

# **Foundation-1: An Orientation**

## ***Session 2***

### **WATER BAPTISM, BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, & THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Let the journey continue. No matter where you are with your walk with God, two things are a fact. It can be the most exciting walk and journey you have ever taken and it just keep getting better and deeper. There is much to learn, explore and experience. What an opportunity you have to read this information yourself, have God speak to you through it, and then to come together with others in your group to talk, walk, and live it out together. We are so glad you have decided to continue and it is our prayer that you hear God speak, that you respond to his voice as you get to know Him better, begin to share life with others and begin to serve others.

Last session, you explored key truths about the family of God (His Church), the history of The Upper Room Fellowship, God message of salvation, what it means to be a follower of Christ, and what God want you to do with His invitation of love. Perhaps you, for the first time or as a renewal, prayed to believe and receive the complete work of Jesus for your life. If you did, WOW!!! Heaven is rejoicing!!! What a fantastic step. It is just that, a step in the beginning of an incredible journey. In some ways, you may have just started. We don't want you to stop, but to keep on growing. So, let's get into some more of God's message to you...

The Bible says that there are two symbols or practices that we need to be involved in to remind us of the decision we've made, **Water Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper**. We will be exploring these aspects of the Christian faith as well as another baptism, the **Baptism of the Holy Spirit**. Of what significance are these to your Christian faith and walk? Please read on...

### **The Importance of WATER BAPTISM:**

#### **1. Why should I be water baptized?**

**1. To follow the example set by Christ.** Mark 1:9 *"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river."* Why was Jesus baptized? Was it for salvation? No, He didn't need to be saved. He was perfect. Baptism doesn't save you. It is a symbol of obedience and it's an example that we are to do what He has done.

**2. Because Christ commands it.** Christ commands that every Christian be baptized. *"Jesus said, `Go then to all people everywhere and (1) make them My disciples, (2) baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and (3) teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."* These are the

three things the church is commanded to do: Make disciples -- help people come to know Christ; baptize them; help them grow up. Many people think, "I'll be baptized after I've grown up. After I know about the Christian life, then I'll be baptized." No, it is right after you make the decision to follow Christ. Notice the order: You make the disciples, then you baptize them, then you spend the rest of your life growing as a Christian.

**3. It demonstrates that I'm really a believer.** The Bible says, *"Many of the people who heard Him believed and were baptized."* Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It just shows that you are a Christian. A wedding ring doesn't make one married; rather it is a symbol of a commitment. On the wedding day, the husband makes a commitment to his wife before God and a bunch of people and says "I do" and gives his life to her in front of God for the rest of his life. That commitment is what makes him married, not the ring. If he were to lose this ring, he'd still be married. The ring is an outward symbol of an inward commitment.

That's what water baptism by being immersed in water is. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It's just an outward symbol of an inward commitment. It is your commitment to Christ that saves you. Baptism just says to the world, "I'm not ashamed to tell the whole world what's happened to me. I've given my life to Christ." A little boy once asked, "When can I get advertised?" That's good. That's what baptism is. Baptism is an advertisement for Jesus. It's saying, "I'm not ashamed of Jesus Christ." Jesus once said, "If you're ashamed of Me in front of the world then I'll be ashamed of you in front of My Father in heaven." People may not get baptized for many reasons. Perhaps some won't get baptized because they don't want to get their hair wet. Are you that ashamed of Jesus Christ? The Bible says, *"We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands."* How do you prove you're a Christian? You obey His commands. One of His first commands is, be baptized.

**2. What is the meaning of water baptism?** Baptism does two things.

1. **It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.** *"Christ died for our sins. He was buried and He rose again."* the Bible says *"For when you were baptized you were buried with Christ and in baptism you were also raised with Christ."* At the URF we baptize the way they did in the Bible -- putting people all the way under the water. It is a symbol of a burial and resurrection. Just like Jesus Christ died and was buried in the ground for three days and then rose again.

2. **Baptism illustrates a new life as a Christian.** 2 Corinthians 5:17 *"When anyone becomes a Christian, he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun."* In the Bible, other than the thief of the cross, there was no such thing as a person claiming to be a Christian that was not baptized. A commitment to Christ was followed by water baptism. *"By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead so we also may live a new life."* It doesn't make you a Christian, it shows you already believe.

3. **Why should I be baptized by immersion?** Not all churches baptize the same way. There are some that sprinkle a little water on your forehead. Some pour a little water. Some dip a little bit. Other churches put you all the way under the water. Why do we believe and practice at the URF that you should be baptized by immersion? Four reasons:

1. **Because Jesus was baptized that way.** We want to do it the way they did it in the Bible. It says *"As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water."* He went down to the Jordan River. John the Baptist baptized Him in the river. He set the example.

2. **Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.** Example; *"Then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. Then they came up out of the water."*

3. **That's what the word means.** "Baptize" literally means "dip under water." The Greek word, baptize, means to dip under water.

4. **It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection.** The founders of denominations agree about this.

Martin Luther (Lutherans) said, "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed as the word imports and the mystery signifies."

John Calvin (Presbyterians) "The word `baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

John Wesley (Methodists) "Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

The above all agree that immersion is the way they baptized people in the Bible. An article in the *Times* talks about how Catholics are now going back to baptizing by immersion. It says, "Many Catholics are returning to full immersion baptism of church history and its greater symbolism." It says since 1988 almost every Catholic church has been built with a baptism pool so they can immerse. Why? It says, "Catholic churches have realized `This brings out far more clearly the true meaning of baptism of being buried with Christ and entering into a new life.'" Even the Catholics who, for centuries, just sprinkled are saying, "We're going back to baptism by immersion".

4. **Who should be water baptized?** Every person who's believed in Christ. *"Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized."* Acts 8:13, *"Simon himself believed and was baptized."* Acts 8:12, *"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."*

At the URF, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. There is only one qualification in the Bible

to be baptized. You've got to believe in Christ. Obviously you've got to be old enough to understand what that's all about. There are many churches that practice the baptism of confirmation. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own confession of faith. This custom only began about 300 years after the Bible was finished. It's not in the Bible. It's just a tradition. This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible, which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

**5. When should you be water baptized?** As soon as you become a believer, or as soon as you realize its importance. Maybe you've been a believer for a while but you didn't realize how important baptism was until now. Jesus said, "**If you love Me, keep My commandments.**" In Acts it says those who believed were baptized that day.

*"Philip began with the scripture and told him the good news about Jesus and as they traveled along the road they came to some water and the man said, "Look! Here's water. Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The man answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he went down into the water and Philip baptized him."*

There's nothing special about the water. The water in the pool is not holy; neither is the baptismal, lake, river, or the pools we've used. What is holy is the faith of the people. It's not where you're baptized. It's why you're baptized -- to publicly say, "I am an adult consenting follower of Christ." There's no reason to delay. After you've decided to receive Christ you ought to be baptized.

### **Some common questions:**

- 1. What do you wear when you're going to be baptized?** Whatever you feel comfortable in. If you're a woman, maybe a swim suit with a t-shirt over the top simply for modesty. The men, just a pair of shorts and a t-shirt. Something you don't mind getting wet in.
- 2. Can my family be baptized together?** Yes. If each family member understands the full meaning of baptism and has become a Christian, we encourage families to be baptized at once. Younger children who wish to be baptized are asked to have a meeting with a pastor for a pre-baptism conversation. If your whole family knows Christ and want to be baptized together, you need to call the church office and arrange a baptism conference. A pastor will sit down with you and your child and, in simple terms, explain what it's all about so they can understand the meaning of baptism.
- 3. Will you have to say anything at your baptism?** No. At the beginning of the service, a brief explanation of the meaning of baptism will be given. You will wait for your turn to be baptized. Then a pastor will introduce you, briefly lower you under the water, then you can leave the pool, dry off and watch the others.

If you would like to give a brief testimony after the immersion, that is encouraged, but not a requirement. Later you will be given a certificate of your baptism that will help you remember your baptism.

4. **We also encourage you to invite family, friends and relatives to your baptism.**
5. **Does baptism always have to be public?** In the Bible there's no such thing as a Christian who hasn't been baptized. At this point, let's mention a couple of special things. You may have a special circumstance which needs a private baptism. We would be happy to do that for you. For instance, if you're petrified of water (and there are folks that absolutely have phobias about water), we can do private baptisms. We are understanding and sympathetic. Let's say you are in cancer treatments and are wearing a wig or toupee and afraid that's going to fall off, or if you've had a surgery or anything that would cause you to be embarrassed, all you need to do is call the pastors and arrange a private baptism.
6. **Is it ok to be baptized more than once?** Yes. An example would be a wife who was baptized when she gave her life to Christ but now her husband has become a Christian and she wants to be baptized again with him. Sure you can. Do you take communion more than once? Are there marriage renewal ceremonies? There's no law that says you can only be baptized once.

## **Another Baptism ...the BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT:**

*"I baptize with water those who turn from their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is far greater than I am--so much greater that I am not even worthy to be his slave. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."*  
Matthew 3:11

Then John said, *"I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon him. I didn't know he was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, he told me, 'When you see the Holy Spirit descending and resting upon someone, He is the one you are looking for. He is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'*<sup>34</sup>*I saw this happen to Jesus, so I testify that he is the Son of God.*  
John 1:32-34

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience that is to follow our salvation experience. It is sometimes referred to as a second work of grace. We cannot be gradually baptized in the Holy Spirit, just as we cannot be gradually baptized in water. Many believe they need not ask for this experience because they think they receive the Holy Spirit and His fullness at conversion. While this is true in the sense that the Holy Spirit comes and dwells within us, to be completely filled or baptized with His Spirit, we ask for Him. When we commit our life to Jesus, there is an indwelling of the Holy Spirit that is immediate and brings about an ever growing fruits-of-the-Spirit in our lives. Though this

is true and something we seek, we are talking about a Baptism of power that if we ask, we will receive.

*"If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" Luke 11:13*

Many people have been "born again" and have the Holy Spirit working in their lives, but have never received the fullness of the Spirit, which equips them for service, and gives them the power to witness and to be victorious in their life in Christ.

*"John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." "But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere--in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:5 and 8*

If you have not known the power of God, in being able to overcome sin, to witness and to know God in His fullness, then you need to ask God for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. There were also Christians in Paul's day who did not know about the power that was available to them. We find this recorded in Acts 19:2-6:

*"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them. No," they replied, we don't know what you mean. We haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit. "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked. And they replied, "The baptism of John". Paul said that John's baptism was to demonstrate a desire to turn from sin and turn to God. John himself told the people to believe in Jesus, the one John said would come later. As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. "*

This Scripture clearly shows us there is more than one kind of baptism. These Christians had received **water baptism**, but had not the **Holy Spirit baptism** until Paul laid his hands on them and prayed. We also see that the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** accompany this baptism, as they often spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Another account of this taking place is found in Acts 8:14-20:

*"When the apostles back in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had accepted God's message, they sent Peter and John there. As soon as they arrived, they prayed for these new Christians to receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them, for they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John laid their hands upon these believers, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given when the apostles placed their hands upon people's heads, he offered money to buy this power. Let me have this power, too, he exclaimed, so that when I lay my hands on people, they will receive the Holy Spirit! But Peter replied, May your money perish with you for thinking God's gift can be bought!"*

## **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A GIFT**

Still again we find an account of the gift of the Holy Spirit being given in Acts 11:14-17:

*"I will tell you how you and all your household can be saved! Well, I began telling them the Good News, but just as I was getting started, the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as he*

*fell on us at the beginning. Then I thought of the Lord's words when he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' And since God gave these Gentiles the same gift he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to argue?"*

God's gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to us today, and not just for the saints back then as we find Peter saying,

*"Peter replied, "Each of you must turn from your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you and to your children, and even to the Gentiles -- all who have been called by the Lord our God." Acts 2:38-39.*

**The Holy Spirit is God's gift to us.** As we are baptized in His Spirit we will find that we will experience the gift of speaking in tongues, plus other gifts of the Spirit found in I Corinthians 12, 13 and 14. These are God's gifts that enable us to accomplish the task to which we have been commissioned. In sharing the Good News we realize that those around us are thirsty.... Jesus speaks to us concerning His heart to refresh those who need drink in John 7:37b-39...

*"...Jesus stood and cried, saying, "If you are thirsty, come to me! If you believe in me, come and drink! For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water will flow out from within." When he said "living water," he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.*

Acts 2:2-4 says,

*"Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm in the skies above them, and it filled the house where they were meeting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability"*

If the disciples of the Lord needed to be filled with the Holy Spirit then, how much more do we need to be filled in our day? We should seek the Lord with a humble heart for the truth of what is written in the Bible and ask Him to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. We can trust Him to show us the truth if we come to Him with an open heart and mind with a willingness to obey Him.

*"Didn't we tell you never again to teach in this man's name?" the high priest demanded. "Instead, you have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching about Jesus, and you intend to blame us for his death!" But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than human authority. The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead after you killed him by crucifying him. Then God put him in the place of honor at his right hand as Prince and Savior. He did this to give the people of Israel an opportunity to turn from their sins and turn to God so their sins would be forgiven. We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey him." Acts 5:28-32*

**We offer a class on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit several times a year that is designed to provide a more “in depth” study concerning this topic.** We will also cover more information about this in **Foundation-2 Walking with God**. You will also be given the opportunity to be prayed for and to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in your group as well as during ministry time in one of our Sunday Celebrations. This is so important and exciting. We are not leaving this topic for good, but rather, at this time, presenting more important truths of our faith.

**THE LORD’S SUPPER:** We’ve talked about Water Baptism as a symbol of salvation. There is another, the **Lord's Supper**.

It's interesting that Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth, but He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols called ordinances. We do not call Baptism and the Lord's Supper, sacraments. We don't call them that because the word sacrament means it saves you. We don't believe baptism saves you and we don't believe the Lord's Supper saves you. The Bible says they are symbols of your salvation, not things that make you saved. So technically they are not sacraments. We call them ordinances because they were ordained by God for Christians to remember Jesus' death.

The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth.

### **What is the Lord's Supper?**

**1. It is a simple act.** The Bible says that the very first communion, the Lord Jesus, on the night that He was betrayed, took bread and broke it. He didn't have some big elaborate ceremony, wearing special costumes and vestments and burning incense and doing all kinds of fancy rituals. The Lord's Supper is a very simple act. He took bread and He took wine and He gave it to the people. It's not some big elaborate ritual. When we take the Lord's Supper at the URF, we don't want to turn it into a big ritual that is void of life and meaning.

**2. It is a reminder.** *"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."* The whole purpose of the Lord's Supper is for us to remember what Jesus did on the cross.

**3. It is a symbol.** *"In the same way, He took the cup, saying, `This cup is the new covenant in My blood; drink it to remember Me."* When Jesus said that this bread is My body and this cup is My blood, He didn't mean that literally. When He said this, He hadn't even gone to the cross yet. He hadn't died yet. Obviously, He's talking about a symbol, not His actual blood.

If someone were to pull the wallet out of his pocket and show you pictures and say, "This is my wife," you wouldn't think his wife was photographic paper with chemicals on it. You know what he's talking about. It represents his wife.

Jesus once said *"I am the door."* Does that mean He's a piece of wood? He said, *"I am the bread of life."* Does that mean He's a loaf? No. He's giving symbolism.

He says this is My body which is for you. It's a symbol.

**4. It is a statement of faith.** *"For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back."* When you take of the Lord's Supper, you're preaching a sermon. There's a forward look and a backward look. We look forward to the fact that Jesus is coming back and He says do this until He comes back. And we look back at the cross. Jesus didn't stay dead. He's coming back again.

### **Who Should Take the Lord's Supper?**

Only those who are already believers. When Jesus offered the communion (the Lord's Supper) He didn't offer it to the 5000 where He fed the loaves and fish. He only offered the Lord's Supper to the twelve disciples whom He knew were true believers. He didn't offer the Lord's Supper to the crowds.

We take the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of the month in our Sunday Celebrations. We encourage our small group leaders in our church to serve the Lord's Supper anytime they want to in their groups. That's the way they did it in the New Testament. In Acts chapter 2 you don't have one example of taking the Lord's Supper in a large meeting. In fact, it says they took and broke bread from house to house. So the Lord's Supper was taken in the small groups in homes. That is why we encourage our small groups to celebrate the Lord's Supper as often as they desire.

The Bible says, *"For anyone who eats or drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself".* So it's for those who believe.

### **How do I prepare myself for the Lord's Supper?**

*"Therefore 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. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."* Anytime we take the Lord's Supper here at this church we have a time of prayer and self examination before. We say, "God, is there anything in my life that's between me and You that I need to confess and get rid of before I take communion." The Bible says that we are to examine ourselves every time we take the Lord's Supper.

We should do these four things:

First, we **examine** ourselves -- "God, what is it in my life that needs to be changed?"

Secondly, we **confess** our sins.

Thirdly, we **recommit** our lives and...

Fourthly, we **restore** relationships.

The Bible says if you've got something against another person -- you're bitter and angry and resentful -- you shouldn't take the Lord's Supper. In fact, it says you shouldn't even

give an offering. It says go get it right with that person first and then come and worship.

### **When and how often should we observe the Lord's Supper?**

The Bible doesn't say. The Bible doesn't give a rule about how often. Anytime you hear a rule like, "You ought to take the Lord's Supper every Sunday" it's a man-made rule. It's not in the Bible. Or, "You ought to take it once a month". It's a man-made rule. It's not in the Bible. Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe the Lord's Supper. He just said that when we do, we are to do it in remembrance of Him.

## **FOUNDATIONS-1/2: LIFE APPLICATION:**

### **The Importance of Water Baptism...**

1. **Why should you be Water Baptized?**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
2. **What is the meaning of Water Baptism?**
  - 1.
  - 2.
3. **Why is Water Baptism by immersion?**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
4. **Who should be Water Baptized?**
5. **When should you be Water Baptized?**
6. **Did the material answer your questions, or are there others?**

## **The Baptism of the Holy Spirit...**

- 1. How would you define or explain what the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is in your own words?**
- 2. How is the Holy Spirit a gift to us?**
- 3. Have you received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit? Do you desire this gift?**

## **The Lord's Supper...**

- 1. What is the Lord's Supper?**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
- 2. Who should take the Lord's Supper?**
- 3. What four things should you do to prepare yourself for the Lord's Supper?**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
- 4. When and how often should we observe the Lord's Supper?**

## **Reflection:**

**What has been most important to you in this session and what is God revealing or saying to you?**