

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord's Supper
Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Make copies of the doctrinal statement under Main Idea for each participant. Cut them so they can be placed in each person's Bible. They are located in multiple copies on the final pages of this session.

Ask someone to read Psalm 95: 6, 7. Ask ahead of time if possible. Ask someone who may not have participated in the service before. Print it out from the final pages of the session.

Bible Study Leader:

Bring to the session a large photo or magazine picture of a family to use as a visual example as indicated in the guide.

Take your copy of the **Teacher Preparation** with you when you teach the congregation from the **Teaching Plan**. You may wish to read the “Background” section to the group sometime during the session as an explanation as to the purpose of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

During the “Application” time of the Teaching Plan, it is suggested that you prepare a list of items on newsprint or a white board. This should be done in advance. See the “Teaching Plan”!!

As well, make copies of the “Assurance of Salvation” reading for your youth to use during the “Take Ten” youth application time at the close of the Bible study. Also note the suggestion below that the same item be copied for all participants in your church to take home with them in their Bibles.

Worship Time Leader:

On the final page of this session is a printable summary of the salvation process and experience. It is also the activity for youth during the Bible study “Application” time for youth.

Prepare a large copy of the introductory example given. A printable version, large enough for the group to see, is located on the final pages of this session.

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Music Sources:

- “Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down”, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition, #105.
- “Spirit of the Living God”, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition, #227.
- “Great and Mighty Is the Lord Our God”, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition #281.
- “King of Kings”, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition #137.

1

Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord's Supper

Focal Text

Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Background Text

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:18-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:14-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12

Main Idea

"Christ instituted two ceremonial ordinances and committed them to his people for perpetual observance--baptism and the Lord's Supper. These two ceremonies are pictorial representations of the fundamental facts of the gospel and of our salvation through the gospel." (*Christian Doctrine*. Walter T. Conner. Nashville, Broadman Press, 1937, p. 273. Also in 1998 edition by Broadman and Holman Publishing).

Questions to Explore

What is the meaning of the church ordinances? Who are they for? How and when are they experienced? What is the difference between "sacramental" and "symbolic" ordinances?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to describe the Scriptural view of the nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Gathering together:

Sing "**Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down**", *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition, #105.

Have a child read Psalm 95: 6, 7 (Prepare a copy from the end of the session or have a Bible with reasonably large type ready for use by the child).

Come let us worship and bow down:

Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For He is our God,

And we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.

Psalms 95:6,7.

Copy the following statement and give to each participant before the worship/study time begins.

As we did last week, we will read together the statement which clearly states the function and importance of two ordinances. Keep the paper given to you as a reminder of the importance of the ordinances and their place in the great doctrinal beliefs we hold as Christians.

“Christ instituted two ceremonial ordinances and committed them to his people for perpetual observance--baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These two ceremonies are pictorial representations of the fundamental facts of the gospel and of our salvation through the gospel.” (*Christian Doctrine*. Walter T. Conner. Nashville, Broadman Press, 1937, p. 273. Also in 1998 edition by Broadman and Holman Publishing).

First thoughts:

The first year after Skip graduated from university, he taught school in a community where most people were baptized as babies. One child discovered their teacher belonged to a church congregation that baptized adults by plunging them under water in a baptistry. She asked him if he attended the small church in their community that had a swimming pool in their building. She did not understand baptism. Many believers do not understand the ordinances of the church. Today we will learn about baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won’t need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord’s Supper

Focal Text

Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Background Text

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:18-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:14-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12

Main Idea

“Christ instituted two ceremonial ordinances and committed them to his people for perpetual observance--baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These two ceremonies are pictorial representations of the fundamental facts of the gospel and of our salvation through the gospel.” (*Christian Doctrine*. Walter T. Conner. Nashville, Broadman Press, 1937, p. 273. Also in 1998 edition by Broadman and Holman Publishing).

Questions to Explore

What is the meaning of the church ordinances? Who are they for? How and when are they experienced? What is the difference between “sacramental” and “symbolic” ordinances?

Teaching Aim

To lead participants to describe the Scriptural view of the nature of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Introduction to your personal study:

A young person goes to the recruiting office of his country’s armed forces to make application for service. Mental and physical exams are given. The individual is either accepted or rejected. An officer of the armed forces leads in a swearing in ceremony and the new recruit pledges to serve faithfully. Usually the recruit is sent to a reception center to receive uniforms, insignia, and orientation. The new person puts on the

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Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord’s Supper – 05 14 12-en

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uniform of his branch of the service and is then sent for basic training. When does the new recruit become a member of the armed forces? Is it when application is made, when physical exams are passed, when the swearing in ceremony takes place, or when the uniform is put on? It's when the recruit swears allegiance to his officers and country, not when the uniform is put on. The uniform is a visible sign of the allegiance of the recruit. Baptism is the uniform of a believer, a visible and public sign of the allegiance of the convert. Using the same analogy, the Lord's Supper serves as a vivid reminder of the reason for our allegiance to Jesus: his enormous sacrifice for us and his complete lordship of everything in our lives.

Background:

All language consists of "symbols". That is, we only derive meaning from spoken or written words because we connect in our brains that certain patterns of speech or print mean certain things. For instance, *ciaaxadca* means nothing to us because it carries no mental picture or concept. It carries no symbolic understanding in our brains.

Certain actions also may have real life consequences but in themselves may also be symbolic in intent or meaning. Both baptism and the Lord's Supper consist of actions that carry a symbolic meaning. In their very action, they do not do anything in regard to our salvation. No magic or miracle takes place when we participate in these activities. However, as we study their symbolic meaning, and as we obey Jesus Christ's command to participate in these "ordinances", then we experience both the understanding of these two events and thrill of obeying our Lord and Saviour.

Focusing on the Meaning:

Jesus was baptized but not to be saved Mark 1:9-11

Mark 1:9 Jesus went to John the Baptist who was baptizing in the river Jordan. Jesus came from Nazareth that had been his home for thirty years. Here Jesus was baptized by John. Jesus was not baptized so that he could obtain salvation. He had come as the Son of God to provide salvation through this sacrificial death on the cross. The sinless one who needed not to repent was baptized by the one who called for repentance. Jesus' baptism was different from others who were baptized by the events that happened afterward. Jesus permitted himself to be baptized by John not to denote repentance, but to validate John's ministry, to set a pattern for his followers and to commit himself publicly to his redemptive ministry. Through this act he pictured his death, burial, and resurrection.

Mark 1:10 As Jesus came up out of the water there was a visible sign of acceptance from heaven of Jesus' mission in the world. Here the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove.

Mark 1:11 In this verse came the audible sign of acceptance. This audible sign was heard only by Jesus. Both the visual and audible signs following the baptism showed

the Father's approval. The spiritual power and truth of heaven were opened to Jesus. The mission given was to defeat sin that bothered men, both inwardly and outwardly. The mission included Jesus' own death to make men right with God.

Baptism Pictures the Death and Resurrection of Jesus and the Death to Sin and the Rising to the New Life by the Convert Romans 6:1-7

Romans 6:1 Paul in speaking of the victory of grace over sin which combats the possible perversion of grace. Some thought that God's forgiveness gave them the freedom to sin without penalty.

Romans 6:2 Paul states that believers have died to sin. They are so linked to Christ that they are joined to him and thus are dead with Christ to sin. They are risen with Christ to a new state where sin has no place.

Romans 6:3 Baptism pictured the identification of the believer with Christ. It pictures the separation of the individual from the sin of the earth which crucified Him. Baptism of the believer signified the death and burial with Christ from the sinful life of the world.

Romans 6:4 Not only did baptism picture the death and burial of Christ. The new convert comes up out of the water just as Christ came out of the grave of the dead. It demonstrates the resurrected life of Christ and also identifies the new believer with a new and different relationship to sin.

Romans 6:5 The believer, joined with Christ in his death, also is joined with Christ in the resurrected life with a different relationship to sin now that he has been delivered.

Romans 6:6 Through faith, Christians are crucified with Jesus so that sin will be done away with. Baptism pictures the turning away from sin by the believer.

Romans 6:7 A person who has died is no longer controlled by a master. The person dying is freed from the control of another, so it is with being controlled by sin. An individual who has died to sin is no longer a slave to sin.

The Lord's Supper Pictures Jesus' Death 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

1 Corinthians 11:23 Paul shared with the Corinthian church what he had received about what we know as the Lord's Supper. This is to be compared with the disorderly occurrences that sometime happened when the church at Corinth observed it. Paul begins with the happenings on the night Jesus was betrayed. Jesus and his disciples had participated in the Passover meal commemorating the delivery of the Jews on that night in Egypt when the death angel took the oldest male child from homes that had not placed blood on the doorway of the home.

1 Corinthians 11:24 After Jesus had given thanks, he broke the bread. He then announced that the bread represented his body which would be broken for them. He

commanded them to participate in the eating of the bread to remember him. The Passover meal looked back on an *event*; here Jesus was telling them to remember a *person*, the Christ. They were to remember the sacrifice of Jesus that provided escape from sin and gave a new eternal spiritual life.

1 Corinthians 11:25 He duplicated the action with the bread with the cup. He refers to the new covenant as stated in Jeremiah 31:33 where the new contract is written on the living hearts of men rather than the dead, lifeless tablets of stone. Again, they were instructed to remember the sacrificial death of Jesus when they drank of the wine. They were to remember not only the death of Jesus but his resurrection from the dead. Believers are to remember that he is not only coming back, but that he is present with us now.

1 Corinthians 11:26 As believers take part in the Lord's Supper they are preaching the Gospel. They are picturing the death of Christ. The broken bread, representing his body, and the wine, picturing his spilt blood, show to all the sacrificial death of the Son of God. It demonstrates the heart of the Gospel, that of Christ's death for all of mankind. This ceremony keeps in the hearts of the believers the fact of Christ's sacrificial death.

1 Corinthians 11:27 Those who take part in an unworthy manner are warned. An unworthy manner could be: not acting out of love for the fellowship of other believers, being insensitive to the presence of Jesus, not being grateful for his sacrifice on the cross, and not being conscious of the meaning of his salvation. To take part in one of these superficial ways would be sinning against Christ. Believers are not to participate carelessly or irreverently. The verse does not say we are to be worthy to take part. No believer will ever be worthy. We are to take part in a serious, introspective, and surrendering way.

1 Corinthians 11:28 A believer should examine himself. What is my fellowship with Christ? What in my life do I need to change? What do I need to do to better my fellowship and obedience to Jesus?

1 Corinthians 11:29 Failure to recognize the bread and wine as illustrative of the body and blood of Jesus is to miss the truth of the Lord's Supper. The judgment brought here is not damnation but a chastening punishment designed to bring the believer back to God.

A Greater Lesson

Faith and Belief Come Before Baptism

Acts 16:30 Paul on his second missionary journey arrived at Philippi. Lydia and her family were saved. Paul cast a demon out of a girl and the turmoil that followed ended up with the disciples in prison. An earthquake came and the doors were opened. The jailer came, fearful that the prisoners had escaped. Paul reassured him they had not

and the jailer questioned them about how he could be saved. We do not know where the jailer received previous knowledge of Paul's message but he knew enough to realize Paul was speaking of a relationship with God.

Acts 16:31 Paul and Silas shared that he must believe in the Lord Jesus. They told him the requirement was faith in the Lord Jesus. It was available to him and all of his household.

Acts 16:32 The disciples further explained the gospel to the jailer and those of his household.

Acts 16:33 The jailer ministered to Paul by caring for his wounds. Then immediately the jailer and his family were baptized. The simple step of faith made them acceptable for baptism.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

As the teacher or leader of your congregation in this study, your assignment consists of helping any pre-Christians in your group to see the real meaning of these two ordinances as opposed to what they may already visualize in their minds because of previous learning and experience. For the Christians in the group, your task should lead to a deeper understanding of each ordinance, a reminder of the scriptures discussing them, and a renewed conviction of their ability to explain them and defend their Biblically based practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord's Supper

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Background Text

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:18-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:14-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12

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Teaching Aim

To lead participants to describe the Scriptural view of the nature of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Connect with Life:

Hold up the magazine picture or photo of a family.

Prompt answers to these attention seeking questions: What is this? What is it for? What is its purpose?

In the discussion help participants to come to an understanding that one important use of the photo is to help the family members to recall individuals in the picture. The picture is displayed so that various family members can be remembered.

Share: Today we are going to examine the Bible to discover how baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be practiced so that we can remember the sacrificial death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Guide the Study:

Tell the group: Let's look first at Jesus' baptism as recorded in Mark 1:9-11.

Have a participant read Mark 1:9-11.

State: Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River.

Challenge the congregation with this: Have you thought about why Jesus was baptized?

Pause for a second or two for the group to think about it.

Emphasize: He was not baptized to picture his own death to sin and new life because he had not sinned. He was not baptized to be saved because he was not lost and estranged from the Father.

Share from the **Teacher Preparation** on Mark 1:9-11 why Jesus was baptized.

Seek an answer to this: What does v. 10-11 say happened? (Jesus saw heaven opened and heard a voice from heaven saying "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.")

Summarize: Jesus gained God's approval with this act of dedication. Jesus set an example for believers and pictured his death, burial, and resurrection from the dead.

Say: Let's look at another passage to see how it portrays baptism.

Request someone to read Romans 6:1-7.

Comment: Paul, in writing the believers in Rome, was combating the false teaching that the more a believer sinned, the more it showed the grace of God. He uses baptism in his argument to fight this falsehood.

Continue: What profound truth is expressed in v.3? (We are baptized into his death).

Discuss what that may mean for us in everyday terms.

Remind the group of this understanding: In v. 4 he says that because the believer is identified with Jesus' death that the believer also is then identified with the resurrection of Jesus to live a resurrected life.

Request responses to this activity. Share: Fill in the blanks of this sentence. "If we have been united with Christ in his _____", we will be united with him in his "_____." (death and resurrection are the two words used to fill in the blanks).

Explain: Baptism pictures two things. One is Christ's death and resurrection. The second is the believers death to a life of sin and a resurrected life with a different relationship to sin from which he has been delivered.

Now state: In this symbolic joining with Christ in his death, the sinful life of the believer is pictured as being crucified.

Follow with this question: What is to be the outcome of this crucifixion? (The believer is no longer to be a servant/slave to sin).

Ask: When is a person freed from slavery or servitude? (When the slave holder or the master is dead).

State: V. 7 then makes the application that the slave master of sin is dead, it no longer has control over the individual.

Summarize: This passage in Romans pictures the death and resurrection of Jesus and the parallel death to sin and the rising to the new life by the believer.

Have someone read Acts 16:30-33.

Look for an answer: What did Paul say was necessary for salvation? (Believe in the Lord Jesus).

Then ask: In v. 33, what happened to the jailer and members of his family? (They were baptized).

Call for an answer to this: Which came first, faith or baptism? (Faith). (This scripture passage was the focus an earlier study so the leader should be careful not to spend undue time here).

Remind the group of the beautiful story of the jailer and his family and the salvation which came to them.

Now emphasize this: We have seen how baptism is not necessary for salvation. We have seen that it does picture the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. It also pictures the death to sin in the life of the believer and his resurrection to a new life in relationship to the Lord. Now, let's look at the meaning of the Lord's supper.

Seek out a person to read I Corinthians 11:23-29.

Say: Paul recounts the experience of Jesus and his disciples at the first supper.

Question the group regarding this: What did Jesus say about the bread? (This is my body).

Encourage a response to this question: What were the disciples to do? (Do this in remembering Jesus).

Now ask: What did Jesus say about the cup? (This is the new covenant in my blood).

Continue: What were the disciples to do? (Whenever you drink it, remember me).

Tell the group: Here is the key question regarding the Lord's Supper. What was the purpose of the bread and the cup? (To remember Jesus and his sacrifice).

Restate their answer this way: The purpose of the Lord's supper is to remember Jesus and his sacrifice. It is to remember his death, not to bring salvation or other blessings that cannot be obtained in other ways.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

On the chalkboard or a newsprint sheet show this outline from the **Teacher Preparation**.

- A. Jesus was baptized.
- B. Baptism pictures the death and resurrection of Jesus—and the death to sin and rising to the new life by the convert. Romans 6:1-7
- C. The Lord's Supper pictures Jesus' death. 1 Corinthians 11:23-29
- D. Faith and belief come before baptism. Acts 16:30-33

Read each line of the chart.

Conclude with this summary of the study: The purpose of baptism and the Lord's Supper is to help us remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Finally, ask the group to listen with bowed heads as you close the study with this brief prayer:

“God, we are grateful for the sacrifice Jesus made for us. We thank you for these two acts which remind us of that sacrifice. Amen.”

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

Youth!!! Take Ten

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord's Supper Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

<p>A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.</p>
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See next page:

Life's Most Important Steps

The appropriate age for emphasizing the need for one to make a public profession of faith varies among faith communities and different cultures.

It is wise to remind ourselves of what it means to become a Christian.

The basics of Christian faith serve as a helpful tool for that remembering.

Admit that you are a sinner. "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). No one has lived up to God's perfect plan for his/her life.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Believe in the lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). Easy, yes. The hardest thing you will ever do? Yes. The simple faith step of believing requires both head knowledge and heart commitment.

Confess. "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9). Baptism is one of the first confessions of your faith; it tells the whole world you are serious about your faith.

These steps of accepting and professing Christ precede the act of baptism and the Lord's Supper. But once done, the act of baptism is a joyful time and saying to the whole world, "I believe, I believe, I believe". Every time we witness the baptism of another person, we rejoice that we have a new brother or sister in Christ and that this person no longer walks in darkness, but in light.

Sharing the Lord's Supper with fellow Christians is an opportunity to examine our hearts, ask for forgiveness, and celebrate remembering that Christ died for us and rose again. We celebrate the Lord's Supper with other Christians (in large groups or in small groups) to remind us that we are part of the people of all the ages who have rejoiced in this good news.

Share with one another times when a baptism (your own or some one else's) was especially meaningful. Ask yourself if you have honestly considered what is happening when you celebrate the Lord's Supper with other Christians? (Be honest here – do you really just wish the worship service would hurry up and be finished? Does it seem like the Lord's Supper is just one more formality to get through? How can you change your attitude? Do you see any need for a change?

3

Copy this section for the Worship Time leader.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)

Symbolic Understanding of Baptism and The Lord's Supper

Mark 1:9-11; Romans 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

Beginning the Service:

Sing “**Spirit of the Living God**” #227, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition
“**Great and Mighty Is the Lord Our God**” #281, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition

Offering:

Praying for the World:

Think today of all the people of the world who are displaced because of natural disasters, war, and famine. Pray especially today for those who have suffered from the recent hurricanes. Pray that the believing community will offer their love, homes, finances and job opportunities to those in need. Pray for officials coordinating relief efforts so that the immediate needs for food, shelter, and medical help can be met.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

Three Views of Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Romans 6:1-11; Mark 14:22-25

Introduction:

One of the most difficult tasks for parents is to teach their children to be obedient. Sometimes their obedience will keep them from getting burned or injured. There are times when obedience will unify a family. A good illustration of disobedience is in a simple picture of army troops:

I said, "LEFT face"!!!
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(Display the larger copy that you printed out.)

As Christians we also must learn to be obedient to our Lord Jesus. He gives us direction that is always best for us. We try in vain to prove we know best. In our every day world our attention span is very short. Our Lord gave us two symbols to help us gain a larger perspective in our lives. He commanded us to observe Baptism and the Lord's Supper to help us see the past, the present, and the future.

1. The symbolic Ordinances remind us of the past we should never forget.

The symbol of the Lord's Supper describes the broken bread as Christ's broken body in the crucifixion. The cup is a symbol of the covenant validated by the death of Christ. In baptism, Paul says, as we are plunged under the water, we "were buried with him through baptism into death (Romans 6:4a)." We must never forget that Jesus died for our sins and we identify with him through salvation. The symbol of baptism reminds us of that identification. God has kept his promise to Abraham and it has become a part of our lives in our being born again. We become children of God through salvation.

Both ordinances remind us of death--the death of Christ. We are reminded that through salvation we die to self, sin, and any future apart from Christ.

2. The symbolic Ordinances remind us of the present we should enjoy.

Paul reminds us "that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Romans 4:4b)." In baptism we remember the new "covenant" which is a walk with God in a new relationship as his Children. We are in a relationship of obedience to him. We walk with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

What a thrill to walk the Christian life -- the abundant life! It is the life of growing into the likeness of Christ. The ordinances remind us of that wonderful privilege. In Romans 4 Paul reminds us "We, too, may live a new life (v. 4); "we will also live with him (v. 8), and be "alive to God in Christ Jesus (v. 11)." Both symbols – baptism and the Lord's Supper - speak of a beginning, not an end! Our Lord's goal is not to baptize bodies but to transform the lives of those who have been baptized as confessing believers.

3. The symbolic Ordinances remind us of a future to anticipate.

Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God. (Mark 14:25).” Paul reminds us that “we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection...we will also live with him (Romans 6:4,8).”

Call to Commitment:

Read Romans 12:1-2.

Baptism calls us to identify with the Crucified One, to witness our hope in the resurrection, and to live in newness of life.

Concluding the Service:

Let us pray today that within our fellowship of believers we will be witnessing to lost friends, neighbours and others within our sphere of influence. Let us pray that soon we will witness a baptism within our group that will honour God and bless our fellowship.

Today would be a good time to celebrate the Lord’s Supper together. This ordinance can be done in small groups as well as in large groups. The focus is not on the elaborateness of the service, but on the fact of remembering the death of Christ for our redemption. Give time for reflection, repentance, and renewal as you celebrate.

End by singing “**King of Kings**” #137, *Maranatha Praise*, 3rd Edition

Helps for Today's Lesson and Worship

“Christ instituted two ceremonial ordinances and committed them to his people for perpetual observance--baptism and the Lord's Supper. These two ceremonies are pictorial representations of the fundamental facts of the gospel and of our salvation through the gospel.” (*Christian Doctrine*. Walter T. Conner. Nashville, Broadman Press, 1937, p. 273. Also in 1998 edition by Broadman and Holman Publishing).

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Psalm 95: 6, 7

**Come let us worship and bow down:
Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
For He is our God,
And we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.**

Life's Most Important Steps

The appropriate age for emphasizing the need for one to make a public profession of faith varies among faith communities and different cultures.

It is wise to remind ourselves of what it means to become a Christian.

The basics of Christian faith serve as a helpful tool for that remembering.

Admit that you are a sinner. "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). No one has lived up to God's perfect plan for his/her life.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Believe in the lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). Easy, yes. The hardest thing you will ever do? Yes. The simple faith step of believing requires both head knowledge and heart commitment.

Confess. "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (Romans 10:9). Baptism is one of the first confessions of your faith; it tells the whole world you are serious about your faith.

These steps of accepting and professing Christ precede the act of baptism and the Lord's Supper. But once done, the act of baptism is a joyful time and saying to the whole world, "I believe, I believe, I believe". Every time we witness the baptism of another person, we rejoice that we have a new brother or sister in Christ and that this person no longer walks in darkness, but in light.

Sharing the Lord's Supper with fellow Christians is an opportunity to examine our hearts, ask for forgiveness, and celebrate remembering that Christ died for us and rose again. We celebrate the Lord's Supper with other Christians (in large groups or in small groups) to remind us that we are part of the people of all the ages who have rejoiced in this good news.

Share with one another times when a baptism (your own or some one else's) was especially meaningful. Ask yourself if you have honestly considered what is happening when you celebrate the Lord's Supper with other Christians? (Be honest here – do you really just wish the worship service would hurry up and be finished? Does it seem like the Lord's Supper is just one more formality to get through? How can you change your attitude? Do you see any need for a change?