

## **Baptism And The Lord's Supper**

**Good Afternoon. Today we come to two simple, ordinary acts that carry extraordinary power for the life of the believer: baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the Gospels we see baptism framed as the inauguration of Jesus' mission and the voice of the Father affirming, "This is my beloved Son." In the Great Commission Jesus sends us out to make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And in 1 Corinthians we are reminded that when we come to the table we remember Christ's body given and his blood poured out for us, and we are called to examine ourselves. Together, these practices mark our beginning in Christ and nourish our life in him.**

**Let me begin with a short story to help us feel what baptism can mean.**

### **A story: the adoption letter**

**Several years ago a small church in a river town baptized a woman named Miriam. She had arrived at the church like so many of us do—worn, unsure, carrying years of mistakes and the quiet shame that keeps you standing at the edge. On the day of her baptism the river was cold; the air was still. Children gathered on the bank, elders took their seats, and friends who had walked with Miriam for months formed a rough semicircle.**

**When the pastor lowered her into the water, it looked like nothing in the world had changed. But later, over coffee, one of the deacons told me what had happened inside the sanctuary: a woman who had always been an outsider suddenly had five people—strangers once, now family—come and clap their hands and shout with joy. The smile that would not come before now beamed from her face. One of the elders wrapped Miriam in a towel and, as a little joke, handed her a copy of the church directory saying, "We put your name in the front." It was a small thing, and yet it was the language of belonging.**

**That moment—of being publicly named, welcomed, wrapped in the warmth of a community—captures a deep blessing of baptism. Baptism says: you are forgiven, you belong, you are named as God's child. It marks the end of exile and the beginning of life in a family that will walk with you. It marks your identification with Christ in his death and resurrection and your commissioning to participate in his mission.**

### **A few blessings to keep in mind**

- Forgiveness and cleansing: baptism symbolizes God's gracious washing away of the past.**
- New identity and belonging: baptism says, "You are not alone; you are adopted into God's family."**
- Union with Christ: it pictures dying to the old life and rising to new life in him.**
- Public witness and mission: it is a declaration that you now belong to Jesus and will**

**live out his calling.**

**- Nourishment in the Supper: baptism begins the journey; the Lord's Supper feeds and sustains it, reminding us of the sacrifice that makes our forgiveness and unity possible.**

**As we read the Word together from Matthew and 1 Corinthians, listen for how baptism and the Lord's Supper work together—one initiates, the other sustains; one claims us, the other reminds and renews us. Both are gifts: signs and means of grace to shape our life with Christ and one another.**

### **Baptism**

**13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.**

**14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?"**

**15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all \*righteousness." Then he allowed Him.**

**16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.**

**17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Matthew 3:13-17**

**19 "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,**

**20 "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.<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Matthew 28:19-20**

**Briefly: Matthew 3:13–17 and Matthew 28:19–20 together show why Christians are baptized and what baptism means.**

#### **What happens in these passages**

**- Matthew 3:13–17 — Jesus comes to John to be baptized. John protests, but Jesus insists "to fulfill all righteousness." When Jesus is baptized the Spirit descends "like a dove" and a voice from heaven says, "This is my beloved Son." This**

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<sup>1</sup> Jack W. Hayford et al., eds., [\*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible\*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 3:13–17.

<sup>2</sup> Jack W. Hayford et al., eds., [\*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible\*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 28:19–20.

**scene:**

- **Models obedience: Jesus submits to baptism as part of God's righteous plan.**
- **Shows God's approval and the presence of the Spirit with the Son (a Trinitarian moment).**
- **Identifies Jesus with the human condition even though he is sinless.**
- **Matthew 28:19–20 — The risen Jesus commands the disciples to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them...” He promises his continuing presence. This shows baptism as:**
  - **A commanded practice for discipleship.**
  - **A Trinitarian, communal rite tied to teaching and mission.**
  - **The formal initiation into the life and mission of Jesus' followers.**

**What inspires us to be baptized**

- **Jesus' example and command: he both submitted to baptism and told his followers to baptize others.**
- **The visible presence and approval of God (Spirit and voice) in Matthew 3 inspires trust that baptism is part of God's saving work.**
- **The Great Commission links baptism with making disciples and living under Jesus' authority and teaching.**

**What baptism represents for you as a believer**

- **Public identification with Christ: a visible declaration that you belong to Jesus and his people.**
- **Union with Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (cf. Romans 6:3–4): symbolizing dying to sin and beginning new life in Christ.**
- **Entrance into the covenant community: adoption into God's family and membership in the church.**
- **Obedience to Christ: an outward act of an inward faith and repentance.**
- **The reality of the Triune God in your life: baptized “in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” points to God's presence and work.**
- **Commission and mission: baptism marks you as one sent to live and share the gospel, accompanied by Jesus' promise, “I am with you always.”**

**A couple of pastoral clarifications**

- **Baptism is commanded and deeply significant, but Christian traditions differ about how it relates to salvation (some stress it as a sign and seal of grace accompanying faith; others teach it is the means of grace). In any case, Matthew shows it as essential to discipleship.**
- **If you're considering baptism (or reflecting on what it meant when you were baptized), talk with a pastor or mature Christian about how your local church practices baptism and how to live out the commitments it represents.**

## **The Lord's Supper**

### **1 Corinthians 11:23-29**

**23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;**

**24 and when He had given \*thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

**25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the \*new \*covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

**26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**

### **Examine Yourself**

**27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

**28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.**

**29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks \*judgment to himself, not \*discerning the Lord's body.<sup>3</sup>**

**Brief answer: The Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist) is primarily a commanded, communal act of remembrance and proclamation. In 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 Paul hands on the Lord's words: the bread is Christ's body, the cup his blood—given for us in a new covenant. By "doing this" we remember Christ's sacrificial death, proclaim the gospel until he returns, and participate in the one body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11:27–29 then warns us to examine ourselves and not eat and drink "unworthily," because the meal has moral, spiritual, and communal consequences.**

**What the Lord's Supper represents (from 1 Cor. 11:23–26 and nearby passages)**

**- Remembrance (anamnesis): "Do this in remembrance of me." It recalls and keeps present Christ's death and what it accomplished (forgiveness, atonement, new covenant).**

**- Proclamation: "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." The meal is a public declaration of the gospel and of hope in Christ's return.**

**- Participation/union: The bread and cup signify our real participation in Christ's body and blood—Paul links the cup and the bread with participation in the body and blood (cf. 1 Cor. 10:16–17). Communion expresses and strengthens our union with Christ and one another.**

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<sup>3</sup> Jack W. Hayford et al., eds., [\*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible\*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 1 Co 11:23–29.

- **Covenant sign:** The cup is spoken of as the new covenant in his blood, recalling Old Testament covenant imagery and showing that Christ's death institutes the new relationship with God.
- **Moral/communal seriousness:** Paul's strong warnings (11:27–29) make clear this is not a casual ritual. It calls for self-examination, repentance, and unity—because how we come to the table affects the whole church.

#### **How the Scriptures motivate us to remember and shape our response**

- **Command and example:** Jesus' words and Paul's repetition ("I received from the Lord... I delivered to you") make the Supper an authoritative practice of the church—remembering is obedience.
- **Gospel-centered focus:** The act centers us on what Christ has done. Repeatedly proclaiming his death shapes our identity and keeps grace as the foundation of faith and life.
- **Call to holiness and reconciliation:** Paul's exhortation to "examine yourself" motivates confession, reconciliation with others, and a life consistent with the reality the Supper declares. If someone is living in unrepentant sin or division, they are urged to address that before coming to the table.
- **Community formation:** By sharing one bread and one cup we are reminded that we are one body; scripture's teaching motivates us to pursue unity, mutual care, and equality in the church.
- **Hope:** "Until he comes" connects remembrance with eschatological hope—communion reorients our lives toward Christ's return and the final fulfillment of God's promises.

#### **Practical implications for faith and practice**

- **Prepare:** follow Paul's command to self-examination—confess sin, seek reconciliation, and come with gratitude.
- **Center on the gospel:** use the Supper to rehearse forgiveness, grace, and the cost of discipleship.
- **Live outwardly:** let the Supper lead to service, sacrificial love, and witness—if the meal proclaims Christ, our lives should reflect him.
- **Guard unity:** resist divisions and selfish behavior that Paul critiqued in Corinth; the table is a corporate witness to oneness in Christ.
- **Remember the warning:** don't participate carelessly. If you are aware of serious, unrepented sin, take the process of repentance and restoration seriously before communing.
- **Affirm together** that the Supper proclaims the Lord's death and our hope in his return, and commit to live accordingly.

#### **Conclusion**

**As we come to the close of this time together, remember that Baptism and the Lord's**

**Supper are not merely rituals we observe; they are the living language of God's love that draws us into Christ's life, death, and resurrection.**

**In Baptism we are named and claimed — buried with Christ into death and raised with Him into newness of life. That waters mark the beginning of a life reoriented: we belong to Jesus. In the Lord's Supper we are continually fed and reminded — the bread and the cup speak of His body given and His blood poured out for us, sealing forgiveness and sustaining us on the way. One proclaims who we are in Christ; the other keeps us close to Him day by day.**

**Together they tell the same Gospel: we have been rescued by grace, joined to Jesus, and called to live as people transformed by that truth. Baptism sends us into a community of grace; the Table gathers us there, forgiving, strengthening, and renewing our hope. Both bind us to the story of Jesus so that his dying becomes our hope and his rising our power to love, serve, and forgive.**

**So go from here remembered, claimed, and nourished. Let the mark of Baptism shape your identity and the bread and cup shape your practice. Live as one who has died to sin and been raised to righteousness; eat and drink in humility and gratitude; love as you have been loved. And when doubts, weakness, or fear come, return to these signs — to the water that named you and the bread that feeds you — and be refreshed in the presence of Christ.**

**May the God who put His name on you in Baptism and who gives Himself to you at the Table keep you in fellowship with Jesus and with one another, now and always. Amen.6**