

# Gospel Commission Verification

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**Bible Principle:** "at the mouth of two or three witnesses", "shall the matter be established"

[Deuteronomy 19:15](#) ... at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

[Deuteronomy 17:6](#) At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

[John 8:17](#) It is... written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. -Jesus

[2 Corinthians 13:1](#) ... In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

**Here are we saw 4 witnesses to establish this Bible requirement.**

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**How does this Bible requirement apply** to each of the teachings of the Gospel commission?

[Matthew 28:18](#) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 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: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

One witness for each teaching was given in the passage above. But, does the Bible provide at least one additional witness, in order to verify each of those teachings?

**1. All power is given unto Jesus.**

- [Matthew 11:27](#) All things are delivered unto me of my Father...
- [John 3:35](#) The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.
- [Ephesians 1:22](#) And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church
- [Hebrews 1:1-2](#) God... hath... spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things...
- [All things were given of the Father to His beloved Son.](#)

**2. Teach to everyone all that Jesus taught.**

- [Mark 16:15](#) And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.**
- [Acts 1:8](#) But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and **ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

**3. Baptize those who believe Jesus' teaching.**

- [Mark 16:16](#) **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;** but he that believeth not shall be damned.
- [1 Peter 3:18-21](#) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight **souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) **by the resurrection of Jesus Christ**

- [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 Spirit.
4. **Jesus is always with His followers.**
- [John 14:18](#) **I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.**
  - [Hebrews 2:18](#) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, **he is able to succour them that are tempted**
5. **Baptize in the 3-fold name.**
- **The Bible does not provide a 3rd or even a 2nd witness to this teaching.** It is found only in [Matthew 28:19](#). Therefore, this doctrine fails the 2-3 witness Bible requirement.
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**Does the Bible provide any contradictory statement(s) for baptizing in the 3-fold name of [Matthew 28:19](#)? Yes:**

[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 you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

[Acts 8:12](#) But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and **the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized**, both men and women.

[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 10:48](#) And he commanded them to be **baptized in the name of the Lord**. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

- In the New Testament, who is "**the Lord**"?
  - [1 Corinthians 8:6](#) But to us **there is but** one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and **one Lord Jesus Christ**, by whom are all things, and we by him.
  - Also, [Acts 8:16](#)(above)

[Acts 14:12](#) "For there is **none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**"

[Acts 19:5](#) When they heard this, they were **baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**.

[Acts 22:16](#) And now why tarriest thou? arise, and **be baptized**, and wash away thy sins, **calling on the name of the Lord**.

[Romans 6:3](#) ¶ Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death**? 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

[Galatians 3:27](#) For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ.

[Colossians 3:17](#) And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, **do all in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

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**Other than in the Bible, are there witnesses in favor of being baptized in the 3-fold name? Yes:**

1. **The Roman Catholic Church and nearly all Protestant denominations.**
2. **Ellen White.** Early in her marriage, she was baptized in the 3-fold name by her husband. Here are some of her strongest statements:
  - John baptized unto repentance, but **the disciples of Jesus, on profession of the faith, baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...** [2SP 136.3](#)

- Regarding [Matthew 28:19-20](#) **Ellen said =>These are the words of inspiration.** You need not fear that you are making a mistake by believing fully in them.... [RH March 4, 1909, Art. A, par. 5-6](#)
- Regarding [Matthew 28:19-20](#) **Ellen said =>** Just before He left them, Christ gave His disciples this promise of the Holy Spirit, and **while the words were upon His lips,** He ascended. A cloud of angels received Him, and escorted Him to the city of God. [ST September 20, 1899, par. 1](#)
- **Note** also that **Ellen gave this disclaimer =>** New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. **Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed.** The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God. Many gems are yet scattered that are to be gathered together to become the property of the remnant people of God. **There is no excuse for anyone in taking the position that there is no more truth to be revealed, and that all our expositions of Scripture are without an error. The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible.** Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair. No true doctrine will lose anything by close investigation. [CW 35.1-2](#)

**Other than in the Bible, are there witnesses against** being baptized in the 3-fold name? **Yes:**

**I have read much from both sides of this:**

1. Those who believe that the phrase "[baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost](#)" were **NOT** spoken by Jesus, but rather was added in the late 1st century or in the early second century AD.
2. Those who believe that Jesus really did speak those words. These folk give various reasons for the early church baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ only.

**I have also witnessed misquoting** from both sides -- especially the former. I have seen many quotes that I have **NOT** been able to verify because I've not been able to find the original sources. For these reasons, I am very careful to only use quotes that are clearly stated from original sources that I've seen with my own eyes. **Here are some quotes I have been able to verify from the original sources:**

[The Jerusalem Bible footnote on Mt28:19](#) says, "**It may be that this formula**, so far as the fulness of its expression is concerned, **is a reflection of the Liturgical usage established later in the primitive community.** It will be remembered that [Acts] speaks of baptising 'in the name of Jesus'. [compare Acts] 1:5+. But whatever the variation in formula, the underlying reality remains the same." {I found this in a photo copy of the entire Jerusalem Bible here => <https://archive.org/details/thejerusalem Bible 1966/page/n1625> }

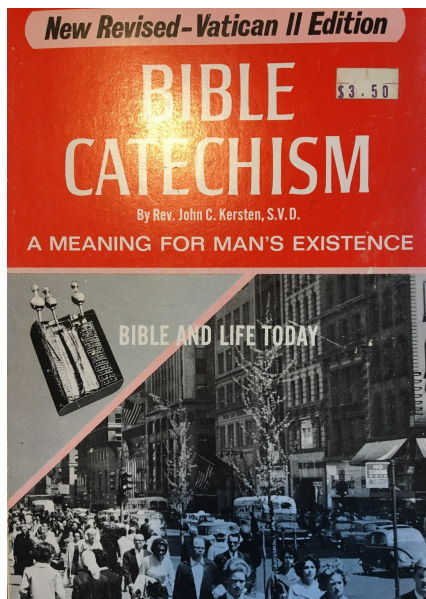
[Acts 1:5](#) was mentioned. It says "[For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.](#)"

"Liturgical" was also mentioned. Here is the [definition of "liturgy"](#):

1. a eucharistic rite
2. a rite or body of rites prescribed for public worship
3. a customary repertoire of ideas, phrases, or observances

In other words, the translators of the Jerusalem Bible noted that the phrase "[the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost](#)" could be a reflection of the traditions of the "later" "primitive community".

From my personal copy of this "Bible Catechism", Vatican II Edition:



Ch. 40

164 Baptism

A signifying word. In number 1, we have explained the bath of water (Baptism) as the ritual bath through which Christians are initiated into that sacred partnership (Covenant) with God, which has such clear marital overtones in Scripture. Christians are related to God in an intimate love that may be compared with the love of husband and wife in marriage.

Here we want to discuss the addition: "by the power of the word" (no. 6). There is no doubt that a signifying word belonged to the rite of Baptism (bath-immersion-infusion). There were so many baptisms: The baptism of the proselytes (no. 2), baptism as initiation to sects (no. 5), the baptism of John (no. 5). Somehow it should be expressed with whom one was united by Baptism.

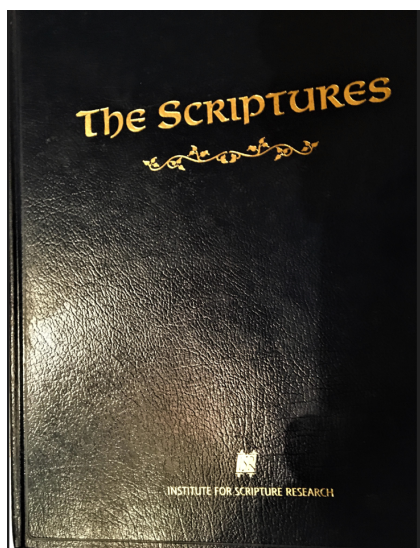
**Into Christ.** The Bible tells us that Christians were baptized into Christ (no. 6). They belong to Christ. The Acts of the Apostles (2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5) tells us of baptizing "in the name [person] of Jesus"—a better translation would be "into the name [person] of Jesus." Only in the 4th Century did the formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" become customary.

Although the Church of the Apostolic era did not know the trinitarian baptismal "word" (in the name of the Father . . .) but only the Christological one (into the name of Jesus Christ), this does not exclude the fact that every Christian

**On page 64, as pictured, it says, "The Bible tells us that Christians were baptized into Christ (no. 6). They belong to Christ. The Acts of the Apostles ([Acts 2:38](#); [8:16](#); [10:48](#); [19:5](#)) tells us of baptizing "in the name [person] of Jesus" --a better translation would be "into the name [person] of Jesus." Only in the 4th Century did the formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" become customary. ¶ Although the Church of the Apostolic era did not know the trinitarian baptismal "word" (in the name of the Father . . .) but only the Christological one (into the name of Jesus Christ)...**

The sentence, "**Only in the 4th Century did the formula "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" become customary**" could be in agreement with the Jerusalem Bible, where it said that the trinitarian formula could be a reflection of the **traditions of the "later" "primitive community"**.

I photographed this from a friend's copy of "**The Scriptures**" by the Institute for Scripture Research".



18 And הוֹשֵׁעַ came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Therefore, go and make taught ones of all the nations, immersing them in the Name<sup>c</sup> of the Father and of the Son and of the Set-apart Spirit,<sup>d</sup>

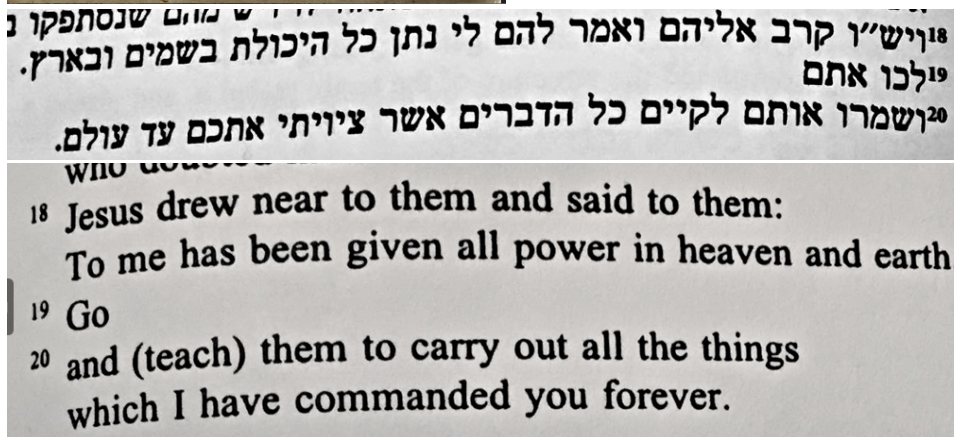
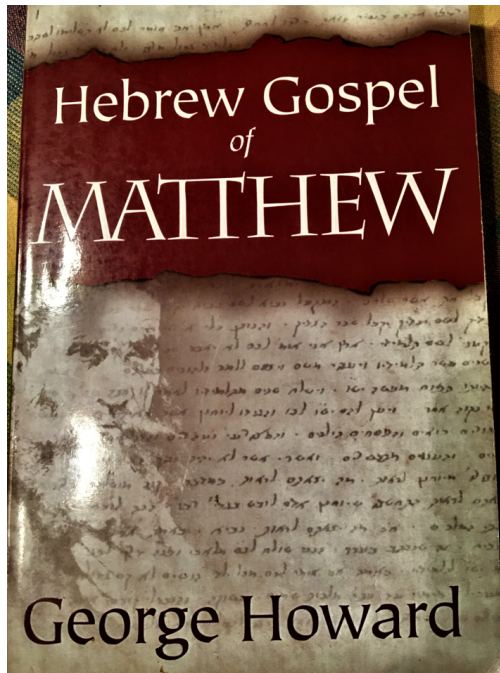
20 teaching them to guard all that I have commanded you. And see, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Amēn.

<sup>28c</sup> Note: The singular. <sup>28d</sup> Not found in the Hebrew Shem Toḅ text, "...and make taught ones of all the nations, immersing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Set-apart Spirit."



**Note "d", regarding the 3-fold Name says, "Not found in the Hebrew Shem Tob text..."** See below for more info on that...

I photographed this from a friend's copy of "**Hebrew Gospel of Matthew**" which contains the "**Hebrew Shem Tob text**" (also interpreted to English) mentioned above:



**Matthew 28:18-20 interpreted from the Hebrew text:** "Jesus drew near to them and said to them: To me has been given all power in heaven and earth. Go and (teach) them to carry out all the things which I have commanded you forever."

**For further study,** I suggest [Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition on Baptism](#)

Here are a few interesting quotes:

[Page 364:](#)

1. It is best to defer the question of the origin of Christian baptism until the history of the rite in the centuries which followed has been sketched, for we know more clearly what baptism became after the year 100 than what it was before.
2. Our earliest detailed accounts of baptism are in the *Teaching of the Apostles* (c. 90-120) and in Justin Martyr.

The *Teaching* has the following:—

Now concerning baptism, thus baptize ye: having spoken beforehand all these things, baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, in living water.

[Page 365 - 366:](#)

1. *The Baptismal Formula.*—The trinitarian formula and trine immersion were not uniformly used from the beginning, nor did they always go together. The *Teaching of the Apostles*, indeed, prescribes baptism in the name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but on the next page speaks of those who have been **baptized into the name of the Lord—the normal formula of the New Testament. In the 3rd century baptism in the name of Christ was still so widespread** that Pope Stephen, in opposition to Cyprian of Carthage, declared it to be valid. From Pope Zachariah (*Ep.* x.) we learn that the Celtic missionaries in baptizing omitted one or more persons of the Trinity, and this was one of the reasons why the church of Rome anathematized [[v.03 p.0366](#)]them; Pope Nicholas, however (858-867), in the *Responsa ad consulta Bulgarorum*, allowed baptism to be valid *tantum in nomine Christi*, as in the Acts. Basil, in his work *On the Holy Spirit* just mentioned, condemns "baptism into the Lord alone" as insufficient. Baptism "into the death of Christ" is often specified by the Armenian fathers as that which alone was essential.

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1. The question arises whether Jesus Himself instituted baptism as a condition of entry into the Messianic kingdom. The fourth gospel (iii. 22, and iv. 1) asserts that Jesus Himself baptized on a greater scale than the Baptist, but immediately adds that Jesus Himself baptized not, but only His disciples, as if the writer felt that he had too boldly contradicted the older tradition of the other gospels. Nor in these is it recorded that the disciples baptized during their Master's lifetime; indeed the very contrary is implied. There remain two texts in which the injunction to baptize is attributed to Jesus, namely, Mark xvi. 16 and Matt. xxviii. 18-20. Of these the first is part of an appendix headed "of Ariston the elder" in an old Armenian codex, and taken perhaps from the lost compilations of Papias; as to the other text, it has been doubted by many critics, *e.g.* Neander, Harnack, Dr Armitage Robinson and James Martineau, whether it represents a real utterance of Christ and not rather **the liturgical usage of the region in which the first gospel was compiled.** The circumstance, unknown to these critics when they made their conjectures, that **Eusebius Pamphili, in nearly a score of citations, substitutes the words "in My Name" for the words "baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,"** renders their conjectures superfluous. **Aphraates also in citing the verse substitutes "and they shall believe in Me"—a paraphrase of "in My Name."** The first gospel thus falls into line with the rest of the New Testament.

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Desiring to live by every word that comes from the mouth of Jehovah ([Deut8:3; Mt4:4](#))

-[Sid Nash](#): 07/17/2023. Latest version: <http://sidnash.org/docs/BaptismalFormula.html>