

53 – Christian Ordinances



There are two Christian Ordinances commanded by God, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is a public profession of faith and should only be performed once after a person has become a Christian and received the Holy Spirit. Baptism should be a full immersion underwater and not a sprinkling or pouring unless a medical or physical reason dictates that. The Lord's Supper involved unleavened bread and grape juice or wine and can be performed as often as desired. I also believe that "The Great Commission" should be included as an Ordinance and we're supposed to continually enact it for the rest of our lives.

The Great Commission

Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to participate in what is referred to as "The Great Commission".

Eleven of Jesus' disciples went away to a mountain in Galilee...

[Matthew 28:18-20] And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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, 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.

Baptism

- The English word "baptize" is a transliteration of the Greek word "baptizo" and it means to submerge or overwhelm. To baptize someone in the Christian sense means to physically and totally submerge the person underwater in the name of the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.
- Baptism symbolizes a Christian's death from the ties of this world, their burial, and finally their resurrection into Christ. (See **Romans 6:3-7**)
- Baptism is for those who believe the gospel whole heartedly and is not something to be forced on someone. Baptism should not be performed on babies or someone that hasn't professed faith in Jesus Christ. (See **Acts 8:36-37**)
- Baptism does NOT save you...it's a public profession of faith performed in obedience to the command given by Jesus Christ. As an example, the penitent thief that died on the cross next to Jesus was saved by faith alone and never had a chance to be baptized, yet he went to paradise with Jesus that day. (See **Luke 23:39-43**)



Other Important Baptism Verses

- Salvation is by grace through faith only: **Acts (15)**, **Romans (4)**, **Galatians (2:16)**, **Ephesians (2:8-9)**, **Philippians (3:9)**.
- Paul never promoted baptism: **1st Corinthians (1:17, 15:1-4)**.
- Many individuals were saved apart from baptism:
 - Penitent Woman - **Luke (7:37-50)**
 - Paralytic Man - **Matthew (9:2)**
 - Publican (Tax Collector) - **Luke (18:13-14)**
 - Thief on the Cross - **Luke (23:39-43)**
- Salvation always comes before baptism: **Acts (10:44-48)**
- Misunderstood verses:
 - **Acts (2:38)** - "for forgiveness" should be "because of..."
 - **Acts (22:16)** - sins were washed by calling on Jesus.
 - **Mark (16:16)** - verse centered on belief, not baptism.
 - **1st Peter (3:21)** - baptism in "Christ's death" not water.



The Lord's Supper

- The Lord's Supper was first observed in the "Upper Room" on the night before Jesus was crucified and was referred to as "The Last Supper" (**Matthew 26:26-29**).
- It is celebrated by breaking and then eating a piece of unleavened bread and by drinking a cup of grape juice (or wine).
- It is only to be observed by Christians (**1st Corinthians 10:16-17**).
- We are told in **1st Corinthians (11:17-34)** how we are to observe the Lord's Supper and that it's to be done in remembrance of the Jesus and what He's done for us:
 - The Bread is broken to represent Jesus's body being broken for us.
 - The cup of juice represents the new covenant in His blood.
- It's extremely important that if you have an unresolved sin issue that you don't participate in the Lord's Supper until you have confessed it and dealt with it appropriately. **1st Corinthians (11:27-31)** tells us of situations where people were weak, sick and had died because of participating in an "unworthy manner".

