

# Lesson 15: Ordinances of the Church

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## Lesson Introduction



In this lesson we will look at two ordinances, or commands, that God gives to the church: water baptism, and communion. These ordinances are pictures for the believer – baptism, showing on the outside what has taken place in the believer, and communion, a reminder of the death of Christ.

First, though, we will look at something that is not pleasant, but necessary for the church to remain pure before God, and that is church discipline. As the believer walks through life, he may fall into sin. If he refuses to deal with the sin in his life, it becomes necessary for the church to take action. We will see that if both of these parties fail to take action, then ultimately God will have to step in.

## Lesson Outline

### Topic 1: Church Discipline

Walking in the Light

Dealing with Sin

### Topic 2: Baptism

A Public Declaration and Picture

### Topic 3: Communion

Unscriptural Errors

## Topic 1: Church Discipline

We're going to talk about 3 things that complement the local church, and it's an important aspect of the local church. It's the essence of the church in our age, the ordinances of water baptism, communion, and also the responsibility of exercising church discipline. Why? Why church discipline? Why is there such a thing that the Bible speaks of for the local church to do, and what are some of the things we need to know about church discipline? 1 Cor 11:30-32 tells us that there was a problem in the church of Corinth where many were weak, and sickly. Now they could have either had the bubonic plague going through, or they might have had the swine flu or who know. They could have had some disease sweeping through the congregation. But we know from the context that that is not what it is talking about. It says "many sleep" but it's because they were not judging themselves, nor were they exercising church discipline, so therefore God had to do the judgment and it was severe. (1 Cor 11:31-32) So church discipline was something they weren't doing, neither were they doing personal judgment, judgment of themselves. This is the responsibility of every believer and if you are a new Christian, you need to know about 1 John 1. (1 John 1:5) When you are studying 1, 2, and 3 John you have to remember that this is primarily to the believer, and these instructions are to the church and the believer. The Christian, we know that God is light, and we are learning more and more every day, as we study our Bible and hear the preaching of the Word of God, it's a truth that we know. (1 John 1:6) (1 John 1:7) Remember this is talking about a walk, fellowship type of thing. We know that sin has been paid for on the cross, and those that put their faith in

him have assurance of everlasting life, but we also know that as we walk we get our feet dirty, and confession needs to come into play. (1 John 1:8) And I think that is the most challenging thing when we are sitting down with someone in a counseling session, is pointing out sin and having them see sin for what it is and respond appropriately. A lot of people don't like that, they don't want to admit it, they don't want to say that they actually have it, and so you can't really get anywhere in those type of sessions. Verse 9, now this is the key relating to the rest of this chapter (1 John 1:9). The word confess is a greek word which is literally to agree with what God says about our sin. We agree. It's this idea of our will aligning with his will.

**Assignment:**

- Memorize 1 Corinthians 11:31-32

**QUESTION 1**

If we do not judge ourselves, and God has to do the judging, it will be \_\_\_\_\_.

**QUESTION 2**

Sickness or death can be a sign of \_\_\_\_\_ unconfessed sin.

**QUESTION 3**

As the believer goes through life, and encounters sin, \_\_\_\_\_ will be an important part of his life.

**QUESTION 4**

Confess means to \_\_\_\_\_ with God about our sin.

**Walking in the Light**

Some have tried to illustrate like this. We are sons and daughters of god, we are children of God, our position is in Christ and there is nothing that can change that. Nothing we do, nothing anyone else can do, we are secure in him. But there are times when things come in that cloud or break our relationship with him, that fellowship, that walk and light. Every day we need to be walking with him and in fellowship, and when sin comes in, it has to be dealt with. How? By judging ourselves. How? By seeing what we've done and confessing it to the Lord, saying Lord, I blew it, this is direct rebellion or sin, don't minimize it, say it like it is to the Lord. You don't have to go to a priest to do this, you can go right to God. Come boldly before the throne of grace and say "Lord I blew it, help me, forgive me." That's how we ought to live. I think this is really a time of communion; while we're taking communion we're told to judge ourselves, to really to look inward at our life and ask God to show us areas in our life where we are failing or in sin. Sometimes sin isn't just watching something we shouldn't have watched, or saying something we shouldn't have said, a lot of times sin is not doing something we should be doing or so on. If you walk in the light you are going to see the dirt. The person that's walking in the dark at night with no light, they could be filthy, they could have dirt all over them, they wouldn't know it. So it's that light, that exposes where we are at, and God can really shine that light. The closer you are with Him, the more that you will see those things, and confess those things. And if you do, he is faithful and just to forgive us, to restore to

fellowship, just like a father would forgive a child. So it's a self examination, but if the person isn't examining themselves correctly, or they're not doing it, then the church ought to step in. And this is where we see judgement by the church. 1 Cor 5: really gives us a snapshot of an event that really happened at the church at Corinth, there was a real bad sin that the church wasn't handling, obviously the individual wasn't handling, and Paul was saying "Folks you've got to deal with this." What's the reason the church needs to handle gross and open sin in the life of somebody in the body? Its because that person can infect other parts of the body. What do we do with cancer? We remove it, we'll treat it. We'll throw things at it, chemo, radiation, surgery. We're going to attack that. Now it's not quite like cancer, because we are trying to restore that person, and often that's not the case, but that is to be our desire.

### **QUESTION 5**

When sin enters our life and breaks our fellowship with God, it needs to be dealt with by \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves.

### **QUESTION 6**

In judging ourselves we need to see our \_\_\_\_\_ as God sees it and confess it to Him.

### **QUESTION 7**

Judging ourselves is a self \_\_\_\_\_.

### **QUESTION 8**

As we walk \_\_\_\_\_ to the light of God, we will see more and more that needs to be confessed in our lives.

## **Dealing with Sin**

1 Corinthians 5:1-5) So there was an immoral relationship, probably with a stepmother. (1 Corinthians 5:2) That's the extent, the utmost extent of church discipline, that person was removed from fellowship. (1 Cor 5:3-5) So this is a believer and that believer was to be put out, and other places Scripture talks about delivering one unto Satan, and that's kind of hard to understand. Basically the church is a bastion without Satan's influence and power, or it should be. So we take that believer, and we say no you can't come in now, you can't have fellowship here, you can't have the benefits of the local church. Everyone loves the benefits of the local church but they don't want to pay the price with a separated life. So put that one outside in Satan's dominion, and the person will be physically saved (salvation of the flesh) . The local church must deal with sin if the individual will not. The local church needs to attempt to restore the brethren. Galatians 6:1) So the object of church discipline is restoration, but we cannot hesitate to remove that individual from the body. 1 Cor 5:11) To eat with someone is the greatest extent of fellowship. That's true fellowship. We're not to do that, we're not to really have anything to do with that person. Not because we hate them, not because we despise them, not because we want the worst for them but because we love them. That's the only thing that's ever going to get their attention. How does that get their attention? It helps people to realize their sin. The holy Spirit within them makes them desirous for fellowship. I've seen Christians living very carnal and wicked lives, that yearn for fellowship, and when they're put outside the body, even though they are living a wicked and carnal life, it still hurts them, it still affects them. This should help them see the need to deal with the sin. That's the bottom line. The problem with church discipline today, is the people "church-hop." So if things get uncomfortable, maybe

the church doesn't officially remove them, but if they continued on this track they would have been removed, so they just go to another church. Then we have judgment of God; we've looked at 1 Corinthians 11, we know Hebrews 12, by the way we could be going through Matthew 18 and lots of different things about how we can judge each other, and help each other. If the individual doesn't do the job, the church doesn't do the job, or if the church does the job, but the individual doesn't get straightened out, then God comes in and He takes care of the situation. Remember how I said that some were sickly and weak? This was sin in the life of the believer that they weren't dealing with, in other words God had taken some of them to glory, to Heaven. In doing that, he negated any future ability for them to serve Christ and earn rewards in Heaven. So it's really a horrible thing if that were to ever happen, and we've got to make sure we judge ourselves, and make sure the church is willing to make judgments, and to stand up and make church discipline, realizing there is a judgment of God. Even in this age, which we call the age of Grace, Ananias and sapphire were part of that, weren't they? So we remember that. Out of love, God will teach us obedience and restore us through chastening, Hebrews 12:5-13.

### **QUESTION 9**

Everyone loves the \_\_\_\_\_ of the local church but they don't always want to pay the price with a separated life.

### **QUESTION 10**

It is \_\_\_\_\_ for a church to put a sinning member out of fellowship.

### **QUESTION 11**

The local church must deal with \_\_\_\_\_ if the individual will not.

### **QUESTION 12**

The Holy Spirit puts into the believer a desire for \_\_\_\_\_.

### **QUESTION 13**

The loss of fellowship should cause a believer to see the need to \_\_\_\_\_ with their sin.

### **QUESTION 14**

Even in this age of \_\_\_\_\_, a believer can be taken home to Heaven if he and the church will not deal with his sin.

## **Topic 2: Baptism**

One of the first ordinances, of the two we see in scripture, is baptism. Why baptism? What's the point? But it's a command, an ordinance. An ordinance is a command of God. Some churches call it a sacrament. We don't call it a sacrament because the sacrament implies that if you take part in this you will be made holy. We believe that's only done by confession. First of all by accepting Christ you are made

holy, then in our walk with Christ, confession is how we're made holy. IT's an act of obedience, it's a command of God that we be baptized. Where do we find it? Well our text verse we'll look at (Matthew 28:18-20) This is a command from the Lord to the disciples, when he was going and leaving, to do these things. It says to go; some have said it means as you go – we are to be in missionary activity each and every one of us. As we go, teach all nations, teach the Gospel first, then we teach them about the Lord and how we can live for Him. Baptizing is the key here, baptizing in the name of the father, and of the son, and the holy ghost. The word 'baptizo' means to dip, to plunge, or immerse. The actual name gives the idea that you are not sprinkling someone, you are not pouring on someone, and you'll have some churches doing that, especially with infants; they'll have a little flower and sprinkle them. The problem with that is if baptism is a step of obedience, how could an infant take a step of obedience if they haven't reached the age of accountability, if they're not even saved? We know that they are protected until the age of accountability, with a young child or someone that's mentally handicapped. But once that person reaches that age of accountability, they must exercise their own faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I've seen some children very interested in spiritual things at very young ages, 5 or 6, and I believe those children, I was one of them, was saved at a very young age. But then that child, once they understand following the Lord, and discipleship, and obeying God, hopefully they will ask to be water baptized. It should mean something, and it's a wonderful thing. It's a choice of a child that can follow the lord, or an adult. But it's after salvation. So if you're sprinkling a child, that individual doesn't know what they are doing. Why baptism? Well, we read about it in Acts, and you'll read about it all through acts; someone is saved, and they are baptized. It happens all through acts. Here's a prime example, and it also illustrates immersion, is Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. In (Acts 8:26-38),

**Assignment:**

- Memorize Matthew 28:19

**QUESTION 15**

An \_\_\_\_\_ is not something that helps to make you holy.

**QUESTION 16**

Being baptized is an act of \_\_\_\_\_.

**QUESTION 17**

The very word "baptism" gives the idea that you are \_\_\_\_\_.

**A Public Declaration and Picture**

So we see an example of baptism after salvation, we see it. It can happen right after salvation, it can happen a short time after salvation, I don't think it should happen months later. I think it should happen rather quickly, because it's the first step of obedience to Christ. Some churches will take a kid that came in on the bus and they'll dunk 'em. I think that's probably a little too soon, and you're asking for trouble when the parents find out. I still think it's an important thing to do quickly after salvation. It is also represented in this passage that he went down into the water, so baptism is by immersion. What else is such a picture? One other thing to note: who should administer baptism? It should be someone called to be a preacher. In the New Testament, the apostles and evangelists were the ones that were baptizing. Baptism, and this is the key, is a public declaration and it's a picture. Communion is a picture, it's done over and over again, as often as we need to remember. Baptism is a picture that is done one time. You get

to carry around that snapshot with you the rest of your life, knowing that you were baptized publicly, telling everyone that you have had a transformation on the inside, you are saved and you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are walking with him now. That all happened internally, you can't see it, you can't see salvation, although sometimes you can see a radiance on someone, or a smile when they understand it and believe, but generally that's an internal thing, but now we want to show the world; publicly declare and show our love for Jesus Christ. IT's a public identification, a public declaration, and that's what baptism is. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That's why immersion is so important. Romans 6:1-2) Why should we? It's possible, or this verse wouldn't be here, but why should we? Again, it goes back to confession. But then he uses this picture. (Romans 6:3) I believe he is speaking of spirit baptism, but spirit baptism is very similar to water baptism. Spirit baptism happens the moment you are saved, by the Holy Spirit you are baptized into the body of Christ, water baptism is something that happens later that you would request. That water baptism doesn't save you, it's a picture of salvation. Here's the picture of salvation. That's going down into and under the water. Death, burial, submerged. Christ died, was buried, (Romans 6:4) So it's this, we're telling the world that we're new in Christ, we're coming up out of the water, and we're risen with Christ, and we have in a spiritual way, so we're showing that in a physical way with water baptism. IT continues on in (Romans 6:5-6). Baptism is a beautiful picture of the death, burial, and resurrection. The baptism of John the Baptist, baptizing before Christ came, the forerunner of Christ, he was looking forward to identification with Christ. Today we baptize, we look back to identification with Christ. We also see that only believers are baptized. Only people that have faith in Christ are baptized.

### **QUESTION 18**

Baptism is something that should happen \_\_\_\_\_ after salvation.

### **QUESTION 19**

Baptism is a \_\_\_\_\_ of the transformation on the inside.

### **QUESTION 20**

Water baptism is a public picture of Jesus' death, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

### **QUESTION 21**

Only believers in Christ are to be \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Topic 3: Communion**

Then we come to the second ordinance of the church, the second thing that complements the church, that is communion. This is another reason why we have church, for baptism, for communion, and for church discipline. What is communion, why? Jesus originated what is called communion, the Lord's supper, at the night he was betrayed. This was in the upper room of Jerusalem; that night he was going to be arrested. You can get the context. He had his disciples with him and we are told that he broke bread. Why do we have communion? 1 Corinthians 11:23-28) tells us that we do it to remember the death of the Lord Jesus Christ until he returns. That's why it is so important. Who should take communion? The Scripture clearly teaches that communion is something that is done by the believer. The believer should be

celebrating communion. There are some churches that teach communion should only be taken by a member of the church. The very nature of communion indicates that all believers should participate and in Matthew 26:27) All of the disciples were to participate. The only one that wasn't to participate, we find in our text in Corinthians, was the person that was in sin, and that person could examine themselves, right before taking communion, or pass on it. How often should we take communion? It says as often as we need to, as often as we should. Some churches do it weekly, some do it monthly, some do it quarterly. It keeps you honest before the Lord, you don't want to take that cup unworthily. So no set rule, whatever the church decides, but I think once a month is good. How? Worthily – we need to take it worthily, not unworthily. The result of eating and drinking unworthily was the judgment of God on the church and on the individual. What are the elements of communion? You have the bread, the Passover bread. This was in preparation for the Passover, and they that day had to get all the leaven out of the house. They had to sweep the corners of the house. Remember the night before the Passover? They had to make sure there was no leaven; leaven represents sin. We need to make sure we sweep the corners of our lives, to make sure there isn't any sin there. The bread was unleavened bread. It reminds us of Christ, that the unleavened bread was pierced and put under intense heat, it is a beautiful picture helps us remember, broken, how the body of Christ was broken, without sin, and how it was pierced for us. The cup, by the way, there has been some controversy over what is in the cup? Is it wine or is it grape juice? I will guarantee you 100% positive that the juice in the cup at the time of the last supper was juice. it was the fresh juice of the vine, the grape. How do I know that? Because Christ gave the promise, that the next time he would celebrate this with the disciples would be in heaven, during the millennium. That's the time when we will be with him physically, and he will be with us bodily and present with us when we have this service. It says in Matthew 26:29)

### **QUESTION 22**

Communion is a \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord's supper, the night He was betrayed.

### **QUESTION 23**

Communion is only a \_\_\_\_\_ of the body and blood of Christ.

### **QUESTION 24**

Scripture clearly teaches that a \_\_\_\_\_ is to take part in communion.

### **QUESTION 25**

The only reason for a believer to not partake in communion would be if that person is living in \_\_\_\_\_ sin before God.

## **Unscriptural Errors**

There's been a couple errors that deal with communion, and what is actually happening. One is called transubstantiation. If you are of Roman Catholic background you might understand that, where they teach the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of Christ. They would base a scripture for their interpretation of that in John 6:53). So the church would interpret that as saying now you have to eat the real body and drink the real blood of Christ. There's a lot of problems with that. Number 1, this John 6 was a long time before his crucifixion. If that were the case, how would they be able to take

communion, they would equate that with part of being saved. If he hadn't died yet, you couldn't eat his body and drink his blood until he died and those people would have no hope of salvation. So it just doesn't make sense, it can't work, plus the Bible said that Jesus died once for all. Jesus said on the cross it is finished. So if this was his body and his blood all over again every time that communion was taken in that church, then it would mean the re-crucifixion, the re-death of Christ, which is a wrong doctrine, and has led many people astray. The Lutheran church and the church of England has taught consubstantiation, which teaches that the body and blood of Christ were present in a spiritual sense, they are present only in the moment when taken then cease to be. Again, I would give the same arguments against that too. What is communion then? The Bible clearly teaches Christ is breaking bread, and he is holding it out to them and he's not saying here take a bite out of my arm. He is saying take this bread, this is my body; in other words, this is a picture of me. What's a picture for? It helps remind us of something. It helps bring our mind back to an important person or place or thing. That's what the Lord's Supper is, it's a picture, it's a symbol of Christ's body, it's a symbol the blood, of Calvary. It brings us back to salvation. It shows these things in an important way, and only communion can do it. It shows humanity, it shows deity. The humanity is my body is broken for you, the deity is the Lord's supper, showing the deity of Christ. It shows the work of Christ, the elements show the body of Christ broken, the blood shed. The words show the resurrection and second coming..."Until I come." The resurrection and second coming are shown there. It shows the way of salvation. Communion assumes our guilt and Christ's merit. It shows his substitution. Communion is beautiful and a wonderful thing to celebrate. It's an important part that complements the church. It shows God's gift of eternal life.

#### **QUESTION 26**

\_\_\_\_\_ is the teaching that the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and blood of Christ.

#### **QUESTION 27**

\_\_\_\_\_ teaches that the body and blood of Christ are present in a spiritual sense.

#### **QUESTION 28**

A \_\_\_\_\_ helps bring our mind back to an important person or place or thing.

#### **QUESTION 29**

Communion shows Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **QUESTION 30**

We are to take part in communion until Christ \_\_\_\_\_.