

Course DC113: Ordinances of the Church

¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Matthew 28:18-20



Intro: "... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you ..." Matthew 28:20

There are three Christian ordinances which Christ has given to the Church to be perpetually practiced: Baptism, The Lord's Supper/Communion, and Feet-Washing. An ordinance (to borrow from Augustine's wording) is a *visibly revealed* truth from God's Word. They are outward observances which testify to spiritual realities, and the Church is commanded to practice them. Ordinances do not produce the spiritual realities associated with them (i.e., they are not a means of grace being given to accomplish these realities), but are physical observances which testify to the spiritual realities that belong to the saved.

Each of these ordinances belonging to the Church have come from Divine Authority; were participated in by Christ Himself; are enjoined upon the Church to be perpetuated; and represent a spiritual reality belonging to those in Christ. The symbolic lessons in these ordinances are deep and manifold. This triple witness of ordinances certainly testifies to the Christian's new relationships – his new standing in Christ. In baptism there is a testimony of our relationship to the world (we have died to it and risen to new life in Christ). In communion there is a testimony of our relationship to God (reconciled, brought into fellowship/communion with God) through the sacrifice of our Lord's death (His body and blood – the cross). And in feet-washing there is a testimony of our relationship to one another in the Church (servants, preferring one another, spurring on each other's Christian walk). The believer's relationship to the world, to God, and to the Church is *powerfully*, yet simply, revealed in the triple witness of these ordinances.

I.) The Ordinance of Baptism

Symbolizing Death, Burial and Resurrection, Cleansed of Sin (Revealing Our Identity in Christ):

- Rom. 6:3-6 ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.
- Gal. 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
- Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
- Col. 2:12 . . . buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.
- Col. 3:1-4 ¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
- Acts 22:16 . . . Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

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Baptism is *only* for Believers: (*Baptism testifies to salvation. See notes for DC107 regarding how one is saved.*)

- Acts 10:47-48 ⁴⁷ "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.
- Acts 8:12-13 ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. ¹³ Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.
- Acts 8:35-36 ³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. ³⁶ Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"
- Acts 18:8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.
- Acts 2:40-41 ⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.
- Acts 16:30-34 ³⁰ And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. ³⁴ Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

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Although baptism testifies of saving grace rather than conveying it, this does not mean that baptism is merely optional for a believer. "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . ." is a commandment which we are not to ignore (Acts 2:38). Jesus said, ". . . whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33). Certainly baptism is not the only way that we may confess Christ before men, but what a powerful incentive is found in the fact that Christ has made baptism *an ordinance by which we are to confess Him before men*. When people are heard to speak of baptism as a "nonessential" commandment, we have reason to tremble for them. How could a commandment from Christ be considered nonessential? The fact that it does not convey saving grace is not the issue – we are commanded to be baptized. When a Christian comes to understand that it is commanded of him (*i.e., being no longer ignorant of that fact*), he must not willfully refuse to do obey it or any other command from God (James 4:17, Heb. 10:26). That the thief on the cross was saved without ever obeying the commandment to be baptized only reveals *that baptism does not save*. However, that does not relieve one who can be baptized from his obligation to obey the commandment.

- **Jesus Enjoined it upon All Believers:** Matt. 28:18-20 ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
- Mark 16:15-16 ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

- **Preached by the Apostles, Continued by the Church:** Acts 2:37-39³⁷ Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?"³⁸ Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."
- Acts 10:48 And he [Peter] commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.
- Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.
- **The Symbolic Action Testifies of an Inward Work:** 1 Pet. 3:21-22 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.
- 1 Cor. 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.
- Col. 2:11-12¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised [in circumcision a small piece of flesh was put off] with the circumcision made without hands [in the N. T., a spiritual thing], by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,¹² buried with Him in baptism [the whole body of sins being symbolized as put off through being buried in baptism], in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.
- Titus 3:5 . . . not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

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Beyond doubt, the Biblical method and practice of baptism is by immersion. Through immersion, the symbolic testimony of being united with Christ in death (falling back into the water), burial (placed under the water), and resurrection (coming up out of the water) is revealed. The modern practices of substituting sprinkling and pouring for baptism fail to represent what is intended in the symbol. In fact, our English word "baptize" also reveals that immersion is the Biblical method. For "baptize" is not a translated but an anglicized word from the Greek word "baptizo." Translated, the Greek word "baptizo" means "immerse" or "to dip."

- **Baptism Obviously Practiced by Immersion:** Matt. 3:5-6⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.
- John 3:23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.
- Mark 1:5, 9-10⁵ Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. . . .⁹ It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan.¹⁰ And immediately, coming up from the water . . .
- Acts 8:36,38-39³⁶ Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" . . .³⁸ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.³⁹ Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. (Clearly, sprinkling and pouring is not the Scriptural teaching.)

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- **Baptism is Not to be Rejected:** Luke 7:29-30 ²⁹ And when all the people heard *Him, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John.* ³⁰ But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.
- **Not for Infants, For those Who are Able to Repent and Believe:** Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.
- Acts 2:38, 41 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. . . . ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.
- Acts 18:8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.
- Matt. 3:5-8 ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,
- Mark 10:13-16 ¹³ Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought *them.* ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw *it,* He was greatly displeased and said to them, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it." ¹⁶ And He took them up in His arms, put *His* hands on them, and blessed them.
- **Baptism's Nature and Meaning Shadowed in Old Testament:** Lev. 14:7-8 ⁷ And he [the priest, with blood] shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field. ⁸ He who is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean. [First came the sprinkling of blood which brought about the pronouncement that he is clean – then the ceremonial washing.]
 - 1 Pet. 3:20-21 ²⁰ who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. . . [The eight in the ark were those whom God saved, a fact which was manifested through the water.]

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Clear Marks of an Ordinance from Christ to Be Observed/Practice by the Church:

- **Established by Divine Authority:** Matt. 28:18-20 ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
- Mark 16:15-16 ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶ He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

- **Participated in By Christ Himself:** Luke 3:21-22 ²¹ When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. ²² And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." (See Matt. 3:13-17 & Mark 1:9-11.)
- **Represents an Important Aspect of Our Standing in Christ:** Rom. 6:3-6 ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.
- Gal. 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
- Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- **Christ Commanded His Followers to Continue the Practice:** Matt. 28:19-20 ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

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II.) The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper (or Communion)

1 Cor. 11:23-26 ²³ **For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**

Intro: The Ordinance of Communion/the Lord's Supper is a great memorial. We observe it in remembrance of Jesus – His substitutionary death for us on the cross in order to save us. The broken bread reminds us of His precious Body broken open by the whip, the nails, and the spear. The wine reminds us of His precious Blood shed for the remission of sins. In remembering Christ in Communion, we are proclaiming the Lord's death – proclaiming that through Christ and Christ alone we have been saved. We are a frail people, apt to forget in some manner that our right standing with God is solely because Christ was crucified. This ordinance vividly portrays Christ crucified to us. Such a memorial ordinance is truly for the saved alone, for only such as are saved can observe it in a worthy manner. Scripture powerfully warns against observing communion in an unworthy manner, lest we become guilty of sinning against the Body and Blood of the Lord. Certainly no one is *worthy* of Christ's sacrifice – we are saved by grace. But the *manner* in which we observe communion must be worthy. We must remember Him, discern through the bread and wine the Lord's body, proclaiming the Lord's death for our salvation.

Symbolizing Reconciliation/Communion with God through the Body and Blood of Christ Offered for Us:

- Matt. 26:26-28 ²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

- Mark 14:22-24 ²² And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²³ Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many."
- Luke 22:17-20 ¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."
- 1 Cor. 11:23-25 ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

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The Reality of the Bread and Fruit of the Vine, His Body and Blood:

- Heb. 10:5-10 ⁵ Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me." ⁶ In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. ⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—In the volume of the book it is written of Me—To do Your will, O God.' ⁸ Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), ⁹ then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. ¹⁰ By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- Heb. 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- Rev. 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
- Rev. 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
- Rom. 3:24-25 ²⁴... Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith...
- Rom. 5:9 . . . having now been justified by His blood . . .
- Eph. 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace . . .
- Eph. 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
- Heb. 10:19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,
- 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- Heb. 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

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Communion's Reality: Christ Gave Himself to Redeem/Ransom Us:

- Matt. 20:28 . . . just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
- 1 Tim 2:5-6 ⁵ For *there is* one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the Man* Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,
- Titus 2:13-14 ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.
- Eph. 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.
- Gal 1:4 . . . who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father,
- Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,
- Gal. 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
- Heb. 7:27 . . . for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.
- Heb. 9:26,28 ²⁶ . . . but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. . . . ²⁸ so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many.
- 1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.
- 1 Cor. 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

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A Memorial and a Proclaiming of His Death for our Reconciliation/Salvation:

- Luke 22:19-20 ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.
- 1 Cor. 11:23-26 ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

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Through His Body and Blood We are Together One Church – Reconciled to God:

- 1 Cor. 10:16-17 ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.
- Matt. 26:26-28 ²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
- Luke 22:17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves;
- 1 John 1:3 . . . that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- 1 Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Cor. 12:12 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Rom. 12:4-5 ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
- Eph. 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.
- Col. 2:19 . . . and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

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To be Observed in a Worthy Manner:

- 1 Cor. 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.
- 1 Cor. 11:17-22 ¹⁷ Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. ²¹ For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.
- 1 Cor. 11:27-34 ²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. ³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

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- **It is Not a Common Dinner:** 1 Cor. 11:17-22 & 33-34 ¹⁷ Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. ¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. ²¹ For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. ²² What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. . . . ³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. ³⁴ But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Communion/the Lord's Supper Shadowed in Old Testament:

- Gen. 14:18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.



Heb. 7:1-3 "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God . . . first being translated 'king of righteousness,' and then also king of Salem, meaning 'king of peace,' without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually." (*Jesus, our High Priest, the King of Righteousness and King of Peace, has been made for us our righteousness and peace through His Body and Blood offered for us [shadowed by the wine and bread].*)

Clear Marks of an Ordinance from Christ to Be Observed/Practiced by the Church:

- **Established by Divine Authority:** 1 Cor. 11:23-25 ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
- **Participated in by Christ Himself:** Matt. 26:26-28 ²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
- **Represents an Important Aspect of Our Standing in Christ:** 1 Cor. 10:16-17 ¹⁶ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ¹⁷ For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.
- Matt. 26:28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
- 1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.
- **Christ Commanded His Followers to Continue the Practice:** Luke 22:19-20 ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

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- 1 Cor. 11:23-26 ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

III.) The Ordinance of Feet-Washing

John 13:12-17 ¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

The Ordinance of Feet-Washing testifies to our unity, standing and equality in the Church – “. . . one is [our] Teacher, the Christ, and [we] are all brethren” (Matt. 23:8). Christians are to be their brother’s keeper, clothed with humility, in brotherly love, in honor preferring one another, exhorting one another, stirring up love and good works, assisting one another’s walk in faith. This reality is beautifully symbolized in the ordinance of washing one another’s feet. How beautifully the ordinance testifies of the relationship of brethren in the Church.

The Ordinance Established and Commanded (A Physical Lesson):

- **Established in Love (An Expression of Love):** John 13:1, 3-5 ¹ Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. . . . ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.
- **Something Never Before Established:** John 13:6-7 ⁶ Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."
- **Literally Washed Their Feet, an Example, Not a Parable:** John 13: 3-5 ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.
- **Commanded to be Observed by His Disciples:** John 13:12-15 ¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

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- **A Promised Blessing in Doing so:** John 13:16-17 ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.
- **Practiced in the Apostolic Church:** 1 Tim. 5:9-10 ⁹ Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, *and not unless* she has been the wife of one man, ¹⁰ well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.
- **Among the Observances Jesus Commanded to be Observed:** Matt. 28:18-20 ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.
 - **Additional Support:** 1 Cor. 11:2 "Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions [ordinances, A.V., deliverances, YLT] just as I delivered *them* to you." From Paul's reference concerning "washing the saints' feet" in 1 Tim. 5:10, it is both logical and reasonable to believe that he taught the Corinthian Christians this tradition/ordinance as well the Ephesian Christians (1 Tim. 1:3 & 1 Tim. 5:10). This is even more evident from what Paul told the Christians in Thessalonica: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle" (2 Thess. 2:15).

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Symbolizing Our Relationship to One Another in the Body of Christ – (the Reality of the Symbolic Lesson):

- **Love for One Another:** John 13:34-35 ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
- John 15:12,17 ¹² This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. [and] ¹⁷ These things I command you, that you love one another.
- 1 John 3:11-14 ¹¹ For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹² not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death.
- 1 John 3:16-18 ¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.
- Rom. 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

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**And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."
 1 Peter 4:8**

Love for One Another Continued . . . (the Reality of the Symbolic Lesson)

1 Pet. 1:22-23 ²² Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

1 Pet. 3:8 Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;

2 John 5-6 ⁵ And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. ⁶ This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

3 John 5-8 ⁵ Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, ⁶ who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, ⁷ because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸ We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

1 John 3:23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

1 John 4:10-12 ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

1 John 4:20-21 ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

1 John 5:1-2 ¹ Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

Heb. 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

1 Thess. 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

Col. 1:4 ³ We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints;

- **Serving (Servants of) One Another:** Phil. 2:1-4 ¹ Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, ² fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ⁴ Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
- Gal. 5:13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
- Matt. 23: 5-12 ⁵ But all their works they [the Scribes and Pharisees] do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. ⁶ They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷ greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' ⁸ But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. ⁹ Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. ¹⁰ And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹² And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.
- Mark 10:43-45 ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
- Rom. 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

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- **Clothed with Humility:** 1 Pet. 5:5⁵ Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility,* for "*God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.*"
- Col. 3:12-14¹² Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do.*¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.
- Luke 14:11 For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

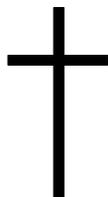
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- **Christians are to be Their Brother's Keeper:** Gen 4:9 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"
- 1 John 3:10-16¹⁰ In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.¹¹ For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,¹² not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.¹³ Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.¹⁵ Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
- 1 Cor. 12:26-27²⁶ And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Gal. 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

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Washing the Saints' Feet Shadowed in Old Testament:

- 1 Samuel 25:40-41⁴⁰ When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife."⁴¹ Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."



This is a very beautiful and expressive shadow. David serves in Scripture as a type of Christ. She who was to become the wife of the great King David shadows the Church becoming the Bride of Christ, the Bride of Him who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. As Abigail offered herself to wash the feet of David's servants, so we see the New Testament ordinance of the saints washing one another's feet.

Clear Marks of an Ordinance from Christ to Be Observed/Practiced by the Church:

- **Established by Divine Authority:** John 13:13- 15¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

- **Participated in by Christ Himself:** John 13:3-5 ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.
- **Represents an Important Aspect of Our Standing in Christ:** Mark 10:43-45 ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
- Rom. 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;
- John 13:34-35 ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.
- **Christ Commanded His Followers to Continue the Practice:** John 13:14-15 ¹⁴ . . . you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

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Concluding Thoughts upon the New Testament Ordinances:

The New Testament ordinances from Christ are rich and meaningful. In each of the three ordinances, we must not suppose that the physical act conveys any spiritual reality to believers, but rather that they testify to spiritual realities which are true for them. For baptism does not wash away sins – it testifies of it. The taking of the elements of communion does not reconcile us to God – but testifies that reconciliation is ours through the Body and Blood of Christ who was sacrificed for us. And, washing the saints’ feet does not make us humbly love and serve one another in our walk of faith – but testifies to the truth of this work and change in us. Many like to speak of ordinances as being “non-essentials” to the faith. However, this is a dangerous term to apply to any command from Christ. For though it is true that they do not produce the spiritual realities they represent, when a Christian fully understands that Christ has commanded their observance, let him obey Him – lest he be one of who says “Lord, Lord” but does not do what He says (Luke 6:46). Blessing always follows obeying the Lord.

**Objections against Ordinances Considered,
 Especially those against Washing the Saints’ Feet:**

The washing of the saints’ feet has been practiced throughout the entire history of the Christian Church. However, many in Christendom today do not acknowledge the washing of the saints’ feet as an ordinance established for the Church by Christ. They may instead be found to refer to it as a Christian practice perhaps, but one that is set at a lower level of obligation upon the Church than that of Baptism and Communion. Truly, the name/title one gives to Feet-Washing, whether calling it an *ordinance* or a Christian *practice*, is not the real issue – but rather that we are found obeying Christ’s commands. However, as we have seen, there is nothing in the language of Scripture which would warrant an inferior status for it.

It is worthy to note that, even among those churches/denominations which will not call it an ordinance, the practice is neither wholly forsaken nor out rightly despised by them (although some have spoken in very ill terms of those who practice it). But rather, one may hear wonderful accounts from brethren across numerous denominational lines about a special time when they experienced a foot-washing service – perhaps at a youth camp, or at a board meeting, or at some special Christian retreat, who nonetheless do not call it an ordinance to be observed. It should not surprise us to hear such glowing testimonies of the experience, for there is blessing

associated with doing it (John 13:17). However, it is the conviction of multitudes throughout history that a simple childlike reading of the Scriptural evidence truly places the washing of one another's feet as a true Christian ordinance established by Christ for His Church, just as He established baptism and communion. Given below is an attempt to list the most popular objections which have been raised against Christians observing the washing of the saints' feet as an ordinance.

Objections Some Give for Not Keeping the Ordinance

Objection 1: Some say: "We only need to understand the spiritual lesson of washing the saint's feet, not perform the literal washing of one another's feet." This is probably the most popularly raised objection against the practice. It may seem to some that it has a reasonableness behind it, since truly the spiritual reality is greater than the physical symbol. However, if this objection were true, it would prove too much. For the same could be said for baptism and communion (i.e., that we need not perform the literal baptizing of persons, nor the literal eating of the bread or drinking of the fruit of the vine – only understand the spiritual reality they symbolize). In fact, there are anti-ordinance teachers who do just that, doing away with all three, teaching that we do not need to keep them literally today. It is interesting that those who would use the arguments for practicing baptism and communion against the anti-ordinance teachers (see above under each of the three, *Clear Marks of an Ordinance from Christ . . .*) do not consider/realize that they clearly apply and establish this ordinance also.

Objection 2: Some say: "We do not practice it today because the washing of feet was only an old Jewish (or, old world) custom for that time period when the roads were dusty and the people wore sandals." However, what Christ did the night He was betrayed, was not observe the common custom of the day, but He established something *entirely new*. We might gather that it was something completely new that night just from Peter's response and Christ's answer to him, "*That which I do thou hast not known now, but thou shalt know after these things*" (John 13:7 [YLT]). Yet, beyond this, we know from an abundance of Scripture texts that the common custom of the day *was not to wash one another's feet*, but the common custom in both the Old and New Testament was to provide water *for each one to wash only his own feet*. Consider:

Gen. 18:4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

Gen. 19:2 And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square."

Judges 19:21 So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

Gen 43:24 So the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed.

Gen. 24:32 Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him.

2 Sam.11:8 And David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house and wash your feet." So Uriah departed from the king's house, and a gift of food from the king followed him.

Luke 7:44 Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head.

Clearly the common custom of the day was that each one washed *his own feet*, and not that they were to wash one another's feet. The account of Abigail offering herself to wash the feet of David's servants is a beautiful shadow of the New Testament teaching, even as baptism and communion also are shadowed in the Old Testament (see notes above on "*Shadowed . . .*" under each ordinance). That the old world custom was that each washed his own feet is beyond dispute. Christ established something new that night for His Church (i.e., washing one another's feet).

Objection 3: Some, through various means, teach that Jesus did not *obligate* or *command* that we wash one another's feet. At a quick glance, one may be persuaded to give credence to such an objection by the fact that Jesus said "you ought to wash one another's feet" and "you should do as I have done to you," as if the language of "ought" and "should" makes the practice optional instead of an obligatory command. However, such an objection proves to be a most unworthy one. First, certainly no one who calls Jesus Lord should think he could rest in saying: "Jesus said I ought to and I should do it, but since He *didn't say that I have to do it*, I won't do it." It would indeed give us strong reason, to say the least, to have grave fear for the person who could utter such a statement. For to know that Jesus said we "ought to" and we "should do" *anything—ought to, and should be*, as binding upon the Christian as any other commandment in Scripture.

More to the point: "ought" and "should" rightly understood testifies to the highest language of obligation that a lover of Christ can imagine. The word "ought" [Gk, Strong's 3784] is used to speak of moral obligation. Besides being translated as "ought," the Greek word can be found to be translated in Scripture by the words *obliged, debtor, owe, duty, bound* and *indebted*. Likewise, where the word "should" is either present or implied in any text concerning our Lord's commands, such language clearly makes His teaching morally binding upon His Church – as we see in 1 John 3:23, "And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment."

Consider the following examples in which the Greek word used for "ought" in John 13:14 reveals, not an "optional choice" but a definite binding moral obligation:

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Eph. 5:28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

1 John 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 John 3:16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.

Rom. 15:1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Luke 11:4 And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.

Luke 17:10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, "We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do."

3 John 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

Philem. 18 But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account.

Acts 17:29 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.

2 Cor. 12:11 I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

2 Cor. 12:14 Now *for* the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

2 Thess. 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other,

2 Thess. 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

Matt. 23:18-19 ¹⁸ And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' ¹⁹ Fools and blind! . . .

No one mistakes the use of the Greek word in the above texts as merely implying an option. Clearly, as the above Scriptures testify, it would be wrong to think that the "ought" [Greek, 3784] in John 13:14 is merely an optional choice rather than a morally binding command upon believers. The ordinance of Feet-Washing has been delivered to the Church in a manner that is not inferior to any other ordinance from Christ. That the words "ought to" and "should" testifies to morally binding obligation is clear. Yet, if we were even to take out the words "ought" and "should" from these verses, it would still be binding upon us, reading: "¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and

Teacher, have washed your feet, you also wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you do as I have done to you." Certainly putting the morally binding words "ought to" and "should" back where they belong does not lessen our obligation to obey His command.

Objection 4: Some find objection to the practice of washing the saints' feet because there are not more passages which speak about it. This is a weak objection indeed. First, it is not the number of times that a doctrine is spoken on that makes it obligatory to the saved, but that it is clearly taught. There is certainly great detail given surrounding the giving of the ordinance of washing the saints' feet, the doctrine being given in explicit and morally binding language in John 13. Furthermore, it is clear from 1 Timothy 5:9-10 that the ordinance was in practice in the early Church an estimated 30 plus years after Christ established it. And it would be a most unworthy objection indeed if one were to conclude that we need not think it obligatory upon us today since it is only spoken of by Paul in one of his epistles (1 Timothy). For Paul has likewise only spoken of Communion/the Lord's Supper in one of his epistles (1 Corinthians), yet we correctly insist that Communion is obligatory.

Concluding Thoughts Upon Objections Raised Against the Ordinance:

There are other objections which have been raised against the ordinance of Feet-Washing, yet these are perhaps those which people will most likely encounter. Yet, just as these "chief" objections prove to be poor, so do all objections. Perhaps the biggest reason the ordinance is rejected by many today, is the fact that they have never seriously considered the Scriptural evidence for its continued practice? Perhaps related to that is the fact that it is such a displeasing thought to the carnal mind to humble oneself and wash another's feet? However, many can truly testify that, having done so, there is great blessing indeed. Walls are broken down, love is expressed, and joy is in the fellowship. How wise indeed is our Lord!

There is Blessing in the Physical Observance and the Spiritual Reality: If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. John 13:17

The spiritual lessons in this simple ordinance are great, deep and laden with truth. In this world, even those who are completely clean through the Blood of Christ need to have their walk attended to and kept clean. We need Jesus every day, not just at the start of our Christian journey, in order to walk in holiness. We need to have our spiritual walk kept clean by Christ, as Jesus said to Peter (who was already clean): "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8). Spiritually Jesus does wash our feet/our Christian walk, even as He *physically* and *spiritually* washed Peter's feet. Yet, in a very real sense, *Jesus washes our feet through the brethren* – a truth revealed in the ordinance of washing one another's feet. For it is Christ in us that make us servants of one another! Christ in us—when we concern ourselves with our brother's walk! Christ in us—when we do not give up meeting together, exhorting one another, and spurring one another on to love and good works! As we kneel humbly before the feet of a Christian and wash their feet in the ordinance of Feet-Washing, this great truth is symbolically demonstrated. The wisdom of Christ, though called foolish by carnal minds, knew that we would indeed benefit from this one as well as the other two ordinances. Through them, the spiritual truths and realities they symbolize are vividly brought to our hearts and minds.

If you have never experienced such a service, it may seem too difficult, too humbling, or too strange a thing to do. However, to many, Baptism (to be immersed fully clothed before others in water) also, no doubt, seems like a strange and unreasonable thing to do. Yet, in each of the ordinances, the wisdom of God is manifested. And certainly, if Jesus were to walk into the room right now and ask us to wash His feet, how willingly we would kneel before our Lord in obedience. Therefore, let us remember that it is Christ in us. Therefore, let us wash one another's feet, remembering: "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me" (Matt. 25:40). H. M. Riggle beautifully wrote:

Time and again we have proved the words of Christ to be true. As we have humbly taken our place at the feet of our brethren and in obedience to Jesus' command have washed their feet, our soul has been refreshed with Heaven's richest blessings. —H. M. Riggle, *Christian Baptism, The Lord's Supper and Feet-Washing* (Guthrie, OK: Faith Publishing House (reprint of 1908 version), 223-224.