

# Obeying Jesus

7 Commands  
for Every Disciple

**Week 2 | Buried with Christ, Raised to Life**

# Obeying Jesus – Series Focus

- In his last moments on earth with his core disciples, Jesus said, “Go and make disciples... teaching them to obey all that I have commanded” (Matt 28:18-20)
- So, what are these commands that sincere, authentic followers of Jesus should be obeying?
- In our **Obeying Jesus: 7 Commands for Every Disciple** series, we will look closely at those teachings and practices that Jesus presented as basic and foundational to faithfully following him as his disciples in the world
- 7 Commands: repent & believe, **baptism**, communion, loving God & neighbor, prayer, giving, and making disciples

# Buried with Christ, Raised to Life

- Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River in order to publicly identify with the Kingdom that is marked by repentance and heart change.
- Later, Jesus commands his own disciples to baptize in his name to identify with him as Lord in order that they might outwardly signify a real inner change.
- This morning, we will see how baptism in the NT is linked to real a conversion and commitment.
- In *Buried with Christ, Raised to Life* (2 of 7), we will look at the reason for Jesus' command, and why baptism is not an option for his disciples.

## Matthew 28:18-20 NLT

<sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

# Baptism in the Ancient World

- **Baptize** (βαπτίζω; *baptizō*): to dip, plunge, immerse, submerge something or someone in/under water
- In the ANE, to *baptize* could range from plunging a hot sword into cold water, to dipping a consecrated vessel in water, to ceremonial cleansing of a person or object
- Both pagans and Jews had various religious forms of ritual cleansing to signify purity and dedication
- NT authors viewed OT events as prefiguring Christian baptism—signifying salvation from wickedness, deliverance from slavery, and a cleansing from all sins



1st Century  
Qumran  
(Dead Sea)  
Miqvots



# What was John “the Baptist” doing?

- In the spirit of the OT prophet Elijah, John the Baptist is out in the wilderness preaching a baptism of *repentance* for the *forgiveness* of sins, the Kingdom of God is coming; in other words, prepare yourself for the Messiah
- Think about that... John is in the “wilderness” (not in the city), preaching heart change, offering forgiveness apart from the Temple system and the priests in Jerusalem!
- The baptism being offered was a one-time act of total submission to God, not self-administered, but by the messenger who was “preparing the way” for Messiah
- Jesus is baptized by John and is confirmed as the Messiah

## Acts 2:36-38 NIV – Peter preaching on Pentecost

<sup>36</sup> “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” <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>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.



## **Acts 8:34-38 NIV – Philip evangelizes the Ethiopian**

<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” <sup>35</sup> Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

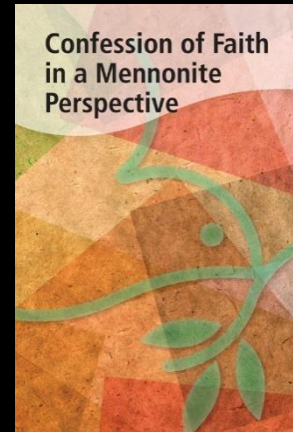
<sup>36</sup> As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” <sup>38</sup> And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

“Initiation into the church is the incorporation into a community. It means participation in a body of people who share a story, a vision, and a mandate. The process of initiation into the church of Christ, therefore, comes about through the combination of inward personal faith, baptism as the outward expression of faith, and membership in a local congregation. **Faith** marks our acceptance of the story of Jesus for us. **Baptism** symbolizes our transfer of loyalties, as we publicly affirm that Jesus is our Lord. And **church membership** marks the public meshing of our personal story with the story of God’s people, as well as that of a specific, local embodiment of that people.”

Stanley Grenz, *Created for Community* (pg. 234)

# Confession of Faith

*in a Mennonite Perspective* | Article 11 (pg.46)



- “Baptism by water is a *sign* that a person has repented, received forgiveness, renounced evil, and died to sin, through the grace of God in Christ Jesus. Thus cleansed, believers are incorporated into Christ’s body on earth, the church.”
- “Baptism is done in obedience to Jesus’ command and as a public commitment to identify with Jesus Christ, not only in his baptism by water, but in his life in the Spirit and in his death in suffering love.”
- Commentary: *“It should be public because baptism means a commitment to membership and service in a particular congregation. Thus, water baptism is to be reserved for those old enough to make such a pledge.”*

# Does Baptism Save You?

- Is baptism a sacrament or an ordinance, or both?
  - **Sacrament** (*sacramentum*) was a common word in the ancient world; an outward, visible sign of an inward, invisible grace.
  - **Ordinance** (“to ordain) is an act which Christ ordained and, therefore, which we practice as a sign of our obedience to him.
- The connection between baptism & reception of the Holy Spirit is obvious in the NT; few examples to the contrary
- If you were to ask an original apostle this question, I’m convinced they would look at you puzzled and perplexed
- While there is nothing magical about the water, the act of baptism coincides with the true condition of your heart

## Paul, Romans 6:3-7 NIV

<sup>3</sup> Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.


<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.



# Buried with Christ, Raised to Life

“Buried with Christ, Raised to Life” reflection questions:

- As the Ethiopian eunuch said to Philip, what stands in your way from being baptized in obedience to Christ?
- If you have been baptized, you have likely received the Holy Spirit and been initiated into the church. What signs of the Spirit do you see at work in your life that testify to the credibility of your baptism? Did you receive Christ?
- How is God calling you to obey him today? Is it to be baptized for the first time, or is it to renew your commitment and concern that all would-be disciples of Jesus be baptized in obedience to his commands?



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Sermon audio & slides in PDF can be downloaded at:  
[www.christiansburgmennonite.org](http://www.christiansburgmennonite.org)