

BAPTISM

To the church in Juja, and all the churches scattered all over the world greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. I salute the brethren which are in Eldoret, and Eli Muti, and the church which is in his house. And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of Kitale. Sami and Zaddoch and Bernard and Brian and Collins and Fredrick, and Wycliffe, unto the church in Embu which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Rongo are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the same like faith. So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure; And to our beloved Florence, Naomi, Jim, Violet, Castleman, Elder Doug, and Mugo our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house, that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have experienced in our life through the lessons of faith, of the Word of life; that which we have heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write us unto you, that your joy may be full. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

We at Gospel Sounders hear that there is much fuse on the baptism mode, some certain verses and quotes of inspiration on how baptism should be conducted and there be amongst the believers in the Father and Son who are at variance on these things. Brethren it ought not to be so. Some have come amongst us privily to disrupt the liberty we have in Jesus and seeking to draw away the flock and divide us into independent atoms. Shall not the brethren counsel together and be of one voice seeing for by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety. Where no counsel is, the people fall; behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

It is expedient then I write unto you these things that you be settled in truth not being tossed about and that you be comforted and relieved of the burdens caused by men who would want to naysay the truth as it is in Jesus. I will now go ahead and address some of the issues raised.

How to Baptize

When we submit to the solemn rite of baptism, we testify to angels and to men that we are purged from our old sins, and that henceforth, having died to the world, we will "seek those things which are above. . . ." (Colossians 3:1). Let us not forget our baptismal vow. ***In the presence of the three highest powers of heaven--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit***--we have pledged ourselves to do the will of Him who . . . declared, "I am the resurrection, and the life: John 11:25. Christ forgives every penitent sinner, and as the forgiven one, at the time of baptism, rises from the watery grave, he is declared a new creature, whose life is hid with Christ in God. Let us ever remember that it is our high privilege to be purged from our old sins. {Ms106-1904} also in {OHC 157.4}

When the Christian takes his baptismal vow, divine help is pledged to him. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit stand ready to work in his behalf. God places at his command the resources of heaven, that he may be an overcomer. His own power is small; but God is omnipotent, and God is his helper. Daily he is to make known his wants at the throne of grace. By faith and trust, by availing himself of the resources provided, he can be more than a conqueror. {Ms13-1902} also in {OHC 157.5}

Before He left them, Christ gave His followers a positive promise that after His ascension He would send them the Holy Spirit. "Go ye therefore," He said, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father [a personal God] and of the Son [a personal Saviour], and of the Holy Ghost [sent from heaven to represent Christ]: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" [Matthew 28:19, 20]. {Ms41-1897} also in {12MR 260.2}

Much has been written then in opposition to baptism in threefold name but evidence shows that even our forefathers believed in the truth of such baptism. Why then stand in variance brethren?! Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But some say, we will not walk therein [Jeremiah 6:16]. It doesn't have to be so amongst you brethren. Why should you content on a legitimate verse found in the bible? Why strip Matthews of its credibility! Instead of taking penknives and cutting off what does not harmonize with our mind, we should seek to understand why Matthew wrote as he wrote.

Why did Matthew write so?

*The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption.** In order to fully carry out this plan, it was decided that Christ, the only begotten Son of God, should give Himself an offering for sin. What line can measure the depth of this love? {Lt12-1901} also in {AUCR, April 1, 1901 par. 10}*

It is the same that was stirred with pity that we are baptized in pledging to b at their instruction. Because Trinitarians think that this supports trinity and it's akin to Matthew, they reject it and so the baptism formula.

"The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race..."

The first question is what is "Godhead"? In the Bible, the word Godhead, in old translations such as the King James, is a term for divinity. This is all it means in the three instances it can be found there. Acts 17:29 tells us that we cannot liken the Godhead or "divinity" to any inanimate thing on earth. Romans 1:20 tells us that we can "see" God's eternal power and Godhead (divinity) by the things that are created. Colossians 2:9 says that the "fulness of the Godhead bodily" was in Christ. This can be taken to mean either that Christ possessed full divinity (which is true) or that God the Father's divinity was in Christ (which is true) or both. The same way you reason with this quote is the same way to reason with the baptismal in Matthew. Does the word name denote numbers of persons or it's the economic and qualitative representation when it comes to baptism?

Christ Himself is the pearl of great price. In Him is gathered all the glory of the Father, the fullness of the Godhead. He is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. The glory of the attributes of God is expressed in His character." (Christ's Object Lessons, p. 115). Whether you be baptized in the threefold name or the name of Jesus it's the same thing because it's their economic representation you are baptized into not persons. When you are baptized in the name you are baptized into their divinity of their character, the Godhead which was stirred with pity. In the name then means in the plurality of majesty rather than plurality of quantity.

In the name of or Godhead will mean

1. As a term for the "quality of divinity", in accordance with the Bible.
2. As a quantified appellation for God the Father because the Father is in the source of the Son and the Spirit.
3. As a qualified appellation for Christ as the one who manifests the Father through the Spirit.

"[The quality of divinity] was stirred with pity for the race..." it is due to this that you are baptized in that quality, character...**and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves...**" a threefold name for your baptism. Much is made of this clause. It is stated that "themselves" must refer to separate persons. "Themselves" is a gender neutral term for the plural of "himself", "herself" and "itself." Thus a male and female could be "themselves" just as easily as a group of guys or girls alone. Again, "themselves" can refer to larger groups or collective "persons" or gender neutral entities, such as "the defence department and the justice department have placed themselves in a closer working relationship under the new regime."

Here, "the defence department" and "the justice department" are not persons in the sense of males or females, though it is comprised of them, but are collective organisations. Thus, "themselves" does not need to equal three separate entities that are exactly the same just as the name would not warranty the same.

What does this clause and Matthew tell us?

- (1) That "the Father", "the Son", and "the Holy Spirit" are separate entities.
- (2) That they "gave themselves" in involvement to whatever follows in the next clause.

What does this clause NOT tell us?

- (1) How "the Father", "the Son", and "the Holy Spirit" are related to each other.
- (2) That they are co-equal, co-eternal beings or persons.

"...to the working out of the plan of redemption." Hence I don't see why threefold baptism name should be brought into question or the verse in doubt.

Here is a dialogue I had with Brother X for your consideration

Brother X Sami, compare Matt 28:19 with Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5, and you will conclude that the Name (one name) of the Father, Son and HS is Jesus.

Isa 6:8-10 says Jehovah spoke these verses, but when Paul quotes them in Acts 28:25-27, he says the HS said it. Another example is Hebrews 3:7-11, where Hebrews says "the HS says", but in Ps 95:6-11 it is Jehovah.

My Response***Point 1: The Threefold Name***

My brother let me try to address the points you have raised saying

“Compare Matt 28:19 with Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5, and you will conclude that the Name (one name) of the Father, Son and HS is Jesus”

Here are the verses for the readers to evaluate:

M't:28:19: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Acts 2:38: 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 Ghost.

Acts 8:16: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

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

So the disciples are given a threefold name to baptize in but end up baptizing in the name of Jesus and this makes my beloved brother conclude the threefold name has to be Jesus. But is this so? First of all what does the name **Jesus** mean?

Matthew 1:21: And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name **Jesus**: for he shall save his people from their sins.

From the Hebrew meaning "Jehovah the Saviour"; in Greek Jesus - The same as Joshua, evwhy Yehoshua, from evy yasha, he saved, delivered, put in a state of safety.

The orthodox, as they are termed, have generally considered this text as a decisive proof of the doctrine of the holy Trinity: and what else can they draw from it? Is it possible for words to convey a plainer sense than these do? And do they not direct every reader to consider the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as three distinct persons? But this I can never believe. I must abide by what I believe to be the meaning of the Scriptures.

He commands them to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but among the Jews, they baptized only in the name of Jesus. See Ac 2:38; 8:16; 19:5. For this reason, that thus the baptizers might assert, and the baptized confess, Jesus to be the true Messiah; which was chiefly controverted by the Jews. Of the same nature is that apostolic blessing, Grace and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Where then is the Holy Ghost? He is not excluded, however he be not named. The Jews did more easily consent to the Spirit of the Messiah, which they very much celebrate, than to the person of the Messiah. Above all others they deny and abjure Jesus of Nazareth. It belonged to the apostles, therefore, the more earnestly to assert Jesus (to be the Messiah) by how much the more vehemently they opposed him: which being once cleared, the acknowledging of the Spirit of Christ would be introduced without delay or scruple. Moses, (in Exodus 6:14,) going about to reckon up all the tribes of Israel, goes no farther than the tribe of Levi; and takes up with that to which his business and story at that present related. In like manner, the apostles, for the present,

baptize in the name of Jesus, and bless in the name of the Father and of Jesus, that thereby they might more firmly establish the doctrine of Jesus, which met with such sharp and virulent opposition; which doctrine being established among them, they would soon agree about the Holy Ghost.

Among the Jews, the controversy was about the true Messiah; among the Gentiles, about the true God. It was therefore proper among the Jews to baptize in the name of Jesus, that he might be vindicated to be the true Messiah. Among the Gentiles, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that they might be hereby instructed in the doctrine of the true God.-Let this be particularly noted.

The Jews baptized proselytes into the name of the Father, that is, into the profession of God, whom they called by the name of Father. The apostles baptize the Jews into the name of Jesus the Son, and the Gentiles, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. [Adam Clarke on the History of Baptism Matthew 28:19, 20] – [<https://www.godtube.com/bible/matthew/28-19>]

Point 2: Jehovah speaks and then apostles refers to Holy Spirit

Isaiah 6:8-10 says Jehovah spoke these verses, but when Paul quotes them in Acts 28:25-27, he says the HS said it.

Isaiah 6:8: Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. 9: And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Acts 28:25: And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, :26: Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Psalms 95:6: O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. 7: For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, 8: Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness 9: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. :10: Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways::11: Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Hebrews 3:7: Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, :8: Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: :9: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. :10: Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. :11: So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Indeed that is so beautiful and we should let the Bible be its own expositor and not try to put anything on to it. Why is Jehovah speaking yet the apostles says it is the Holy Spirit?

Isaiah 63:9: In all their affliction he [**Father Exodus 23:20**] was afflicted, and the **Angel of His Presence** [**Jesus – Exodus 23:20, 21**] saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. 10: But they rebelled, and vexed **His Holy Spirit** [**The Father's Spirit**]: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. 11: Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he that put **His Holy Spirit** [**Jesus's Spirit**] within him?

Matthew 10:19: But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. 20: For it is not ye that speak, but the **Spirit of your Father** which speaketh in you.

1Peter 1:10: Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: 11: Searching what, or what manner of time **The Spirit of Christ** which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

2Corinthians 3:17: Now **the Lord is that Spirit**: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Romans 8:9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the **Spirit of God dwell in you**. Now if any man have not the **Spirit of Christ**, he is none of his.

From the above texts it's so clear the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the Father and Jesus. But do we have two spirits? No.

John 14:10: Believest thou not that **I am in the Father, and the Father in me**? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: **But the Father that dwelleth in me**, he doeth the works. 11: **Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me**: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 10:30: I and my Father are one.

In which sense is the father and son one and in one another? This cannot be in a physical sense; so how?

John 3:34: For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: **for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him**. 35: The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

The way the Father is in the son is by his spirit which he has given him without measure and then Jesus Christ in turn gives the same spirit to those who accept him

The questions will then still be asked, why the threefold name still? I will take liberty in taking an excerpt from Brother [Brendan Paul Valiant](#) – in his article “THE TRIAD” dated [18 June 2013](#)

The Frequent Use of Triads in the Gospel of Matthew - A Key to Understanding the Literary Force of the Matthean Baptismal Formula.

In recently studying the Gospel of Matthew, it has become abundantly apparent that there is a frequent use of the literary device of "triad". This is also a commonly recognised technique of John's Gospel, but it thoroughly permeates Matthew.

A triad is a group of three connected people or things. In literature, triads are often found to reinforce or draw attention to something. Matthew appears to use triads for both emphasis and organisation of the narrative. From the very beginning, Matthew structures his account in a triadic manner by dividing the genealogy of Jesus into three parts. He begins with a triadic statement of emphasis (Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham), then follows this up with a structural triad of the complete genealogy (verses 2-17).

Here is a list of many of the triads in the Gospel of Matthew. Some of these will be emphatic, where three people, things or concepts are listed together. Others will be structural, involving a larger portion of text.

- *The introduction to the Genealogy of Jesus (Matthew 1:1)*
- *The Genealogy of Jesus split into three lots of 14 generations (Matthew 1:2-17)*
- *Gabriel comes three times to Joseph (1:20; 2:13, 19)*
- *The wise men bring three gifts to Jesus (2:11)*
- *Three temptations in the wilderness (4:1-11)*
- *Jesus' ministry composed of teaching, preaching and healing (4:23)*
- *Nine (3 x 3) blessings in the beatitudes (5:1-11)*
- *Three sins connected with anger and insults are condemned (5:22)*
- *Three "your" petitions and three "us" petitions in the Lord's prayer (6:9-10/6:11-13)*
- *Three anxieties (6:31)*
- *Three examples of petition - "ask", "seek", "knock" (7:7-8)*
- *Three sets of three healings with interludes (8:1-22/8:23-9:17/9:18-38)*
- *Six (3 x 2) types of healing (11:5)*
- *Three small parables about growth between Sower parable and explanation (13:24-30)*
- *Three additional parables about kingdom (13:44-50)*
- *Three petitions for help by the Canaanite woman (15:21-27)*
- *Jesus announces His suffering three times (16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19)*
- *Three translated beings and three disciples and mention of three booths at the mount of transfiguration (17:1-8)*
- *Peter asked three questions (17:25)*
- *Discipline among believers has three steps (18:15-17)*
- *Jesus to suffer three punishments - "mocked and flogged and crucified" (20:19)*
- *Three parables in the conflict over Jesus' authority (21:28-22:14)*
- *Three in the greatest commandment - Love God with "heart", "soul" and "mind" (22:37)*
- *Three weighty things about the law - "justice and mercy and faithfulness" (23:23)*
- *Three missionaries of God - "prophets and wise men and scribes" (23:34)*
- *Three parables about Jesus' return (25:1-46)*
- *Jesus prays three times in Gethsemane (26:36-46)*
- *Three denials of Peter (26:69-75)*
- *Three people are crucified (27:38)*
- *Triple commission - make disciples, baptising them and teaching them (28:19-20)*
- *Baptism in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (28:19)*

This list is by no means exhaustive. The number three also appears many times throughout the Gospel narrative, and there are other structural triads which are more readily discernible through the use of Greek connectives. As can be seen though, from this representative list, Matthew uses triadic lists and structures quite often. That this is deliberate can be seen by comparing some of these instances above with their parallel passages in other synoptic Gospels. For example, while both Mark and Luke list four elements of Love for God - "heart", "soul", "strength" and "mind" (Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27), Matthew has stylistically truncated it into three. Other examples show that Matthew has either an expanded or reduced version of lists, or in larger passages has restructured the narrative into triadic components.

It is self-evident that each triad clusters around a common idea or notion. Structural triads tie together a thematic idea, while smaller triadic lists serve different purposes of emphasis, which will be explored further below. To summarize the triads of Matthew's Gospel so far, we can see that it is a common structural and emphatic device which permeates the entire literary work and that each triad revolves around a common thread.

In looking at the purpose of the use of triads, there may be several reasons for Matthew to employ the device so frequently in his work. The first use which might bear mentioning would be for memorisation. Triads are common to the Johannine literature as well, which might serve to show that in the day when copies of sacred documents were scarce, these may have been among the various devices which were relied upon to aid cognitive retention. Structural and Emphatic triplets are part easily recalled. Examples in modern use would be "past, present and future", "father, mother and child", "beginning, middle and end".

One reason, perhaps, that both Matthew and John's writings feature heavy uses of triads is that this device seems to have been widely used in Hebrew literature. More study needs to be done on this, but triads may be found at times throughout in the Old Testament and the rabbinical literature. For example, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel wrote, "The world is sustained by three things: By justice, by truth, and by peace" a list that is similar to many of the themes of Jesus in the Gospels, especially in the Sermon on the Mount. Thus Matthew can be seen to be resting upon a literary tradition. The extent to which triads are employed in these writings is something that should be investigated further.

Perhaps the most significant purpose behind some of Matthew's use of triads might be the principle from the Torah that, "On the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses the one who is to die shall be put to death; a person shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness" (Deuteronomy 17:6). Matthew actually features Jesus quoting this verse in the teachings on discipline within the Church. It is also apparent that the idea of witnesses was important to John's writings. The prologue for John's Gospel involves appeals to the witness of John the Baptist, while the discussion of witnesses to Christ's divinity and divine mission are further picked up in chapters 5 and 8. It is also a minor theme in John's first epistle. With the Old Testament principle directly quoted or alluded to by these writers, it should come as no surprise that they employ triads to reinforce major ideas in their writings. Of course, not all smaller triadic lists would count as being for this purpose. Common sense and context are determinative as to whether this level of importance is attached to any triad.

One of the first steps in investigating the meaning of the baptismal triad in Matthew 28:19 would be to look at whether there are any parallel passages in the other Gospels. As seen above, Matthew has a habit of expanding or contracting so as to arrive at a triad in some instances. The Gospel of Luke's account of the final sayings of Jesus contains words which overlap the themes in Matthew's Great Commission.

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be

proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:45-49)

Here we can see a few parallels between the two accounts. Both accounts speak of "all nations" and a "name" and there is a parallel between the actions of "proclaiming" and "teaching". There is also a parallel that can be seen between the two "behold" statements. Matthew's account closes with the words, "Behold, I am with you always", while Luke's has "Behold, I am sending the Promise of My Father upon you". These two statements speak of the abiding presence. Jesus likely said a lot of things in his final discourse which included the Great Commission. Matthew and Luke chose different parts from that discourse to preserve. Luke highlights whose the name is with the words "His name", while Matthew highlights what the name represents. It is significant that in Luke's "Part II" in the book of Acts, the disciples who heard the words of Jesus practiced baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ" (see Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:46; 19:5).

So how should we understand the triad in Matthew 28:19? *The final words of Jesus in this Gospel account span the last three verses. The "Great Commission" is sandwiched between two statements from Jesus from which it takes its impetus.*

- 1. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*
- 2. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*
- 3. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

There is also a chiasmic structure to these words:

- A--All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*
- B----Go therefore*
- C-----and make disciples of all nations,*
- D-----baptizing them*
- X-----in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*
- D`-----teaching them*
- C`-----to observe*
- B`----all that I have commanded you.*
- A`-And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

The first statement of Jesus references the Father as the Source of Christ's authority. The second statement, which contains the Great Commission, describes the continuation of the ministry Christ instituted in His time on Earth. The final statement describes Jesus' unseen, spiritual, abiding presence as the Holy Spirit. So we can see that the broader triadic outline of the last words of Jesus in Matthew fits the pattern of the central triad of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The pattern is one of Source-Standard-Supply. That is, God the Father is the Source of the authority for the Great Commission; Jesus the Son is the Standard by which we should carry on our Mission; and the Holy Spirit is the Supply given for us to fulfill the Great Commission.

Looking at the chiasm, it is evident that it is not just baptism that should be done "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", but that this taking center-stage, all the verbs in the arms leading into this are connected. We are to:

- "Go therefore... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
- "Make disciples of all nations... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
- "Baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
- "Teaching them... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
- "To observe... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."
- "All that I have commanded you... in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."

With this fuller understanding of the text, we can see that limiting the triad to baptism alone hinders the force of the text. This more complete view conforms more closely to Luke's account which says, "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations" (Luke 24:47) and further statements in Acts which show salvation, teaching, healing, casting out demons, baptism, etc. being done "in the name of" Jesus, such as:

- Acts 2:21 - "And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
- Acts 2:38 - "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"
- Acts 3:6 - "But Peter said, 'I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!'"
- Acts 8:12 - "But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."
- Acts 9:27-28 - "But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord."
- Acts 10:48 - "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."
- Acts 16:18 - "And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour."
- Acts 19:5 - "On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
- Acts 21:13 - "Then Paul answered, 'What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.'
- Acts 22:16 - "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

*So what is the meaning of the phrase "in the name of"? The Greek word ὄνομα has several different nuances of meaning, depending on the context. It can mean a proper name, **surname/family name, title or appellation** (the same word is used for each of these separate categories in English). It can mean the **character** by which someone is known. It can also mean the **authority** by which a name is invested and the power a name carries by reputation. In the Lucan literature, it is clear that "in the name of" has a meaning closest to the latter of these options - that of **power and authority**. One narrative section demonstrates this very clearly.*

In chapter 3 of Acts, Peter and John heal a crippled man at the temple. From this they launch into a sermon to the crowd, where among other things they say, "And His name--by faith in His name--has made this man strong

whom you see and know, and the faith that is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16). Here we see the name connected to the power of faith. In the next chapter, Peter and John are put on trial, where they are asked, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" (Acts 4:7). Peter's answer to this question is that "by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Whom you crucified, Whom God raised from the dead--by Him this man is standing before you well" (Acts 4:10). As Peter reaches a peak in his discourse, he states, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The result is that the Sanhedrin (futilely) forbids the disciples from speaking or teaching "in the name of Jesus" (Acts 4:18).

From this account we can see two things. Firstly there is a literal use of an actual proper name - that of Jesus Christ. The second thing is that the force of nuance over "name" (ὄνομα) extends to embrace power and authority. That this is also the force of the word in the closing words of Matthew is apparent by the context. The central statement of Jesus, containing the Great Commission proper, follows a statement by Jesus about His authority as to both its extent (all... in heaven and earth) and source (from the Father).

Peter J. Leibart in his paper, "Jesus as Israel: The Typological Structure of Matthew's Gospel" (<http://bit.ly/1Erv9y>) gives a fascinating hypothesis of how Matthew's Gospel structure reflects the entire history of the Old Testament from Genesis right through to where the traditional Hebrew text culminates with the commission of Cyrus (a type of Christ) in 2 Chronicles 36:23. We can see that this Old Testament commission has the same features as the Great Commission in Matthew:

- 1. Statement regarding universal authority*
- 2. Statement regarding source of authority*
- 3. Commission to "go"*
- 4. Statement regarding the abiding presence "with" God's people.*

2 Chronicles 36:23 - "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? The LORD his God be with him, and let him go up."

Matthew is clearly choosing to conclude his Gospel account in the same way as the Hebrew canon closed - another interesting stylistic choice. Jesus is greater than Cyrus in that His authority is over heaven as well as earth. Jesus' commission is also greater, but related. Jesus' commission is to go and build up the Spiritual Temple of God - the Church. The commission would be carried out in the literal name and authority of Cyrus. Looking at Ezra, it is abundantly clear that the commission to build the temple was carried out "in the name of" Cyrus (Ezra 4:3; 5:13-17; 6:3, etc.).

Coming back to Matthew, we can see that Jesus' name is the one which fulfills all the contextual, stylistic, antitypical and parallel considerations of the passage. So the final question we need to understand is this: "How does the name 'Jesus' relate to the three parts of the triad - 'Father', 'Son' and 'Holy Spirit'?"

The syntax of the statement makes it clear that there is a single name to which the three titles of "Father", "Son" and "Holy Spirit" bear a genitive relationship. We have seen that this singular name is "Jesus Christ" and the semantic nuance of "name" extends to include authority and power. With the emphasis on authority in Matthew 28:18-20, we can understand that there is a genitive of representation here. When we say, "the ambassador of France", we mean "the ambassador WHO REPRESENTS France". Thus the "of" can be switched out with "which represents". This same type of sense is what we see happening in Matthew 28:19 - the "name" Jesus represents the triad of "Father", "Son" and "Holy Spirit".

The way in which Jesus represents the three offices can be discerned from the context of everything He says in these closing words, however there are additional insights that can be gleaned from other passages as well.

Jesus represents the office of "Father"

- *Jesus represents the Father having been invested with Authority by Him (Matthew 28:18).*
- *The name "Jesus" which is given by Heaven (Matthew 1:21) literally contains the name of the Father - "Jesus" ("Yeshua" in Hebrew) literally means "YHWH Saves" (see also Exodus 23:23).*
- *Jesus also holds a title of "Father" over humanity in the sense that He stands as the Second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45).*
- *Jesus represents the office of "Son".*
- *Jesus is known as the "Son of God" representing His divinity.*
- *Jesus is known as the "Son of man" representing His divinity in humanity.*
- *As the Second Adam, Jesus took the title "Son" in a new sense.*
- *Jesus represents the office of "Holy Spirit"*
- *In the words immediately following the Great Commission Jesus gives assurance of His personal abiding presence giving power to fulfill His words. (Ephesians 4:9-10)*
- *Jesus understood His Words to be "Spirit and Life".*
- *Jesus as the Second Adam "became a Life-Giving Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45).*

Thus we have the Great Commission carrying the authority and power of the Father Who invests authority in Jesus, the authority and power of Jesus the Son, and the authority and power of the abiding presence of Christ through His Words as the Holy Spirit. The name "Jesus" represents these three economic offices. In a further sense, Jesus Himself also holds all three titles by virtue of being the Second Adam. An Old Testament prophetic passage which has Second Adamic force also has one "name" representing multiple offices:

"For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

The Second Adamic nature of this prophecy can be seen clearly throughout. Christ is seen in Scripture as a "Father" over the redeemed (see Isaiah 8:17-18 quoted in Hebrews 2:13). The idea of the "government... upon His shoulder" is not just a Davidic image, but also invokes the responsibilities of dominion granted to Adam in Genesis. We see clearly in this verse "Father" and "Son" as titles for Christ, but there is also a very clear link that can be found between the imagery of "Counselor" here and the role of "Comforter" in the New Testament, especially in light of "Counsel" being one of the attributes of the Spirit in Isaiah 11:2. So we can see that as the Second Adam, Jesus is worthy of the titles "Father", "Son" and "Holy Spirit", and that His name also represents His Father, and His words of promise are to us the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. We are to "go", "make disciples", "baptise", "teach" and "obey" everything that has been "commanded" in the name of "Jesus" - the One Who stands to us in power and authority representing the offices of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Matthew's choice to use these words of Christ, out of all the words Jesus must have preached as part of the Great Commission, others of which are represented in parallel passages such as Luke, show his affinity for triadic formulas. Matthew, like John, liked to reinforce his message with small triplets of emphasis and larger triadic structural components. The more significant of these appear to be used by Matthew so as to abide by the principle

of Moses requiring "two or three witnesses" to confirm the truth of something. Thus, Matthew's choice of the triad "of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" in place of the Lucan use of "His name" or the larger theme of "the name of Jesus" gives superlative weight to the Great Commission Matthew closes with in a stylistic parallel to the close of the Hebrew canon. Matthew equates the three offices to the singular "name" of Jesus, as the context reveals and as confirmed by comparison to the parallel in Luke. What is abundantly clear is that Matthew did not intend the superficial Trinitarian meaning most see today by his use of the triad any more than Isaiah intended a Quartet (or Quintuplet depending whether you read "Wonderful Counsellor" as one or two titles) in Isaiah 9:6. Matthew simply wished to summarize the Great Commission with the greatest literary force he could muster! The message that we should take from Matthew is that our entire Christian mission centers in the Authority Christ received from His Father and that His abiding presence enables us to carry out His Assignment to us.

With that excerpt from Brother Brendan, we can rest the case here but much more has to be addressed still

Born of Water and the Spirit

How my soul yearns I should speak concerning 1 John 5 but it will be a digression and turn this into a voluminous treatise and so I desist. When Nicodemus came to Jesus inquiring of these things, Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John 3:5. Christ here referred to water baptism and the renewing of the heart by the Spirit of God.

Repentance, faith, and baptism are the requisite steps in conversion. As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. ***This vow is their oath of allegiance.*** Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "The Lord our Righteousness." Jeremiah 23:6.... Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled the promise: "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. The obligations in the spiritual agreement entered into at baptism are mutual. As human beings act their part with whole-hearted obedience, they have a right to pray, "Let it be known, Lord, that Thou art God in Israel." The fact that you have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is an assurance that if you will claim their help, these powers will help you in every emergency. {FLB 145.3-6}

Whenever possible, let baptism be administered in a ***clear lake or running stream***. And give to the occasion all the importance and solemnity that can be brought into it. At such a service angels of God are always present. {6T 97.2}

The one who administers the ordinance of baptism should seek to make it an occasion of solemn, sacred influence upon all spectators. Every ordinance of the church should be so conducted as to be uplifting in its influence. Nothing is to be made common or cheap, or placed on a level with common

things. Our churches need to be educated to greater respect and reverence for the sacred service of God. As ministers conduct the services connected with God's worship, so they are educating and training the people. Little acts that educate and train and discipline the soul for eternity are of vast consequence in the uplifting and sanctifying of the church. {6T 97.3}

In every church, ***baptismal robes should be provided for the candidates.*** This should not be regarded as a needless outlay of means. It is one of the things required in obedience to the injunction: "***Let all things be done decently and in order.***" 1 Corinthians 14:40. {6T 97.4}

It is not well for one church to depend upon ***borrowing robes from another.*** Often when the robes are needed, they are not to be found; some borrower has neglected to return them. Every church should ***provide for its own necessities in this line. Let a fund be raised for this purpose.*** If the whole church unite in this, it will not be a heavy burden. {6T 98.1}

The robes should be made of ***substantial material, of some dark color that water will not injure, and they should be weighted at the bottom.*** Let them be neat, well-shaped garments, made after an approved pattern. ***There should be no attempt at ornamentation, no ruffling or trimming. All display, whether of trimming or ornaments, is wholly out of place.*** When the candidates have a sense of the meaning of the ordinance, they will have no desire for personal adornment. ***Yet there should be nothing shabby or unseemly, for this is an offense to God.*** Everything connected with this holy ordinance should reveal as perfect a preparation as possible. {6T 98.2}

Who should be baptized?

The sin of these last days is upon the professed people of God. Through selfishness, love of pleasure, and love of dress, they deny the Christ that their church membership says that they follow. I thank God that Jesus Christ knows every impulse in the heart of the believer. Many profess to be children of God, who do not follow Christ. Their frivolity, their cheap conversation, their want of high-toned piety, their low aims, mislead others, who would pursue a different course were it not for the example of these deceptive characters, who do not love Christ or do His will, but simply follow their own imaginations. {5MR 329.2}

Some teachers and managers who are only half converted are stumbling blocks to others. They concede some things and make half reforms; but when greater knowledge comes, they refuse to advance, preferring to work according to their own ideas. In doing this they pluck and eat of that tree of knowledge which places the human above the divine. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." "If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." Joshua 24:14, 15; 1 Kings 18:21. We should have been far in advance of our present spiritual condition had we moved forward as the light came to us. {6T 141.2}

Halfhearted Christians are worse than infidels; for their deceptive words and noncommittal position lead many astray. The infidel shows his colors. The lukewarm Christian deceives both parties. He is neither a good worldling nor a good Christian. ***Satan uses him to do a work that no one else can do*** {Letter 44, 1903} also in {7BC 963.6}

No one is to take part in the solemn ordinance of baptism without giving the subject careful, prayerful thought. The candidates and especially the youth, are to be carefully instructed in regard to the obligations they assume in taking this step. ***They pledge themselves to devote their lives to God's service; and the three great Powers of heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, pledge themselves to cooperate with them, to work in and through them.*** As they accept Christ as their Saviour, they receive power to become the sons of God. {Ms118-1902} also in {21MR 150.4}

When Children Are Ready for Baptism.--Never allow your children to suppose that they are not children of God until they are old enough to be baptized. ***Baptism does not make children Christians; neither does it convert them; it is but an outward sign, showing that they are sensible that they should be children of God by acknowledging that they believe in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and will henceforth live for Christ.*** {CG 499.2}

Baptism Requisite in Conversion.--***Repentance, faith, and baptism are the requisite steps in conversion.*** {Letter 174, 1909} also in {Ev 306.3}

Clinching Decision for Baptism.--***The souls under conviction of the truth need to be visited and labored for. Sinners need a special work done for them, that they may be converted and baptized.***—{Manuscript 17, 1908} also in {Ev 306.4}

The Christian's Oath of Allegiance.--As Christians submit to the solemn rite of baptism, He registers the vow that they make to be true to Him. This vow is their oath of allegiance. ***They are baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thus they are united with the three great powers of heaven.*** They pledge themselves to renounce the world and to observe the laws of the kingdom of God. Henceforth they are to walk in newness of life. No longer are they to follow the traditions of men. No longer are they to follow dishonest methods. They are to obey the statutes of the kingdom of heaven. They are to seek God's honor. If they will be true to their vow, they will be furnished with grace and power that will enable them to fulfill all righteousness. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.— {Letter 129, 1903} also {Ev 307.3}

Thorough Conversion to the Truth.--***The preparation for baptism is a matter that needs to be carefully considered. The new converts to the truth should be faithfully instructed in the plain "Thus saith the Lord."*** The Word of the Lord is to be read and explained to them point by point. {Ms56-1900} also in {Ev 308.1}

All who enter upon the new life should understand, prior to their baptism, that the Lord requires the undivided affections. . . . The practicing of the truth is essential. The bearing of fruit testifies to the character of the tree. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. ***The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.*** There is need of a thorough conversion to the truth.— {Manuscript 56, 1900} also in {Ev 308.2}

Accepted When Position Fully Understood.--The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. . . . When they give evidence that they fully understand their position, they are to be accepted.--Testimonies to Ministers, p. 128. (1897) {Ev 308.3}

Judge by the Fruit of the Life.--There is one thing that we have no right to do, and that is to judge another man's heart or impugn his motives. ***But when a person presents himself as a candidate for church membership, we are to examine the fruit of his life, and leave the responsibility of his motive with himself.*** But great care should be exercised in accepting members into the church; for Satan has his specious devices through which he purposes to crowd false brethren into the church, through whom he can work more successfully to weaken the cause of God.—{Review and Herald, Jan. 10, 1893} also in {Ev 313.3}

An Impressive Baptismal Service.--The efforts put forth in Oakland have borne fruit in the salvation of precious souls. Sunday morning, December 16, I attended a baptismal service at the Piedmont Baths. Thirty-two candidates were buried with their Lord in baptism, and arose to walk in newness of life. This was a scene that angels of God witnessed with joy. . . . The entire service was impressive. ***There was no confusion, and occasionally a verse of some hymn of praise was sung.***—{Manuscript 105, 1906} also in {Ev 315.1}

Emergency Baptism

Dear brother Santee,

Last Sabbath Brother Mills drove us to Santa Rosa where I spoke to a good congregation. I had much freedom in speaking from the first chapter of second Peter. Every time I speak from this chapter, the instruction it contains seems more precious, and I never felt this more decidedly than when I spoke last Sabbath. Brother Mills requested that the discourse be written out and published. On our return we called upon a family by the ***name of Lighter.*** They live about half way between Santa Rosa and Healdsburg and seem to be in limited circumstances. ***Sister Lighter's father, a very old man, is quite feeble.*** The physician thinks that he will only live a short time. A few months ago he accepted the truth, ***but he has not yet been baptized.*** We were glad to do an errand for the Master by visiting this family. Willie read the comforting promises of God's Word to the sick man, and I presented the afflicted one to the Great Physician, who is able to heal both soul and body. The family were very thankful for our visit. I know that they were comforted. ***Arrangements will be made to fulfil the aged man's request for baptism. He is not strong enough to go to Santa Rosa or to Healdsburg, and the only way in which the ceremony can be performed is by getting a bathtub and letting him into the water.*** {Lt126-1901}

Conversion, Not Just Baptism.--***Salvation is not to be baptized, not to have our names upon the church books, not to preach the truth. But it is a living union with Jesus Christ to be renewed in heart, doing the works of Christ in faith and labor of love, in patience, meekness, and hope.*** Every soul united to Christ will be a living missionary to all around him. — {Letter 55, 1886} also in {Ev 319.1}

A Weakness in Our Evangelism.--***The accession of members who have not been renewed in heart and reformed in life is a source of weakness to the church.*** This fact is often ignored. Some ministers and churches are so ***desirous of securing an increase of numbers that they do not bear faithful testimony against unchristian habits and practices.*** Those who accept the truth are not taught that they cannot safely be worldlings in conduct while they are Christians in name. Heretofore they were Satan's subjects; henceforth they are to be subjects of Christ. The life must testify to the change of leaders. Public opinion favors a profession of Christianity. ***Little self-denial or self-sacrifice is required in order to put on a form of godliness, and to have one's name enrolled upon the church book.*** Hence many join the church without first becoming united to Christ. In this

Satan triumphs. Such converts are his most efficient agents. They serve as decoys to other souls. They are false lights, luring the unwary to perdition. It is in vain that men seek to make the Christian's path broad and pleasant for worldlings. God has not smoothed or widened the rugged, narrow way. If we would enter into life, we must follow the same path which Jesus and His disciples trod,—the path of humility, self-denial, and sacrifice. -- {ST, February 1, 1883 par. 16}

Ministers who labor in towns and cities to present the truth should not feel content, nor that their work is ended, until those who have accepted the theory of the truth realize indeed the effect of its sanctifying power, and are truly converted to God. ***God would be better pleased to have six truly converted to the truth as the result of their labors, than to have sixty make a nominal profession, and yet not be thoroughly converted.*** These ministers should devote less time to preaching sermons, and reserve a portion of their strength to visit and pray with those who are interested, giving them godly instruction, to the end that they may "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." The love of God must be living in the heart of the teacher of the truth. His own heart must be imbued with that deep and fervent love which Christ possessed; then it will flow out to others. Ministers should teach that all who accept the truth should bring forth fruit to the glory of God. They should teach that self-sacrifice must be practiced every day; that many things which have been cherished must be yielded; and that many duties, disagreeable though they may appear, must be performed. ***Business interests, social endearments, ease, honor, reputation, in short, everything, must be held in subjection to the superior and ever-paramount claims of Christ.***—{Testimonies, vol. 4, 317. (1879)} also in {Ev 320}

Soon after our return from the camp meeting, ***I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion.*** Some of my Methodist sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God. Finally the time was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. It was a windy day when we, ***twelve in number, went down into the sea to be baptized.*** The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore; but as I took up this heavy cross, my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world, but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of life. ***The same day in the afternoon I was received into the church in full membership. A young woman stood by my side who was also a candidate for admission to the church. My mind was peaceful and happy till I noticed the gold rings glittering upon this sister's fingers, and the large, showy earrings in her ears. I then observed that her bonnet was adorned with artificial flowers, and trimmed with costly ribbons arranged in bows and puffs. My joy was dampened by this display of vanity in one who professed to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.*** I expected that the minister would give some whispered reproof or advice to this sister; but he was apparently regardless of her showy apparel, and no rebuke was administered. We both received the right hand of fellowship. ***The hand decorated with jewels was clasped by the representative of Christ, and both our names were registered upon the church book. This circumstance caused me no little perplexity and trial as I remembered the apostle's words: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."*** The teaching of this scripture seemed to be openly disregarded by those whom I looked upon as devoted Christians, and who were much older in experience than myself. If it was indeed as sinful as I

supposed, to imitate the extravagant dress of worldlings, surely these Christians would understand it and would conform to the Bible standard. Yet for myself I determined to follow my convictions of duty. I could but feel that it was contrary to the spirit of the gospel to devote God-given time and means to the decoration of our persons--that humility and self-denial would be more befitting those whose sins had cost the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. {1T 19.5-20.4}

The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are two monumental pillars, ***one without and one within the church***. Upon these ordinances Christ has inscribed the name of the true God. {6T 91.1}

Christ has made ***baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit***. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "The Lord our Righteousness." Jeremiah 23:6. {6T 91.2}

Baptism is a most solemn ***renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family***, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled the promise: "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. {6T 91.3}

Preparation for Baptism

There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. ***We are not only to say, "I believe," but to practice the truth***. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. ***The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts***. {6T 91.4}

Faithful Christian men and women should have an intense interest to bring the convicted soul to a correct knowledge of righteousness in Christ Jesus. If any have allowed the desire for selfish indulgence to become supreme in their life, the faithful believers should watch for these souls as they that must give an account. They must not neglect the faithful, tender, loving instruction so essential to the young converts that there may be no halfhearted work. The very first experience should be right. {6T 92.1}

Satan does not want anyone to see the necessity of an entire surrender to God. When the soul fails to make this surrender, sin is not forsaken; the appetites and passions are striving for the mastery; temptations confuse the conscience, so that true conversion does not take place. If all had a sense of

the conflict which each soul must wage with satanic agencies that are seeking to ensnare, entice, and deceive, there would be much more diligent labor for those who are young in the faith. {6T 92.2}

These souls, left to themselves, are often tempted and do not discern the evil of the temptation. Let them feel that it is their privilege to solicit counsel. Let them seek the society of those who can help them. Through association with those who love and fear God they will receive strength. {6T 93.1}

Our conversation with these souls should be of a spiritual, encouraging character. The Lord marks the conflicts of every weak, doubting, struggling one, and He will help all who call upon Him. They will see heaven open before them, and angels of God descending and ascending the ladder of shining brightness which they are trying to climb. {6T 93.2}

The Parents' Work. ***Parents whose children desire to be baptized have a work to do, both in self-examination and in giving faithful instruction to their children. Baptism is a most sacred and important ordinance, and there should be a thorough understanding as to its meaning.*** It means repentance for sin, and the entrance upon a new life in Christ Jesus. ***There should be no undue haste to receive the ordinance.*** Let both parents and children count the cost. In consenting to the baptism of their children, parents sacredly pledge themselves to be faithful stewards over these children, to guide them in their character building. They pledge themselves to guard with special interest these lambs of the flock, that they may not dishonor the faith they profess. {6T 93.3}

Religious instruction should be given to children from their earliest years. It should be given, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in a cheerful, happy spirit. Mothers need to be on the watch constantly, lest temptation shall come to the children in such a form as not to be recognized by them. The parents are to guard their children with wise, pleasant instruction. As the very best friends of these inexperienced ones, they should help them in the work of overcoming, for it means everything to them to be victorious. They should consider that their own dear children who are seeking to do right are younger members of the Lord's family, and they should feel an intense interest in helping them to make straight paths in the King's highway of obedience. With loving interest they should teach them day by day what it means to be children of God and to yield the will in obedience to Him. Teach them that obedience to God involves obedience to their parents. This must be a daily, hourly work. Parents, watch, watch and pray, and make your children your companions. {6T 93.4}

When the happiest period of their life has come, and they in their hearts love Jesus and wish to be baptized, then deal faithfully with them. ***Before they receive the ordinance, ask them if it is to be their first purpose in life to work for God.*** Then tell them how to begin. It is the first lessons that mean so much. In simplicity teach them how to do their first service for God. Make the work as easy to be understood as possible. Explain what it means to give up self to the Lord, to do just as His word directs, under the counsel of Christian parents. {6T 94.1}

After faithful labor, if you are satisfied that your ***children understand the meaning of conversion and baptism, and are truly converted, let them be baptized. But, I repeat, first of all prepare yourselves to act as faithful shepherds in guiding their inexperienced feet in the narrow way of obedience.*** God must work in the parents that they may give to their children a right example, in love, courtesy, and Christian humility, and in an entire giving up of self to Christ. ***If you consent to the baptism of your children and then leave them to do as they choose, feeling no special duty to keep their feet in the straight path, you yourselves are responsible if they lose faith and courage and interest in the truth.*** {6T 94.2}

The Pastor's Work. Candidates who have grown to manhood and womanhood should understand their duty better than do the younger ones; but the pastor of the church has a duty to do for these souls. Have they wrong habits and practices? ***It is the duty of the pastor to have special meetings with them. Give them Bible readings, converse and pray with them, and plainly show the claims of the Lord upon them. Read to them the teaching of the Bible in regard to conversion. Show what is the fruit of conversion, the evidence that they love God. Show that true conversion is a change of heart, of thoughts and purposes. Evil habits are to be given up. The sins of evil-speaking, of jealousy, of disobedience, are to be put away. A warfare must be waged against every evil trait of character. Then the believing one can understandingly take to himself the promise.*** "Ask, and it shall be given you." Matthew 7:7. {6T 95.1}

Examination of Candidates

The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. ***It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventists, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates.*** Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirements of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism. {6T 95.2}

One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is ***the subject of dress.*** Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. ***It must not be taken over into the new life.*** In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress. {6T 96.1}

There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witnesses we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. ***Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic.*** In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion, that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments. {6T 96.2}

The words of Scripture in regard to ***dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel.*** {6T 96.3}

All who study the life of Christ and practice His teachings will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of character. As they walk in the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God, they exert an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work. In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying power of truth upon the human character. {6T 96.4}

The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, expressed in character, is an exaltation above everything that is esteemed in earth or in heaven. It is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city. This knowledge it is God's purpose that all who put on Christ by baptism shall possess. And it is the duty of God's servants to set before these souls the privilege of their high calling in Christ Jesus. {6T 97.1}

When to be Re-Baptized

When precious rays of light from the Sun of Righteousness have shone upon our pathway, some have opened wide the door of the heart, welcoming the heaven-sent light into the chambers of the soul. They receive the words of Christ Jesus gladly. Others have needed the divine anointing to improve their spiritual eyesight, in order that they may distinguish the light of truth from the darkness of error. Because of their blindness, they have lost an experience that would have been more precious to them than silver and gold. Some, I fear, will never recover that which they have lost. {7MR 261.3}

There are many at the present day who have unwittingly violated one of the precepts of God's law. When the understanding is enlightened, and the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the conscience, they see themselves sinners in the sight of God. "Sin is the transgression of the law" and "he that shall offend on one point is guilty of all." The honest seeker after truth will not plead ignorance of the law as an excuse for transgression. Light was within his reach. God's Word is plain, and Christ has bidden him search the Scriptures. He reveres God's law as holy, just, and good, and he repents of his transgression. By faith he pleads the atoning blood of Christ, and grasps the promise of pardon. ***His former baptism does not satisfy him now. He has seen himself a sinner, condemned by the law of God. He has experienced anew a death to sin, and he desires again to be buried with Christ by baptism, that he may rise to walk in newness of life. Such a course is in harmony with the example of Paul in baptizing the Jewish converts.*** That incident was recorded by the Holy Spirit as an instructive lesson for the church.--Sketches From the Life of Paul, p. 133. (1883) {3SP 420} also in {Ev 372}

The subject of rebaptism should be handled with the greatest care. After the truth is presented upon the Sabbath question and other important points of our faith, and souls manifest the moral courage to take their position upon the truth, they will see this question in the Bible light if they are fully converted. But by some these questions have been handled unwisely, and God has sent reproof many times on this point. ***Those who place the subject of rebaptism in the front, making it of as much importance as the Sabbath question, are not leaving the right impression upon the minds and correctly representing the subject.*** It requires great discrimination to bring in kindred truths with the Sabbath, rightly dividing the Word, giving to each his portion of meat in due season. {Lt56-1886} also in {Ev 372.3}

This is a subject which each individual must conscientiously take his position upon in the fear of God. ***This subject should be carefully presented in the spirit of tenderness and love.*** Then the duty of urging belongs to no one but God; give God a chance to work with His Holy Spirit upon the minds, so that the individual will be perfectly convinced and satisfied in regard to this advanced step. A spirit of controversy and contention should never be allowed to come in and prevail on this subject. Do not take the Lord's work out of His hands into your own hands. Those who have conscientiously taken their position upon the commandments of God, will, if rightly dealt with, accept all essential truth. But

it needs wisdom to deal with human minds. ***Some will be longer in seeing and understanding some kindred truths than others, especially will this be the case in regard to the subject of rebaptism***, but there is a divine hand that is leading them--a divine spirit impressing their hearts, and they will know what they ought to do and do it. Let none of our zealous brethren overdo this matter. They will be in danger of getting before the Lord and making tests for others which the Lord has not bidden them to make. It is not the work of any of our teachers to urge rebaptism upon anyone. It is their business to lay down the great principles of Bible truths, especially is this the case in regard to rebaptism. Then let God do the work of convicting the mind and heart. {Lt56-1886}

Some workers in the cause of God have been too ready to hurl denunciations against the sinner; ***the grace and love of the Father in giving His Son to die for the sinful race have been put in the background***. The teacher needs the grace of Christ upon his own soul, in order to make known to the sinner what God really is--a Father waiting with yearning love to receive the returning prodigal, not hurling at him accusations in wrath, but preparing a festival of joy to welcome his return (Zephaniah 3:14-17). {1SM 184.1}

If you differ with your brethren as to your understanding of the grace of Christ and the operations of His Spirit, ***you should not make these differences prominent. You view the matter from one point; another, just as devoted to God, views the same question from another point, and speaks of the things that make the deepest impression on his mind; another viewing it from a still different point, presents another phase; and how foolish it is to get into contention over these things, when there is really nothing to contend about***. Let God work on the mind and impress the heart. {1SM 183.1}

One man may be conversant with the Scriptures, and some particular portion of the Scripture may be especially appreciated by him; ***another sees another portion as very important, and thus one may present one point, and another, another point, and both may be of highest value. This is all in the order of God***. But if a man makes a mistake in his interpretation of some portion of the Scripture, shall this cause diversity and disunion? God forbid. ***We cannot then take a position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of Scripture in the very same light. The church may pass resolution upon resolution to put down all disagreement of opinions, but we cannot force the mind and will, and thus root out disagreement. These resolutions may conceal the discord, but they cannot quench it and establish perfect agreement. Nothing can perfect unity in the church but the spirit of Christlike forbearance***. Satan can sow discord; Christ alone can harmonize the disagreeing elements. Then let every soul sit down in Christ's school and learn of Christ, who declares Himself to be meek and lowly of heart. Christ says that if we learn of Him, worries will cease and we shall find rest to our souls. {11MR 266.1}

All who profess to be children of God should bear in mind that as missionaries they will be brought into contact with all classes of minds. ***There are the refined and the coarse, the humble and the proud, the religious and the skeptical, the educated and the ignorant, the rich and the poor. These varied minds cannot be treated alike; yet all need kindness and sympathy***. By mutual contact our minds should receive polish and refinement. We are dependent upon one another, closely bound together by the ties of human brotherhood. {MH 495.3}

Christianity is not manifested in pugilistic accusations and condemnations.--6T 397 (1900).

Every association of life calls for the exercise of self-control, forbearance, and sympathy. ***We differ so widely in disposition, habits, education, that our ways of looking at things vary. We judge differently. Our understanding of truth, our ideas in regard to the conduct of life, are not in all respects the same. There are no two whose experience is alike in every particular. The trials of one are not the trials of another.*** The duties that one finds light are to another most difficult and perplexing. {MH 483.1}

Will you please to present this that I have written to Brother Kunz? ***I have been shown that our brother will have to learn in the school of Christ many lessons that are essential before he can be a successful teacher.*** He carries too much of the burden of self, and manifests too little of the meekness and lowliness of Jesus, and he is constantly in danger of moving unwisely in presenting the subjects of truth. He needs greater wisdom from heaven and more of the love of Christ and the spirit of forbearance and patience brought into his work. Then he will have greater power to win souls to Christ and to the truth. ***In regard to rebaptism he should not place this on a level with the Sabbath.*** He needs to treat this subject with great caution. If any one comes to him for knowledge upon this subject, he should not create a controversy but in meekness give the light that he has from the Bible and then let the Lord do all the pressing and urging. ***Every honest soul who accepts the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will see and understand his duty in time.*** But it will take time for some. It is not a subject to be driven and forced upon those newly come to the truth, but this subject will work like leaven; the process will be slow and quiet, but it will do its work if our ministering brethren will not be too fast and defeat the purpose of God. Those who have long looked upon this subject see it quite clearly and think all others should see it just as they do. They do not consider that with some newly come to the faith this matter looks like denying all their former religious experience. But in time they will come to regard the matter differently. As the truth is constantly unfolding to their minds, they will see advanced steps to be taken; new light will flash upon their pathway; God's Spirit will work upon their minds, if men will not interfere and seek to drive them to the positions which they think are truth. ***Now let it be distinctly understood, from time to time, all through our experience, God has given me testimonies of caution to our brethren in regard to handling the subject of rebaptism. Our good Brother Bates and several others of our ministers I was shown were making a mistake at some point in their experience in putting in the front and making a test question of rebaptism.*** This is not the way that the subject should be treated. It is a matter to be treated as a great privilege and blessing, and all who are rebaptized, if they have the right ideas upon this subject, will thus consider it. These good brethren were not bringing those newly come to the faith along step by step cautiously and guardedly, and the result was that some were turned from the truth, when a little time and tender, careful dealing with them would have prevented all such sad results. {Lt56-1886}

Our ministering brethren make a decided failure of doing their work in a manner directed by the Lord. They fail to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. They have not gained an experience through personal communion with God, or a true knowledge of what constitutes Christian character; therefore many are baptized who have no fitness for this sacred ordinance, but who are knit to self and the world. They have not seen Christ or received Him by faith.—{Review and Herald, Feb. 4, 1890} also in {Ev 319.2}

Said the angel, Can ye stand in the battle in the day of the Lord? Ye need to be washed and live in newness of life. (Then I saw those whose hands are now engaged in making up the breach and are standing in the gaps that have *formally, since '44, broken the commandments of God and have so far followed the Pope as to keep the first day instead of the seventh, would have to go down into the water and be baptized in the faith of the shut door and keeping the commandments of God, and in the faith of Jesus coming to sit on the throne of His father David and to redeem Israel. I also saw those who have been baptized as a door into the professed churches will have to be baptized out of that door again, and into the faith mentioned above, and all who have not been baptized since '44, will have to be baptized before Jesus comes, and some will not gain progress now until that duty is done and then they must live anew unto God and serve him faithfully.*) {Ms5-1850} also in {18MR 11.4}

I saw those who have been *baptized as a door into the churches, would have to be baptized again as a door into the faith.* Those who have not been baptized since 1844 will have to be before Jesus comes. *And some I saw would not make progress till the duty was performed.* {SpM 3.8}

To our brethren at the Medical Missionary Council,—

I speak to our leading brethren, to our ministers, and especially to our physicians. Just as long as you allow pride to dwell in your hearts, so long will you lack power in your work. For years a wrong spirit has been cherished, a spirit of pride, a desire for pre-eminence. In this Satan is served, and God is dishonored. The Lord calls for a decided reformation. *And when a soul is truly reconverted, let him be rebaptized. Let him renew his covenant with God, and God will renew His covenant with him.* My brethren, show true repentance for departure from God. Let angels and men see that there is forgiveness of sin with God. Extraordinary power from God must take hold of Seventh-day Adventist churches. Reconversion must take place among the members, that as God's witnesses they may testify to the authoritative power of the truth that sanctifies the soul. Renewed, purified, sanctified, the church must be, else the wrath of God will fall upon them with much greater power than upon those who have never professed to be saints. {Lt63-1903}

Who can baptize?

The principles is that those folks who have been consecrated for ministry like elders and evangelist deacons can baptize because we find that Evangelist deacons like Phillip did baptize

By the laying on of hands, the church authorizes ministers to teach, baptize, and organize churches.-- *"There were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, . . . and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:1, 2). Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism, and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority.--GW 441. {PaM 42.1}*

The disciples were to carry their work forward in Christ's name. Their every word and act was to fasten attention on His name, as possessing that vital power by which sinners may be saved. Their faith was to

center in Him who is the source of mercy and power. In His name they were to present their petitions to the Father, and they would receive answer. ***They were to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*** Christ's name was to be their watchword, their badge of distinction, their bond of union, the authority for their course of action, and the source of their success. Nothing was to be recognized in His kingdom that did not bear His name and superscription. {AA 28.2}

Philip the evangelist was bound to Paul by ties of the deepest sympathy. A man of clear discernment and sterling integrity, ***Philip had been the first to break away from the bondage of Jewish prejudice, and thus had helped prepare the way for the apostle's work.*** It was Philip who preached the gospel to the Samaritans; ***it was Philip who had the courage to baptize the Ethiopian eunuch.*** For a time the history of these two workers had been closely intertwined. It was the violent persecution of Saul the Pharisee that had scattered the church at Jerusalem, and destroyed the effectiveness of the organization of the seven deacons. ***The flight from Jerusalem had led Philip to change his manner of labor, and resulted in his pursuing the same calling to which Paul gave his life.*** Precious hours were these that Paul and Philip spent in each other's society; thrilling were the memories that they recalled of the days when the light which had shone upon the face of Stephen upturned to Heaven as he suffered martyrdom, flashed in its glory upon Saul the persecutor, bringing him, a helpless suppliant, to the feet of Jesus. {LP 204.1}

I saw that ***this door that the enemy comes in at, to perplex and trouble the flock,*** can be shut. I inquired of the angel how this door could be closed. Said he, "The ***church must flee to God's word, and become established upon gospel order*** which has been overlooked and neglected." This is indispensably necessary to bring the church into the unity of the faith. I saw that they were in danger in the apostles' days of being imposed upon and deceived by false teachers; and men were chosen by the brethren, or church, who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house, and preserving order in their own families; men that could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning them, and then, according to the mind of the church, and the Holy Ghost, they were set apart by the laying on of hands. ***Having received their commission from God, and having the approbation of the church, they go forth baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and to administer the ordinances of the Lord's house, often waiting upon the saints by presenting them the emblems of the broken body and spilt blood of the crucified Saviour,*** to keep fresh in the memory of God's beloved children, his sufferings and death. {ExV54 18.2}

This is the very work [described in the Scriptures], as I have been writing on the life of Christ in regard to these [believers] being scattered, how because of the persecution they went everywhere preaching the Word of God; they were preaching the gospel everywhere, and as souls were raised up they were baptized. ***Philip was not an ordained minister, but when the eunuch began to inquire about this matter, Philip opened to him the Word, and then what? He says, "What doth hinder my being baptized?" Sure enough, what did hinder? It was not considered that anything hindered, and Philip went down and baptized him.*** {Ms75-1896}

The evangelist who is prepared to minister to a diseased body is given the grandest opportunity of ministering to the sinsick soul. Such an evangelist should be empowered to administer baptism to those who are converted and desire baptism. {Ms58-1901} also in {Ev 513.2}

The gospel ministry is a high and sacred calling. Properly done, the work of the gospel minister will bring many souls into the fold. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Christ said. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, ***baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.***" ***This commission is given to every ordained minister.*** The minister who is merely a speaker, who does not labor as Christ labored, putting his whole soul intelligently into the work, needs true conversion. {RH, October 6, 1904 par. 19}

Another thing I want to tell you that I know from the light as given me: it has been a great mistake that men go out, knowing they are children of God, like Brother Tay, [who] went to Pitcairn as a missionary to do work, [but] that man did not feel at liberty to baptize because he had not been ordained. That is not any of God's arrangements; it is man's fixing. When men go out with the burden of the work and to bring souls into the truth, those men are ordained of God, [even] if [they] never have a touch of ceremony of ordination. To say [they] shall not baptize when there is nobody else, [is wrong]. If there is a minister in reach, all right, then they should seek for the ordained minister to do the baptizing, but when the Lord works with a man to bring out a soul here and there, and they know not when the opportunity will come that these precious souls can be baptized, why he should not question about the matter, he should baptize these souls. {Ms75-1896}

Well, there are these things that need to be considered before men shall ever go into these countries, and if you are going to have the ordained ministers from what we have now, the ordained ministers will be few and far between. There must be men that shall be commissioned or encouraged by our brethren to go out, and if they feel that it is best to have these men ordained—some of them—why, ordain them; but if not, let them go out and let them do to the very best of their ability. They are conscientious men and are accountable to God. We must not put men into straight jackets that are going out to proclaim the gospel of peace among those that are in midnight darkness and idolatry and all these things. And we must lead these men with our prayers, earnest prayers, and our hearts to go with them, and bid them Godspeed, and for the Lord to prosper them. That is what we must do. {Ms75-1896}

Chap. 18 - "He Must Increase"

For a time the Baptist's influence over the nation had been greater than that of its rulers, priests, or princes. If he had announced himself as the Messiah, and raised a revolt against Rome, priests and people would have flocked to his standard. Every consideration that appeals to the ambition of the world's conquerors Satan had stood ready to urge upon John the Baptist. But with the evidence before him of his power, he had steadfastly refused the splendid bribe. The attention which was fixed upon him he had directed to Another. {DA 178.1}

Now he saw the tide of popularity turning away from himself to the Saviour. Day by day the crowds about him lessened. When Jesus came from Jerusalem to the region about Jordan, the people flocked to hear Him. The number of His disciples increased daily. Many came for baptism, and while Christ

Himself did not baptize, He sanctioned the administration of the ordinance by His disciples. Thus He set His seal upon the mission of His forerunner. But the disciples of John looked with jealousy upon the growing popularity of Jesus. They stood ready to criticize His work, and it was not long before they found occasion. ***A question arose between them and the Jews as to whether baptism availed to cleanse the soul from sin; they maintained that the baptism of Jesus differed essentially from that of John. Soon they were in dispute with Christ's disciples in regard to the form of words proper to use at baptism, and finally as to the right of the latter to baptize at all.*** {DA 178.2}

The disciples of John had declared that all men were coming to Christ; but with clearer insight, John said, "No man receiveth His witness;" so few were ready to accept Him as the Saviour from sin. But "he that hath received His witness hath set his seal to this, that God is true." John 3:33, R. V. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." ***No need of disputation as to whether Christ's baptism or John's purified from sin. It is the grace of Christ that gives life to the soul. Apart from Christ, baptism, like any other service, is a worthless form.*** "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life." {DA 181.2}

Conclusion

The gospel ministry is a high and sacred calling. Properly done, the work of the gospel minister will bring many souls into the fold. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Christ said. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This commission is given to every minister who have been called into the service; men may have ever received ordination or not but as an evangelist like Philip they have a work to do for their master... The minister who is merely a speaker, who does not labor as Christ labored, putting his whole soul intelligently into the work, needs true conversion. The much disputation found amongst God's people is not doing good but harm to the body of Christ. Shall we continue disputing like the disciple of John about the correct words, modes, who to baptize, when and who can baptize? No brethren. There is more grand work to do than this. I hope this letter brings you comfort and restores the Philadelphians spirit amongst you. Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Blessings