

## The Only Salvific Use Of The Name Of Jesus Is In Baptism

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### Part 1

#### **Christian salvation involves the name of Jesus.**

Christian salvation is not merely about believing in the Person of Jesus. The name of Jesus itself has a significant role to play and that vital role is not fulfilled by simply believing in, or praying to, Jesus.

#### **John said life (salvation) comes *through* the name of Jesus (John 20:31).**

“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

John stated that the purpose of writing his Gospel was so that people would believe Jesus to be the Jewish Messiah, to whom salvation would be afforded *through* His name. That indicates some tenet by which the name is to be used and salvation procured.

#### **Peter said the name of Jesus is the *only* saving name (Acts 4:12).**

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

From Peter, we understand that no other name than Jesus has salvific power— not titles like “Father”, “Son”, “Holy Spirit”, “Christ”, “Lord”, etc.

#### **In the same verse, Peter declared that Christian salvation *must* involve the name of Jesus.**

Peter said we *must* be saved *by* the name of Jesus. The name itself has saving efficacy. That, too, like the verse we looked at in John, implies there is a proper biblical use or application of that name by which salvation can be appropriated, meaning there is some necessary tenet of salvation involving the name.

Peter spoke these narrow words to members of the Jewish Sanhedrin. If one of them were to receive Peter’s words about Christ, there would have had to have been some universally accepted Gospel means to invoke the saving name of Jesus.

**This corresponds to Old Testament prophecy (Joel 2:32a).**

“...whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered...”.

Joel 2:32, which prophetically refers to salvation in the New Covenant, stated the efficacy of the name of the LORD for salvation. This proper name in the New Testament would translate to, *Jesus*. There is no other saving name. This Old Testament prophecy is so relevant that Peter quoted it on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:21). Ananias alluded to it as well when he attended the conversion of Paul (Acts 22:16). And Paul also quoted it in his epistle to the Romans (Romans 10:13).

**Part 2****How does the name of Jesus save?**

We learned in Part 1 that the name of Jesus is salvific. How is that so? Let's see what the Bible reveals.

**Remission of sins occurs through the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38; 10:43; 22:16).****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.”

Peter expressly declared on the Day of Pentecost that baptism in Jesus' name is for the remission of sins. By that word, he specifically revealed how the name of Jesus is salvific— it remits our sins. And there can be no salvation without remission of sins.

**Acts 10:43**

“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” (underline added for emphasis)

Here, once again, Peter gives us certain specificity as to how the name of Jesus is salvific. He said *through the name* is remission of sins. And, the only evident use of the name of Jesus in the context is baptism, which he commanded (Acts 10:48).

**Acts 22:16**

“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”

This is when Ananias attended the conversion of the Apostle Paul, as recounted by Paul to his fellow countrymen. Ananias used the Old Testament prophecy of Joel that we referred to earlier and applied it to baptism, which he dramatically indicated would *wash away his sins*.

From these examples of salvation involving the name of Jesus and remission of sins, we can see that baptism in Jesus' name is the prescribed tenet to *call upon* (invoke) the name of the Lord. The name of Jesus was universally applied in Christian baptism (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5). There is no other salvific use of the name of Jesus in the New Testament.

### **Part 3**

#### **The Great Commission**

Recall that Peter announced on the Day of Pentecost that baptism in Jesus' name was for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). That was following Jesus' commission just days earlier before He ascended to heaven. Luke recorded this final occasion of His Great Commission.

#### **Luke 24:45-47**

**45** Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

**46** And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

**47** And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Here, you can see the direct association of Christ's name and remission of sins that Jesus prescribed for the Christian era. He declared that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name, beginning at Jerusalem. This is exactly what took place ten days later in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. Peter said to those persons inquiring of salvation, "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". And, in the next verse, he declared it to be the plan of salvation for the Church age. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38-39).

#### **There is necessarily universality of conversion based on the Great Commission.**

Jesus' Great Commission governs true preaching of the Gospel. No one is authorized to differ from it in the slightest way. When studied in its fulness, it plainly reveals the tenets of salvation that Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost. This powerful combination of the Great Commission and its biblical fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost proves the salvific use of the name of Jesus in the Christian era and guarantees that there would only be one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Ephesians 4:5).

## **Part 4**

### **What about Matthew 28:19?**

1/ Matthew 28:19, unmistakably, calls for a singular name to be used in the baptismal formula.

2/ For the New Testament to agree, Matthew 28:19, Luke 24:47, and Acts 2:38, along with all the other examples of baptism in Acts, must teach the same thing regarding the baptismal formula. And, the only way for that to be the case is for Jesus, in Matthew 28:19, in a way revealing His Own Person, to have been calling for the His Own name, as He did in Luke 24:47, and as was fulfilled in all the cases of baptism in the Christian era, as seen throughout Acts, beginning on the Day of Pentecost.

3/ Matthew 28:19 was the middle segment of a three-part Great Commission by Jesus to His disciples. It was, therefore, in the middle of a progressive revelation about Christian baptism. It does not reveal the fullness of the revelation of the saving name to be used in baptism. That came in the final commission of Luke 24:47 when Christ made it clear that baptism was to be administered in His Own name, which is how the Apostles fulfilled it.

4/ We have previously stressed in this section the relevant point about the fulfillment of Matthew 28:19 in Acts. That is where we would look as to the certainty of its meaning. Since Matthew 28:19 was a part of the commission by Christ to His Apostles, and since the history of their fulfilling it is recorded in Acts, we can easily see what they understood Matthew 28:19 to mean. They literally fulfilled Matthew 28:19 by using the name of Jesus.

## **Part 5**

### **Conclusion**

We have seen that Christianity involves use of the saving name of Jesus. But in Acts, which records all Christian conversions, the only salvific use of the name is in baptism.

The prophecy of Joel, which foretold salvation in the proper divine name, was cited by Peter on the Day of Pentecost. It was followed by the imperative for every person to be baptized in Jesus' name. Ananias confirmed that baptism is the fulfillment of Joel 2:32 when he made use of Joel's prophecy in directing Saul of Tarsus to be baptized (Acts 22:16).

That makes baptism necessary for salvation. Jesus made this point (Mark 16:15-16) and so did Peter (1Peter 3:21).

And, specifically, the name of Jesus is to be used in baptism for the following reasons:

1/ Jesus mandated it in His Great Commission (Luke 24:47)

2/ It was commanded by Peter (Acts 2:38; 10:48).

3/ It was the name used in all the examples of Christian baptism.

4/ Remission of sins, which baptism accomplishes, requires the authority of the name of Jesus (Acts 4:12).

5/ Baptism in Jesus' name fulfills Joel's prophecy of invoking the name of the Lord for salvation (Acts 22:16).

End