

Matthew 28:18-20

Sec 2 of the WCF chapter 28 is largely derived from Christ’s Great Commission: “The outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, & of the Son, & of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.”

A. There is a whole lot of unnecessary & divisive re-baptizing going on in central Louisiana & in many other parts of this world.

1. One can understand how Baptists feel strongly about the mode of baptism & that it is to be done only for believing young people or adults who can give their consent & profession of faith. That does not really get me upset.
2. What is absolute, total nonsense is that a church leadership would say that a Christian baptized in accordance to Christ’s Great Commission must be baptized again because they were not baptized according to the correct formula. Did the blessed Lord Jesus Christ get it all wrong?
 - a. This strange, divisive practice comes from a radical interpretation of Peter’s Pentecost sermon where he concluded, **“Repent, & each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; & you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).**
 - b. If you were baptized **“in the name of the Father & the Son & the Holy Spirit,”** isn’t the glorious name **“Son of God”** a messianic title belonging to Jesus Christ?
 - c. Part of the problem here is that baptisms are re-done because of an opposition to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.
 - 1) Some who hold to “Oneness Pentecostalism” deny the doctrine of the Trinity yet instead hold to an old heresy called Modalism or Sabellianism.
 - a) They describe God as always in one mode of being at a time.
 - b) “Modalism was condemned by Tertullian (c. 213...). Also known as Sabellianism, it was condemned as heresy by Dionysius, bishop of Rome (c. 262).”¹
 - 2) A key passage that makes nonsense of Modalism is the baptism of Jesus in **Mat 3:13-17**. Turn there.
 - d. Another matter of error is that Oneness Pentecostals teach that receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit as evidenced by speaking in tongues is essential for salvation.
 - 1) The reason why so many don’t have the gift of the Holy Spirit from Pentecost is because they did not get the prescription for baptism from Pentecost.
 - 2) We saved by faith alone in Jesus Christ is how one is justified (**Eph 2:8**).
 - 3) Their view of salvation adds extra-biblical requirements to being saved.
 - 4) **Rom 10:9** says: **“If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, & believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”** This verse doesn’t say you must speak in tongues to be saved. No verse does.

¹ <https://www.theopedia.com/modalism>

5) **Gal 5** says that the fruits of the Holy Spirit include: “**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**” (22-23).

B. **Sec 2** concludes by saying that a person must be baptized by “by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.”

1. Even if that person who baptized you denies the faith; their sin & unbelief at a later date does not make your baptism invalid.
2. The question is whether or not a he was “a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.”
3. What about a person baptized by a woman or openly gay minister in a liberal denomination or in a rather loose evangelical church?

Sec 3 says, “Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person.”

A. Part of the opposition of many against pouring or sprinkling comes from a hard & fast interpretation of the Greek word “baptize” to always mean to immerse, submerge, or dip.

1. **Luke 11:37-38** “**Now when He had spoken, a Pharisee asked Him to have lunch with him; & He went in, & reclined at the table.** ³⁸ **When the Pharisee saw it, he was surprised that He had not first ceremonially washed before the meal.**”

- a. The Greek for “**ceremonially washed**” here come from the root word “baptizo.”
- b. This verse alone proves “baptizo” does not always mean to submerge.

2. **Mark 7:3-4** “**For the Pharisees & all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; ⁴ and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; & there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups & pitchers & copper pots.**”

- a. “**Cleanse**” in **v4** could be translated “sprinkle” or “wash.”
- b. The Greek words for “**washing**” in **v4** is a derivative of “baptizo.”
- a. There is a textual variant. The NKJV & KJV include the word “dining couches.” The ESV includes “tables.” The Greek word is closer to “couches” rather than “tables.’

B. Don’t let others trip you up in regard to the matter of baptism.