

Study 12: The Godhead & the Baptism of Jesus

Do we find the Three Persons involved at the baptism of Jesus?

Matthew 3:16, 17 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Here we see all Three Persons in the Godhead. Jesus gets baptized, He receives His guarantee of acceptance when the Holy Spirit descends upon Him, and the Father confirms that acceptance by answering from heaven. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee and bears witness that we are taking the right steps:

2 Corinthians 5:5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

1 John 5:6 This is He who came by water and blood; Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.

"Through the gates ajar there streamed bright beams of glory from the throne of Jehovah, and this light shines even upon us. The assurance given to Christ is assurance to every repenting, believing, obedient child of God that he is accepted in the Beloved." (ST July 31, 1884)

Isaiah 42:1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Here Isaiah prophesied that the Father would give Jesus the Holy Spirit. Once again all Three.

Do we also find all Three involved in our baptism?

Matthew 28:19, 20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

"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." [Acts of the Apostels pg. 28.2](#)

The Spirit of Prophecy agrees with the Bible. We are to baptize in the name of all Three Persons. Then Ellen White says that Christ's name was to be the disciples' watchword, which explains why sometimes they only used Christ's name at baptism in the New Testament. However, the command is still to baptize in the name of ALL THREE.

"The waters cover the candidate, and in the presence of the whole heavenly universe the mutual pledge is made. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, man is laid in his watery grave, buried with Christ in baptism, and raised from the water to live the new life of loyalty to God. The three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present...The work is laid out before every soul that has acknowledged his faith in Jesus Christ by baptism, and has become a receiver of the pledge from the three persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." [MS 57, 1900](#)

“Jesus did not receive baptism as a confession of guilt on His own account. He identified Himself with sinners, **taking the steps that we are to take**, and doing the work that we must do. His life of suffering and patient endurance after His baptism was also an example to us.” [Desire of Ages pg. 111.2](#)

“Of the vast throng at the Jordan, few except John discerned the heavenly vision. Yet the solemnity of the divine Presence rested upon the assembly. The people stood silently gazing upon Christ. His form was bathed in the light that ever surrounds the throne of God. His upturned face was glorified as they had never before seen the face of man. From the open heavens a voice was heard saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”” [Desire of Ages pg. 112](#)

“When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan after His baptism and offered up prayer in behalf of humanity, the heavens were opened; and **the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold**, encircled the form of the Saviour; and a voice came from heaven which said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”” [Child Guidance pg. 525](#)

“There are **three living persons of the heavenly trio**; in the **name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and **these powers will co-operate** with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.” [Evangelism pg. 615](#)

“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**. ...In the **name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection**, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is **dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit**.” [Counsels to the Church pg. 295](#)

In these statements we find clear evidence that there are Three Living Persons in heaven Who are present at the believer’s baptism. Some don’t like the word “Trinity” because it isn’t in the Bible. I choose to use the word “Godhead” as used in Scripture. But the meaning of the word “Trinity” is in line with Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy - Three Persons in unity. Spirit of Prophecy says: *“There are three living persons of the heavenly trio.”* So our stance in regard to these Three great powers is correct and is backed by the most accurate theological exposition of the Bible - the Spirit of Prophecy. I want to emphasize a few points from the above quotes:

- “The **three great powers in heaven are witnesses; they are invisible but present**”
 - If there were only two Persons, then EG White would’ve said that only Two are at our baptism and invisible to the human eye
 - If the Holy Spirit was only the mind, power, or breath of God & Christ, then again she would’ve only said that Two Persons are at our baptism
- “In the **name of these three great powers --the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**--those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and **these powers will co-operate** with the obedient subjects of heaven”
 - She calls them “three great powers”, then she mentions who she is referring to: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
 - She also says that all Three powers will co-operate with us after baptism. If there were only Two then she would’ve mentioned only Two
- “under **the authority** of the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**”
 - All Three have authority

If you believe that there are Three living Persons in the Godhead, then you have the backing of powerful statements in the Spirit of Prophecy. When reading these statements we understand why all Three had a role to play in creation

and the giving of the commandments. In our future studies we will see that all Three had a role to play at the crucifixion, the resurrection, the second coming etc.

In our next study we will look more closely at Jesus receiving the Holy Spirit at His baptism.

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