

# Discipleship Moment

## **Sermon Text: Luke 2:21-39**

When Sara and I got married we looked each other in the eye and made a promise to each other. We made what's called a covenant. A covenant is a formalized agreement between two parties: they can be nations or people or families. But God also does something in these kinds of promises. For example, in the covenant of marriage, God works through the husband and wife and creates new life, multiplying the two to become more and through the parents love for each other the young children grow into mature and loving people who serve their communities, families, and work with dignity and faithfulness.

This is how Biblical covenants work: God promises to do something to us to communicate his grace and bring glory to himself. In circumcision (in the Jewish context) God makes a promise to the Jewish people that out of an infertile man God was going to bring a nation and a person who, as they were told, would bless all the world. The circumcision was a mark on the body of the boys and men of Israel to remind all people that God made a promise to them. The circumcision was a physical sign of the promised reality.

While we are no longer tied to the Old Covenants like circumcision and kosher food laws, we are given new promises from God in Jesus Christ. These new covenants are given physical signs as well. The new promises are greater than the old promises: the new promises are new life and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the very presence of Jesus. These promises are given to us through Baptism (new life) and Holy Communion (the presence of Jesus). Through these things God *does something*. In Baptism we are brought from underneath God's wrath into relationship with him and are given a reliable relationship with God in which we can explore our faith. In Holy Communion we are given Jesus' presence and are strengthened by him.

God has made a promise to you: that he will make you into a new person in Baptism and will strengthen you in Holy Communion. And God always makes good on his promises.

## Going Deeper

*Use this resource to start conversations about this week's sermon for your personal devotions, with your family, or with your Life Group. You can use one question per day or all at once.*

1. What promises have you made in the past? How important are those promises to you?
2. Do you feel like you can trust God to keep his promises? When have you experienced God's promises?
3. Try to think about your baptism. Were you a baby? A child? An adult? Ask your parents or family about that baptism.
4. Read 1 Peter 3:20-22. What does this Scripture tell us about baptism?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. What does this Scripture tell us about Holy Communion?
6. Pray that God would remind you of your baptism every day and help you trust in his promises.