerton	Stephen	c.1555-1622	Cambridge: Peterhouse (BA 1576, MA 1579)	London	Formative godly minister. Constant pressure from Bancroft.
Estey	George	1560/1-1601	Cambridge: Gonville & Caius	Suffolk	Signed petition against the arminian Peter Baro whilst at Cambridge.
Featley	Daniel	1582-1645	Oxford: Corpus Christi (BA 1601)	Oxford, Paris, London	Renowned controversialist against Catholics and ecclesiastical licenser. An increasingly staunch Episcopalian, but did sit in the Wesminster Assembly.
Fenton	Edward	see comm	??	Norfolk	Long-lived East Anglian minister. An Edward Fenton was rector of

**APPENDIX C: AUTHORS**

<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		ents			Combs, Suffolk, and also Booton, Norfolk, possibly between 1575 and 1648 between 1580-2 he corresponded with the separatist Thomas Wolsey. Harrison also wrote to him rebuking him for not separating.
Field	Theophilus	bap 1575-1636	Cambridge: Emmanuel but transferred to Pembroke (BA 1596, MA 1599, DD 1611)		Bishop of Hereford, often embroiled in legal or political trouble. Incessant careerist. Brother Nathan was an actor; father John had been a formative puritan.
Frewen	John	1558-1628	Apparently did not attend university	Sussex	
Gawton	Richard		??	Hertfordshire	
Geree	John	1599/1600-1649	Oxford: Magdalen Hall (BA 1619, MA 1621)	London	Prominent non-conformist minister.
Greenwood	Henry		Probably Cambridge: Pembroke (BA 1601-2, MA 1605)	Essex	
Hildersham	Arthur	1563-1632	Cambridge: Christ's	Cambridge, Lincolnshire	Formative puritan minister and academic. Influence of Lawrence Chaderton; worked with Egerton on Milenary

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<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
					petition, supported Bradshaw in Cambridge.
Hill	Robert	d.1623	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1585, MA 1588) Fellow of St John's	Cambridge, London	Strongly influenced by William Perkins, whose <i>Golden Chaine</i> was first translated into English by Perkins. Wrote a biography of Samuel Hieron.
Horne	William		??	Nottinghamshire	
Hunt	Nicholas	1596-1648	Oxford: Exeter (BA 1616)	Surrey	Oxford mathematician and theologian. May have been a proctor of the court of arches
Inman	Francis	1599-1638	Cambridge: Trinity (BA 1593, MA 1596)	Kent	
Jenison	Robert	bap.1583-1652	Cambridge: Emmanuel (BA 1605), St. John's (MA 1608)	Newcastle	Ejected, exiled to Danzig. Sibbes wrote an epistle to one of his works
Jewel	John	1522-1571	Oxford: Corpus Christi (BA 1540, MA 1545)	Salisbury	Bishop of Salisbury, key influence on the emerging Elizabethan religious settlement. Exile in Mary's reign, notably to Zuirich
Lake	Arthur	bap.1567 – 1626	Oxford: New College (BA 1591, MA 1595, BD	Hampshire, Oxford, Bath	Moderate Calvinist bishop of Bath and Wells

**APPENDIX C: AUTHORS**

<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
			1605)		
Page	Samuel	1574-1630	Oxford: Corpus Christi (BA 1591, MA 1594, BD 1611)	London	Conformist minister and naval chaplain
Pagit	Eusebius	1546/7-1617	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1568)	Northampton hire	
Pemble	William	1591/2-1623	Oxford: Magdalen (BA 1614, MA 1616) Career at Magdalen Hall	Oxford	In the mid-century was posthumously accused of antinomianism.
Perkins	William	1558-1602	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1581, MA 1584)	Cambridge	England's most influential Reformed theologian. Formative in the godly living genre.
Preston	Richard	d. 1624?	Probably Cambridge: Sidney Sussex	Northampton hire, possibly London	
Randall	John	1570-1622	Oxford: St Mary Hall, Trinity (BA 1585, MA 1589, BD 1598)	London	
Richardson	Charles		Possibly Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1592, MA 1595)	Claims to be preacher at St Katherine's London; possibly also Northants <sup>1115</sup>	
Rogers	Richard	1551-	Cambridge:	Essex	Renowned godly author,

<sup>1115</sup> Richardson, *Doctrine*, title page.

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<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		1618	Christ's (BA 1571), Gonville and Caius (MA 1574)		<i>Seven Treatises</i> commended by Egerton, Culverwell.
Sibbes	Richard	1577? -1635	Cambridge: St John's (BA 1599, MA 1602)	Cambridge	Moderate puritan. On record whilst at Cambridge as disputing the propriety of the sign of the cross in Baptism
Smith	Henry	1560- 1591	Cambridge: Queen's. Oxford: Lincoln (BA 1579), Hart Hall (MA 1583)	London	'Silver-Tongued' Smith, renowned preacher of the Temple Bar, reluctantly conformed
Smith	Samuel	1584- 1665	Oxford: St Mary Hall	Essex	Became a Presbyterian in mid-century
Sparke	Thomas	1548- 1616	Oxford: Magdalen (BA 1572, MA 1574)	Buckinghamsh ire	A puritan representative at Hampton Court in 1604, but thereafter conformed
Sutton	Christophe r	c.156 5- 1629	Oxford: Lincoln (BA 1586, MA 1589)	Norfolk	Positions in both Lincoln cathedral and Westminster Abbey
Thomas	Lewis		Oxford: Brasenose (BA 1587)	Glamorganshir e	
Thornborough	John	1551? -1641	Oxford: Magdalen (BA 1573, MA 1575)	Ireland, London, York, Worcester	Bishop of Worcester. Marital controversies. Richard Baxter noted with approval that Thornborough never used the sign of the cross in Baptism.

**APPENDIX C: AUTHORS**

<b>Author Surname<sup>1113</sup></b>	<b>Author Forename</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Locations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Tozer	Henry	c.1601-1650	Oxford: Exeter (BA 1623, MA 1626, BD 1636)	Oxford	Assistant to John Prideaux. Died in Rotterdam
Tuke	Thomas	1580/1-1657	Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1600, MA 1603)	London	Royally sponsored, anti-parliamentarian in the war
Tye	William	d. 1620?	Possibly Cambridge: Christ's (BA 1586, MA)	Cambridgeshire, Kent	In epistle to Prince Henry claims to have travelled and preached abroad, and that his grandfather was tutor to Edward VI
Tymme	Thomas	d.1620	Cambridge? No record of graduation	London, Suffolk	Patrons included Grindal
Webbe	George	b. 1581 d. in or before 1642	Oxford: University College, Corpus Christi (BA 1602, MA 1605, DD 1623)	Wiltshire, London, Ireland	Schoolmaster and later, in Ireland, Bishop. <i>Spirituell Flowers</i> is a staple of godly devotional writing, but also enjoyed High Church patronage in the 1630s
Whiting	Giles	1550-1627	Cambridge: Trinity (BA 1574)	Northants	
Wilcox	Thomas	c. 1549-1608	Oxford: St John's, probably non-graduate	London	Well connected formative puritan
Willoughbie	John		Oxford: Exeter, Broadgates Hall (BA 1589, MA 1593)	<i>Mnemosyn</i> penned from Oxford 1603	



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