

# BIBLICAL BAPTISM



I would like to dedicate this booklet to my Pastor and mentor of 35 years, Mr Barry Hodson.

He has taught me to “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet 4 v 11) and has taught the truth with biblical accuracy and without any financial reward.

In my opinion, he has been the best Bible Teacher in the world and has inspired me to write this booklet, and I pray that many will receive insight and direction through this Biblical study on baptism.

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## What is Baptism?

Baptism refers to full immersion in water. The original Greek word translated baptism is “baptizo” and means to “make fully whelmed or covered”.

Baptism therefore requires for a repentant convert to be immersed in water. We have performed baptisms in hot and cold swimming pools, baths, the sea, ice cold rivers, lakes, and even blow up paddling pools in Africa where much water is scarce; and drums and sheets of plastic in a Latvian refugee centre.

Where time was short, we have baptised a brother in Lake Malawi at night under a full moon, who we affectionately named “Brother Moonlight”. Where there is a desire to obey God’s command, there is always a way to perform it!

Full immersion is both a symbolic and a foolish act commanded by God to test obedience.

We are passionate about baptism and often in all humility, go to great lengths to enable a convert to fulfil their desire for baptism. We have travelled all over the world baptising, sometimes carrying physically handicapped persons into the water. In one case a young man had a badly ulcerated leg, so we wrapped his leg, and carried him into Lake Malawi for baptism – he has since died and now sleeps awaiting the resurrection.

Another time, we baptised a blind man called Peter in Kenya. He also has now fallen asleep in Christ. One has to admire the boldness and determination of such ones to obey the command of Christ to be baptised.

**1Cor 1:27: But God chose the foolish things of the world that the wise might be put to shame, and God chose the weak things of the world so that He might put to shame the strong things.**

There is nothing special or magical about the water, but to the natural man it is a foolish thing to do. Those who come to God must be humble, and doing a humanly foolish thing tests this humility.



The act of baptism also has 2 main symbolic purposes:

- 1) It is symbolically an act showing that in repentance, our sins are washed away in Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross – 1 Cor 6 v 11, Heb 10 v 22, Rev 1 v 5.
- 2) It shows that we are prepared to be identified with Christ in his death and resurrection. As we “descend” into the water, we are showing that we believe Jesus died; and as we “ascend” out of the water, we show that we believe he was raised. It also is a sign that we are prepared to also “die” to the flesh and live a new life in Christ – Read all of Rom 6.

**Rom 6:11: So also you count yourselves to be truly dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Those who desired salvation were baptised “immediately”, “the same hour”.

Baptism should go hand in hand with conviction, belief and repentance and should where practicable be done as soon as possible after one has decided to be in Christ.

In some churches, they insist on often long periods of Bible study to obtain enough doctrinal knowledge to qualify for baptism.

This is quite unscriptural as we will see from the many examples the way the Apostles baptised. The important component is repentance and the desire to be in Christ. One example I heard of recently is of a man who was told by his church that the coming of Jesus was near and even imminent, and that he needed to be ready for the judgment; and yet on the other hand insisted he spend 6 months or so doing a Bible study course before he could be baptised and saved! Another case tells of a young man who was examined only once a year and took 4 years to be baptised, despite knowing all the basic doctrines but being tripped up by the examiner's trick technical question!

Often in these longwinded examinations of the convert, there is no reference or emphasis put on repentance at all – which is what baptism really is about!



## Fundamental to Salvation

Baptism is a fundamental Bible doctrine and yet has been misapplied, misunderstood, and even missed altogether by many mainline churches in Christendom.

It is presented in scripture as an essential, non-negotiable part of salvation. When Peter was asked by the Jews on the day of Pentecost, having their hearts pricked by his message; “What shall we do”; he replied:

**Act 2:38: Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

And even before that event, the Master Jesus had instructed his disciples to go through the world and baptise for salvation:

**Mar 16:15 – 16: And He said to them, Go into all the world, proclaim the gospel to all the creation. He who believes and is baptised will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.**

Again, when Paul and Silas were imprisoned and God sent an earthquake, their response to their repentant jailor included baptism:

**Act 16:30 – 33: And leading them outside, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved, and your household. And they spoke the Word of the Lord to him, and to all who were in his household. And taking them in that hour of the night, he washed from *their* stripes. And he was baptised, he and all his, immediately.**

The book of Acts records the ministry of the Apostles as they went through the world preaching and converting. Baptism always went hand in hand with their conversions, and was in fact “commanded”.





See:

Pentecost

Acts 2:38 – 41 – as quoted above

Samaria

Act 8:12: But when they believed Philip preaching the gospel, the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men and women.

Ethiopian Eunuch

Act 8:38: And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch. And he baptised him.

Paul

Act 9:18: And instantly scales as it were fell from his eyes, and he instantly saw again. And rising up, he was baptised.

Act 22:16: And now what do you intend? Arise and be baptised and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Cornelius

Act 10:48: And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord. Then they begged him to stay certain days.

Lydia

Act 16:15: And when she was baptised, she and her household, she begged us, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay. And she constrained us.

Corinthians

Act 18:8: And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house. And hearing this, many of the Corinthians believed and were baptised.



## Jesus Baptised

Such is the importance of baptism, that even Jesus himself insisted that he be baptised by John to “fulfill all righteousness”:

Mat 3:13 – 15: Then Jesus came from Galilee to Jordan, to John, to be baptised by him. But John restrained Him, saying, I have need to be baptised by You, and do You come to me? And answering Jesus said to him, Allow *it* now, for it is becoming to us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he allowed Him.

More will be said in a moment about the significance of baptism, and why Jesus, although sinless, would insist on being baptised himself. The point being made for now is that if Jesus, the son of God, was baptised to fulfill all righteousness; then we who are sinners must take note of this when we judge the importance of baptism to our own lives.

If Jesus insisted on being baptised, then how can anyone claiming to be Biblically saved claim it is not necessary for them!?

Jesus led by example and identified himself with we who are sinners.

## Objections

There are always objections by some to the need for baptism – most of which are fleshly or carnal in nature, but I would like to answer two main objections which I believe are worthy of addressing.

- 1) The thief who was dying on the cross next to Jesus was accepted by Jesus himself into Christ’s coming kingdom – Luke 23 v 42 – 43. Clearly, while on the cross, his repentance could not be coupled with water baptism and yet he will be saved.

In answer to this, we need to consider what baptism represents. Rom 6 v 1 – 8 says that when we are baptised, our old man is crucified with him; we are baptised into his death. Water baptism is a symbol of our old nature being crucified and put to death, so we can live a new life in the

spirit. It is obviously just a symbol, because we do not literally die, or need to be hung on a cross with Christ.

However, the thief on the cross was “literally” dying with Christ – what we do symbolically in water, the thief was doing in reality next to Christ himself!

What is more substantial – the symbol or the true – clearly the true. Therefore the thief did not need water baptism as he was experiencing the true meaning of it while suffering and dying on the cross with Christ.

- 2) I came in contact with a young man a number of years ago, who had read our teaching on baptism and had decided to get baptised. He made contact with us and we went to meet him. We discussed the principle of Biblical baptism and he was convinced of the truth of the need for full immersion baptism.

However, during the conversation he made the comment that if baptism was so important, why is it that God had been working in his life already for a number years. Why would God appear to be accepting him and even blessing him, if he was not yet “saved” in baptism?

I have since heard this objection again from those who often do not want to accept the need for baptism.

In answer to this:

- 1) Even Jesus saw the need for baptism to “fulfill all righteousness” (Matt 3 v 15). Can we really go beyond the example of the Master?
- 2) Baptism is not the only thing that is required for us to fulfill the “born again” experience.

By this I mean that there are a number of factors that commend us to God in the final washup. I would sum them up in 5 steps:

- 1) Faith or belief – Heb 11 v 6, Mark 16 v 16.
- 2) Repentance – Acts 2 v 38, Acts 17v 30.
- 3) Baptism – Acts 2 v 38, Mark 16 v 16.
- 4) Taking up the cross, overcoming and endurance to the end – Matt 10 v 22, 38, James 1 v 12, Rev 21 v 7.

- 5) Being “born” in the City of God – the New Jerusalem, receiving immortality – Ps 87, Rev 2 v 7.

So if one has believed and repented, he is on his way to “being” born again, but is still required to follow through with the remaining steps.

An interesting precedent is shown in Acts 10. Peter had visions of all manner of unclean beasts and was told by God to slay and eat. Peter protested, but God told him “what God has cleansed, do not call unclean”. The vision related to the fact that God was going to accept the calling of the Gentiles – starting specifically with the conversion of Cornelius the Roman centurion.

Acts 10 v 2 tells us that Cornelius was devout and feared God already – and the dream meant that God had made him clean. In Acts 10 v 44, the Holy Spirit fell on all them who heard Peter preaching. Now Acts 5 v 32 tells us that God gives his Holy Spirit to those who obey, not indiscriminately to any unbeliever.

So, here in Acts 10, Cornelius and his believing house had been approved by God by receiving the Holy Spirit. You could imagine them perhaps saying: “Clearly God has approved us, what need is there for baptism?” But Peter in v 48 “commands” them to be baptised.

So the point being made here is that; yes God predestines us, he leads us to faith, and blesses us, and gives us his Holy Spirit; but if we renege on the commandment to be baptised; it is all undone and fails to meet God’s requirement for salvation.

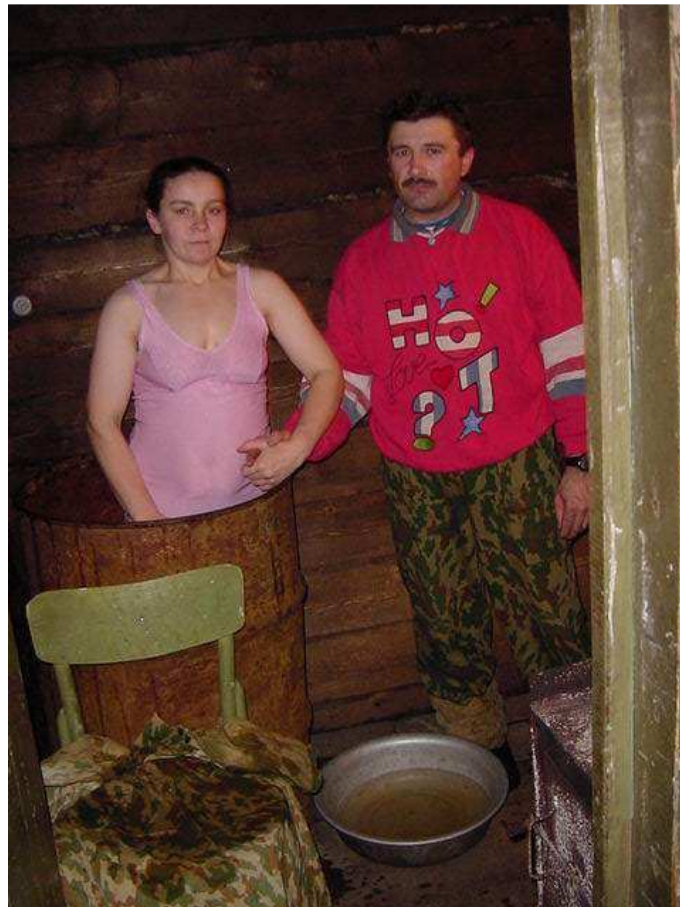


## Baptisms

Heb 6:1 – 2: Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Whatever “baptisms” refers to, it is evident that it relates to a plural as the original Greek word shows.

The first point to notice is that this list relates to “principles of the doctrine of Christ.” The Greek word “logos” is translated “doctrine” here, and is used 325 times in the New Testament. 281 of those times it is translated: word(s), saying(s), communication(s), speech; thus showing that these principles were from the word or sayings of Jesus. Jesus did not teach us to continue in the ceremonial washings of the law, but taught a new covenant of grace through faith by his blood.



The Greek “baptismos” is used 4 times in the New Testament and is translated washing(s) 3 of those times and then here in Heb 6 as baptisms. The reference to washings do refer to the washings under the law in Heb 9 v 10; but in Mark 7 v 4,8 it refers to the vain traditions of man – self imposed washings – neither of the law of God or the teaching of Christ.

Some churches believe that the baptisms refer to ceremonial washings under the law. They are forced into this conclusion because they do not wish to accept that the laying on of hands is a practise that they should exercise in their church life.

However, “baptismos” as shown relates not only to the law but also man’s traditions. The fact is, “baptismos” just means “washing” and relates to all of these types depending on the context. The context here demands that it refers to washing in Christian baptism – as taught by Christ. The fact is that the Greek word “baptizo” translated as Christian baptism, is also translated “wash(ed)” in Mark 7 v 4 and Luke 11 v 38 in relation to the Pharisees’ vain tradition. Again, the word just literally means to “make fully whelmed or covered” and relates to baptism and washing in general.

We can actually trace through the gospels that Jesus taught about a number of different baptisms – in fact 4 are mentioned:

- 1) Water – Matt 3 v 15, Mk 16 v 16, John 3 v 5.
- 2) Holy Spirit – Matt 3 v 11, John 3 v 5, Acts 1 v 5.
- 3) Suffering – Matt 20 v 22-23.
- 4) Fire – Matt 3 v 11 (John said of Christ), Acts 2 v 3



## **Infant sprinkling – not Biblical Baptism**

One will search the scriptures in vain to find support for such a practise.

Why is it today that most mainline churches in Christendom practise infant sprinkling as a substitute for Biblical full immersion baptism?

On an eventful day in 253 A.D., a man named Novatian lay in illness, apparently upon his death-bed. Believing in the necessity of immersion for salvation, but unable to leave his bed, he was permitted by a local “bishop” to substitute the pouring of water all about him in its place. This episode, reported by the famous church historian, Eusebius (Church History VI. Xliii. 14, 17), constituted the first known historical substitution of another action in the place of immersion.

Man has had a history since the garden of Eden of wanting to take the easy way out. Sprinkling a few drops of water is much more convenient than having to find enough water to immerse in!

Note the following concession from celebrated cleric Albert Taylor Bledsoe (1809-1877), of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who himself engaged in the practice of “infant baptism.”

“It is an article of our faith, that ‘the baptism of young children (infants) is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable to the institution of Christ’. But yet, with all our searching, we have been unable to find, in the New Testament, a single express declaration, or word, in favor of Infant Baptism.” (*Southern Review*, St. Louis, Vol. XIV, April, 1874, p. 334).

Bledsoe went on to attempt his justification solely by inference — a most futile endeavour indeed.

## **Evolving History of Infant Sprinkling**

Infant sprinkling is a post-apostolic vain tradition of man that crept into church teaching after about the second century AD.

By the time of Cyprian (A.D. 200-258), a theologian in Carthage, the error of "infant sin" had taken a full grip on some who professed Christianity. Cyprian argued:

"But if even the chief of sinners, who have been exceedingly guilty before God, receive the forgiveness of sins on coming to the faith, and no one is precluded from baptism and from grace, how less should the child be kept back, which, as it is but just born, cannot have sinned, but has only brought with it, by its descent from Adam, the infection of the old death; and which may the more easily obtain the remission of sins, because the sins which are forgiven it are not its own, but those of another" (Epistle, 58).

In the same general timeframe, Origen (A.D. 185-254), a teacher in both Alexandria and Caesarea, contended:

"Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? Or when have they sinned? Or how can any reason of the laver in their case hold good, but according to that sense we mentioned even now — none is free from pollution, though the life be the length of one day upon the earth. And it is for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized" (Homily on Luke, 14:5).

Though strongly opposed soon after its appearance, even as an "exceptional" measure, pouring and then sprinkling continued to gain more and more acceptance as adequate substitutes for immersion. It was inevitable that these alternative modes would ultimately become acceptable even in "normal" circumstances. The first "official" approval of such occurred in 753 A.D., when Pope Stephen declared the alternative modes acceptable in "cases of necessity."

It was not until 1311 A.D., by the council of Ravenna, that the practice of baptism by modes other than immersion was officially legislated as a matter of

indifference in any circumstances of conversion. The words of Alexander Campbell are particularly pertinent here:

"In the history of Christianity, the whole world, Eastern and Western Christendom, with the exception of a few sick and dying persons practiced immersion during the long space of thirteen hundred years. Since that time, license was granted first to the Pope, in 1311, to practice affusion (pouring) with the authority of the church. Calvin next gave a law to his branch of the church, authorizing affusion. This was carried first into Scotland, and then into England . . . and finally imposed upon the people, much against their own conviction and inclination at first. Time, however, reconciled them to it;" (Christian Baptism, p. 153).

(History references taken from an article from Truth Magazine XIX: 27, pp. 422-424 - May 15, 1975; and an article by Wayne Jackson).

The true symbolism of full immersion baptism is lost in the tradition of infant sprinkling – there can be no belief, faith or repentance from a baby; and the rich symbolism of baptism representing death and burial in Christ (Rom 6) is lost. When one buries a body, it is not just sprinkled with a few pieces of dirt – it is fully encased!

It is noteworthy to also consider the description of John baptising:

**Joh 3:23: And John also was baptising in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptised.**

There needed to be much water because baptism involved immersion not sprinkling a few drops of water!

## **What age is allowable?**

This is a question that has arisen many times in our practical experience of performing baptisms over the years. As already made clear, the candidate must be at the place where they have believed God's message of salvation, and have repented of their sin.

The Bible does not lay down specific restrictions by virtue of age – only these above requirements. People mature at different ages and can therefore understand the principles of baptism at different ages.

My wife Janet was baptised at 12 years old, having come from essentially an atheistic home upbringing. But when our Pastor's daughter, who was on the same school bus each day, told her about the coming kingdom of God on earth, and how the animals would live at peace and we could live forever; that was something she wanted and understood. That was 38 years ago, and she has never faltered in her commitment and desire to serve God.

Both of my daughters were 15 years old and my son was 11 years old when they chose to be baptised. My son in particular has always been a sensitive, obedient and discerning boy and even though only 11 years old, he knew he wanted to be saved and understood the significance of baptism when I asked him.

Some may argue that children should have to go through puberty so as to experience the lust of the flesh before being baptised. However, based on this argument, the person involved would never be baptised – there are always new and ongoing sins to experience!

A few years ago, one young girl – the child of a committed church family; asked to be baptised. She was 8 years old at the time and we questioned her on her understanding of baptism. At the time she did not really understand and so we gently and lovingly denied her baptism, but encouraged her that God would not reject her; and that in a year or 2 perhaps she could.

A year or so later she approached us again and this time with benefit of more knowledge, she was granted baptism and was baptised at our church camp in Taupo with a number of other youngsters.

The other issue of intellectually handicapped candidates also has arisen from time to time. In our church we have had several baptisms of such, who in a childlike way, could still profess that they loved Jesus and wanted to be in his kingdom. I am aware that even in Christadelphia, they have also baptised such candidates, whose mental age would be regarded as that of a child; and therefore it seems consistent to me that children should be allowed baptism if they can profess belief and repentance.



## Rebaptism

It is common practise in some church circles to rebaptise Christians even if they have been fully immersed, but in another church. The reasoning is that they have not been baptised into the “true” Jesus. That is, if the Christian was a Trinitarian, their concept of Jesus was wrong and when they come to the true knowledge that Jesus is only the son of God, not God the son; they need to be baptised correctly.

In fact, in our local experience, although we as The Christian Restoration Centre believe the same as the local Christadelphians in relation to the nature of Jesus; we have had the example of someone leaving us to attend the local Christadelphians and being rebaptised.

I do not agree with this approach, as it makes validity of baptism a matter of understanding and also of church affiliation; rather than basic repentance from sin.

I love God’s truth and am committed to the preaching and teaching of it, but Biblical precedent shows us that the Master Jesus himself accepted the baptism of his followers, including his own disciples, although they clearly had wrong doctrine.

For example:

- 1) The disciples believed in ghosts – Matt 14 v 26.
- 2) They did not understand the truth Jesus told them that he would have to die and be raised after 3 days – Mk 8 v 31, Mk 9 v 31-32, Mk 10 v 33-35.

On the day of Pentecost, 3000 were baptised in 1 day. On the assumption that the 12 disciples all baptised for a 12 hour day, it means it took approximately 2.9 minutes per person – hardly enough time to examine the candidates on their doctrine!

Peter had preached repentance in Jesus and being convicted, the people were baptised and thus began their life in Christ, and would go on to learn more truth.

Some may argue that because they were Israelites they would have known the truth – but that is a very naïve and incorrect assumption. Even the Jewish teachers believed in superstitious nonsense including belief in demons as departed spirits (immortal soul concept), false gods (Baalzebub – see Matt 12 v 24 – Baalzebub was actually a Philistine deity – see 2 Kgs 1 v 16).

So the Jews in Jesus' time were far from pure in their doctrine, but Jesus told them to “come unto me ... and learn of me ...” (Matt 11:28 - 29). He did not tell them to go away and learn and then come! If we are repentant of our sin, Jesus will receive us as new babes in Christ and teach us by his spirit the truth of God.

The only example of rebaptism in scripture is recorded in Acts 19:1-5. There were certain disciples in Ephesus who had been baptised into John's baptism who were then rebaptised into the name of Jesus.

Now this does not mean that all those whom John baptised got rebaptised – there is no evidence of that. Although we are not told, Jesus' disciples would have been baptised by John, and they did not need to be rebaptised.

The difference was that in John's baptism, he pointed forward to the Lamb of God – Jesus himself.

#### Joh 1:29 -36:

The next day John sees Jesus coming to him and says, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, after me comes a Man who has been before me, for He preceded me. And I did not know Him, but that He be revealed to Israel, therefore I have come baptising with water. And John bore record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and He abode on Him. And I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptise with water, that One said to me, Upon whom you shall see the Spirit descending, and remaining upon Him, He is the One who baptises with the Holy Spirit. And I saw and bore record that this is the Son of God. Again, the next day afterward, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking upon Jesus as He walked, he says, Behold the Lamb of God!

John's mission was to prepare the way of the Lord and point the people to repentance, in preparation for the further work of salvation Jesus would make manifest. It seems in Acts 19, that John's later disciples had lost sight of this and it had just become "John's baptism", with no reference to the greater cause in Christ.

So, in conclusion, if a person has repented of their sin and been baptised into Jesus (albeit believing the Trinity); I accept that baptism and would simply go on to show such ones the way of God more perfectly.

Baptism is not to be performed every time we come to a better understanding of a Bible doctrine – it signifies repentance from sin and identification with Christ in his death and resurrection – and even Trinitarians believe that!





## Baptised into what?

Mat 28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ...

Interestingly, this formula given by Jesus to the disciples in Matt 28 is never evidenced in practise throughout the book of Acts.

Converts were always baptised into Jesus Christ:

Act 2:38: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Act 8:16: (For as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Act 10:48: And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord.

Act 19:5: When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Rom 6:3: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death?

Gal 3:27: For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ.

So what is the explanation for this inconsistency? Were the disciples disobedient or did they forget how to do it? Of course not, they were spirit filled apostles to whom every church should look to emulate.

It is interesting to note that in the formula in Matt 28, it is only the *name of the Father*, not the name of the son and the name of the Holy spirit.

I believe Matt 28 and the way the apostles baptised are in fact synonymous terms.

The name of the Father is Yahweh. Yahweh has put his name into Jesus – Yahshuah in Hebrew – Yah saves. The spirit is God’s power not a person so does not have a name. But when we are baptised in the name of the Father – into Yahshua (Jesus), we are also baptised in the spirit. We receive God’s spirit to enable us to overcome sin – see John 3 v 5.

So by being baptised in Jesus Christ (as performed by the apostles), we are being baptised into the “name of the Father” (because it is in Jesus’ name); we are being baptised into the son (Jesus); and being baptised into the spirit; as we receive God’s power – albeit in measure if we have not yet received the Holy spirit gifts. But if we are to have the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5), then we must receive the spirit also.

Baptism is into Christ not into a church system or collection of doctrines:

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



## **Baptised for the Dead?**

Mormons practise baptism by proxy, claiming that a dead person can be redeemed with the baptism of a live person.

This doctrine is based on an erroneous interpretation of 1 Cor 15 v 29:

**“Else what shall they do which are baptised for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptised for the dead?”**

This is one of those verses that must be understood by comparing other scriptures and is as Peter put it: “hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” – 2 Pet 3 v 16.

This doctrine is not Biblically sound as the Bible makes it clear that it is given unto man once to die and then the judgement at Christ’s coming – Heb 9 v 27.

Also, Psa 49:7 says: A man cannot at all redeem a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him ...

The context of 1 Cor 15 is that of the sureness of Christ’s resurrection, and if he has not been raised, then we are in fact dead in our sins with no hope – v 17.

The verse should be understood this way:

**“What shall they do who are baptised into the dead Christ, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptised into the dead Christ?”**

### Self baptism

There have been times when converts have baptised themselves in the absence of another brother to do the immersing. This does not have scriptural precedent and so is not the ideal situation. However, when these instances occur, it is usually due to extreme isolation or other very difficult circumstances.

We have even conducted some baptisms via cellphone connection – such is the advantage of the technological age in which we live! Again it is preferred that we follow the Biblical example and baptise people in person; but when these situations arise, we believe it is far better that the convert's repentance is followed as soon as possible by baptism – performed by self if there is no other way.

After all, in reality, the baptism is for the benefit of the “baptisee” not the person doing the baptism, and for sure the Lord is with that person and the angels are rejoicing also when such a sinner repents – Luke 15 v 10.

