

# Brief Theses on Paedocommunion

## *A Succinct Introductory Defense*

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BY TIM GALLANT

1. The children of believers are possessors of the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 19:13-14), and therefore members of Christ's Church.
2. The children of believers are therefore rightly baptized, to signify and seal their real relationship with Jesus Christ, even as infants were circumcised under the old covenant (Gen. 17:10-14; cf. Col. 2:11-12).
3. Those who are baptized into Christ possess full inheritance rights in the new covenant (Gal. 3:27), and are therefore included in all its privileges (Gal. 3:26-29).
4. The sacrament of Lord's Supper is one of these privileges which belong to the baptized body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16-17; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13).
5. Sacraments are signs and seals which depict spiritual realities, and are not meant to be severed from those realities (cf. Acts 22:16; 1 Cor. 10:16).
6. Therefore, the whole baptized Church is in principle given authority to partake of the Lord's table, since the bread and the body are coextensive (1 Cor. 10:16-17). Biblically, barring from the table is an administration of discipline (excommunication), to declare on Christ's authority that the barred person is under the judgment of the kingdom (1 Cor. 5:1-8; Mt. 18:15-20).
7. The calling for remembrance and self-examination in 1 Corinthians 11 stands in the pattern of the character of the sacraments of the old covenant (e.g. Ex. 12:14; Is. 1:10-20).
8. These old covenant sacraments admitted children into participation (e.g. Dt. 16:11, 14).
9. Therefore, the requirements of 1 Corinthians 11 may not be employed to bar covenant children from the sacrament, since similar requirements in the old covenant did not bar them.
10. When Paul gives the requirement of self-examination (1 Cor. 11:28), in context, his purpose is to prevent Christians from coming to the table of the Lord in a divisive manner. The barring of covenant children from the table, however, is itself a divisive practice: it divides children from 'mature' members and implicitly makes them second-class citizens in the kingdom of heaven (directly contrary to Christ's assessment in Mt. 19:13-14).
11. The ancient Church admitted the children of believers to the Lord's Supper (see Cyprian, *On the Lapsed*, ch. 9, 25-26). This practice was essentially abandoned around the twelfth century in the Western (Roman Catholic) Church, largely due to superstitious views concerning the Mass. This discontinuance of ancient practice was an error, and ought to be reversed in biblically reformed churches.

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Tim Gallant, *[Feed My Lambs: Why the Lord's Table Should Be Restored to Covenant Children](#)* (published February 2002).