

LESSON 10

February 8, 2026

Unit III: The Church and Its Teachings

Outer Expressions of Inner Truths

DEVOTIONAL READING: John 1:29-34

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 41;
Romans 6:1-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

PRINT PASSAGES: Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

KEY VERSES

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, KJV)

.....

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
(Matthew 28:19-20, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do the following:

- Examine the vital role of baptism and the Lord’s Supper in the Christian faith.
- Discover your identity as God’s beloved in whom God is well pleased.
- Bring the Good News of Jesus to those with spiritual, economic, and social needs.

*Key Terms

Baptized (Matthew 3:13)—Greek: *baptizó* (baptid'-zo): dipped; submerged, but specifically of ceremonial dipping; ceremonially washed.

Examine (1 Corinthians 11:28)—Greek: *dokimazo* (dok-im-ad'-zo): to test, prove, discern.

Hindered (Matthew 3:14)—Greek: *diakóluó* (dee-ak-o-loo'-o): obstinately prevented; “forbad” (KJV); “tried to deter” (NIV).



The Biblical Context

The contextual setting for the Print Passages from Matthew's gospel is two pivotal events in Christ's life: His baptism by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17) and His final commission to the disciples before His ascension (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus' baptism inaugurated His earthly ministry and mission and was significant for several key purposes. Though sinless, Christ's submission to John's baptism of repentance identified Him with sinful humanity, foreshadowing His future role in bearing the world's sins. The presence of God the Father and the Holy Spirit at His baptism publicly affirmed His divine sonship and validated His mission. The presence of the Holy Spirit served as empowerment for Jesus' future redemptive work, and fulfilled John's prophecy that one mightier than him would arrive. Jesus' baptism signified His public commitment to fulfill His God-given assignment. It laid the foundation for the church's identification with Him and its role in carrying out the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. Similarly, those who accept Christ by faith and publicly identify with Him through baptism declare their commitment to calling others into a relationship with Him and faithfully serving as members of His body.

Righteousness (Matthew 3:15)—Greek: *dikaiosuné* (dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay): justice; equity (of character or act); Christian justification.

Testament (1 Corinthians 11:25)—Greek: *diathéké* (dee-ath-ay'-key): a disposition; a contract (especially a devisory will); "covenant" (NIV).

Voice (Matthew 3:17)—Greek: *phóné* (fo-nay'): sound; tone; utterance; cry; noise; dialect.

***Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2**

Introduction

Rituals are planned sets of gestures, words, actions, or treasured items woven into everyday life. Because of this, rituals deeply shape how people live, guide their relationships, and color the cultures where they appear. They meet basic human needs: giving life meaning, creating belonging and trust, and steadyng emotions during stress, doubt, or change. For believers, spiritual rituals serve the same helpful goals. In the Old Testament, when God chose Israel to be His covenant people, He gave them rituals to keep a strong bond with Him, teach them to worship correctly, set them apart as a holy nation devoted to the one true God, and tighten their ties with each other. Today, churches still use baptism, communion, prayer circles, and shared songs to remember God's grace, build unity, and carry hope forward.

In the New Testament, Christ instituted two sacred rituals—baptism and the Lord's Supper—

specifically for the church. These ordinances are not merely symbolic acts; they are vital to the church's mission and witness to God's redemptive plan. Baptism and the Lord's Supper visibly proclaim the Gospel message, affirm believers' identity and unity in Christ, and set them apart from the world as a distinctive community of faith. When the church participates in these sacred ordinances, they must embrace their spiritual significance and boldly live in mission by proclaiming the Gospel, advancing God's kingdom, and reflecting the unity and distinctiveness that define the church as His redeemed people in a watching world.

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

Baptism: Commitment to Mission

(Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20)

KJV

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

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

.....

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 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.

NIV

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

14 But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

15 Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

.....

19 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 “and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

After describing how John the Baptist's ministry fulfilled prophecy as Christ's predecessor, Matthew shifts to Jesus' baptism by John (verse 13). John's baptism was a call for people to

repent from sin. Since Jesus was without sin, He had no need to repent. John may not have fully understood this, but he tried to stop Jesus, saying he wasn't worthy to baptize Him (verse 14). Still, Jesus insisted, saying His baptism was needed "to fulfill all righteousness" (verse 15). By being baptized, Jesus identified Himself with the sinners He came to save—those in Israel turning from sin and getting ready for God's kingdom. If Jesus, the Messiah, was going to offer righteousness to sinners, He had to fully relate to them. Being baptized "as one of them" was a key step in fulfilling God's plan to save humanity.

Jesus' baptism also marked the official beginning of His public ministry. The presence and affirmation of the Triune God confirmed His divine identity, mission, and authority (verses 16-17). Within this lesson's context, baptism in Matthew 3 emerges as both a symbol of repentance and a declaration of commitment to God's will. In Matthew 28, baptism assumes even greater significance—it became a visible expression of obedience to Christ's commission, a public acknowledgment of a believer's identification with Christ, one's commitment to live as His disciple, and a pledge to fulfill the mission He entrusted to His church supported by the promise of His abiding presence (verses 19-20).

QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How can the church elevate the ordinance of baptism to its original purpose and significance?

The Lord's Supper: Commitment to Remember (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

KJV

23 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:
24 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.
25 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.
26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.
27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.
28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.
29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

NIV

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

27 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

29 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthian church to address several critical issues among its members, who struggled with division, immorality, and confusion regarding spiritual practices. One issue was the misuse of the Lord’s Supper. Rather than honoring this sacred ordinance with reverence and unity, some within the Corinthian congregation treated it as something casual, resulting in division and harm within the larger faith community. To correct this, Paul reminded them of the Lord’s Supper’s origin and purpose, emphasizing its seriousness and spiritual significance. In verses 23-26, he explains that the Lord Jesus instituted this sacred meal on the night He was betrayed. It was established as a continuous observance to remember His sacrificial death on the Cross until He returns. Because of its holy origin and purpose, Paul warns believers against partaking in the Lord’s Supper “in an unworthy manner” (verse 27). In this context, he likely refers to participating without correctly discerning its meaning, disregarding the profound sacrifice it commemorates, reducing it to a hollow ritual, or receiving its elements with unconfessed sin. As a result, Paul urges every believer to examine themselves before taking part, checking the condition of their hearts to avoid disrepecting Christ’s sacrifice and bringing God’s judgment upon themselves (verses 28-29). The Lord’s Supper is essential to the church’s purpose and message—it is a sacred act of worship and a shared declaration of the Gospel. Each time we take it, we are called to do so with humility, thankfulness, unity, and a clear focus on Christ’s saving work, honoring His death until He returns.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

How would reclaiming the Lord’s Supper as vital to the church’s mission and witness affect its members, outreach, and visible presence?

A Closing Thought

The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are vital to the church's mission and serve as witness for several important reasons, chief among them being that Christ Himself instituted both during His earthly ministry and commanded His followers to observe them until He returns. These ordinances serve as "outward expressions of inward truths," visibly affirming the believer's inner transformation, obedience to Christ's commands, unity with Him and fellow believers, proclamation of His death and resurrection, and commitment to live for Him daily. Baptism and the Lord's Supper uphold the church's mission by visibly declaring the Gospel and bearing public witness to Christ's redemptive work, resurrection power, and ongoing mission of making disciples who reflect His character and glory.

Your Life

Jesus commanded the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, instructing His followers to observe them until He returns. For this reason, teaching believers how to approach these sacred ordinances with spiritual understanding, reverence, and heartfelt gratitude must be a priority in the life and mission of the church.

Your World!

Baptism and the Lord's Supper help carry out the church's mission by clearly showing the message of the Gospel and the visible signs of a changed life and identity with Christ. Pastors and church leaders must regularly and purposefully teach their meaning, while congregations must take responsibility to ensure that those who take part do so with true faith and a desire to honor Christ.

Closing Prayer

Gracious Father, thank You for giving us the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper through Your Son as visible reminders of Your salvation and new life in Him. When we observe them, help us approach them with reverence and gratitude as we joyfully anticipate our Lord's imminent return. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

As you prepare for next week's lesson, consider your response to this question: "How should we observe the Christian Sabbath?" Read Exodus 20:8-11; Romans 14:4-6; Revelation 1:10.

Home Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY, February 9	“God Rests on the Seventh Day”	(Genesis 1:31–2:4a)
TUESDAY, February 10	“The Promise of Entering God’s Rest”	(Hebrews 4:1-11)
WEDNESDAY, February 11	“Delight in the Sabbath”	(Isaiah 58:8-14)
THURSDAY, February 12	“Jesus Is Lord of the Sabbath”	(Matthew 12:1-13)
FRIDAY, February 13	“The Day of Resurrection”	(Matthew 28:1-10)
SATURDAY, February 14	“Keep the Sabbath Day Holy”	(Exodus 20:1, 8-11)
SUNDAY, February 15	“Living or Dying to the Lord”	(Romans 14:4-8)

Notes