

**Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
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Detroit, Michigan 28208
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Lesson 4:

Baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [the Son], and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” *1 John 5:7*

Goal: To embrace and fulfill our covenant relationship with God and one another.

Objective: To understand the significance of being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost and what it reveals about the nature of God.

Introduction:

The doctrine of the Trinity is one of the great mysteries of God. It reveals the unity of three distinct persons in one divine being. These three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are equal participants in the same nature, sovereignty and power of God. The Trinity (the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit) agree as one in unity having the same mind and purpose. *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”* [Eph. 4:4-6.] The trinity is a divine revelation that can not be fully understood with our finite mind and must be accepted by faith in God. To be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit glorifies God who is the Creator, sustainer and source of life. The Son, Jesus Christ, is God’s perfect gift who is with us being the visible image of the Father and is the author of eternal salvation. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16). The Holy Spirit that dwells in us is our source of hope in a sinful world. We, as individual and collective believers, are given the assurance by the Holy Spirit that we are children of God and we have been sealed until the day of redemption. [Romans 8:16; Eph. 4:30]

Christ instituted Christian baptism, when He submitted to John’s baptism, adopting its form, with some change of meaning. John’s baptism was unto repentance and faith in Him who was to come. Jesus baptized (or His disciples) into Himself as the Messiah

who had come, and as the sign that His kingdom had already been established in the hearts of those who received it.¹

Baptized in the Name of the Father:

The significance of baptism in the name of the Father confirms a personal relationship and oneness with God, the Creator of all creation. He is the Most-High God, who sought us and loved us with an everlasting love and gave us the very best of Himself. Consider what the Psalmist says about God, the Everlasting Father and Creator when he writes:

“Oh, Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth; who hast set thy glory above the heavens! ... When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? [Psalm 8: 1, 4].

When we are baptized in the name of the Father, we understand that a Most Holy, unchanging God had an intention of love towards a sinfully depraved, undeserving and unlovable creature—man. When we trace the history of God’s dealings with man back to the Garden of Eden—this intentional love and grace are evident. It was His love, grace and mercy that drove our spiritual father and mother out of the garden after they committed sin. Had they eaten of the fruit of the tree of life, sin would have been entombed in our mortal bodies forever. But God drove them from the garden and barred their entry back. Even then, God’s intention and perfect plan of redemption was in His mind.

Throughout history, our Father has lovingly sought us with the intention of bringing us back into fellowship with himself. Consider the ways in which God has loved us despite ourselves. He sent forth Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the prophets—Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah, the judges, the kings, and yet we did not heed the invitation to live as his people. God desires to have fellowship with us. He longs for our worship, praise, and honor. It is for this reason we have been created *“that we should be to the praise and glory”* of the Father. [Eph. 1: 12]. Throughout the entire Old Testament, we see examples of God’s love for us and His continuous availability.

The great singer, Roland Hayes arranged and interpreted an old Negro spiritual called *“Prepare Me One Body.”* Its haunting refrain beautifully depicts God’s tenacious intention towards us:

*“Prepare me one body.
I’ll go down. I’ll go down.
Prepare me one body like man’s.
I’ll go down and die!”²*

¹ Hiscox, Edward T. *Principles and Practices for Baptist Churches*, pgs. 125-130.

² Hayes, R. (2001). *My Favorite Spirituals: 30 Songs for Voice and Piano*. Dover, England: Dover Publications

Can you imagine this soliloquy of love in which God decides to en flesh himself in the person of Jesus Christ, and comes down to earth to give the ultimate sacrifice—his own life as atonement for our sin? When we are baptized in the name of the Father we become a living testimony not only of the sovereignty of God, but of His grace and mercy towards us. It shouts the truth of God’s power in us to triumph over sin. Our lives ought to reflect that truth. We declare through the act of baptism in the name of the Father that He has the last word! We declare that we are sons of the living God. God’s plan of redemption is perfect and complete!! ***Hallelujah!***

Jesus personalized our relationship with God as our Father when He taught us to pray “Our Father...” [Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4] Jesus extended His kinship as the Son of God and modeled a personal relationship characterized by love, prayer and obedience to all the Father commanded of Him. [John 15:10, 11; John 17:1-5] Through our love for the Father, we fulfill the greatest commandment and grow in faith. It is because of our love for God that we trust Him and allow Him to direct our lives according to His divine purpose.

Recognition of the will of our Heavenly Father initiates our response to the call to discipleship. This conviction is the first urging to surrender our lives and willingly obey all of His commands. God’s commands in His Word enable us to enjoy the relationship that He intended when He created Adam and Eve. The moment we are convicted of our sin, repent, and believe and accept Jesus, the Holy Spirit seals us. Through baptism, we demonstrate the inner change that has occurred and our commitment to follow God’s purpose for our lives.

Baptized in the Name of the Son:

Being baptized in the name of the Son is an acknowledgment that Jesus is co-equal with the Father. He allowed His divine nature to be wrapped in human flesh. He is fully God and fully man. Through Jesus we have access to the Father. We can identify with Him in His humanness; through Him we also become identified as children of God. John 1: 12 states, “*But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*” When we are baptized in the name of Jesus we are being baptized into Jesus. We are taking on his name; similar to the way a woman takes on her husband’s name. We are saying that we belong to Jesus and we are identifying with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. Jesus became flesh and dwelt among us and models that it is possible to lead lives of obedience through faith. Jesus declared, “*I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* [John 14:6 KJV]

John the Baptist stated, “*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.* [Matthew 3:11 KJV] However when Jesus came to be baptized, John rejected the need for His baptism. But Jesus answered him by saying, “*Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness.* Jesus demonstrated what it means to be totally yielded and obedient to the will of the Father.

Baptism is to be administered to those who have exercised and professed a saving faith in Christ; that is, to believers. This saving faith supposes an exercise of godly repentance for sin, and a turning to the Lord with full purpose of heart. All people are under obligation to repent of sin, and believe on Christ as the only means of salvation, and all believers in Christ are bound by the most sacred considerations to obey their Lord's command, and confess Him before people in baptism. *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ"* [Acts 2:38].

Baptism points itself back to Christ in His suffering, death, burial and His victorious resurrection, and should be kept constantly in the minds of believers how He died for our sins and rose again for our justification. It testifies that He died, suffered, and was buried, and rose again for our justification, to perfect the work of redemption. *Are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in a new way of life.*" [Romans 6:3, 4 Holman Christian Standard Bible]

Baptized in the Name of the Holy Ghost:

The significance of being baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit acknowledges the work of the third person of the Trinity—the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth that Jesus promised the Father would send. The Holy Ghost bears witness to everything Jesus taught as He guides us in all truths. The Spirit is the living vehicle that allows us to become more and more like Christ. He helps us grow in Holiness and into the image and stature of Christ. This experience of sanctification enables us to fulfill God's divine will. The Father and the Son are Holy and the Holy Spirit ensures that we are not left in an unholy state—comfortless. Through the indwelling ministry of the Holy Ghost we can fully embrace God's will as we experience growth and maturity.

The Holy Ghost actualizes the oneness for which Jesus prayed. *"My prayer for all of them is that they will be one, just as you and I are one, Father—that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are—I in them and you in me, all being perfected into one. Then the world will know you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me."*[John 17:21-23 NLT]. Baptism in the Holy Spirit produces unity of the faith, and the fellowship with the people of God, who, in baptism, profess their trust in one Lord, and their acceptance of one faith.

Summary:

What are we to understand from this baptismal formula that Jesus gave to us, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?" **Baptism in the name of the Father is a declaration of our relationship with the one true, sovereign and Holy Creator.** It demonstrates how perfect God's will is for man. Our baptism in the Father's name defines the very purpose and reason for our existence—to glorify the Father with our whole heart, mind, and soul—with all that we are! Ephesians 1: 12

accurately captures it. *“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”*

Baptism in the name of Jesus demonstrates the depth of the Father’s love for us. He sent His only begotten Son and clothed Him in earthly flesh so that we could identify with him. We are complete and hidden in Him through faith. Our eyes are opened to our utter sinfulness, rebellion, and separation from God. Jesus came to the earth to open unto us a way to the Father—the God of all creation. He came to show us the possibility of eternal life through identification with Him in his life, death, burial and resurrection. *“For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him which is the head of all principality and power [Colossians 2: 9-10].* In Christ we are complete!

Baptism in the name of the Holy Spirit represents God’s keeping power until we come into the fullness of our relationship to the Father through Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit that draws us, teaches us, renews and seals us until we see our Father face to face. It is also the Holy Spirit that inducts us into the body of Christ—the fellowship of the redeemed so we can support, love, and grow together as the body of Christ *“till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” [Ephesians 4: 13].*

“The pattern given in baptism applies to worship, service, fellowship, and all other things pertaining to our life in God. We glorify the Father through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this Trinitarian pattern, the entire drama of salvation is kept before us. It is a key to understanding what it means to have fellowship, communion with God, so that we might overcome this world. Thus we praise God from whom all blessings flow! We praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!”³

Questions for Class Dialogue and Study

1. Being baptized in the name of the Father means that we have a relationship with the Father, the sovereign Creator of all things, what implication does that have for us whenever we interface with the world?
2. Being baptized in the name of the Son, means we no longer face the penalty of sin, we have a new freedom to live holy lives. What implication does that have for your daily walk as a believer?
3. Being baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit means that we are kept by the Holy Spirit, we are united as a body in Christ. What implication does this have for our life as a church family?

Closing Prayer:

³ Turner, Jr. W.C. (2002). *Discipleship for African American Christians: A Journey through the Church Covenant.* Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.
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A Journey Through the Church Covenant
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Where we are in the Church Covenant...*

HAVING BEEN LED, AS WE BELIEVE, BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour; and on the profession of our faith, having been *baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,* we do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers, and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Saviour in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

**New Feature: Each month we will include a copy of the Church Covenant and highlight the current lesson. It is our hope that this will give the larger context for the passage being studied.*