

Baptism as Apprenticeship

Scripture Reading — Matthew 28:16-20

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them ...”
Matthew 28:19 —

As we have seen this week, baptism is a sign that the Christian life involves our cleansing by the blood of Jesus, our coming to second birth, our dying to self and rising to new life, our joining with the church, our suffering with Jesus, and our new identity-shaped clothing in Christ. All of these vivid images give us pictures of what it means to follow Jesus.

Each image conveys a little piece of what it means to be an apprentice of Jesus. At a university, an assistant basketball coach is likely an apprentice, eagerly learning from the head coach how to run a basketball program. In the plumbing business, a newcomer is apprenticed to a master plumber to learn the trade.

In the Christian life, we are all Jesus' apprentices.

Another word for apprentice is the Bible's word “disciple.” And that word is closely connected to “discipline.” Like any apprentice plumber or basketball coach, apprentices to Jesus take on disciplines to keep them growing and learning about the rich possibilities for following him.

Christian disciples read the Bible, offer prayers, go to church (perhaps tomorrow!) not so that God will love them more. No, we take on those disciplines because God loved us first. Through them, we grow into the mature believers Jesus wants us to become.

Prayer

Holy Spirit, we pray that you will breathe on us your strengthening power. Give us the strength to live faithfully and joyfully as apprentices of Jesus. In his name, Amen.

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