

Corinthians 10:16 *The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?* Paul argues from what is known to be true. When God's people gather and seek God's blessing on the ordinances he set forth, God blesses them with spiritual blessings.

Discussion Questions

- How often do you think about the blessing it is to take the Lord's supper together? Or do you simply take it as a thing to do once again week by week?
- Think back to the last baptism you witnessed. Do you remember it as a blessing from God? Spend some time thanking God for giving us his ordinances.

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

We began this week by asking how the ordinances become effective in the lives of God's people. It is not by the working of the elements themselves. It also is not by the virtue of the pastor who carries out the ordinances. The blessing of the ordinances is something that Christ provides by his Spirit when we follow in the ordinances as he has instructed us. The key element to receiving blessing through the Lord's Supper and Baptism is that we receive them in faith. God doesn't bless unbelievers who takes the ordinances. This is one reason we don't endorse baptizing infants. They are not able to receive the ordinance of baptism by faith. Paul actually tells the Corinthian church that if they take the Lord's Supper without faith they will receive not blessing but a curse! 1 Corinthians 11:29 *For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.* Just as we must believe in Jesus alone for our justification before God. The blessings of sanctification that God graciously gives his children through the ordinances are received only by faith. If you are seeking a blessing from God through worshipping with God's church, and especially taking part in the ordinances of God, and you're not doing it in faith, then you are receiving nothing. Such works are dead. You must trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. Then you must regularly come to his ordinances, believing His promise to meet you there with all the blessing he has promised you.

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to receive the ordinances of God by faith?
- If you have been baptized, were you baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ?

Baptist Catechism

Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, August 17th, 2025)

Baptist Catechism Question #96

Q: How do baptism and the Lord's supper become effectual means of salvation?

A: *Baptism and the Lord's supper become effectual means of salvation, not for any virtue in them, or in him that doth administer them, but only by the blessing of Christ, and the working of the Spirit in those that by faith receive them.*

Suggested Memory Verse

1 Peter 3:21 Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Over the next few weeks we will be looking at the two ordinances Christ has given to his church. Our Lord has given us both Baptism and the Lord's Supper as physical practices for us to carry out in our worship services. Both of these ordinances are given by Him as means of grace by which he communicates to us the benefits of our salvation. We've discussed in previous weeks how God uses the means of grace in our lives to strengthen us in faith and to empower us for holiness through the working of His Holy Spirit. Our question this week deals with how these ordinances provide the blessings that God has so promised. Often when we hear children asking questions of their parents. "How does God put the rain into the sky?" "How does the caterpillar turn into a butterfly?" "How do you make ice cream?" They are filled with questions about the how's and why's of the world around. It is only natural for us to ask the same questions with regard to the works of God in our lives. How do baptism and the Lord's supper become effectual means of salvation? Ultimately they accomplish their intended purpose because God makes them work. They are God's gifts and He provides both the means and the wonderful blessings they produce. As we study this question it is important to remember that the ordinances are God's blessings to us, not something we accomplish ourselves.

Discussion Questions

- Have you thought much about what happens when we take the Lord's Supper or are Baptized?
- Why is it important to remember when asking these questions of "how?" that God is the one who gives the blessings?

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Do you have a favorite meal you like to eat at home? Maybe a really special meal for you might be the rare time you are able to splurge and eat out at a special restaurant. The food is special. The ingredients are perhaps a little more pricey. Tables, lighting, or music all come together to add to the value of the meal. In these special meals, the ingredients create the value. With such experiences in our lives it can be tempting to come to the ordinances of God and see them as plain. The Lord's Supper, rather than being a great banquet, is merely a bite of bread and taste of juice. Baptism, rather than being an elaborate party at the beach, is a quick dunk in water. If we look at the outward elements of these ordinances as if the physical reality are the active agents we miss what God is doing through them. 1 Peter 3:21 *Baptism...now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* Peter tells us here that the significance of what God is doing for us in the ordinances is not by the physical elements we engage in. When we carry out God's instructions in faith as he has commanded, then God does a work of grace in our lives. This is why our catechism answer today says is in not by any virtue in [the elements]. God's Spirit is the one who acts.

Discussion Questions

- The Catholic Church teaches that it is the elements of the ordinances, once blessed, that have power to bless. How is this different than what Peter teaches?
- Why do you think faith is so important in how we take the Lord's Supper or receive Baptism?

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

If you were baptized, who baptized you? Often when people come to be baptized they will have a significant person in their lives perform the baptism. It is tempting for us to put too much importance on the person who performs the baptism. There has been a tendency for people to want to be baptized by a celebrity. If I could be baptized by Billy Graham, Voddie Baucham, or John MacArthur, why would I be satisfied with a no name pastor baptizing me? The early church was not immune to such thinking. 1 Corinthians 1:12-13 *Each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?* Paul here chastises the Corinthian church for practicing such celebrity worship. He actually says he's glad he didn't baptize many. This isn't because Paul didn't like baptizing. He didn't want the name of the pastor to detract from the significance of the ordinance. The catechism answer today says the ordinances are not effective because of any virtue in the one who administers them. It is God who makes them effective, not the preacher. This is important for those whose pastors aren't a big name. God uses them. It is important for those whose pastors end up sinning and being disqualified. The effectiveness of your baptism doesn't depend on the preacher, but on God who testifies to what He has done in you.

Discussion Questions

- If the virtue of the preacher is not what makes the ordinances effective, does it even matter who performs baptism or leads the Lord's Supper?
- Spend some time thanking God for giving us his ordinances.

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

How do we know when something is blessed? We may consider our lives blessed when we enjoy peace and plenty. We see blessing evident when we have family and friends close by. When our jobs, finances, and homelives are prospering we know they are blessed. While these things are blessing we can forget that not everything that is blessed looks like it. Jesus declares in Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* The poor in spirit don't appear blessed, yet God declares they are. Blessing is not so much the material prosperity but the purpose of God for both good and evil in the lives of his people. Romans 8:28 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.* How then can we know if we are blessed in the ordinances of God? When they are performed according to the will of God by his people. That which he ordains he blesses. He promises such blessing in his word. 1