



III. THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH

A. Founded upon the Lord Jesus Christ

1. Jesus Christ dwells in the church.
 - a. New Testament believers are Christ's dwelling place (Romans 8:9).
 - b. The church is Christ's dwelling place (Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16-17; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5).
2. Jesus Christ is the foundation.
 - a. He offered Himself to the Jewish people (John 1:11).
 - b. The Jewish builders rejected Him (Acts 4:10-11).
 - c. He became the foundation for the New Testament church (1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:19-22).
3. Jesus Christ owns the church (Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28).

B. Built According to the Word of God

1. The authority of the word of God
 - a. Based on the authority of the Author (Mark 1:22, 27; Luke 4:36)
 - b. Based on its ability to last (Matthew 24:35)
 - c. Based on its ability to survive attacks (Genesis 3:1)
2. The power of the word of God
 - a. The power to enlighten (Psalm 119:130)
 - b. The power to discern (Hebrews 4:12-13)
 - c. The power to accomplish (Isaiah 55:11)
 - d. The power to save (Romans 1:16; James 1:21)
 - e. The power to perfect (2 Timothy 3:15-17)
 - f. The power to judge (John 12:48)
3. The influence of the word of God
 - a. On doctrine
 - b. On practice
 - c. Note: There are only three possible categories for all practices, teachings, or convictions: scriptural, unscriptural, or nonscriptural.

IV. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

A. Its Independence

1. Problems
 - a. The Jerusalem council (Acts 15:1-35)
 - b. The Pauline authority (1 Corinthians 4:16, 21; 1 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Timothy 1:3-4, 18-20; 1 Timothy 4:11; Titus 1:5)
2. Evidence for independence
 - a. They received members.
 - b. They practiced church discipline (Galatians 6:1).
 - c. They sent out missionaries (Acts 13:1-4).
 - d. They partook of the Lord's supper.



B. Its Leadership

1. In heaven (Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 1:18)
2. On earth (Acts 20:28; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 3:4-5, 8-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

C. Its Authority

1. Given by the Lord
 - a. The administration of the ordinances (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
 - b. The sending of missionaries (Acts 13:1-4)
 - c. The discipline of its members (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)
2. Not to be replaced by colleges, mission boards, individuals, or corporations
3. Not to be usurped by conventions or fellowships

D. Its Teachings

1. Built on the word of God
2. Propagated by all (2 Timothy 2:2)

E. Its Responsibility (Acts 1:8)

V. THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

A. Laying the Groundwork

1. What is an ordinance?—"an authoritative direction, decree, or command" or additionally something "put in order"
2. A biblical view of the ordinances
 - a. An ordinance can be anything viewed as something having order or structure demanding adherence.
 - b. Although the New Testament identifies several things as ordinances, we are focusing primarily on Paul's words to the saints at Corinth—"keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you" (1 Corinthians 11:2).

B. Water Baptism

1. Introduction to water baptism
 - a. What it is
 - (1) The most basic meaning of the word is *to immerse*.
 - (2) The scriptural practice
 - a) The baptism offered of John (John 3:23)
 - b) The baptism of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17)
 - i) Christ came to John to be baptized (Matthew 3:13).
 - ii) When He was baptized, He "went straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16; see Mark 1:10).
 - c) The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-39)



- b. What it is not
 - (1) It is not a means of salvation
 - a) The gospel according to Paul
 - i) Paul presented his gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.
 - ii) He stated that his purpose was to preach the gospel and contrasted that with baptism (1 Corinthians 1:17).
 - b) The thief on the cross (Luke 23:40-43)
 - (2) It is not the baptism with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5; Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16).
 - a) The administrator: Jesus Christ
 - b) The subject: Believers at Pentecost
 - c) The medium: The Holy Ghost
 - (3) It is not the baptism of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27).
 - a) The administrator: The Holy Spirit
 - b) The subject: Believers
 - c) The medium: Jesus Christ
- 2. The proper mode of baptism
 - a. By immersion
 - (1) Seen in the word baptism which means “to immerse”
 - (2) Seen in the connection to burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12);
Note: It is only our contention that these references show that the word *baptism* in general is connected to burials.
 - (3) Seen in the baptisms in scripture (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:5; John 3:23; Acts 8:36-39)
 - b. In the name of
 - (1) The meaning of this phrase
 - a) To do something “in the name of” someone else means to do it by that person’s authority (Deuteronomy 18:5-7, 20-22; Esther 3:12).
 - b) It can also refer to doing something in the place of another (Deuteronomy 25:6).
 - (2) The words of Christ—“Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” (Matthew 28:19)
 - (3) The baptisms of the apostles (Acts 2:38; Acts 8:16; Acts 10:48; Acts 19:5)
- 3. The proper candidate for baptism
 - a. Limited to those of understanding (Acts 8:12)
 - b. Limited to believers
 - (1) The commission to the disciples (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16)
 - (2) The ministry of the apostles (Acts 2:36-41; Acts 8:12-13, 36-37; Acts 9:6, 18; Acts 10:34-48; Acts 16:13-15, 29-33; Acts 18:8)
- 4. The proper authority for baptism
 - a. Given to John (Mark 11:27-33; see Matthew 3:13-17)
 - b. Given to the apostles (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 1:13-16)
 - c. Given to the churches (1 Corinthians 11:2)



5. Water baptism and the church age
 - a. The arguments against
 - (1) The other baptism (Romans 6:3-7; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12; see Ephesians 4:5)
 - (2) The commissions of water baptism
 - a) John the Baptist was sent to baptize (John 1:33).
 - b) The first apostles were sent to baptize (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - c) Paul was not sent to baptize (1 Corinthians 1:17).
 - (3) Paul's apparent lack of concern for water baptism (1 Corinthians 1:14, 16)—Those who oppose water baptism today do so partly because they say Paul would not have been thankful concerning his few baptisms if it was meant to continue. This argument falls apart with these same people concerning the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:18).
 - b. The proofs for
 - (1) Paul himself was baptized (Acts 9:18).
 - (2) Baptisms were still frequent after the calling of the apostle to the gentiles (Acts 10; Acts 16; Acts 18).
 - (3) Paul baptized (1 Corinthians 1:14-16)

C. The Lord's Supper

1. Introduction to the Lord's supper
 - a. Its institution (Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 11:23)
 - b. Its continuation: After His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, Christ reaffirmed the practice of the Lord's supper to Paul.
2. The purpose of the Lord's supper
 - a. Memorial (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26)
 - b. Prophetic; It looks forward to:
 - (1) The coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:26)
 - (2) Our future fellowship with Christ (Matthew 26:29)
 - c. Purification (1 Corinthians 11:27-34)
3. The practice of the Lord's supper
 - a. The place
 - (1) When ye come together into one place (1 Corinthians 11:20)
 - a) "Ye" is plural and indicates a time when the "church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2) would be gathered together in one place.
 - b) This is also referred to as the "church of God" in contrast to the houses of the people (1 Corinthians 11:22).
 - (2) Not just any situation will do (1 Corinthians 11:22)
 - b. The order
 - (1) The bread (1 Corinthians 11:23-24)
 - (2) The cup (1 Corinthians 11:25)
 - a) The taking of the cup (1 Corinthians 11:25)
 - b) The giving of thanks (Matthew 26:27)
 - (3) The singing of a hymn (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26)



- c. The parts
 - (1) The bread
 - a) The type of bread
 - i) The disciples came together to partake of the Passover meal (Matthew 26:17).
 - ii) The bread at the Passover was to be unleavened bread (Exodus 12:1-11).
 - iii) The bread at the Lord's supper had to be unleavened bread or else the Lord would have been violating the Passover.
 - b) The symbol of the bread (Matthew 26:26; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-24)
 - (2) The cup
 - a) The content of the cup
 - i) The fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18)
 - ii) The *fruit of the vine* would be the fruit produced by the vine without the intervention of men.
 - b) The symbol of the cup
 - i) The Lord Jesus told His disciples that the cup pictured His blood (Matthew 26:27-28).
 - ii) This was reaffirmed to Paul (1 Corinthians 11:25).
 - iii) The only "pure" blood (1 Peter 1:19) would be the freshly squeezed juice from the vine. Therefore, the "fruit of the vine" could not have been fermented wine.
 - d. The time
 - (1) Time of day; It was instituted in the evening (Matthew 26:20; 1 Corinthians 11:23); yet, we are not given direct commands as to what time of day we are to partake of the Lord's supper.
 - (2) Frequency; The Bible does not suggest a **quantity**, but rather a **quality** (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).
4. The participants of the Lord's supper
- a. Open communion
 - (1) Description; Open communion is defined in many different ways. We will define it as permitting all who are saved to participate in the Lord's supper regardless of church affiliation.
 - (2) Refutation
 - a) The ordinance was said to be for "*When ye come together therefore into one place*" (1 Corinthians 11:20).
 - b) The recipient of this epistle and the "ye" of the previous verse is "the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2).
 - b. Close communion
 - (1) Description; Close communion is defined in different ways. We will define it as permitting all who are of the same doctrinal statement to participate in the Lord's supper regardless of church membership.



- (2) Refutation
 - a) See refutation for open communion above.
 - b) This was given for a local body and was to be practiced by that body. Someone who is an active member of another body ought to partake of the Lord's supper with that body.
 - c) We have no way disciplining (1 Corinthians 5:11).
- c. Closed communion
 - (1) Description
 - a) Closed communion is defined in different ways. We will provide and explain two categories of closed communion.
 - b) Category one: Allowing only active members of the local church to participate in the Lord's supper.
 - c) Category two: Allowing only active members and faithful attendees to participate in the Lord's supper.
 - (2) Biblical support
 - a) This option does not contradict the fact that the Lord's supper is for the local body of believers.
 - b) This option permits the body of believers to exercise any type of discipline that needs to be executed.
 - (3) Tough questions
 - a) Should a person be required to be an official member to participate in the Lord's supper?
 - i) We have an official way for people to unite with a local body of believers.
 - ii) It is possible for someone to attend every church service, faithfully participate in outreach, and faithfully support the work financially without ever officially uniting with a body of believers.
 - iii) Was the same thing true of the early church?
 - (a) The Lord added to the church (Acts 2:47).
 - (b) People could be received (Philippians 2:25-30) or rejected (Titus 3:10).
 - (c) Churches were able and responsible for church discipline (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).
 - (d) People could be put out (1 Corinthians 5:13).
 - iv) We do not have definite verses to prove that those who frequently and faithfully attend services would not be part of a local body *in the early church*.
 - b) Should all church members be able to participate?
 - i) Some strongly advocate that the Lord's supper is only for official members, yet neglect to make sure the members are scripturally able to participate.
 - ii) Every man ought to examine himself (1 Corinthians 11:28).
 - iii) Every man ought to examine others (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11, 13).