



FIRST STEPS

a core course of Life Transformations

Del Wells

INCLUDES STUDY GUIDE

THE FOUR CORE COURSES FROM THIS LIFE TRANSFORMATION
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Lesson 4: Water Baptism & Communion – Taking Steps of Obedience

The Big Deal!

Obeying Jesus and His commands is your pathway to God's blessing.

Water Baptism

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38

Water Baptism is a beautiful, physical expression of what has transpired in your life as a new Christian. Going down under the water symbolizes the fact that you have identified with Christ in His death and have yourself died to sin. Coming up out of the water symbolizes that you have participated with Christ in His own resurrection from the dead and that you have been raised to a new way of living.

Water Baptism cannot save you. You must place your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour before being baptized in water. However, a new believer should be publicly baptized at the first opportunity given, after having a clear understanding of the reasons for baptism and the desire to live a committed life for Christ each day.

Why Water Baptism is Important

1. It is obedience to Christ's Great Commission. (Matthew 28:19-20)
Why would water baptism be included in Christ's command?

2. It follows the example of the Early Church:
 - a. Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2:38)

 - b. Philip in Samaria (Acts 8:12)

 - c. The Ethiopian Convert (Acts 8:36)

 - d. Paul after his Conversion (Acts 9:18)

 - e. Cornelius and his Family (Acts 10:46-48)

- f. The Philippian Jailer and his Family (Acts 16:32-33)

- g. Paul with the Ephesians (Acts 19:4-5)

What do these examples show you about the importance of water baptism?

- 3. It confirms identification with Christ (Galatians 2:20)
How does identifying with Christ help you to live for Him daily?

- 4. It is a testimony of the change in your life (2 Corinthians 5:17)
Why is it important to testify about your new life in Christ?

Being baptized in water will strengthen your faith as you take this early step of obedience to Christ. Your baptism provides a wonderful opportunity to give witness to what has taken place in your life to everyone present. Also, your obedience to Christ moves you along the pathway of God's blessing.

Communion (The Lord's Supper)

“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.” 1 Corinthians 11:26

While water baptism is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for you as a new Christian, the Lord's Supper (Communion) is to be experienced regularly. Just as water baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Christ, so has Jesus commanded you to participate in communion regularly.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-32:

- 1. What does the broken bread represent? (v. 24)

- 2. What does the cup and its contents represent? (v. 25)

- 3. What are you doing by eating the bread and drinking the cup each time? (v. 26)

4. Why do you have to partake of the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner? (v. 27)

5. What must you do before you partake of the Lord's Supper? (v. 28, 31)

The Lord's Supper is not to be treated lightly. We as Christians are to place a high priority on meeting together regularly in obedience to the Lord's directive. In so doing, we show respect for Christ and His Church by recognizing the body and blood of the Lord. We take the time to remember Christ's work at Calvary and thank Him for saving us from eternal death. We also have an opportunity to ask forgiveness from God for any sin we may have in our lives, knowing that He will faithfully forgive us our sins when we ask. (1 John 1:9)

The Lord's Supper is a powerful time of corporate worship as the whole church proclaims Jesus' death until He comes again to earth at the Second Coming.

Your Response

If you have been baptized in water, reflect back on that experience and restate what you committed to the Lord for your life.

If you have not been baptized in water, begin now to make preparations for that step of obedience to Christ.

Quote Acts 2:38 by memory if you can and thank the Lord again for the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit to you.

Quote 1 Corinthians 11:26 and begin to prepare yourself to worship Christ with other Christian believers at the next Lord's Supper.

Make a commitment to participate in every Communion service in a worthy manner in order to honour the Lord.



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

STUDY GUIDE

Lesson 4: Water Baptism & Communion – Taking Steps of Obedience

The Big Deal!

Emphasize the importance and blessings of obeying Jesus and His commands through water baptism and communion.

Water Baptism

Be ready to answer the question of why you need to be baptized in water if you were already baptized as an infant.

As an infant, baptism is not based on your decision and personal commitment to Christ. As an adult, you have scriptural understanding and have made a personal choice to follow Christ.

It is important that a person is baptized at an age where they have a good understanding of what they're doing and why. Make sure that being baptized is not just an emotional response, but a decision made with understanding.

Question 1 – See John 15 about obedience being the pathway to joy.

This is a good place to share your own experience about baptism and its significance to your Christian faith.

Question 2 – Briefly review the highlights of the listed examples to show the biblical pattern of first accepting Jesus as Lord and then being baptized in water.

Question 3 – Be familiar with Jesus' example to us (Matthew 3:13-15) and our identification with Christ's death and resurrection. (Romans 6:1-14)

Communion

Questions 1, 2, 3 - The early Christians stressed the importance of being devoted to the Lord's Supper. It is important to teach this to new believers early. Communion should be taken regularly with a proper understanding of what it represents. Be familiar with 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 and what it teaches about eating the bread and drinking the cup.

Talk about when Communion became important to you.

Questions 4 & 5 - We must partake of the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner so we don't sin against the Body of Christ. We are to respect Christ's Body and hold nothing against anyone else in the Body. We are to examine our own hearts and motives and ask forgiveness for any wrong in us (1 John 1:9) to be prepared to take communion. If there is an issue that needs resolving with God or others, do it before the time of communion in honour of Christ.

Share how you prepare yourself for Communion.

Discussion Group Questions – Lesson 4

1. Why is it so important to obey Christ and His commands for your Christian growth? (John 15:10-11)
2. Have the group share their experiences of water baptism. Were they occasions of joy?
3. What are some similarities and differences that you see in the examples of water baptism in the book of Acts?
4. What conclusion can you draw about the importance of water baptism for a Christian from the Bible accounts?
5. Why do you think it's important to be immersed in water to be baptized?
6. What opportunities for witness does a water baptism provide?
7. Why do you think that the early Christians devoted themselves to communion?
8. Why are we not told exactly how often we are to partake of the Lord's Supper?
9. Briefly describe Communion so that a new believer could understand.
10. What are some practical ways to be prepared to partake of the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner?
11. What opportunities for witness does the Communion service present?