

# living on bread & water

selections from Romans and 1 Corinthians

**Bread, water, wine**—common, everyday substances—become charged with symbolic meaning as part of baptism and Communion. Faith combined with understanding makes this happen.

The simple acts associated with these observances involve us in the reality of Christ's death and the new life it brings.

Baptism and Communion have played an important part in Christian worship from the first century to the twenty-first. To keep these ordinances alive and relevant today, we must look beyond the outward rituals to their meaning as explained by the Bible.

Take the following quiz to check your understanding of baptism and Communion.

## ▶ Baptism

- ▶ What Old Testament religious customs are related to baptism? (Lev. 17:15; Num. 19:17-19; 31:21-24; 2 Kings 5:1, 10)
- ▶ What connection is there between baptism and Christ's death and resurrection? (Rom. 6:3-4)
- ▶ In what way do we as Christians experience Christ's death and resurrection? (Rom. 6:5, 11)
- ▶ How did Christ show His approval of baptism? (Matt. 3:13-15; 28:19-20; John 3:22; 4:1-2)
- ▶ John baptized with water, but what new dimension did Christ add to baptism? (Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:1-4, 38)

## ▶ Communion

- ▶ During what Hebrew celebration did Jesus institute Communion? (Matt. 26:17)
- ▶ What historical event did the Jews celebrate at this time? (Exod. 12:3-14)
- ▶ What similarities can you see between what God did for Israel in the Passover and what Christ did for us through His death? (1 Pet. 1:18-19)
- ▶ Why are we commanded to celebrate Communion? (1 Cor. 11:24-26)
- ▶ How would you explain the meaning of the Communion bread and the cup to a small child? (1 Cor. 11:23-26)
- ▶ What does Paul instruct believers to do before taking Communion? Why? (1 Cor. 11:27-32)
- ▶ How is the celebration of Communion a picture of our relationship with Christ? (1 Cor. 10:17, 21)

### Romans 6:3-5

<sup>3</sup>Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>For if we have been united with him in a death like this, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.

### 1 Corinthians 11:23-28

<sup>23</sup>For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup>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." <sup>25</sup>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." <sup>26</sup>For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

<sup>27</sup>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. <sup>28</sup>Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

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In verse 28, Paul tells us to examine ourselves when partaking of the Lord's Supper. Like taking inventory of products in a store, we occasionally need to take stock of our Christian growth indicators. Make a list of things in your life you might "count" as pleasing to the Lord. What things need to be removed from your inner shelves?

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A biblical word for the Lord's Supper is *Eucharist*. It means "to give thanks." When sharing in Communion, we are remembering what Christ has done for us and thanking Him for it. Write a short poem that gives thanks for Christ's love.

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In baptism we view ourselves as united to Christ by dying to the old life (before Jesus) and rising to the new life. Our new life is powered by the Holy Spirit. Ask God to help you live in the newness of this life Christ has brought to you.

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Christ's death and resurrection have broken the power of sin and provided the way to be free from it. Ask God to work in those areas of your life that still need release from sin's power.

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In Communion we remember the Lord's death *until He comes again*. Take a moment to imagine what it will be like when Christ returns. Every knee will bow to Him as Lord—either joyfully or with shame. What will it be like for you?

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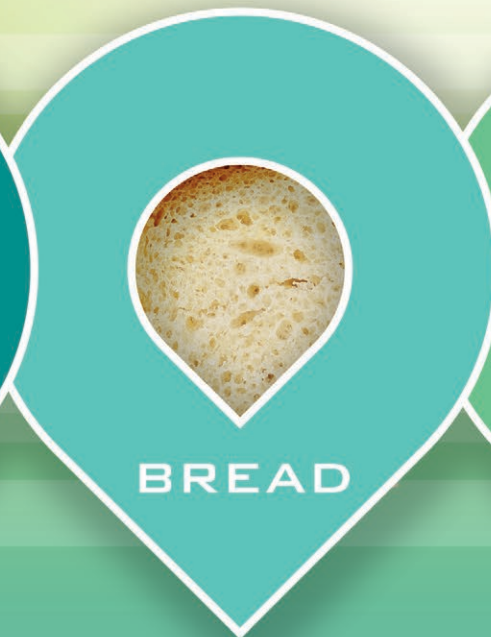
Baptism and the Lord's Supper help us focus on Christ's great love for us. He sees us as worthy enough to die for. Repeat a simple prayer throughout this day: "Thank You, Jesus, for loving me so much!"

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

—1 Corinthians 11:26

All of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death.

— Romans 6:3b



Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

— 1 Corinthians 11:26