

Theme: Disciples are those who have personally responded to Christ in repentance and faith, obey His command to be baptized, and are vital members of a local church.

## I. Intro - An Exciting Day Today!

- A. We will be recognizing 2 new families joining BRCC
- B. We will also be doing 2 water baptisms!
- C. I decided to take a week off Daniel and teach why this is biblical, important, and God's call for each believer
- D. Why is baptism important? Why join a local church?

## II. The Foundation - Disciples of Christ

- A. Background: Peter preaches on Pentecost
  - 1. The Holy Spirit filled the 120 and crowds gathered
  - 2. Peter preached about Jesus from the Old Testament
  - 3. Peter then declared Jesus as Lord and Messiah  
"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:36
    - a. They had rejected and killed Jesus
    - b. God overruled, raised Jesus, & made Him Lord of all
  - 4. The foundational message is the Lordship of Jesus
- B. The call to repentance, faith - and water baptism
  - 1. The people respond to Peter's preaching  
When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Acts 2:37
    - a. They do not make excuses or deny God's verdict

- b. They humbly acknowledge their guilt
    - c. This is the first step in responding to God - humbly admitting God's Law is true and I am guilty
- 2. The call to repentance and faith  
Peter replied, "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. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38–39
  - a. Repent - turn from your sin to God
  - b. The promise - receive God's promise by faith
  - c. Discipleship begins when we respond to God by repenting of our sins and actively trust in Jesus and God's Promise of salvation (the Gospel).
- 3. Baptism - The Initial act of Obedient Faith  
Peter replied, "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. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38–39
  - a. Baptism - the initial act of obedient faith for everyone
  - b. Baptism does not make us Christians, but it is the public, outward sign that we are disciples of Christ through faith.
  - c. Jesus declared that was essential for disciples  
Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18–20

1. Jesus has all authority - and we must submit to Him as Lord
2. Disciples are made through water baptism and being taught the Word of God so that they can obey Jesus
3. Discipleship apart from water baptism is no more conceivable than discipleship apart from learning and obeying the Word of God.
4. This is why we see baptism so often in the book of Acts and the rest of the NT - it is the initial act of obedient faith, the doorway to a life of discipleship in obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ the Lord.
5. We will celebrate as two believers are baptized later today!

### III. Disciples and the Local Church

#### A. Disciples are joined to the local church

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. <sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:41–42

1. Those who responded in repentance & faith were baptized - the beginning of discipleship
2. But they were not only united to Christ - they were added to the local church in Jerusalem.
3. This was not just the universal church; they met for teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper, and prayer.
4. This is a description of the worship of a local church

#### B. Disciples are part of the community of a local church

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, Acts 2:46

1. Gathering as a local church was their continual practice
2. Notice they met for public worship (Temple courts) and also smaller groups (in their homes)
3. Disciples don't just express love for God in public worship, they also gather together in smaller groups regularly so they can connect their lives with other believers in their local church.
4. This includes not only small group meetings for study but also enjoying meals and fellowship with one another.
5. They not only connected with others but also served one another as part of their life in the local church  
All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Acts 2:44–45
  - a. These disciples not only worshipped God in public gatherings (Temple) and connected in smaller groups (homes), they also served one another, even being willing to sell possessions to help one another.
  - b. This is not speaking of helping those in the community, but caring for and serving one another in the local church.
  - c. In other New Testament passages, this includes things like using our gifts to build up the church and serving in ways to help the local church flourish.

### C. Disciples reach the world together

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and **enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.** Acts 2:46–47

1. The overflow and outcome of their life as a community of believers caused the Gospel to flourish in their area.
2. God added the believers - but the means He used was the vibrant life of the disciples in the local church community.
3. The most effective way to reach our local community and the world is as we pray and labor together as a local church community.

### D. Disciples - LOVE, CONNECT, SERVE, REACH

## IV. Applying the Word

### A. Have I responded to Christ in repentance and faith?

1. This is where EVERYTHING begins
2. Apart from faith baptism and church membership mean NOTHING!
3. Have I ever personally responded to Jesus as Lord and received forgiveness of sin?
4. I urge you to do so today!

### B. Have I been baptized in water as the initial act of obedient faith?

1. In the NT everyone who comes to Christ is then baptized in water

2. This is not a nice ceremony - it is commanded by Christ!

3. This is not a nice ritual - it is a means of grace for our struggle against sin!

4. Have I received the covenant sign of water baptism, publicly professing my faith in Jesus Christ for salvation?

5. If you have never been water baptized, see me!

### C. Am I a faithful member of a local church?

1. In the NT every single believer is part of a local church where they worship, learn the Scripture, receive the sacraments, are cared for by elders, serve one another, and labor together to reach the world.
2. Being part of a local church is not a nice option - it is essential for my own spiritual health and vitality
3. Being part of a local church is not a nice option - it is essential to pass the faith on to my family
4. Being part of a local church is not a nice option - it is essential to reach the world with the Gospel
5. What local church am I a committed member in, regularly gathering for worship, growing in relationship, serving, and laboring together?
6. Our next Walking Together class is October 31 - see Scott or call the office

### D. New members and water baptisms

## Disciples, Water Baptism, and the Local Church

Acts 2:36-47

October 10, 2021

Welcome new members and water baptisms

Galatians 3:26-29

Teaching keywords: Discipleship; water baptism; Church; Christian life

You are all sons and daughters of God through faith in Christ Jesus,<sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.<sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:26–29

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”<sup>37</sup> When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, “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.<sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call.”<sup>40</sup> With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”<sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.<sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.<sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common.<sup>45</sup> Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

<sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,<sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:36–47