

Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38b) – [Asaolu O.S.](#)

Teaching @ The Church of Christ UNILAG [Jan 15th, 2023]

Introduction: After His resurrection, Jesus mandated the apostles,

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. –Matthew 28:19.

*And said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached **in his name** among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. -Luke 24:46-47.*

...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

Today, immersion in water is the one baptism -Eph 4:5. When the empowered apostles preached the first gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost, what was the response unto the convicted audience's query, "what shall we do?"

*Acts 2:38-39 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins**, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*

Thesis: In this era, water baptism is the crux of a sinner's conversion, and it must be into the name "Jesus Christ" which is 'the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' [One must first hear the word (1 Cor 15:1-4), repent and believe the gospel (Mk 1:15, Jn 3:16), and also confess Jesus as Christ/Lord/Son of God (Mt 10:32-33; 16:16, Rm 10:9-10)] It is evident in the scripture that **Jesus is the Father** (Isa 9:6, 1 John 3:1-5), **He is the Son** (Mk 1:1, Jn 1:14) **and He is the Holy Spirit** (2 Cor 3:17, Phil 1:19). The immersion in water must be in the name of Jesus, NOT 'in the name of Paul' or 'in the name of Peter', etc. because mankind can only be saved in Jesus' name –Mt 1:21, Acts 4:10-12. Jesus is the name of '*the great God our Saviour*' -Tit 2:13, Phil 2:5-11. That the LORD would have a unique and universally authoritative name was prophesied:

*"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: **in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.**" - Zechariah 14:8-9*

Consequently, under the New Covenant, baptisms are conducted with an invocation of the name of Jesus by a baptizer after a penitent has acknowledged Jesus as Master cum Saviour. Such mutual acknowledgement is akin to Jesus' representative, and a newly recruited disciple signing a divine contract specifying that the penitent is henceforth, a possession of the Godhead; translated from the realm of darkness into the dominion of Christ. Under the Old Covenant, a male child officially received his name at his physical circumcision (Gen 17:12, Lk 1:59-63; 2:21). Baptism is part of our new birth in the NT –Jn 3:5, Tit 3:5. It signifies our spiritual circumcision; divine cutting off or remission of our sins. It also depicts dying with Christ and being raised with Him (Col 2:11-13).

Why should one be baptized in Jesus' name? Several other reasons can be deduced from the New Testament [NT]

- Do you expect ordinary water to wash away sins as though one is taking natural bath? -1 Peter 3:21
- Is it not the blood of Jesus, shed at His death, which washes sins away, and cleanses one? -1 John 1:7-2:2
- How could you dip someone in water; not say a thing or refuse to call upon Jesus, and expect the sinner to be washed spiritually or sanctified? -1 Corinthians 6:9-11
- Why ignore approved apostolic examples and necessary inference? -Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16
- Would you baptize someone who has not expressed faith in Christ? -Acts 8:35-38
- Should such person not be informed into who or unto what, he is being baptized, by the baptizer expressly stating so? -Acts 10:43; 22:16, Rm 6:3-6
- Would anyone know that one is baptized 'in the name of the Lord Jesus' or 'in the name of Paul' unless a name is uttered at the event? -1 Corinthians 1:12-15

Galatians 3:27 *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

The NT does not contain any record indicating that anyone was actually baptized in three titles; ‘Father, Son & Holy Spirit.’ Rather than recite a phrase from Mt 28:19, the apostles utilized ‘the name of Jesus.’ Since they were **inspired**, we can be sure they perfectly obeyed the Lord’s Commission unlike uninspired persons who do otherwise today. In Christ dwells the fullness of deity –Col 1:19; 2:9. The Lord our God is one Lord (Mk 12:29-32) operating in several roles (1 Cor 8:6; 12:3-6). The analogy below clarifies using **His actual name** in baptism.

A child bears the father's surname. Whenever a daughter gets married, she would no longer be addressed ‘*in the name of the father.*’ At her wedding ceremony, only the lady’s name will change, not the husband's name; the officiator would inform people that he presents the latest couple in town: Mr. & Mrs. X. She has been wedded in her man’s name, with the name X of the groom PRONOUNCED upon her at the public ceremony. The officiator would NOT say to her; “*be wedded in the name of the husband.*” He declares them married in a specific literal name 'X' by uttering the groom’s actual name (X could be Adewale, Tochukwu, Ibrahim, Abraham, etc.). Consequently, the bride is now called Mrs Adewale for example. She was handed over to the groom, authority over her was passed unto the husband, and she now bears his name which was called upon her (Isa 4:1b). Likewise in water baptism, a repentant sinner leaves the kingdom of darkness into the dominion or authority of Christ. The literal name of the Godhead (The Lord Jesus Christ) is called upon when a penitent is handed over unto the Saviour. A convert hereafter bears the name **Christian** as part of Christ’s church/bride.

As a representative of Christ, one immerses a prospect because Jesus authorized it. One carries out the task on His behalf, for His sake so that the penitent would become a possession of Christ, and establish a union [fellowship] with the Godhead. Thus, Christ’s name is uttered during baptism to identify the source, and sustainer of this transaction and relationship. In addressing division in Corinth, Paul implied that at their baptism, he did not mention his own name but Christ’s name. This aligns with Acts 15:14-17 which referenced the prophecy that the Lord’s name would be called upon believing Gentiles. It aligns with Isa 62:1-2, Acts 11:26b, 1 Pet 4:14-16.

Forgiveness and **remission** are both translated from the same Greek word ἄφεσιν (aphesin), but the latter seems weightier, and is only used in the NT with respect to Christ’s redemptive work. In Acts 2:38, the second conjunction stipulates two conditions to obtain the gift of the Spirit. The first conjunction shows the criteria are:

1. Repent (even Old Testament prophets preached this)
2. Be baptized individually in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (new command unto the people)

The text requires that ‘*repentance*’ must **precede** ‘*baptism in the name of Jesus*’ though both are required. It declares that baptism is for the remission of sins (See also Acts 22:16, Col 2:11-13). Repentance is for the ‘forgiveness of sins’ (Acts 5:31; 26:18). Forgiveness precedes the washing away of sins by Jesus’ blood. **In the OT, sins were forgiven but covered, not remitted (Rm 4:6-8; 3:24-25, Heb 10:1-18).** **In the New Covenant, sins are forgiven, blotted out, and remembered no more (Heb 8:8-12).** The blood of animals could not really take away sins but Christ’s blood can wipe off sins committed under any dispensation since He is the Lamb of God.

Hebrews 9:15 *And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

As forerunner, John the Baptist pointed people to Christ -Jn 1:19-37. John’s baptism “*for the remission of sins*” (Mk 1:4) is like buying an item with a **credit card**; one can make a purchase, with payment for the goods arriving later. John’s baptism conferred the remission of sins, but Christ’s shed blood made the payment at Calvary. Yet, one may no longer validly use an expired credit card when a new **debit card** has been issued as replacement. That was why Paul had to baptize “*in the name of the Lord Jesus*”, those disciples which had undergone John’s baptism but were unaware that Jesus had come, and given the Spirit unto believers (Acts 19:1-5).

Conclusion: A sinner must repent, believe, profess Christ and **be baptized with an invocation of the name of the Lord Jesus for such person’s sins to be washed away.** Those NOT ‘*baptized into Christ*’ cannot put on Christ!