

LOCAL CHURCH ORDINANCES

Acts 2:41-42

**Jesus Christ gave instructions to the local church
in order to keep them focused on the cross**

I. THE ORDINANCES

A. CHRIST'S DIRECTIVES

1. The Particulars
 - a. Baptism - Matthew 28:18-20
 - b. Lord's Table - I Corinthians 11:23
2. The Practices
 - a. Initiated in the gospels
 - 1) Baptism: Matthew 28:18-20
 - 2) Communion: Luke 22:14-20
 - b. Implemented in Acts
 - 1) Baptism - Acts 2:41
 - 2) Lord's Table - Acts 2:42
 - c. Practiced in the Epistles
 - 1) Baptism - I Peter 3:21
 - 2) Lord's Table - I Corinthians 11:17-34
3. The Reality
 - a. To refuse or reject these ordinances is to be disobedient to Christ
 - b. John 14:15 indicates that if we love Christ, we will keep His commandments

B. ADMINISTERED BY THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. The Details
 - a. Baptism - See Acts 2:41
 - b. The Lord's Table - I Corinthians 11:23
2. Some Distinctions
 - a. The assembled local church is the only valid place where these ordinances can be practiced
 - b. When administered or performed in other places they are improper

C. CROSS-FOCUSED

1. Because the good news of redemption through Christ's cross is ground zero for Christianity and the church - See Acts 2:41-42
2. In baptism we picture our salvation - See Romans 6:2-5
3. At the Lord's Table we remember our Savior - See I Corinthians 11:22-25

D. NOT SACRAMENTAL

1. These ordinances do not contribute to one's salvation - See Ephesians 2:8-9
2. These do not seal any covenant condition
3. These are not God's special instrument to bestow favor or forgiveness *Next page please*

II. WATER BAPTISM

A. FOR BELIEVERS

1. This is an initial step of obedience for one who's been born again
 - See the example of the Pentecost believers in Acts 2:41
2. Baptism is not a part of regeneration
 - a. Note Cornelius and company in Acts 10:47-48
 - b. There is no Scriptural reference to anyone who was baptized without first being saved
3. Not for infants
 - Because the Bible teaches "Believer's Baptism" infants should not be baptized

B. TO COMMUNICATE ...

- Baptism is a public profession of faith
1. An association with repentance - Luke 3:3
 2. An indication of transformation - Romans 6:3-5, 11-12
 3. A willing identification - Galatians 3:27
 4. A forgiveness of transgressions - Colossians 2:12-13
 5. A sensitivity toward righteousness - I Peter 3:21

C. BY IMMERSION

1. See Jesus' example in Mark 1:19
2. Note Philipp's experience in Acts 8:36-38
3. The Greek word "baptizo" always means to immerse and never anything else

III. THE LORD'S TABLE

A. THE ELEMENTS

1. Symbolic of Christ's body and blood - Luke 22:19-20
2. The elements are not supernaturally changed into Christ's actual body and blood
3. The elements do not mystically contain Christ's presence in and around them

B. THE SIGNIFICANCE - I Corinthians 11:17-34

1. A time of reflection (24-25)
2. A time of proclamation (26)
3. A time of examination (27-32)
4. A time of participation (33-34)

C. THE REGULATION

1. Who can come to the table? - See Acts 2:41-42
 - a. Those who have received the Word
 - b. Those who are baptized
 - c. Those who are church members
2. When should we come to the table? - See I Corinthians 11:26
 - a. "As often as you do this"
 - b. There are no frequency requirements

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CONCLUSION:

Jesus instituted ordinances that were implemented by the Apostles in Acts and practiced by local churches in the Epistles.

Baptism and the Lord's Table are ordinances of the local church given so that its members can publicly identify with Christ and remember His sacrifice on the cross

Are you a baptized believer regularly coming to the Lord's table?

- If not, you need to change and become obedient

Are you a believer who's come to Christ's cross for salvation?

- If not, you need to be born again and should do so today!