

Discipleship  
Assignment for Appointment #10  
The Ordinances: Baptism & Communion

- Read the book of Romans as outlined:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Day: Introduction - Romans 1:1-17
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Condemnation
    - Romans 1:18-3:20
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Justification
    - Romans 3:21-5:21
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Sanctification
    - Romans 6:1-8:39
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Israel
    - Romans 9-11
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Transformed Living, Part 1
    - Romans 12-14
  - 7<sup>th</sup> Day: The Righteousness of God Revealed in Transformed Living, Part 2
    - Romans 15-16
  
- Read and complete the lesson on The Ordinances: Baptism & Communion
  
- Memorize Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Corinthians 11:26
  
- Take notes on Pastor's Sunday Sermon

**DISCIPLESHIP**  
**APPOINTMENT # 10**  
**THE ORDINANCES: BAPTISM & COMMUNION**

While some churches practice sacred rites called “sacraments” by which the participant receives grace from God, the New Testament only records our Lord giving commands concerning two sacred rites which are to be practiced by His church. These two sacred religious ceremonies, Baptism and Communion, do not earn the participant any saving grace, but they are very meaningful and important in the believer’s life and walk with the Lord. These two sacred rituals are called ordinances because the Lord has commanded for them to be observed.

***WATER BAPTISM***

Adapted from a paper by Dr. Henry Holloman

**Meaning of Christian Baptism**

The word *baptize* comes from the Greek word *baptizo* (βαπτίζω) which means literally to “dip” or “immerse.” The baptized object becomes identified with whatever it is “immersed” into such as a piece of cloth “immersed” into indelible dye. When the Bible teaches that the Christian is *baptized* into Christ (Galatians 3:27), it is showing that the Christian is spiritually identified with Christ in death (Galatians 2:20), burial (Colossians 2:12), and resurrection (Colossians 2:12; 3:1).

According to Romans 6:4, what do we identify with in baptism and what is its purpose?

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The word *baptism* is sometimes used in the sense of “washing” with water and we find that Christian baptism also includes the idea of spiritual cleansing or forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16, cf. Titus 3:5).

**Requirements for Christian Baptism**

The New Testament teaches that only those who profess faith in Jesus Christ are to be baptized. When does baptism occur in each of these passages below? Is it before or after repentance / faith is expressed?

<b><u>Scripture</u></b>	<b><u>Before</u></b>	<b><u>After</u></b>
Matthew 28:19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acts 2:41	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acts 8:12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acts 16:14-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acts 16:31-33	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acts 18:8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

There are also specific examples of people receiving the Holy Spirit before baptism (Acts 9:17,18; 10:47-48). A person baptized before salvation is just a wet sinner instead of a dry one.

All true believers have been spiritually baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13, “*For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body*”). What can be said about anyone that does not have the Spirit of Christ?

Romans 8:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Water baptism is a physical and outward sign of this spiritual reality. (Note that the fruit of the Spirit and any spiritual gift is the manifestation of being baptized by the Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7,11).

Baptism should be limited to people who are able to communicate they have personally placed their faith in the Lord Jesus for salvation from sin. This can be true of even very young children, but never of infants, so infants should not be baptized. There is no clear example of infant baptism in New Testament or that it removes inherited sin (see Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21,22). Neither are there any Scripture passages that equate Christian Baptism to Old Testament circumcision. The basic principle to remember is that genuine belief in Jesus Christ must precede Christian baptism if it is to be scriptural and meaningful.

### **Motive for Christian Baptism**

Those who love Jesus Christ seek to obey Him, and so the proper motive for Christian baptism is identification with and obedience to Christ out of love for Him. (See Matthew 28:19, cf. John 14:15; Romans 6:3-5). Christ's own baptism "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15-16) gives an example of obedience for the believer to follow in Christian baptism.

Baptism should not be done as an effort to gain or to keep salvation because water baptism does not save! Salvation is completely by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior (Acts 16:31; Ephesians. 2:8-9) and not by good works such as water baptism (Titus 3:5). Baptism is a result of salvation and not a requirement for it. Note again the order in Acts 18:12, "*when they believed . . . they were baptized.*" It is a demonstration of the fruit of repentance (Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20). There are no Biblical examples of people remaining unbaptized after coming to faith in Jesus Christ, and the Epistles assume believers to be baptized (Romans 6). Those who professes Christ yet remain unbaptized can continue in that state only if they are ignorant or rebellious. If rebellious, then the continued disobedience can be a cause to question the genuineness of the profession of faith (Matthew 28:19,20; John 14:23; 2 Corinthians 13:5).

While the example of other Christians should be an encouragement to us, being baptized simply to imitate the baptism of other people is not a good motive. It is an individual decision. Christian baptism is like a soldier who puts on his uniform. He does not do it to become a soldier, but because he is a soldier and wants to publically identify himself as such. A person is not baptized to become a Christian, but because he already is one and desires to publically identify himself with Jesus Christ and His people.

### **Baptism and Christian Living**

Read Romans 6:3-11.

What should we consider our relationship to sin to be? \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 11)

People stop sinning when they die! While Christians do not become sinless in this life (1 John 1:8-10), the more we count ourselves to be dead to sin through our death with Christ, the less we will sin.

What is the purpose of our identification with Jesus' resurrection? (vs. 4)

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Baptism shows two very basic principles for spiritual living: (1) the Christian's death to his past life of sin is pictured when he goes into the baptismal waters, and (2) the

Christian's new life of righteousness for God is pictured when he comes out of water. In baptism the Christian is testifying that he has turned his back on his former life of sin and has begun to walk in a new life of righteousness for God.

### **Method of Christian Baptism**

There are several methods of baptism common among Christians. However, the method of immersion, by which a person is placed completely under water and then raised up, best agrees with the primary meaning of the word *baptize* ("dip" or "immerse") and the meaning of baptism in identification with Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. The key issue in baptism is not the mode but that it is done subsequent to belief and salvation and not as a means of salvation. Those baptized prior to salvation need to be baptized as believers. Those baptized by a method other than immersion may consider being rebaptized simply as an opportunity for a clearer identification with Jesus Christ and testimony of their faith in Him.

### **Special Note Concerning Acts 2:38**

Several groups teach that until a person is baptized they are not saved based on Acts 2:38. Below are 6 reasons that conclusion is not correct.

1. The Greek text does not require this to be "*baptized for the purpose of forgiveness.*" It can just as easily mean "*baptized because of*" or "*on the occasion of forgiveness of sins.*"
2. Forgiveness of sin is linked with repentance independent of baptism even in the preaching of Peter (see Acts 3:19; 5:31; 10:43).
3. In Acts 10:44, the Holy Spirit, who is the sign (Acts 11:15-18) and seal of salvation (Ephesians 1:13), came upon the those at Cornelius' home while Peter was still preaching. They were baptized after that.
4. If baptism was necessary for salvation then it would have been included in those passages and books which give clear gospel presentations such as Romans 3:21-30; 10:9,10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 3:7-14 and 1 John.
5. If baptism was necessary for salvation it would be part of the gospel message and Paul could not have made the statement in 1 Corinthians 1:17 that "*Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel.*"
6. Those in Acts 2 would have understood Peter's call to repent and be baptized to be the same as or similar to John's earlier call for the baptism of repentance which was a ceremonial cleansing to reflect and demonstrate an inward reality.

While baptism is extremely important and should be one of the first acts of obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, our salvation comes only by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not by any works or righteousness we have done. It is in Jesus Christ alone that we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin (Ephesians 1:7).

### **Personal Application**

Have you been baptized by immersion in water since professing faith in Jesus?

Yes     No

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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If not, when will you be obedient? Talk to your pastor this week to arrange a date!

## **COMMUNION - THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Includes excerpts from *The Church in God's Program* by Robert L. Saucy

The Lord's Supper is a biblically ordained rite for the life of the church and a means by which God is worshiped (1 Corinthians 11:20). It is also called "*communion*" from the apostle's reference to it by that term in 1 Corinthians 10:16, "*breaking of bread*" from Acts 2:42; 20:7, the "*Lord's Table*" from 1 Corinthians 10:21 and by some as the "*Eucharist*" which comes from the Greek word for giving thanks.

### **The Institution of The Lord's Supper:**

The Lord's Supper was instituted by the direct command of Jesus the night before His death when He was gathered with His disciples to eat the Passover meal.

Read Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20 and 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

The Passover meal was a remembrance of God's redemption of Israel from their bondage in Egypt (Exodus 12 & 13). Jesus used this occasion to institute a memorial to His own imminent death as the redemption sacrifice for them.

### **The Practice of the Early Church:**

From the very beginning the Lord's table has played a significant part in the worship of God by the early church. Acts 2:42,46 tell us that immediately after Pentecost the early church was regularly "*breaking bread*" in remembrance of the Lord's sacrifice. The three other activities they were devoted to were:

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### **The Meaning of the Lord's Supper:**

The primary meaning of the Lord's supper is summed up in Jesus' command, "*This do in remembrance of Me*" (Lk 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24,25). It is first and foremost a memorial rite of Jesus Christ and His redemptive death. A secondary meaning is found in the communion of believers in the unity of His body as expressed in 1 Corinthians 10:16 as the believers shared in the cup and the bread.

The remembrance of Christ in the Lord's Supper is threefold.

#### First, it is a remembrance of His sacrificial death.

The very elements and the words of this ordinance emphasize the remembrance of Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death as the ransom for sin.

The elements of Communion are:

\_\_\_\_\_ which signifies Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 11:23-24)  
and \_\_\_\_\_ which signifies Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Corinthians 11:25)

To the ancient Hebrew, the body and blood referred to the two component parts of the body of the sacrificial animal that are separated when it is killed. Jesus' death is the sacrifice which is the basis of the new covenant (Mark 14:24). To remember His death is to remember the event which brought the promised forgiveness of sins and the possibility for reconciliation between God and man. The ceremony is a proclamation of His death as the final salvation act of God. It reminds the believer that his salvation is in the redemptive death of Christ. This is why it is a proclamation of the Lord's death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26).

This is not a re-enactment in any sense of the death of Christ. He died once for sins and then sat down at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 9:28; 10:12; 1 Peter 3:18). The ritual and the explanatory words serve as a remembrance and a proclamation of what God has already done. To

use the rite to seek to again crucify to themselves the Son of God would is to put Him to open shame (Hebrews 6:6).

Second, the Lord's Supper is a present fellowship with Christ.

In partaking of the Lord's Supper the Christian shares in the "*communion in the blood of Christ,*" and in the "*communion of the body of Christ*" (1 Corinthians 10:16).

The word "*communion*" used here is the same Greek word that is also translated "*fellowship.*" There is a sense of being in fellowship with Christ. This is more than just sharing a meal with Him, for He gives Himself as the substance of that meal.

In what sense is Christ present in the Lord's Supper? Is it a literal physical presence or a spiritual presence? Roman Catholicism teaches transubstantiation and the Lutheran Church teaches consubstantiation. Both of these teach that the elements of bread and wine turn into the physical body and blood of Christ at some point in the ritual. (At the consecration by the priest in Roman Catholicism and when eaten in Lutheranism). They believe they are eating the physical flesh of Jesus Christ and drinking his physical blood when partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Read Leviticus 3:17; 7:26,27 and 17:10-14.

In light of these verses, what would the Jews, including Jesus' disciples, have considered a command to eat the physical flesh and drink the physical blood of a human?

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Jesus was physically present with His disciples when He gave them the command to "*Take, eat; this is My body*" and "*Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sin*" (Matthew 26:26-28). Would they have believed Jesus was speaking in metaphorical language or would they have believed they were to physically consume His flesh and blood?

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The view with the greatest Biblical support is that the Lord's Supper is a memorial with Jesus Christ being present in some real sense spiritually, not physically. The bread and the wine are visible symbols of His presence and partaking in them visibly symbolizes spiritual participation in salvation through His sacrificial death.

Third, the Lord's Supper is an anticipation of Christ's return.

Jesus expressed the hope of His future during the Lord's Supper when He said, "*But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.*" (Matthew 26:29; cf. Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16,18). The Apostle Paul expressed the same idea in 1 Corinthians 11:26 saying, "*For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*" Communion anticipates the day of Jesus' return when we will have direct fellowship with Him in God's Kingdom.

**The Efficacy of The Lord's Supper:**

The Lord's Supper is a blessing received by faith as the participant remembers the redemptive work of Jesus. It is not a special means of saving grace in itself as some churches teach. Christ's spiritual presence in the Lord's Supper also brings the blessing of a fresh awareness of His continual presence within the believer, for the believer already has Christ spiritually within him and the hope of His physical return.

**Participants of the Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper was given only to the disciples and the church and so only believers who are a part of the body of Christ are entitled to partake of it. It has no meaning for non-Christians. The Lord's Supper is both a joyous time of celebration in communion with Christ and with other

believers, and a solemn time to think seriously about the sacrifice Christ made and how He wants the believer to live.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-30

What is the Christian to do before partaking? \_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 28)

What guilt belongs to those who partake of Communion in an unworthy manner?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 27)

What happened to some of the Corinthian believers who partook of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (vs. 29-30)

### **Personal Application**

How can you participate in the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner?

- \* Examine yourself and confess any sin - 1 John 1:9
- \* Make sure that you are at peace with all men as far as it depends on you - Romans 12:18; Matthew 5:24-25
- \* Avoid flippancy and be sober minded by reflecting on the sacrifice Jesus made in order to cleanse you from your sin.
- \* Give thanks and praise God that through the blood of Christ you are clothed with His righteousness and can come to His throne of grace - Hebrews 4:16; 10:19