

# **\*The Heights Baptist Church \* Sermon Series: Doctrine\***

## **\* Topic: The Sacraments \* Scripture: Various \* 5/17/26 \***

### **MAIN POINT**

A sacrament is a symbolic act ordained by Christ to be performed by His church. These include baptism, which Jesus instituted as part of His Great Commission, and communion, which Jesus told his disciples to do in remembrance of Him. There is deep spiritual meaning in these two sacraments.

### **INTRODUCTION**

**What special traditions do you or did you partake of with your family that have special meaning to you; and what made them so special?**

We celebrate birthdays, holidays, and special occasions together. These traditions are special because they celebrate something significant together with those we love. These moments communicate something about an event's importance, and they connect us to each other in a way that other daily activities do not.

In today's lesson, we will be looking at the two sacraments Jesus instituted for the church to carry out together. They are rich in spiritual meaning and are carried out together as a body of believers.

### **UNDERSTANDING**

#### **BAPTISM**

The Great Commission is recorded in Matthew 28:16-20. This is one of the last instructions Jesus gave his disciples before ascending into heaven. Part of this commission includes the direction to baptize people, and this is still our mission as the church today.

### **ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES**

**What do each of these verses tell us about the spiritual meaning of the sacrament of baptism?**

- **Acts 22:16:** Symbolizes calling on Jesus' name, washing your sins away.
- **Colossians 2:12:** Symbolizes our old self being buried with Christ, and our new self being raised with Him, through faith.
- **Romans 6:3-7:** Symbolizes our being united with Christ in his death and resurrection, that we no longer are slaves to sin, and have been raised to live a new life in Christ.
- **Matthew 3:11-12:** Symbolizes more than just repentance. It symbolizes our being baptized by the Holy Spirit.
- **1 Corinthians 12:13 and 27:** Symbolizes our being joined by the Holy Spirit to form one body; the body of Christ .
- **Galatians 3:27:** Symbolizes our being clothed with Christ. When God sees us, He no longer sees our imperfect sinful life. He sees Jesus perfect sinless life.
- **1 Peter 3:21-22:** It is a pledge of good conscience between a believer and God through the resurrection and ascension of Christ.

**How would you summarize what baptism by immersion symbolizes for the believer?**

Outward picture symbolizing: our sins being washed away; being buried with Christ (in our old nature) and being raised with Him (our new nature); being baptized by the Holy Spirit into one body; being clothed in Christ; a pledge of good conscience toward God.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 PETER 3:18-22

**In what ways is Noah's flood a great picture of baptism?**

The world had become completely corrupt. The flood waters brought judgement on the world, while Noah and his family were protected in the Ark. After the flood, the wicked world had been destroyed, and only righteous Noah and his family emerged from the flood. (Noah's righteousness was based on his faith in God).

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-4

**In what ways is Israel crossing the Red Sea a great picture of baptism?**

Slavery in Egypt pictures slavery in sin. Israel and Egypt's armies entered the Red Sea. The waters of the Red Sea drowned the Egyptian Army, and only pure Israel emerged from the sea (Israel's righteousness was based on their faith in God [Hebrews 11:29]).

COMMUNION

ASK A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 22:17-20

**What symbolism did Jesus tie to the bread and the cup at the Lord's supper?**

Jesus took the bread at the Passover meal and broke it, saying, "This is my body given for you." When he took the cup, he said "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." He is revealing a previously hidden meaning about the Passover meal.

1. The body of Christ pictured in the bread

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES

**What do these verses tell us about the spiritual meaning of the bread in communion?**

- **1 Corinthians 11:24:** Jesus' body was broken for us.
- **Exodus 16:2-4 and 35, and John 6:48-53:** Jesus is the bread from heaven. He sustains us spiritually, just as the manna from heaven sustained Israel physically while they were in the desert.
- **Exodus 12:15, Matthew 16:6 and 11-12, and 1 Corinthians 5:6-7:** Unleavened bread shows us Jesus lived a sinless life in our stead.

**Based on these verses, how would you summarize the spiritual meaning of the communion bread?**

Bread sustains our physical life. Jesus sustains our spiritual life. Leaven is often used in the scriptures to picture how evil can rapidly spread throughout the environment it is included in. So unleavened bread shows us Jesus lived a sinless life, qualifying him to be the perfect, acceptable sacrifice for our sins. This is also pictured in the Passover lamb, which was required to be spotless and without blemish, sacrificed for us.

2. The blood of Christ pictured in the cup

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ EXODUS 12:5-8, JOHN 1:29, AND HEBREWS 9:22

**What do these verses tell us about the spiritual meaning of the cup in communion?**

Jesus' blood was shed for the washing away of sins.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ HEBREWS 9:22-28 AND HEBREWS 10:1-4 and 14.

**What to these verses remind us of about the importance of Jesus shedding his blood on the cross for us?**

Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. We take the fruit of the vine in a cup separate from the bread, showing Christ's blood has been shed for us, making perfect payment for our sins.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES

- **Genesis 2:17**
- **Leviticus 17:11**
- **Ephesians 2:1,12-13**
- **John 6:53-57**
- **John 11:23-27**
- **1 Corinthians 15:20-23**

**While celebrating the Lord's supper, we don't just pour out the juice or wine from the cup, representing Jesus' blood having been shed for us; we drink it. What is symbolized when we drink the cup as we celebrate communion?**

"The life is in the blood." In Adam, all of us have died; there is no life in us. We were all dead in our sins. But Christ lived a perfect life, and there is life in his blood. Jesus is the provider of our spiritual life. Unless we drink the blood of Christ, we have no life in us.

3. The importance of regularly partaking of communion together as a church

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-29

**As disciples of Christ, why is it important for us to partake in communion?**

- Because Christ tells us to do this.
- To proclaim the Lord's death until he comes, remembering what Christ has done for us.
- To examine ourselves (reflecting on whether we are walking in obedience to Christ).

APPLICATION

ASK A VOLUNTEER READ LUKE 22:24-30

**It is clear the disciples were not fully grasping the significance of what they were partaking in. What was their natural focus on, and what did Jesus tell them their attitude needed to be?**

**How can we apply these lessons to our life?**

**Have I been obedient to Christ by being baptized as a believer in Christ?**

PRAYER

Thank God for making a way for sinful people to be restored to Him through the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ. Thank Him for the beautiful pictures Christ has given to us in the sacraments to help us remember what He has done for us. Help us not to just go through the motions as we participate in these sacraments, but to focus on the meanings behind them, of the work Christ has done in our lives.

*Note to study leader: Since this lesson is comprised of many individual passages from scripture rather than one larger chunk of scripture, the usual Commentary section is not included in this lesson.*