

Salvation Army

Quotes copied & pasted from: http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/about-us_65047/faqs/questions-about-our-faith.html?s=2026750641#baptism

Why don't the Salvos have baptism?

To the vast majority of people, baptism is regarded as a distinctly Christian ritual. So it may seem odd to some and puzzling to others as to why it is not observed within The Salvation Army.

The Army has several distinctives that make it different to other denominations—its uniform, terminology and symbols to name a few. In respect to spirituality, the Army is fundamentally simple and uncluttered compared to some other churches.

In its early days, baptism was part of Salvation Army practice, but a decision was made that saw the discontinuation of any form of ritual that could be interpreted as a substitute for daily faith and dependence upon God.

Salvationists see such rituals as outward signs of an inward experience, and it is the inward experience that is of greatest importance to God.

The decision to discontinue baptism resulted from the question: Is baptism essential to a person becoming 'saved' or for one to continue in a relationship with God?

Based upon the Bible, the answer was clearly 'no', baptism is not regarded as essential to salvation or continued faith.

While some might accuse the Army of being disobedient to what the Bible teaches regarding baptism, it was and continues to be a way whereby people witness to their new found faith and conversion.

New believers within The Salvation Army testify publicly in worship and tell their story of conversion. When becoming members they are publicly enrolled, testify and sign a covenant of membership. Although no water is involved, the witness to one's faith is the same and some might even argue that personal testimony might be the greater witness.

Quotes copied & pasted from: http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/about-us_65047/faqs/questions-about-our-faith.html?s=2026750641#communion

Why don't the Salvos have communion?

Some people might be surprised to learn that communion is practiced among many Salvation Army members—although it is not represented in the ritual and observance that people commonly associate with communion that occurs as part of a church service.

It's worth considering whether or not Jesus intended to turn a beautiful moment in a common meal into a ritual. At the famed last supper, Jesus took bread and wine—two common elements on the meal table at the time—and issued an invitation for his people, when they came together, to remember his sacrificial death.

Is the means of remembrance more important than the remembrance itself? The Salvos say 'no'.

At most meals, it is common practice for Salvationists to say two prayers. One before the meal is eaten (referred to as 'grace' or a blessing). The second prayer comes at the end of the meal and is the 'remembrance' or returning thanks.

In that second prayer the life and death of Jesus is remembered with thankfulness and gratitude.

We believe the Army's practice of saying grace and returning thanks at each meal is a valid observance of communion.

At least this is how the Salvos have come to understand the Bible verse where the apostle Paul writes (in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verse 26): 'For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'