

## VI. THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

### A. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE ORDINANCE OF WATER BAPTISM WHICH CHRIST GAVE TO THE CHURCH?

1. Water baptism is an act of association and obedience of a believer to Christ.

- a. It is based upon the command which the Lord gave His disciples (Matt. 28:19,20).
- b. It is a visible expression of the results of the invisible baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:1-4; Col. 2:10-13, 20; 3:1).
- c. It is an act whereby a believer testifies of his decision for Christ and his desire to obey the Lord (Acts 2:41; 18:8).
- d. It is only for believers who have accepted Christ as Saviour, because only believers can outwardly express the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:41,44; 8:36,37; 16:31,33).

2. Water baptism has nothing to do with salvation and cleansing from sin.

- a. Salvation is by grace through faith alone (Eph. 2:8, 9; Rom. 3:24,25) and is a free gift (Rom. 5:15, 16, 17; 6:23).
- b. It is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin not baptismal water (Heb. 9:14,22; I Jn. 1:7; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Rev. 1:5).
- c. Notice baptism is used as a figure of those saved (I Pet. 3:20,21). This is a reference to those of Noah's day who were saved "through" not "by" water. The water didn't save Noah and his family it was the ark and it is the type of Christ.
- d. Notice in Acts 2:38 Peter is referring to both receiving Christ and its results (remission of sin) and also to obedience to Christ's command concerning baptism. That remission of sins is not predicated upon baptism is clear from Peter's second sermon (Acts 3:19).
- e. It is clear the repentant thief was not baptized and it is also clear that he was saved and went to heaven (Lk. 23:42,43).
- f. Paul's attitude toward the problem at Corinth regarding baptism shows that it is the gospel that saves not baptism (I Cor. 1:14-17; Rom. 1:16).

3. Water baptism can only be administered in one manner to properly portray the believer's association with Christ.

a. Only immersion is symbolic of the believer's participation in Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and the work which the Holy Spirit has done (Rom. 6:3,4).

b. Only immersion is described in the reference to baptism in the New Testament (Acts 8:38,39). Even prior to the church John baptized by immersion (Mark 1:5-10; Jn. 3:23).

c. Notice the word baptizo (baptize) means to dip or immerse whereas there are other words used to describe sprinkling or pouring in connection with other things (Heb. 9:13; 12:24; I Pet. 1:2). These other words are never used in connection with baptism of believers.

d. Notice the practice of sprinkling or pouring as other modes came out of false teachings which arose in the second century. It was propagated that a person had to be baptized to be saved because it was held that baptism washed away sins. This led to the baptism of infants and bed-fast individuals using other modes.

## **B. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE ORDINANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER WHICH CHRIST GAVE TO THE CHURCH?**

1. The Lord's supper is a memorial of Christ's sacrifice for believers.

a. It is based upon His command which He gave to His disciples as they ate the passover meal (Matt. 26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:14-20; I Cor. 11:23-25).

b. When it is eaten it is to be done in a way that believers can remember the Person and the price of their redemption (I Cor. 11:24,25; I Pet. 1:18,19).

c. The bread and the cup are symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood on behalf of the believer (I Cor. 11:24,25). There are two other views regarding this:

(1) Roman Catholics hold that by an act of consecration by the priest the bread and cup are changed into the actual body and blood of Christ which is then a new offering of Christ's sacrifice. This is known as transubstantiation and is contrary to the Scriptures (Heb. 1:3; 10:10-12).

(2) The Lutherans hold to the view known as consubstantiation. This holds that the bread and cup remain symbols but those who partake of it are consuming the body and blood of Jesus along with these elements.

d. Notice references to the cup do not refer to it as wine. It is called the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:29).

2. The Lord's supper is to be eaten in a prescribed manner.

a. Firstly there must be preparation of one's heart. This was ignored by many in the Corinthian church. As they enjoyed a love feast prior to the Lord's supper some were guilty of gluttony and drunkenness which brought chastening upon them for insulting the Lord in this manner (I Cor. 11:27:30).

b. Secondly the believer needs to examine himself regarding sin in his life (I Cor. 11:28).

c. Thirdly the believer is to judge himself and correct whatever he knows to be wrong by confessing it to the Lord (I Cor. 11:31; I Jn. 1:9). Notice failure to examine oneself and correct what is wrong will bring chastening (I Cor. 11:32).

d. Fourthly participation in the Lord's supper should be a worshipful experience (Acts 2:46,47). As the believer considers what the Lord has done for him this should result in a thankful heart and renewed commitment to live for the Lord (II Cor. 5:14,15; 8:9).

e. Lastly participation should only involve those who are saved, baptized, united with a local church, and in fellowship.

3. The Lord's supper is also a memorial of the believer's redemption.

a. As Israel was freed from Egyptian bondage by the blood of the Lamb which is typical of Christ they remembered that fact in the passover feast.

b. As believers partake of the Lord's supper they are remembering their redemption from bondage by the blood of the Lamb (I Cor. 5:7).

c. Participation at the Lord's supper is a personal testimony of those partaking that it was for them. For this reason unbelievers have no part because it is no testimony of things which involve them.