



FIRST BAPTIST of Hayden

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**The Baptist Faith and Message
Baptism & The Lord's Supper**

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Preface

The church is God's method for reaching the world for Christ. Baptized members of the church are the vessels God uses through the local church to reach the world. Those believers who live according to the precepts taught in the Word of God are to regularly show the Lord's death through communion with other believers.

These two ordinances do not make us more Christ-like, nor do they save us. However, if acted upon in a biblical manner, they will declare God's glory through our lives.

7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

***BFM:** Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.*

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.

Baptism:

Baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Christ. *“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”* This act is a point of demarcation (def. *“a dividing line”*); it sets a point in the believer’s life that says in a public way, *“I belong to Christ.”* Baptism is a clear statement of allegiance to Christ as King. It is the act of baptism that so often causes parents of Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, or other religious beliefs to disown their children, or in some cases, leaders of nations hostile to the gospel will arrest, or take the life of the believer after baptism.

Matthew 28:16–20 (ESV): 16 *Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.* 17 *And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.* 18 *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* 19 *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*** 20 *teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

This links the authority of Christ to the mission that he has given to his followers – meaning that we are not looking for those who have changed their minds about the Lord, but rather, committed and faithful followers.

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When we make disciples, we will always get the church; but when we make churches, we do not always get disciples.

Baptism is a part of making disciples. He commanded us to go, which means he has sent us out into the world to make them into disciples, baptizing and teaching what he has commanded. If I am to be a faithful follower of the Lord, it must begin with my public declaration that “Jesus is Lord of my life”, and that is done through the waters of baptism.

While we in the West enjoy the freedom granted through our constitutional government, many in this world – millions of believers – face persecution by their villages, families, and governments for daring to become a Christian and then declaring their faith in a baptismal service. Many times, becoming a Christian brings no real persecution, but baptism often causes those who are around the new believer to take a different view of this “conversion.” Baptism sets the believer aside in a way that causes anger and retribution in many places.

These acts of persecution have occurred since the time of the early church. Caesar required certain individuals, as well as nations, to make a public vow of faithfulness. This oath of allegiance was called a *sacramentum*. There are 150 extant references to *sacramentum* in ancient Roman literature.

Roman dictator Julius Caesar was the first to use *sacramentum* in a military sense.

Livy (ca 59 BCE–17 CE), a Roman historian, noted that *sacramentum* was used during the Republic era as a soldier's oath of obedience, administered by a consul, which obligated a soldier to obey his superiors and not to abandon his comrades-in-arms. Because a *sacramentum* was considered sacred and taken in front of witnesses—both humans and deities—it was irrevocable. Those breaking faith faced penalties ranging from shame to death (Livy, Hist. 28.27).

Christ-followers borrowed the term *sacramentum* and used it to express their fealty to Christ and his kingdom.

Tertullian (160 CE–225 CE) identified baptism specifically as the Christian *sacramentum* and contrasted it to a Roman soldier's pledge of loyalty to the Emperor and Empire (Tertullian, Bapt. 4.4–5; Idol. 19.2). We are, in essence, declaring Christ as King and Lord when we pass through the waters of baptism. Thus, persecutions arose against the church and her members in the earliest days. They were, essentially, breaking their oath to Rome and to Caesar and taking a higher oath – one of a Heavenly kingdom.

The Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper, or communion, is a church gathering to show the Lord's death and his brokenness that accomplished our redemption.

When we take part in eating the bread, we are declaring that we have taken the bread of life that has come down from heaven.

John 6:35 (ESV): 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

Luke 22:17–20 (ESV): 17 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. 18 For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And he took bread, and when he had 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 likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

So, when we eat the bread, we are declaring his sacrifice—his willingness to give his body as a substitute for us, and his blood as the propitiation for our sin.

1 John 4:10 (ESV): *10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

This act of worship was so important to Paul that he wrote the Corinthian church regarding their disregard for its importance.

This is an act of worship that declares the awful price our redemption cost God. We should never hold it as something that is merely a ritual, and we most certainly should never take part in it if we are living in sin and refuse to repent.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (ESV): *23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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.”*

25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

This is God laying claim to our past – present – future and what it means for us to take part in this ordinance.

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1 Corinthians 11:27-28 (ESV): *27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

To examine oneself is to get honest before God, allowing his Holy Spirit to probe and look deeply into our soul. We prove ourselves worthy of taking part in this ordinance by looking at our current spiritual condition and correcting anything that is amiss.

Here is the warning for all of us who dare to act as if this ordinance is nothing more than a ceremony.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30 (ESV): *29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.*

Additional Scripture:

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23;

Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.