

**Sermon: The Importance of Baptism.**  
**Series: Foundations of Faith.**

**Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20.**  
**Date: January 19, 2025**

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**OBSERVATION** -- As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through *Who, What, Where, When, How, Why* questions together.

**INTERPRETATION** -- Answer these questions together:

**1. What does this passage teach us about us?**

a) Think back to your own personal baptism? Can you recall your motivation for getting baptized? Were you saved before you were baptized? Were you baptized by and into a local church?

b) Read Matthew 16:18-20. God has given the local church (through Jesus and the Apostles) the authority to bind on earth what is bound in heaven. This means that the local church has the authority to affirm a person's salvation? How is baptism a part of this affirmation process? How is local church membership a part of this affirmation process?

**2. What does this passage teach us about God?**

a) When God makes a covenant with us it is always from his grace, but it requires a faith response. Consider the promises God makes to us in the New Covenant found in Hebrews 8:10-12. What specific promises does God make to us in the New Covenant? In what ways does water baptism symbolize these promises?

**3. What does this passage teach us about grace/salvation? How does it point to Christ?**

a) Think about the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. Why do you believe Jesus commanded us to baptize as part of making disciples? What do you think - does a person have to be baptized in order to be a disciple of Jesus?

b) Read Romans 6:1-4. Paul is using the symbolism of water baptism to describe our identity with Christ. In what way does baptism depict our union with Christ's death and resurrection? Compare Romans 6:1-4 with 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. How are these passages saying the same thing? In what are they different?

**APPLICATION**

a) Are you a baptized member of a local church? Should you be?

b) Is there a new believer in your church that you can encourage and disciple?

**PRAYER**

- Praise God for his New Covenant of grace.
- Confess ways that you have taken your faith response too lightly.
- Thank Jesus for satisfying all the demands of the New Covenant for us.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you respond in faith to Christ, either in baptism to start or in ongoing local church involvement.