

The Wednesday Word, January 15, 2025: The Correct Formula

I recently was asked the following question on the internet. It asked,

“What is God going to do with the people who were baptized in the name of the father, son and Holy Spirit instead of the being baptized in the name Jesus Christ?”

Here’s my reply:

Thanks for the question. With respect, a baptismal formula does not justify (declare not guilty) anyone. Christ Jesus alone saves, and baptism is a public declaration that such is the case. The baptismal candidate must first, by faith, be a partaker of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Then, the believer is qualified for Baptism. Baptism is a testimony which declares that salvation has already been accomplished. An incorrect baptismal formula cannot, therefore, undo the great work that Christ Jesus effectively accomplished at the cross 2000 years ago.

You see, it is neither by Christ **and** a correct baptismal formula that we are saved,

Nor by Christ **and** good works that we are declared not guilty.

We are neither acquitted by Christ **and** the Church.

Nor through Christ **and** any kind of baptism.

We are neither saved through Christ **and** the confessional box.

Nor by Christ **and** doing our best.

Salvation is in, by and through Christ Jesus alone!

“Christ **AND**” is a perverted gospel. Christ alone without the *and* is the sinner’s only hope and the believer’s confidence. In Him we receive forgiveness and eternal life.

In addition, if we are ultimately saved by Christ plus a correct baptismal formula, then the baptismal formula is one of our mediators. But the Scripture boldly asserts that there is only one mediator between God and man, not two. (1 Timothy 2:5).

If our baptismal formula mediates for us, then it must be viewed as partly responsible for our salvation. But the scriptures know nothing of this. Salvation has already been accomplished by Christ and His shed blood plus nothing (Colossians 1:20).

We have been reconciled to God by Christ alone. (2 Corinthians 5:18). And this is as it should be. What works of ours can compare to those of the Lord Christ? All our works, the good the better and the best, are defiled by imperfections. As John Berridge

lamented, “Even my repentance needs repenting of.” Our works cannot make an atonement but rather they need one made for themselves.

And that’s the Gospel Truth!