
OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 1: Introduction, History, & Overview

THE WORDS (OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES)

1. OBSERVING

Some definitions that Merriam Webster gives for “observe” are:

- a. to **inspect**; to watch carefully especially with attention to details
- b. to conform one’s action or practice to; to **celebrate** in a customary or accepted way

2. THE

Southern Baptist doctrine teaches that there are **two** (a defined number) ordinances. I didn’t title this series, “Observing some ordinances,” or “Observing those ordinances,” or “Observing most of the ordinances”. Baptists believe that Jesus ordained (theological term meaning to set aside for a special purpose) two activities that are to be repeated. We believe that there are two and they are baptism and communion.

3. ORDINANCES

Some definitions that Merriam Webster gives for “ordinance” are:

- a. something **ordained** or decreed by fate or a deity
- b. a prescribed usage, **practice**, or ceremony

Ordinance or Sacrament?

Ordinance: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony. *Theological key: outward expression of **faith***

Sacrament: a Christian rite that is a means of divine grace. *Theological key: impartation of God’s **grace***

THE WHAT (WHAT DID IT LOOK LIKE IN THE FIRST CENTURY?)

The only hard-and-fast accounts (Gospels) of first century ordinances occur in the Bible itself. There are a multitude of other Gospels, but they have been found to be untrustworthy (Gospel of Judas, Gospel of Barnabas, Gospel of Peter, etc.—misunderstandings of these and others are where we get sensational stories like *The Da Vinci Code*, etc.), so we have to depend on the Bible and what the Bible says about these things. It’s not for another 100 years or so do we have what historians that we would consider to be somewhat trustworthy (Justin Martyr, Shepherd of Hermas, etc.) giving accounts of how things worked in the early church (and we’ll cover some of those in later lessons).

1. BAPTISM

So, let's look at baptism by asking questions . . . What is baptism? Who baptized in the NT? Who didn't baptize in the NT?

Let's answer each.

- a. **What is baptism?** Our English word baptism is a **transliteration** of the Greek words, *bapto* and *baptizo*.

Bible Study Magazine, James Montgomery Boice, May 1989: The clearest example that shows the meaning of *baptizo* is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be 'dipped' (*bapto*) into boiling water and then 'baptized' (*baptizo*) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. e.g. Mark 16:16. 'He that believes and is baptized shall be saved'. Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!

For our purposes, it's sufficient to say that both words clearly imply immersing or dipping under. When a person would dye fabric, they would baptize the material in the dye. When a ship would sink, it was said to be baptized. Look at **Matthew 3:16-17** for an example of this in Jesus' baptism: **When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water.** This is obviously an example of someone who went under water and came up out of the water.

- b. **Who baptized?** The easiest answer is . . . John the **Baptist**. He baptized Jesus (big day for John—he got to experience the entire trinity at one time—look at **Matthew 3:16-17: 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. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**—first man to see the entire trinity at one time).

Who else did John baptize? **Matthew 3:6** & **Mark 1:5** (those that listened to his preaching and had confessed their sins); **Matthew 28:19-20** (those that had been made disciples); **John 1:26** (John baptized with water);

Who else baptized? The disciples in **Acts 2:41** (implies that 3,000 people were baptized which is more than just the preacher could have handled in one day); both men and women were baptized in **Acts 8:12**; **Philip** baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch in **Acts 8:35-39**; Ananias baptized Saul in **Acts 9:17-18**; and so many more in Acts (Lydia, the jailer, Crispus, etc.

Anyone else? Jesus in **John 3:22**? Or did He not in **John 4:1-2**? **Adam Clarke: What they [Jesus' disciples] did, by his authority and command, is attributed to himself. It is a common custom, in all countries and in all languages, to attribute the operations of**

those who are under the government and direction of another to him by whom they are directed and governed.

- c. **Who didn't baptize?** I couldn't find evidence that any believer was prohibited from baptizing. Only men are mentioned as having baptized, but I don't see an exclusionary note in Scripture.

2. COMMUNION

Communion, or the Eucharist as referred to by other denominations, or the Lord's Supper, is a several thousand year old practice that Jesus used to illustrate a theological concept. He hijacked the Passover meal and gave it added meaning and significance. The Passover occurred at the Exodus when the angel passed over all the houses in Egypt and spared those that had the blood on the doorposts and lintel. The Passover meal commemorates the memory of that salvation of the nation of Israel.

Jesus and His disciples were celebrating that **Passover** meal when Jesus decided to add to the significance of that event. The passages about Jesus instituting this are [Matthew 26:17-30](#), [Mark 14:12-26](#), [Luke 22:7-20](#), and [1 Corinthians 11:17-32](#).

In prior series, we've looked at that event, the Passover meal, and the symbolism that is there. Jesus then takes the unleavened bread and makes it about His **body** that will be broken. Now, this bread that He has in His hands would have been very thin because it had no leaven (the agent in bread that causes it to rise). It also would have had stripes on it where it would have been laid across the fire on a rack. It also would have had holes in it so that the heat from the fire wouldn't burn any sections (much like crackers today). Think about the symbolism there—the thinness of the bread (symbolizing Jesus' lack of sin), the stripes on the bread—symbolizing the stripes that He would bear for us, the holes in the bread—symbolizing how He was pierced for us.

And He breaks the bread to give them a picture of how the breaking of His body will occur. It's interesting to note that the bread that they ate that night filled their physical stomachs and the bread of Life (Jesus) can fill our spiritual stomachs. The parallels go on almost forever if you think about them.

Also, during that Passover meal (called the Seder), there are four cups of wine that are drunk. They represent the four "I will" statements in [Exodus 6:6-7](#), where God says: "**I will bring you out**," "**I will rescue you**," "**I will redeem you**," and "**I will take you**." Jesus lifts (I believe) the third cup (the cup of redemption) and makes it about His **blood** when He says, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me**." Jesus is saying that the New covenant will be established with His own blood—not the blood of bulls or goats (as so often is the case in under the Old Covenant—the Old Testament), but the blood of One Who is worthy to be the once-for-all sacrifice for all mankind.

I'm amazed at the instructions that we're left with—"**This do, as often as you drink it**." Those directions are lovely in both their simplicity and complexity. Thus communion is instituted, and we continue to observe it 2,000 years later.

I'll leave you with one final thought about communion and its significance in the ministry of Jesus. Does anyone remember how Jesus' ministry began? In **John 2**, Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding, right? A wedding—the physical representation of the fulfillment of a promise (and you'll recall that a Jewish wedding is based on those same four promises in **Exodus 6**). A wedding where Jesus takes water—ordinary and simple water—and turns it into wine. Now, during the Last Supper with His disciples, the Last Seder, what did Jesus say that the wine represented? His blood. What are the elements that Jesus deals with in His first ministry act? Water and wine (which represents blood).

Now fast-forward a few years to the cross. Remember that he was pierced for our transgressions. The Roman soldier came up to him and thrust a spear into His side. And do you remember what came out? **John 19:24** says it was water and blood (which is represented by wine). I find it interesting that Jesus began His ministry using the same two elements that He ended it. His ministry started on the day celebrating the fulfillment of a wedding promise and now we look forward to our own wedding day as His bride. **Water** and **wine**—they are bookends to His ministry, and there is much to learn from them and their use in the New Testament.

THE WHY (WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO DO OBSERVE THESE ORDINANCES?)

Now, let's look for a minute at how baptism and communion intertwine. Baptism **symbolizes** the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Communion **symbolizes** the broken body and blood of Jesus the Christ. They both center on the work of Christ on the cross—the central component of the New Covenant—the New Testament. That's why the ordinances are so important—they **remind** us of the center of our faith—the finished work of Jesus on the **cross**. Without the cross, we're hopeless. And without reminders, we're liable to forget. It's a wise and kind Heavenly Father that incorporates into our faith a process whereby we are consistently called to observe the center.

The next two weeks, Lord willing, we'll look closer at baptism, followed by two weeks digging deeper into communion. Lastly, we'll spend a few weeks looking at how other Christian denominations view baptism, communion, rites, and sacraments.

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 2: Baptism 101

REVIEW

1. OBSERVING (to inspect; to celebrate)
2. THE (Baptist doctrine teaches there are two ordinances—baptism and communion)
3. ORDINANCES (something ordained; a practice)

Ordinance or Sacrament?

Ordinance: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony. *Theological key: outward expression of **faith***

Sacrament: a Christian rite that is a means of divine grace. *Theological key: impartation of God's **grace***

RUDIMENTS (THE BASICS OF BAPTIST DOCTRINE)

Baptist Backronym (Wikipedia: is a “reverse acronym,” that is a phrase constructed “after the fact” to make an already existing word or words into an acronym.)

- **Biblical** authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- **Autonomy** of the local church
- **Priesthood** of all believers (1 Peter 2:5-9)
- **Two** ordinances (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)
- **Individual** soul liberty (Romans 14:5-12)
- **Separation** of church and state (Matthew 22:15-22)
- **Two** offices of the church (pastor-elder and deacon) (1 Timothy 3:1-13)
- **Saved** church membership (Acts 2:41)

Notice that one of the core doctrines of the Baptist denomination is the idea that there are two ordinances. When we describe to people what Baptists believe, talking about our ordinances is a basic baptist concept.

RESEARCH (WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?)

Thomas White (a theologian at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) **writes: Jesus demonstrates the importance of baptism in the commission given to his disciples. “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 [Matthew 28:19-20].” In His last words prior to his ascension, He [Jesus] gave His vision statement for the church. This statement literally rendered contains one verb with three participles. As you go, make disciples, baptizing and teaching them. Some argue that the participles may be placed in any order; however, taking seriously verbal plenary inspiration means that even the order of the given participles is inspired. [“Verbal plenary inspiration” means that God inspired the complete Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, and that inspiration extends to the very words the writers chose] **This being the case, Jesus clearly states to 1) go and preach the Word, 2) make disciples, 3) baptize them, and 4) teach them all things that he has commanded. . . . proclaiming the Gospel is of first importance, making disciples is of second importance, baptism is of third importance, and everything else that Christ taught comes fourth.**

Last week we looked briefly at a few baptisms in the New Testament. This week, I want to break baptism apart into different components and study each component. We won't finish this week, so next week we'll look at how baptisms have evolved over the past 2,000 years.

First, the meaning of baptism . . .

1. MEANING (WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?)

We believe in ordinances and not sacraments and that baptism is not essential to salvation (example: thief on the cross). So, if salvation is by grace through faith, why baptism? What does it mean?

Rick DeMichele: Water baptism is clearly a *figure* or *type* of something which already took place in the heart of the believer the moment he/she was saved (Romans 6:4-6: Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.). Water baptism is the ordinance representing the identification of the Christian with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

You are “**crucified**” (standing upright in water), you are “**buried**” (immersed into the water), and you are “**raised from the dead**” (raised out of the water). . . . It [water baptism] is the outward testimony of the believer's inward faith. A sinner is saved the moment he places his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is a visible testimony to that faith.

Baptism *pictures* and *proclaims* four important things:

1. the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with 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)
2. the death of our **old** life to sin, and our resurrection to walk in **newness** of life (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.)
3. our faith in the **Trinity** (Matthew 28:19b: baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit)
4. our "putting on" of **Christ** (Galatians 3:26-27: For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.)

So then, water baptism is a picture of what transpired when you placed your faith and trust in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to save you from your sins. It does not atone for sin. Only the blood of Christ cleanses us from sin.

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: The Bible makes it clear that scriptural baptism is **believer's** baptism.

- In Acts 2:41 we observe that they received the word, *then* they were baptized.
- In Acts 8:12, 36-37 we find that they believed, *then* they were baptized.
- In Acts 10:47-48, it is plain to see that those who believed received the Holy Ghost, and *then* they were baptized.

When the Philippian jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." (Acts 16:30-34). Paul did not tell him to be baptized to be saved. His baptism came *after* his believing.

Who then should be baptized? According to the established Bible pattern, only those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Water baptism then, is *not* salvation, but obedience to a command by God concerning discipleship.

We practice what is referred to as credobaptism. This is directly opposite to paedobaptism. Credobaptism is baptism after you have made a statement of faith. Paedobaptism is baptism as an infant (prior to any possible statement of faith). We do not recognize paedobaptism as scriptural as there is no scriptural evidence to support its validity.

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: **Immersion** in water is the only scriptural method of baptism.

- In John 3:23 we find that John the Baptist needed "**much water**" for baptism
- In Acts 8:38-39 we are taught baptism by immersion

- **In Romans 6:3-6 we see that baptism must fulfill three types: death, burial and resurrection. . . . the only mode of baptism which fulfills all these pictures is the immersion of the believer in water.**

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID?)

First option: “the name of Jesus Christ” or “the name of the Lord Jesus”

Peter in **Acts 2:38b**: **Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.**

Peter in **Acts 10:48**: **And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.**

Paul in **Acts 19:5**: **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**

New disciples in Samaria’s experience in **Acts 8:16b**: **They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**

Galatians 3:27: **As many of you as were baptized into Christ.**

Second option: “the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit”

Matthew 28:19b: **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

Next week, we’ll look at the history of baptism and how it has evolved over time.

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 3: History of Baptism

REVIEW

1. OBSERVING (to inspect; to celebrate)
2. THE (Baptist doctrine teaches there are two ordinances—baptism and communion)
3. ORDINANCES (something ordained; a practice)

Ordinance or Sacrament?

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RESEARCH

1. MEANING (WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?)

Rick DeMichele: Baptism pictures and proclaims four important things:

1. the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ
2. the death of our old life to sin, and our resurrection to walk in newness of life
3. our faith in the Trinity
4. our "putting on" of Christ

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: The Bible makes it clear that scriptural baptism is *believer's baptism* . . . (only those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior)

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: Immersion in water is the only scriptural method of baptism

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID?)

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Second option: "the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit"

[Matthew 28:19b](#): **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.**

Last week, I left you with a question: did the apostles and early disciples get it wrong? If Jesus said perform baptism in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the early church did it in Jesus' name only, does that count?

The answer is found in [Colossians 2:8-9](#): **Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.**

So you see, when you baptize in the name of Jesus, you are getting the whole Trinity. It's a package deal.

Now, I told you last week that we would look at the history of baptism and how it has evolved over time. So let's get at it. To start, I wanted to back up and look at a few Old Testament events that foreshadowed baptism. Turn to [Genesis 1](#).

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY (FORESHADOWING BAPTISM)

1. CREATION: [Genesis 1:1-2](#): **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.** The Earth started out under water (don't worry, the examples get stronger)

2. THE FLOOD: [Genesis 7-8](#): The Earth again under water (and what happens after each covering of water? An explosion of life on the Earth)

3. PASSING OF THE ISRAELITES THROUGH THE RED SEA: [Exodus 14](#): Paul saw this as a type of baptism in [1 Corinthians 10:1-2](#)

4. RITUAL WASHING IN JUDAISM

From Wikipedia: There are several occasions on which biblical or rabbinical regulations require immersion of the whole body, referred to as *tevilah*. Depending on the

circumstances, such ritual bathing might require immersion in “living water” - either by using a natural stream or by using a mikvah (a specially constructed ritual bath, connected directly to a natural source of water, such as a spring).

- **Conversion to Judaism**
Traditional Judaism requires converts into Judaism to immerse themselves fully in water in a Mikvah or body of “living water.”
- **Bodily fluids and skin conditions**
The Torah prescribes rituals addressing the skin condition known as Tzaraath [leprosy in [Leviticus 14](#)] and unusual genital discharges in a man or women [in [Leviticus 15](#)], which required special sacrifices and rituals in the days of the Temple in Jerusalem which included immersion in a Mikvah. In addition, a period of ritual impurity following a seminal discharge (Keri) and during and following a women’s Niddah period around menstruation ended with ritual immersion.
- **Contact with a dead things**
According to Leviticus, anyone who comes into contact with or carries any creature that hadn’t been deliberately killed by shechita was regarded by the biblical regulations as having made themselves unclean by doing so, and therefore was compelled to immerse their entire body. [Leviticus 17:15](#)
- **Yom Kippur**
The biblical regulations of Yom Kippur require the officiating Jewish High Priest to bathe himself in water after sending off the scapegoat to Azazel, and a similar requirement was imposed on the person who lead the scapegoat away, and the person who burned the sacrifices during the rituals of the day. [Leviticus 16](#)

I point out these examples to illustrate the fact that submersion in water and a subsequent change is **not** an entirely New Testament idea. Just as Jesus took the Passover meal and gave it new meaning, taking the immersion in water and making it represent His death, burial, and resurrection, was taking an old thing and making it mean a new thing.

CHURCH HISTORY

CHURCH FATHERS

Steven Cole: The first reference to baptism outside of the Apostolic writings is found in Justin Martyr’s First Apology in the latter part of the first century; however, the earliest detailed accounts of baptism are found in Tertullian’s On Baptism and Hippolytus’s Apostolic Tradition, which were written during the second or third century. Although baptism could be administered at any time by men the two most popular dates for the ceremony were **Pentecost** and **Easter**. According to Hippolytus, inquirers into the faith spent a minimum of three years studying Scripture, praying, and receiving lessons in morals

and exorcisms before being initiated into the body of Christ through the rite of baptism. Preceding the baptism the candidate would receive an exorcism from the bishop and a prayer would be said over the water, preferably flowing water, which would be used for the ceremony, the candidate would then undress and renounce the devil directly prior to the baptism. Baptism was typically by tri-immersion, however in cases when there was not sufficient water pouring was deemed acceptable, along with the affirmation of the trinity by the candidate. After the candidate had received the baptism he was now an official member of the Church and was anointed with the oil of thanksgiving. The bishop would then pray over the candidate for the receiving of the Holy Spirit and would then anoint the candidate with holy oil in the name of the Trinity and “seal” him with a holy kiss upon the forehead. The candidate would then participate in his first Eucharist, which consisted of both the traditional bread and wine as well as water, which symbolized the inward washing as baptism had symbolized the outward washing, and milk and honey, which were symbolic of the Old Testament Promised Land.

Tertullian - “We are immersed **three** times, fulfilling somewhat more than our Lord has decreed in the Gospel” - de Bapt. c. iv

Ambrose - “You were asked, Dost thou believe in God Almighty? Thou said'st, I believe; and thus thou wast immersed, that is, thou wast buried.” - De Sacr. lib. ii. c. 7

Augustine - “After you professed your belief, there times did we submerge your heads in the sacred fountain.” - Hom. iv

The practice of trine immersion prevailed in the West as well as the East, till the fourth council of Toledo, which, acting under the advice of Gregory the Great, to settle some disputes which had arisen, decreed that henceforth only one immersion should be used in baptism.” - Isaac Taylor Hinton, in *A History of Baptism*, 1840, page 164

“For those who were sick, were baptized in bed, since they could not be immersed by the priest, they were only poured with water.” - Isaac Taylor Hinton, in *A History of Baptism*, 1840, page 165

Additionally, if you had been baptized this way, this method prohibited you from being promoted to church leadership of any kind. In fact, Baronius says, “Those who were baptized upon their beds were not called Christians, but clinics.” - *Annales Eccl. Caesaris Baronii, &c. Moguriae*, 1523. An. 254. Sect. ix. p. 208, quoted from Isaac Taylor Hinton, in *A History of Baptism*, 1840

Baptisteries were illegal until the middle of the third century (when Constantine made Christianity the religion of the empire)

“But thou shalt beforehand anoint the person with the holy oil, and afterward baptize him with the water, and in the conclusion shall seal him with the ointment; that the anointing with oil may be the participation of the Holy Spirit, and the water the symbol of the death of Christ, and the ointment the seal of the covenants.” *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Book 7, Chapter 22* (late fourth century work)

MIDDLE AGES

Baptisteries didn't appear in churches until the **sixth** century. Even in cities where there were multiple churches, with very few exceptions, there would only be one baptistery.

Steven Cole: It was not until 1311 at the Council of Ravenna that sprinkling and immersion were considered as equally valid forms of baptism.

So, how does all of this get corrected? Why do we do it the way we do it today?

PROTESTANT REFORMATION

Jeff Johncoat: William Tyndale . . . worked most of his translating years alone, but . . . he had the help of Erasmus in the publication of his Greek/Latin New Testament printed in **1516**. Erasmus and the great printer, scholar, and reformer John Froben published the first non-Latin Vulgate text of the Bible in a millennium. Latin was the language for centuries of scholarship and it was understood by virtually every European who could read or write. Erasmus' Latin was not the Vulgate translation of Jerome, but his own fresh rendering of the Greek New Testament text that he had collated from six or seven partial New Testament manuscripts into a complete Greek New Testament.

The Latin that Erasmus translated from the Greek revealed enormous corruptions in the Vulgate's integrity amongst the rank and file scholars, many of whom were already convinced that the established church was doomed by virtue of its evil hierarchy. Pope Leo X's declaration that “the fable of Christ was very profitable to him” infuriated the people of God.

Martin Luther declared his intolerance with the Roman Church's corruption on Halloween in **1517**, by nailing 95 Theses of Contention to the Wittenberg Door.

Steven Cole: Martin Luther drastically reduced the number of sacraments of the church from the seven recognized by the Roman Catholic Church to two: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Zwingli viewed baptism as a mere symbol or sign, as he had done with the Lord's Supper, and not necessary to an individual's salvation; this idea was later adopted by the Anabaptists who in addition to Zwingli's position also emphasized the profession of personal faith prior to baptism.

This day in Christian History, by William D. Blake, *Almanac of the Christian Church: January 5, 1527* - Swiss Anabaptist reformer **Felix Manz**, 29, was drowned in punishment for preaching adult (re-)baptism. Manz's death made him the first Protestant in history to be martyred at the hands of other Protestants.

BAPTISTHISTORY.ORG, BAPTISTS AND THEIR THEOLOGY, BY FISHER HUMPHREYS

The first two Baptist theologians were John Smyth (ca. 1554–1612), who was trained in theology in a university (Cambridge), and Thomas Helwys (ca. 1550–1616), who was not. Three of their principal concerns were believer's baptism, sectarian withdrawal from society, and religious liberty.

When Smyth and his church adopted the practice of believer's baptism, they were responding to two impulses at once. One was the restorationist impulse, the impulse to order contemporary church life as closely as possible to the life of New Testament churches. Once Smyth and his church became convinced that only believers were baptized in New Testament churches, they were determined to imitate that practice.

The other impulse was to achieve a **believers'** church. The Separatist churches in England had left the Church of England to achieve a more pure church, but their practice of baptizing their own children meant that their congregations continued to have members who had not made a public profession of their faith. Christians have a deep need to be part of an intentional faith community, and that was achieved on the day that Smyth baptized himself and the other members of his church.

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 4: Communion 101

REVIEW

1. OBSERVING (to inspect; to celebrate)
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Sacrament: a Christian rite that is a means of divine grace. *Theological key: impartation of God's **grace***

RUDIMENTS (THE BASICS OF BAPTIST DOCTRINE)

Baptist Backronym (Wikipedia: is a “reverse acronym,” that is a phrase constructed “after the fact” to make an already existing word or words into an acronym.)

- **Biblical** authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- **Autonomy** of the local church
- **Priesthood** of all believers (1 Peter 2:5-9)
- **Two** ordinances (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)
- **Individual** soul liberty (Romans 14:5-12)
- **Separation** of church and state (Matthew 22:15-22)
- **Two** offices of the church (pastor-elder and deacon) (1 Timothy 3:1-13)
- **Saved** church membership (Acts 2:41)

Notice that one of the core doctrines of the Baptist denomination is the idea that there are two ordinances. When we describe to people what Baptists believe, talking about our ordinances is a basic baptist concept.

RESEARCH (WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?)

1. MEANING (WHAT DOES COMMUNION MEAN?)

We believe in ordinances and not sacraments and that communion is not essential to salvation (example: thief on the cross). So, if salvation is by grace through faith, why communion? What does it mean?

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called “ordinances”) as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are baptism and communion.

The Baptist Faith & Message: “A symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

A. It is a **reminder** of the past

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 [the Greek word is *eucharisteo*—where we get our English, Eucharist], He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-24

Strong’s Concordance: bread: composed of flour mixed with water and baked; the Israelites made it in the form of an oblong or round cake, as thick as one's thumb, and as large as a plate or platter hence it was not to be cut but broken

B. It is a **symbol** of the covenant

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.” 1 Corinthians 11:25

C. It is a statement of **faith** about the future

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD TAKE COMMUNION?)

27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy [literally, not weightily] manner will be guilty [literally, liable] of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine [Greek is *dokimazo*, meaning to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals; to recognize as genuine after examination, to approve, deem worthy; it’s from the Greek word *dokimos*. In the ancient world . . . all money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into moulds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. . . . laws were passed in Athens to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money changers were men of integrity, who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honor who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called “dokimos” or “approved.” Donald Barnhouse] 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 [in a

legal sense] **to himself, not discerning** [a compound Greek word made up of the word for ‘through’ and the word for ‘judgment’ (the word just previously used)] **the Lord’s body. 1 Corinthians 11:27-29**

A. Those that view it as **worthy**

B. Those that have **examined**

C. Those that are **discerning**

FYIs about how our church does it: SHBC practices “open communion” (if you are a believer, you may participate). SHBC does this the last Sunday of the month.

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE TAKE COMMUNION?)

In **community**

Acts 2:41-42: 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 20:7: Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID DURING COMMUNION?)

No prescribed words are found in Scripture, but every time Jesus is recorded doing it, His **prayers** are mentioned.

Other verses: **Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21**

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 5: History of Communion

REVIEW

1. OBSERVING (to inspect; to celebrate)
2. THE (Baptist doctrine teaches there are two ordinances—baptism and communion)
3. ORDINANCES (something ordained; a practice)

Ordinance or Sacrament?

Ordinance: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony. *Theological key: outward expression of **faith***

Sacrament: a Christian rite that is a means of divine grace. *Theological key: impartation of God's **grace***

RESEARCH (WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?)

1. MEANING (WHAT DOES COMMUNION MEAN?)

We believe in ordinances and not sacraments and that communion is not essential to salvation (example: thief on the cross). So, if salvation is by grace through faith, why communion? What does it mean?

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The Baptist Faith & Message: “A symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-29

- A. It is a reminder of the past
- B. It is a symbol of the covenant
- C. It is a statement of faith about the future

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD TAKE COMMUNION?)

- A. Those that view it as worthy

B. Those that have examined

C. Those that are discerning

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE TAKE COMMUNION?)

[Acts 2:41-42](#); [Acts 20:7](#)

In community

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID DURING COMMUNION?)

No prescribed words are found in Scripture, but every time Jesus is recorded doing it, His prayers are mentioned.

Now, I told you last week that we would look at the history of communion and how it has evolved over time. So let's get at it. To start, I wanted to back up and look at a few Old Testament events that foreshadowed communion. Turn to [Genesis 14](#).

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY (FORESHADOWING COMMUNION)

1. **MELCHIZEDEK**

[Genesis 14:18-20](#): **Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine** [this is the **first** time these elements are mentioned together]; **he was the priest** [this is the **first** mention of a priest in the Bible—and it's prior to the establishment of the Levitical priesthood] **of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.** It is interesting to note that this interaction between Abram and Melchizedek occurred after **victories** by Abram—as we remember Christ's victories through communion.

[Psalm 110:1-4](#): **The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3 Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4 The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order [pattern] of Melchizedek."** This is a prophecy about **Jesus**. Just as Melchizedek used bread and wine, so did Jesus.

2. **PASSOVER**

[Exodus 12](#)

Verse 3: **"take for himself a lamb"** (Jesus is called the **"Lamb of God"** in [John 1:36](#))

Verse 5: **"without blemish"** (Jesus was our perfect moral—not physical—sacrifice)

Verse 6: **“you shall keep it”** (we must ‘have’ Jesus to participate—thanks to Kay Goble for pointing that out to me)

Verse 6: **“the whole assembly . . . shall kill it”** (we all had a part in His death)

Verse 10: **“you shall let none of it remain”** (we are to take all of Christ, not just parts—Christianity is not a buffet line where we can pick and choose)

Verse 14: **“a memorial . . . throughout your generations”** (just as we remember Christ’s death and resurrection and coming again through communion)

Verse 43: **“no foreigner shall eat it”** (you must be a member of God’s family to participate)

Verse 46: **“nor shall you break one of its bones”** (Jesus’ bones were not broken on the cross during His sacrifice—[John 19:33](#))

Verse 47: **“all the congregation”** (everyone observes it—parallels the concept of community in the New Testament)

3. **MANNA**

Compare [Exodus 16](#) (wandering in the wilderness and God providing manna) with [John 6:48-51](#): **I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.**

CHURCH HISTORY

EARLY CHURCH

[Acts 2:46](#): implies that communion **may** have been practiced every day

[Acts 20:6-11](#): implies that communion **may** have been practiced once a week

Peg Bowman: Worship in the early church was divided into two parts: The first part was open to anyone, and included prayers, singing of psalms and songs, readings from scripture, and teaching. The second part was for baptized believers only—anyone not baptized had to **leave before the second half—and included the “love feast” we now call Communion. Back then it was an actual meal that included the elements of bread and wine in memory of Jesus.**

CHURCH FATHERS

Wikipedia: Christian denominations differ in their understanding of whether they may receive the Eucharist with those with whom they are not in full communion. The famed apologist St. Justin Martyr (c. 150) wrote: “No one else is permitted to partake of it, except

one who believes our teaching to be true....” For the first several hundred years, non-members were forbidden even to be present at the sacramental ritual; visitors and catechumens (those still undergoing instruction) were dismissed halfway through the Liturgy, after the Bible readings and sermon but before the Eucharistic rite. The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, used in the Byzantine Churches, still has a formula of dismissal of catechumens (not usually followed by any action) at this point.

Wikipedia: The Didache (Greek: teaching) is an early Church order, including, among other features, instructions for Baptism and the Eucharist. Most scholars date it to the early 2nd century.

NewAdvent.org: According to the Didache, the breaking of bread took place on “the Lord's day”. Pliny [late first/early second century] says that the Christians assembled “on a fixed day” (Ep. x). . . . It is in Tertullian [late second/early third century] that we first read of the Liturgy being celebrated on any other day besides Sunday. . . . Daily reception is mentioned by St. Cyprian [third century] . . . St. Jerome [late fourth/early fifth century] . . . St. John Chrysostom [late fourth/early fifth century] . . . St. Ambrose [late fourth century].

MIDDLE AGES

NewAdvent.org: The Fourth Lateran Council [1215] compelled the faithful, under pain of excommunication, to receive at least once a year.

REFORMATION AND BEYOND

Wikipedia: Some Protestant groups regard the Eucharist (also called the Lord's Supper or the Lord's Table) as a symbolic meal, a memorial of the Last Supper and the Passion in which nothing miraculous occurs. This view is known as the Zwinglian view, after Huldrych Zwingli [early 16th century], a Church leader in Zurich, Switzerland during the Reformation. It is commonly associated with the United Church of Christ, Baptists, the Disciples of Christ and the Mennonites.

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 6: Other Denominations: Baptism

REVIEW

1. OBSERVING (to inspect; to celebrate)
2. THE (Baptist doctrine teaches there are two ordinances—baptism and communion)
3. ORDINANCES (something ordained; a practice)

Ordinance or Sacrament?

Ordinance: a prescribed usage, practice, or ceremony. *Theological key: outward expression of **faith***

Sacrament: a Christian rite that is a means of divine grace. *Theological key: impartation of God's **grace***

RESEARCH

1. MEANING (WHAT DOES BAPTISM MEAN?)

Rick DeMichele: Baptism pictures and proclaims four important things:

1. the believer's death, burial, and resurrection with Christ
2. the death of our old life to sin, and our resurrection to walk in newness of life
3. our faith in the Trinity
4. our "putting on" of Christ

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: The Bible makes it clear that scriptural baptism is *believer's baptism* . . . (only those who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior)

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?)

Rick DeMichele: Immersion in water is the only scriptural method of baptism

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID?)

First option: "the name of Jesus Christ" or "the name of the Lord Jesus"

Second option: "the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit"

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY (FORESHADOWING BAPTISM)

1. CREATION
2. THE FLOOD
3. PASSING OF THE ISRAELITES THROUGH THE RED SEA
4. RITUAL WASHING IN JUDAISM

CHURCH HISTORY

CHURCH FATHERS; MIDDLE AGES; PROTESTANT REFORMATION; BAPTISTHISTORY.ORG,
BAPTISTS AND THEIR THEOLOGY, BY FISHER HUMPHREYS

OTHER DENOMINATIONS

1. ROMAN CATHOLIC

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The **Sacrament** of Baptism: Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from **sin** and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word."

The Decree for the Armenians (from "Exultate Deo" of Pope Eugene IV): Holy Baptism holds the first place among the sacraments, because it is the door of the spiritual life; for by it we are made members of Christ and incorporated with the Church. And since through the first man death entered into all, unless we be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, we can not enter into the kingdom of Heaven, as Truth Himself has told us. The matter of this sacrament is true and natural water; and it is indifferent whether it be cold or hot. The form is: *I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. We do not, however, deny that the words: Let this servant of Christ be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; or: This person is baptized by my hands in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, constitute true baptism; because since the principal cause from which baptism has its efficacy is the Holy Trinity, and the instrumental cause is the minister who confers the sacrament exteriorly, then if the act exercised by the minister be expressed, together with the invocation of the Holy Trinity, the sacrament is perfected. The minister of this sacrament is the priest, to whom it belongs to baptize, by reason of his office. In case of necessity, however, not only a priest or deacon, but even a layman or woman, nay, even a pagan or heretic can baptize, provided he observes the form*

used by the Church, and intends to perform what the Church performs. The effect of this sacrament is the remission of all sin, original and actual; likewise of all punishment which is due for sin. As a consequence, no satisfaction for past sins is enjoined upon those who are baptized; and if they die before they commit any sin, they attain immediately to the kingdom of heaven and the vision of God.

Arguments for Infant Baptism: [Acts 2:38-39](#)

2. BAPTIST

3. METHODIST

Methodist Articles of Faith: Article XVII—Of Baptism: Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth. The Baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

United Methodist Baptismal Covenant: Through the **Sacrament** of Baptism, we are **initiated** into Christ's holy church.

Why Baptize Babies? From the earliest times, children and infants were baptized and included in the church. As scriptural authority for this ancient tradition, some scholars cite Jesus' words, "Let the little children come to me...for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs" ([Mark 10:14](#)). However, a more consistent argument is that baptism, as a means of grace, signifies God's initiative in the process of salvation. John Wesley preached "**prevenient** grace," the grace that works in our lives before we are aware of it, bringing us to faith. The baptism of children and their inclusion in the church before they can respond with their own confirmation of faith is a vivid and compelling witness to prevenient grace. *A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism*, by Mark C. Trotter

4. LUTHERAN

In Holy Baptism the Triune God **delivers** us from the forces of evil, puts our sinful self to death, gives us **new** birth, adopts us as children, and makes us members of the body of Christ, the Church. Holy Baptism is received by faith alone. *The Use of the Means of Grace*, Principle 14

| Ordered by # of Members | Denomination | Beliefs about Baptism | Type of Baptism? | Baptize Infants? | Baptism Regenerates, Gives Spiritual Life? | Standard? |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Roman Catholic | "Necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament" (<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> , 1257) | Usually by pouring in the West, by submersion or immersion in the East; sprinkling admitted only if the water then flows on the head. | Yes | Yes | Trinity |
| 2 | Baptists | A divine ordinance, a symbolic ritual, a mechanism for publicly declaring one's faith, and a sign of having already been saved, but not necessary for salvation. | By submersion only. | No | No | Trinity |
| 3 | Methodists | The Sacrament of initiation into Christ's holy church whereby one is incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the spirit. Baptism washes away sin and clothes one in the righteousness of Christ. | By sprinkling, pouring, immersion or submersion. | Yes | Yes | Trinity |
| 4 | Lutherans | Baptism is how God miraculously delivers a person from sin, death, and the devil; gives new life; and brings one into Christ's kingdom forever (Titus 3:5). | By sprinkling, pouring, immersion or submersion. | Yes | Yes | Trinity |
| 5 | Presbyterian | A sacrament, a symbolic ritual, and a seal of the adult believer's present faith. It is an outward sign of an inward grace. | By sprinkling, pouring, immersion or submersion | Yes, to indicate membership in the New Covenant. | No | Trinity |
| 6a | Trinitarian Pentecostals and various "Holiness" groups, Christian Missionary Alliance, Assemblies of God | Water Baptism is an ordinance, a symbolic ritual used to witness to having accepted Christ as personal Savior. | By submersion. Also stress the necessity of a "second" Baptism of a special outpouring from the Holy Spirit. | No | Varies | Trinity |
| 6b | Oneness Pentecostals | Necessary for Salvation | By submersion only | No | Yes | Jesus' name |
| 7 | Anglican | "Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New-Birth..." | By submersion, immersion, pouring, or sprinkling. | Yes | No | Trinity |
| 8 | Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon) | An ordinance essential to enter the Celestial Kingdom of Heaven and preparatory for receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. | By immersion performed by a person holding proper priesthood authority. | No (at least 8 years old) | Yes | Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost (The LDS church doesn't believe in the Nicene trinity) |
| 9a | Churches of Christ | Baptism is a must for salvation as commanded by Jesus, Mark 16:16; Matt. 28:19. One receives forgiveness of sin, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and addition to God's church. Acts 2:38-41. This is done after one has expressed faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and repented from sins. | Submersion only | No | Yes | Trinity |
| 9b | United Church of Christ | One of two sacraments. Baptism is an outward sign of God's inward grace. It is not necessary for membership in a local congregation. However, it is a common practice for both infants and adults. | By sprinkling, pouring, immersion or submersion. | Yes, to indicate membership in the New Covenant. | No | Trinity |
| 10 | Jehovah's Witnesses | Baptism is necessary for salvation as part of the entire baptismal arrangement: as an expression of obedience to Jesus' command (Matthew 28:19-20), as a public symbol of the saving faith in the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:10), and as an indication of repentance from dead works and the dedication of one's life to Jehovah. (1 Peter 2:21) However, baptism does not guarantee salvation. | By submersion only; typical candidates are baptized at district and circuit conventions. | No | Yes | Jesus |

OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES

Week 7: Other Denominations: Communion

REVIEW

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RESEARCH (WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?)

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1 Corinthians 11:23-29

- A. A reminder of the past B. A symbol of the covenant C. A statement of faith about the future

2. SUBJECT (WHO SHOULD TAKE COMMUNION?)

- A. Those that view it as worthy B. Those that have examined C. Those that are discerning

3. MODE (HOW SHOULD ONE TAKE COMMUNION?) **Acts 2:41-42; Acts 20:7:** In community

4. FORMULA (WHAT WORDS SHOULD BE SAID DURING COMMUNION?)

No prescribed words are found in Scripture, but every time Jesus is recorded doing it, His prayers are mentioned.

OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY (FORESHADOWING COMMUNION)

1. MELCHIZEDEK: [Genesis 14:18-20](#); [Psalm 110:1-4](#)
2. PASSOVER: [Exodus 12](#)
3. MANNA: Compare [Exodus 16](#) with [John 6:48-51](#)

CHURCH HISTORY

EARLY CHURCH; CHURCH FATHERS; MIDDLE AGES; REFORMATION AND BEYOND

VIEWS OF COMMUNION

1. OPEN VS. CLOSED COMMUNION

- Open: allowing individuals outside the membership of a church to participate
- Closed: not allowing individuals outside the membership of a church to participate

2. INTERPRETATIONS OF COMMUNION (FROM WIKIPEDIA)

- **Transubstantiation**: the substance (fundamental reality) of the bread and wine is transformed in a way beyond human comprehension into that of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ, but the accidents (physical traits, including chemical properties) of the bread and wine remain. This view is taught by the Roman Catholic Church . . . and is held by many Anglicans.
- **Sacramental union**: in the “use” of the sacrament, according to the words of Jesus Christ and by the power of his speaking of them once for all, the consecrated bread is united with his body and the consecrated wine with his blood for all communicants, whether believing or unbelieving, to eat and drink.
- **Objective reality, but pious silence about technicalities**: the view of all the ancient Churches of the East, including the Eastern Orthodox, the Oriental Orthodox, the Eastern Catholic Churches) and the Assyrian Church of the East as well as perhaps most Anglicans and Lutherans. These, while agreeing with the Roman Catholic belief that the sacrament is not merely bread and wine but truly the body and blood of Christ, and having historically employed the “substance” and “accidents” terminology to explain what is changed in the transformation, usually avoid this terminology, lest they seem to scrutinize the technicalities of the manner in which the transformation occurs.
- **Real Spiritual presence**, also called “pneumatic presence,” holds that not only the Spirit of Christ, but also the true body and blood of Jesus Christ (hence “real”), are

received by the sovereign, mysterious, and miraculous power of the Holy Spirit (hence “spiritual”), but only by those partakers who have faith. It is also known as the “mystical presence” view, and is held by most Reformed Christians, such as Presbyterians, as well as some Methodists and some Anglicans.

- **Symbolism**: the bread and wine are symbolic of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and in partaking of the elements the believer commemorates the sacrificial death of Christ. This view is also known as “memorialism” and “Zwinglianism” after Ulrich Zwingli and is held by several Protestant and Latter-day Saint denominations, including most Baptists.

OTHER DENOMINATIONS

1. ROMAN CATHOLIC

- Transubstantiation as a statement of what is changed when the bread and wine are consecrated, not an explanation of the means or mode by which the Real Presence is effected
- Christ is really (not just in sign or symbol), truly (not just subjectively or metaphorically) and substantially (not just in his power) present in the Eucharist.
- Closed communion, with relaxation of the rule in certain defined circumstances.
- Frequency: All Catholics are obliged to attend celebration of the Eucharist at least on every Sunday and on other days known as holy days of obligation. Priests generally celebrate the Eucharist daily. Reception of Holy Communion is obligatory at least once a year (at Easter time).

2. BAPTIST

3. METHODIST

- Eucharist commonly celebrated on Sundays and Holy Days, like Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, but never without a congregation. While monthly observance was once the most commonly found experience, since the 1980s weekly celebration has become more common, and not just on Sundays.
- Eucharistic theology: “Jesus Christ...is truly present in Holy Communion...The divine presence is a living reality and can be experienced by participants; it is not a remembrance of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion only.” (from *This Holy Mystery*), i.e., Real Presence.
- United Methodists practice open communion and allow non confirmed youth and adults to receive the Eucharist.

4. LUTHERAN

- Eucharistic theology: the sacramental union is the mode of the Real Presence, the means is the mandate and institution of Christ. This mandate and institution is expressed in the Lutheran divine service as the Words of Institution or the *Verba*. Statement of Martin Luther: *Why then should we not much more say in the Supper, "This is my body," even though bread and body are two distinct substances, and the word "this" indicates the bread? Here, too, out of two kinds of objects a union has taken place, which I shall call a "sacramental union," because Christ's body and the bread are given to us as a sacrament. This is not a natural or personal union, as is the case with God and Christ. It is also perhaps a different union from that which the dove has with the Holy Spirit, and the flame with the angel, but it is also assuredly a sacramental union (WA 26, 442; LW 37, 299-300).*
- Body and Blood are "in, with, and under the forms" of bread and wine Lutherans do not seek to explain the change, and some designate their beliefs as consubstantiation, while others reject the designation of their doctrine as consubstantiation in contradistinction to the transubstantiation of the Roman Catholic Church, which they also reject.
- Many Lutheran Church bodies practice closed or close communion. However, the largest Lutheran body in the United States and Canada, the ELCA, allows all believers to partake in the sacrament, as do many of the national Lutheran Churches in the countries of Scandinavia and elsewhere. Also, in recent decades a revival of frequent partaking of the Sacrament has taken place in the mainline Lutheran branches, and the ELCA advises that Communion should be a part of all services.

5. PRESBYTERIAN

- Eucharistic theology: historically, real spiritual presence, i.e., pneumatic presence.
- Reformed theology has taught that Jesus' body is seated in heaven at the right hand of God and therefore is not present in the elements nor do the elements turn into his body. When the Eucharist is received, however, not only the spirit, but also the true body and blood of Jesus Christ (hence "real") are received in a pneumatic (ghostly) sense, but these are only received by those partakers who eat worthily (i.e., repentantly) with faith. The Holy Spirit unites the Christian with Jesus though they are separated by a great distance.
- Communion is usually open to all baptized believers, and although often it is reserved for those who are members in good standing of a Bible-believing Church, participation is left as a matter of conscience.

| # of Members | Denomination | Beliefs about Communion | View of Communion | Open or Closed? |
|--------------|----------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Roman Catholic | The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist. | Transubstantiation | Closed |
| 2 | Baptists | The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. | Symbolism | Most Open |
| 3 | Methodists | The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. . . . The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. | Real Presence | Most Open |
| 4 | Lutherans | the integrity of the bread and wine remain though united with the body and the blood of Christ | Sacramental Union | Varies |
| 5 | Presbyterian | It is the Lord's feast, hosted by the One who promises an ultimate continuous feast in the Kingdom of God. Under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit the divine host is made present so that a bond of unity can exist among those present and those unseen. . . . The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of continuous growth, nourishment and new life. | Real Spiritual Presence | Open |