

transform
discipleship mentoring

Obeying Christ...Making Disciples

“Go therefore and make disciples..”

Matthew 28:19

LEVEL ONE

ESTABLISH

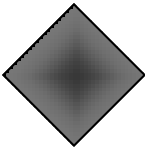
Transformed Relationship



4a

A Discipleship Ministry Resource Provided by
Faith Assembly of God

254 Spackenkill Rd., Poughkeepsie NY
(845) 462- 0662



Understanding Water Baptism

Establishing Transformed Relationships

INTRODUCTION on Water Baptism

Water baptism is one of two God-given ordinances of the church. Importance of baptism is made very clear in the Bible. Our Lord's commission to teach all nations and preach the gospel to every creature includes "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (read **Matthew 28:19**), and promises "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (read **Mark 16:16**)

Baptism is a **PUBLIC DECLARATION** of faith in Christ by the believer before man. It is an **OUTWARD** expression and testimony of an **INWARD** work of God's marvelous grace. It is a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Not only does Water Baptism show the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, it also shows our **IDENTIFICATION** with Christ.

Baptism is our full declaration of our own death in Christ. (read **2 Corinthians 5:14**)

We are : 1. Dead to sin 2. Dead to self 3. Dead to the old life

It is also our declaration of being raised with Christ, after burying the old life, and to walk in newness of life with Him.

Why do we have to be baptized?

- a. It is a command of Jesus..... **Matthew 28:19**
- b. It is an outward confession of what has happened within. It expresses our identification with Jesus..... **Romans 6:1-11**
- c. Jesus himself was baptized..... **Matthew 3:13-17**
- d. It is a kind of circumcision, a "cutting off" of the old life..... **Colossians 2:11:12**
- e. Water baptism symbolizes washing and cleansing **Acts 22:16**
- f. This is only a symbol because we are cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus and by the Word of God..... **Revelations 1:5, John 15:3**

When we are water baptized, we are testifying publicly:

To the church - (that we are part of it)

To the world - (that we are finished with it)

To the devil - (that we are finished with him and we have changed to God's side)

Water baptism is a public testimony that we are new creatures in Christ Jesus (read **2 Corinthians 5:17**), that we are dead to the world, the flesh and the devil, and that we have found new direction in life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. **AMEN!!!!**

The FORM of Baptism - part one

The form (method) of Water Baptism is very clear from the New Testament Scriptures.

Read the following scriptures and answer the following questions.

1. Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were coming and being baptized. - **John 3:23**

Q. What must there be *plenty of* in order for one to be baptized?
A. _____

2. And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. - **Acts 8:38**

Q. Where should people position themselves *in* order for one to be baptized?
A. _____

3. We were therefore *buried* with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was *raised* from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. - **Romans 6:4**..... "Having been *buried* with him in baptism, in which you were also *raised* with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. - **Colossians 2:12**

Q. When a person is baptized, are they sprinkled with water, or are they buried under the water?
A. _____

4. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a *resurrection* like his.

Q. After a person is buried under water and baptized, do they resurrect up from the water or stay under water?
A. _____

The FORM of Baptism - part two

The **FORM** of Baptism is best explained this way:

Into the water.....**DEATH**

As we go down into the water, we are saying that just as Christ died for our sin on the cross, so we have died to the sin in our lives. There has been a complete turning from the past life of sin and death.

Read Romans 6: 11 and answer the following questions.

Can you define the word “reckon” ?

A. _____

What are we to reckon ourselves to?

A. _____

Under the water.....**BURIAL**

A dead person must be buried. Just as Jesus Christ was buried in a tomb, when we are lowered beneath the water (under) our lives as sinners are regarded as put out of sight. The Apostle Paul speaks of being “buried with Him through baptism” (Romans 6:4). Our baptism then becomes a kind of funeral, and the water a grave, by which a declaration is made to all that the sinner has been committed to death. Death followed by burial, now prevents our returning to our former way of life.

UP/OUT of the water.....**RESURRECTION**

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. - **Romans 6:4-5**

Just as Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the power of God, we are lifted from the water to live a new life , the life of Christ Himself. (read Galatians 2:20)

The life we live as Christians must express these two truths:
We are **dead** to sin and **alive** to God!

How CHRISTIANS should be Baptized

Because of confusion and controversy among Christians about baptism, we need to be clear as to what the Bible teaches. The question is not, "What does church tradition say?" but "What does the scripture say?"

Christians should be baptized by total immersion in water.

The word *baptize* comes from the Greek word *baptizo*, meaning "to bury." To fulfill the true sense of the word, we must be completely buried or immersed in water.

Christians should be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The scripture is our guide and it is crystal clear.....Matthew 28:19

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." - Matthew 28:19

People should be baptized as believers. Adult believers, or older Children and teen believers, not as babies.

According to the scriptures, we must be saved before we can be baptized. Therefore no baby on earth can meet the qualifying requirements for baptism (Acts 8:6-37). There is not one reference in the scripture that makes a reference about babies or infants being baptized. Jesus blessed the little children but did not baptize them.

Read the following scripture and list the person (s) who got baptized:

Acts 2:41 _____

Acts 8:12 _____

Acts 8:38 _____

Acts 9:18 _____

Acts 10:24, 48 _____

Acts 16:15 _____

Acts 16:33 _____

Acts 18:8 _____

"Infant baptism" and **"Christening"** is based upon tradition and not revelation.

Our authority is the Bible/Scriptures. If we accept infant baptism, we go outside the authority of the Word and accept the opinions of man.



Review Questions - Lesson 4a

1. Why must a person be baptized? p.26

2. What is a person who is being baptized publically declaring ? p.26

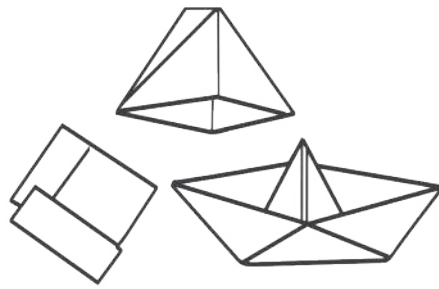
3. What is the significant symbolism of going "under water" when a person is being baptized? p.28

4. What is the significant symbolism of coming "up/out of the water" when a person is being baptized? p.28

5. Who should be baptized? p.29

6. What are we testifying to "the world" when we get baptized? p.26

Remember:
We are **dead** to sin and **alive** to God!



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Understanding Communion

Establishing Transformed Relationships

INTRODUCTION on HOLY COMMUNION

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Lord's Supper is a reminder of what Jesus did in the past, a symbol of our present relationship with him and a promise of what he will do in the future. Let's examine these three aspects.

1. THE BREAD AND WINE ARE MEMORIALS OF JESUS' DEATH ON THE CROSS

(please read Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:26)

In the Lord's Supper, we each eat a piece of bread in remembrance of Jesus. When we drink the "fruit of the vine," we remember that Jesus' blood was shed for us, and that it signifies the new covenant.

The Lord's Supper **LOOKS BACK** to the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Jesus' death shows how much God loves us — so much that he sent his Son to die for us, so that our sins may be forgiven and we may live forever with him. This is good news! Although we may be saddened by the enormous price that had to be paid for us, we are happy that it was indeed paid.

When we remember Jesus' death, we also remember that Jesus was dead for only three days. We rejoice that Jesus has **conquered** death, and has set free all who were enslaved by a fear of death (read Hebrews 2:14-15). Our mourning has turned to joy (read John 16:20).

Christians look back to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the *defining moment* in our history. * This is how we escape death and the slavery of sin, and this is how we are freed to serve the Lord. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of this defining moment in our history.

2. THE LORD'S SUPPER ALSO PICTURES OUR PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST

The crucifixion has a continuing significance to all who have taken up a cross (obey the Lord's Will) to follow Jesus. We continue to participate in his death (Rom. 6:4; Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:20) because we participate in his *life* (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:13; 3:1).

Paul wrote, "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). With the Lord's Supper, we show that we **share** in Jesus Christ. We participate with him, commune with him, and become united in him.

The Lord's Supper helps us **LOOK UPWARD**, to Christ.



Lesson 4b

Understanding Communion

Establishing Transformed Relationships

INTRODUCTION on HOLY COMMUNION

In John 6, Jesus used bread and wine to graphically illustrate our need to be spiritually nourished by him: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.... Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" (verses 53-56). The Lord's Supper reminds us that real life is found only in Jesus Christ, with him living in us.

When we are aware that Jesus lives in us, we also pause to think what kind of home we are giving him. We allow him to change our lives so that we *desire* to live the way he wants us to. Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:28).

The Lord's Supper helps us LOOK INWARD, to examine ourselves because of the great meaning in this ceremony.

As we examine ourselves, we need to **LOOK AROUND**, to other people, to see whether we are treating one another in the way that Jesus commanded. If *you* are united with Christ (and *I* am united with Christ), then we are united to each other, too.

The Lord's Supper, by picturing our participation in Christ, also pictures our participation (other translations may say communion or sharing or fellowship) with each other (1 John 1:3, 7).

Paul wrote in 1 Cor. 10:17, "Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are *one body*, for we all partake of the one loaf." The Lord's Supper pictures the fact that we are one body in Christ, one with each other, with responsibilities toward one another.

3. THE LORD'S SUPPER ALSO REMINDS US OF THE FUTURE, OF JESUS' RETURN

Jesus said he would not drink the fruit of the vine again until he came in the fullness of the kingdom (Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:18; Mark 14:25). Whenever we participate, we are reminded of Jesus' promise. Paul wrote that "For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death *until he comes*" (1 Cor. 11:26).

The Lord's Supper helps us LOOK FORWARD.

The Lord's Supper is rich in meaning. That is why it has been an important part of the Christian tradition/practice throughout the centuries. At times for some, it has become nothing more than a lifeless ritual, done more out of habit than with meaning. Let it be rich and meaningful the next time you observe communion.

What is our position on transubstantiation?

Do we teach that the bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Jesus Christ?

Jesus said, "This is my body."

Some churches take this statement *literally*. However, other churches take this statement to be *symbolic*. In either case, Jesus did mean what he said. In some way, the bread and wine communicates the grace of Jesus to us. However, it is quite possible that what Jesus said, and what he meant, was something *symbolic* or *metaphorical*. Jesus often used figurative language. For example, when Jesus said, I am the bread that came down from heaven, he did not mean that he was literally bread. He meant what he said, yet he meant it *figuratively*.

At the Last Supper, when Jesus actually said the words, he was right in front of the disciples, holding the bread, telling his disciples, this is my body. The disciples could see his body. They could see the bread. They could tell that there was a difference. In the original setting, the disciples would have understood Jesus' words in some *figurative* way.

Jesus also said that the *cup* was the new covenant in his blood. That's figurative language. He was not concerned about the actual cup. He used the word "cup" to refer to the wine inside the cup. It was a figure of speech. And the wine itself wasn't the new covenant, either. Jesus was speaking *figuratively*. He did not say that the wine was his blood.

The pattern is consistent: Jesus was speaking *figuratively*. The bread *symbolized* the body of Jesus. However, this does not mean that the bread is "only" a symbol — as if symbols are not important. Symbols *are* important. The bread represents the body of Jesus, and that's an extremely important representation. Moreover, Jesus is present in the ceremony in some spiritual way. By partaking of the bread and wine, we participate in our Lord (read 1 Corinthians 10:16).

I encourage you the next time you take communion to remember two things - First, **the bread** which He broke in half *represents* His body which was broken on the cross for us, in our place. Secondly, **the cup** *represents* the blood He shed on our behalf, sealing a covenant (of grace) between Him and us. Each time we take communion, we are not only remembering what He did for us, but we are "showing" it as well to all who watch and all who participate. This is a beautiful and graphic picture of what happened at the cross, what it means, and how it impacts our lives as believers.

How often should believers take communion?

The Bible nowhere instructs us how often we should take communion.

1 Corinthians 11:24-26 records the following instructions for communion:

“...the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; And giving thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me.’ In the same way He took the cup also, after supping, saying, ‘This cup is the New Covenant in My blood; as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of Me.’ For ‘as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show’ the Lord’s death until He shall come.”

This passage of God’s word, the Bible, clearly lays out what we need to know about the ordinance of communion and to understand the significance of what we are doing.

Again, as stated earlier in this weeks lesson, the bread which He broke in half represents His body which was broken on the cross for us. The cup represents the blood He shed on our behalf, sealing a covenant between Him and us. Each time we perform the communion ritual, we are not only remembering what He did for us, but we are “showing” it as well to all who watch and all who participate. This is a beautiful and graphic picture of what happened at the cross, what it means, and how it impacts our lives as believers.

It would seem, then, that since we take the Lord’s Supper to remember Christ’s death and shed blood, we should take it as often as we like. Some churches like ours have a monthly Lord’s Supper service (1st Sunday of the month and one of the Wednesday nights)), others do it bi-monthly, and others weekly. Since the Bible does not give us specific instruction as to frequency, there is some latitude in how often a church should observe the Lord’s Supper. It should be often enough to renew our focus on Christ, without being so often that it becomes a lifeless routine. In any event, it’s not the frequency that matters, but the heart attitude of those who participate. We should partake with reverence, love, and a deep sense of gratitude for the Lord Jesus, who was willing to die on the cross to take upon Himself our sins.



Lesson 4b

Understanding Communion

ESTABLISH

Transformed Relationships

What does it mean to take communion in an unworthy manner?

This important question is derived from the text in 1 Corinthians.

Let's take a look!

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly." - 1 Corinthians 11:26-29

There is much discussion about what it means to take the bread and cup "in an unworthy manner."

Here are some different views:

1. It could be that those taking the communion elements needed to be fully aware that they represent the sacrifice of Christ by which we are redeemed from sin. Therefore, to participate in communion while not understanding this would be to take it in an unworthy manner.
2. Another possibility is that taking the supper with willful unconfessed sin would be in an unworthy manner.
3. The earlier context of **1 Corinthians 11** seems to suggest that taking communion in an unworthy manner means to do so while you have a problem with another Christian with whom you are not reconciled.
4. Another view is that some Corinthians were using the communion supper as an opportunity for self-indulgence, which is why Paul mentioned about how some got drunk in verse **21**.
5. The fifth view is that *both* elements (bread *and* wine) must be taken, not just one (bread *or* wine) since Christ commanded that both be taken. This would, incidentally, invalidate the Roman Catholic practice of taking the wafer only.

The context of the verses seems to begin around verse **16** of **1 Corinthians 11**. Paul mentions people who are contentious and that there were divisions among them (**v. 18**). He also mentions people getting drunk in **v. 21**. Paul then says in verse **22**, "Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you."

It is after this that Paul speaks more directly about communion and how it represents the Body and Blood of Christ. In verse **26** he says, "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." Paul relates the communion to the sacrifice of Christ and then says to examine one's self in verse 28. **It seems most probable that Paul is telling people to examine their motives, make sure there is no dissension with other believers, to take the supper solemnly, and that they were to rightly understand that it represents the sacrifice of Christ.**

Finally, many Christians do not feel worthy of taking communion because of their sin. But the Christian should realize that communion is for sinners, for Christians who are sinners. It is not that communion makes sinning okay. By God's grace and indwelling Holy Spirit, the Christian should always war against his sin, but Christians should **NOT** withhold themselves from the table if they are trying to repent of their sins and are struggling to gain victory but have not yet attained it. It is the struggle against sin that is an admission that we must *depend* upon Christ and his marvelous grace. In our struggle, we judge sin to be sin and war against it. It is precisely this struggle that is a vindication of our position with Christ and a manifestation of our need for communion as an act of dependence upon His work and grace.

Review Questions - Lesson 4b

1. What did Jesus' death conquer and how did it benefit us? p.31

2. What does the Lord's Supper help us look back to? p.31

3. Whenever we take communion, what promise are we reminded of according to 1 Corinthians 11:26? p.32

4. What was Jesus referring to when He said "this is my body?" p.33

5. Explain in one word what is meant by "New Covenant." p.33

6. How often should a person or a church observe communion? p.34

7. Is it OK to participate in communion if you don't know what it means and why? p.35

8. What should you do when it comes to communion and you are struggling with a sin that you just can't get the victory? p.35

Remember: We are **dead** to sin and **alive** to God!