

Course Outline

Class 1

A Display of God's Glory in the Local Church

Class 2

Church Membership

Class 3

Preaching

Class 4

Prayer

Class 5

Ordinances

NEXT: Class 6

Church Governance

Class 7

Church Fellowship

Class 8

Church Leadership

Class 9

Disagreement in the Church

Class 10

Church Discipline

Class 11

Giving

Class 12

Worship

Class 13

Evangelism

LIVING AS A CHURCH



Class 5: Ordinances

Foreshadowing Unity in Heaven

I. Introduction: A Mark of Christian Unity

Ordinances mark out the church and proclaim the gospel

- Baptism
- Lord's Supper

Class objectives

- Importance of ordinances
- Regular attendance
- Impact on health of a local church

II. What Are the Ordinances?

Three characteristics

- Ordained for the church by Jesus Christ

Matt 28:19-20

I Corinthians 11:23-26

- Practiced by the New Testament church
- Distinct as ceremonies

Definition of baptism

Definition of the Lord's Supper

Implication #1: ordinances are not optional

I Corinthians 4:4

Implication #2: ordinances are permanent and trans-cultural
Ephesians 4:5
Ordinances *reflect* the unity of the church

III. How Ordinances Foster Unity

1. Safeguard the message of the gospel around which unity is built

Defining the essence of what it means to be a Christian

Defining the essence of what it means to be a Church

Application

- Practice ordinances as Jesus taught them
- Explain the truths symbolized by the ordinances (to children, church members, co-workers, etc.)

2. Reminds us that the gospel is to be the root of our identity

“We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.” – Romans 6:3-5

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.” – I Corinthians 10:16-17

Application: use baptisms and the Lord's Supper to reflect on our commitment to Christ

3. Clarify the boundaries of the church

Narrowing focus of special unity to those who are Christians

- Limiting participation in the Lord's Supper to Christians
- Limiting baptism to those who profess faith in Christ
 - Examining baptismal candidates
 - At what age should believers be baptized?
 - Every case is different
 - Cognitive understanding of the gospel
 - Our ability to identify a true choice to follow Christ

Expanding focus of special unity to all members of a church

- Examining your relationships prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper

4. Celebrating God's work

Celebrating what God has done

- Baptism
- Lord's Supper

Celebrating what God will do

- Romans 6:5
- I Corinthians 11:26