

1000 a.d. Historian Fulbertus Carnotansas explained the dynamics of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

(*J. Van Bright, Martyrs Mirror, Pg. 254*).

1312 a.d. There were many Wales Holiness Brethren that believed and adhered to Acts 2:38 (Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ) baptism. (*Blunt, pg. 246*)

According to many sources, Baptism was performed by the early church, and throughout history in the single name of Jesus Christ. This is opposite the view held by those that cling to the Athanasian Creed. Let's look at some of these:

1. *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (1962, V.I, Pg 351)*: "The evidence suggest that baptism in early Christianity was administered, not in the threefold name, but in the name of Jesus Christ or in the name of the Lord Jesus."

2. *New International Encyclopedia Vol. 22*: "The term 'Trinity' was *originated by Tertullian*, a Catholic church father."

3. *Encyclopedia Britannica 11th Edition Vol.* "The baptismal formula *was changed* from the name of Jesus Christ, to the words, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* by the Catholic church in the 2nd century."

4. *Encyclopedia Britannica Vol. 3 Pg 82*: "Everywhere in the oldest sources it states that Baptism took place in the name of Jesus Christ."

How Different Churches Evolved

As a result of much dissention, in the 16th century

a movement known as the Protestant Reformation took place. Many that were dissatisfied broke rank with the Catholic Church in protest of one doctrine or another. These came to be known as Protestants. We can trace the origin of every modern Protestant denomination to a particular date. Here is a basic timeline:

Church Origins and Founders

1. Catholic Church- 313- Constantine
2. Lutheran Church- 1530-Martin Luther
3. Baptist Church- 1607- John Smith
4. Presbyterian Church- 1643- Zwingli
5. Methodist Church- 1784- Francis Asbury
6. Mormons- 1830- Joseph Smith
7. Jehovah's Witnesses- 1870- Charles Taze Russell
8. Church of God- 1934- Herbert W. Armstrong
9. Assemblies of God- 1914- Eudorus N. Bell
10. **Apostolic Church- 30 A.D.- Jesus Christ**

In each case, however, Protestant reformers held to the trinity form of baptism. We must, however, note that during this time, as they always had been, there was a strong worldwide Apostolic movement that was a continuation of the original church started at Pentecost Circa 30 A.D. They original church remained monotheistic throughout the centuries. In 1913, R.E. McAlister preached that "original baptism has always been in the name of Jesus Christ". (Foster pg.51)

Today, there are over 500 oneness Apostolic organizations worldwide, with over 1.5 million in the UPC alone.

1 Tim 3:16

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.
KJV

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The Nicene Controversy

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Let me take you back in history. The setting; a series of meetings convening at a place called Nicea. The time; is 325 a.d. Scholars have met to discuss what will be the frame work of beliefs for the newly forming Roman Catholic church. With much debate and discussion, the draft is adopted. One particular subject that, to this day, is still the subject of much debate, is the subject of baptism.

At Nicea, what became known as the Athanasian Creed, was adopted as the model for baptism. This creed taught:

“There is one father, one son, one holy ghost, and in this trinity none is before or after the other, none is less or greater than another, but the whole three persons are co-eternal and co-equal.”

Two Trains of Thought

We must look at the two main trains of thought on the subject of baptism.

Firstly, as was mentioned, there was the concept of three distinct persons in the godhead. Though this seemed to be a relatively new doctrine, it was actually based on the teachings of a man named Tertullian (160 –250 a.d.). The *New International Encyclopedia Vol. 22* states: “The term ‘trinity’ was originated by Tertullian, a Catholic Church father.” Tertullian got his ideas

from the Study of an ancient pagan teaching known as Mithra, which was the teaching of the Babylonians. According to *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop, the Babylonians believed in a 3 person godhead, which was the deification of Nimrod, Tammuz, and Semiramis. They were symbolized by statues of a mother, father, and child. Today, these same symbols are used without a second thought by some religions. Athanasias, who is believed to be the author of the creed adopted at Nicea, borrowed his teachings directly from Tertullian. This doctrine is known as polytheism, or, the belief in multiple persons in the godhead.

Secondly, we must look at the prevailing doctrine that was in place at this time; monotheism. Monotheism, which is in sharp contrast to polytheism, teaches that there is a single person godhead. The primary basis for this can be found in places like Colossians 2:9 -10:

9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

And in Isaiah Isa 45:5-6

5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me:

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

These are but two examples. There are literally hundreds that could be listed here. (2 Sam. 7:22, Isaiah 9:6, 44:6-8, 46:5, Deut. 6:4, John 1:1-14, 5:45-46, II Cor. 5:18-19, Col. 2:9-10, Rev. 22:13).

What about History? Is there sufficient proof from ancient thinkers for the case of monotheism?

We know that the first evidence of Christ’s church was at Pentecost in **33 a.d.** These Jews were firmly rooted in Deut 6:4 “*Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*”.

46-50 a.d. Paul evangelized Asia Minor with One –Godism. (*M. M. Arnold– Apostolic History Outline*)

215 a.d. Sabellius was recorded to be a profound and able teacher of oneness. According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, “His central proposition was to the effect that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same person, three names thus being attached to one and the same being.”

Bernard Rothman in 1528 researched the 9th century religious scene, and found monotheistic baptism to be the predominant method of the time. (*F.J. Wray– Reformation Studies, 1962, page 229*).