

## 2

## GRACE COMMITMENTS 3

## 3

## The Sacrament of Baptism

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Review memory verse of the week.
- Check JG member's progress on 21 days of personal worship. Ask if anyone has gone past 21 days yet.
- **EQUIPPING** – Continue memorizing the books of the New Testament. Review the illustration and the "roof" (Pastoral Letters).
- **MISSION** – Encourage your JG to begin the Mission section early in the week. Their assignment this week is to have a conversation with a second person on their prayer list in order to gain insight into their needs and look for opportunities to make the gospel known through deed.

## EXERCISES

- You should have a few people recruited to recite the books of the New Testament for this meeting. Continue recruiting so that everyone in your JG has recited the books of the New Testament by the end of this section of *The Journey*.

## DISCUSSIONS

- **TRUTH** – The material this week defends the view that both believers and their children are legitimate recipients of baptism. This subject may arouse some strong opinions about who should and should not be baptized, especially if your JG members come from a variety of church backgrounds. A good way to approach a potentially heated discussion like this is to respectfully acknowledge the differences between various church traditions, and then humbly, yet confidently, reiterate the view that this material presents.

That is, that believers and their children should both receive the New Covenant sign of baptism because:

- Children of believers were included in the Old Covenant, were heirs of its promises, and also received the sign of the covenant.
- When a child received the sign of the Old Covenant it signified a call to repentance and faith, so as to live up to the terms and promise of the covenant.
- There is no indication in the New Testament that God has changed the pattern He established in the Old Testament.

As you review some of the in Bible questions, be sure to draw attention to the fact that God's covenants with Noah and Abraham (and Isaac, Jacob, David, etc.) always included the representative's descendants. (e.g. *"I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you..."* Genesis 17:7).

You will also want to point out from the story of Jacob's dream of a ladder connecting heaven and earth, that Jacob

was a child of God's Covenant with Abraham and had received the covenant sign (circumcision) as such. Yet, he was a deceiver and did not live up to the faith of Abraham. His life is an example of how the sign signified a *call to faith*. And in fact, we see the beginning of Jacob's saving faith in his response to the dream. We also have the example of Jeremiah relying on the covenant sign of circumcision to signify a call for Israel's true repentance and faith in Jeremiah 4:4.

- **EQUIPPING** – It is important not to let this JG meeting become a theological debate about baptism. The key issue you should focus on is your JG members' grace commitment to baptism. Focus on getting people to share their attitudes about the importance of baptism for themselves and their children. Encourage any who haven't been baptized, or whose children have not been baptized to seek an opportunity to receive that sign soon.
- **MISSION** – Allow time for people to share their experience talking with people on their prayer lists.