

Ordinances of the Church

Text: Revelation 2:12-16 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; 13 I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. 15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. 16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

II Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Introduction: We are in our Fifth Sermon on the subject of Fundamental Truths– TONIGHT – Ordinances of the Church: The 6th Statement of Fundamental Truths. Previous non-negotiable tenets of faith sermons were:

- .01 *The Bible is the Word of God - inspired by God, without error, & reliable/trustworthy for our faith.*
- .02 *There is Only One God as revealed in Scripture as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
- .03 *The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ*
- .04 & .05 *The Fall and Salvation of Man*

NEXT SERMON: *The Believer's Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

Why is it important to teach Christian Fundamental Truths?

Bill Muehlenberg, a conservative Christian cultural commentator best known for his Culture Watch blog, wrote in **"40 Quotes on the Importance of Sound Doctrine and Good Theology"** - *There would be many weaknesses in the church in the West today, but a major one would be the failure to teach and appreciate Christian doctrine. Our churches today are awash with those who run on emotions but not on biblical truth. The need of the hour is to restore sound theology into our churches.*

*Of course it goes without saying that right doctrine must always be accompanied by right living. One can have right doctrines and live wrongly, but **it is quite hard to live right if we do not believe right.**"*

(ref.: <https://billmuehlenberg.com/2023/02/05/40-quotes-on-the-importance-of-sound-doctrine-and-good-theology/>)

Other Quotes on Sound Doctrine:

- *Zeal without doctrine is like a sword in the hand of a lunatic. **John Calvin***
- *The devil is not fighting religion. He's too smart for that. He is producing a counterfeit Christianity, so much like the real one that good Christians are afraid to speak out against it. We are plainly told in the Scriptures that in the last days men will not endure sound doctrine and will depart from the faith and heap to themselves teachers to tickle their ears. We live in an epidemic of this itch, and popular preachers have developed 'ear-tickling' into a fine art. **Vance Havner***
- *What many men despise today as 'doctrine' the New Testament calls the gospel; and the New Testament treats it as the message upon which salvation depends. **J. Gresham Machen***
- *We should no more tolerate false doctrine than we would tolerate sin. **J. C. Ryle***
- *He that is not zealous against error, is not likely to be zealous for truth. **J. C. Ryle***

Ordinances of the Church - Water Baptism & Holy Communion:

WHY DOES THE CHURCH BELIEVE, TEACH, AND OBSERVE THESE TWO ORDINANCES? DOES THE BIBLE PROVE THEM TO BE NON-NEGOTIABLE TENETS OF FAITH? YES!

I. FIRST, let us quickly mention a 3rd Ordinance that some churches observe: FOOT-WASHING. Although, not a common ordinance of today's church, it is scriptural and acceptable to observe this ordinance too as an ACT OF OBEDIENCE, BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURE:

John 13:13-15 *Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

OBSERVING THIS ORDINANCE OF OBEDIENCE SHOULD BE EACH CHURCH BODY'S DECISION!

II. Water Baptism – WHY OBSERVE WATER BAPTISM? There are many reasons. Please allow me to name a few:

1. Water Baptism is an ACT OF OBEDIENCE TO SCRIPTURE - see scripture references below:

Matthew 3:13-17 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Mark 16:15-16 And he (*JESUS*) said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Acts 10:47-48 (after the CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS' HOUSEHOLD) Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...

2. Water Baptism is a Public Act of Identifying as a Disciple and Follower of Christ:

Billy Graham: "...take your stand publicly for Jesus—which He commands us to do. (This, incidentally, is one reason why I ask people to come forward publicly, openly confessing their faith in Jesus.) Jesus said, "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

3. Water Baptism is a PERMANENT MEMORIAL of our CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE:

Joshua 4:5-6 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

4. Water Baptism is a Symbol of New Birth – like the transformation of WORM to CATERPILLAR:

Romans 6:3-5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:**

5. Water Baptism is a SIGN OF HUMILITY – PRIDE IS BURIED and HUMILITY IS EXHIBITED:

Matthew 18:3-4 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

III. Holy Communion - WHY OBSERVE HOLY COMMUNION? There are many reasons. Please allow me to name a few:

1. Holy Communion is an ACT OF OBEDIENCE TO SCRIPTURE - see scripture references below:

Luke 22:14-20 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: **this do in remembrance of me.** Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

ALSO – Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; John 13-17

I Corinthians 11:23-32 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: **this do in remembrance of me.** After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: **this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.** Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

2. Holy Communion is a PERSONAL ACT of REMEMBRANCE of Jesus' Sacrifice for us:

I Corinthians 11:24-25 Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: **this do in remembrance of me.** After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: **this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.**

3. Holy Communion is a TIME TO OFFER THANKS UNTO GOD and TO WORSHIP HIM:

... the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: **And when he had given thanks, After the Last Supper in the Upper Room, Jesus guided his disciples into Worship with a hymn!**

Matthew 26:30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Mark 14:26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

4. Holy Communion is a TIME TO EXAMINE OURSELVES and our RELATIONSHIP with GOD:

I Corinthians 11:28-32 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

5. Holy Communion is a TIME OF REMEMBRANCE OF OUR PLACE WITHIN THE BODY OF CHRIST:

I Corinthians 10:16-17 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? **For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.**

IV. Closing: The Ordinances of the Church reminds us of OUR GLORIOUS FUTURE IN CHRIST:

I Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death **till he come.** --REST ASSURED, HE IS COMING! THIS IS THE BLESSED HOPE OF THE CHURCH!

Revelation 22:17,20 *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*