

IN THE NAME OF...
Text: Acts 2:38 (KJV)

INTRO: Our subject is the expression "in the name of" as that expression might be used in a baptismal formula.

This subject is important because baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is for remission of sin. If certain words must be orally pronounced over each penitent believer in order to validate his baptism we need to know that--& we need to know exactly what those words are. If, on the other hand, God has not revealed any such formula, we need to know that lest we bind where God has not bound & submit to the doctrines of man as if they were of God.

I. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD "NAME."

A. In English, Webster's New Col. Dict. notes 7 basic definitions of the word "name."

1. A word or phrase that constitutes the distinctive designation of a person or thing.

Call His name Jesus (MT 1:21).

2. A descriptive, often disparaging, epithet (Call him names.)

3. Reputation. (Gave the town a bad name.)
A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. (Prov.. 22:1).

4. Family, clan. (He is a disgrace to his name).

5. Appearance as opposed to reality (a friend in name only.)

[Sardis] a name that thou livest (Rev 3:1).

6. One referred to by a name (praise His holy name).

7. Authority, "Stop in the name of the law.)

B. In the Greek, the A.G.L. lists the following uses:

1. A name, the proper name of a person, etc.
2. A reputation.
3. A name as representative of a person.
Hallowed by Thy name (Matt. 6:9).
4. Authority. In His name shall the Gentiles trust.
(Matt. 12:21).
5. On score of being possessor of a certain character:
Receive a prophet in the name of a prophet...
Cup of cold water only in the name of a
disciple... (Matt. 10:41-42).

C. W.E. Vine lumps these into 3 basic categories:

1. The name by which a person or thing is called.
2. For all that a name implies, of authority, character,
rank, majesty, power, excellence, etc. Of
everything the name covers.
3. As standing by metonymy, for persons.

Thou hast a few names even in Sardis who
have not defiled their garments... (Rev. 3:4).

II. THE BIBLE CONTAINS NO BAPTISMAL FORMULA.

Define:

"A set form of words for use in a ceremony or ritual,"
Webster.

- A. There are 6 passages most commonly used by those who
insist on a certain oral baptismal formula.
 1. MATTHEW 28:19, [The Pentecostals usually ignore
this passage). Go ye therefore & teach all na-
tions, baptizing them **in the name of the
Father, & of the Son, & of the Holy Ghost.**
 2. ACTS 2:38, Then Peter said unto them, Repent, &
be baptized every one of you **in the name of
Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins, & ye
shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

3. ACTS 8:16, (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus**.)
4. ACTS 10:48, And he commanded them to be baptized **in the name of the Lord**...
5. ACTS 19:5, When they heard this, they were baptized **in the name of the Lord Jesus**.
6. ACTS 22:16, And now why tarriest thou? arise, & be baptized, & wash away thy sins, calling **on the name of the Lord**.

B. Note that these passages tell what the apostles **did**; they do not tell us what they **said**.

1. The only one of these passages that could possibly tell of something that was **said** is Acts 22:16. Some scholars suggest it could be translated "invoking His name." Our standard translations show that most scholars thought otherwise. Most important to our lesson: even if the passage tells us what was said, it was the one being baptized that invoked the Lord's name, not the one doing the immersing.
2. It is far more likely that the calling on the name of the Lord in Acts 22:16 means the same as in Acts 2:21 & Rom 10:13, which both contexts show was obediently submitting to the Lord's **authority**.

C. Tho the 6 passages under consideration all teach the same truth, they are not stated in the uniform manner in which they would have to be stated to constitute a baptismal formula.

1. They are not uniform in English:
in the name of Father, Son, & Holy Ghost -MT 28:19

in the name of Jesus Christ--Acts 2:38
in the name of the Lord Jesus--Acts 8:16
in the name of the Lord--Acts 10:48
in the name of the Lord Jesus--Acts 19:5
on the name of the Lord--Acts 22:16

If one of these constitutes a baptismal formula which MUST be said in order to make baptism valid, how are we to know which one to use?

2. Not only are these statements not uniformly stated in English, they differ even more in Greek.

εις το ονομα του πατροσ υιου κια αλιου πνευματοσ-Mt 28:18
επι τω ονομα του ιησου χριστου--Acts 2:38
εις το ονομα του κυριου ιησου--Acts 8:16
εν τω ονομαη του κυριου--Acts 10:48
εις το ονομα του κυριου ιησου--Acts 19:5
επι το ονομα του κυριου--Acts 22:16

C. The Pentecostal baptismal formula is based on 2 false assumptions:

1. That there should be a baptismal formula. The concept was borrowed from Rome. Jesus never taught it, the Holy Spirit never revealed it, the apostles never practiced it & there is no evidence that the apostolic church ever used such a formula.
2. That Jesus & His Father are the same Person. He is is own Father & His own Son.
 - a. The KIND of oneness or unity that exists between Jesus & the Father is the same kind of unity that will allow millions of Christians to be one. JOHN 17:20-22.
 - b. Jesus & His Father are not the same Person. 2 John 9. BOTH=two!

III. THE BASIC IDEA OF BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF JESUS IS BAPTISM BY HIS AUTHORITY.

- A. To gather in His name, MT 18:20, is to assemble by His authority. To preach in His name is to preach what He has authorized
- B. To call on the name of the Lord is to submit to His authority, Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 10:13.
- C. To pray in His name is to pray in keeping with what He authorized.
- D. Christians are to do all things in Jesus' name, Col. 3:17. That is, everything we do is to be done in view of His authority.
- E. Baptism in the name of Jesus is baptism as commanded by Him. If the baptism one practices is different from that which Jesus commanded, saying Jesus' name will not change it.
- F. If in baptizing we DO what Jesus said to DO, we are baptizing in His name whether we SAY anything or not. He never told us what to Say. He told us what to DO.
- G. What about "Father, Son, & Holy Ghost"? The name or authority of the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit are one & the same.
 - 1. Jesus received His authority from the Father, Matt. 28:18-20; John 5:26-27.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit received His message & mission from Jesus Christ & from God the Father, John 16:13-14.
 - 3. Thus to speak of doing something in the name of the Jesus, or to speak of doing it in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit, is simply 2 ways

of expressing the same thought.

H. But aren't "Father, Son, & Holy Spirit" **titles**? Jesus said baptized in the **name**, not the titles.

1. Jesus was not telling what to SAY. To do a thing in His name is to do it by His authority.
2. Besides, by the same definition, "Lord" & "Christ" are titles, thus no statement concerning the name in which baptism is to be offered is ever made by the Holy Spirit in the holy Scriptures without using one or more titles of Deity, whether or not any personal proper name is stated. (Pentecostal preachers usually say "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.")
3. The Pentecostal preacher who is going to be consistent with his doctrine, could not baptize a person while saying what Jesus said in Matt 28:19, or what Peter said in Acts 2:38. He could not quote Acts 8:16 or 10:48 or 19:5 or 22:16. In fact, to be consistent with his doctrine, he must formulate his own formula completely outside the inspired revelation of God. And when he does, he has produced a baptism that differs from that which is in the name of Jesus Christ no matter what he may say while performing it. He has an added element--a formula unknown to the Scriptures.

CONCLUSION: We began with Acts 2:38. It is proper that we conclude with that same passage. If you have not submitted to the baptism commanded by Jesus Christ, you need to do so in order to have your sins forgiven.

La Porte, TX, March 2, 1980

Red Bluff, Pasadena, TX, March 12, 1980

Exton, PA, May 4, 1986

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, January 30, 1994
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, June 22, 1997

This is a problem.