

## ***The Things we Do! "Glimpsing Water Baptism, Communion and the Laying on of Hands!"***

**Key Verses:** "Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John resisted him, saying, I have a need to be baptized by you, and are you coming to me? And Jesus answered him saying, allow it to be so now: *for this is how we will fulfil all righteousness.* Then he allowed him. Matthew 3:13-15

**"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.* 1Corinthians 11:23-26**

**"And these signs shall follow them that believe... In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; *they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*" Mark 16:17,18**

### **Introduction**

Our three texts underlie the three "sacraments:" *rites conferring grace*, given to the church! Typically, sacraments are rituals or traditions that are held high by people practicing religion. Sometimes they are held so high that they overshadow a person's faith, defy reason, and hinder others from coming into a life of faith (The NT is filled with examples where overly zealous religionists eclipsed the very purpose of their faith! Mt 9:1-17; 12:19; 15:1-14, etc.). But the sacraments left us by the Lord (And in each case above *He is the One* who left them behind for us) should only be visible forms and reminders of valid, invisible truths!

We'll begin dealing with our "sacraments" on the basis of the frequency by which we utilize them or by the frequency by which they enter into our lives. Water Baptism for instance was designed to be, generally speaking, a one-time event. Communion is something that happens with a fairly regular frequency in a believer's life, actually "as often as we have the need to remember." And included among the many rights given to us by Jesus Christ, the laying on of hands is something that should be happening with great regularity, for many different reasons, throughout our daily experiences!

So, let's take a look at each of the three... the sacraments of Righteousness, Remembrance, and, "Rights"!

## Water Baptism, the Righteousness Sacrament!

There is something very "simple" about being baptized in water! It makes the minds of 21<sup>st</sup> Century/Year 2000 thinkers' cramp to think that an adult would have to submit to such an unceremonious, childlike, activity... But if Jesus, who was completely sinless and totally righteous needed to submit to the requisite of water baptism to fulfill the right order of God... Then there should be no wonder that we are called to follow suit as well! Believers need to be baptized!

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:19,20

The gospel message includes repentance and baptism:

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38

Water Baptism was an institution in the Old Testament, during Jesus lifetime and now it's a commandment for all believers!

### Only one shot?

Many things are different today than they were in the beginning days of the church because we have had years to develop our different religious ways! Many of us have come from backgrounds where babies are baptized as a combination dedication to the Lord and entry into the Kingdom of heaven. Since we know that salvation only comes by faith in Jesus, baptism doesn't work as a salvation mechanism. There's really no harm in getting a baby wet by immersion or by sprinkling (and the symbolism should not be lost – water representing the Word of God or the Holy Spirit), but Biblical baby dedication does not necessitate the use of water! Since many of us have been baptized as babies and later have come to the knowledge of God's saving grace in Jesus, it follows that we want to walk in obedience and be baptized! Can we? Does being baptized once hinder us? No, in fact, many people have been baptized more than once because of a salvation experience subsequent to infant or child baptism... Because of their desire to be baptized with "understanding"... Wanting to be re-consecrated to the Lord after an absence... Or just to be re-identified with Him in His death and resurrection (Romans 6) at a time of personal revival! One time is enough to be baptized in water if you did it with understanding... but more than once is perfectly fine too!

### Only one way?

Actually, we only see one mode of baptism in the Bible and that is immersion. We see Jesus being immersed. The men and women coming to John were being immersed. Philip, baptizing after the dispersion of the church "Went down into the water with the Ethiopian eunuch, and he baptized him there." Baptizo, the root word used for baptize, baptism, or baptized means immersion, to wholly cover with water, to plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm, etc. Paul gives us a further image in Romans 6 that to be baptized in Christ is to be buried with Him (going down into something – i.e.: the ground) and that coming up from the water is like being

resurrected with Him into new life. While we would not discount baptism a different way in dire circumstances, whenever there is water available, we would opt for baptism by immersion!

### The Multiple Benefits Of Obedience To Be Water Baptized!

The four main benefits of Water Baptism are highlighted in Matthew 3:13-17:

- **The Fulfilling of righteousness!** v15

"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness."

- **Supernatural enlightenment!** v16

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, the heavens were opened unto him."


- **Holy Spirit Anointing!** v16

"And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

- **Father's affirmation!** V17

"And a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."


 **What is our method of water baptism?** \_\_\_\_\_

 **What are some of the things that happen when we are baptized in water?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 **Have you been baptized in water?**    \_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no

 **If not, why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

## Communion – the Remembrance Sacrament

Communion is a sacrament that happens with a great deal of regularity in the church! Unfortunately it generally only happens in a church service! But it is not *only* for a church service! Communion is for us, *the* church, to individually partake of any where, any time we need to remember Jesus, His life, His sacrifice, His substitution, or our freedom from sin, from sickness, from brokenness, from bondage, etc! Some of the most astounding visitations you will have from the Lord will be when you sit

down at your kitchen table and take communion, just you and Him in fellowship together!

Communion turns our mind to Jesus! It is shot through with "In remembrance of Me!" We remember the new covenant that has come as a result of *His* sacrifice and we relate to *Him* at a level higher than mere laws. We remember our need for *Him*, that without *Him* we can do nothing of lasting value! We remember the victory that is ours because of *Him* and it promises a new start after failure! We are reminded of the price of redemption that we have in *Him* and it renews our esteem and hope! We are reminded that *He* is coming back and that someday we'll experience the fullness that we now only have in part! And sometimes we just "remember Him!" Thinking back on Him as we've seen Him in the pages of the Bible... As the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, as the Master of Quality, Time, Distance, Provision and Master over mans misfortune. We have Kodak perfect pictures of Him as the Spring of Life, the Empowered One, the Forgiver, the Door, the Great Shepherd, and Master over Death! He is the ideal image of the Servant, the Way, the Truth and the Life! He stands in vivid relief as the Vine, the Overcomer and the Intercessor! He is the One we see submitted and anointed for death, burial and Resurrection and then we see Him as the Great Commissioner and, in flashes of glorious imagination, as the Returning King on a White Horse coming with thousands and thousands of saints to gather us up! He is wonderful and beautiful and worthy of great meditation! And a call to remember Him in all aspects is couched in the sacrament of Communion! Communion is definitely the Remembrance Sacrament!

### Understanding Communion!

There are five elements of communion:

**Bread:** symbolizing the broken body of Jesus, who is for us, The Bread of Life!


**Juice:** symbolizing the redemption we have through Jesus blood, shed on the cross for us!


**Faith:** Partaking of His blood and body is an act of faith! While some believe in transubstantiation: the conversion of the communion elements of bread and juice into the actual Body and Blood of Jesus Christ... Or consubstantiation, that the Body and Blood of Jesus co-exist with the bread and juice we partake of... We believe that we are substantiated: made firm and strong, made partakers of His incredible sacrifice, by faith!

**A Self-Examined heart:** There is a clear injunction against taking communion "unworthily:" irreverently, without gravity or sobriety, without discernment of the Lord's Body (offered and broken for us)! In fact, if we "eat and drink" without discernment of the Lords sacrifice the Bible says we are "eating and drinking judgment on ourselves" and for this cause, many remain sick and die (The Remembrance Sacrament of Communion definitely has life altering affects!.)! We must examine our hearts to see if there is, at any time, apathy, coldness, callousness, blindness when we are partaking of something as significant as the "Lord's Supper!"

**A Re-Collected Mind:** During moments of communion we must "gather up the fragments" of our glimpses and experiences with the Lord that are littered around our busy lives so that "nothing is lost!" In fact, by spending much time in communion with Him we will find that when the fragments are gathered up that, just like His touch on the original "five loaves," there is more left over than we

started with! When taking communion we must put our minds to work, Remembering!

 **Communion is something I can do at home alone or in Church or anywhere that I have the need to remember!**    \_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_ no

 **With the Bread and Juice I must also include \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_ if I am going to receive the full benefits of common-union with Him!**

## The Laying on of Hands – the “Rights” Sacrament!

The laying on of hands is a “right” given us in the Lord that has application in every day life! All of us have been given authority in Jesus to utilize for doing good things, and the laying on of hands can confer many of those good things! We should be employing it far more than we do and the only reason we don’t have much more of it may be because we don’t fully understand its scope of use!

### Understanding its use!

- **Healing!** *“They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover!” Mk 16:18*

This is more than the positive power of touch (which should not be minimized in our touch-less society!)! This is the touch of identification, of compassion, of impartation! When Jesus conferred this benefit on all believers He was asking for people to be His hands extended! More often than not, Jesus touched the people He was praying for! When you pray for someone, don’t be hesitant to make a lateral kingdom connection by laying a hand on their shoulder or head!

- **Infilling with the Holy Spirit!** *“Through the laying on of hands the Holy Ghost was given...” Acts 8:18*

People want to know if “just anyone” can do this! The answer is “Yes!” Anyone can pray for someone who is willing to receive the Holy Spirit! He is a gift that the Lord desires every believer to experience and any person of faith (Because we receive Him by faith) can lay their hands on someone and ask Father for the gift poured out two thousand years ago! There is nothing quite like the experience of praying for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with someone and seeing and feeling the power of God flowing into their lives!

- **The impartation of spiritual gifts!** *“I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to the end that you may be established!” Romans 1:11 “I put you in remembrance to stir up the gift of God which is in you by the putting on of my hands.” 2Timothy 1:6*

Is this something for every believer? Actually, if we can have a part in praying for someone to receive the Holy Spirit, certainly we can have a part in laying hands on them to receive His gifts as He directs us! [Note: Since we don’t have any gifts of our own to distribute, and it’s not our will, all a person will get from us praying without direction is messed up hair or a sweaty head. And if someone wants you to pray for them to receive some gift, remember the injunction to not lay hands on any one quickly... you must hear from the Holy Spirit, whose gifts they are and whose will is eminent!]

- **Blessings on your children!** *"And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them!" Mark 10:16*

Jesus gave us the permission to imitate Him! There is probably only one "more" pastoral scene in the Bible than this moment with the children (That would be the Great Shepherd laying down His life for the sheep!)! A praying touch is far more effective than a touching prayer! It is a wise person who takes the time to lay a hand on a child to ask Father for a blessing upon them!

- **Ordination/Setting apart of ministers/ministry!** *"They set them before the apostles and when they prayed they laid their hands on them." Acts 6:6*  
*"Separate Barnabas and Paul for the work I have for them. And when they fasted and prayed they laid their hands on them and sent them away." Acts 13:2-3*


This is such a touching moment for all concerned when, in obedience to the Lord's direction and confirmation by the Holy Spirit and visible fruit, we commission a brother and sister for ministry. It's such a joy to touch them as we pray symbolizing our commitment to them, our support for them, our identification with them, and our partnership with them in the field of their work!

 **Name the ways you have employed the laying on of hands during your Christian lifetime:**


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 **How many more experiences do you have coming? \_\_\_\_\_**

## Response To Truth

 **Now knowing that "Sacraments" are Ordinances of Grace, literal "legislations" given us by the Lord to insure life-giving interactions with spiritual truths... And that they are *not options* for 21<sup>st</sup> Century, self-ruled, democracy-riddled believers...**

**I am going to be much more careful to observe all that I have been "commanded" to do... Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_**

**And I am going to employ all three sacraments with new fervor!**

**Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_**