

THE CHURCH AND HER ORDINANCES  
COLOSSIANS 2:8-14

Introduction:

1. During the Old Testament period of Jewish history, the Jews found themselves bound by the strictness of God's laws or ordinances.
2. Paul wants the saints of Colosse to understand that when Jesus was crucified, the law was done away and the age of grace was instituted.
3. When we speak of the ordinances of the church, we are referring to those declared statutes prescribed by Jesus to His church, which were to be kept and observed until He declares them to be invalid.
4. We might also use the term "sacraments" to describe these "badges of the Christian faith."
  - A. "Sacrament" is derived from the Latin, sacramentum, which was a military term denoting the oath by which a Roman soldier bound himself to be faithful to his commander.
5. In order to meet the criteria for being a church ordinance we must:
  - A. Find where Jesus commanded such a practice to be observed by His church, and;
  - B. Find such commands being practiced by His church.
6. Understanding this, we find only two such ordinances - Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

I. THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

- A. The word "baptize" is transliterated from the Greek baptizo which means, "to dip, immerse, to plunge under." Never was there a meaning of pouring or sprinkling water upon a person. **cf. Romans 6:4** *Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*
- B. The first baptizing we find in the Bible is that being done by John the Baptist. **John 3:1-8\*\*\***
  1. This was referred to as the "baptism of repentance and confession."
  2. Notice that John would not baptize anyone unless they first showed evidence of a changed life. **v. 8**
  3. John baptized many of those who composed the first church. **John 1:28** These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing., **35-37** *Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.*
- C. The authority to continue to baptize was transferred from John the Baptist to Jesus' church at a very early time. **John 4:1-3** *Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.*
  1. The first church continued to grow, yet like every church since, she has had her ups and downs, her gain of membership and loss of membership. **cf. John 6:66** *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.*
- D. We find the command and authorization by Jesus to His church to continue to baptize given after His resurrection and before the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church on the day of Pentecost. **Matthew 28:18-20** *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 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, 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."*
- E. Baptism, to be valid, must have authorization behind it.

F. Baptism is an identification with Christ, on the part of one who has been born again, showing that the believer has left the old life behind and is now walking in a new quality of life - that of a Christian. **Galatians 3:27** *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*; **Colossians 2:12** *...buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

G. This same baptism, practiced by the early churches, continues to be practiced by the Lord's churches today. **Acts 2:41** *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.*; **10:47-48** *"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.*

## II. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

A. The institution of the Lord's Supper was given by Jesus to His church the night before His crucifixion. **Matthew 26:26-29** *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."*

B. Again, authority was given to the church to continue such an ordinance.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26**\*\*\*

C. The Lord's Supper is a restricted supper, that is, those who partake of it must meet certain qualifications.

1. They must be saved, baptized, and in the church. **1 Corinthians 11:18, 26, 33**\*\*\*

2. They must be under the discipline of the church. **1 Corinthians 5:11**\*\*\*

3. It is easy to see that those who are not members of the congregation that is partaking of the Lord's Supper cannot meet these qualifications.

4. Remember, this is a church ordinance, not an individual one.

D. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of the crucifixion of Jesus upon the cross of Calvary, which crucifixion allows us to become the recipients of eternal life through repentance and faith in Jesus. **1 Corinthians 10:16 ; 11:24-26**\*\*\*

E. It is to be taken with the right motive. **1 Corinthians 11:27-29**\*\*\*

### Conclusion:

1. Some churches have included foot washing as a church ordinance, but this was never commanded by Jesus, practiced in early churches, nor hinted to in the church epistles. **cf. John 13:14-15** *If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.*
2. Remember that both baptism and the Lord's Supper are IN the church. One should never be baptized without becoming a church member, nor should one who is not a church member be allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper.
3. We do not mean to offend those who do not believe as we do, but we must stand true to God's Word, as we will appear before Him to give an account of ourselves. **Romans 14:12** *So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.*