

ORDINANCE vs. SACRAMENT

In Christian theology, both "ordinance" and "sacrament" refer to religious rites or ceremonies, but they differ in their interpretation and significance.

Ordinance:

- An ordinance is generally understood as a religious ritual instituted by Jesus for Christians to observe.
- Emphasizes the _____ of the rite and the believer's obedience to Christ's command.
- Focuses on the _____ act of _____ and expression of faith.
- Examples: Baptism and the Lord's Supper in some Protestant denominations, seen as _____ of _____, but not channels of grace themselves.

Sacrament:

- The Roman Catholic Church believes these to be instituted by Christ and to be a means by which God conveys grace to the participant.
- Examples: _____ and the _____ in Catholic traditions, believed to be conduits of God's grace, and sometimes seen as essential for salvation.
- The Roman Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Churches recognize seven sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist (or Holy Communion), Confirmation, Reconciliation (Penance or Confession), Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.
- Lutherans acknowledge two sacraments: Baptism and Eucharist
- The Sacramental view sees the rite as a _____ of _____, where God's grace is actually conferred upon the participant.
- Often involves a deeper _____ of the rite's efficacy in spiritual life and _____.

Key Differences:

- Means of grace: Sacraments are considered to be channels or conduits of God's grace. Ordinances are seen as symbols or representations of a spiritual reality already received.
- Grace: Ordinances are _____; sacraments are seen as _____ of _____.
- Focus: Ordinances emphasize _____; sacraments emphasize _____.
- Role of God: In a sacrament, God is believed to be _____ through the rite to impart grace. In an ordinance, the focus is more on the human act of _____ and the _____ of faith.
- Number of rites: Different denominations recognize varying numbers of sacraments or ordinances.
- Salvation: In some traditions, such as Roman Catholicism, sacraments are considered necessary for salvation. Most evangelicals, however, believe that salvation is received through faith alone, and ordinances are not a requirement for salvation.

In essence, while both terms refer to important religious practices, the key distinction lies in whether the rite is viewed as a symbolic act of obedience or as a means through which God bestows grace.
