

One Baptism, Many Communions

Introduction:

1. Tonight I want to consider the topics of baptism and the Lord's Supper because, in these two traditions, we have some beautiful pictures. Notice I said "pictures." Baptism and the Lord's Supper both **picture** something.
 - Pictures aren't bad, but a picture isn't the real thing. Religions take these two pictures and try to make them be the real thing. They say that baptism washes away your sins, and when you partake of the Lord's Supper, you take in Christ himself.
 - Instead of walking by faith in Christ, religion makes it all an observance of rituals, with man trying to do something to be justified before God.
2. What does the Bible teach about these two pictures?
 - In the Bible, baptism came after a person had believed the message of Christ, and baptism publicly identified the person with Jesus Christ.
 - In the Bible, the Lord's Supper also came after a person was saved, and it was a commemoration of the Lords' death for us on the cross.
3. Two differences between baptism and the Lord's Supper must be distinguished.
 - Baptism was a one-time event and was observed at the beginning of the Christian's life, never to be repeated. After Christ's finished work, once a person believed on Christ, received the Holy Spirit, and was saved, he or she would be baptized.
 - Communion was a repeated practice and observed frequently.
 - In other words, **one baptism, many communions. But why?**
4. The reason is very clear when we understand the meaning of the two:
 - Baptism is a picture of our **union** with Christ.
 - The Lord's Supper speaks of our **communion** with Christ and our communion with other members of the body of Christ.

Baptism

1. Baptism is a picture of our eternal relationship and standing in Christ. It speaks of identification. It is a picture of the unchangeable **union** that we have with our Head (Jesus) through faith alone in Him, which brings salvation. Ephesians 5:30-32; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:17
2. This union that we have in Christ can never be lost. Therefore, baptism (which pictures that union) doesn't have to be repeated.
 - Aren't you glad that, once per quarter, we don't all line up to go through baptism and get dunked!
 - Just as our union with Christ is a one-time event, so is baptism.
3. We have an indestructible union with Christ (Romans 8:38-39). When we got saved, the Holy Spirit baptized us into Christ, and into spiritual union with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27

4. The moment I got saved, I became a partaker with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. His history is my history. God now identifies me in His Son's finished work. What is true of Him is now true of me. I am in Christ!
 - Water baptism is an outward picture of the Holy Spirit baptism into Christ.
 - Romans 6:3-4 (This is the real thing and happened at salvation.)
 - We can't die twice, no more than Christ can. We die with Christ once (just as He died once), and are raised with Him by faith only once for all eternity.
5. Therefore, baptism - which signifies this death, burial and resurrection - does not need to be repeated. Water baptism is simply a picture of the one true baptism (Holy Spirit baptism) that saves you and places you into an eternal union with Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper

1. While baptism speaks of our **union** with Christ, the Lord's Supper speaks of our **communion** with Christ (our fellowship). "Come on over to the house and commune with us around the dinner table." It speaks of fellowship.
2. You can have union, but lack communion. **Illustration:** Tie two cats together by the tail! You have union, but no communion. Marriage: You can have union, but broken communion.
3. Our union with Christ can never be broken (once we trust Christ). It is eternal, and we are already seated in Him in heavenly places. It is settled in heaven. Ephesians 2:6
4. But our communion (fellowship) takes place daily on planet earth. That fellowship with Christ is something that we decide upon daily, of our own free will. We decide whether we will walk in Him in sweet communion. Colossians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 10:21
5. We are perfect in our standing and eternal position in Christ. But, in our daily walk and earthly state, we are very imperfect. We can choose to walk after the flesh and not walk in communion with Christ. Galatians 5:25
6. How often we fail, we sin, we walk after the flesh, and our fellowship with Christ is hindered. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of the fellowship that we are created in Christ to enjoy, not only with Christ, but with the other members of the body.
7. It is a time to remember the great sacrifice He made for us on the cross so we could enjoy that fellowship. It is a time to examine ourselves and make sure that our communion is all that it should be with Christ in light of all that He has done for us.
8. It is a time to make sure that our communion with the other members of the body is what it needs to be, and that we aren't carrying bitterness and unforgiveness and grudges.

In Conclusion:

1. **One baptism** – Why? Because we only get saved and placed into spiritual union with Christ once. Baptism pictures this once-for-all eternal union in Christ.

2. **Many communions** – Why? Because every day we wake up and decide whether we will walk in communion or fellowship with our Savior. Our communion with Christ is something we have to seek for each and every day.