

The Sacraments

Here at Crossroads we celebrate the two Christian sacraments first instituted by Jesus Christ: Baptism and The Lord's Supper (also called Holy Communion or, in some churches, the Eucharist). A "sacrament," by the way, is a special religious observance that we believe has particular significance to God and therefore to the practice of our Christian faith.

Baptism

Baptism, like faith, is a gracious working of God. By the work of the Holy Spirit, God claims His own. He spiritually cleanses us. He "marks, seals, identifies" His people through baptism and incorporates them into the family of God. He says to the whole world, "This is my son...This is my daughter...They bear my seal." On our part, Baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Christ, fulfilled by all who have subjected themselves to His sovereignty. In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commands His followers to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit..." We believe that His command involves all people, no matter what age.

The Lord's Supper

Jesus initiated this sacrament when met with His disciples over a meal before He was to be crucified. He offered bread and said to them "this is my body;" he then offered wine and said "this is my blood." For us this act is more than symbolic; we believe that Christ is really present in a supernatural way with the bread and wine. In the celebration we receive Christ's body and His blood together with the bread and wine (or juice) as tangible assurance of what God promises in Christ: forgiveness of sins and new life in Him. Anyone who worships with us is welcomed to our Communion celebration if they are prepared: they are believers in Christ as Lord, they understand their sin condition and desire repentance, and they recognize the supernatural presence of Christ with the bread and wine.

Differences Among Christians

There are different views among sincere Christians on the specifics of these two sacraments. People will debate the methods of baptism or the precise meaning of Christ's presence as part of The Lord's Supper. For the most part, these differences come from a sincere effort to understand and adhere to biblical teaching. That's a good motivation, and we encourage charitable discussion among Christians on these (and other) doctrinal questions in a continuing effort to seek God's truth.

However, these issues can become divisive and destructive when we try to move them "front and center" as essential to what it means to be a Christian. We believe the only essential in Christianity is Christ: that is, He is God and salvation comes by true faith in Him and Him alone as our Lord and Savior. Beyond that there are many important matters of faith and practice that we must consider with the aim of being true to the Bible as God's word. However, because our understanding is imperfect, we will come to some different views. So long as those views do not stray off into heresy we urge respect among Christians for these differences.

If you have any questions about our views on Baptism, the Lord's Supper, or any other doctrinal issues, please e-mail us at crossroads@crossroadsconnect.net or contact the church office at 630.585.7777 and we'll be happy to set up a time for you to chat with one of our pastors.