

Introduction

1. Please turn to Matthew 28:16-20. We all know this as the Great Commission.
2. As we planned to have our baptism at Presque Isle, wanted preach on subject of baptism.
3. Three question emerge from what Jesus says.

I. WHY IS BAPTISM IMPORTANT (VV. 19-20)?**A. Great Commandment & Great Commission**

1. In His ministry Jesus gave a great commandment & great commission, Matt. 22:34-40.
2. As there is no greater commandment than to love so no greater commission.
 - a. This is why central focus of mission statement is "becoming Christ-followers."
 - b. It is our marching orders, the central priority of our ministry.

B. One Command, Three Action Steps

1. One command = make disciples (followers of Jesus); 3 actions = go, baptize, teach
2. W. A. Criswell, pastored 50+yrs in Dallas, 1st one ever remember explaining this.
3. Go, baptize, teach = participles modifying main verb. Make disciples = what do.
4. Go, baptize & teach is how we are to do it. Excellent summary:
5. To become a disciple of Jesus Christ means 1st to believe in the person & work of Jesus Christ—the gospel; to be publicly baptized—identifying with Jesus and His message & joining the community of faith; & finally, to receive the teachings which Jesus taught the disciples.¹
6. Interesting Thing? Baptism so important Jesus made it 2nd step in Great Commission.
 - a. 2nd step in the marching orders of the church is to baptize believers.
 - b. Even comes before teaching. Not more important than teaching.
 - c. So important should occur fairly early in one's Christian life.
7. If asked questions: Going important? Yes. Teaching? Yes. Baptizing? Yes.

II. WHAT IS MEANING OF BAPTISM (V. 19)?**A. Badge of Christian Belonging**

(Reason enough right?)

1. People been asking why wearing police badge? (**Show**) (I'm supporting the police.)
 - a. It's also a reminder to pray for Jeff Marker. (Found 1 badge in toys at Goodwill.)
 - b. Badge = typically worn to identify a person.² Verb = mark with a badge.
 - c. Detectives pull out badges to identify themselves.
2. Jesus knew the power of symbols to teach didn't He? Gave us a powerful badge.
 - a. Baptized in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Baptism is the badge that we belong to the triune God.
 - i. When believe – Father adopts us into His family.
 - ii. Son becomes our Savior washing us clean of our sins.
 - iii. H.S. indwells us transforming us with new life. We belong.

B. Belonging to The New Community, the Church

1. Notice there is more. Baptism is done by other believers to us. *Baptizing them.*

¹ Jeff Reed (1997). *Becoming a Disciple*. Ames, IA: BILD International, p. 23.

² Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. (Eds.). (2004). *Concise Oxford English dictionary* (11th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- a. We don't baptize ourselves. Baptized by other Christians.
- b. Baptism is the badge that we belong to a new community, the church.
- c. Not only claimed by Father, Son, HS & have committed ourselves to them, →
- d. But, united to body of Christ & committing ourselves to the local church.
2. All know when officer shows badge, not only police in town. Belongs department.
 - a. Serves community with other officers. Accountable to each other & leaders.
 - b. Did you know police have an *Oath of Law Enforcement Honor?*
 - c. *On my honor, I will never betray my badge, my integrity, my character, or the public trust.*
 - d. *I will always have the courage to hold myself and others accountable for our actions.*
 - e. *I will always uphold the constitution, my community and the agency I serve.*³
3. An officer's badge symbolized a commitment to the department & the community.
 - a. Jeff is in Cleveland w/all others because his badge symbolizes commitment to us.
 - b. Baptism like that badge. Says belong to body & committed to body for their good.

III. WHAT IS REASON FOR BAPTISM (V. 19)?

A. Command of Jesus

1. Clear here that this is what Jesus wants. We do it in obedience to Him.
2. Pastor Ron Libey of 1st Baptist in Gwinn likes to refer to it as "*obedience baptism.*"
3. We often call it "*believer's baptism*" because should be done only with believers.
4. But *obedience baptism* is another excellent way because we are obeying Jesus.
5. For baptism is among Jesus' commands. He sent His followers to disciple all nations, baptizing them in the triune name (Matt. 28:19). So a church that did not require baptism, and an unbaptized Christian who did not ask for it would be something of a contradiction in terms. The root reason for the practice of baptizing is to please Jesus Christ our Lord.⁴

B. Hazel Turns Grandson

1. Many yrs-ago asked teenager getting baptized, *Why are you being baptized?*
 - a. *Jesus was baptized. If He got baptized, I figured I should too.*
 - b. *Said to that teen, That's one of the best answers I have ever heard.*
2. That's why baptism should follow salvation, not precede it. Obedience follows faith.
3. We trust & obey, don't we? We follow in the way of Jesus as He commands us.

³ <http://www.theiacp.org/Presenting-Oath-Of-Honor>. Accessed 7/14/16.

⁴ J. I. Packer (1994). *Growing in Christ*. Quoted in Reed, op. cit., p. 24.