

## 5 Facts About Baptism (according to the Bible)

Welcome to our baptism and communion service – different

We don't normally have the opp to observe both on the same day together

Thought it would be special to do so

But I realize that these practices may generate more questions than answers for you

Especially if you're more familiar w/ church tradition than you are w/ what Bible says

So before we begin, I want to give you brief overview of each, starting first with baptism, and then later on in the service, communion

So I want to give you 5 Facts About Baptism (according to the Bible), starting with . . .

### 1. Baptism is an ordinance

Church word that means something prescribed/commanded

Something Jesus intended for every follower to do or observe, confirmed in practice by the early church; There are only 2 – baptism and communion

Jesus said go and make disciples, *baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and HS*

Early church did exactly that – *those who received his word were baptized* (Acts 2:41)

### 2. Baptism is a symbol

Of our new life in Christ – because he lives, so do we

Of our unity with Christ – that we are in Christ and he in us

Of our forgiveness of sin – no longer counted against us; or gripped by its guilt

Of our cleansing from sin – cleansing that occurs not from being dipped in water . . .

But through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on our behalf

Of which, baptism is a picture

Put all that together, and baptism is an outward expression of your inward salvation

An outward symbol of the inner transformation that took place when you gave your life to Jesus Christ

### 3. Baptism is a statement

That identifies you as a follower of Jesus – that Jesus is Lord of your life

In Acts 10, when Cornelius and his family/friends believed Peter's preaching of gospel . . .

*He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ* (Acts 10:48)

Meaning that their baptism was to identify them with Jesus Christ, once and for all

Baptism is a statement that you're inseparably identified with Jesus; Which means that . . .

### 4. Baptism is for believers

If baptism is a symbol of our unity with Christ, our forgiveness of sin, and our new life in him, then . . .

It's meaningful *only* for believers – otherwise you're saying something outwardly that's not true inwardly

That's the overwhelming teaching in Scripture – belief, then baptism

Doesn't mean that you were a bad person if you were sprinkled as an infant, or had your kids sprinkled

But understand that sprinkling infants is not in the Bible, and therefore has nothing to do with salvation or baptism

There *is* a word for *sprinkle* in Gr, but it's never used in the context of baptism

Sprinkling came later in the history of the church, initially as a concession when sufficient water was not available for immersion . . .

And then as a substitute for personal faith and trust in Jesus Christ

### 5. Baptism is for all believers

Jesus commanded it as part of making disciples

The apostles taught it; The early church practiced it; Jesus did it as our example

Baptism is so closely associated with salvation in the Bible, that some people often mistake it as a requirement/prerequisite for salvation, instead of a picture of it

It's not a requirement, but under normal circumstances, an "un-baptized believer" is a contradiction of terms

It was unthinkable for a follower of Jesus Christ to remain un-baptized – still is

- So we have the privilege of witnessing several baptisms today

Bottom line – each and every person you see is so gripped by their relationship w/ Jesus

Christ, that they are publicly/unashamedly aligning themselves w/ him in baptism

They're saying – "I'm forgiven, I'm saved, I'm his"

If you're sitting there thinking – "*I've* never been baptized as a believer"

"Jesus is Lord of my life, but I've never been baptized according to the Bible"

And your heart burns to do so; You can, today, right after the end of the service

As soon as I'm done talking, or anytime during the rest of this service . . .

If you want to be baptized . . .

Get up; Go to the back of the WC; Tell one of our deacons you'd like to be baptized

When you do, 3 things will happen:

1. They'll listen to your testimony
2. They'll make sure you understand what you're doing
3. They'll ask you to commit to working through the baptism packet

Don't have to worry about what to wear – shorts, T-shirts, and towels for you

It doesn't matter what you look like – we don't care, and God looks on the heart

- But if you haven't yet committed your life to Jesus Christ

If you haven't yet crossed over from death to life, you need to – that comes *first*

Comes by *believing* (in faith) – that Jesus died for your sins

By *repenting* of your sins – asking God for forgiveness, and turning from them

By *committing* to live for Jesus as Lord of your life – living for his glory and purposes

That comes first; And if that already describes your heart and life

And you want to be baptized – don't wait

Get up any time, and go talk to one of our staff or elders in the back

In the meantime, get ready to rejoice and be blessed

It's an awesome thing to see the fruit of changed lives

### At the Lord's Table . . .

Like baptism, the Lord's Table/Supper or Communion (meaning participation/fellowship),  
is the second ordinance of the church  
And like baptism, it's symbolic in nature  
Taking communion doesn't save you or ensure your salvation . . .  
Rather, it's symbolic *of* your salvation

Invite you to turn with me to 1 Cor 11:23-32

Briefly read and comment on these verses

Make sure we understand what we're doing and why

In v17-22, Paul just finished telling them that their current practice of the Lord's Supper  
is deplorable

He says in v22b – *Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not . . .*

23 – *For I received . . .*

The info I passed on to you was as good as it gets, and you should know better

Then he reviews what he's already told them

24 – *This is my body . . .*

This broken piece of bread represents the sacrifice of my body, for your sake

When you eat it, remember my death on your behalf

Remember my death in your place; my death for your sins

At the Lord's Table . . .

**We remember Christ's death on our behalf (v24)**

25 – *This cup is the new covenant in my blood . . .*

The contents of this cup represent the blood of Jesus that secured the promise of  
salvation (*the new covenant*) that is ours by faith

25b – *Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

**We reflect on the salvation his blood secured (v25)**

26 – *You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes*

As often as we do this (we're not told how often), we proclaim the Lord's death

**We proclaim the gospel by our act (v26)**

We tell the old, old story of the old rugged cross, not by our words, but by our actions

By our eating and drinking, we proclaim the good news that Jesus died for the sins of  
the world, including our own

That's why it doesn't make sense for an unbeliever to participate

Because you'd be proclaiming something you don't even believe

What's worse, you risk bringing judgment on yourself

27 – *unworthy manner*

In a way that your heart or life doesn't match the holiness of the act

You can't possibly eat/drink in a worthy manner if you're not right w/ God; You'd be . . .

27 – *profaning the body and blood of the Lord*

Treating something that is holy and sacred, as common

Showing disrespect and irreverence toward Christ's sacrifice on the cross

28 – *Let a person examine himself, then . . .*

Assess the state of his heart, and then partake

At the Lord's Table, we remember, reflect, proclaim, and . . .

**We examine our heart to honor him most (v28)**

Instead of cheapening the act with a sinful heart/life, believer or not . . .

We hold it in the highest reverence by examining ourselves, confessing our sin, and  
coming clean before the Lord

God doesn't expect you to come perfect, he expects you to come clean

He doesn't expect u to come perfect *to* the table, he expects u to come clean *at* the table

The alternative is judgment

That's why I so often say to those who don't yet believe . . .

Let the bread/cup pass, and consider the message declared by those who *do* believe . . .

Those who *are* right with God

Because the consequences otherwise, are grave

29 – *discerning the body*

The Corinthian believers were participating with sin in their heart, because they weren't

being sensitive to the needs of their brothers/sisters in the body of Christ

They were portraying a holiness on the outside that wasn't true on the inside

By doing so, they were defeating their purpose – instead of reaping God's blessing, they  
were heaping God's judgment/punishment on themselves

The same is true for our sin, whatever it is

If we participate in an unworthy manner, with sin in our heart, we risk God's judgment

30 – *many of you are weak or ill, and some have died*

This isn't some voodoo stuff where God is just waiting to poke us with the needles of  
sickness out of glee

Rather, he's so passionate about the glory and honor of his Son, that he will stop at  
nothing to preserve it

32 – *disciplined*

Even in God's passion for the glory of his Son, he shows us grace by disciplining us for  
the purpose of correction, instead of condemnation

But the key is examining your heart to honor him most

• If you've embraced Jesus as your Savior, if he is Lord of your life – this is for you

If however, u haven't embraced Jesus Christ as Savior of your soul and Lord of your life

Let the bread and cup pass so that you don't participate in an *unworthy manner*, and  
risk bringing judgment on yourself

Pray – stir our hearts and reveal sin

Impress on us the grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness of your death on the cross