

# These Things We Believe Study

## Mt. Zion Church Bible Study

Taken from

**A Remedy for Itching Ears** written by

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## Lesson 5: Baptism, The Lord's Supper, and the Sabbath



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We Have a Vision to Be Intentionally Learning!

Introduction: The following lesson is intended to give clarity on topics that can be confusing due to the manner in which they are practiced across the Christian faith. The differences across denominations do not invalidate one or the other, rather they indicate various interpretations of what the practice means, is intended for, and/or should be modelled. Regarding *baptism, communion, and the sabbath*, the Baptist denomination seeks to follow Jesus' teaching to the letter with an emphasis on the symbolic meanings behind each practice. The first two, baptism and The Lord's Supper are two ordinances. Ordinance simply refers to religious rituals that are observed. These two rituals or practices are symbolic but are also commands given by Jesus. After this lesson, students will be able to define the scriptural basis and symbolic meanings of *baptism, communion, and the sabbath* in a clear and understandable manner.



## I. Baptism

**Article XIV part A Remixed:** We believe that baptism is an ordinance that we submit to as an outward sig or witness that we have experienced salvation through Jesus Christ. Baptism is done by immersion of the believer in water in the ae of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; it signifies our death to sin and our resurrection to new life in Jesus Christ.

Across the Christian faith and in various churches one may see baptizing ceremonies occurring in various manners. Some baptize or sprinkle infants. Others baptize at certain ages, pour water over the heads of congregants or other methods of "baptizing". The term baptize comes for a Greek root word BAPTIZO which means to immerse. The Hebrew word MIKVEH also means immerse. The denomination name of Baptist comes from this term which is a literal following of Jesus' baptism by John as recorded in Matthew 3: 13-17, Luke 3: 21-38; John 1: 29-34. In each instance the word baptize is used, thus to follow Jesus' practice exactly, Baptist and other denominations immerse believers fully under water.

- Baptism means \_\_\_\_\_

What is the symbolism?

The symbol of baptism relates again to the ideas represented in the act. First, a person is immersed in water which represents dying. The person is then raised from the water, which represents a new beginning in life. The literal picture is of a person being raised to a new life in Christ.



Reading Matthew 28: 19 one sees a specific order.

1. Go make disciples
2. Then baptize

The order is not baptism first and then make them disciples. In other words, before a person is to be baptized, they should know and understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Even if that understanding is very basic, they must at least understand why they are at a moment to be baptized, what it represents, and how it serves as a beginning (not a conclusion) of their Christian walk. This is what is meant by the *believers' baptism*.

One can find a great example of this process in Acts 8: 26-40 where the apostle Philip teaches an Ethiopian about Christ from the book of Isaiah. The Ethiopian lacked understanding. When Philip explained what the scriptures meant and to whom they were referring, the Ethiopian understood and then said **“Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” (Acts 8: 36)**


**Can you now explain it? Write down what baptism is and what it means.**


- Does baptism mean that I literally die?
- What or who is the model for being baptized?
- When should a person be baptized?

## II. The Lord's Supper (Communion)

**Article XIV part B:** We further believe that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance that we practice in the church that commemorates the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The bread signifies the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he gave to die on the cross of Calvary; and the cup signifies His blood, which was shed at Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. Whenever we do it, it is done in remembrance of Jesus Christ.

The second ordinance of the church is The Lord's Supper or as many call it, Communion (commune meaning to share something together). This ordinance was established by Jesus as recorded in Matthew 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22: 17-20; John 13 (John does not record the exact language of the command but records the broader conversation happening at the event). In each recording, readers will come to see that Jesus wants his disciples to commemorate His sacrifice which came on the cross. A deeper study of the significance involves understanding the Passover Feast which they were celebrating. Jesus redefines the meaning of Passover from that of a real lamb to Himself. In the act, Jesus tells them, He is the Lamb of God "which takes away the sins of the Earth." This reference fulfills many scriptures such as Genesis 22: 8, Isaiah 53: 7, John 1: 29, and Revelations 5: 2. In each instance Jesus is described as a lamb who is sacrificed for mankind.



The bread and wine during communion do not have "magical" or powerful properties. They are symbols of Jesus' sacrifice for mankind!

As an ordinance, we are following Jesus' command to commemorate His sacrifice (Luke 22: 19). The bread and the juice do not have some magical or spiritual properties. In fact, if a person does not have bread and wine, they can still commemorate Jesus' sacrifice with water and a grape or milk and a cookie. The point is that one pauses to consider why Jesus died for us and to give thanks for the sacrifice.

## Can you explain it? What is the importance of The Lord's Supper?


- What other names have been used for The Lord's Supper? Why do we have these names for the same thing?
- Why do you think Jesus wanted us to remember in this manner?

### III. The Christian Sabbath

**Article XV Remix:** We believe that the first day of the week, Sunday, is the Christian Sabbath or the Lord's Day. The Christian Sabbath is a holy day because it is the day that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. It has its roots in the Old Testament Sabbath and should therefore be observed as a day of worship, rest, and meditation on our life with God and the church both privately and publicly.

**Activity:** Let's see what you know about the Sabbath. Below is a chart of truths and untruths. Circle the accurate statements and cross out the inaccuracies about the observation of The Sabbath.

A. I need to eat with my family on the Sabbath	B. The Sabbath models what God did after creating everything	C. Observing the Christian Sabbath is different than the Jewish Sabbath	D. The Sabbath is supposed to be a day of rest and reflection
E. We should do nothing on the Sabbath	F. We find examples of the Sabbath in the Old Testament	G. The Sabbath is no big deal.	H. The reason I cannot have Chik-Fil-A on Sunday is because of the Sabbath
I. The Christian Sabbath is Sunday because Jesus was raised on the first day of the week	J. Jesus was criticized for doing work on the Sabbath	K. The Sabbath is the only day I should pause to think about The Lord	L. The Sabbath is for my benefit

The Christian Sabbath models the behavior of God. After six days, God rested. Knowing that we too need rest, God instituted the Sabbath in Exodus 20:8-11. The purpose was to give God's people a day where rest and reflection on God occurred. The Old Testament Sabbath was observed from sundown on our Friday through sunset on our Saturday (think basically Saturday). The New Testament Sabbath follows the day of Jesus' resurrection which scripture teaches was the first day of the week or our Sunday (See Matthew 28: 1).

God desires that we take time out and worship Him. However, if we only worship God on Sundays, we are missing the intent of worship. Every day should have time where we commune with The Lord. Every day should have time where we seek to grow our relationship with God. Sunday should be a continuation of the worship occurring all week.

So, what if I work???? Modern society has often required of us to do things that push us beyond God's intent. While not a command, I (Pastor Ken Patterson) would suggest that believers try to free themselves from having to work on Sundays. I have found that when we make the effort, God often makes a way for us to live as he has designed. Ask your boss if they would work your schedule so that you can worship on Sunday. You may be surprised at the outcome!

**Can you explain it? What is the Christian Sabbath and its purpose?**


Closing Prayer: Lord thank you for helping me to understand the lesson for today. I ask that you give me clarity and an opportunity to share what I learned. In Jesus name, Amen.