

# WHY WE BAPTIZE IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST



By

Elder Felix Anane, Sr.

*". . .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).*

# WHY WE BAPTIZE IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

The subject of “water baptism” has long been called a great issue, and no doubt has been made such by many church leaders of the past and present. Let us first consider the importance of baptism or the necessity of being baptized.

Water baptism is an ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ. If it is not important in the plan of God, why did Jesus command it in *Matthew 28:19*? And why did Peter follow up by saying “everyone of you” in *Acts 2:38*? There are two things that we should remember:

1. Whatever Christ definitely established or ordained cannot be unimportant whether or not we understand the importance of it.

2. Christ and the apostles showed the importance of this ordinance by observing it. Jesus walked seventy miles to be baptized though He was without sin. When John the Baptist forbade him, Jesus said, “suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness” (*Matthew 3:15*).

One may say that water does not contain any virtue, but remember that it is included in God’s plan of salvation. Peter explained it by saying “baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (*I Peter 3:21*). In *Luke 7:30*, we find that the “Pharisees and conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (*I Peter 3:21*). In *Luke 7:30*, we find that the “Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves being not baptized of him.” Why then is the mode of baptism? Baptism is by immersion according to the scriptures. “And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water” (*Matthew 3:16*). In *Acts 8:38*, Both Peter and the eunuch went down into the water, and Peter baptized the eunuch. “Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death” (*Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12*). A burial is not placing a corpse on top of the ground and sprinkling a little soil on it, but it is placing it in the ground.

From the world book encyclopedia volume 1, page 651, it states, “At first all baptism was by complex immersion.” And in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 2, page 263, I found that in the early centuries, people were baptized by immersion in streams, pools and baptisteries. Immersion became inconvenient after the Roman Catholic Church instituted infant baptism. Thus, the mode of baptism was changed to sprinkling of water. (See Britannica Encyclopedia, Eleventh Edition, page 265-266).

Repentance is typical of the death of Christ. Baptism is typical of His burial. Coming forth from the watery grave of the baptism is typical of His resurrection. What then is the formula to be used in baptizing? Jesus gave the command in *Matthew 28:19* saying, “baptizing them in the

name (singular) of the father, and of the son, and of the Holy Ghost.” He did not command them to use that as a formula, but commended them to baptize in “the name.” Name is used here in singular and is the object of this commission. It is not the titles, “father, son, and Holy Ghost” which show relationship. Why did he command to baptize in the name? “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*). This name is above every name under heaven.

“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, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father” (*Philippians 2:9-11*). This name is above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come

(*Ephesians 1:21*). The angel of the Lord in speaking to Joseph, said “and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (*Matthew 1:21*). In *John 5:43*, Jesus said, “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” *John 14:26* says, “but the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Thus, in baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ, we honor the Godhead. Jesus said to the Jews, “ye do dishonor me” (*John 8:49*). “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (*Colossians 2:9*).

Then said Jesus on to them, “Thus it is written” and this is the apostles telling what Jesus said, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations (Jews and Gentiles), beginning at Jerusalem. Peter was among the number to whom Jesus had spoken and whose understanding had also been opened. After having listened to these instructions he, a few days later, inspired by the Holy Ghost, began to preach and continued until hearts were pierced and the hearers feeling condemned. The hearers said unto Peter and the other Apostles, “Men and brethren what shall we do?” Peter did not hesitate but boldly gave the prescription—“repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (*Acts 2:38*). “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (*Acts 2:41*). Some say that the reason Peter commanded them to be baptized was because they were Jews and that baptism was to make them acknowledge Jesus Christ. However, let us consider Cornelius, a Gentile, who Peter went to his house and commanded him and his household to be baptized in the name of the Lord (*Acts 10:47-48*). If Peter was wrong on the day of Pentecost, he surely had ample time to be corrected before he went to the house of Cornelius. Was Peter wrong on the day of Pentecost? Let us put in mind that at the time when “they were pricked in their hearts” (*Acts 2:37*) they said unto Peter **and to the rest of the apostles** Men and brethren, what should we do? This included the disciple Matthew who wrote *Matthew 28:19*. Also, in *Acts 2:14*, we find Peter “standing up with the eleven,” Matthew was there, yet we find no words of correction from him or the remaining disciples. Jesus said in *John 17:6*, “I have manifested thy name unto the men (Apostles) which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.” It did not say, “some or most of them kept thy word or all of them kept thy word,

except Peter.” Thus it is clear that Peter did not in anyway disobey God’s word in his message did not in anyway disobey God’s word in his message in *Acts 2:38*. “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them” (*Acts 8:5*). These people were not Jews, but Samaritans. However, when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ; they were baptized both men and women (*Acts 8:12*). How? “In the name of the Lord Jesus (*Acts 8:15-16*).

Some may ask what was wrong with John’s baptism. John’s baptism was right for the dispensation, to which it belonged, but the dispensation had changed and the church age had begun. Let us see what happened to Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. When he went to Ephesus twenty-one years after Pentecost, he found some of John’s disciples and he said unto them, “have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost” (*Acts 19:2*). Paul then asked them, “Unto what then were ye baptized?” They responded, “Unto John’s baptism.” “Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” The scripture says that “when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Read *Acts 19:1-5*).

We do not believe that Paul changed the formula or mode of baptism when he baptized Lydia and her household (*Acts 16:14-15*). We have the account of the Philippian’s jailor in *Acts 16:30* where “he came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, saying Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they (Paul and Silas) said, “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” The Jailor “took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway” (*Acts 16:29-33*). How can we doubt that Paul baptized using the same mode and formula that he had used before; that is by immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? Paul was not with the Apostles when Jesus gave his final instruction to the disciples in *Matthew 28:19* and in *Luke 24:47*; yet we find Paul baptizing in the Name of the Lord Jesus. From whom did he receive this revelation? Let us note that Paul’s gospel is not a tradition from the other apostles, but it is a revelation. “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (*Galatians 1:12-13*). Paul was chosen to bear Jesus’ name to the Gentiles and he wrote fourteen epistles to the church. To this Apostle, God revealed the mystery of the church “which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (*Ephesians 3:5*).

Paul claimed to have divine authority: “if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (*I Corinthians 14:37*). Why did Paul state in *Colossians 3:17* that “and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” Water baptism is done both in word and in deed. We cannot afford to overlook this command to the church. Paul said, “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. . .” (*Ephesians 3:14*).

We must read the Act of the Apostles and the epistles of Paul to learn what the apostles taught and preached after the Holy Ghost came. We are “built upon the foundation of the apostles and

prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (*Ephesians 2:20*). The apostles not only preached baptism in Jesus name, but they practiced it. Nowhere can we find that they baptized using the words “in the name of the father, of the son, and of the Holy Ghost.” We find them baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In baptizing in the name of the Lord, Paul said, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (*Galatians 1:8-9*). Let this be a solemn warning.

Some say that they will accept the word of Jesus Christ in *Matthew 28:19*, but not that of Peter in *Acts 2:38*. Was it Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost or was it the Holy Ghost from heaven? (*I Peter 1:12*). Note that Paul said we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (*Ephesians 2:20*). Peter was one of the apostles and to him had been given the keys of the kingdom, and has the right to discredit his words. “. . .that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” (*2 Peter 3:2*). Here we are exhorted to hear the words of the holy prophets and the commandment of the apostles. This means we have to also here the Apostle Peter who commanded baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

In *Mark 7:8*, Jesus said, “laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men. . .” History tells us that it was not until the year 325 A.D. that both method and formula of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was changed. (Read “History of Christian Baptism” in Hastings Dictionary of the Bible, volume 1, Chapter 4, page 241). Which means that the most to you—the command of the Lord, or the tradition of men?

“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written” (*Acts 15:14-15*). Jesus Christ is the head of the body which is the church (*Colossians 1:18*). Then, why should we not baptize in His name? There is no other name for His church. “And they shall see his face and his name shall be their foreheads” (*Revelation 22:4*).

Let us therefore search the scriptures with an open heart remembering that Jesus said “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (*Matthew 4:4*). So you must be baptized in the only name that can save you which is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you!