

LESSON FIVE

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH: Baptism and the Lord's Supper

*"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" (Mt 28:19).
"Do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Cor 11:24).*

DAY 1: READ & SUMMARIZE

The following verses encapsulate the lesson to follow. Read them carefully, meditating on their message. Express the key concept of each passage as it applies to baptism and the Lord's Supper.

A) Acts 8:26-39 –

B) Romans 6:1-4 –

C) 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 –

DAY 2: LEARN & RESPOND

INTRODUCTION

The religious life of the Old Testament was full of ritual and God-ordained activity. There were special officiants, garments, furniture, days, and symbols. Complexity and endless repetition marked the Jewish religion (the only religion given by God). Everything was prescribed; virtually nothing was explained—why a lamb here, a goat there? why an ephah or a cubit or blue instead of purple? Any explanation at all had to await the unveiling of the “types” in the New Testament.

But Christian worship is the opposite: very little is prescribed; virtually everything is explained. There are no vestments or ritual; no officiating priests or liturgy—since every believer is a priest (see 1 Cor 11:23-34; 1 Pet. 2). Even the occasion for the Lord’s Supper is left to us in the words “as oft.” In a law relationship it would be right to dictate the day, but how do you dictate to your spouse when to say, “I love you”? Of course those nearest to the Lord thought He in-

tended a weekly remembrance (see Acts 20:7, “*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread*”). Certainly the Lord Jesus did not mean “as seldom”!

Another clear difference between the OT and the NT: the Jewish natural and visible “shadows” are replaced by spiritually discerned substance. Their tabernacle or temple, priesthood, altar, sacrifices, etc. were seen by all but they were only “figures of the true” tabernacle which is in heaven. Now, as the Lord Jesus said, we no longer must worship in Jerusalem; we “*worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship Him*” (Jn 4:23). We “*enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*” (Heb 10:19), something no ordinary Israelite could do.

– ORDINANCE #1 – BAPTISM: THE TROUBLED WATERS OF THE CHURCH

1. MEANING of the WORD: Baptism is mentioned 76 times in the

New Testament. The word is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*, meaning “to immerse, submerge and emerge.” It was used for the dyeing of cloth and there is no idea of sprinkling or pouring in the word. Note the example of Phillip and the eunuch: “*And both Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water...*” (Acts 8:38-39).

2. DIFFERENT BAPTISMS: There are seven different baptisms mentioned in the NT and these must be kept distinct:

- Israel to Moses, their new leader (1 Cor 10:2)
- Israel by John (Lk 7:29), an act of national repentance and preparation for the coming of Messiah
- Christ by John (Mt 3:16), a distinct act of identification with Israel, and prefiguring His death

- Anticipated persecution of the disciples and the early Church (Mt 20:23)

- Christ on the cross (Mt 20:23) when He could say, “*all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over Me*” (Ps 42:7).

- Holy Spirit baptism (1 Cor 12:13), a once-for-all historic act that unified all believers into one body

- Believer’s baptism (Acts 8:36-38) expressing the practical truth of a completed act (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12)

3. WHAT BAPTISM IS NOT:

Many have distorted ideas about baptism. It must be clearly understood that, biblically speaking, baptism is NOT a doorway to the church—either universal or local. It is NOT a means of salvation from the penalty of sin (or necessary for it). Nor is baptism a replacement for circumcision. Col 2:11-12 is speaking of the value of the death of Christ, not baptism

4. WHAT BAPTISM IS:

Baptism is a beautiful ACT of OBEDIENCE to the LORD (Mt 28:19) to His simple request included in the Great Commission

Baptism is the ANSWER of a GOOD CONSCIENCE (1 Pet 3:21; see also 2:19; 3:15-16 for a good conscience).

Baptism is a MARK of IDENTIFICATION with CHRIST (Rom 6:4); I will not be able to be baptized in heaven; now is the time to identify with the Lord in the day of His rejection.

And baptism is a DECLARATION of DEATH to the WORLD (Col 2:12), a "happy funeral," rising to a new kind of life.

5. THE ORDINANCE of BAPTISM:

Baptism is part of the Great Commission (Mt 28:18-20) and seems to have been practiced by evangelists soon after a person confessed belief in Christ.

There is no evidence of:

- a long waiting period between belief and baptism (perhaps 3 days at the most)
- a believer remaining unbaptized (barring the thief on the cross!)
- a person who did not claim salvation being baptized
- infants being baptized; "households" baptized evidently were all believing (Acts 16:15; 1 Cor 1:16)

A new believer should be taught the meaning and importance of this act. The only requirement is *believing*. For example:

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2:41); "When they believed Philip preaching... they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8:12); "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18:8).

There may be cases—severe infirmity, underage children forbidden by unsaved parents, wives of uncooperative husbands, and other circumstances that preclude baptism. If the person is willing, this should not be an impediment to full fellowship and participation in the life of the local church.

6. SOME HARD VERSES about BAPTISM:

Mark 16:16 – Notice the negative statement (help is found for the first two verses in 1 Cor 1:17)

Acts 2:38 where the Jews are called on to do the opposite of what they had just done: receive, don't reject Christ; and as your rejection of Him was public (at the cross), so your repentance should be public—this is more like John's baptism which was for the nation of Israel

1 Corinthians 15:29 – Why do we come out of the water? just to breathe? Or is it a picture of resurrection?

1 Peter 3:21 – Jesus, by the Spirit, preached through Noah to those now in God's prison. He went under!

**– ORDINANCE #2 –
THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Before we consider the Lord's Supper specifically, let's think first about some of the joys and responsibilities of worship in general. Please note that Christians should not limit their worship to the Breaking of Bread! *"For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering: for My name shall be great among the heathen, says the Lord of hosts"* (Mal 1:11).

1. WORSHIP is the HIGHEST ACT of SERVICE: Some definitions:

The old **English** word for worship is actually "worthship", to declare the worth of something. The **Hebrew** meaning is "to bow before" (*sahah*; see Gen 18:2). The Greek

has three shades of meaning to the word worship:

- i) "to kiss towards" (*proskuneo*);
- ii) "to revere, be devoted, feel awe" (*sebomai*);
- iii) "to render homage or service" (*latreuo*)

2. EVERY BELIEVER should be EQUIPPED to be a WORSHIPPER (not only at the Lord's Supper). How have we been equipped?

- Our SPIRITS have been made alive through the new birth (1 Cor 2:9-16)
- Our MINDS are to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and the Word (Jn 16:14)
- Our HEARTS cannot help but be aflame with love to Christ as we think upon Him (see Lk 24:32)

3. The ART of MEDITATION—LET'S ACTUALLY WORSHIP!

Read Scripture passages carefully and often: look especially for

attributes and acts of the Father, Son, and Spirit. **Think** it through in different ways: other verses help; what does it teach me? **Pray** it up to God in thanksgiving. **Consider** how you might share the blessing with others.

THE LORD'S SUPPER: REMEMBRANCE

Remembrance more focussed: there are things suitable for worship that are inappropriate at a time of remembrance

1. The DIVINE INSTITUTION of the LORD'S SUPPER (Mt 26:26-30): *"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body."* This was obviously a symbolic act since He was in His physical body.

"And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Notice the simple eloquence, the fervent

passion, the unmistakable meaning, and the practical consideration in this act.

“They who once knew the sweetness of celebrating the Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day will not, I am sure, be content to put it off to less frequent seasons.” –C. H. Spurgeon

2. PREPARATION for WORSHIP at the LORD’S SUPPER

a) The condition of our BODIES: Our physical temples require adequate rest, food, etc. in order to offer up spiritual worship.

b) The condition of our HEARTS: Brethren, “*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*”. To help fill your heart, review certain passages of Scripture like: prophecies, messianic psalms, the gospels (especially our Lord’s Passion), the epistles, and Revelation. Some helpful books include: *Worship and The Lord’s Supper* (Gibbs); *Plant of Renown* (Sheldrake); *Worship and Remembrance* (D. Smith); *Glories of Our*

Lord (Hewlett); *The Suffering Savior* (Krummacher), to name just a few.

c) The condition of our SCHEDULES: Are we strategically planning our jobs, where we live and other factors around the priority of meeting to worship the Lord? Or is the Lord’s Supper an afterthought? Remember this important principle: God honors those who honor Him!

d) The condition of our SOULS: “*examine himself*”. Those who bear the vessels of the Lord must be clean (Isa. 52:11).

3. The SIMPLICITY and ELOQUENCE of the SYMBOLS:

These symbols—the bread and cup— have historic scriptural significance (Gen 14; Ps 104:15; Eccl 9:7). They also are important for several other reasons:

- They teach both UNITY and PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY— all and each
- The milling of the flour for the BREAD and the crushing

of the vintage for the WINE is expressive of the suffering Savior

- They are both GENERAL and SPECIFIC, with worldwide availability

4. The PURPOSES of the LORD'S SUPPER:

a) Centrality: He is *"in the midst"* and in a special sense He meets there with us week by week

b) Supremacy: It is *"the Lord's Supper,"* the only meeting of the church expressly and solely for the Lord

c) Intimacy: *"remember Me"*—not remembering one long dead but *"calling Him to mind"*

d) Testimony: To declare or *"show forth"* the Lord's death *"until He comes"*

e) Accessibility: To worship as priests (both men and women, 1 Pet 2) into the *"holiest"*. How?

i) *speaking to yourselves* in song—heart-warming hymns should give way to personal worship

ii) *to one another by the Word*—only that which ministers Christ to the heart; not a teaching time

iii) *to Him in prayer*—no need to be long, but a need to be real, so all can say *"Amen!"*

f) Harmony: *"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread"* (1 Cor 10:17)

5. The REQUIREMENTS for participating in the Supper:

- saved and walking in obedience (the pattern, though not a rule: saved, baptized, continued steadfastly)

- self-examined *"and so let him eat..."* (not *"so let him stay at home"*)

- something to offer Him (only what He has already given me, see Ps 116:12-13)

- we should come reverently, regularly, respectfully, rejoicing in our Savior, ready to be led by the Spirit

6. The LORD'S SUPPER is the weekly CLIMAX to the LORD'S TABLE (1 Cor 10)

- At the Table, the cup is first, then the bread; at the Supper, it is the other way around
- The table is both an Old Testament (Ps 23:5; 78:19; Mal.1:7, 12) and New Testament idea; the Supper is unique to the New Testament
- I am to be at the Table all the time (a spiritual choice); the Supper is the climax of my week at the Table (Acts 20:7)

7. The LORD'S SUPPER compared with BAPTISM:

THE LORD'S SUPPER	BAPTISM
a picture of COMMUNION (so done often)	a picture of UNION (so only once)
His identification with me: <i>"My body...My blood for you"</i>	my identification with Christ: <i>"into His death"</i>
shows that Christ is in me (take, eat...)	shows that I am in Christ (like Israel baptized "in cloud, in the sea")

EVERY BELIEVER A PRIEST

In the Old Testament, God also desired a kingdom of priests (Ex 19), but due to man's failure, it was not possible. In the lives of Job and Abraham, during the patriarchal period, the heads of families acted as priests (Job 1:5; Gen 8, 12). Then in Ex 28, Aaron's family was taken to function as priests on behalf of God. This system eventually became so

corrupt that it was the very priests who instigated the execution of the Lord Jesus!

However, Christ Himself, having replaced the repetitive offerings with His one sacrifice and the dying priests with His ever-living and unchangeable priesthood, instituted a new order of priesthood. It was not based on law but on grace. And although in type He followed the Aa-ronic priesthood, as to order He is after Melchizedek, the king-priest.

Now all who trust the Savior become priests, male and female (1 Peter 2 has no mention either of gift or gender—more in Lesson 9). There is no longer a selective priesthood; every believer has access into “the holiest by the blood of Jesus,” a new and living way He consecrated for us. Peter explains that our priesthood has two distinct aspects:

HOLY PRIESTHOOD	ROYAL PRIESTHOOD
built up to offer up spiritual sacrifices	go forth to show forth His virtues
for worship primarily towards God	for witness primarily towards men
“holy” reminds me that I no longer belong to this world	“royal” reminds me that I now belong to the world to come

QUESTIONS

FOR DISCUSSION...

1. Describe in detail what comes before, during, and after baptism for an individual, and how those events relate to the Lord Jesus.
2. How does (or how should) worship, and specifically the Lord's Supper, affect the way we live through the week?

WHAT PRIESTHOOD INVOLVES

Purification: the *condition* of priesthood (Heb 9:14; 10:22): “Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord” (Isa 52:11)

Responsibility: the *charge* of the priesthood (1 Pet 2): worship and witness; represent God to men, men to God

Identity: the *character* of our priesthood: He “hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father” (Rev 1:6)

Entrance: the *claim* of priesthood (Heb 5:14-16; 6:18-20)—all welcome, under all circumstances, at all times

Sacrifice: the *costliness* of priesthood (Rom 12:1; Phil 4:18; 1 Pet 2:5; Heb 13:15-16), the daily burnt offering

Testimony: the *calling* of our priesthood (1 Pet 2:9-20) speaking well of God to the people we meet each day

Review:

1. What contrast was drawn between worship in the Old Testament and worship in the New Testament? _____

2. List below the four descriptions of what baptism is:

i) _____

ii) _____

iii) _____

iv) _____

3. “ _____ is the highest act of worship.”

4. Describe a time when you set aside a time to worship that was not on a Sunday or in a scheduled meeting. _____

DAY 3: WATCH & ANSWER

Fill in the blanks as you watch the video. TIP: It's helpful to pre-read the questions before watching. You can check the answers in the Answer Key (Appendix 10).

Introduction: a) A sacrament is the administration of by the church in order to enable you to live the Christian life. The New Testament describes instead two ordinances, special requests by the Lord.

b) God has gone to great lengths to explain Christian worship in a logical, clear, and devotional way because He calls us .

c) The first day of the week was an ideal time to worship the Lord because it was:

i) day, and; b) the of the Church.

Baptism:

1. It cannot mean .

2. It is a declaration of a act.

3. Baptism should not be linked to in the local church.

4. Baptism should be the of obedience by a new believer.

Worship:

Christians should be worshipping .

The Lord's Supper:

1. It is those who have _____ themselves who realize what a Savior they _____ and what a Savior they have been _____.
2. The New Covenant is this: "I will write my laws on their hearts and their minds and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever." This is called a _____ covenant.
3. God is very particular in not using the specific word for _____ bread, but rather a general word so that _____ type qualifies.
4. The two great bonds are _____ and _____. Union is the _____ bond in the world for "_____ can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." Communion is the most _____ bond in the world, for any sin, any carelessness, any thoughtlessness, any offence against my brother can _____ that fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

Every Believer a Priest:

1. God wanted everyone to be a priest. That is why, in I Peter 2, there is no mention of _____ or of _____. Every brother, every sister is a priest.
2. All believers are to say "_____" to a prayer indicating that they have a part in that prayer, signing their name to the prayer, making it their own.
3. God hears the _____ of our _____, not the _____ of our _____.

DAY 4: WRITE & REMEMBER

1. Record three significant statements from this chapter. Why are they significant to you?

A) **Statement One:** _____

B) **Statement Two:** _____

C) **Statement Three:** _____

2. Memorize **Malachi 1:11**.

DAY 5: REFLECT & PRAY

Respond in prayer: Having looked carefully at the two and only ordinances of the Church, baptism and the Lord's Supper, reflect on your own life in the following ways:

Praise: _____

Repent: _____

Ask: _____

Yield: _____

PRAISE: What specific blessing have you discovered in this lesson? Thank the Lord for it! **REPENT:** Is there something in your life that is hindering you from experiencing what you have just learned? **ASK:** What specific way would you like the Lord to help you live out these truths? **YIELD:** Is there a particular area in your life that needs to come under the Lord's rule?