

COMMUNION AND BAPTISM

SELF STUDY QUESTIONS

What have I gained personally through Jesus' baptism and His model of the practice of communion?
Do I understand the depth of what takes place when I participate in baptism and communion?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How does taking communion as a group change the dynamic of the practice?
Since baptism is an outward confession of an inward change, how can it impact a community of people?

MAIN NOTES

What Is Baptism?

Baptism is different from salvation. It's Greek meaning is "submerge".

It's a significant event to our identity. Immediately after Jesus' baptism, His identity was confirmed by God.

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13-17

Why Do We Baptize?

The natural component of baptism has us physically submerge in water. As we confess that Jesus is our Lord and submerge, this publicly signifies that we belong to God.

There is a spiritual component to baptism that signifies a burial of who we used to be and creates a barrier between that old way of life and the new life that we now live.

We are identifying with Jesus' own death, burial, and resurrection.

Communion

Jesus led his disciples through this practice during the Jewish holiday of Passover. It is a celebration remembering what Jesus accomplished, and means "fellowship", "mutual participation", or "sharing intimate thoughts".

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave

it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'" Matthew 26:26-28

It is a permanent symbolic covering by Jesus of the past and what once was, and a continual reminder of God's promise to be in relationship with us.

How Do We Participate?

Bread and juice represent Jesus' body and blood so that when we eat and drink it, we can remember the sacrifice that Jesus made.

You can participate as often as you eat and drink by simply remembering Jesus' sacrifice as you eat and drink. Make it a continual and purposeful lifestyle.

The communion service, the specific bread, or the wine are not what makes communion special. Remembering Jesus' sacrifice as we eat them is what lets us take part in communion.

DAILY LIVING

Jesus has called every one of us to be baptized as He was. He also said we can take communion as often as we eat or drink in order to remember His sacrifice and to have this fellowship with Him be a regular thing. It's pretty clear that the Lord wants to be a regular and consistent part of our lives. It's easy to let our focus shift to the business and worries of life, forgetting that we were designed to have regular intimate communication with our Heavenly Father based on the newness of life that comes from baptism and the regular fellowship of communion. We were all designed to live from this life giving model that Jesus lived by, and to receive every single one of its rewards.

PERSONAL NOTES

PRAYER POINT

Take a moment to go through the Self Study or Group Discussion questions again. Ask God to point out a key truth that He wants you to focus on. Is the Lord calling you to engage on a deeper level with these two practices? Ask Him to show you how He wants you to take your next steps.