

THE TRUTH ABOUT WATER BAPTISM

With the Actual Quotation of the Original Text of Matthew 28:19

Biblical and Historical Proof

by Eddie Jones

You have a right to know the truth about water baptism. What does the Bible say? What does history say? Do not take mere theories and ideas of men; learn the truth about this important subject. The following information is based on Biblical and historical proof that cannot be denied.

IS WATER BAPTISM ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION?

Jesus commanded, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is **BAPTIZED** shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15,16). This command of Christ is merely an extension of His own ministry through His disciples. "**Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples**" (John 4:1,2). The words cited above show that making disciples and baptizing them went together. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "*Except a man be born of WATER and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God*" (John 3:5).

Paul said, "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us (How?) by the WASHING of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*" (Titus 3:5).

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached, "*Repent, and be BAPTIZED everyone of you in the Name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS ...*" (Acts 2:38). To the Gentiles Peter said, "*Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized ...? And he COMMANDED THEM TO BE BAPTIZED ...*" (Acts 10:47,48). "*In the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls were saved by WATER. The like figure whereunto even BAPTISM DOTHS ALSO NOW SAVE US*" (I Peter 3:20,21).

Baptism occupied a place of great importance in the Christian community of the first century and was regarded as essential to the new birth and to membership in the Kingdom of God (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1982 Edition, Vol. 1, p. 798).

Water baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Christ, necessary for the remission of sins, and essential to the new birth. It is therefore definitely essential to salvation.

WHAT IS THE CORRECT MODE FOR WATER BAPTISM?

The word baptize is derived from the Greek word "baptizo" which means to dip, immerse, plunge or sink (Greek-English Lexicon). A careful study of the New Testament Church will prove that immersion was the original mode used for water baptism.

Paul said, "*We are BURIED with Him by baptism*" (Rom. 6:4). When Jesus was baptized by John in Jordan River, He came straightway up out of the water (Mark 1:9,10). When Philip baptized the eunuch, both went down into the water and then came up out of it (Acts 8:36-39).

The "Early Christians" practiced immersion (submerging a person in water) as the method of baptism (World Book Encyclopedia, 1987 Edition, Vol. B, p. 71,72).

The original mode of baptism was by immersion of the entire body in water, but a wide accepted method since the 2nd century has been baptism by affusion (pouring water on the head employed by the Roman Catholic Church) (Encyclopedia International, 1982 Edition, Vol. 2, p. 378).

It is evident that Baptism in the early Church was by immersion. The Didache (Christian writings around the second and third centuries) and Cyprian (Bishop of Carthage) are generally cited as the earliest evidence for the allowance of affusion instead of immersion. Baptism by sprinkling is admitted by the present discipline of the Roman Catholic Church (New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1977 Edition, Vol. 2, p. 56,65).

Nowhere will you find that the New Testament Church baptizeded by sprinkling or pouring. They baptized by immersion of the entire body in water.

WHAT IS THE CORRECT FORMULA FOR WATER BAPTISM?

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19).

Confusion has been left in the minds of many as to whether or not it is valid to use the words Father, Son and Holy Ghost for the baptismal formula and for the basis of the Trinity doctrine. A careful study of the original text, taken from ancient manuscripts and from the earliest historical writings, should dispel all doubt concerning the true baptismal formula. Note the following textual criticism: Elsewhere in the New Testament the triune formula is not used. Some scholars thus doubt the accuracy of the quotation in Matthew (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1987 Edition, Vol. 1, p. 877).

Matthew 28:19 has been disputed on textual grounds. There is grave doubt whether they (the traditional words Father, Son and Holy Ghost) may be regarded as the actual words of Jesus (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 1980 Edition, Vol. 1, p. 35).

All ancient manuscripts, which contain the original words of Jesus found in Matthew 28:19, were either lost or destroyed. We have no complete manuscript older than the year 400 (Hibbert Journal, F. C. Conybeare, 1902 Bound Edit., p. 108). In all still existing MSS (manuscripts which contain Matthew 28:19) the text is found in the traditional (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) form (Encyclopedia of Religion & Ethics, Vol. 2, p. 380). In the only codices (manuscripts) which would be likely to preserve an older reading, namely the Sinaitic Syriac and the oldest Latin MS., the pages are gone which contained the end of Matthew (Hibbert Journal, Conybeare, 1902, p. 108). To settle the question about the baptismal formula, we must turn to the earliest quotations of the original text.

The noted Greek scholar Eusebius of Caesarea (A.D. 270-340), who lived in the greatest Christian library of his time, had access to much older MSS than currently exist, and also exegesis of Origen, of Clement, of Alexandria, of Pantaenus and of many other ancient works (Hibbert Journal, Conybeare, 1902, p. 104). Eusebius quoted from Matthew 28:19 many times in his writings, in which he clearly revealed that Jesus commissioned the apostles to use a singular name---"His Name." The following is an actual quotation taken from the ancient manuscripts of the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19: *"Go ye and make disciples of all the nations IN MY NAME, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I commanded you"* (Demonstratio Evangelica, by Eusebius, A.D. 300-336, col. 240, p. 136: English --- The Proof Of The Gospel, Translated by W. J. Ferrar, 1981 Edition, p. 152,159,179).

In "The Proof Of The Gospel" Eusebius emphasized, "He (Jesus) did not bid them (Apostles) simply and indefinitely to make disciples of all nations, but with the necessary addition of '**IN MY NAME**' " (p. 157). Any other form of text he had never heard, and knew nothing until he had visited Constantinople and attended the Council of Nicaea. Then in two controversial works written in his extreme old age he used the common (traditional) reading (Hibbert Journal, Conybeare, 1902, p. 105). This of course reveals that he was persuaded to replace the original text with the traditional wording.

Other authors who had access to the original text also refer to the use of a singular name in the commission of Christ. The anonymous author of De Rebaptismate in the 3rd century dwelt at length on the power of the Name of Jesus invoked upon a man by baptism (De Rebaptismate 6,7: Dictionary Of The Bible, William Smith, Vol. I, p. 352).

In Justin Martyr's writings between A.D. 130 and 140, there is a passage which has been regarded as an echo of Matthew 28:19 by various scholars: "God hath not yet inflicted nor inflicts the judgment, as knowing of some that still even today are being made disciples in the Name of His Christ, and are abandoning the path of error, who also do receive gifts each as they be worthy, being illumined by the Name of this Christ" (Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho 39, p. 258: Hibbert Journal, Conybeare, 1902, p. 106). This certainly suggests that Justin did not know the traditional text of Matthew 28:19 (The Encyclopedia Of Religion And Ethics, Vol. 2, p. 380).

In Origen's works, as preserved in Greek, the first part of the verse (Matthew 28:19) is used three times, but his quotation always stops short at the words "the nations." That in itself suggests that this text has been censored, and that the words which followed "in My Name" struck out (Hibbert Journal, 1902, p. 105).

In the 3rd century baptism in the Name of Christ was still so widespread that Pope Stephen, in opposition to Cyprian of Carthage, declared it to be valid. Ursinus, an African monk also asserted that baptism into the Name of Christ alone was valid (Encyclopedia Britannica, Eleventh Edition, Vol. 3, p. 365,366).

Dr. Swete, professor at Cambridge, wrote in his book on the Apostles creed (London, 1894) that the triple formula forms the framework of the so-called Apostles' creed. He pointed out that the baptismal creed is seen to rest on the baptismal words Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Hibbert Journal, 1902, p. 102).

Matthew 28:19 is the central piece of evidence for the traditional view of the institution of baptism by Christ. The objection made to the historical criticism is that the references to baptism in the Acts point to the earliest form as baptism "in the Name of the Lord" (The Encyclopedia Of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 2, p. 380).

In the oldest sources it is stated that baptism takes place "in the Name of Jesus" (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1937 Edition, Vol. 3, p. 82).

For centuries the trinitarian formula for water baptism has been primarily based on the traditional wording of Matthew 28:19. With all the Scriptural and historical evidence now available, there remains absolutely no solid foundation to support the triune name baptism.

The traditional wording of Matthew 28:19 cannot be used to support the trinitarian formula without clashing with Scriptural and historical evidence. It can only be used in reference to three manifestations of one God and not three persons with a triune name. Which ever text you choose to use: the original or traditional; a singular name is required. Notice that Jesus said, "**NAME**" (singular). Father, Son and Holy Ghost are only titles or offices in which the one true God has manifested Himself --- This is not His proper Name! To repeat the titles and refuse to state the Name is failure to fulfill the commission of Christ. Therefore, to obey the commission, the **NAME** must be used. What is the **NAME** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?

Name of Father --- Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's Name" (John 5:43).

Name of Son --- "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His Name **JESUS**" (Matt. 1:21). (Also Luke 1:31.)

Name of Holy Ghost --- Jesus said, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in **MY NAME**, He shall teach you all things" (John 14:26).

Emphatically the **NAME IS JESUS!** Zechariah prophesied, "... *In that day (day of Salvation) shall there be ONE LORD, and HIS NAME ONE*" (Zec. 14:9). "*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord . . .*" (Phi. 2:9-11). Paul declared the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ of whom the whole family in heaven and in earth is named (Eph. 3:14,15).

A trinitarian name-mysticism in Matthew 28:19 is quite out of the question. The Greek words "eis to onoma" (in the name) seems rather to have been a technical term in Hellenistic commerce "to the account." In both cases the use of the phrase is understandable, since the account bears the name of the one who owns it, and in baptism the Name of Jesus is pronounced (Acts 22:16) (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Kittel, Vol. 1, p. 539,540).

Luke also records the "Great Commission" of Christ, which agrees with the original text of Matthew 28:19. Then Jesus opened the understanding of the disciples to the Scriptures, and said, "... *That repentance and REMISSION OF SINS should be preached IN HIS NAME among all nations beginning at Jerusalem*" (Luke 24:45-47).

In obedience to the commission of Christ, Peter stood with the other apostles in Jerusalem and said, "*Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the NAME OF JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 2:38). To question the words of Peter is to doubt the divine wisdom of God, for Jesus gave to Peter the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 16:13-19). Certainly the apostles were authorities on the correct formula for water baptism. (Also see Eph. 2:20.)

When Philip preached Christ in Samaria, they that believed were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus

(Acts 8:16).

To the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius in Caesarea, Peter said, "*Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the Name of the Lord* (R.V., Weymouth, Vulgate-'Name of Jesus Christ')" (Acts 10:47, 48).

According to Paul's testimony, he was baptized, washing away his sins, calling on the Name of the Lord (R.V. --- "His Name") (Acts 22:16).

The believers in the church at Rome were baptized into Jesus Christ. Paul said, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism ...*" (Rom. 6:3,4).

To the church at Corinth Paul asked the question, "*Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul*" (I Cor. 1:12-15)? This indicated that Jesus was crucified and they were baptized in His Name.

The believers in the churches of Galatia were baptized into Christ. Paul said, "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*" (Gal. 3:27).

Certain disciples at Ephesus were **REBAPTIZED** in the Name of the Lord Jesus, when they heard the preaching of the apostle Paul (Acts 19:4, 5).

The believers in the church of Colosse were buried with Christ in baptism. Paul said, "*Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with Him in baptism ...*" (Col. 2:11,12).

In agreement with the Scripture, history further proves that water baptism in the Name of Jesus was universally practiced by the New Testament Church for many years after Christ, and was changed by the Roman Catholic Church with the development of the Trinity. Examine the following additional historical proofs:

The original form of words was "into the Name of Jesus Christ" or "the Lord Jesus." Baptism into the Trinity was a later development (Dictionary of the Bible by James Hastings, Thirteenth Edition, Vol. 1, p. 241; Revised Edition, Vol. 1, p. 88).

The early church always baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus until the development of the Trinity, afterward they were baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Canney Encyclopedia, p. 53).

The first use of the Latin word "trinitas" (trinity) with reference to God is found in Tertullian's writings (about 213 A.D.). He was the first to use the term "persons" (plural) in a Trinitarian context (New Catholic Encyclopedia, 1977 Edition, Vol. 13, p. 1012).

The word "Trinity" is not in Scripture. The term persons (plural) is not applied in Scripture to the Trinity (Encyclopedia Americana, 1957 Edition, Vol. 27, p. 69).

Belief in Father, Son and Holy Ghost was first defined by the earliest general council of churches. This was the First Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. (World Book Encyclopedia, 1987 Edition, Vol. T. p. 363). (For Nicene Creed see Encyclopedia Americana, 1983 Edition, Vol. 20, p. 310.)

The triune and trinity formula was not used from the beginning, and up until the third century, baptism in the Name of Christ only was wide-spread . . . (Baptismal formula changed by the Roman Catholic Church). Now the formula of Rome is "I baptize thee in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Britannica Encyclopedia, Eleventh Edition, Vol. 3, p. 365,366).

The Trinity doctrine. The Catholic Faith is this: We worship one in trinity, but there is one person of the Father, another of the Son and another of the Holy Ghost. The Glory equal --- the Majesty coeternal. The doctrine is not found in its fully developed form in the Scriptures. Modern theology does not seek to find it in the Old Testament. At the time of the Reformation the Protestant Church took over the doctrine of the Trinity without serious examination (New International Encyclopedia, 1916 Edition, Vol. 22, p. 476,477).

The doctrine of the Trinity did not form part of the apostles' preaching, as this is reported in the New Testament (Encyclopedia International, 1982 Edition, Vol. 18, p. 226).

No record of the Trinitarian formula can be discovered in the Acts or the Epistles of the Apostles (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, p. 396).

Is this not sufficient proof? Nowhere, absolutely nowhere, will you find that the New Testament Church baptized using the words Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Honest hearts, receive the truth! It is of utmost importance that water baptism be applied in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. *"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is NONE OTHER NAME under Heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12).

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For IN HIM DWELLETH ALL the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are COMPLETE IN HIM, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are ... BURIED WITH HIM IN BAPTISM, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead" (Col. 2:8-12). *Ye are WASHED, ye are sanctified, ye are justified IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, and by the Spirit of our God (I Cor. 6:11). "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS"* (Col. 3:17). There is only *ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, AND ONE BAPTISM* (Eph. 4:5).

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

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