

Paedocommunion, Paedobaptism, and Covenant Theology: A Baptist Assessment and Critique

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INTRODUCTION

One of the distinguishing marks of the Church is the proper administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper.¹ Since the time of the Reformation when these two visible signs were recognized as ordained by Christ, they have been hotly debated. The correct mode and the proper recipients of baptism have a long pedigree of opposing viewpoints, and the nature of the Lord's Supper has been historically contentious as well. More recently, however, the inclusion of all children of believing parents to the Lord's Table, a practice known as paedocommunion, has become a contested issue among Anglican² and especially Reformed and Presbyterian circles.³ Advocates of paedocommunion assert that baptized children or infants who are physically capable of eating should participate in the Lord's Supper.⁴ On the other hand, many paedobaptists reject this practice and seek to maintain what they believe is the biblical teaching (including the teaching of John Calvin and the *Westminster Confession of Faith*) that the Lord's Supper should be reserved only for those who have consciously responded to God's grace in Christ.

Interestingly, some of the impetus among covenant theologians and pastors to include children in communion is derived from Baptist polemics. Baptists claim that hermeneutical consistency in covenant or federal theology demands that if infants are baptized into the church, then so should they have a share in the other ordinance, the Lord's Supper.⁵ Thus, proponents of infant communion, desiring to see their covenantal theology worked out consistently, assert that all members of the new covenant community, believers and their children, should participate in the Lord's Supper.⁶ Furthermore, motivation is found for incorporating infants or children who have not reached the age of discernment, based on the fact that children participated in the Passover feast and were included in other OT meals and sacrificial feasts. These OT covenantal meals, especially the Passover, have been replaced by the Lord's Supper. The new covenant meal is more beneficial and should have no less than the privileges that children enjoyed in the old covenant administration. Considerations of 1 Corinthians 11 also drive paedocommunion impulses. Lastly, evidence from church history on the practice of infant communion, in conjunction with analogous historical arguments for the practice of infant baptism in the early church, is also used to affirm paedocommunion. Each of these arguments, however, is strongly opposed by traditional Reformed paedobaptists as they seek to maintain that communion is only for those who have made a conscious and public profession of faith.

In this article, I will present the paedocommunion argument and its interpretative approach to the Passover and Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 11, before I reject it. I will do so in five steps: (1) set the paedocommunion argument in the overall system of covenant theology; (2) outline the hermeneutics of paedocommunion; (3) describe the key arguments for the paedocommunion view; (4) outline the response to the paedocommunion argument from those who embrace paedobaptism; and finally (5) present my biblical-theological critique of paedocommunion (and its corollary paedobaptism) from a Baptist view. The goal of the entire paper is to demonstrate that the paedocommunion view is consistent with covenant theology, unlike those within covenant theology who reject it, but it ultimately flounders on their understanding of the nature of the new covenant, coupled with their misunderstanding of the national and typological aspects of the Passover. On both these counts, the argument for paedocommunion and paedobaptism

fail. The history of paedocommunion in the early and medieval church, although important, will not be addressed given space limitations.⁷

COVENANT THEOLOGY AS THE THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING PAEDOCOMMUNION

Baptist theologian Paul Jewett noted that the argument from circumcision to infant baptism, which was so pivotal and central to the whole debate of paedobaptism, reflected “the more basic theological principle of continuity in redemptive revelation.”⁸ The same theological principle is also of crucial importance in the debate regarding paedocommunion. “The same issues that arise in the debate over infant and child observance of the Lord’s Supper,” observes Keidel, “appear also in the debate over infant baptism.”⁹ Indeed, if the foundational argument of infant baptism rests on a unified covenant of grace evidenced in both the New and Old Testaments,¹⁰ such is the same for the presentation for paedocommunion.

Basically stated, following the fall of Adam recorded in Genesis 3, God initiated “the covenant of grace” which extends through the OT and NT as his saving work across redemptive history displays a continuity: OT believers received salvation from the gospel of Christ to come, and NT believers receive salvation in the gospel of Christ who has come.¹¹ Further, the Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and even the new covenant—albeit in a more glorious and fulfilled sense—are all administrations or expressions of this one overarching covenant of grace.¹² Though the various administrations of the covenant of grace are diverse and particular in terms of mode, the substance does not change; the successive administrations are essentially the one and same covenant of grace.¹³ The implications of this framework, which both paedobaptists and paedocommunionists adopt,¹⁴ include first, the continuity of the people of God—one church progressing throughout all of redemptive history—and second, membership in the covenant community is for believers and their children—also known as the genealogical principle and linked to the household codes¹⁵ and lastly, the continuity of the essential meaning of the covenant signs and seals (e.g., the spiritual realities of circumcision are replaced in baptism even though the signs—cutting of foreskin versus water—are different).¹⁶ A critical aspect of covenant theology is that the church, like Israel, is a mixed people with the invisible church consisting of all of God’s

true elect and the visible church reflecting a community of believers and unbelievers. From this theological grid, paedobaptism is asserted; baptism replaces circumcision (Col 2:11-12; Rom 2:29; 4:11) because they both signify and anticipate the realities of the gospel.¹⁷

It is important to note that the argument for paedocommunion is placed within the overall theological framework of covenant theology. Peter Leithart states it this way:

Simply put, the most common Reformed argument for infant baptism is this: (male) children were included in Israel in the Old Testament; Israel and the church are the same people, bearers of the same promise; therefore, just as (male) children were marked for inclusion by circumcision in the old covenant, so children should be marked for inclusion by baptism in the new covenant. The argument for inclusion of young children in the Lord's Supper has the same structure: children ate with their parents at the feasts of Israel; Israel and the church are the same people; therefore, children should participate in the Christian feast.¹⁸

THE HERMENEUTICS OF PAEDOCOMMUNION

Before turning to the specific arguments for paedocommunion, I will outline some hermeneutical issues pertaining to it. Leithart has laid down the assumed but often unstated hermeneutical principles of "paedo-arguments."¹⁹ These are important, Leithart contends, because such unexamined presuppositions have led to hermeneutical inconsistencies among paedobaptists.²⁰

The first hermeneutical issue that paedo-arguments assume is that the "ceremonial" regulations associated with the liturgical forms and patterns of the old covenant have "ceremonial" import in the new covenant era.²¹ Just as there are ritual ordinances that require circumcision on the eighth day and govern the access to and manner of Israel's feasts, so there are ceremonial regulations for the church with reference to the admission requirements to baptism and the practice of the Lord's Supper. "Accepting that infant circumcision supports infant baptism logically entails accepting that ceremonial regulations of the Old can be applied as ceremonial regulations in the New."²²

A second hermeneutical assumption of paedo-arguments involves typology. OT persons, events, institutions typify not only Jesus, but also the *totus Christus*, the whole Christ in terms of head and body.²³ The Augustinian

principle of *totus Christus* means that the OT typifies not only Christ, but also the church and that such OT types will “have some regulatory authority in the church.”²⁴ Leithart offers an example of this principle. Israel’s exodus-wilderness wanderings are typologically applied to Christ in Matthew 3-4 as one observes that Jesus’ sonship, baptism, and wilderness temptation experiences all correspond to the exodus and wilderness wanderings of the nation of Israel. However, the second aspect of the hermeneutic of *totus Christus* is given in Paul’s treatment of the exodus-wilderness narrative. Paul employs an ecclesiological typology when he applies the Israel wilderness experience to the story of the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 10:6-11.²⁵ In this passage, Israel’s wilderness wanderings foreshadow not so much the story of Christ but the Corinthian church.²⁶ Thus, the Augustinian principle of *totus Christus* is at least implicitly affirmed by paedocommunion advocates.

The third hermeneutical point is that paedo-arguments do not claim complete continuity between the institutions of the Old and New Testaments.²⁷ Clearly, baptism does not involve the removal of the foreskin. Furthermore, the inclusion of children in the Passover applies to the situation of children at the Lord’s Table but still assumes discerning areas of similarity between the two meals while maintaining the evident dissimilarities (e.g., the consumable elements in each meal).

KEY ARGUMENTS FOR PAEDOCOMMUNION

Having sketched the theological framework of covenant theology and some hermeneutical assumptions of paedocommunion advocates, I now turn to the key arguments for the view.

The Paedocommunion Covenant Argument

A key argument for covenant communion is that all members of the new covenant should receive the privileges of that covenant. If baptism is the sign of entrance into the new covenant community, then the ongoing sign of the new covenant relationship with God, the Lord’s Supper, should be granted to all members.²⁸ One aspect of this argument draws from the genealogical principle which is also utilized for the case of infant baptism.²⁹ Strawbridge appeals to this principle and applies it to paedocommunion and thereby seeks to correct what he views as an inconsistent theology and practice among covenant theologians.

With the baptism of infants based on covenantal inclusion, Strawbridge argues that the case is even more explicitly true for communion. Baptism is not explicitly called a covenant sign in Scripture, but communion is specifically called such, being identified as the new covenant sacrament in Luke 22:20.³⁰ Also, generational inclusion, according to Strawbridge, is “explicit in all covenant administrations in Scripture.”³¹ Beginning with Adam, one observes that all the children of Adam are involved (1 Cor 15:22; Rom 5:12). The Noahic covenant involved the salvation of his household (Heb 11:7).³² The patriarchs (Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) performed sacrifices for their entire families, and with the Abrahamic covenant circumcision was given as a representative sign for Abraham and all his descendants throughout their generations (Gen 17:7, 9). In addition, during the Mosaic administration the blood of the Passover lamb preserved the firstborn, and the Passover was to be observed as an ordinance for Israel and their children forever (Exod 12:24). For the Davidic covenant, Strawbridge appeals to Psalm 89:3-4, since God confirms his promise to David in establishing his seed and building up his throne to all generations. Therefore, this brief survey of the covenantal framework of the OT demonstrates, according to Strawbridge, that the “pattern of covenant administration includes the principle of family inclusion and successive generations in both covenant content and covenant recipients of the signs.”³³ The visibility of signs and seals of the covenant promises is inclusive of the children of believers, claims Strawbridge, and so he argues from new covenant consistency as well. New covenant passages (Deut 30:6 and Jer 31:8, 17) with references to “descendants” and “children” indicate the inclusion of children.³⁴ Additional evidence in the NT suggest that the offspring of covenant participants are explicitly included with the promise to “you and your seed” (Luke 1:17; 1:49-50; Acts 2:39; and Acts 13:32-33).³⁵ If children of believers are in the new covenant, the logical entailment is that the cup of the new covenant, signifying the purchased redemption, should be extended to them.³⁶

The involvement of children in the covenants leads to further conceptual problems in terms of membership, as traditional paedobaptists are viewed as inconsistent. Strawbridge argues that there is no conception of “half-covenant, halfway covenant members” in the Bible.³⁷ No biblical proof is available to maintain a two-tiered membership in the church (communicant and non-communicant) or for the practice of requiring “as a rite the profession

of faith on the part of covenant children as the prerequisite for entrance into the fullness of their covenant privileges.”³⁸ Similarly, Strawbridge points out the inconsistency and incoherence of marking off baptized children as “non-communing” members, for membership “signifies participation or being part of something, in this case Christ’s body and the community of his people (cf. 1 Cor. 1:9; 7:14). But ‘participation in’ is conceptually identical to ‘communion in’—biblical *koinōnia* ...” and furthermore, a “static category of ‘non-communing member’ is like saying there is a ‘non-communing communer,’ or a ‘non-participating participator,’ or a ‘non-member member.’”³⁹

To not allow baptized infants a part in the Lord’s Supper also brings about the issue of church discipline and the unity of the church. Keidel states it this way:

The Westminster Confession of Faith states that ‘sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God ... to put a *visible* difference between those that belong unto the Church and the rest of the world ...’ By continually denying baptized infants and children the right to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, the pedobaptist [*sic*] puts them with the rest of the world. But why should covenant members be denied the covenant meal, as if they were outside the covenant?⁴⁰

Moreover, if baptized infants and children are excluded, could this not be seen as a form of discipline, since denial of the Lord’s Supper is a serious component of church discipline?⁴¹ Clearly, confessional continuity would seem to require paedocommunion since the *Westminster Confession of Faith* affirms that the sacraments represent Christ, supply his benefits, and serve as a demarcation of those who belong to the church and those outside, but then the confession also “defines the visible church as ‘all those ... that profess the true religion, together with their children’ (25:2).”⁴² Furthermore, the confession “maintains that ‘the sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the New’ (27:5).”⁴³ If such standards apply to paedobaptism, then these same principles ought to be employed for paedocommunion. Lastly, Keidel also points out that baptized infants should not be excluded from the Lord’s Supper, for to do so would “deny them the privilege of showing the unity of the visible church into which they were baptized.”⁴⁴

The Paedocommunion Argument from the Passover and Covenant Meals

Alongside the appeal to consistency in covenant membership, paedocommunion advocates marshal evidence for the inclusion of children at the Lord's Table from the OT witness of children participating in sacrificial meals, especially the Passover (see Exod 12:3, 6, 19, 47; and sacrificial meals generally included sons and daughters, Deut 12:6-7, 12, 18; 16:11, 14).⁴⁵ Once again, implications of covenant theology (the same substance of the covenant of grace across the canon, the mixed assembly of the church, etc.) and the hermeneutical principles described by Leithart play an important role. For example, the typological hermeneutic with the principle of *totus Christus* is observed in these remarks of Mason: "As Christ's death typologically fulfilled the redemptive sacrifice of the Passover lamb and so brought about a new exodus, so the Church's memorial meal, the Lord's Supper, typologically fulfills Israel's memorial meal, the annual Passover."⁴⁶ Furthermore, Keidel and others claim that the inclusion of infants in the Lord's Supper, based on the Passover, is formally similar to paedobaptist argumentation. Paedobaptists contend that infant baptism has the same essential meaning of the initiatory rite of circumcision and thus replaces it in the new covenant era.⁴⁷ The same hermeneutical principles are applied to the situation of the other ordinance—the Lord's Supper—since this NT sacrament replaces the Passover and possesses the same essential meaning.⁴⁸ In what follows, paedocommunion adherents argue that the connections of the Passover to the Lord's Supper will have a direct bearing on the question of who participates in the Lord's Supper.

The main thesis of Keidel and other paedocommunion proponents is that because the OT presents infant and child members of the "visible church" participating in the Passover feast, and because the Passover is typologically fulfilled in the Lord's Supper, infant members of the NT visible church are commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper if they are physically capable of eating.⁴⁹ The specific association between these OT and NT ordinances is based upon the institution of the Lord's Supper in the Synoptic Gospels. In the Synoptic Gospels, the Last Supper is presented as a Passover meal as the disciples and Jesus speak of eating the Passover (Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7-9) and the disciples go before Jesus to prepare the Passover meal (Matt 26:19; Mark 14:16; Luke 22:13).⁵⁰ In fact, the essential

unity between the Lord's Supper and the Passover meals is, according to the paedocommunion view, demonstrated in that they are both sacrificial meals.⁵¹ Propitiation for sins was always accomplished through the Passover meals as lambs were sacrificed beforehand (the slaughter of the lamb is expressly termed a "sacrifice" in Exod 12:27; 23:18; 34:25). The Passover meals were more than just memorial feasts, but also essentially a sacrifice for atonement—the lamb serving as a substitute—for the forgiveness of sins since in the first Passover meal God redeemed Israel's firstborn sons from death, sparing them the divine punishment inflicted upon the Egyptians, and as a consequent blessing, the deliverance from the hand of Egypt.⁵² The Lord's Supper is a sacrificial meal, "not because a sacrifice is made during the meal, nor because Christ's sacrificed body is physically present in some sense, but because participants consume the bread and wine which signify Christ's sacrificed body and blood."⁵³ The Lord's Supper, then, is viewed as having the "same essential meaning" as the Passover although it is its new covenant replacement.⁵⁴

Highlighting the essential meaning between two, Keidel offers several reasons for affirming that the Passover meal was also replaced by the Lord's Supper.⁵⁵ Christ directly transformed the Passover into a celebration of the Lord's Supper as the elements of the Passover were invested with new meaning in Christ's words of institution (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-24).⁵⁶ Second, the continuity extends even into the eschaton as Jesus identifies both the Passover and the Lord's Supper with the messianic banquet, for Jesus says that he will not eat of the Passover until the kingdom of God is brought to full completion (Luke 22:15-18). As a result, if "the messianic banquet fulfills both the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper, there must be a direct correspondence between the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper as well, and the Lord's Supper may therefore be said to replace the Passover."⁵⁷ The third reason offered is based on Paul's statement that Christ is the Passover who has been sacrificed (1 Cor 5:21). "If the Lord's Supper is a feeding upon that which signifies the sacrificed Christ, and if the sacrificed Christ is among other things, a Passover sacrifice ... then the Lord's Supper is a feeding upon that which signifies a Passover sacrifice and should thus be considered a Passover meal."⁵⁸ Lastly, given the common meanings with both being sacrificial meals, the "efficacy of the Passover" sacrifices rest completely on Christ's once and for all atoning work (Heb 10:4).⁵⁹ However, even though

the Passover features animal sacrifices while the Lord's Supper presents the 'true' sacrifice, the benefits of the Passover—the deliverance of the firstborn and redemption from Egypt—as well as the benefits of the Lord's Supper—the deliverance from bondage to sin and freedom from the curse upon the earth (Rom 8:22-23; Rev 21:1ff)—both rest “upon the prior sacrifice of atonement and the forgiveness of sins obtainable therefrom.”⁶⁰

From all of this, Keidel concludes: “If then circumcised infants and children were commanded to eat the Passover meals if physically capable and if the Lord's Supper replaces and has essentially the same meaning as the Passover meals, why should not baptized infants and children be required as well to eat the Lord's Supper, if physically capable?”⁶¹

The Paedocommunion Argument from 1 Corinthians 11

In addition to the above arguments,⁶² proponents claim support from Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 11.⁶³ In verses 17-34 Paul lays down warnings for the proper observance of the Lord's Table, specifically as they relate to counteracting the divisions that existed among the Corinthians. For the issue of paedocommunion, the crux is 1 Corinthians 11:28-29 since Paul calls on the communicants to examine themselves and to discern the Lord's body. Keidel's main contention is that there is nothing stated in this chapter which would necessitate the application of Paul's requirements to infants and children.⁶⁴ Such words as “remembrance” (v. 24, 25), “examine” (v. 28), and “judge” (v. 29) are part of statements and warnings that are addressed to a specific audience within the church; in other words, we should not assume that their reference is unlimited.⁶⁵ Davies argues that the Paul's instruction is against factiousness and drunkenness; therefore, the call to self-examination is a moral demand such that the warning does not apply to children unless they too were somehow guilty of the kind of divisive misconduct.⁶⁶

Moreover, universal terms and phrases such as “whoever” (1 Cor 11:27), “let a man” (v. 28), “he who” (v. 29) and “anyone” (v. 34) may be unlimited, but there are many contexts where such words reference a specific group.⁶⁷ The mere usage of terms in 1 Corinthians 11 does not mean that the unlimited reference may be assumed. Thus, given the contextual ambiguity of these terms, Keidel proposes that another passage does illuminate the question, that being the Passover celebration.⁶⁸ Keidel assumes his previous analysis of the Passover that all children were included even though their understanding of

the OT rite was quite limited. With 1 Corinthians 11 not directly addressing whether children should have to examine and discern the body in order to participate, “the analogy between the Lord’s Supper and the Passover feast indicates that this spiritual discernment is unnecessary for them” and thus Keidel concludes that 1 Corinthians 11 is specifically addressed to the adult members of the church alone.⁶⁹

Finally, paedocommunion supporters argue that 1 Corinthians 10-11 is crucial for understanding the relation between Lord’s Supper and the unity and solidarity of the body of Christ (see 1 Cor 10:16b-17).⁷⁰ The problem with the Corinthians was that they did not discern the body of the Lord (1 Cor 11:29), which means they were not properly understanding the unity of the church; they were unworthily participating because of divisive behavior such as failing to wait for others and having greedy irreverence for fellow Christians (1 Cor 11:33-34).⁷¹ Instead, a “man ‘proves himself’ [1 Cor 11:28] by *how* he eats, not how much he understands or how thoroughly he searches his heart.”⁷² Meyers asserts that it is not children who fail to discern the unity of the body of Christ, but rather those who bar covenant children a place at the Lord’s Table.⁷³ Paul’s commands do not exclude children; instead, they call on the adults who were disrupting the unity of the community, causing factionalism, and profaning the Lord’s Supper to come to repentance and to judge oneself rightly.⁷⁴ From the paedocommunion standpoint, factionalism arises when covenant children are not allowed to participate in the Lord’s Supper.

PAEDOBAPTIST RESPONSES TO INFANT COMMUNION

The arguments in favor of paedocommunion, namely, covenant membership and genealogical inclusion, mandate that new covenant children have access to the Lord’s Supper, including the arguments based on the Lord’s Supper as the fulfillment and replacement of the Passover. Also, 1 Corinthians 10-11 re-enforced the claim as the commands in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 were directed only to those who were causing divisions in the church. Despite these arguments, traditional paedobaptists have rejected them for the view that only believers, i.e., individuals who consciously and volitionally place their faith in Christ, are to be communicants.

Traditionally, paedobaptists have exclusively appealed to 1 Corinthians

11 to defend the view that only professing believers should participate in the Lord's Supper. For example, Calvin and Berkhof insist that Paul requires mental and spiritual engagement to participate in the Lord's Supper because the Corinthians are called to self-examination prior to the celebration.⁷⁵ Furthermore, Calvin cites the Lord's command of remembrance (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:25) and the proclamation of the Lord's death (1 Cor 11:26) when participating in the Lord's Supper as actions reserved for older persons who are capable of comprehending such things.⁷⁶ Recently, Venema argues that the paedocommunion interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 is unduly restrictive because a careful analysis suggests that 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 represents a shift from addressing the abuses that characterized the situation at Corinth to a more general treatment of how all recipients are to receive the bread and the wine.⁷⁷ The section shifts to third person, indicating the stipulations of examining and discerning the body have general application to any believer who should receive the ordinance.⁷⁸ As a result, these instructions of Paul limit admission to the table because they pertain to only those capable of professing belief in Christ.

The paedocommunion assertion that the participation of children during the Passover is instructive for the church since the Passover is the OT type for the Lord's Supper (antitype) has had varied responses. Berkhof concedes that children were allowed to eat the Passover but denies the same for children in the new covenant administration because of 1 Corinthians 11:28.⁷⁹ Calvin and Murray, however, appeal to Exodus 12:26 as an indication that not all the children participated in the first Passover, but only those able to inquire into its meaning.⁸⁰ Bavinck points out that subsequent Passover meals were not household celebrations but took place in Jerusalem and excluded children. Furthermore, Beckwith builds on this observation and argues that the Lord's Supper had its true antecedent or background in these subsequent Passovers and not in the first Passover which occurred in Egypt.⁸¹

Venema picks up on all of the above points save Berkhof's concession and provides a thorough evaluation.⁸² First, the stipulations for later Passover meals commanded men to participate but did not require women and children to make the pilgrimage (Exod 23:17; 34:23; Deut 16:16). Secondly, Venema finds it unclear that younger children would eat the elements of the Passover, especially the roasted lamb and bitter herbs. Moreover, the subsequent Passover meals added the element of wine, so the cup of blessing

would not have been suitable for children. Thirdly, the catechetical element (Exod 12:26) may not argue conclusively against paedocommunion but is suggestive that some understanding was required before participating. Nevertheless, the spiritual significance of the Passover still benefited even those who did not partake of all the elements. Fourthly, Venema appeals to the historic practice of Judaism as the intertestamental period shows no explicit indications that women and children participated in the Passover feast. Lastly and most importantly, Venema argues that there are too many differences between the Passover and the Lord's Supper to allow the inferences of the former to dictate the practice of the latter.⁸³ Christ's words of institution (Mark 14:24; Matt 26:28; Luke 22:20) draw from the covenant renewal ceremony of Exodus 24, which means he did not directly connect the Supper with the Passover; furthermore, the "Lord's Supper is a new covenant observance that commemorates Christ's sacrificial death, which is the fulfillment of *all the types and ceremonies of the law, especially the sin and guilt offerings of the old covenant.*"⁸⁴ So while the Lord's Supper is related to and fulfills the Passover meal, all of the OT sacrifices are more pertinent since they "typify atonement for the guilt of sin."⁸⁵ Thus, the historical/typological connection between the Passover and Lord's Supper does not work as the paedocommunion view contends.

Many of the paedobaptist responses to paedocommunion focus on the specific Passover and Lord's Supper texts as seen above. However, very little is directed towards the overall covenantal argument. Nevertheless, Venema broaches the topic, asserting that the covenant of grace is not properly understood among paedocommunion advocates. The traditional conception of Reformed theology made a distinction "between the covenant in its historical administration, which includes all professing believers and their children, and the covenant in its fruitfulness as a saving communion of life."⁸⁶ This provides accounting for the fact that some of those under the covenant administration are non-elect. Thus, the distinction disarms the sacramentalism of paedocommunion, for the "claim that all believers and their children already enjoy full participation in Christ, and ought therefore to be nourished in the Christ at the Table of the Lord, is seen to be an unwarranted exaggeration of what covenant membership entails."⁸⁷ In this sense, baptized members must respond to the gospel promise in Christ by way of public profession, and participation in the Lord's Supper provides the unique sacramental means of ensuring the

exercise of faith.⁸⁸ Finally, having passive and active subjects in baptism and the Lord's Supper, respectively, does not exclude the benefits of the covenant of grace to children. Covenant members have real privileges, but there are also covenantal responsibilities, and the invitation to the Lord's Supper obligates its recipients to come by faith after self-examination.⁸⁹

A BAPTIST ASSESSMENT AND CRITIQUE OF PAEDOCOMMUNION

In the debate over paedocommunion, the traditional paedobaptists have offered some arguments that would cohere or resonate with the Baptist understanding for limiting the ordinance to believers only. Yet, the traditional Reformed arguments do not ultimately challenge the core theological rationale for infant communion since they too subscribe to the covenant of grace framework and adhere to the same hermeneutical entailments, namely, the genealogical principle, the mixed assembly of the church, and the continuity of covenantal signs. From a Baptist perspective of this controversy, arguments regarding whether or not children ate the Passover in the OT are not germane to the issue of infant communion, nor do such arguments delve into the crux of the problem.⁹⁰ The more critical factors are how paedocommunion supporters (and paedobaptists) put the Old and New Testaments together, interpret the covenants, and associate covenant signs to each other. Ultimately, both paedobaptists and paedocommunion advocates foist "the covenant of grace" framework upon the Bible and end up flattening the OT and the NT, missing the covenantal discontinuities across redemptive history, and diminishing the newness associated with the nature and structure of the new covenant.⁹¹ Before critically evaluating the paedocommunion argument and their claim that the Passover and the Lord's Supper share the same essential meaning, a foray is needed into why the paedobaptist rejection of infant communion demonstrates a hermeneutical inconsistency given their commitments to the covenant of grace and the implications derived thereof.

The Hermeneutical Inconsistency of Traditional Paedobaptism

It is important to note how arguments for paedocommunion and paedobaptism closely parallel each other. The same principles are applied: the appeal to the incorporation of children across the covenants (genealogical

principle) ensured their covenant membership, the implications based on household texts,⁹² Jesus' reception of children in the kingdom (e.g. Matt 19:13-14), the sanctity or consecrated position of believer's children (1 Cor 7:14),⁹³ the continuity of covenant signs, and the continuity of the people of God. At the end of the day, only two significant factors prevent traditional paedobaptists from practicing infant communion: their interpretation of 1 Corinthians 11 and their disassociation of the Lord's Supper from the Passover, either by denying children ate the Passover or by rightly understanding the typological correspondences.⁹⁴

In the case of 1 Corinthians 11, paedocommunion advocates (and Baptists) wonder how paedobaptists can counter Baptists in arguing that passages such as Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:16 do indeed refer only to adults but such verses do not necessitate application to infants. Yet, at the same time, they fail to make a similar case when reading 1 Corinthians 11 and interpreting these verses to unequivocally apply stipulations upon all covenant members.⁹⁵ Furthermore, since there is no clear passage that excludes children from the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11 does not explicitly concern infants), how is it that paedobaptists can "appeal to texts that *imply* a continuation of the Old Testament practice of including the children of believers within the covenant community"⁹⁶ for the case of infant baptism but not for infant communion? Given the "paedobaptist principle that whatever is in the Old Testament continues unless it is specifically abrogated in the New Testament,"⁹⁷ one questions the inconsistency when baptism texts are not viewed as a restriction to infant participation but now covenant children are brought under the restrictions of 1 Corinthians 11 and not permitted to the Lord's Supper.⁹⁸

Closely related but equally demonstrative of the paedobaptist hermeneutical inconsistency is how they distinguish between passive and active subjects in regard to the sacraments. Infants are passive recipients of baptism, but participants in the Lord's Supper must be active. However, Jewett has succinctly noted the problem with the paedobaptist reasoning:

The truth remains that each experience of "receiving the word" or "putting on Christ" or "believing" or "repenting" – terms that are invariably associated with baptism in the New Testament – involves just as high a degree of activity by those baptized as does "showing forth the Lord's death," "discerning the Lord's body," or eating "in remembrance of him" by those who partake of the Lord's Supper.⁹⁹

The paedocommunion view, then, is consistent in having infant subjects passive for both baptism and the Lord's Supper. Therefore, the paedobaptist distinction makes them vulnerable to the charge that their reasoning is asymmetrical, holding to paedobaptism and credo-communion.

Problems of inconsistency arise also for the Passover. Traditional paedobaptists hold that the spiritual substance or aspects of circumcision under the Abrahamic covenant comes directly over to the new covenant, having essential unity with infant baptism. Nevertheless, they argue that the essential substance of the Passover does not come across into the Lord's Supper. Venema appeals to discontinuity on the subject of the Passover:

The paedocommunionist appeal to the Passover tends to minimize the important differences between the administration of the old and new covenants. Though the Lord's Supper was instituted on the occasion of a Passover celebration, the administration of the Supper belongs to the new covenant economy, so it must be governed primarily by the stipulations of the New Testament Scriptures. Advocates of paedocommunion often overstate the similarities between the Passover and the Lord's Supper, and fail to reckon with the implications of the New Testament's teaching determining who should be admitted to the sacrament.¹⁰⁰

Venema's words are legitimate (as we shall see below), however, at no point in his book does he work out these assertions for the case of infant baptism. Would he be willing to acknowledge the differences between the Abrahamic covenant and the new covenant and allow the NT's teaching to determine who should be baptized? Venema's comments seem difficult to square with his other statements when arguing for paedobaptism: "However much greater and richer the new covenant administration in Christ may be, it *does not abrogate or displace* the old covenant."¹⁰¹ But if the Lord's Supper is governed by the new covenant administration, and thus different from the Passover, then certainly some features of the old covenant have been displaced. What is the criterion for determining which features of the covenant of grace carry over and which ones do not carry over into the new covenant? This raises the issue of the continuity of the covenant signs.¹⁰²

Moreover, Venema appeals to Acts 2:39, finding that Peter reaffirms the OT covenant promise which includes the children of believing parents, with the effect that God's grace extends "from generation to generation, incorporating

[believers and their children] into His household and numbering them among His beloved children.”¹⁰³ If so, in the context of Acts 2:39, one would presume that the children of these new converts were eventually baptized and so would expect their inclusion in fellowship, including the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42, a possible reference to the Lord’s Supper).¹⁰⁴ Even if not a reference to the Lord’s Supper, Acts 2:42 and 46 contain household formulas which again could be applied for the case of infant communion. For, on the one hand, the household texts (e.g. Acts 16:14-15, 30-34; 18:8; 1 Cor 1:14-16) are applied by paedobaptists in favor of the practice of infant baptism,¹⁰⁵ but on the other hand, the household formulas involving fellowship and communion—paralleling the involvement of covenant children in the OT covenantal meals and the Passover—are not applied for the case of infant communion.¹⁰⁶ Once again, a hermeneutical inconsistency is observed.

In summary, the paedobaptist position is roundly criticized, for different reasons, by both Baptists and paedocommunion advocates. The hermeneutical principles employed for infant baptism are not applied to infant communion. As Jewett rightly observes, “Having embraced their children in the covenant by giving them baptism, Paedobaptists exclude them from that same covenant by refusing them participation in the covenant meal. Having reasoned from inclusive circumcision to inclusive baptism, they turn about and go from an inclusive Passover to an exclusive Eucharist.”¹⁰⁷ Even Murray, when considering these issues associated with baptism and the Lord’s Supper, was willing to concede and go in the paedocommunion direction.¹⁰⁸

A Baptist Critique of Paedocommunion

Paedobaptists are having difficulty restraining the paedocommunion tendencies in their ranks. While rightly arguing that the Lord’s Supper is for believers only, they are unable, given their theological commitments, to challenge the heart of the issue: the theological framework of the covenant of grace that is worked out in favor of infant communion. Baptists, on the other hand, can offer a more robust and debilitating critique of paedocommunion because they can consistently address the covenant argument.¹⁰⁹ Let us develop this point in three steps by unpacking: (1) the nature of the new covenant community; (2) the new covenant and the genealogical principle; and (3) some typological problems with the paedocommunion view.

1. The Nature of the New Covenant Community.

While rightly recognizing the unity of God's salvific plan in Christ, covenantalists do not fully do justice to how the unfolding of God's redemptive plan reveals that the nature of the new covenant community and the covenant signs change across the epochal horizons.¹¹⁰ Space does not permit a detailed analysis of the relationships between the biblical covenants, but a survey of the nature and newness of the new covenant will suffice in challenging the notions of the church as a mixed assembly and the genealogical principle which is applied for incorporating infants to covenant membership.

Jeremiah 31:29-34 contains the significant prophecy of the new covenant inaugurated by Jesus at the Last Supper (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25) and which is applied to the church (Heb 8, 10). A careful reading of this passage reveals that the tribal structure of the past covenants would change in the new covenant era.¹¹¹ Unlike the previous eras, this new covenant envisions a day where everyone will die for their own sin (Jer 31:30) instead of experiencing divine wrath when the tribal leaders (prophets, priests, kings) sinned in their failure to represent and speak for God (cf. Exod 20:19). Also, the people are characterized as having the law in their hearts (Jer 31:33) and possessing personal knowledge of God in conjunction to receiving the forgiveness of sins (Jer 31:34; cf. 32:39-40). Carson rightly observes that "the *nature* of the new covenant [is] not to be overlooked: as foreseen in the prophecy of Jeremiah, it is the abrogation of an essentially tribalistic covenant structure in favor of one that focuses on immediate knowledge of God by all people under the new covenant, a knowledge of God that turns on the forgiveness of sin and the transformation of the heart and mind."¹¹² The knowledge of God is a salvific one; the mediated knowledge of God is displaced in the new covenant. Unlike the mixed community wherein all were physically circumcised while only some were spiritually circumcised, this new covenant prophecy envisions a covenant people who are all circumcised in the heart as they have the law in their hearts and know God intimately (Jer 9:25-26; cf. Deut 10:16; 30:6).¹¹³

While Jeremiah 31:31-34 does not explicitly refer to the Holy Spirit (see Ezek 36:25-27; cf. Num 11:27-29), since the law was housed in the temple, Jeremiah now presents the law residing in the hearts of individuals and thus points to the indwelling Spirit that constitutes the people of God as his temple.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the tribal structure in the old covenant community

meant that only the leaders were imbued with the Spirit, but the new covenant era will be significantly different in that the Spirit will be distributed to all covenant members. The messianic age is one characterized by the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2) as all those within the new covenant community enjoy the promise of the Spirit (Eph 1:13-14) who enables them to have union with Christ (Rom 8:9-11) and to be faithful covenant keepers.

The structural changes and nature of the new covenant are not indicative of a renewed covenant but of a qualitatively better covenant ushered in through a covenantal head—Christ Jesus—who is far superior to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and David. As Wellum rightly highlights:

[The new covenant] has better promises and better sacrifices and therefore is a *better* covenant. What is the *better* nature of the covenant? It is this: because of who the Redeemer is and what he offers as a sacrifice we now have a *more effective* sacrifice and thus a *more effective* covenant. ... Due to his work, he has brought a full, effective, and complete salvation unlike the types and shadows of the old (see Heb 7-10).¹¹⁵

Therefore, the dramatic changes involving this new covenant features a far superior mediator—the divine Messiah—and a people who are collectively the eschatological “new man” in Christ (Eph 2:11-22). The members of this community have been born of and indwelt by the Spirit. The church is characterized as a people who have all been regenerated (Eph 2:5-6; Col 2:12-13; 3:3), recipients of forgiveness, and who have immediate knowledge of the Lord. Therefore, the church is not a mixed community¹¹⁶; there is no remnant in the NT administration as there was in the nation of Israel during OT times.¹¹⁷

Furthermore, the initiatory rite of entrance into the new covenant, baptism, does not replace circumcision but is a new rite in conjunction to the nature of the new covenant. Baptism does not anticipate gospel realities then and neither is it for children who cannot profess faith in Christ. Rather baptism signifies the believer’s union with Christ by faith and that he or she has experienced the benefits of the new covenant such as the gift of the Spirit and forgiveness of sins (Gal 3:26-27; Rom 6:1-4).¹¹⁸ Both paedobaptists and paedocommunion advocates go in the wrong direction from the outset because they do not properly account for the nature and structure of the new

covenant and the NT presentation of a regenerate community in contrast to the mixed spiritual condition of national Israel.

2. The New Covenant and the Genealogical Principle.

The new covenant realities also show that the genealogical principle and the continuity of covenantal signs are invalid and do not apply for the ordinances in the new covenant era. Before addressing the continuity of covenantal signs with respect to the Passover below, some comments on the genealogical principle are necessary.

Strawbridge is correct in tracing out the family or generational inclusion throughout the covenants of the OT era. However, his use of the genealogical principle fails when applied in the NT because of the nature of the new covenant. As noted above, the new covenant church demonstrates that covenant membership is only permitted to those who come to faith in Christ, being regenerated (Tit 3:4-7). Passages such as Acts 2:39 do not actually teach a genealogical principle such that the children of believers are to be incorporated as covenant members and given the ordinances. The promise of Acts 2:39 is a reference to the promised Spirit (cf. Acts 2:33; Joel 2:28-29; Ezek 36:26-27).¹¹⁹ Even if Peter's audience would have associated the promise to Abraham and his seed (Gen 13:15; 17:7-9), the promise of the Spirit is fulfilled through Jesus as the crucified (Acts 2:23), resurrected (Acts 2:24-31), and ascended Christ (Acts 2:32-33) pours out the Holy Spirit. It is Christ's work on the cross (Gal 3:14), and Christ as the true seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16) who secures the pouring out of the Spirit on those (both Jews and Gentiles) who are of faith (Gal 3:22). Most convincing, moreover, is the last phrase of Acts 2:39 which qualifies the members that Peter has identified. The promise of the Spirit is to all whom God shall call (cf. Joel 2:32); "the passage is concerned with the call of God, that inner work of the Spirit who enlightens the mind and renews the hearts ('they were pricked in the heart,' v. 37), and with the response to that call ('what shall we do?' v. 37) on the part of those who receive it."¹²⁰ A similar analysis could be made for the other passages that refer to children and that, on the surface, favor the genealogical principle.

The Paedocommunion views offers consistency with respect to those who enter the covenant community and experience the ongoing privileges of covenant membership in participating in the Lord's Supper. However,

instead of having passive subjects for both baptism and communion, the nature of the new covenant and the NT evidence dictates that baptism and the Lord's Supper be granted to only active, believing subjects. Only those who have come to faith in Christ, having their heart circumcised through regeneration in receiving the gift of the Spirit, are proper candidates for both ordinances. Also, only those marked by such faith can strive for maintaining unity in the church. Lastly, even church discipline can only be adequately applied if the Lord's Supper is limited to those professing faith.¹²¹

3. *Typological Problems with the Paedocommunion View.*

Paedocommunion proponents misinterpret the nature and structure of the new covenant *and* also draw incorrect typological relationships based off their *totus Christus* paradigm. In conjunction with the newness of the new covenant, Wellum has demonstrated that the paedobaptist appeal to the continuity of covenant signs does not hold; circumcision and baptism are not directly related typologically, they do not have the same essential spiritual meaning.¹²² Baptism does not replace circumcision. Similar problems exist for the paedocommunion case for the Lord's Supper conveying the same essential meaning as the Passover and serving as its replacement.

The structural changes and discontinuity associated with the new covenant era and its covenant signs means that the substance of the previous old covenant signs do not carry over into the new with the same essential meaning. In other words, drawing correspondences between those who participated in the Passover meals as directive for who participates in the new covenant Lord's Supper is illegitimate because not only has the nature of the covenant community changed (a mixed versus regenerate community) but also because the two covenant meals, though having many parallels, are not identical in substance, they do not share the exact same spiritual realities.¹²³ Furthermore, the national aspects of the Passover are wrongly collapsed into the spiritual realities of the Passover by paedocommunion supporters.

The Passover meal, placed within the setting of the exodus from Egypt (and the subsequent Passover feasts which served as memorials of God's act of sparing the Israelite firstborn sons), had both national aspects and anticipated spiritual realities. The spiritual aspects of the Passover, rightly noted for the most part by the paedocommunion camp, consisted of atonement as the sacrificed lamb served as the substitute for the Israelite firstborn sons.¹²⁴ The

physical lives of the sons were spared as the wrath of God did not enter the Israelite homes because of the blood on the doors. The Passover sacrifices were typological and forward looking in anticipation of the great Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world (John 1:29; 19:31-36).¹²⁵

Nonetheless, even with these spiritual aspects, the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper, given the nature of the meals and the escalation or intensification characteristic of the typological pattern, could not have the same essential meaning.¹²⁶ They are qualitatively different as the Passover sacrificial meal commemorates God's sparing the lives of the firstborn while the Lord's Supper, which obviously lacks the sacrifice of an animal, looks back to Christ's effective and one time sacrifice on the cross. Like the other OT sacrifices, especially the guilt and sin offerings, the Passover sacrifice could not finally remove sin as the author of Hebrews presents, for the blood of animals was ultimately ineffective and offered repeatedly, but Jesus provides a better and greater sacrifice as priest in offering his own blood once and for all (Heb 8:1-6; 10:1-14).¹²⁷ Not only is there discontinuity in terms of the actual elements (only bread and wine used in the Lord's Supper), the spiritual realities are also different. The sign of the new covenant in Jesus' blood—the Lord's Supper—is a benefit to only those in faith union with him. The new covenant believers are the only ones allowed to the Lord's Supper because greater spiritual realities—forgiveness, justification, the removal of sins, etc.—associated with Christ's death are theirs through faith. Only those who have experienced these spiritual realities can participate in the new covenant meal, for only they can remember and proclaim what Christ has done for them (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24-26).

In addition, while the Passover meal anticipated spiritual realities, there was also a national context. The Passover meal was a memorial (Exod 12:24-28), for God delivered Israel, liberating them from the hand of Egypt, and established them as his people at Mt. Sinai. In other words, the exodus from Egypt was a *physical* redemption as the nation of Israel became a theocracy established under the Mosaic covenant. However, the Lord's Supper does not have a theocratic nation in purview. Instead the new covenant-making event that Jesus inaugurates at the Last Supper is really a new Passover and a new exodus that involves the forgiveness of sins tied to *spiritual* redemption. The reconstituted people of God participate in the Lord's Supper since they have experienced a spiritual deliverance not from Pharaoh or from Egypt, but from

slavery to sin. They now have “liberation from the sinfulness and powerlessness experienced under the old covenant.”¹²⁸ This coincides with what was discussed above, but it is important to highlight that the Passover had a national context that looked back at God’s deliverance from Egypt and forward to the salvation to come.¹²⁹ The Lord’s Supper is not oriented around a socio-political nation, but is for believers from all tribes, tongues, and nations.

In sum, the typological differences between the Passover meal and the Lord’s Supper are apparent: “There it was the blood of animals sacrificed according to God’s command; here the self-sacrifice of the Son of God. There it was an earthly people; here the eternal ‘saints of the Most High.’ The Passover re-presents an event in redemptive history; in the Lord’s Supper one is present who is himself ‘a covenant for the people.’”¹³⁰ The Passover meal is fulfilled through Christ’s work on the cross. The Lord’s Supper is not a one to one replacement of the Passover meal, for it does not have the same essential meaning. The Passover meal anticipated the Lamb of God and the new exodus. It is now obsolete. When the true lamb—Jesus Christ—came, he transformed the Passover meal at the Last Supper so that his disciples have fellowship in the Lord’s Supper by looking back to his atoning work and also proleptically participate in the messianic banquet that is yet to come (Rev 19:9; Luke 22:16-18).¹³¹ Overall, paedocommunion advocates wrongly reduce the national (physical) and typological aspects of the Passover meal to just the spiritual realities. This in turn becomes a grid to interpret who participates in the Lord’s Supper and leads them to allow “covenant” children to partake. However, maintaining the national and typological aspects of the Passover and focusing on the new covenant spiritual realities connected to the Lord’s Supper demonstrates that the paedocommunion proposal is completely wrong. Only followers of Jesus, those redeemed and so true members of the church, may enjoy fellowship and communion at the Lord’s Table.

CONCLUSION

Baptists have often argued that “paedocommunion is the logical outworking of a Reformed ecclesiology. It is nonetheless ruled out by the New Testament’s tying of the Lord’s Table to discipline, but could it be that this is only because the NT restricts membership in the new covenant community to those who

have been regenerated and have expressed faith in Christ?”¹³² My analysis affirms this conclusion. Paedocommunion is the consistent outworking of covenant theology, as the covenant of grace framework entails the genealogical principle, the mixed assembly of the church, and the continuity of covenant signs. Paedocommunion supporters, unlike paedobaptists, apply their hermeneutics in a straightforward manner having infant “covenant” members receive the privileges of the new covenant meal. The same arguments used for infant baptism are applied to infant communion. Yet, both paedo-advocates miss the newness of the new covenant and fail to account for the associated structural changes. The presence of the Spirit, immediate knowledge of God, and the realization of circumcised hearts all demonstrate that the new covenant community is a regenerate one. Only those who are of faith may be granted the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Finally, just as all paedobaptists reduce circumcision to only spiritual realities and so neglect the national and typological features of circumcision, so paedocommunion supporters do the same with the Passover meal. The Passover and the Lord’s Supper do not have the same essential meaning. The superiority of Christ and his supper point us to far greater spiritual realities that the Passover meal could only foreshadow. Since the Lord’s Supper does commemorate Christ’s unique atoning work, churches must be diligent in obeying the clear NT teaching that participation is for believers alone.

¹ For general discussions of these two ordinances see Mark Dever, “The Doctrine of the Church,” in *A Theology of the Church* (ed. Daniel A. Akin; Nashville, TN: B&H, 2007), 766-856, esp. 783-91; Gregg R. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 321-409.

² For debate among Anglicans and for those against the practice of paedocommunion, see Roger T. Beckwith, “The Age of Admission to the Lord’s Supper,” *WTJ* 38 (1976): 123-51; Donald Allister, “Admitting Children to Holy Communion,” *Churchman* 113 (1999): 295-306. For those in favor of the practice, see Matthew W. Mason, “Covenant Children and Covenant Meals: Biblical Evidence for Infant Communion,” *Churchman* 121 (2007): 127-38; Glenn N. Davies, “The Lord’s Supper for the Lord’s Children,” *RTR* 50 (1991): 12-20; Alan Ward, “Communion Before Confirmation: A Response to ‘Admitting Children to Holy Communion,’” in *Churchman* 113/4 (1999), *Churchman* 114 (2000): 295-99; David R. Holeton, “Communion of All the Baptized and Anglican Tradition,” *Anglican Theological Review* 69 (1987): 13-28.

³ That the issue of paedocommunion has become a significant issue in recent years among Reformed and Presbyterian churches is seen in the publication of a collection of essays in favor of the practice in Gregg Strawbridge, ed., *The Case of Covenant Communion* (Monroe, LA: Athanasius Press, 2006), and defenses against the practice by Cornelis P. Venema, *Children at the Lord’s Table?* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2009) and Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, eds., *Children and the Lord’s Supper* (Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2011).

⁴ Christian L. Keidel, “Is the Lord’s Supper for Children?” *WTJ* 37 (1975): 305. Venema, *Children*, 3 makes

- a distinction between “soft” and “strict” views of paedocommunion where the former permits covenant children who have made a simple confession of faith while the latter view favors the admission of any covenant child so long as they are physically able to eat. The focus of paedocommunion in this study will concentrate on those who follow the “strict” paedocommunion position.
- 5 Keidel, “Is the Lord’s Supper for Children?” 305 n. 24, admits his acceptance of paedocommunion was stimulated by the works of Baptist apologist Paul Jewett. See also Beckwith, “The Age of Admission,” 123-24, for a discussion on the Baptist assumptions and claims in arguing that infant baptism and infant communion stand or fall together. Note also Gregg Strawbridge, “The Polemics of Infant Communion,” in *The Case of Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 148-50 on the matter of theological consistency and his observation that the argument against including children in the Lord’s Supper is of the same substance and form as the Baptist case against infant baptism. For Baptist discussions of paedobaptist inconsistencies with reference to the issue of the Lord’s Supper, see Paul K. Jewett, *Infant Baptism & the Covenant of Grace* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 193-207 and David Kingdon, *Children of Abraham: A Reformed Baptist View of Baptism, the Covenant, and Children* (Worthing, UK: Henry E. Walter, 1973).
 - 6 Venema, *Children*, 5-6.
 - 7 According to paedocommunion advocates, by around AD 250 the practice of including infants was commonplace in the church, see Robert S. Rayburn, “A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion,” in *The Case of Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 12. The earliest reference to paedocommunion in the early church seems to be attributed to Cyprian in 250. The history of infant communion has been compared to that of infant baptism. According to Rayburn, “A Presbyterian Defense,” 13, the presence of paedocommunion occurs very early in the church and, like infant baptism, while the practice does not receive discussion in the earliest materials, neither is it spoken against. Another point is with respect to the references to paedocommunion as there seems to be no sense of its practice as an innovation or in terms of controversy; it is taken for granted. For further assessment of church history from a pro-paedocommunion standpoint, see Keidel, “Is the Lord’s Supper for Children?” 301-305; Blake Purcell, “The Testimony of the Ancient Church,” in *The Case of Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 131-45; and David L. Percy, “Infant Communion Part I: The Historical Practice,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 7 (1980): 43-47. For traditional paedobaptist refutation and for the conclusion that Cyprian’s comments were not indicative of general church practice, see Matthew Winzer, “The True History of Paedo-Communion,” *The Confessional Presbyterian* 3 (2007): 27-36; and Venema, *Children*, 12-26. For further historical assessment from paedobaptist perspectives, see Roger T. Beckwith and Andrew Dauntton-Fear, *The Water and the Wine: A Contribution to the Debate on Children and Holy Communion* (London: Latimer Trust, 2005), 40-56 and Nick Needham, “Children at the Lord’s Table in the Patristic Era,” in *Children and the Lord’s Supper*, ed. Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, 145-61.
 - 8 Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 202.
 - 9 Keidel, “Is the Lord’s Supper for Children?” 306. In the preface of his work, Venema, *Children*, i, notes that the covenant of grace argument is so important to the issue of paedocommunion that he included his previously published chapter – Cornelius P. Venema, “Covenant Theology and Baptism,” in *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism* (ed. Gregg Strawbridge; Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2003), 201-29 – as an appendix. Although not published by P&R, the *Case for Covenant Communion* appears to be a companion to *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism* and thus highlights the symmetrical aspects involving paedobaptism and paedocommunion.
 - 10 For the emphasis on the role of the continuity of the covenant of grace for the defense of paedobaptism, see Robert R. Booth, *Children of Promise: The Biblical Case for Infant Baptism* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1995), 10, 16-28; Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics* (ed. John Bolt, vol. 4, *Holy Spirit, Church, and New Creation*, trans. John Vriend; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 525; Rayburn, “A Presbyterian Defense,” 8, n. 5.
 - 11 Richard L. Pratt Jr., “Reformed View: Baptism as a Sacrament of the Covenant,” in *Understanding Four Views on Baptism* (ed. John H. Armstrong; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 64-65.
 - 12 For a summary of covenant theology with emphasis upon the covenant of grace in relation to infant baptism, see Stephen J. Wellum, “Baptism and the Relationship Between the Covenants,” in *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (ed. Thomas Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright; Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 2006), 97-161. Presentations of the covenant of grace through redemptive history may also be found in Booth, *Children of Promise*, 8; Venema, “Covenant Theology and Baptism,” 204-206; Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (rev. ed; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 272-283, and see 632-34 for how Berkhof ties the Abrahamic covenant to the new covenant and to infant baptism within an understanding of the covenant of grace. Also see John Murray, *Christian Baptism* (Philadelphia: Maurice Jacoby Press, 1952), 48-61.

- ¹³ Venema, "Covenant Theology and Baptism," 215-17; see also Randy Booth, "Covenant Transition," in *The Case for Covenantal Infant Baptism*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 175-200.
- ¹⁴ Michael D. Williams, *As Far as the Curse is Found: The Covenant Story of Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2005), 71 notes that there has been debate revolving around the "covenant of works" and "covenant of grace" distinction within Reformed and Presbyterian groups. For concerns with the "covenant of works," see W. J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: A Theology of the Old Testament Covenants* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster Press, 1997), 44-46; for concerns with both the concept of a "covenant of grace" and a "covenant of works" see Paul R. Williamson, *Scaled with an Oath: Covenant in God's Unfolding Purpose* (NSBT 23; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007), 30-32, 52-54.
- ¹⁵ See Gen 9:9-10, 17:1-14; Exod 2:24, 6:1-8; Ps 89:3-4 with 2 Sam 22:51, 23:5; and Acts 2:39.
- ¹⁶ Wellum, "Relationship Between the Covenants," 111-24. See also Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 82-89; Sinclair Ferguson, "Infant Baptism View," in *Baptism: Three Views* (ed. David F. Wright; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 96-105; Pratt, "Reformed View," 64-71.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 119-124; Booth, *Children of Promise*, 96-119, esp. 105-12; Edmund P. Clowney, *The Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity), 276-84.
- ¹⁸ Peter J. Leithart, "Sacramental Hermeneutics and the Ceremonies of Israel," in *The Case for Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 111.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 111-129. By "paedo-arguments" Leithart is bundling together the arguments for paedobaptism and paedocommunion, 112, n. 2. For a discussion of the principles of interpretation in regard to Reformed hermeneutics and how the issue of paedocommunion caused the author to re-evaluate and ultimately reject paedobaptism, see Fred Malone, *The Baptism of Disciples Alone: A Covenantal Argument for Credobaptism Versus Paedobaptism* (2nd ed; Cape Coral, FL: Founders Press, 2003), 23-45.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 112 and observe endnote 3.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 113. Obviously this is a contested point among paedobaptists. For example, Venema, *Children*, 60, writes: "Any consideration of the practice of the old covenant community, particularly its significance for the question of a new covenant community practice such as the Lord's Supper, must reckon with this principle [i.e. that the ultimate norm for the practice of the church must be the NT description of the administration of the new covenant]. Since the old covenant administration has been replaced by the new covenant administration, one may not argue for a practice solely on the basis of Old Testament precedents. The general application of this principle is illustrated by the abrogation of the entirety of the 'ceremonial legislation' of the old covenant, which finds its fulfillment in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since the ceremonial legislation of the old covenant is fulfilled in Christ, the substance and reality to which this legislation pointed forward still remains. However, the ceremonies and types of the old administration ended with the introduction of the new. Since the Lord's Supper marks the 'new testament in [Jesus'] blood' (Luke 22:20), it must be governed by the New Testament's teaching regarding the Lord's Supper." Venema makes an important point but unfortunately, he nowhere discusses how this line of reasoning applies to infant baptism. If the OT ceremonial legislation of circumcision is not allowed to determine the NT's teaching regarding baptism, how could infant baptism be affirmed? Elsewhere Venema says that paedobaptists "argue that the silence of the New Testament confirms the continuation of the Old Testament practice" and that such an argument from silence points to the importance of grounding paedobaptism on the basis of the doctrine of the covenant of grace ("Covenant Theology and Baptism," 202-203). For consistency, Venema needs to argue that circumcision is not a ceremonial legislation or that the NT teaching is sufficient to affirm infant baptism.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 112, 117.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 112. Not all covenant theologians affirm Leithart's appeal to *totus Christus* in their understanding of typology. For example, see Bryan D. Estelle, "Passover and the Lord's Supper: Continuity or Discontinuity?" in *Children and the Lord's Supper*, ed. Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, 37-41. Leithart has also presented some aspects of typological interpretation in his *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2009), 35-74, 173-80. For other works specifically addressing typology, see Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Vol. 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981) and Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (trans. Donald H. Madvig; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982). For further discussion of how *totus Christus* functions in ecclesiology, see Michael S. Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 6, 155-89.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 117-18. This is not to the neglect what Leithart calls the "rich Christological allegory" whereby Paul

- identifies Jesus with the rock of Israel who is Yahweh (Deut 32:4, 15, 18).
- ²⁶ Ibid., 119. Leithart favorably appeals to Richard Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale, 1989), 98, on 1 Corinthians 10:6-11.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 113, 117.
- ²⁸ Strawbridge, "The Polemics of Infant Communion," 148: "Both baptism and communion are covenantal sacraments. Those in the covenant have a right to the rite."
- ²⁹ Wellum, "Relationship Between the Covenants," 136, asserts that that paedobaptist argument "takes the genealogical principle operative in the Abrahamic covenant—'you and your seed' (Gen 17:7)—as applicable in exactly the same way across the canon without suspension, abrogation, and especially reinterpretation in the new covenant era. So the paedobaptist contends that baptism replaces circumcision and that the covenant sign, regardless of our location in redemptive-history, is for 'you and your seed' (i.e., physical children)."
- ³⁰ Strawbridge, "The Polemics of Infant Communion," 159.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² The NT household texts, commonly appealed to for the practice of infant baptism, is reapplied for infant communion. On this point, see Strawbridge, "The Polemics of Infant Communion," 157.
- ³³ Ibid., 160.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 161.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 161-62.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 162.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 163. Also see, Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 14.
- ³⁸ Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 8, 9 n. 6.
- ³⁹ Strawbridge, "The Polemics of Infant Communion," 155.
- ⁴⁰ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 337. Keidel cites chapter 27, section 1 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 341. Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 179-201, shows that the fourth step in the church discipline process includes severing the unrepentant from participation in the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor 5:1-11). On this point, see also Russell D. Moore, "Baptist View: Christ's Presence as Memorial," in *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper*, ed. John H. Armstrong (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 40.
- ⁴² Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 13.
- ⁴³ Ibid. Davies, "The Lord's Supper for the Lord's Children," 14 also makes appeal to this section of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* while noting that the statement was adduced solely by 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, see endnote 62 below for a discussion on 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.
- ⁴⁴ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 337. On the issue of the unity of Church in regard to the Eucharist, see David Percy, "Infant Communion. Part III: Reasons for its Restoration," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 8 (1981): 162-65.
- ⁴⁵ Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 5-7.
- ⁴⁶ Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals," 127.
- ⁴⁷ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 307.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 325.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 306; see also Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 5-7; Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals," 127-31; James B. Jordan, "Children and Religious Meals," in *The Case for Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 54-57.
- ⁵⁰ Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals," 127. For debate about whether the Last Supper was a Passover meal; see Joachim Jeremias' important study, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (trans. Norman Perrin; New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1966), 15-88, and studies such as Paul H. Jones, "The Meaning of the Eucharist: Its Origins in the New Testament Texts," *Encounter* 54 (1993): 169-86; Mark A. Throntveit, "The Lord's Supper as New Testament, Not New Passover," *Lutheran Quarterly* 11 (1997): 271-289, esp. 275-80; Robin Routledge, "Passover and Last Supper," *Tyn Bul* 53 (2002): 203-21. Much of the debate surrounds the issue of harmonization, as the chronological timing of the Passover in the Synoptics appears to be in tension with John's Gospel. On this point, see I. Howard Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper* (Carlisle, U.K.: Paternoster Press, 1997), 57-75; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 981-85; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel of John* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 455-57, 588-90, 603-604; Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?" in *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ until He Comes* (NACSBT 10, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Matthew R. Crawford; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2010), 6-30. Regarding the relation of the Lord's Supper in the

- church to the Passover, see R. H. Stein, "The Last Supper," in *Dictionary of the Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green, et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 444-50, esp. 445-47.
- ⁵¹ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?" 316-17. Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals," 131-32, identifies the Passover as a particular type of peace offering (cf. Lev 7:15-17) which was commonly described as a sacrifice. Note also Jordan, "Children and the Religious Meals," 57-61.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, 316-17, 320. Keidel, 318, states: "The sacrifice of lambs was meant to provide redemption from sin as well as temporal redemption from the death of the first-born and from the land of Egypt." See also pp. 335-36 where Keidel extends this, arguing that all the sacrificial meals in the OT were replaced by the Lord's Supper (appealing to Heb 10:1ff), and had the same atoning significance while also recognizing that all the sacrifices foreshadowed Christ's sacrifice. Therefore, he reasons, since circumcised infants and children had the right to eat sacrificial meals (specifically Feast of Weeks and Tabernacles, Deut 12:6-7, 12, 18; 16:11), baptized infants should have access to the Lord's Supper as well. Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals, 131-32 discusses the connection of the peace offerings to the Lord's Supper concluding that the "regulations for participation in the peace offering should also govern participation in the Lord's Supper" (131).
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, 317.
- ⁵⁴ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 306. Venema summarizes this position in *Children*, 56-59.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 320-22.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 321.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 322.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² Presentation cannot be provided here for how infant communion supporters appeal to the kingdom of God and children. On this point, see Tim Gallant, "The Kingdom of God and Children at the Table," in *The Case for Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 35-47. On how paedobaptists think of the similarity between 1 Cor 7:14 and Jesus' reception of children in Matt 19:13-14, see Murray, *Christian Baptism*, 62-66, 67-68; Booth, *Children of Promise*, 135; and Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 633-34.
- ⁶³ Some paedocommunion supporters assert that Paul implicitly provides sacramental parallelism in 1 Cor 10:1-5, since baptism into Christ (1 Cor 12:12ff) corresponds to baptism into Moses; and further, participation in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor 10:16)—the Lord's Supper—typologically corresponds to Israel's eating spiritual food and drinking water which came from Christ as Paul identifies him as the rock (1 Cor 10:4) (Mason, "Covenant Children and Covenant Meals," 133; Davies, "The Lord's Supper for the Lord's Children," 13). A full response is not possible here, yet Drane argues that Paul "was not intending here to give an exposition either of the exodus narrative, or of the Christian sacraments. Indeed, the parallel between the two situations was not all that close in details, for the Israelites were not really 'baptized ... in the sea': they never got wet at all. What Paul was obviously referring to here was simply the broad similarities of the two situations, and he was certainly not intending to expound the O.T.: he was hoping to correct a practical aberration in the church at Corinth" (John W. Drane, "Typology," *EQ* 50 [1978]: 200-201). Cf. T. R. Schreiner and A. B. Caneday, *The Race Set Before Us: A Biblical Theology of Perseverance and Assurance* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2001), 224.
- ⁶⁴ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 323. See also Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 11-12.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 323-24.
- ⁶⁶ Davies, "The Lord's Supper for the Lord's Children," 18, 20.
- ⁶⁷ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?" 323-34. See texts such as Romans 10:13 ("whoever"), Romans 3:28 ("man"), John 3:36 ("he who"), and 2 Thessalonians 3:10 ("anyone").
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 325.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ Davies, "The Lord's Supper for the Lord's Children," 19; Jeffrey J. Meyers, "Presbyterian, Examine Thyself," in *The Case for Covenant Communion*, ed. Gregg Strawbridge, 19-34.
- ⁷¹ David L. Percy, "Infant Communion Part II: Present Barriers to the Practice," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 7 (1980): 167-68.
- ⁷² Jeffrey J. Meyers, "Presbyterian, Examine Thyself," 21.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 32-34.

- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 28, 31.
- ⁷⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (ed. John T. Neil, trans. Ford Lewis Battles; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1960), 4.16.30; Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 656-57. See also Robert Letham, *The Lord's Supper* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2001), 56 and Guy Prentiss Waters and J. Ligon Duncan III, "Introduction," in *Children and the Lord's Supper*, ed. Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, 18-21.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1353. See also Murray, *Christian Baptism*, 78.
- ⁷⁷ Venema, *Children*, 117, 123. Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4:584, also notes that 1 Corinthians 11:26-29 is a general demand addressed to all participants in the Lord's Supper and therefore excludes children. See also George W. Knight III, "1 Corinthians 11:17-34: The Lord's Supper: Abuses, Words of Instruction and Warnings and the Inferences and Deductions with respect to Paedocommunion," in *Children and the Lord's Supper*, ed. Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, 75-95.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 118-24. For Venema, 121, the third reference to the "body of Christ," (v. 29) is not ecclesiological, but refers to Christ's body in terms of his physical body given as a sacrifice. Therefore, discerning the Lord's body means that "[m]inimally, the recipient of the sacrament is obliged to 'evaluate' or 'recognize' that the bread and wine represent the body and blood of Christ." The first stipulation of believers examining themselves (v. 28), which is often "freighted with the excess baggage of a protracted, introspective process of spiritual inventory-taking . . . requires only a responsible testing on the part of the believer to see whether his faith is genuine" (119).
- ⁷⁹ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 656.
- ⁸⁰ Calvin *Institutes* 4.16.30; Murray, *Christian Baptism*, 77. See Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 311, who seeks to counter the Exod 12:26 argument applied by Murray and Calvin.
- ⁸¹ Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4:583; Beckwith, "Age of Admission," 132-33, 136-37.
- ⁸² Venema, *Children*, 67-73; see also 132-33. Cf. Waters and Duncan, "Introduction," 15-18; Estelle, "Passover and the Lord's Supper," 31-57.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, 85-89.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 87 (emphasis original), cf. 64-65.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 139-40.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 144-45.
- ⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 146-47. On the difference between the practices of the sacraments, see Murray, *Christian Baptism*, 77-79, who argues that "the diversity of the ordinances warrants the discrimination in practice" because of the nature and characteristics of each ordinance (79). Given the *differences* between the sacraments, Murray argues for paedobaptism and the exclusion of infants from the Lord's Supper. See also, Derek W. H. Thomas, "'Not a Particle of Sound Brain' – a Theological Response to Paedocommunion," in *Children and the Lord's Supper*, ed. Guy Waters and Ligon Duncan, 108-15.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 147; see also Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 4:584 who notes the manner of the Lord's Supper differs from baptism, but the child is still ensured a share in the benefits of the covenant of grace.
- ⁹⁰ Obviously, pointing to children eating the Passover only has significance if one already assumes the continuity between the Passover and the Lord's Supper and is operating with a covenant of grace framework.
- ⁹¹ Wellum, "Relationship Between the Covenants," 125-53 shows this to be case for paedobaptists. See also *idem*, "Beyond Mere Ecclesiology: The Church as God's New Covenant Community," in *The Community of Jesus* (ed. Kendell H. Easley and Christopher W. Morgan; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013), 183-212.
- ⁹² If the covenant of grace involved believers and their children, paedobaptists argue that the NT examples of the baptism of households certainly involved children. Similarly, the household texts involving communion and fellowship are also appealed to by paedocommunion advocates in demonstrating that children should be included in the Lord's Supper.
- ⁹³ Booth, *Children of Promise*, 133 makes this argument for paedobaptism; Meyers, "Presbyterian, Examine Thyself," 24-25 draws attention to 1 Cor 7:14 for the case of paedocommunion by linking it to the common baptism of all members (1 Cor 12:12) and the unity of church (1 Cor 12:25; 1 Cor 10:16-17). See also Gallant, "The Kingdom of God and Children," 43-44. Thomas, "'Not a Particle of Sound Brain,'" 105, counters, arguing that "1 Cor 7:14 establishes the principle of familial solidarity but it does not establish the basis for paedocommunion any more than it establishes (by itself) the basis for paedobaptism. All it establishes is a pattern of consistency with regard to circumcision and baptism on the basis of familial solidarity. But familial solidarity is not sufficient as a basis for participation in either the Passover or the Lord's Supper."
- ⁹⁴ On these two summary points, see Rayburn, "A Presbyterian Defense of Paedocommunion," 14-15.

- ⁹⁵ Keidel, "Is the Lord's Supper for Children?," 327.
- ⁹⁶ Venema, "Covenant Theology and Baptism," 202 (emphasis original).
- ⁹⁷ Malone, *The Baptism of Disciples Alone*, 34. Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 105 also observes that covenant theologians read the Old Testament "as though it were the New, but the New Testament is read as though it were the Old."
- ⁹⁸ For a critique of Calvin's theological inconsistency with regard to the Eucharist, and for the general problem of how paedobaptists could exclude infants based from 1 Corinthians 11, see Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 199-200.
- ⁹⁹ Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 198-99
- ¹⁰⁰ Venema, *Children*, 133, and also see 59-66 for fuller discussion.
- ¹⁰¹ Venema, "Covenant Theology and Baptism," 223 (emphasis mine) or Venema, *Children*, 172.
- ¹⁰² See the issues raised above derived from the language of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 224-225 or Venema, *Children*, 173-74.
- ¹⁰⁴ For the interpretation of "breaking bread" as a reference to the Lord's Supper in Acts 2:42, see Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers*, 365-66, 402; for the notion that the expression covers both a common meal and the Lord's Supper, see C. K. Barrett, *Acts 1-14* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 164-65.
- ¹⁰⁵ See Booth, *Children of Promise*, 141-51, for how the household baptisms point to the practice of infant baptism.
- ¹⁰⁶ Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 53-54.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 205.
- ¹⁰⁸ See Murray, *Christian Baptism*, 77.
- ¹⁰⁹ Reformed Baptists do operate within a framework involving the covenant of works and covenant of grace. However, the differences are significant in that covenantal Baptists do not see the Abrahamic covenant as identical to the new covenant and they reject the genealogical principle as an essential feature of the covenant idea. For these and other differences, see Malone, *The Baptism of Disciples Alone*, 50-76. Note also the study by Pascal Denault, *The Distinctiveness of Baptist Covenant Theology: A Comparison Between Seventeenth-Century Particular Baptist and Paedobaptist Federalism* (Birmingham, AL: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2013).
- ¹¹⁰ See Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 293-310, for a discussion of the three horizons of biblical interpretation (textual, epochal, and canonical).
- ¹¹¹ D. A. Carson, "Evangelicals, Ecumenism, and the Church," in *Evangelical Affirmations* (ed. Kenneth S. Kantzer and Carl F. H. Henry; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 359-63; *idem*, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 151-54; Wellum, "Relationship Between the Covenants," 141-43; and Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 492-513.
- ¹¹² *Ibid.*, 361. On this point, see P. T. O'Brien, "The New Covenant and its Perfect Mediator," in *The Perfect Saviour: Key Themes in Hebrews* (ed. Jonathan Griffiths; Nottingham, UK: Inter-Varsity, 2012), 19. Scott J. Hafemann, "The Covenant Relationship," in *Central Themes in Biblical Theology: Mapping Unity in Diversity* (ed. Scott J. Hafemann and Paul R. House; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 54, notes that the heart is not just the seat of volition and desire, but associated with understanding and intellectual knowledge. Thus, "all those who belong to the new covenant community will do so by virtue of their transformed heart." Also see, David G. Peterson, *Transformed by God: New Covenant Life and Ministry* (Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity, 2012).
- ¹¹³ See John D. Meade, "Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart: The Typology of the Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant," in *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies* (ed. Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), 127-58.
- ¹¹⁴ James M. Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments* (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2006), 44. See also, Wellum, "Relationship between the Covenants," 143; Carson, "Evangelicals, Ecumenism, and the Church," 362-63.
- ¹¹⁵ Wellum, "Relationship between the Covenants," 145 (emphasis original). Another promise of the new covenant was that all in the covenant community would be taught by God (Isa 54:13; cf. Jer 31:34). That this promise is fulfilled in the NT is clear from John 6:45; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; and 1 John 2:20, 27.
- ¹¹⁶ Rejecting the notion of a mixed community does not mean that there is no continuity between Israel and the church. There is one people of God throughout redemptive history, but the church is a spiritual and eschatological community through the work of Christ and is not to be confused with Israel which was a national entity, containing a faithful and spiritual remnant. See Brent E. Parker, "The Israel-Christ-Church Relationship," in *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies*, ed.

- Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, 39-68.
- ¹¹⁷ On this point, see Williamson, *Sealed with an Oath*, 154-55.
- ¹¹⁸ Wellum, "Relationship between the Covenants," 159. On this point, see Meade, "Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart," 145-56 and Martin Salter, "Does Baptism Replace Circumcision? An Examination of the Relationship between Circumcision and Baptism in Colossians 2:11-12," *Themelios* 35 (2010): 15-29.
- ¹¹⁹ Malone, *The Baptism of Disciples Alone*, 128. See also Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 120, who also notes that the promise of the Spirit in Joel 2:28-32 bestows visions and prophecies (Acts 2:17) which do not apply to infants.
- ¹²⁰ Jewett, *Infant Baptism*, 121.
- ¹²¹ Keidel appeals to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* in observing the problematic situation where covenant children are denied the Lord's Supper and marked out as those who belong to the world and thus, in a sense, disciplined. However, the new covenant meal is to be reserved for believers only as they are the only ones who can commemorate and celebrate the new covenant through Christ's blood (Matt 26:26-29; cf. Exod 24:8; Jer 31:31-34) and who have benefitted from his incarnation as his body represents the bread. Furthermore, church discipline serves to identify a once professing believer as an unbeliever and so an unworthy participant in the Lord's Supper. This situation would be confounded if unbelieving "covenant" children were allowed to the Lord's Supper because at some point they would have to refrain from partaking given a lack of confession at a mature age, and in a sense be disciplined when in fact they never had faith to begin with. This confusion emerges because the initiatory covenant rite of baptism is given to infants, but at least paedobaptists correctly argue that in 1 Cor 11 the Lord's Supper assumes participants who can examine themselves appropriately.
- ¹²² Wellum, "Relationship between the Covenants," 153-60; cf. Meade, "Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart," 152-57. Specifically, circumcision cannot be reduced to spiritual realities for it also had a national reality (identifying the sons with a national entity—Israel) and served typologically in pointing to Christ (the true seed of Abraham) and to circumcision of the heart (Rom 2:25-29; Phil 3:3).
- ¹²³ See Stein, "Last Supper," 447, who provides a helpful list of correspondences between the Last Supper and the Passover, yet also demonstrating that the new covenant realities are accentuated in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper, then, does not have the same essential meaning as the Passover, for it is tied to far greater spiritual realities through the person and work of Christ.
- ¹²⁴ T. D. Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: Exploring God's Plan for Life on Earth* (Nottingham, UK: InterVarsity, 2008), 128-30.
- ¹²⁵ For an excellent treatment of the Passover typology in John, see Paul M. Hoskins, "Deliverance from Death by the True Passover Lamb: A Significant Aspect of the Fulfillment of the Passover in the Gospel of John," *JETS* 52 (2009): 285-99. See also idem., *That Scripture Might Be Fulfilled: Typology and the Death of Christ* (LaVergne, TN: Xulon Press, 2009), 85-115.
- ¹²⁶ Goppelt, *Typos*, 17-18; Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, 94 and many others point out that there is an escalation or qualitative progression from type to antitype. The antitype is far greater while the type foreshadows what is to come. In this sense, the Passover meal points to something that is not essentially the same, but to something greater—Jesus Christ and the new covenant meal he brings. This is not to deny that paedocommunion advocates make typological connections. The key is whether or not the typological relationship corresponds to essentially equal persons, events, or institutions. Typology properly understood involves escalation and prospective fulfillment such that the antitype far surpasses the type. For a discussion of the similarities between the Passover and the Last Supper, but with the Passover finding its antitypical fulfillment in the death of Christ which eclipses the Passover and exodus in significance of salvation, see Hoskins, *That Scripture Might Be Fulfilled*, 73-83, esp. 82.
- ¹²⁷ A helpful treatment on the new covenant in Heb 8 and 10 with a view towards how it is better, and far superior than the old, see James R. White, "The Newness of the New Covenant (Part I)," in *RBTR* 1 (2004): 144-68; idem., "The Newness of the New Covenant (Part II)," in *RBTR* 2 (2005): 83-104.
- ¹²⁸ David Wenham, "How Jesus Understood the Last Supper: A Parable in Action," *Themelios* 20 (1995): 14. See also Brian J. Vickers, "The Lord's Supper: Celebrating the Past and the Future in the Present," in *The Lord's Supper: Remembering and Proclaiming Christ until He Comes*, ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Matthew R. Crawford, 313-40.
- ¹²⁹ For helpful treatments of how the exodus anticipated the new exodus, see Rikki E. Watts, "Exodus," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (ed. T. Desmond Alexander et al.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 478-87; David W. Pao, *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002).

¹³⁰ Goppelt, *Typos*, 114.

¹³¹ Marshall, *The Last Supper*, 80 makes the distinction that the Passover is a type of the heavenly banquet while the Lord's Supper is the anticipation of the heavenly meal. While the main purpose of the Passover was to look back at God's passing over and deliverance from Egypt, a case can be made that the Passover meal anticipated the messianic age when placed within the new Exodus eschatological motif that is found in the prophets (e.g. Isa 25:6-9). The Lord's Supper does anticipate the marriage supper of the lamb, but since the kingdom has already broken in, followers of Christ proleptically participate in that future feast now through the Lord's Supper.

¹³² R. D. Moore, "A Baptist Response," in *Understanding Four Views on the Lord's Supper*, ed. J. H. Armstrong, 74.