

Explanation of Redeemer Church's Approach to

THE LORD'S SUPPER

"Baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper in which the members of the Church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to remember together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination (Matt 26:26-29, 1 Cor 11:17-32)."

From Article XIV of Redeemer Church Statement of Faith.

Summary:

We believe the Lord's Supper is for baptized believers.

*(see our **Baptism** document for an explanation of our teaching about baptism)*

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Lord's Supper is the physical expression of a spiritual reality: our participation in the body and blood of Christ and the spiritual benefits that come with it (Matt 26:26-28, 1 Cor 10:16-17, Eph 1:3).

- Every time we celebrate the Lord's Supper together, we remember and proclaim Christ's death and all that He accomplished through it until He returns (1 Cor 11:25-26).
- The Lord's Supper displays our union with Christ.
- The Supper also reflects our unity with other believers in His body, the church (Eph 4:4-5).

The Lord's Supper is a two-part act, involving the church and the believers who are receiving the meal. The church communes with Christ and one another by eating the Supper together, and each believer is strengthened in his faith and renews his commitment to Christ and His people.

WHAT DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER LOOK BACK TO IN THE BIBLE'S STORY OF SALVATION?

God's redemption of Israel from Egypt, marked by the observance of the Passover (Exod 12, Lev 23:5-8):

When God's people were slaves in Egypt, He carried out several plagues against Egypt culminating with the death of their firstborn males. The people of Israel were spared this death—passed over—through the blood of a spotless lamb smeared on the doorposts of their homes. God commanded His people to celebrate the Passover annually to remember God's redemption through this blood sacrifice.

The Passover brought the Lord's past act of deliverance into the present in the life of God's people—the Lord's Supper does the same with the sacrifice of Christ.

WHAT DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER LOOK FORWARD TO IN THE BIBLE'S STORY OF SALVATION?

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Matt 26:29, Rev 19:6-9):

After Christ comes again, we will eat with Him at a meal beautifully depicted in Revelation 19:7,9: "Let us be glad, rejoice, and give Him glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has come ... Then he said to me, 'Write: Those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb are fortunate!'" Isaiah prophesied about this meal and its setting, saying that the Lord of Hosts would prepare a feast for His people in a place where there was no more death, tears, or disgrace (Isa 25:6-10).

When we take the Lord's Supper, we look forward with hope to this glorious day in the future.

WHEN DID JESUS COMMAND HIS FOLLOWERS TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper at one of the annual Passover observances just prior to His death (Matt 26:17-29). This timing seems intentional to show that the Lord's Supper was replacing the Passover in the life and practice of God's people.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TAKING THE LORD'S SUPPER AS A CHURCH?

The Holy Spirit uses the Lord's Supper to strengthen and encourage God's people, reminding us that all the promises of God find their yes and amen in Christ (2 Cor 1:20) and that we are partakers in those promises through faith in Him.

When we receive the Lord's Supper, the Spirit reminds us of the hope that we have in Christ and our unity together as believers. As we take the Supper together, the Spirit renews our mind, strengthens our resolve, and re-stokes the fire of our joy in the Gospel, as individuals and as a church body. Taking the Supper together reminds us that we live out our faith as part of a church family, not in isolation.

WHY IS BAPTISM A PREREQUISITE TO RECEIVING THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Because Baptism signifies entry into a relationship with Christ and initiation into the church, while the Lord's Supper is the ongoing expression of commitment to Christ and His church.

- Baptism is the *one-time* sign of a believer's *entry into* fellowship with Christ and His church.
- The Lord's Supper is the *ongoing* sign of the church's *renewal* of fellowship with Christ and each other.

HOW SHOULD I APPROACH THE LORD'S SUPPER WITH MY CHILDREN WHO HAVE NOT YET BEEN BAPTIZED?

We encourage you to teach your kids to wait to start taking the Lord's Supper until after they have been baptized. There are many significant moments in life that are worth waiting for and come at the appropriate time: marriage, graduation, driving a car, leaving the home. Waiting can create excitement and anticipation for when the time for participation is right.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are two such significant practices in the life of believers in the church. It is important to help your children understand everything these signs represent before they get baptized and begin receiving the Lord's Supper.

Repeatedly emphasize the following with your kids:

- Remind your children regularly that Christ alone saves and anyone can have a relationship with Him if they repent of their sin and trust in Him.
- Help them understand they are sinners by nature and by choice. Help them see their need for a Savior and point to Jesus as that Savior.
- Rejoice in the Good News of the Gospel, talk about it often, and model the life of a Christ follower before them.

Wisdom is needed in this area for you as parents and us as church leaders. When you believe the time is right for your child to consider baptism, we encourage you to set up a meeting with a pastor. You can do that by reaching out to Keziah Rynne: **Keziahr@redeemerrockford.church**



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