

## “Make Disciples ... Baptizing Them” (Matthew 28:19)

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010

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Please turn in God’s authoritative Word to Matthew 28, where we will read His last authoritative words to His followers in the gospel of Matthew before He ascended to heaven. These words were not just for first-century Jewish disciples. Christians of all types and stripes rightly see these words from the Almighty risen Savior as being all-important and applying to all Christ’s followers for all time, to make disciples of all nations, who all need to be baptized and all need to be taught all God’s truth, and this all comes from the One with all authority in the universe speaking to all of us:

Matthew 28:18 (NAS) *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”<sup>19</sup> “Go therefore 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> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

There are all kinds of phrases with “all” we could study here today:

- “all authority” = unlimited sovereignty and power. He is speaking as King Jesus, this is not the “great suggestion”
- Not only is Christ *all-powerful*, He is *all-present*; He is with us *always* for all of this age of history to help us in this task we all are not powerful enough to pull off on our own
- “all the nations” = every ethnicity, people group within the one human race God has created (“races” is not a biblical word or even accurate scientifically or biologically). But every tribe, tongue (language), and people, has redeemed representatives around the throne in Revelation, and every group is loved by God and part of His gospel plan. Vodie Baucham is a gifted black Reformed Baptist pastor who I’ve heard explain that every new member in their church learns this Greek phrase *panta ta ethne* (every ethnicity / nation) which has been the focus of God’s redemptive plan and grand theme from the very beginning (see Gen. 12:3). But don’t just think this phrase is only for missionaries in other nations, we need to make disciples in our nation, too, in our homes (our children), workplaces, our spheres here
- “all I commanded you” = everything Jesus taught, we are to teach all disciples to obey, to observe. We don’t believe what Jesus taught in the gospels is for another dispensation or age, we teach all to obey all He taught for all of this age

Not everyone will go to a foreign country, like Paul did. But we can give or get involved in this commission, and “as you go” (one of the ways v. 19 can be translated) *wherever we go* around here or over there, we’re all called to have some part in *making disciples*. That’s the main verb everything else is subordinate to: “make disciples.” You don’t have to go across the globe to obey this verse and this verse is not only or mainly about making *converts*, the focus of the grammar is “make *disciples*” (not identical, we’ll see). The majority of this command has to do with *after* one converts to Christianity, he or she is to be disciplined and baptized and taught to obey all Jesus taught. I want to draw your attention to the 2 phrases “make disciples ... baptizing them.” That will be our title today.

## 1. The Ordinance of Christian Baptism

Why do we believe baptism is important? Because Jesus did, and He singles out this command / ordinance “*baptizing them*” as the first and foremost act of obedience. Then everything else He taught is included in v. 20, which would include the other ordinance of Communion. Verse 20 by itself includes baptism (John 3:22, 26) and every other thing Jesus taught, but by commanding baptism as the separate and supreme command it is, by making it stand out as Jesus does in this Great Commission, the marching orders for the church till end of time, baptism is clearly important in God’s Word <*it’s secondary to the gospel, but primary for obedience*>

This ordinance of Christian baptism is instituted and its importance set and singled out right here, on this all-important occasion before the King with all authority in heaven on earth ascended to heaven. In the context of Matthew 26, as we saw 2 weeks ago, in His last discourse to His disciples before His death, He gave the institution of the Lord’s Supper, and told them to do it in remembrance of Him until He would come again to eat and drink with them in His kingdom to come. Now the Lord gives another ordinance, this time not right before His death, but right before His departure: baptism.

I don’t think we should elevate one ordinance over the other. On the one side, there are some Christian churches who are super strict on who can take the ordinance of Communion ... but some of the churches with high spiritual requirement for one ordinance have virtually no requirement for the other ordinance except to be born into a family with at least one Christian parent, at which case many churches will administer the ordinance of baptism to infants.

We should take communion seriously, as I’ve taught last 2 weeks, and emphasize what Scripture says believers must be able to do before partaking: at a level of maturity of faith where you can discern within any unworthy attitudes or actions towards others in the body, can judge the body rightly, you are at a place where you reflect on your sin and repent of it on your own before God. The key phrase is “*examine yourself*”-I can’t examine all of your hearts

Most in history haven’t downplayed Communion or taught God has no requirements for an individual before that ordinance, but many good Christians lessen the other ordinance in my view, saying God doesn’t require anything of one before baptism, only a believing parent. This is where I differ with many godly brethren, and where I think the NT and NC differs from OT and OC – it’s no longer about what family you’re born into or what happened to you right after birth (circumcision or infant baptism) that puts you in this covenant. Its focus changed from outward to inward, physical to spiritual, from what father you have to what faith you have.

John the Baptist said to the Jewish religionists in Matthew 3:9 “*do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.* [i.e., spiritual children with spiritual new hearts that replaced stony old hearts, including regeneration of Gentiles. Being in the right faith community or having the right father isn’t enough in the NT, John called them to repent first]. The NC is a greater covenant, as the NT explains (Heb. 8, 2 Cor. 3-4). Jesus used the “*this is*” formula in inaugurating the NC like OT passages where the Lord announces the sign of a covenant, and in the NT, baptism doesn’t have that language, but the Communion cup does, as we saw last time.

The cup signifies or symbolizes the NC forgiveness of sins by the blood of Christ, for those who've experienced that salvation represented by the NC sign or symbol.

Many assume and assert baptism is *the sign and seal* of the NC replacing circumcision of the OC, then they build their theology on that premise and would apply baptism to infants. I consider those Reformed Covenantal brethren as friends, but would ask them to consider

- The NT passages that compare the NC to OC are speaking of the OC not as the covenant *with Abraham* with the sign of circumcision but the covenant *with Moses* (Heb 8 “*when I brought you out of Egypt,*” 2 Cor. 3 “*Moses ... tablets...*”)
- The sign to Moses and Israel as a nation was the Sabbath: Ex. 31:12 *The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,* <sup>13</sup> “*But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations ... as a perpetual covenant.’*” <sup>17</sup> “*It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel ...*”
- So if we're going to speak of the same “old covenant” that the NT speaks of, its sign was the Sabbath not circumcision (other covenants with Noah and Abraham were not made obsolete like Hebrews 8 says the covenant with Moses was)
- The NT does make clear that circumcision of an 8-day-old boys doesn't save (or baptism for boy or girl) but when the NT explains why circumcision isn't required they don't argue it's because it's been replaced by baptism, they argue it's been replaced *by faith* (Acts 15, Gal. 3, Rom 4, etc.)
- And if we're going to use NT language for “sign and seal” of the NC, the “seal” language in NT is the HS, not H2O, in Eph. 1:13, it's a seal that occurs *when we believe* in Christ.
- The NT never calls *Baptism* a “sign” at all or of NC, but it speaks of *Communion* with sign/covenant-type language
- But let's assume for argument sake that *both* ordinances are signs of the NC; the NT makes clear that NC members are believers, not babies (Heb. 8 says NC is better in *sins forgiven* never to be remembered against them, all *know Christ* in the NT sense of intimate relational knowledge). Colossians 2:11-12 speaks of spiritual circumcision (“made without hands” – regeneration) and links baptism *with faith*

I can appreciate the work of the Reformers and Reformed churches but there's too much inference and inconsistency in the ordinances and in applying the regulative principle strictly in other areas but not to baptism (“sola Scripture,” Scripture alone should govern the worship of the church). The Reformation wasn't complete ... I'm thankful for what it did but I don't pledge allegiance to a system. To be fair to the other side, they do have theological arguments and inferences from Scripture they try to use to support their views, and they have many of the big names from church history in their camp (including many of my heroes). I've learned many things from their many books on my shelves, and they've changed my views on a number of things, but not on this one. Still I count them not as liberals or enemies but as friends, brethren, and allies, if they trust Christ alone to save, not trusting in the water or works.

What about on the other side of the spectrum? Might we elevate the other ordinance over the other? It's possible some people think *communion is not a big deal* and any child who's prayed the right prayer and knows the right gospel answers quickly simply takes communion for many years and then somewhere down the road when their faith and age is a certain level, then they eventually get serious then baptized.

As if baptism is a big deal but Communion is on some lower and lighter level, which I don't think is how the NT portrays it. Communion actually has sober warnings to true believers for mature self-examination 1<sup>st</sup>. I don't want to separate Christ's ordinances by years or elevate one far above the other.

If you're not willing and ready to obey the ordinance of baptism, I'm not willing or ready to encourage you to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, in my conviction. Some day my kids will ask about the Lord's Supper, and I want them to understand and obey first what Jesus commanded here as the first part of making disciples: baptism. And before that I want to make sure they know what a *disciple* is biblically, and that they are a disciple of Christ, as the NT defines it. A true disciple's first step of obedience is baptism.

<Disciple is the key precursor, not *denominational* stuff>

As we saw a couple weeks ago, the order of Matthew 28:19-20 was the normal order of Christianity for most all of its history in all forms; baptism the first step, then observing Communion and all the other things Jesus commanded us as His disciples. The pattern of the Great Commission is also the pattern of Acts 2, when the NT church is born, Peter tells them Jesus is Lord and Christ, and when they ask him "what shall we do," he says "*Repent and be baptized*" (v. 38, in that order). Then as the Pentecost crowd responded, and many became disciples (committed to follow Jesus as Lord) it says: <sup>41</sup> *So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.* <sup>42</sup> *They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and ... to the breaking of bread* [another NT name for Communion]

That's the beginning of the fulfillment of Christ's word in Mt 28. They were made disciples the same way Jesus made disciples (told to repent after hearing the gospel message) and it says those who became disciples of Jesus as Lord were baptized and were taught everything Jesus taught the apostles. And they were committed to Christ as well as His body, to fellowship with the church, to communion with the church and to prayer with and for the church.

Baptism signifies being initiated or brought into the body, while Communion signifies our ongoing participation in Christ's body. Baptism marks the beginning of the Christian life and is a one-time act, while Communion is a continual act throughout Christian life.

1 Corinthians 10:2-4 develops the spiritual order and analogy in these terms: "*all were baptized* [i.e., immersed in, identified with]... *and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink*" – then v. 16-17 applies communion to the body: <sup>16</sup> *Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing* [fellowship] ... *Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?* <sup>17</sup> *Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body* ...

**1 Cor. 12:13** right after Communion text: "*by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body...and we were all made to drink of one Spirit* [spiritually we're baptized into the body and so we eat and drink with the body spiritually – both are about the body of Christ]

In many historic churches, communion could begin as early as age 12 (even those churches that may have baptized them many years earlier or as infants), and was seen by some as kind of a “coming of age” time, which for some may have flowed out of the Jewish concept into Christianity. You can read in Luke 2:42 a pattern in Bible times alluded to there: age 12 was when the child could begin partaking of Passover that their parents had been celebrating, after a period of preparation and instruction. The young adult now became responsible for the truth of God’s law (bar-mitzpah or bat-mitzpah = son or daughter of the law). Then their parents’ faith was now their faith, or at least was supposed to be, as they now made more independent choices. So there was a process for those who grew up in the faith, and if you wanted to convert to the Jewish faith as an adult Gentile, there are documents from the first century, perhaps earlier, speaking of the baptism or immersion of proselytes (converts to Judaism)

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The School of Shammai say: If a man became a proselyte [convert] on the day before Passover, he may immerse himself and consume his Passover-offering in the evening.<sup>1</sup>

### Which brings us to point #2: **The Origin of Christian Baptism**

Ordinances were not new to God’s people; Passover was called an ordinance and a memorial. But Jesus turned it into a new ordinance for Christians in Matt. 26, and in Matt. 28:19 He also distinguishes Christian immersion from any of Judaism’s ceremonies: “*baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*”

That qualifying phrase in the grammar refers to the Trinity, with 3 persons listed as distinct but linked. It’s not “the names” (plural) as if these are just 3 different names of the same person. They’re not the same *person*; there is *one God in 3 persons*, Father, Son, Spirit.

And notice v. 19 doesn’t say “the name of the Father and *the name of* the Son and *the name of* the Holy Spirit” (i.e., the name of this God and then this 2<sup>nd</sup> God and then this 3<sup>rd</sup> God). No, there’s One God in Christianity, but 3 persons, which is consistent with the Grk phrase that has 3 personal names on equal level under a singular noun: “the name of the Father *and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*”

This would not only separate Christian baptism from Judaism’s baptisms for converts (or other religions or cults, Mormonism, etc.) – this baptism is for Christians who are followers (disciples) of the One and Only God that Scripture reveals in 3 persons, the Trinity. We don’t do this or any other work to become Christians or to get to heaven, that also distinguishes this from other religions. We do this because *we are Christians* who want to *obey the Lord*, not to obtain our Lord’s grace and gift of eternal life (by def., unearned).

The origin of Christian baptism in the name of Father, Son, and Spirit didn’t start in the last 2 verses of the gospel of Matthew. In chapter 3, Christ Himself was baptized, and the Trinity manifested: **Matthew 3:16** *After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him,<sup>17</sup> and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”*

So you have God the Son on earth being baptized, and God the Father is speaking from heaven about His beloved Son, and there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> member or person called the Spirit (not an actual dove, it says it came down like or as a dove). These are not 3 different modes of God or just 3 different names for the same person, these are clearly 3 distinct persons involved in baptism, the virgin-born God-man on earth, the voice from heaven of His Father, and the visual Spirit in-between heaven and earth. To match our Lord's words in 28:19, there is a singular God, but 3 persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.

Jesus not only prescribes that we are to baptize in chapter 28, He practiced it as our pattern in chap. 3, and the Trinity is pictured as He does so. That's why baptism is such a wonderful picture of Christianity. We invoke the name of Father, Son, Spirit in baptism, and "the name" in Bible means "and all it represents and is". The fullness and oneness of God in 3 persons is also pictured in Eph. 4: "*One Spirit ... One Lord ... one baptism ... One God and Father*"

Not only is the Trinity closely associated with baptism in Matthew 3 and 28, but each member is presented or pictured in baptisms in the NT. In Acts 2, God the Spirit came down from God the Father to rest upon the original disciples as well. And then Peter preached about God the Son and promised the same HS and said "*repent and be baptized.*" The picture here is also similar to Acts 10, where when Cornelius believes the gospel, the Holy Spirit comes down upon them as they believe that God the Father raised the Son from the dead, and then as a result they baptized the first Gentile Christian converts. In both cases, the Spirit and baptism followed a message about Christ being laid down in death and raised up by the Father, which baptism pictures, laying us in water, then raising up.

**Romans 6:3** "*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.*" (similar baptism-gospel imagery in Col. 2:12)

*Which brings us from the ordinance to the origin of baptism to*

### **#3. The Original Meaning of Baptism for Christians/Disciples**

The Greek word here is actually not translated, it's transliterated (*baptiz-* is simply spelled in English with the same letters "baptize" rather than translating the Greek word as "immerse, dip")

- The *Complete Word Study Dictionary of the NT* says: "In contrast to the verb *baptizō*, to dip, immerse, is the verb *rhantizō*, to sprinkle, which must not be taken as equivalent to *baptizō*." There was another Greek word for "sprinkle" that's not used for baptism.
- *TDNT*, 1:529-30, says the root *bapto* means "dip in or under ... The intensive *baptizo* occurs in the sense of "to immerse" (trans.) from the time of Hippocrates, in Plato and esp. in later writers [and it cites examples of the Greek word used for ships that went down entirely underwater, and it meant to go under or be brought under]
- Fred Malone, a Presbyterian-turned-Baptist who wrote the book *The Baptism of Disciples Alone*, points out what few point out that in the grammar of how the NT uses "baptize": you simply cannot translate the word "sprinkle" or "pour" or "dab water on forehead" because it's used passively with a human being as subject.

Ex: gospels say Jesus *was baptized in* the Jordan river  
 Jesus wasn't *poured into* the river by John  
 Jesus wasn't *sprinkled into* the river by John in little  
 pieces, but He was *immersed into* the river by John  
 Point: you can pour or sprinkle water or liquid, not a person

And in the passage I just read from Matthew 3:16, it says "*After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water*" [KJV "straightway out of the water"]. In another place it says he baptized there because there was much water / abundant water / deep water. So as a baptist I believe in immersion. Here's some non-baptists:

- Calvin (father of Reformed churches that baptize infants): "The word 'baptize' means to immerse, and it is clear that the rite of immersion was observed in the ancient church."<sup>2</sup>
- Luther (forefather of Lutherans) wrote: "I would have those who are to be baptized completely immersed in the water, as the word says and as the mystery indicates ... This is doubtless the way in which it was instituted by Christ."<sup>3</sup>

Apparently not only did early Lutherans practice immersion, but when early church began baptizing infants, they did so by immersion into the middle ages. Immersion best symbolizes the Romans 6 imagery (lying in death, under in burial, raised in life)

But I don't want to hammer or be hardcore on the mode more than the meaning of it, which some Baptists do (Baptists with capital "B," I'm more of a lower-case "b" guy, a Christian who attends a baptist church who wants to be Biblical with a capital "B"). Some Anabaptists pour, which I don't, some Mennonites or Brethren dunk forward 3x, others do it backwards 3x, in England at one time Baptists broke fellowship with others who didn't do it with the laying on of hands, and at some points in history the Anabaptists were persecuted by Catholics and put to death for their views! The persecution of Baptists by other Protestants continued into the 17<sup>th</sup> century and even into American history, and Baptists themselves have often been divisive, exclusive, and their own worst enemies.

So let's get back to what the Bible says in Matthew 28. The mode of baptism is not what's most important, the meaning of baptism is most important. Does baptism save? Does it make you a disciple? Who does Jesus command to be baptized in Mt 28:19? When He says "*baptizing them,*" who's the "*them*"? You can't go baptize a nation [God did immerse all nations under a flood in Genesis], but the "*them*" in v. 19 is clearly the "*disciples*" He just mentioned. In grammar, it's called the antecedent, the noun that came before the verb that it refers to. As disciples go and make disciples from all nations, the disciples are to be baptized in the name of the Triune God, and the disciples are to be taught everything Christ taught.

So if you're interested in being baptized or wondering when you should be baptized, and you haven't been as I'm teaching this and you wonder if maybe you should be, the key question is this: are you a disciple of Jesus? If we're to baptize disciples in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, what makes a person a disciple?

If you're not a disciple of Christ, if you reject the Trinity or gospel that Christ proclaimed (grace alone through faith alone), "baptism" may have made you wet, but it doesn't make you saved.

**So what does Disciple mean?** In Grk world, “follower of someone and his teaching, not merely a learner, but someone committed and attached to a teacher and following that teacher’s life and doctrine.” I called this last point “Meaning of Baptism *for Christians*” and I’ve been using the phrase “Christian baptism,” but a better term would actually be “Disciples-Baptism.” The more common phrase is “Believer’s baptism,” but in the 4 gospels, you’ll never find the word “believer” or “Christian” in the major literal translations of the Bible.<sup>4</sup> The gospels never speak of “believers / Christians,” it’s always “disciples” (239x just in first 4 books of NT). Other titles developed later (Christian only 3x in NT), but to stick with the gospels and words of Jesus, I like to use the term “disciple.”

How do we know when someone has been made a disciple, as this text describes, and then should be baptized? Well, let’s look to the example and words of Jesus who’s speaking here. To speak of a disciple or “follower of Christ” has much more richness and meaning than how we Americans use the word “Christian” (basically for someone who goes to church or who prayed a sinner’s prayer at some point and isn’t outright atheist)

John 2:22 *So when He was raised from the dead, His **disciples** remembered that He said this; and **they believed** the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.<sup>23</sup> Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many **believed** in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.<sup>24</sup> But Jesus, on His part, was **not entrusting Himself** [same Grk word translated “believe” in v. 22-23; NKJV “commit”] to them, for He knew all men,<sup>25</sup> and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.*

That’s the same Greek word in John 3:16, but in 3:16 it is in the present tense, meaning a continual pattern of life. And the context of chapter 2 helps us see that some who were not disciples did “believe” on some level, but He didn’t trust some of them since He knew their heart. The full meaning of the word “believe” has in its meaning “trust, entrust to, commit to” in 2:24 so bring that to John 3:16 for “*whosoever believes ...shall have everlasting life*”

**3:36** “*He who believes* [again present tense in grammar, continual not temporary, not “believed” only intellectually or formerly, but presently “believes” truly] *in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.*” [NKJV “does not believe” but it’s a different Grk word *apeitheuo* which usually means “disobey” or “disbelieve/reject”]

Look back at v. 22 at how Jesus baptized and who He did:

**3:22** *After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.*

**4:1** *Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more **disciples** than John ...*

Jesus made disciples and baptized disciples and remember these were the same men receiving His commission in Matt. 28:19 to do the same He had taught them to do. How did Jesus define disciple? Was it a mystery to His disciples as to what made a true disciple?

**8:31** *So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine ...*

Jesus said His true disciples abide or continue in His Word. That’s one of the indicators you could look at in you life first if you want to know if you’re a disciple as Jesus described who should be baptized. I always believed in Jesus since as early as I remember, but I don’t think I was regenerated when I repeated a formula prayer when I was 4 years old. Even demons believe, that doesn’t make them saved. But when as a young adult, I understood more my sin in a way I can only attribute to the HS, nothing natural in me, I cried out to Christ for mercy in repentant faith. He saved me and gave me a hunger for God’s Word I hadn’t had before and that is one of the biblical evidences the Lord had made me His disciple.

There are some who have a temporary or superficial interest in God’s Word that doesn’t last (parable of the soils) but one of the marks of Christ’s true disciples, according to Christ, is continuing or abiding in God’s Word, remaining, reading, hungering for it. So examine yourself at this point and compare yourself to the Word. If you have little to no interest in God’s Word or eagerness for it, as it’s taught publically or in your private life at home, please don’t be offended if I’m not eager to baptize you, but wait. I don’t know your heart, but I do know what Jesus said about who a disciple is.

Jesus said men can observe to see if a person has been made a disciple of Jesus. If the Lord’s love has truly penetrated your heart, He says it will manifest in your life:

**John 13:35** *“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Do you demonstrate love to one another, not natural human love but supernatural *agape* love to one another, God-produced love? That’s another evidence God is within you, and as Jesus taught a little later in this same discourse to His disciples, the HS convicts of sin. We don’t long for the Word perfectly or perfectly show love to one another, we still sin, but an evidence we have the HS within is that we’re convicted when we do fall short and want to change and want to be more like Christ, and we’re striving to follow Him for His glory. Look at John 15, for one more summary statement:

John 15:8 *“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”*

John the Baptist wouldn’t baptize any who didn’t “bear fruit worthy of repentance” – is their fruit in your life of repentance? To use a later NT teaching, are you bearing fruit of the Spirit? If you want to discern if you have the Spirit within, there should be fruit. Again, not perfect, but present in some measure, growing, pursuing

There are other ways to know when one is made a disciple of Jesus but we’ll stop with this one: Luke 14:27 *“Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”* This same passage in Luke speaks of even forsaking family to follow Christ (v. 26) and giving up everything to follow Jesus or we cannot be His disciple (v. 33). There needs to be willingness to do this, even though that process continues throughout Christian life, it must start.

Anyone who tries to make discipleship an easy thing, or something non-costly, that you don't have to give up anything or change your life to follow Jesus, needs to read Jesus.

It's NOT that you have to do a bunch of things and then you're saved, it's that if you are saved you are willing to do all Christ calls you to because you now love Him because He first loved you, by His grace you have begun to be His disciple, by definition one who is continually learning and following. Jesus has transformed your desires so now you want to pursue what He calls you to, you are not marked by perfection but new direction and desires that is called by Paul "a new creation, old things have passed away, new things have come" or "regeneration." If that transformation has taken place in you, and you want to be baptized as a disciple of Jesus to publicly declare and picture that, please join us next week in our class. If you're not a disciple yet, please talk with me or God today.

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<sup>1</sup> H. Danby, *The Mishnah* (London: Oxford University, 1933) 148.

<sup>2</sup> *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (John McNeill, ed., Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 2:1320.

<sup>3</sup> Martin Luther, *Three Treatises: The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1960), 191.

<sup>4</sup> The NIV, which is a dynamic-equivalence translation rather than more word-for-word such as NASB/NKJV, does use "believer" in John 4:41, but in Greek it is a verb, not a noun, and in simple past tense "believed."