



Statement of Faith - The Ordinances

The Ordinances – Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the two ordinances of the church which we observe. Christian baptism by immersion is the public testimony of a believer’s faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ. The Lord’s Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination, private confession of sin and the need for divine grace (Matt 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:1-23, Acts 2:38-42, 8:36-39, Romans 6:1-11, 1 Corinthians 11:20-34)

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are the two ordinances of the church which we observe. – It is clear from scripture that the Lord Jesus implemented two ordinances in the church. By ordinances we mean “ordained ceremonial activities” which He commanded be carried out. This is to say that there are only *two* such activities which He commanded, not three or four or more.

Matthew 28:19-20 - 19 "Go therefore and **make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,** 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. " NASB

Luke 22:14-21 - 14 And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. 15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. " 17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "**Take this and share it among yourselves;** 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes. " 19 **And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."** 20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. NASB

It is not to say that Jesus did not command us to do many other things. But that these are the two ceremonies He instituted among the church. It is clear from scripture that this was the common practice of the Apostles in the early church.

Acts 2:38-42 - 38 And Peter said to them, "**Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins;** and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself." 40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" 41 **So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.** 42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. NASB

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 - 23 For **I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you,** that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; **do this in remembrance of Me.**" NASB

Christian baptism by immersion is the public testimony of a believer's faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life.

– It is clear from scripture that the *mode* of baptism is *immersion*. That is to say that when they baptized people in the Bible, it was always done by immersing them in water. It is a commonly known fact that the ancient world of that day had “baptism pools” for immersing in many public areas.

Mark 1:9-11 - 9 And it came about in those days that **Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And immediately coming up out of the water,** He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; 11 and a voice came out of the heavens: "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased." NASB

Acts 8:39-39 And **when they came up out of the water,** the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing. NASB

Furthermore, that this baptism was *preceded by an outward confession or testimony of faith in Jesus Christ and followed by repentance from sin*. This is to say that someone must be old enough to make such testimony and that baptism is the formal act of confirming that testimony *publicly*. It is the outward **public** confession of the inward reality of faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:35-38 - 36 And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" 37 [And Philip said, **"If you believe with all your heart, you may."** And he answered and said, **"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."**] 38 And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him. NASB

1 Peter 3:21 - 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, **but an appeal to God for a good conscience** — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, NASB

It is clear from scripture that *baptism is an identification with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ*. We are saying to the world publicly that we have faith in the crucified and risen Christ.

Colossians 2:12 - 12 having been **buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God,** who raised Him from the dead. NASB

It is a symbolic representation of the work of God and response of faith by the believer of.....

- Death – Repentance, being dead to sin, the old self and to the desire for sin
- Resurrection - Newness of life, being alive to God – godly behavior and living

In the immersion into water we symbolize death to the old self of sin and in the coming up out of the water we symbolize the new resurrected life of holy living.

Romans 6:1-11 - 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 **Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life,** 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that **our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin;** 7 for he who has died is freed from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. 10 **For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.** 11 **Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.** NASB

It is clear from scripture that **baptism is NOT the means of regeneration**, but a public profession of an already regenerate person. It is not by the work of baptism or any other work that someone is saved, but only by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Ephesians 2:8-10 - 8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works**, that no one should boast. NASB
Even the Apostle Paul, who was strongly committed to evangelization and the salvation of people says that it was not his chief concern to baptize people, but rather to preach the gospel. It is by means of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (believing the gospel message) that one is saved.

1 Corinthians 1:17 - 17 For **Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel**, not in cleverness of speech, that the cross of Christ should not be made void. NASB

Romans 10:9-10 - 9 that **if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved**; 10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. NASB

Acts 10:47-47 "Surely **no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit** just as we did, can he?" NASB

It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ. – It is clear from scripture that baptism is carried out by the visible body of Christ, and is the means for officially recognizing the new believer's entrance into the body of Christ publicly.

Acts 2:41-42 - 41 **So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.** 42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. NASB

The Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination, private confession of sin and the need for divine grace – It is clear from scripture that Jesus commanded his followers to perform the act of "communion" for the purpose of commemorating His death. This, He said, "do in remembrance of Me."

Luke 22:14-21 - 14 And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. 15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "**Take this and share it among yourselves**"; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." 19 **And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."** 20 And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood. NASB

Paul when instructing the Corinthian church made it clear that we were, "**proclaiming the Lord's death until He comes.**" This is to say that we are remembering the death of Jesus Christ, and the great price which was required for the redemption of our sins, and all the other benefits and graces afforded to us by it. This is also to say that it is a symbolic commemoration of Christ's death, not that the bread and wine actually become the body of Christ. It is symbolic and Christ's presence is among us spiritually, not physically. When the Lord returns we will no longer need a ceremony of remembrance for we shall eternally be joined to Him in fellowship, and never be separated from Him again. (1 Thes 4:17)

1 Corinthians 11:26 -26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, **you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.** NASB

Further when Paul instructed the Corinthians, *he called for a solemn “self examination” in order to “judge ourselves rightly” before taking the Lord’s Supper.* We are to consider whether or not we are reflecting the Lord’s character in our actions and in our inner desires, and come before Him in humble repentance, recognizing our desperate need for His grace and our disdain for sin which we are at war with.

1 Corinthians 11:27-32 - 27 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. 28 But **let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.** 29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. 30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. 31 **But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged.** 32 But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world.

It is clear from scripture that all the Corinthian believers were allowed to participate in the Lord’s Supper, and that Paul never put restrictions on “who” could take the Table. Therefore we have an “open” communion and encourage all believers to participate, but this should be done carefully as outlined above.