

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Genesis 12:1–3 | Genesis 15:9–21 | Luke 22:19

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 02.23.25

SUMMARY

In the final act of his earthly ministry, before he ascended to take his rightful place in the heavenly realm, Jesus gave his disciples a final set of commands. Matthew, the gospel writer, records that Jesus was worshipped (v. 17) and that he claimed all authority in heaven and on earth (v. 18). This is a fitting conclusion considering how Matthew’s gospel began with, first, a detailing of Jesus as the successor to royal dignity (Matthew 1:1–17), and second, the affirmation that he is the true “king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:1–12). Furthermore, Jesus’ resurrection validated his righteousness and sovereignty over everything—including death. With this authority granted to him by the Father, he tells his disciples to go and make more disciples by “baptizing them” (v.19) and “teaching them all that I have commanded you” (v. 20). This instruction forms the basis of the churches observance of what we call “sacraments.” A sacrament is an ordinance—an authoritative decree—specifically instituted and set aside by Christ as holy, which he instructs his followers to observe. The sacraments are signs that represent Jesus and the benefits of the new covenant of grace that he ushered in. Moreover, these signs are spiritual seals that are applied to believers. The two sacraments that Jesus explicitly told us to observe are baptism (Matthew 28:19) and The Lord’s Supper (Luke 22:19). These sacraments are mysteries of the Old Testament, now revealed in the New, specifically, as circumcision corresponds with baptism, and Passover corresponds with The Lord’s Supper; the signs of the Old are completed in the New. It’s also important to remember that sacraments are given in the context of a covenant—an agreement between two parties. However, these covenantal signs ultimately point us back to—not *our* ability to keep a covenant—but God’s faithfulness in *his* ability to keep a covenant. God does what he says he will do despite our unfaithfulness.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Matthew 28:16–20.

Why are sacraments necessary? Why should the church practice these ordinances?

How do the signs of baptism and The Lord’s Supper point us to God’s faithfulness to his people? How do these signs emphasize God’s faithfulness more than our own?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.