

THE ORDINANCES

Various religious denominations teach many things concerning the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. The bible teaches that the Lord gave his church these ordinances to commemorate the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is important to understand that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper are not essential to your salvation, but they are important to demonstrate your obedience to the Lord after your salvation.

The key word of this lesson is:

OBEDIENCE

The key question this lesson answers:

What is the importance of baptism and the Lord's supper in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To give the bible's clear and definite teaching on the two ordinances given to the church.

The key point of this lesson:

Baptism is the first act of obedience for a believer, and the Lord's supper is a remembrance of Jesus Christ's death until He comes.

MEMORY VERSES:

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

– Acts 8:36-37

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

– 1 Corinthians 11:26

SECTION 1: *BAPTISM*

Virtually all religious denominations teach some form of baptism as part of their doctrine, and the teachings are diverse. This section of the lesson is intended to give the bible's clear and definite teaching on this subject so that you can understand what God's intention is regarding baptism.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

A. Water baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:1-7

B. Water baptism is the public testimony of your salvation and identification with Jesus.

Romans 1:16; 10:11

You are publicly demonstrating that you have trusted Christ's death on the cross on your behalf. As you are taken beneath the water, you are publicly demonstrating that your sins were buried with Christ in his grave. As you come up out of the water, you are publicly demonstrating your resurrection with Christ, and that he has raised you to walk in newness of life.

C. Water baptism is a public declaration that you are choosing to follow and submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus set the example for us by submitting to baptism before he began his public ministry.

Matthew 3:13-17

THE KEY POINT OF THIS SECTION...

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

– **Matthew 28:19-20**

According to the bible, the first act of obedience for a believer is the ordinance of baptism. It is essential for your spiritual growth. Before you can be taught to follow Jesus Christ, you must be willing to submit to the first act of obedience that God requires of you following your salvation. Your growth in Jesus Christ will be hindered if you will not obey the simple command of God to be baptized.

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

A. The Lord commands all who place their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior to be baptized.

*“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” – **Matthew 28:19***

B. There are two requirements for those who desire to be baptized.

*“And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” – **Acts 8:36-37***

Requirement #1 – Heart belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior

Requirement #2 – Confession that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior

Romans 10:9-10

WHEN SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

A. The Bible teaches that you should be baptized after your salvation.

Below are a few examples of baptism occurring after salvation:

- The people of Samaria – **Acts 8:12**
- The Ethiopian eunuch – **Acts 8:36-39**
- The apostle Paul (Saul) – **Acts 9:18**
- Cornelius and his house – **Acts 10:44-48**
- The Philippian jailer – **Acts 16:25-33**
- The people of Corinth – **Acts 18:7-8**

B. You should be baptized at the first opportunity after understanding God’s command and purpose to be baptized.

Are you completely sure that you are saved?

Have you been baptized since your salvation? If not, when will you?

HOW SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

A. Every biblical example of an individual's baptism was by immersion.

*"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway **out of the water...**"*
– **Matthew 3:16**

*"...and they went down both **into the water**, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." – **Acts 8:38***

B. The biblical method of baptism is by complete immersion.

*"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." – **Romans 6:4***

1. The word "baptize" means to immerse, to dip, to be placed into, and to submerge.
2. Baptism cannot picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ if it does not include the believer being completely immersed into water.
3. Sprinkling is not a biblical method of baptism because it does not picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

WHERE SHOULD YOU BE BAPTIZED?

A. Your baptism should be carried out under the authority of a local church that teaches sound doctrine concerning baptism.

B. The location of baptism is not as important as the public testimony of your identification with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

C. You should be baptized in a public body of water large enough for immersion.

John 3:23; Acts 8:36-37

SECTION 2: *THE LORD'S SUPPER*

Like baptism, the Lord's supper (communion) is not essential for your salvation, but it is very important for your new life in Jesus Christ. This section of the lesson is designed to give you a biblical understanding of how to apply the memorial of the Last Supper to your Christian life.

WHY SHOULD YOU OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The primary reason to observe the Lord's supper is for the regular remembrance of the price Jesus paid for your sins.

- A. Jesus instituted the observance of the Lord's supper when he said, "... *this do in remembrance of me.*"**

Luke 22:14-20

- B. The apostle Paul confirms the observance of the Lord's supper for the New Testament church as a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for sin.**

1 Corinthians 11:20-34

WHAT DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER REPRESENT?

- A. Unleavened bread is used to signify the pure body of Jesus Christ.**

1. Leaven in the Bible speaks of corruption, sin, and false teaching. It was also forbidden in Israel's Passover feast.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Matthew 16:6-12; Deuteronomy 16:1-4

2. The bread is broken to remind you that Jesus' body was given for you.

1 Corinthians 11:24; Isaiah 53:4-6

- B. Grape Juice is used to signify the pure blood of Jesus Christ.**

1. The juice is unfermented because every mention of the "cup" at the Last Supper is said to be the "fruit of the vine."

Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18

2. The juice is "poured out" to remind you that the blood of Jesus was shed for sins.

Matthew 26:26-29

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

A. The Lord's supper provides you with a proper perspective.

The three views you should take when observing the Lord's Supper...

1. **Look to the PAST** – This reminds you of what Jesus did to pay for your sins. Remembering the death of Jesus Christ will remind you that your sins have been covered in his blood.

1 Corinthians 11:24-25

2. **Look to the FUTURE** – This reminds you that Jesus Christ is coming again. You should want to be clean so that you will not be ashamed when the Lord Jesus Christ returns.

1 Corinthians 11:26

3. **Look to the PRESENT** – This reminds you to judge your own sins. God wants you to examine your life so that you can judge your own sins and turn from them.

1 Corinthians 11:27-28

B. The Lord's Supper maintains purity within the body of Christ.

1. It is a time to purge bitterness and sin that defiles you. You will bring the chastisement of God if you choose to partake of the Lord's supper "unworthily" by not examining your spiritual life and walk with God.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32

2. It protects from allowing unrepentant sin to remain within the church.

1 Corinthians 5:1-8

THE KEY POINT OF THIS SECTION...

The most important events in history are the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and his glorious return. Just as you observe special days in your life by a special "remembrance," the Lord's supper is observed by the church as a memorial of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for your sins, and to remind you that he will come again.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. Why does God instruct Christians to be baptized?

2. What is the biblical method of baptism, and what does it represent?

3. What are the biblical requirements for a someone to be baptized?

4. Why are Christians instructed to participate in the Lord's supper?

5. How does the Lord's supper picture the suffering of Jesus Christ?

6. What is the key purpose of the lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words what *Acts 8:36-38* teaches you concerning baptism.

Read each passage below and describe when each individual was baptized.

Acts 8:12-13

Acts 10:44-48

Acts 18:7-8

Describe in your own words what Jesus was teaching his disciples in *John 6:48-58*.

Read *Matthew 26:26-30* and briefly compare the Last supper with the way the Lord's supper is observed in your local church.
