

FOUNDATIONS

Track One : Believer to Disciple

Lesson 09 : The Sacraments of The Church

This course is designed to teach us about the two sacraments or ordinances of the Church. By sacraments or ordinances of the Church we refer to the practices ordained by Christ to be permanently observed by the Church. Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two Sacraments ordained by Jesus Christ our Lord for the Church. These ordinances as practiced by the believer are also means by which the power of Christ's finished work on the Cross becomes real and effective in the believer's life. Learn how to receive the power of God into your life as you participate in the sacraments of the Church.



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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version.

1. The Sacraments of the Church

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2. Water Baptism

1. Introduced by John the baptist when announcing the Kingdom of heaven on earth, as a sign of repentance (Matthew 3:1-8)
2. Jesus was baptized - although He had nothing to repent from - as a way to demonstrate obedience to fulfill all righteousness (Matthew 3:13-16).
3. Baptism is a command in the New Testament (Matthew 28:19-20)
4. Baptism expresses your decision to follow Jesus Christ alone (Acts 2:38,39)
5. Baptism is a symbol of the inner experience of death, burial and resurrection with Jesus (Romans 6:4)
6. Baptism is an expression of your desire to maintain a clear conscience before God (1 Peter 3:21).
7. The only requirement to be baptized is "repent and believe" in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 8:36,37).
8. Baptism is by immersion in water only (Acts 8:36, 37).
9. You don't have to become very holy to be baptized.
10. Water baptism will not make you a spiritual giant. You still have to grow spiritually through the Word and prayer.
11. Because baptism is an act of obedience you can expect increased measure of blessing.
12. Because baptism is a symbolic proclamation of the Cross, you can expect the power of the cross to affect your life in breaking bondages, addictions, bringing deliverance, etc., during baptism.

In the book of Acts, we see each time people were baptized, they were baptized "in the name of Jesus". We understand that this mean "by the authority given to us by Jesus".

The formula we use : "In Jesus' Name (*meaning, by Christ's authority*), I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit"

If you have not been baptized in water according to the command in Scripture, we encourage to be baptized. Please look for the next scheduled Water Baptism Service and please register.

3. The Lord's Table

Matthew 26:18-30 1 Corinthians 11:20-34 1 Corinthians 10:16-21

The Lord's table was instituted by the Lord Jesus Himself.

The Lord's table is open to all who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Celebrating the Lord's Table is :

1. An expression of our personal faith in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord.
2. A proclamation of the completed work of Christ on the cross. Every proclamation is powerful in the spiritual realm and hence we can expect to receive the power of the Cross invading our lives as we partake in the Lord's table.
3. An expression of our faith in His return.
4. An expression of our union with Jesus (we are declaring our "communion" with the body and blood of Jesus - with Christ Himself. 1 Corinthians 10:16)
5. An expression of our union with one another (1 Corinthians 10:17)

We must prepare our hearts by :

- Examining our lives and renouncing known sin
- Taking the elements understanding and believing in what they represent - the death and shed blood of Christ on the cross

In celebrating the Lord's table, we can expect the full blessings of the Cross: salvation, healing, deliverance, wholeness, etc., to be released in to our lives.

3.1. Partaking In A Worthy Manner

One of the issues Paul is addressing is the behavior of people at the Corinthian church. There were two ways in which they were violating the Lord's table:

1, they were partaking of the Lord's table (as an act of worship) and then also partaking of foods offered to idols as an act of worship toward the idol which Paul calls idolatry (1 Corinthians 10:14-33). The real problem was not with the food - but with the reverence that was being given to the idol in so eating something sacrificed to the idol, which also became a stumbling block to other new believers.

2, they had turned the Lord's table into some sort of feast (1 Corinthians 11:20-22) and hence the admonition to discern the body and partake in a worthy manner. If we do so in a worthy manner - we receive the full blessings of the Cross in our lives - which included healing. If we do it without really understanding or paying attention to the significance of what we are doing, we miss receiving the blessings of the Cross - and one of the consequences is we miss out on the provision of healing for our bodies, and hence "... That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died..."

3.2. Only Requirement

There is no explicit instruction in Scripture that you must be water baptized before taking part in the Lord's table. Therefore at All Peoples Church, we keep participation in the Lord's table open to all born-again believers.

There is no explicit age restriction in Scripture on when a person should be baptized in water or when a person can start participating in the Lord's table. The only requirement is that a person has been born again (has become a believer) through personal faith in Jesus Christ. Hence we take this approach in welcoming people to be baptized or partake in the Lord's table.

4. Application

1, If I have not been baptized in water, now that I have understood the meaning and significance of water baptism, I must obey the Lord's command.

2, Whenever I partake of the Lord's table, I must do it with meaning and understanding. I must expect to receive by faith.

5. Reflection

1, What is it that makes the practice of water baptism and the Lord's table real and meaningful?

2, Is faith and Scriptural understanding in the heart of the person administering the Sacraments important, just as there must be faith and Scriptural understanding in the heart of those receiving the Sacraments.

6. Some Common Questions

1, If I was "baptized" before - either "sprinkled" or I just went through "immersion" without having been born again, is it necessary, alright for me to be baptized "again"?

Now that you are a believer, Yes, it is alright to be baptized again and do it as an expression of your faith in Jesus Christ. We have such an instance in Acts 19:1-6, when Paul encountered some disciples who had been baptized by John the baptist. He updated them about Jesus Christ, and after they believed, they were baptized in water in the name of Jesus Christ.

2, Do I need to reach some spiritual level or spiritual maturity before being water baptized?

No. The only requirement we see is that one is born again, becomes a believer in Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts most of them were baptized in water as soon as they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

3, Can one believer baptize another believer in water or should water baptism be conducted only by a Pastor or some spiritual leader?

In the book of Acts, we see Philip who was a deacon at the church in Jerusalem baptizing new believers. We also see Ananias who was a believer sent to baptize Saul (who later became Paul). So yes, any believer can baptize another believer in water.

4, What if I took part in the Lord's table in an "unworthy manner" not really understanding or having faith in what I was doing - will I be struck down with some deadly disease?

No. Just recognize that you took this lightly. Tell the Lord you are sorry, (i.e. repent of doing this in an unworthy manner) and going forward, do this the right way.

5, Should I take part in the Lord's table when the person leading the celebration himself does not believe in what he is doing?

There is no value in taking part in the Lord's table if the person leading the celebration does not believe in what is being done.

6, Can I as a believer take part in the Lord's table at home?

Sure. As long as you are doing it as unto the Lord, in remembrance of Him, one or more believers can celebrate the Lord's table at home or anywhere else.