

Baptism and The Lord's Supper
 Ordinances *of and for* the local church
 Research for the elder's of Trinity Baptist Church
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Baptists have generally believed¹ that there are two ordinances, Baptism and The Lord's Supper. These ordinances are symbolic rather than communicative, i.e. sacraments. These ordinances are the ordinances *of and for* the local church and not ordinances *of* a portion of a local church, or individual Christians.²

Baptists have consistently held that baptism is by immersion for those who have been born again by faith in Jesus Christ.³ Baptism is a sign of identity with Christ in redemption, separation from the world, and the door into the local church whereby the member submits himself to be accountable to a local body of believers.⁴ The Lord's Supper is closed or semi-closed and is inextricably connected with church discipline.⁵

¹ Some Baptists have practiced foot washing as a third ordinance of the church.

² "The ordinances are to be administered by the authority of the church. ... They belong to the church and are to be kept and administered only by the church. ... That is also why the church must receive the candidate for baptism, not a man, even though he be the preacher. Even Simon Peter did not arrogate to himself that authority; namely, to personally receive candidates for baptism. In Acts 10:46-47 the great apostle first asked, 'Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy [Spirit] as well as we?' Only under the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit, and as an ordained deacon-evangelist-emissary of the mother church in Jerusalem, did Philip baptize the Ethiopian treasurer in Acts chapter 8." *Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors*, W.A. Criswell, (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), page 200.

³ "Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming." *Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.* VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper; *Baptist Faith and Message 2000*.

The Greek word for baptism is, *baptize*, which means to "dip" or "plunge". In addition, the symbolism of the death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12) is best portrayed by believer's baptism by immersion.

⁴ "Baptists baptized. It signified redemption in Christ; it was the gospel in picture. ... But it also signified the separation of the church from the world. In baptism converts abandoned the world—its values, pastimes, and sins—and entered the kingdom of God on earth. It was a pledge to live according to the kingdom's moral code under the church's oversight." *Polity: biblical arguments on how to conduct a church life*, edited by Mark Dever, page 24.

"The local churches together are to be a faithful replica of the true church, the universal church." *Lectures in Systematic Theology* by Henry Clarence Thiessen page 321.

"Not only does baptism symbolize the identification of the convert with Christ; it also is the visible means of identifying the penitent with the local body of believers." Thiessen page 325.

Baptism is commanded in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

“It is ordinarily the door into the visible, local church. Acts 2:41.... He is thereafter presented to the church as a candidate for baptism (Acts 11:47; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:36-39).” Criswell page 203.

“Christian baptism is in essence the representation [*Abbild*] of a man’s renewal through his participation by means of the power of the Holy Spirit in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and therewith the representation of man’s association with Christ, with the covenant of grace which is concluded and realized in Him, and with the fellowship of His Church.” *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*, Karl Barth, (London, SCM, 1948), page 9.*

“It serves as a public testimony of one’s faith in Jesus Christ. It is an initiatory rite—we are baptized *into* the name of Christ.” *The New Directory for Baptist Churches*, Edward T. Hiscox, (Philadelphia: Judson, 1894), page 121.*

It confirms the fact of one’s salvation to oneself and affirms it to others. ...It is, then, a testimony that one has already been regenerated. If there is a spiritual benefit, it is the fact that baptism brings us into membership or participation in the local church.” *Systematic Theology*, Augustus H. Strong, (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1907), page 945. **Above three quotes by Barth, Hiscox, and Strong, from selected pages in

Christian Theology, Vol. 3, Millard J. Erickson, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985) Chapter 52 – The Initiatory Rite of the Church: Baptism. “Baptism marks the juncture of individual discipleship and corporate discipleship. By it the believer becomes submissive to the discipline of the church. Without believer’s baptism the visible church could not exist. [Baptism] is ...the indispensable sign of incorporation into the visible fellowship of believers.” *The Anabaptist Story*, William R. Estep, p179

⁵ “They upheld their duties also by exercising church discipline. To allow wickedness among them to go and rebuked and unrestrained would pervert the design of the Lord's Supper. ...Baptists visiting from other churches usually participated (they called this "transient communion").... Some churches did not allow Baptists who belonged to other churches to take the Lord's Supper with them. With all Baptists they agreed that only careful exercise of church discipline could preserve the integrity of the Lord's Supper. But since the authority to exercise church discipline extended only to the members of the local church, they concluded that the Lord's Supper ought to extend to the local members only.” Dever, page 25.