



Practicing the Priesthood of Believers and Ordinances



Foreword

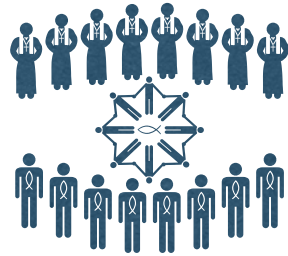
This document has been designed for use with small groups using cell-phones, tablets, computers, TV connections, or projectors. This document is not designed as a printed book (though it may be printed) or large group presentation but rather an electronic discussion guide for small or medium sized multi-language groups. The graphics on each page are designed to ease cross-cultural communication issues when using a translator or with group members using a second language. We hope that this document helps facilitate discussions about the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both formal and informal discussion groups in homes, churches, and coffee shops around the world. The copyright on this document allows you to freely distribute and even modify the content to meet your needs.

Table of Contents

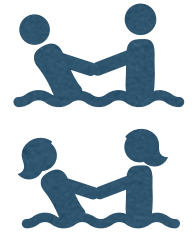
(Quick Access Menu)



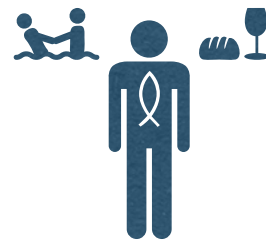
Priesthood
Of all Believers



Men Baptize Men,
Women Baptize Women



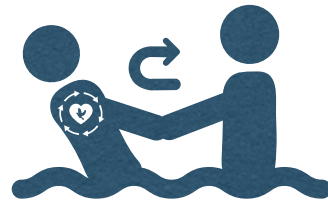
Disciples May
Lead Ordinances



The Focus Is Faith,
Not Authority



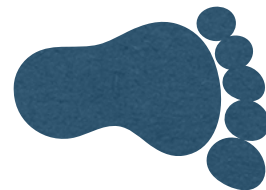
Outward Sign
Of an Inward Change



The Lord's Supper
Develops fellowship



Baptism Is the
First Step of Obedience



The Lord's Supper
as Gospel Witness



The Person Who Shares
Baptizes Them



Only for Baptized
Believers



Quick Access Menu (Hyperlinks)

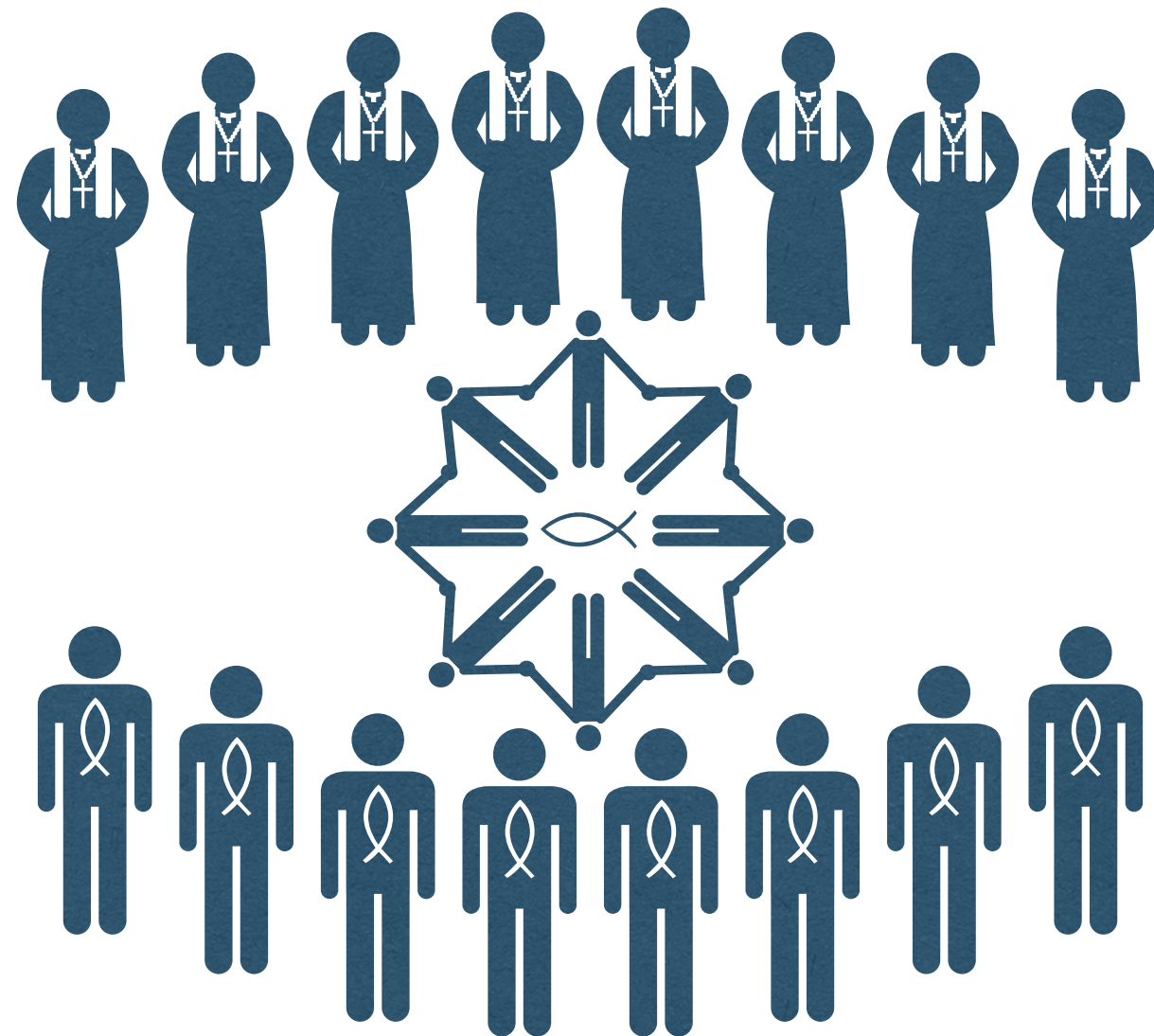
The Lord's Supper
Convicts of Sin



Case Studies



Priesthood of all Believers



8 baptized members = 8 priests

“and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (Revelations 1:6)

*“And behold, **the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.**” (Matthew 27:51)*

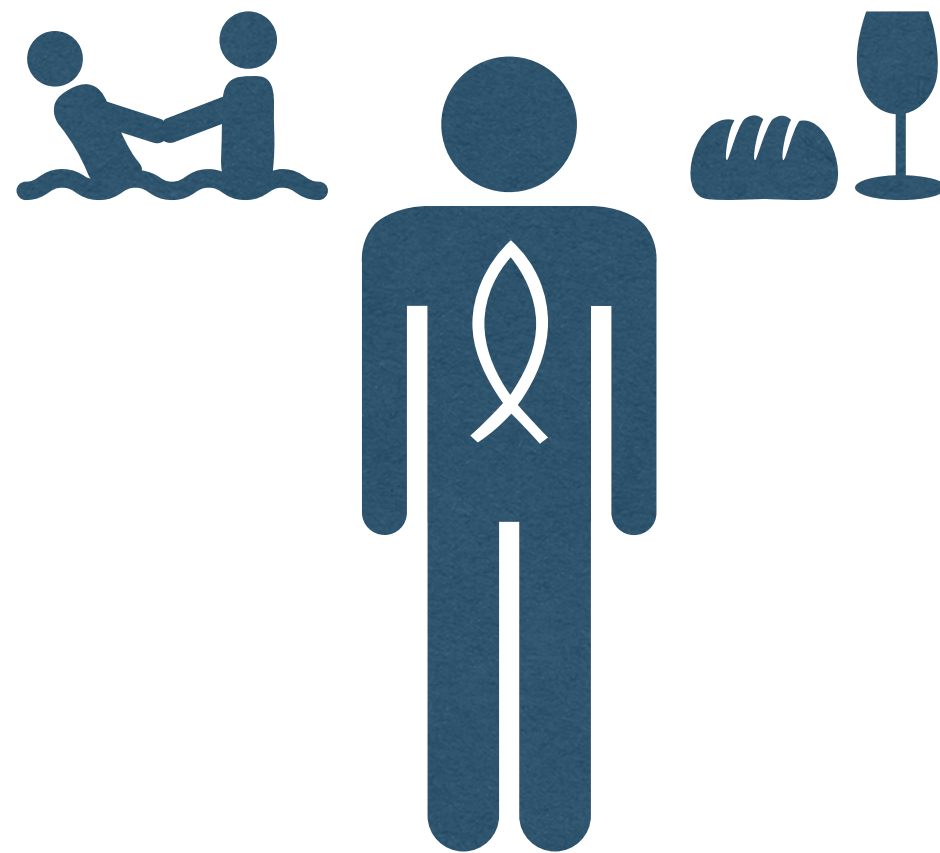


*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.**” (Matthew 28:19-20a)*

“you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.’ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,’ and ‘A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do. But **you are** a chosen race, **a royal priesthood**, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, **that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**” (1 Peter 2:5-9)

Key Idea: All baptized believers, according to the Bible, are now priests of God and are given the task of making disciples. This included baptizing new believers under the authority of the local church. When Jesus died the veil at the Temple was torn and now there is no other priest in-between God and us but Jesus.

Disciples May Lead Ordinances



“Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.” (John 4:1-2)

*“What I mean is that 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? **I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name.** (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power..”*

(1 Corinthians 1:12)

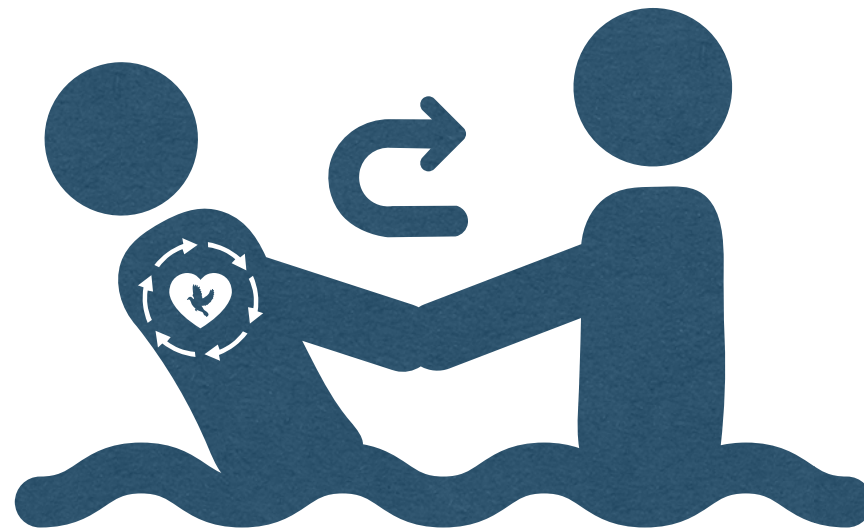
There is no passage in the Bible that says Baptism and the Lord's Supper must be done by a pastor or any mention of a pastor performing these actions. During Jesus' ministry the

Disciples were the ones baptizing people. Later Paul talks about refraining from baptizing in order to give ownership to the local church and to minimize divisions within the church.

Phillip, who was not a pastor or Apostle, baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch. Baptism and the Lord's Supper belong to the local church and anyone can do these things as long as the local church agrees. The advantage of allowing all believers to participate in baptizing new believers and leading the Lord's Supper is increased motivation and ownership of the Great Commission.

Key Idea: Because every believer is a priest, every believer may baptize new believers and lead the Lord's Supper under the authority of the Church.

An Outward Sign of an Inward Change



*“In him also you were **circumcised with a circumcision made without hands**, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been **buried with him in baptism**, in which you were also **raised with him through faith** in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:11-12)*

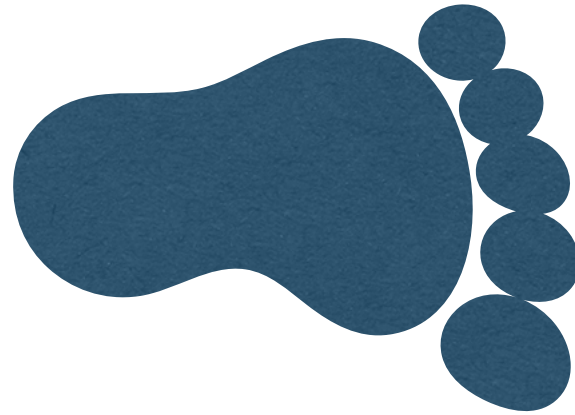
*“We were **buried therefore with him by baptism into death**, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might **walk in newness of life**.” (Romans 6:4)*

*“And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, **today you will be with me in paradise.**”” (Luke 23:43)*

***The thief on the cross had no chance to be baptized but Jesus said that he would be with him in paradise.**

Key Idea: Baptism is an outward sign of an inward change. It is a believer’s public act of identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and with other believers.

Baptism Is the First Step of Obedience

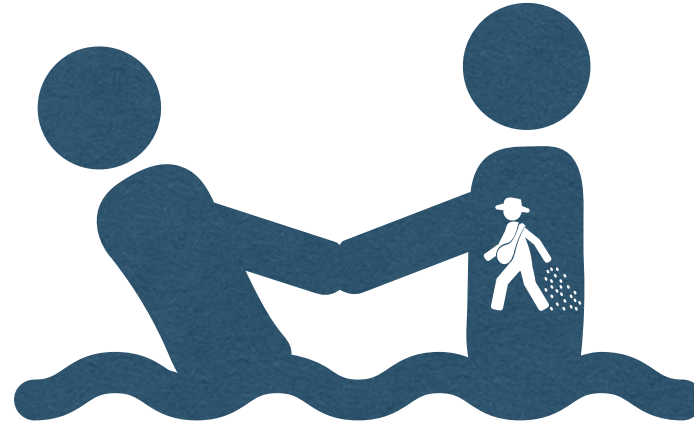


*“Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.** ” (Matthew 28:19-20a)*

*“**And as they were going along the road** they came to some water, and the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water! **What prevents me from being baptized?**’” (Acts 8:36)*

Key Idea: If a person confesses faith in Jesus the first step of obedience is to be baptized as a public profession of their faith.

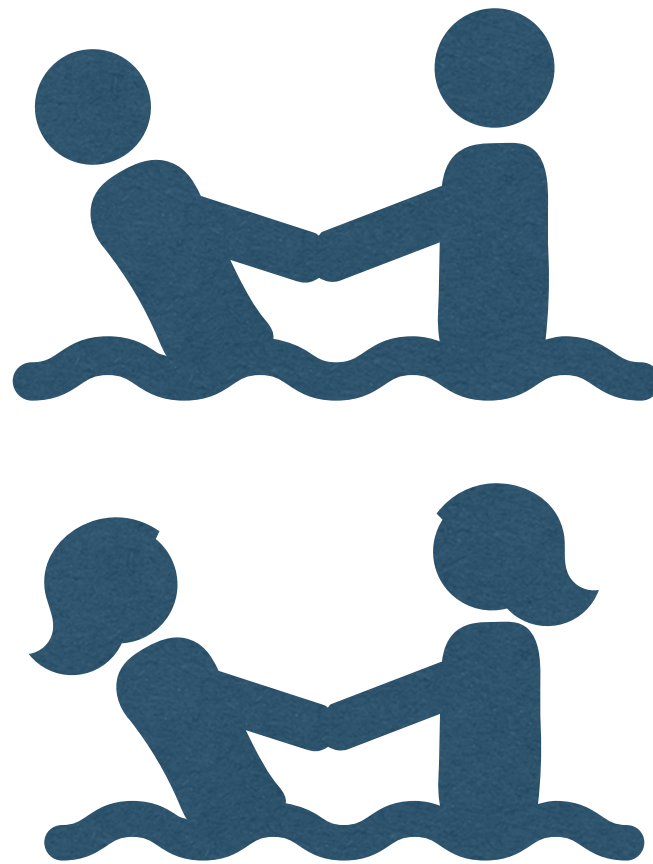
The Person Who Shares Them Baptizes Them



“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.” (Acts 8:35-38)

Key Idea: The person who shares the Gospel with a person can be the one to baptize them.

Men Baptize Men, Women Baptize Women



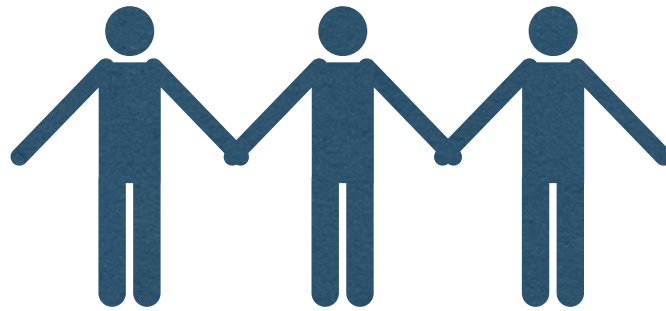
Key Idea: Generally it is best if men baptize men and women baptize women. There is nothing in scripture that says a woman cannot baptize others.

The Focus Is Faith Not Authority



Key Idea: The point of baptism is that the believer is publicly professing faith in Christ and joining the Body of Christ, not that they are being baptized by a “holy” person or person of “authority.”

The Lord's Supper Develops Fellowship



“But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. (1 Corinthians 11:17-21)

Key Idea: The Lord's Supper should be used to help unify fellowship within the Body of Christ.

The Lord's Supper as Gospel Witness



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

Key Idea: Baptism is one way in which Christians proclaim the Gospel.

Only for Baptized Believers



“Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

Key Idea: Unbelievers should not take the Lord’s Supper.

The Lord's Supper Convicts of Sin



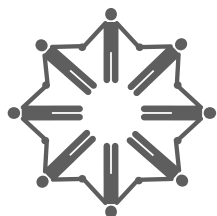
“Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

Key Idea: Believers should take time to examine their lives and deal with sin before taking the Lord's Supper.

Case Study 1



A member of one of your home group, who is not a leader, shares the Gospel with someone and they come to Christ. Who should baptize this new believer and why?

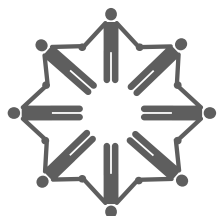


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 2



A single woman shares her faith with another woman and this other woman comes to Christ. Who should baptize this new female believer and why?

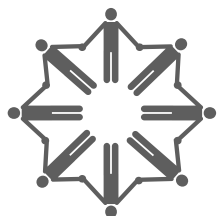


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 3



A member of your group was initially baptized and disciplined by another church. He left his former church after the pastor renounced Christianity and join another religion. Should this group member be re-baptized? Is his initial baptism still valid? Why or why not?

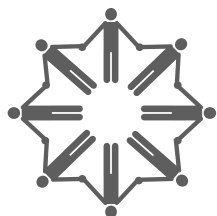


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 4



Your group is having the Lord's Supper during a weekly gathering. You have two visitors who are not baptized believers. Several members of the group suggest that you should offer the Lord's Supper to the visitors so that they do not feel embarrassed or left out. What should you do?



**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

