UNMASKING SOPHISTRY

A Journal of Christian Evidences and Comparative Religions

Discourse on Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

SPECIAL EDITION, MARCH, 2022

"See to it that there is no one who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception in accordance with human tradition, in accordance with the elementary principles of the world, rather than in accordance with Christ."
(Colossians 2:8, NASB)

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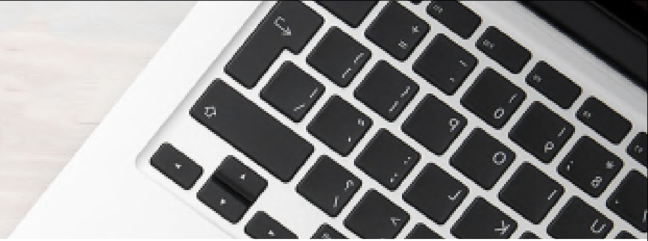
From The Editor's Desk



This is a special edition of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine containing series of exchanges on the "baptismal formula" doctrine. In the January – March 2022 edition of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine, an article appeared on pages 37-38 titled "Matthew 28:19 and the Triune God." One of our readers (Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu) disagreed with the article and wrote a rejoinder to the work. He published this rejoinder on his website and circulated it on various social media platforms three days after the January – March edition of this magazine was released. Since we have always encouraged readers who disagree with any of our published articles to write a rebuttal for onward publication, we thought it would be a good idea to publish brother Asaolu's rejoinder in the next edition coming in April with our response following it. However, since he had already published his rejoinder and has been circulating it, it became obvious that it needed our urgent attention, hence, a response was released by me and circulated as well two days after the release of his first rejoinder. This further gave rise to two other rejoinders coming from the both of us.

Due to the volume of the debate, we have decided to publish all of it in one single edition. This will also enable readers to have access to the whole discussion in one single file and they can enjoy the reading without a break or suspense. Both writers have 3 rejoinders each and the articles have been arranged in the order of their release. The original article that birthed the debate has also been reproduced so as to refresh the readers' memories. We have tried to reproduce the rejoinders exactly as they were originally written by our brother - including the punctuations, bold and coloured words, misspelled words, wrongly cited Bible passages and syntax. The purpose of doing this is not to embarrass him or anyone else, but only in an effort to be accurate in what he said and how he said it. Since the rejoinders have already been published independently of the other before putting them together as a single file in this magazine, the in-text citation of page numbers may not appear in the magazine exactly as it appears in the original published file. Readers may simply scroll up to find where a statement was made or refer to the original articles (the links to all cited works have been made available at the end of each rejoinder).

Thus, we present to our dear readers this special edition of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine that is devoted to address this important subject. In what name should scriptural baptism be done? Should it be done in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit or should it be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? While some have taken the view and insisted that for a baptism to be valid, it must be done only in the name of Jesus Christ (by this, they mean that the baptizer has to call the name of the Lord Jesus Christ over the one that is being baptized), others have maintained that baptizing "in the name of Jesus Christ" is simply recognizing His authority and has no bearing with saying a particular formula. The former view is mostly held by the Oneness Pentecostals and which is the view maintained by brother Asaolu throughout the debate. The latter view, however, is maintained by me throughout the debate.

I am confident that this debate will serve as an eye opener to many people and that God will through this effort save a lot of people from being carried away by the swelling current of false doctrines that render worship to be in vain (Matthew 15:8-9; II John 9).

Osamagbe Lesley Egharevba
Editor

Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

Osamagbe Lesley EGHAREVBA | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article appeared in the Question and Answer Section of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine (Volume 2, Number, 1, January – March 2022, p.36-37). We received a rejoinder to the article from one of our brethren who disagrees with it. We are reproducing it here again (before the rejoinder and other responses that followed) so that readers can refresh their memories without having to redirect them to the erstwhile edition.

Question:

In Matthew 28:19, Jesus said that baptism should be done in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Since it is to be done in the name (singular) and not names (as in plural), what is the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? Some teach that the name is Jesus and that Baptism must only be done in this name.

Answer:

A careful reading of Matthew 28:19 reveals that there are THREE distinct persons mentioned in that verse (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). But those who try to fuse these three as ONE single person seem to find solace in the grammatical construction of this verse. The argument is made that since the command is to baptize "in the NAME of..." and not "in the NAMES of..." it refers to a single name and not a plurality of names. In other words, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is **Jesus**. Shall we take a moment to examine the validity of this argument?

First, In Genesis 48:16, we find a statement made by Jacob while he was addressing the sons of Joseph. He said; "*Let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.*" Here we also find THREE persons mentioned (Jacob, Abraham and Isaac). But the grammatical construction is where we should direct our minds as it seems to read like that of Matthew 28:19. Here in Genesis 48:16, we find the same singular number; "...my **name** and the **name** of my fathers Abraham and Isaac." Note that he did not say "my **name**s and the **name**s of my fathers..." And so we find the singular "name" used in connection with the father (Abraham), son (Isaac) and grandson (Jacob).

Going by the argument of those who advocate for a single name in Matthew 28:19 for the THREE persons (Father, Son and the Holy Spirit), it means (and consistency demands) that the THREE persons in Genesis 48:16 (Father, Son and Grandson) ought to have a single name since the singular "name" is used in connection with the three in both instances. And now, the question is: ***What is the one name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?*** Since **the name** of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is **Jesus** (as per Matthew 28:19), what is **the name** of the father, the son and the grandson in Genesis 48:16? I am not quite sure what the advocate of this doctrine would say is the one name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but I can safely say that there is not a single person on this earth who would be able to show us from the scriptures the ONE or SINGLE name of the three mentioned in Genesis 48. What then is the essence of all the trouble or argument about the "name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" being Jesus? It is simply to defend the false idea that there is only one person in the godhead.

I wish to point out that the issue here is not about what the word "name" stands for in either of the passages neither are we interested at this point in people's commentaries on what is meant by what was said in either passage (we will come to that at a different question). The point here is that the so called grammatical rule that was used to arrive at "a single name" for the Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit should also be consistently used to produce "a single name" for the trio in Genesis 48:16.

Second, I wish to call our attention to a grammatical principle known as the Granville Sharp's Rule. Granville Sharp (1735–1813) was a Greek language scholar known for his contributions regarding the translation of New Testament Greek as it relates to the divinity of Christ. The Grandville Sharp's rule states that;

> *"When the copulative KAI connects two nouns of the same case, if the article HO or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always refer to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a further description of the first-named person." (A Manual Of The Greek New Testament, Dana & Mantey, p.147 cited by Theopedia).*

Basically, Gandville Sharp is saying that when you have two nouns which are not proper names (such as Peter, Paul, Timothy, etc.) which are describing a person, and the two nouns are connected by the word "and," and the first noun has the article ("the") while the second does not, both are referring to the same person. For example, if someone says; "We saw **the** President and Chief Commander in the office." Since the definite article (*the*) is only used once, before the first noun (president) and not repeated before the second noun (Chief Commander). According to the Granville Sharp's Rule, this means that the two nouns, joined by *and*, are clearly referring to the same individual. If the statement had read "We saw **the** President and **the** Chief Commander in the office," since the definite article (the) is used twice before the first and second nouns, the grammatical construction leaves the question open as to whether the president and chief commander are one and the same person or two different people and one cannot argue that it refers to one single person.

Two of the New Testament verses associated with the Granville Sharp Rule are Titus 2:13 and II Peter 1:1. In Titus 2:13, we find; "Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (NASB). And in II Peter 1:1 we find "...our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." In the Greek, the words for "God" and "Saviour" are joined by kai and the definite article ho is used once, preceding "God"; according to the Grandville Sharp's Rule, both God and Saviour must refer to the same person – Jesus Christ.

And let us come to Matthew 28:19. The statement reads; *"...baptizing them in **the** name of the Father and of **the** Son and of **the** Holy Spirit,"* Notice that the definite article (the) is mentioned three times before each of the nouns (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). According to the Grandville Sharp's Rule, one can only argue that it refers to the same person if the definite article is used before the first noun and not repeated before the second and third. And so, the argument of those who claim that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit refer to the same person in this verse and must have one single name is moot.

Finally, even if the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all have the same name, such would not prove that they are the same person. I have seen men who bear the same name with their father and even grandfather. A woman bears her husband's name when she is married to him but she is still a separate individual from her husband; thus, the single name argument for the three, does not prove anything if at all it is true. Not a single New Testament passage tells us what was said at the point of baptizing an individual and it would be wrong to insist on a particular formula to be said when baptizing a person.

Listen to the Word Of God On YouTube

(1) Why Deny That Jesus Christ Is The Son Of God? (https://youtu.be/p71VKCs7EPE)

(2) Jesus And The Father Are One (https://youtu.be/8rgslhxnpyg)

(3) Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God (https://youtu.be/jlJC-uDTXaM)

(4) What Must I Do To Be Saved? (https://youtu.be/DbXwFHX5KwI)

(5) Why Not Tear Off The Old Testament? (https://youtu.be/C2uk0WWjPVY)

(6) Why Can't I Baptize My Baby? (https://youtu.be/nq4vkjZzL2g)

(7) Is Baptism Essential To Salvation (https://youtu.be/0J3x_TufsTc)

(8) Practical Christianity: Living Messages From The Book Of James (https://youtu.be/MoqoQOPUgFk)

(9) Why We Should Worship God Rightly (https://youtu.be/cc4YFTR7eRE)

(10) Are We Saved By Faith Only? (https://youtu.be/EubFgFs59_E)

(11) Will All Good People Be Saved? (https://youtu.be/VxAuRtVKiAs)

(12) Should My Enemy Be Part Of My Prayer Points? (https://youtu.be/imP5C4pfdTM)

(13) Perseverance of the Saints (https://youtu.be/hnK7VE2pZfc)

(14) Does Church Really Matter? (https://youtu.be/5qf6xX-_xSY)

All video preaching are done by Osamagbe Lesley Egharevba

MATTHEW 28:19 AND THE TRIUNE GOD

A rejoinder to Mt 28:19 And The Triune God

Olumuyiwa Asaolu | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article was received on the 4th of January, 2022 from Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu. He disagrees with our published article on Matthew 28:19 and he released this rejoinder on his website and social media groups.

This brief is a rejoinder to Bro. Lesley Egharevba's article featured on Page 36-37 of his e-Magazine *Unmasking Sophistry* Vol 2 No 1 released on 2022 New Year day. Some local readers may discern that the piece is probably motivated by the discussion about the Godhead in October 2021 on the WhatsApp Group "Men of God Preaching the Gospel." Though a member, Lesley opted to observe rather than contribute during that discourse; afterwards, I condensed my take on the subject into an article titled "Is God one or three?" [Available at https://www.lainosint.com/download/faith/Is_God_one_or_three.pdf] Lesley informed me after reading it that he does not agree with my write-up. I enquired if he would do a rejoinder and he responded 'No' but that he would publish on whether Matthew 28:19 alludes to a single name. Somehow, he also devoted Page 11-13 of the e-Magazine to "The Oneness Doctrine." He wrote: "But some "among us" have started to propagate this teaching. …I do not believe that the scriptures teach this and while it may be impossible to explode all of the errors of the oneness doctrine in one single article due to space constraint, we will take time to address it gradually in different articles. Anyway, shall we begin process of unmasking this sophistry?"

My present interest is in his Mt 28:19 rooted article since the other is effectively addressed already. My remarks will be tagged as OA while Bro Lesley will be quoted as LE. He may publish this rejoinder.

Matthew 28:19 *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*

LE: Jesus said that baptism should be done in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Since it is to be done in the name (singular) and not names (as in plural), what is the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? Some teach that the name is Jesus and that Baptism must only be done in this name.

OA: It is curious that LE devoted space and time in his article **without eventually answering the query posed**. LE did not explain what 'name' means in Mt 28:19. He failed to inform his readers what is the name of the Father, what is the name of the Son, what is the name of the Holy Spirit or if altogether the three shares a common name in which disciples are to be baptized. Let us examine LE's arguments.

Argument I – What name did Jacob pronounce upon Joseph's sons; Ephraim and Manasseh?

Genesis 48:15-16 *And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.*

LE: What is the one name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Since the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is Jesus (as per Matthew 28:19), what is the name of the father, the son and the grandson in Genesis 48:16? I am not quite sure what the advocate of this doctrine would say is the one name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but I can safely say that there is not a single person on this earth who would be able to show us from the scriptures the ONE or SINGLE name of the three mentioned in Genesis 48.

OA: The grammatical construction of Mt 28:19 differ slightly from that of Gen 48:16; "seems to read like" is not "same as." Let us therefore take a closer look at the statement of Christ and that of Jacob.

Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit… → immersing them into the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Though Christ refers to 'the name of' three personalities, He did not mention an actual name in this Commission. We ought to search the scriptures for that name or names associated with water baptism, from the day of Pentecost when the apostles were endowed with power from on high. While some have posited that 'name' refers to authority, possession or another concept, it is indisputable that the Lord revealed a single name to his apostles to use in baptizing converts. That name is "the Lord Jesus Christ" as evident in Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5, etc. as established on Page 16-18 of my referenced article.

If Christ had stated:

1. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father and in the name of the Son and in the name of the Holy Spirit...*

This could mean to use three distinct names. For instance:

Revelation 3:12 *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

'The name of' is repeated and could be indicative of three names, one of which is identified as 'new Jerusalem.'

2. *Baptizing them in the names of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit...*

This would connote usage of multiple names of distinct personalities. For instance:

Matthew 10:2 *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.*
Revelation 21:14 *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

3. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit...*

Such rendering with lone instance of 'in the name of' could refer to a single name of one person described in various capacities e.g. "The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel" -1 Chronicles 17:24.

1 Samuel 17:45 *Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.*

Let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac... → let one or two names (mine as well as my progenitors) be placed on the boys. By using 'name' twice in his expression, the possibility exists that Jacob might be referring to just one or more than a single designation (if his name is not same as that of his ancestors). Technically, Jacob discusses 'self, grandfather and father' NOT 'father, son and grandson' as alleged. Contextually, Jacob means: Let these two sons of Joseph be regarded as my direct offspring who shall walk before God and partake of the ancestral benediction.

Genesis 48:3-5 *And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, **are mine**; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.*

This alludes to 'adoption,' akin to the 'possession' argument on Matthew 28:19. The LORD took the sons of Jacob as his people and said "...*Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is ...mine*" -Psalms 60:7

Do Jacob as well as Abraham and Isaac share a common designation which inspiration bestowed upon Joseph's sons and on the tribes of Israel? LE **presumes** nobody can indicate such appellation from the Bible but he also failed to explain Gen 48:16. That Jacob did not expressly state 'a shared name' does not mean it is not implied elsewhere. Irrespective of whether we can ascertain the name that Jacob alluded to, it does NOT affect the validity of Matthew 28:19 especially when the name which Christ alluded to for baptism, is afterwards expressly revealed and documented in the New testament.

It must be realized that a name is simply a term by which a person, place or thing is called. The term by which each of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is called is '**heir**' [receiver or possessor of God's blessing/promise so as to have numerous descendants in the Promised Land and multitudes worldwide].

Hebrews 11:8-9 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.*

God told each of these patriarchs that 'in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' Abraham, Isaac and Jacob respectively became an heir by God's personal oath - Gen 17:1-8; 26:1-4; 28:10-15. Moses once reminded the LORD of this fact to appease His anger: "*Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever*" - Exodus 32:13

When the tribes of Israel inherited the land of Canaan (Joshua 16-18), Manasseh and Ephraim were allotted portions – 14:4; 16:4. The Hebrews are fond of stating that 'we have Abraham for our father' –Matthew 3:9a, John 8:39. After all, Isaac was bestowed the promise for Abraham's sake (Gen 26:24) and ditto Jacob (Gen 28:1-4,13). Thus, rather than always enumerate the names of these three forebears, Judaizers and Christians simply uses the term 'our father Abraham' – Acts 7:2, Romans 4:12,16, James 2:21. It extends unto Gentiles as the children of Abraham by faith (Galatians 3:7) who are the spiritual Israel of God (Gal 6:16); the children of promise like Isaac (Gal 4:28). We are heirs (Rm 8:17, Gal 3:29), called to inherit a blessing; eternal life in a heavenly city (1 Peter 3:9b).

Argument II - A grammatical principle known as Granville Sharp's Rule [GSR].

"*When the copulative KAI connects two nouns of the same case, if the article HO or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always refer to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a further description of the first-named person.*"

LE: And let us come to Matthew 28:19. The statement reads; "...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," Notice that the definite article (the) is mentioned three times before each of the nouns (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). According to the Grandville Sharp's Rule, one can only argue that it refers to the same person if the definite article is used before the first noun and not repeated before the second and third. And so, the argument of those who claim that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit refer to the same person in this verse and must have one single name is moot.

OA: It is interesting that LE cited and exemplified GSR with Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1 to surmise that "both God and Saviour must refer to the same person - Jesus Christ." I wonder if he would dare such with Jude 1:4 and accept the ramification of '*the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*.'

LE's application of GSR over Matthew 28:19 is incomplete. It is not in contention that three entities A, B & C were referred to in the verse; the Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit. (Whether these are distinct persons or three personalities manifested by a lone person may not be wholly determined from the verse, passages such as Isaiah 9:6 and 2 Corinthians 3:17 establish that.) To appreciate how GSR fully comes into play in the matter of the name in which anyone is to baptize, let us for a moment consider the relevant phrase in the following simple format:

Baptizing them in ***the name of A and of B and of C***...

Interestingly, 'name' is a noun as well as what A, B & C represents. Based on Granville Sharp's Rule as quoted by LE, definite article HO (the) is only before '**name of A**' that is intrinsically a noun, while KAI (and) connects it. Thus, A, B & C share or possess the same name; it does not necessarily mean that the objects are the same though the possibility exists. Substituting back for A, B & C, one is born again when a penitent is immersed into *the* ***name of*** *the Father* ***and of*** *the Son* ***and of*** *the Holy Spirit.*

The definite article (the) before "name" also ought to be considered when applying GSR in Mt 28:19. Let D = of A, E = of B, F = of C, same result holds with "*Baptizing them in the name D and E and F...*"

LE reasons that had Christ said: "*Baptizing them in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit...*" it would mean that the same person is referred to hence, a single name. However, the verse mainly highlights the commonality of a name for the listed not whether the trio are the same. Thus, the relevant phrase emphasizes "and of." Likewise, in Rev 22:1 "*proceeding out of* ***the throne of*** *God and* ***of the*** *Lamb*" refers to one throne not two. In Col 2:2 "*acknowledgement of* ***the mystery of*** *God,* ***and of*** *the Father,* ***and of*** *Christ*" refers to a single mystery although God is the same as the Father or Christ! A penitent experiences the new birth not births, when he is "***born of*** *water* ***and of*** *the Spirit*" -Jn 3:3-5. To initiate a relationship between the Godhead and a disciple, divinity's name is utilized in baptism.

Argument III - Separate individuals could bear the same name without any consequence.

LE: Finally, even if the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all have the same name, such would not prove that they are the same person. ...thus, the single name argument for the three, does not prove anything if at all it is true.

OA: While the first sentence of LE herein is correct as I established above, the latter is incorrect. Having co-named persons co-located at an instant might have some consequences. Why would a wife bear her husband's name and not another man's name? If a couple's name is mentioned in a gathering won't either or both respond unless it is qualified with Mr/Mrs or Bro/Sis? The single name argument is true. Ramifications abound that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit bear the same name. For instance,

1. Many professing Christians do NOT know the name of the manifestations or the **fulness of the Godhead** under the New Covenant. Such do not know the name of the Holy Spirit though they believe that the Father is named Jehovah and the Son is named Jesus.

2. Since some are uncertain on who is the LORD and cannot reconcile how Christ is referred to as the Lord when Old Testament passages are cited in the writings of the apostles, it becomes easier to understand passages like Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10 which state that "*at the name of Jesus* ***every knee*** *shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth.*" (Surely, the real owner of the name will not bow!)

3. It explains why the inspired apostles are recorded to have only "*baptized men and women in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*," why the factious Corinthians could be queried "*were you baptized in the name of Paul?*" How there is "*one baptism*" NOT three immersions, how we are "*buried with Christ in baptism*" not buried with Jehovah, Emmanuel, Comforter, etc.

LE: Not a single New Testament passage tells us what was said at the point of baptizing an individual and it would be wrong to insist on a particular formula to be said when baptizing a person.

OA: Faithful members of the Lord's church, do not insist on "a particular formula" or set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone. We simply proclaim that the scripture guides both the penitent and the baptizer on the essence of what could be uttered on such occasion. The New Covenant teaches that a penitent should confess that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 8:37) or the Son of the living God (Mt 16:16) or the Lord (Rm 10:9-10, Acts 22:16) or the Messiah (Mt 10:32, Jn 4:43) while a baptizer is to acknowledge that the subject is being immersed in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38) or in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:16; 19:5) or in the name of the Lord (Acts 10:48) or in the name of Christ (I Cor 1:13) since a disciple thereby dies to sin, is buried and raised with Christ (Rm 6:3-4) as a Christian, added unto the church, body and kingdom of Christ (Acts 2:47, Col 1:13,18).

To Download Unmasking Sophistry Magazine (January – March, 2022, Volume 2, Number 1), Please Click - https://www.unmaskingsophistry.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Unmasking_Sophistry_January-March_2022.pdf

The Fog Of False Teaching

On June 18, 1815, the British army commanded by the Duke of Wellington, defeated the French army commanded by Napoleon. It is said that the good news of Napoleon's defeat was sent by signals in the form of the message: "W-e-l-l-i-n-g-t-o-n d-e-f-e-a-t-e-d t-h-e e-n-e-m-y." However, as the message was being read, fog rolled in, and the only part of the message received was, "Wellington defeated..." Obviously, the difference between "Wellington defeated the enemy," and "Wellington defeated..." was quite a difference. And in a similar way, people today who only get part of the Bible's message on important subjects are also gravely mislead.

For example, the New Testament teaches that people must believe the gospel, repent of their sins, confess their faith in Jesus, and be scripturally baptized to be saved and become Christians. How sad it is that the fog of false doctrines often obscures that whole message. You see, many have only gotten the message about believing the Gospel. Of course, it is essential to believe, and God's Word teaches that in many places. However, in many places the Word of God also teaches it is essential to repent and be baptized. For example, we read in Acts 2:38: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 22: 16 says, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." And in Mark 16: 16 Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned."

Friend, I plead with you to beware of the fog of false doctrines which can keep you from getting the full message about what to do to be saved. Think on these things

Dennis Abernathy | Texas, USA

Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

A Response To O.S. Asaolu

Osamagbe Lesley EGHAREVBA | Lagos, Nigeria

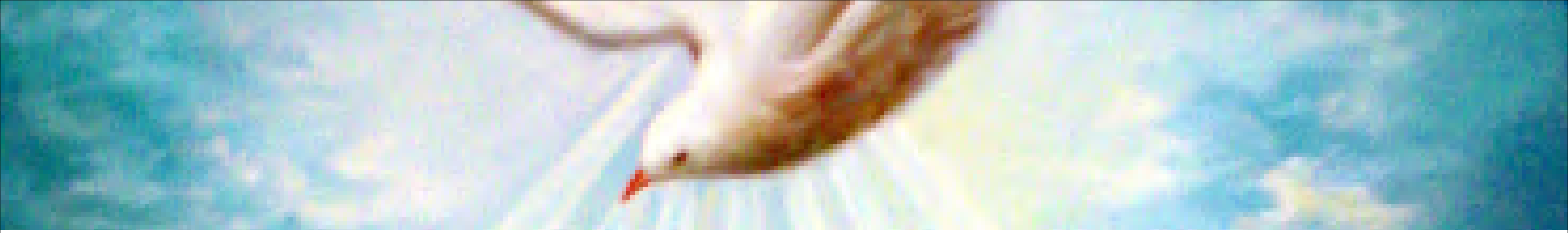
The following article is a response to Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu's rejoinder. It was released on the 6th of January, 2022 on social media groups and Unmasking Sophistry website.

In the January – March 2022 edition of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine, I answered a question on Matthew 28:19 on pages 37-38. Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu released a rejoinder to that article on the 4th of January, 2022. It is my desire to respond to his rejoinder in this piece. Although, the magazine has an open door policy of publishing both sides of an issue and we have always encouraged people who disagree with any of the articles published to write a rebuttal (if they so desire) for onward publication. But his rejoinder came very early and has been in circulation. Since our next publication will be in April, 2022, I think that it is not ideal to delay my response until that time. Thus, I shall pay careful attention to the points raised and address them. Nevertheless, God willing, both his rejoinder and this response will be published in the next issue of the Magazine, whether or not he releases a rejoinder after reading this.

Brother Asaolu is my very good friend and brother in Christ and I love and respect him so much. But it seems that I have to expose the errors that he is promoting concerning the Godhead. I have no desire whatsoever to win a polemic victory but I believe that faithful Christians must be ready at all times to tackle teachings contrary to sound doctrine. To teach that God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are ONE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL is one of the greatest damage that anyone would attempt to do to the Christian faith. He has introduced passages of the scriptures, some of which has no bearing with the subject matter and made statements that cannot be backed up by any Bible passage or any Greek scholar in the world and even contradicted himself severally. A little reflection on his argument (in my opinion) reveals the fact that the arguments are neither Scriptural nor logical. Let us get down to business!

What Is "The Name" Of The Trio In Matthew 28:19?

Brother Asaolu accused me of not "*addressing the query posed*" in page 37 of the magazine. He needed different separate names for each of the three or a single name for the trio mentioned in Matthew 28:19. He even said it in page 2 that "*Though Christ refers to "the name of" three personalities, He did not mention an actual name in this Commission*." He seems not to understand that the three names in that verse are: (1) Father, (2) Son, and (3) Holy Spirit. If I say "my dad went to town," I am not using "dad" as a name but only as a relationship. But if I say "Dad, can I go with you to town?," in this case, I am using "Dad" as a name. That is how it is used in Matthew 28:19; and elsewhere, we find that God is called by the name "Father" (Mark 14:36). Even Isaiah 9:6 clearly indicates that "Everlasting Father" is a name that one shall be called. Understanding this, we should not have trouble with the fact that the **three names in Matthew 28:19 are Father, Son and Holy Spirit**. What Asaolu should prove to the readers is that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not names! He has not done that and he may never be able to do that. This is because according to him, "*...a name is simply a term by which a person, place or thing is called. The term by*



*which each of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is called is **"heir"*** (p.3). How in the world would he deny that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are names and at the same time insist that "heir" is the name for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

Brother Asaolu further accused Lesley of not explaining "*what 'name' means in Matthew 28:19.*" Yes I did not and it was deliberate. I stated on page 37 that the issue I was addressing is not about what the word "name" stands for in either of the passages being discussed but the grammatical rule used in arriving at the so-called single name for the three. Here is my very statement on p.37:

> I wish to point out that the issue here is not about what the word "name" stands for in either of the passages neither are we interested at this point in people's commentaries on what is meant by what was said in either passage (we will come to that at a different question). The point here is that the so called grammatical rule that was used to arrive at "a single name" for the Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit should also be consistently used to produce "a single name" for the trio in Genesis 48:16.

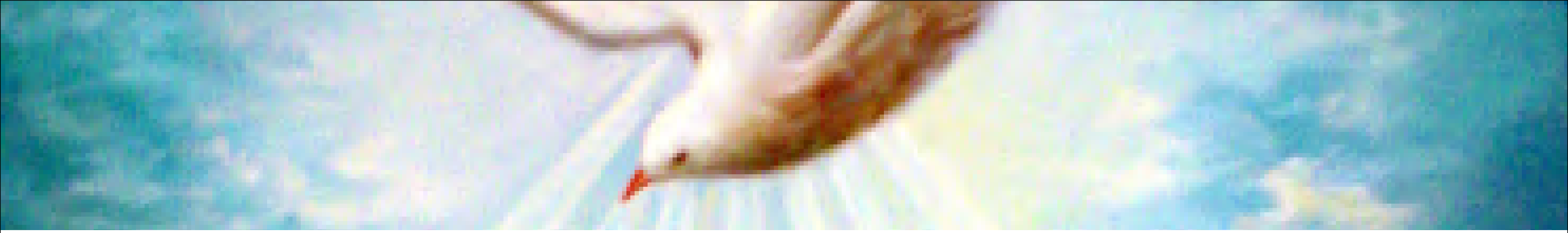
Did brother Asaolu read that statement of mine? If he did, why must he accuse me of not explaining what "name" means? Magazine articles are guided by spaces and one should not expect that all of the issues surrounding a topic must be discussed at one time in one article.

The Argument On Genesis 48:16

Whatever brother Asaolu has said about the statement in Genesis 48:16, his inability to apply his so called grammatical rule to the statement "*the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac,*" conclusively disproves his contention that the "name" being singular in Matthew 28:19 means the Father, Son and Holy Spirit share one name. He has been contending all along that **the grammatical construct of Matthew 28:19 shows that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all bear same name** (see page 18 of his article "*Is God one or three?*"). He even said in page 16:

> The great commission is not about baptizing disciples in the **<u>nameS</u>** of three distinct persons. The instruction is to immerse disciples into the new covenant name of God. **<u>This name</u>** covers each role God reveals Himself in this gospel era. We cannot run away from the fact that the INSPIRED apostles understood that under the NT, the name of the Father is the name of the Son and is the name of the Holy Spirit (emphasis LE).

His argument is based on the grammar; because we have "name" (not names) used with Father, Son and Holy Spirit, he thinks it must mean one name. Even now, he alludes to Matthew 10:2 and Revelation 21:14 to show that "names" is used with "apostles" in an effort to back up his argument. And when I offered him a parallel statement where "his rule" should be applied, rather than simply applying "his rule" he preferred to give his commentary. He picks up on my words and said "seems to read like" is not "same as." He also talks about Jacob discussing "self, grandfather and father" NOT "father, son and grandson" as I mentioned. All of these are beside the point. Abraham begot Isaac and Isaac begot Jacob. In that order, Abraham is the father (of Isaac), Isaac is the son (of Abraham) and Jacob is the grandson (of Abraham). That is simply how I chose to describe them and Asaolu said it is incorrect. Well, if he is willing to affirm that "Jacob is not Abraham's grandson," I will be glad to deny it. The

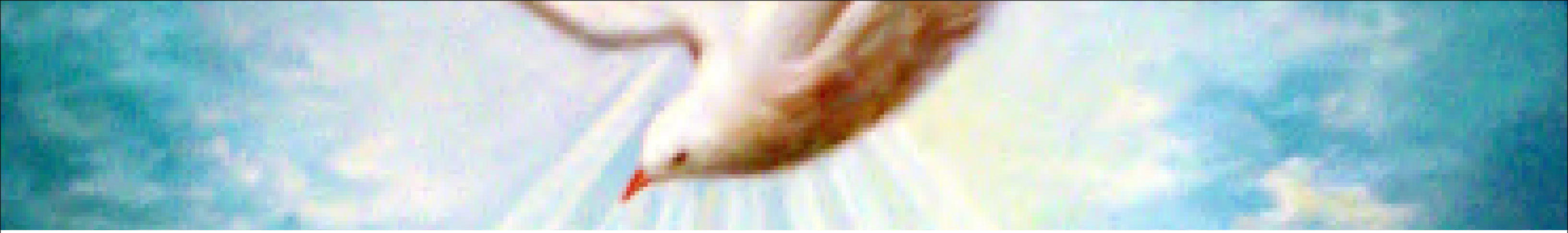


simple argument reiterated on Genesis 48:16 and Matthew 28:19 is this: we have the singular word (name) used and more than one person is mentioned together IN BOTH PASSAGES; (1) "*the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac*," and (2) *the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*. Let Asaolu simply tell us why his rule will not work for both!

I have used a similar argument when debating a denominational pastor on the necessity of baptism. The man insists that the phrase; "*...for the forgiveness of sins*" as used in Acts 2:38 means "because their sins have been forgiven." I pointed to Matthew 26:28 to show that the same phrase "...for the forgiveness of sins" appears there. In the first passage, they were to repent and be baptized "for the forgiveness of sins" while the second passage talks about Jesus shedding His blood "for the forgiveness of sins." My argument was that if you apply one meaning to the first verse, you have to apply the same meaning to the second. We are not asking for the meaning or background of the passages; both have different messages but why give different meanings to the same expressions found in both text? In fact, Asaolu is not even sure of the explanation he gave because he said that "*Jacob **might be** referring to just one or more than a single designation*" (emphasis L.E.). Yet, in another page, he finds a single name for them which he called "heir." We do not actually need his commentary **and I would not pay a single attention to it**. I may not even object to whatever explanation he may give on those passages whether it is correct or not; but let him apply "his rule" and tell us his conclusion – the one name for the trio in Genesis 48:16 – Is it heir? Or is it MORE THAN A SINGLE NAME?

I am amazed at how he misused Revelation 3:12 in order to justify his point by all means. He said; "*If Christ had stated: Baptizing them in the name of the Father and in the name of the Son and in the name of the Holy Spirit...* This could mean to use three distinct names." And then he brought up Revelation 3:12 and concludes that "'*The name of' is repeated and could be indicative of three names, one of which is identified as "new Jerusalem.*" But we find "name" repeated in Genesis 48:16; "my name" and "the name of" my fathers Abraham and Isaac. From his argument, this should be THREE NAMES. Yet, he was able to produce a SINGLE name for them. This is the problem: INCONSISTENT SELF-MADE RULES AND APPLICATION OF THEM! And how on earth did he not realize that the passage talks about the name of a person and the name of a city? That text mentions *the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name*. Three PERSONS are NOT described here like Matthew 28:19 and Genesis 48:16 and the passage is not even parallel to what he tries to prove. Besides, would he interpret that passage LITERALLY? I truly wish to know.

He quotes 1 Chronicles 17:24 and 1 Samuel 17:45 and tries to create a parallel to Matthew 28:19 but there is absolutely no connection whatsoever. The first passage says; "*The LORD of hosts is the God of Israel.*" Every speaker of English language knows that the sentence means exactly what it says and referring to one person. The second text says "*...come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.*" There is no conjunction (and) that joins "the LORD of hosts" AND "the God of the armies of Israel" like the construction of Matthew 28:19. So what is the relevance?



Brother Asaolu used Hebrews 11:8-9 – "*...the heirs with him of the same promise*" to prove the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He said it is heir. I know that those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ are heirs too. Is that OUR SINGLE NAME?

Grandville Sharp's Rule

I am amazed at how Brother Asaolu muddled up the Grandville Sharp's rule. He brought up Jude 1:4 to dismiss the relevance of Sharp's rule but it only shows he did not look at the text well and he did not fully grasp the rule. He said; "I*t is interesting that LE cited and exemplified GSR with Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1 to surmise that "both God and Saviour must refer to the same person - Jesus Christ." I wonder if he would dare such with Jude 1:4 and accept the ramification of "**the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.***" Let us look at the text (Jude 1:4) and the phrase to which reference is made.

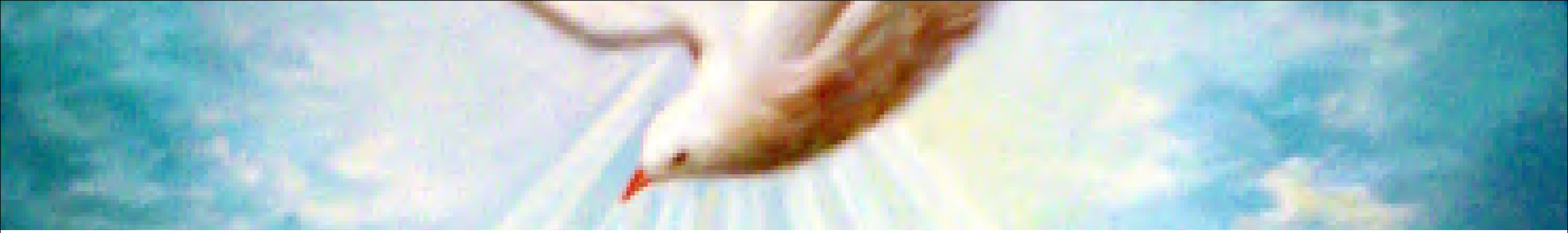
In the Greek, the above phrase is written thus: *ho monos despotes kai kurios ego Iesous Christos.* To translate that in English, what we have is: *ho (the – g3588) monos (only – **g3441**) despotes (Master, Lord, etc. – **g1203**) kai (and – **g2532**) kurios (Lord – **g2962**) ego (of us – **g1473**) Iesous (Jesus – **g2424**) Christos (Christ – **g5547**).* It simply reads; ***the only Master and Lord of us Jesus Christ***. You see that the definite article is used once before the first noun (Master) and it is not repeated before the second one (Lord). Since the definite article (the) is only used once, before the first noun and not repeated before the second noun; according to the Granville Sharp's Rule, this means that the two nouns, joined by and, are clearly referring to the same individual. In fact, several translations capture this verse very clearly in line with what I have just stated:

“For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord” (Jude 1:4, NIV)

“I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:4, NLT)

Readers may check other translations online at Bible Hub and see how that verse is rendered. Even though I did not use Jude 1:4 to explain this rule, the Grandville Sharp's rule is still EXTREMELY RELEVANT and CANNOT BE DEBUNKED as far as this discussion is concern! I need brother Asaolu to simply appreciate this rule OR he should clearly prove it is faulty. **He has not done any of these!**

He brought two passages in an attempt to disprove the rule. He introduced Revelation 22:1: "*proceeding out of **the throne of** God **and of** the Lamb*" and he said it refers to one throne not two. And then he brought up Colossians



2:2: "*acknowledgement of* ***the mystery of*** *God,* ***and of*** *the Father,* ***and of*** *Christ*" and he also said it refers to a single mystery. But this is a MISAPPLICATION of the Grandville Sharp's rule. In the statement of this rule, Sharp only discussed substantives (i.e., nouns, etc.) of **personal description**, not those which referred **to things**. Let me quote the rule again and please notice the part in **bold:**

> "*When the copulative KAI connects two nouns of the same case, if the article HO or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always refer to* ***the same person*** *that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a further description of the* ***first-named person****." (A Manual Of The Greek New Testament, Dana & Mantey, p.147 cited by Theopedia)*

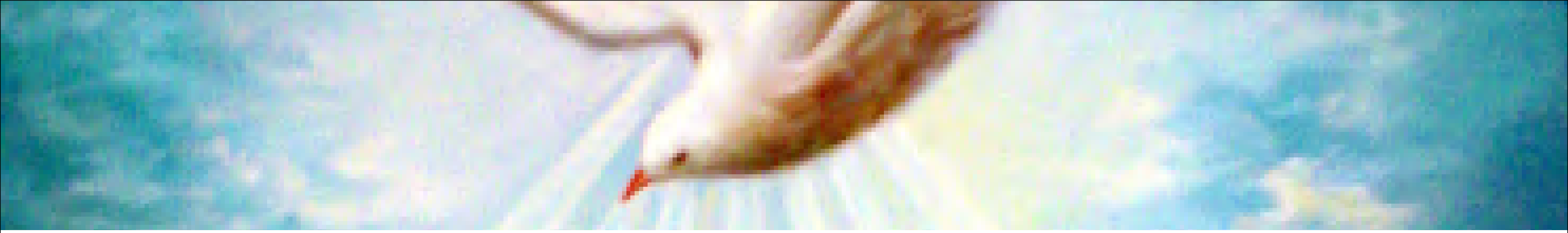
Simply put, the rule states that: **definite article + singular noun + copulative conjunction + singular noun = THE SAME PERSON. NOT the same THING but the same PERSON. And so, Asaolu's mathematical equations do not prove anything and the TWO passages he introduced are INAPPROPRIATE passages that do not fault the Grandville Sharp's rule. I hope that brother Asaolu will simply admit that the Sharp's rule is correct and nullifies his own rule rather than try to look for scriptures to disprove the rule. That is an exercise that may never be accomplished!**

He said that Isaiah 9:6 and 2 Corinthians 3:17 prove that three personalities were represented by a lone person. I deny this! One cannot take a passage or two that he seems not to understand and then array it against several passages of the scriptures that teach the complete opposite. Besides, nothing in these passages prove that Jesus and the Father are ONE SINGLE INDIVIDUAL. Whether anyone likes it or not, the Son will deliver the kingdom to God the Father at the end of the day (I Corinthians 15:24) and I have not yet seen a convincing explanation from the Oneness advocate on this passage.

What Is The Problem?

Asaolu stated in p.4 that "*Faithful members of the Lord's church, do not insist on "a particular formula" or set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone.*" Yet on page 2, he insists that "*the Lord revealed a single name to his apostles to use in baptizing converts. That name is "the Lord Jesus Christ" as evident in Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5, etc.*" In page 17 of his article, he said:

> In order to deny that Christ is personification of the Godhead, many refuse to mention his name while immersing a penitent but prefer to recite the phrase in Mt 28:19 as a formula. Before dipping a convert in water, do such not insist the penitent must confess that "Jesus Christ" is the Son of God or hear that name mentioned? No baptizer from the Lord's church would be satisfied with a penitent saying: "I believe in the Son of God and his authority" without the very name verbalized to identify the Son! In telling us what to do, the scriptures has indicated how to do it **and impliedly limited the essence of what is to be said by both the baptizer and the penitent**. Dipping someone into water with neither party saying anything on what is being done and why, is not really a baptism. A penitent



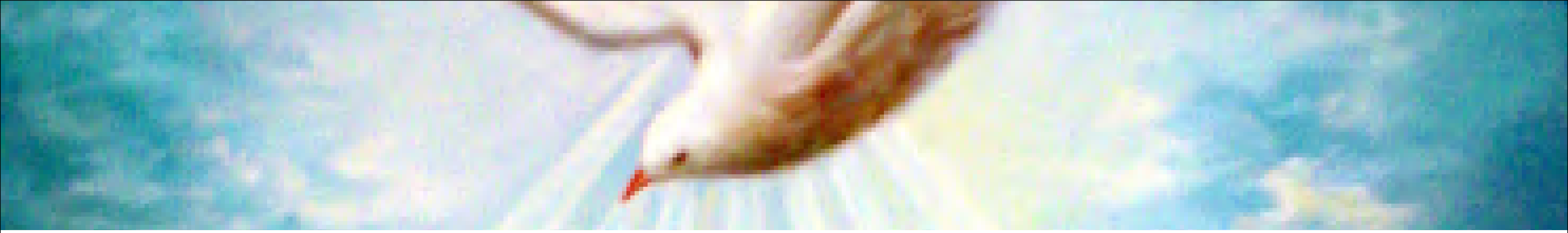
must confess Jesus Christ (Rm 10:9-10) or call on His name (Acts 2:21; 22:16) to demonstrate that he believes (Acts 8:35-37) in order to receive remission of sins via immersion in water (Mk 16:16). Thereafter, the one baptizing immerses such penitent into the same Christ who embodies the Godhead. **Neither of them should fail to say the name.**

Asaolu seems displeased because "*many refuse to mention his (Jesus') name **while immersing** a penitent...*" Yet at the same time, "faithful members of the Lord's church do not insist on a set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone." According to him (1) the Lord revealed a single name to His apostles **to use** in baptizing; (2) the name is "*the Lord Jesus Christ*" (3) his complaint is that many refuse to mention this name **while baptizing** but decide to mention something else and (4) at the same time, faithful members of the Lord's church do not insist on a particular set of words to be mentioned while baptizing (5) Baptizing without the baptizer saying the name is not really a baptism, etc. Asaolu insists that the name is "*the Lord Jesus Christ*" (p.2) and that this name ("*the Lord Jesus Christ*") must be mentioned at baptism, yet that does not sound like "a set of words" or "a formula" to him. Well, a formula does not have to be a very long sentence to be a formula. It is a formula and it is a set of words if you insist that "*the Lord Jesus Christ*" should be mentioned while baptizing an individual even if there are 100 other words said alongside with it at different times. "*The Lord Jesus Christ*" is four words and Asaolu said that these set of EXACT words MUST be said when baptizing. It is amazing, if not amusing that he insists on a set of words to be said while baptizing someone, yet at the same time, according to him, "*faithful members of the Lord's church, do not insist on "a particular formula" or set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone.*"

In fact, what is the whole essence of his argument on the single name **to be used** in baptism? Is he aware that there are variations of the name? (1) "...baptized in the name of **Jesus Christ**" – Acts 2:38 (2) "...baptized in the name of **the Lord Jesus**" (Acts 8:16; 19:5) (3) "...baptized in the name of **the Lord**" (Acts 10:48). Which of these should be used in baptism? He simply wants the name to be pronounced (call it over the person being baptized). If baptizing in the name of Jesus means calling the name of Jesus over the one being baptized, remember that in Acts 2:38, Peter said they should "*Repent...in the name of Jesus Christ.*" "Repent" is also "in the name of Jesus Christ." Let Asaolu tell us HOW the penitent SHOULD "repent... in the name of Jesus Christ." **But I wish that he would also tell us if those who were immersed as depicted in his quote above have been wrongly immersed!** The Oneness Pentecostals that I have met will clearly tell you that if you are baptized and "the name of Jesus" is not mentioned, your baptism is not correct. **Brother Asaolu should clearly tell us whether if a man is immersed in water and the baptizer said something relating to the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit without mentioning Jesus, the baptism is invalid. If the baptism is valid without the baptizer mentioning the name of Jesus and Asaolu recognizes such as being baptized into Christ, then his whole argument IS A WASTE OF TIME!** Why does he have to argue over this if he believes that a person is scripturally baptized whether or not the name of Jesus is called over him at the point of baptism?

Different Individuals Could Bear The Same Name

In my article, I stated that even if the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all have the same name, such would not

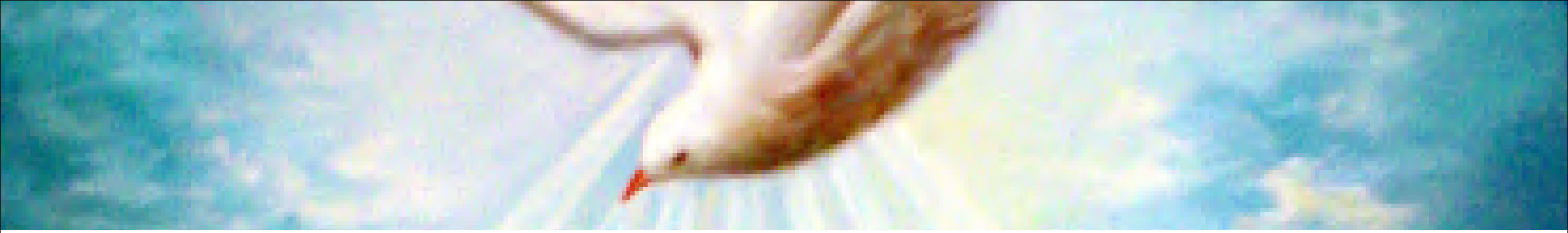


prove that they are the same person. And I insist on this. Asaolu brought up the idea of them "co-located at an instant." I have seen men who bear the same name with their father and even grandfather. It seems that Asaolu will have them live together for them to be able to bear the same name. That is absurd! I remember that Asaolu have argued at one time about the name of the church. If I remember correctly, he does not believe that the term "church of Christ" is the proper name for the church. He believes it is a descriptive name just like other descriptive names that we have in the New Testament for the church. I know that in the Bible, The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit are called different names at different times (for example, the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, etc.; the Son is called by different names in Isaiah 9:6 and elsewhere; and even the Father is called by other different names in Exodus 3:14, Isaiah 42:8, etc.). How in the world is it consistent to insist for a single name for any or all of the three and it makes no sense to insist for a single name for the church? God's children are also called by different names in the New Testament but Asaolu would not insist for a single name. **Let him give us A CLEAR PASSAGE that reveals the EXCLUSIVE SINGLE NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then he will be making some progress!** Thus, I insist that the single name argument for the three, does not prove anything if at all it is true. May I ask this question which has been bothering my mind: **How do we distinguish a person who is baptized in the name of Jesus from a person who is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?**

What Does "Name" Mean?

The Greek word translated "name" in Matthew 28:19 is "*onoma*" (**g3686**) and most scholars agree it means authority. A.T. Robertson cites the use of *onoma* in Matthew 28:19 as an example where "name" "has the idea of 'the authority of'" (1934, p. 740). Vine writes that "name" in Colossians 3:17 means "in recognition of the authority of" (1940, p. 100; cf. Miller, 2007, p.80). Moulton and Milligan write that "name" refers to "the authority of the person" and cite Philippians 2:9 and Hebrews 1:4 as examples (1930, p. 451). Commenting on Philippians 2:9, Dave Miller said; "Paul's reference to the name of Jesus is a reference to the authority and jurisdiction of Christ. Jesus' name being above every name means that His authority transcends all other authority." New Testament scholar John Eadie summarized the thrust of Colossians 3:17 thus: "It...strictly means—by his authority, or generally, in recognition of it. To speak in His name, or to act in His name, is to speak and act not to His honour, but under His sanction and with the conviction of His approval" (1884, 4:249). Dave Miller also has the following to say on this:

> After Moses presented God's demands to Pharaoh, he returned to the Lord and complained that Pharaoh's reaction was retaliatory: "For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people" (Exodus 5:23). For Moses to speak in God's name meant to speak only those things that God wanted said. After healing the lame man, Peter explained to the people: "And His name...has made this man strong" (Acts 3:16). He meant that it was Christ's authority and power that achieved the healing. Likewise, when Paul became annoyed at the condition of the demon possessed slave girl, he declared: "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her" (Acts 16:18, emp. added). He, too, meant that he had Christ's backing and authorization to do such



a thing. So when Paul states that everyone is obligated to speak and act "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17), he indicates that all human conduct must be conformed to the directives of Jesus Christ.

We can go on and on to cite Greek scholars on what name means. But the simple point is: it does not mean that three people mentioned in Matthew 28:19 have **one single and special name** that must be pronounced on someone when baptizing the individual; It simply refers to the authority.

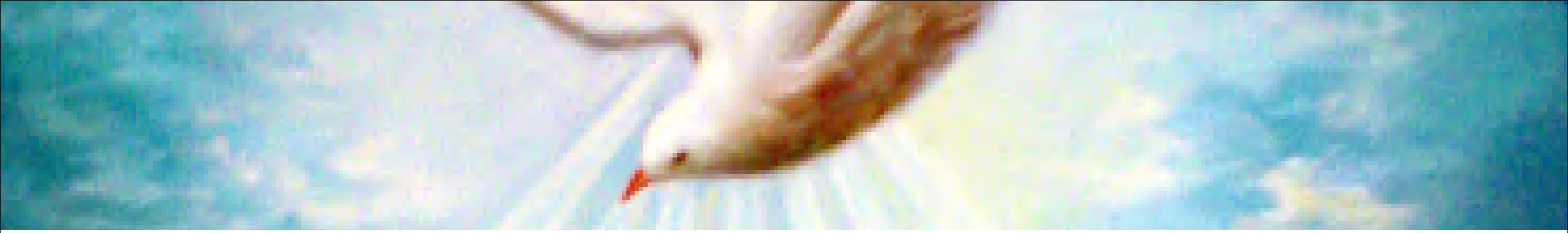
Unnecessary Assumptions

Having addressed the arguments of Brother Asaolu relative to the oneness doctrine, I wish to point out some unnecessary assumptions that he made. Contrary to his supposition, my piece was not motivated by the discussion on "*Men of God (MOG) Preaching the Gospel*" WhatsApp platform and he cannot prove otherwise. Making assumptions about what motivated my writing is unnecessary. I did not cite any statement from the platform in my writing. Neither did I even cite a single statement from his 33 paged write-up. Brother Asaolu is not the first person to advocate the oneness doctrine and I can safely say that there is not a single argument that he has made on this subject which has not been previously made by the oneness Pentecostals in the past. Those who have read debates on this issue such as the *Wallace –Vaughn (1951), Porter – Hicks (1957), Miller – Vaughn (1961), Donahue – Weatherly (2010),* etc. would see that these arguments were made by these denominational pastors and **were properly addressed**. Asaolu somewhat tried to make them in a different way, but they all point to the same thing!

Also, making assumptions and insinuating that I "***opted*** *to observe rather than comment*" during the MOG WhatsApp discussion is unnecessary. For the most part, I did not even have time to properly read through the discussion. Although, I have been an active participant in Bible discussions in that group in the past and have engaged in several debates there. However recently, due to some more pressing commitments, I have not been following up with discussions therein. Often, there are too many bulky (and sometimes) uncoordinated messages to read in the group, I only ended up skimming and that is all – looking through passively (without interest).

But even if I had deliberately decided to "*observe rather than comment*" in the WhatsApp group, that should not be an issue as he seems to present it. Most people come to a closed group discussion to advocate what they cannot boldly teach in their congregations. I am somewhat beginning to lose interest in such kind of discussion. And since there are other pressing engagements that I must attend to, I only devote my time to address issues that have been brought to the public. Those who are bold enough should publicly publish their writing and not stay in a closed group, rehashing their points and accusing people of not commenting. At least, I did not only "observe" when I received the 33paged write-up of brother Asaolu on the 6th of November, 2021, I was still reading through when I told him the next day that I will address a question on Matthew 28:19 about the singular name in the next issue of Unmasking Sophistry. I did not consider it necessary to rebut his 33paged article since I believed there are enough materials already available which masterfully did justice to his work even as I mentioned to him privately.

Prior to that discussion on the MOG platform in October 2021, I have known brethren (including Asaolu) who have advocated this teaching on ***social media platforms*** and personally, I have somewhat discussed it with some of



them privately. I have not brought up the discussion because none of them (at least the few that I know) has published anything about it. Somehow, Asaolu's publication (and not the MOG discussion) triggered my interest to write on the oneness doctrine as I consider this extremely important since churches of Christ are not known to teach such doctrine. Even at that, I deliberately chose not to quote his article in my writing so it does not appear I am picking up on a man rather than what he advocates.

I am hoping and praying that God helps us all in understanding and doing His will. Amen.

To Download Brother Asaolu's Cited Rejoinder, Please Click:
https://lainosint.com/download/faith/A_rejoinder_to_Mt_28_19_And_The_Triune_God.pdf

To Download **Unmasking Sophistry Magazine** (January – March, 2022, Volume 2, Number 1), Please Click https://www.unmaskingsophistry.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Unmasking_Sophistry_January-March_2022.pdf

To Download Brother Asaolu's 33paged Write-up Titled "Is God one or three," Please Click: https://lainosint.com/download/faith/Is_God_one_or_three.pdf

Does It Matter What One Believes?

Does it really matter what you believe as long as you are honest and sincere? We hear this sentiment, either stated or implied, over and over again. People offer this as justification for practices and convictions for which they have no other justification. But such actually flies in the face of the revelation of God. It makes subjective determination the standard of belief in serving God, and effectively undermines the idea of any true standard of authority. The last thing we need today is the rejection of God's standard found in His inspired Word. Our country and society, as well as religion, is growing increasingly corrupt, because people no longer believe in any uniform code of ethics or morality. And the cry continues: "It doesn't matter what you believe just as long as you're honest and sincere." Such a sentiment can be translated as "I'll do what I want to do" dressed in ecclesiastical garb!

Suppose a person mistakenly boards the wrong airplane. We all know his honesty and sincerity will not guarantee that he will go where he wants to go. Examples of like nature can be multiplied. As long as there is true and false, a genuine and a counterfeit, it WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE what we believe. First John 4: 1 says: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world." Hebrews 13: 9 says: Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings." Colossians 2: 8 tells us to "beware lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men."

Dear friend, does it make a difference what you believe? Yes indeed! It not only makes a difference what you believe, but it makes an ETERNAL difference! Think on these things.

Dennis Abernathy | Texas, USA

Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

A 2nd rejoinder to Mt 28:19 And The Triune God

Olumuyiwa Asaolu | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article is Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu's second response to the above article. It was received on the 10th of January, 2022. He still maintains his position on the issue.

This second rejoinder of mine is to address the rejoinder issued by Bro. Lesley Egharevba on Jan 6th, 2022 to my rejoinder. He wrongly accuses me of errors, contradictions, unnecessary assumptions, etc. as will be shown below. I will again quote Lesley as LE and tag my remark with OA.

LE: He seems not to understand that the three names in that verse are: (1) Father, (2) Son, and (3) Holy Spirit. If I say "my dad went to town," I am not using "dad" as a name but only as a relationship. But if I say "Dad, can I go with you to town?," in this case, I am using "Dad" as a name. That is how it is used in Matthew 28:19...

OA: LE did not expressly state in his previous article the name or names in which one is to be baptized. In your illustration, the one who went to town is qualified as '**my** dad,' to denote role. If you are required to formally state his name or he is asked to state his name, it would be 'Julius Egharevba' not 'dad.' Lesley's view of Mt 28:19 would be correct if Christ had said: "baptizing them in the names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." However, Christ used the definite article to indicate roles 'of **the** Father & of **the** Son & of **the** Holy Spirit.' In Mk 14:36, Jesus used 'Father' as a name not just as a relationship. He said, "*Father, all things are possible unto thee*" NOT "The Father, all things are possible unto thee."

LE: How in the world would he deny that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are names and at the same time insist that "heir" is the name for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

OA: I did not deny that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are nouns or names. Each could be a role and is NOT the common name alluded to in the Great Commission. Contrary to Lesley's claim, a Bible verse exist that branded Abraham, Isaac and Jacob **with a common name,** which referred to them as heirs.

LE: Did brother Asaolu read that statement of mine? If he did, why must he accuse me of not explaining what "name" means? Magazine articles are guided by spaces and one should not expect that all of the issues surrounding a topic must be discussed at one time in one article.

OA: I read the part where you wrote you were concerned with the grammar but I brought it up because without explaining what name means, you could not and did not answer the original query your article was supposed to address. It is in your rejoinder you aver that 'name' refers to three distinct names yet posit it refers to authority. The incongruences of that position shall be exposed.

LE: My argument was that if you apply one meaning to the first verse, you have to apply the same meaning to the second... In fact, Asaolu is not even sure of the explanation he gave because he said that "Jacob might be referring to just one or more than a single designation" (emphasis L.E.). Yet, in another page, he finds a single name for them which he called "heir."

OA: The issue is that LE '**does not pay a single attention**' to English grammar. He assumes that the constructs of

Mt 28:19 and Gen 48:16 are same but that is not true. I will elaborate and make this clear.

Christ said: *Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...*

If Jacob had stated: *Let my name and of my father Abraham and of my father Isaac be named upon them...* this would be exact with the construction of Mt 28:19 and indicate a single name was invoked.

But Jacob said: *Let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac...*

In other words, *Let **my name** be named upon them, and [let] **the name of my fathers** Abraham and Isaac [be named upon them]...*

Jacob was invoking 'name' twice upon the boys so it amounts to two names -His and that of his fathers. However, if the two names are the same then it would become just one name. Heb 11:9 reveals that to be the case and the single name applicable to both Jacob and his fathers is "heir."

LE: I may not even object to whatever explanation he may give on those passages whether it is correct or not; but let him apply "his rule" and tell us his conclusion – the one name for the trio in Genesis 48:16 – Is it heir? Or is it MORE THAN A SINGLE NAME?

OA: I showed that the single name for the patriarchs is "heir". It amuses me that LE is still asking for it.

LE: I am amazed at how he misused Revelation 3:12 in order to justify his point by all means... And how on earth did he not realize that the passage talks about the name of a person and the name of a city? That text mentions the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. Three PERSONS are NOT described here like Matthew 28:19 and Genesis 48:16 and the passage is not even parallel to what he tries to prove. He quotes 1 Chronicles 17:24 and 1 Samuel 17:45 and tries to create a parallel to Matthew 28:19 but there is absolutely no connection whatsoever... So what is the relevance?

OA: Lesley totally missed the point or why I cited those passages. In that section, I gave examples of how "**in the name of**" is used in sentences in scripture. Each construction was examined to show it has its own implication. Unfortunately, Lesley was too engrossed with his suppositions about Mt 28:19 to notice or appreciate the differences between the grammatical constructions in the cited verses. Consider some simple modern illustrations instead. A government official could say:

1. *I bring greetings in the name of the Governor and in the name of the President* -this is a reference to two entities; Sanwoolu & Buhari.

[He would not say: '*I bring greetings in the name of **the Governor and President** since such conflation would misrepresent matters as if the duo are one and the same person, based on GSR*]

2. *I bring greetings in the name of the Head of State; the President and Commander-in-Chief* -this is a reference to one entity with three roles.

[He would not say: '*I bring greetings in the name of the Head of State and in the name of the President and in the name of the Commander-in-Chief*', that would be verbose.]

3. *I bring greetings in the name of the President and of the Petroleum Minister* -this is a reference to two entities which share a single name; Buhari.

LE: Brother Asaolu used Hebrews 11:8-9 – "...the heirs with him of the same promise" to prove the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He said it is heir. I know that those who have obeyed the gospel of Christ are heirs too. Is that OUR SINGLE NAME?

OA: Heb 11:9 discusses Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and establishes that their common name (Gen 48:16) is heir. **Do you still deny it or now concede this truth?** I went further to show that today as children of Abraham by faith; we are spiritual Israel and children of promise as Isaac. I cited Rm 8:17, Gal 3:29 which declare that we are heirs. I noted that when baptized into the name of the Godhead, we are known as ***Christ****ians*. To be named after or called a child of the patriarchs is good but being called a child of God named after Christ is better. LE feigns ignorance of these and asks if heir is OUR SINGLE NAME?

LE: I am amazed at how Brother Asaolu muddled up the Grandville Sharp's rule. He brought up Jude 1:4 to dismiss the relevance of Sharp's rule but it only shows he did not look at the text well and he did not fully grasp the rule.

OA: I understood the GSR and stated that LE's application of same over Mt 28:19 was incomplete. I suspected Lesley does not really accept the ramification of GSR in Jude 1:4. Rather than admit it teaches that Jesus Christ alone is the Lord God Almighty, LE sought for translations that render it as 'only Sovereign.' Nevertheless, the import remains that Christ as the only potentiate is our Lord and God.

LE: the Grandville Sharp's rule is still EXTREMELY RELEVANT and CANNOT BE DEBUNKED as far as this discussion is concern! I need brother Asaolu to simply appreciate this rule OR he should clearly prove it is faulty. **He has not done any of these!**

OA: Why should I debunk something that I agree with? I even applied it severally in my rejoinder without you realizing that.

LE: And so, Asaolu's mathematical equations do not prove anything and the TWO passages he introduced are INAPPROPRIATE passages that do not fault the Grandville Sharp's rule.

OA: Grandville Sharp's Rule could be paraphrased as: *If a sentence is in the form "... the A and B and C..." where A, B & C are singular nouns depicting a person then B & C are further descriptions of A; only one person is being referenced.* We concur that the principle is exemplified in Tit 2:13 & 2 Pet 1:1.

Agreed that three personalities are stated in Mt 28:19, I affirm that they bear the same name. Like uninspired Granville Sharp, I could equally highlight a grammatical principle but for English language.

Observation: If a sentence is in the form "U of A and of B and of C..." where A, B & C are singular nouns then the principal attribute in U applies simultaneously to A, B and C.

Lesley neither discerned nor understood this rule but assumed I was applying GSR when I cited...

Rev 22:1 "*...proceeding out **of** the throne of God **and of** the Lamb*."

Col 2:2 "*...acknowledgement **of** the mystery of God, **and of** the Father, **and of** Christ.*"

Jn 3:5 "*...Except a man be born **of** water **and of** the Spirit...*"

On these passages, my submission is:

1. One throne is occupied by the Lamb and God; the throne of God is the throne of the Lamb (Rev 4:2; 5:6-7)
2. A single mystery pertains to the Godhead -the mystery of godliness (1 Tim 3:16, Eph 3:4)
3. A single birth occurs when someone is born again (1 Pet 1:23, Tit 3:5) not two distinct births although water and the Spirit are involved. We are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God.

While Granville Sharp discusses Greek 'HO & KAI (the, and)' distribution over singular nouns, I discuss English 'OF THE, AND OF (tou, kai)' distribution over such nouns. More examples include...

Mark 15:40 *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother **of** James the less **and of** Joses, and Salome.*

This verse names just three of the onlookers and indicates that the Mary who was the mother of James was also the mother of Joses. If "of" was missing before Joses, it would have meant that Joses was amongst the onlookers rather than a sibling of James the less.

Acts 3:13 *The God **of** Abraham, **and of** Isaac, **and of** Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.*

The same God was known by the patriarchs (Mk 12:26) not 'a different God for each' as Lesley might misconstrue based on his contention over "name" in Gen 48:16 & Mt 28:19.

Ephesians 5:5 *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom **of** Christ **and of** God.*

The kingdom of Christ is principally that of God, this verse is not a reference to two separate kingdoms.

James 1:1 *James, a servant **of** God **and of** the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*

One James introduced as a servant of God, was concurrently a servant of Christ. He served the Lord Jesus and God. Since his name is stated, Lesley cannot argue that 'servant' refers to two distinct persons.

Likewise, one name is under consideration in Mt 28:19 due to "of" & and of" in the clause:

*Baptizing them in the name **of** the Father, **and of** the Son **and of** the Holy Spirit...*

LE: He said that Isaiah 9:6 and 2 Corinthians 3:17 prove that three personalities were represented by a lone person. I deny this! One cannot take a passage or two that he seems not to understand and then array it against several passages of the scriptures that teach the complete opposite.

OA: Lesley may deny these passages but he can neither erase nor refute both. The verses state that Christ is *the everlasting Father* and that *the Lord is that Spirit*. The word of God is in harmony. It teaches that there is a Father, as well as a Son as well as a Holy Spirit and I believe that. It also teaches that one God is the deity who expresses Himself in these personalities and I equally believe it.

LE: ...Asaolu insists that the name is "the Lord Jesus Christ" (p.2) and that this name ("the Lord Jesus Christ") must be mentioned at baptism, yet that does not sound like "a set of words" or "a formula" to him. Well, a formula does not have to be a very long sentence to be a formula. It is a formula and it is a set of words if you insist that "the Lord Jesus Christ" should be mentioned while baptizing an individual even if there are 100 other words said alongside with it at different times. "The Lord Jesus Christ" is four words and Asaolu said that these set of EXACT words MUST be said when baptizing.

OA: Quoting my original article without proceeding to debunk what is cited indicates the weakness of LE's position. It is true that I wrote that the name revealed for baptism is "**the Lord Jesus Christ.**" However, it is a false attribution on LE's part to write, "Asaolu said that these set of EXACT words MUST be said when baptizing." I challenge Lesley to pinpoint a Page, paragraph and line in any of my articles wherein that statement is penned. My position has always been that the name ought to be confessed by the penitent and by the baptizer. I gave at least four VARYING examples of such in each of my articles but LE conveniently ignored that in other to promote his propaganda on 'exact formula.'

Most Junior High School students know the so-called 'almighty formula' ($x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$) for solving the quadratic equation ($ax^2 + bx + c = 0$). In special cases, where *b* is zero, we may use $x = \pm\sqrt{-c/a}$, where *c* is zero we may use $x = 0$ or $-b/a$ but where *a* is zero, we use $x = -c/b$. The important thing is that each solution expression is a variant of *x equals...* Thus, a formula may take different forms at certain times though the same system is under consideration. Similarly, the inspired writers did not consider it mandatory to always write 'the Lord Jesus Christ' in full. Even accounts of conversion in the book of Acts have variations; some have confession or baptism missing but we believe such are implied.

LE: In fact, what is the whole essence of his argument on the single name to be used in baptism? Is he aware that there are variations of the name?

OA: The essence of using one name in baptism is to acknowledge that the Godhead is fully manifest in **Christ** (Col 1:19; 2:9). Furthermore, when one is immersed into that name, "*the name of Christ is named upon the person*" and, such becomes a **Christian** -Acts 2:38, 11:26, 2 Tim 2:19, 1 Pet 4:16 One does not become a 'Fatherian and Sonian and Holy Spiritian'!

Besides, few ramifications of the single name argument were listed on page 4 of my first rejoinder. I am aware of variations in the name used for baptism but LE did not grasp the last paragraph of my first rejoinder. We are to use the name of the Godhead in water baptism. Whether we say "in the name of Jesus Christ" or "in the name of the

Lord Jesus" or "in the name of Christ," such is valid -Acts 2:38; 8:16; 8:35-37; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16, Rm 6:3-4; 10:9-10 & 1 Cor 1:12-15. Each of the statements **refer exclusively to the same Saviour**; the one God manifest in the flesh, Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Acts 4:12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

LE: If baptizing in the name of Jesus means calling the name of Jesus over the one being baptized, remember that in Acts 2:38, Peter said they should "*Repent...in the name of Jesus Christ*." "Repent" is also "in the name of Jesus Christ." Let Asaolu tell us HOW the penitent SHOULD "repent... in the name of Jesus Christ."

OA: Lesley is trying to inject his opinion into scripture. The inspired text does NOT state "*Repent in the name of Jesus Christ*" rather it says "*Repent and* ***be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ***."

LE: Brother Asaolu should clearly tell us whether if a man is immersed in water and the baptizer said something relating to the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit without mentioning Jesus, the baptism is invalid. If the baptism is valid without the baptizer mentioning the name of Jesus and Asaolu recognizes such as being baptized into Christ, then his whole argument IS A WASTE OF TIME!

OA: To minister unto and baptize a person, without mentioning the name of Jesus Christ would be unacceptable. A scriptural conversion starts with preaching and culminates in water baptism; it is a process in which the name of Jesus Christ is believed and proclaimed by both the penitent and the baptizer. That is the New Testament pattern. **Nobody understands Mt 28:19 more than the inspired apostles who established on the day of Pentecost** that to "*baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" is to use a single divine name and, "*baptize in the name of Jesus Christ.*"

LE: In my article, I stated that even if the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all have the same name, such would not prove that they are the same person. And I insist on this. Asaolu brought up the idea of them "co-located at an instant." I have seen men who bear the same name with their father and even grandfather. It seems that Asaolu will have them live together for them to be able to bear the same name. That is absurd!

OA: It is not absurd given that the Godhead resides in heaven though omnipresent. Rather than affirm outright as false 'the one name argument,' Lesley repeatedly avers: '**even if it is true** it does not prove that they are the same person.' This suggests that the view is reasonable but the larger implication makes it difficult for him to accept the mounting scriptural evidence that the Godhead bears one special name.

LE: I remember that Asaolu have argued at one time about the name of the church. If I remember correctly, he does not believe that the term "church of Christ" is the proper name for the church. He believes it is a descriptive name just like other descriptive names that we have in the New Testament for the church... How in the world is it consistent to insist for a single name for any or all of the three and it makes no sense to insist for a single name for the church? God's children are also called by different names in the New Testament but Asaolu would not insist for a single name.

OA: Lesley does NOT remember correctly. He could have revisited my Facebook page to see the thread where someone argued over my post. It is indisputable that 'the church of Christ' is a descriptive term in scripture [just as '*the church of God or the household of God*.'] The phrase identifies the church relative to its owner and is not a proper name. Also, *the body of Christ, the name of the Son, the apostle of Christ, the disciples of Christ*, are not names, as "the dog of Lesley" or "Lesley's dog" is just a description for a pet dog which could actually be named Bingo. The foremost, proper name for God's people under the New Covenant is **Christian**s since the most exalted name of God in this dispensation, wherein His people are immersed is Jesus Christ. Terms like brethren, saints, disciples, etc. are not unique to them. Interestingly, a local congregation does not formally bear 'church of Christ' rather the nickname of each assembly is prefixed or suffixed with a geographical location e.g. "Corinth church of Christ" or "the Church of Christ - Corinth." The single name that we bear worldwide is 'Christians.'

LE: I know that in the Bible, The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit are called different names at different times (for example, the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, etc.; the Son is called by different names in Isaiah 9:6 and elsewhere; and even the Father is called by other different names in Exodus 3:14, Isaiah 42:8, etc.).

OA: Do you baptize a penitent in the names of God such as 'the Holy One of Israel, the everlasting Father and the Spirit of Truth'? [If not, why not?] I don't do such because Acts 4:12 fulfills Zech 14:9.

LE: Let him give us A CLEAR PASSAGE that reveals the EXCLUSIVE SINGLE NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then he will be making some progress!

OA: Jesus Christ is the name of God -Titus 2:13. To confirm it, anyone can **sincerely apply** Grandville Sharp's Rule to 2 Timothy 1:2 to discover that Father and Christ refers to the same entity: *To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The Holy Spirit is known as *the Spirit of God or the Spirit of the Lord or the Spirit of Christ* (Acts 5:9, Rm 8:9) because He is the same named deity considered from various perspectives or roles.

[God who is Spirit appeared in human form so as to save mankind in this last age after sending prophets to foretell same. Isaiah saw God in a vision and was sent to deliver a message to Israel (Isa 6:1-10). John wrote that the LORD of hosts whom Isaiah saw, was Jesus in His glory (Jn 12:36-41) while Paul said that the Holy Spirit spoke to Isaiah (Acts 28:25-27). Some, like Lesley denies that Christ is the LORD (Jehovah God) in the OT and also deny that God (the Father) is our Lord Jesus in the NT.]

LE: May I ask this question which has been bothering my mind: **How do we distinguish a person who is baptized in the name of Jesus from a person who is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?**

OA: Perhaps by their fruit we shall know them since out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. Those who truly believe the deity of the Son or that "our God and Saviour is Jesus Christ" would wholeheartedly confess or call upon (by voice or text or sign language) the name of the Lord before being baptized. Such would likewise inform penitents being made into disciples that a person is to be baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ via immersion into His name [regardless of the variant pronounced].

Those that believe otherwise, who profess they were baptized into three separate divine persons, will likely uphold their baptismal formula. Do you insist that the EXACT phrase: "*in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" MUST be pronounced?

LE: We can go on and on to cite Greek scholars on what name means. But the simple point is: it does not mean that three people mentioned in Matthew 28:19 have **one single and special name** that must be pronounced on someone when baptizing the individual; It simply refers to the authority.

OA: Lesley threw in verses such as Col 3:17, Exo 5:23 & Acts 3:16 to propound that name refers to authority in Mt 28:19. That is inadequate. Firstly, he ought to focus on the context of the verse in question, where the risen Christ commanded baptism for our gospel age in the name of the Godhead. Secondly, he should note the exemplification in verses where the inspired apostles reiterated same.

I anticipatorily addressed the incursion into Col 3:17 in my original article. Besides, I wrote on Page 17:

"Peter never commanded people to be baptized in the name of a Trinity or in the authority of a Trinity. Christ need not instruct: "*baptizing them in the authority of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" since he just declared that **all authority is vested in himself!**" [Emphasis OA - Mt 28:18-19]

Now the incongruities are laid bare. Is Lesley positing that...

1. Penitents must be baptized in three literal names: Father, Son & Holy Spirit?

2. Jesus means baptizing them in three distinct authorities of the Father & the Son & the Holy Spirit? [If it is not a common name then it can't be a common authority! Presently, who has all authority?]

3. In Gen 48:16, Jacob meant: "let my authority be authorized upon them and the authority of my fathers Abraham and Isaac..."?

On Page 18 of my initial work, I wrote:

Sometimes, "in the name of," "in his name," "in my name" refers to the **actual name** i.e. "Lord Jesus Christ" not merely "in his authority," **see Mt 12:21; 24:5, Acts 3:16; 16:18** [Emphasis OA]

LE's commentary on Acts 3:16 & 16:18 begs the issue since in these texts (contexts), Peter & Paul **uttered** the name of Jesus, and not the phrase "in the name of the Son." Christ's authority was displayed by his approved messengers using His name to heal a lame man and to expel a spirit of divination.

LE: Having addressed the arguments of Brother Asaolu relative to the oneness doctrine, I wish to point out some unnecessary assumptions that he made... I did not consider it necessary to rebut his 33paged article since I believed there are enough materials already available which masterfully did justice to his work even as I mentioned to him privately ...Somehow, Asaolu's publication (and not the MOG discussion) triggered my interest to write on the oneness doctrine...

OA: It is a pity Lesley does not see the irreconcilabilities in his statements. If LE really believed that existing works **sufficiently address** my position, he would not devote any effort to write on the subject or do rejoinders! His two Magazine articles were supposedly to confront 'false doctrine' which 'not until very recently' had he ever known is propagated by 'some "amongst us."' He declined to privately discuss his views on Mt 28:19 based on Gen 48:16 which he raised after the MOG discussion. Seems he preferred a public avenue to seek to address 'the old arguments' which 'Asaolu somewhat tried to make in a different way.' I am so thankful that this exercise will provoke many to study and arrive at the truth.

LE: I consider this extremely important since churches of Christ are not known to teach such doctrine.

OA: It is what the New Testament teaches that is important not necessarily what some modern Churches of Christ teach and practice now. The apostles' doctrine in the Lord's church is evident in Acts 2:38f.

LE: God willing, both his rejoinder and this response will be published in the next issue of the Magazine, whether or not he releases a rejoinder after reading this.

OA: That is welcomed. Do publish as many rejoinders as we exchange, in the Magazine. That would be prioritization and balanced reportage, pagination should not really be an issue since you publish only softcopy not hardcopies on www.unmaskingsophistry.com

LE: I am hoping and praying that God helps us all in understanding and doing His will. Amen.

OA: In Jesus Christ's name, Amen!

To Download O. Lesley Egharevba's First Response, Please Click:
https://www.unmaskingsophistry.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Matthew_28_19_And_The_Triune_God_Rebuttal_To_Asaolu.pdf

Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

A Response To O.S. Asaolu (Part Two)

Osamagbe Lesley EGHAREVBA | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article is the second response to Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu's rejoinder. It was released on the 12th of January, 2022 on social media groups and Unmasking Sophistry website.

I am delighted to respond again to the arguments of Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu presented in his second rejoinder on the above subject. His second rejoinder was released on the 10th of January, 2022 and those who have been following this discussion from the beginning would understand that Asaolu is yet to realize the absurdity of his position. It is my desire to address the arguments as he has presented them. His inconsistencies and summersaults on this subject are increasing as he continues to write. This will be made clear in this piece. Again, a little reflection on his argument (in my opinion) reveals the fact that the arguments are neither Scriptural nor logical.

Does The Definite Article Really Nullify The Names?

It is interesting that Asaolu finds solace in the definite article (the) to disprove that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are names in Matthew 28:19. In his words;

> *Lesley's view of Mt 28:19 would be correct if Christ had said: "baptizing them in the names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." However, Christ used the definite article to indicate roles "of **the** Father & of **the** Son & of **the** Holy Spirit." In Mk 14:36, Jesus used "Father" as a name not just as a relationship. He said, "Father, all things are possible unto thee" NOT "The Father, all things are possible unto thee."*

Because the definite article (the) does not appear before the name "Father" in Mark 14:36, Asaolu agrees the usage of "Father" in that verse is a name but because the definite article appears before "Father", "Son" and "Holy Spirit" in Matthew 28:19, he says they are not names but just indicating roles. If this is true, how come the name that Asaolu gave to us (*"the Lord Jesus Christ"*) which must be pronounced at baptism by the baptizer has the definite article in it? At least, there are three occasions where Asaolu reiterated that the name into which one must be baptized is "***the*** *Lord Jesus Christ.*" In page 16 of his 33paged write-up, he said; ***"The Lord Jesus Christ" is "the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*** And then on page 2 of his first rejoinder, he said that *"the Lord revealed a single name to his apostles to use in baptizing converts. That name is "**the Lord Jesus Christ**" as evident in Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5, etc."* And in page 4 of his second rejoinder, he said; *"It is true that I wrote that the name revealed for baptism is "**the Lord Jesus Christ.**"*

Notice that in all of these three instances, Asaolu has the definite article ("the") before "Lord Jesus Christ." If the definite article before "Father," "Son" and "Holy Spirit" disqualifies them to be names, how come he conveniently has it before "Lord Jesus Christ" and that qualifies as a name? Notice that in page 4 of his second rejoinder, he agrees that there are varying examples of the name. One of such variations is "the Lord" (Acts 10:48). If "the Lord" is accepted as a name, why will "the Father" not be accepted as a name? Did he even realize that the Bible passage (Hebrews 11:9) from which he brought out the so-called single name for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has the definite article before the word "heir" which he called their correct and common name? Hebrews 11:9 reads; "***...the heirs*** *with him of the same promise*" and not "*...heirs with him of the same promise.*" He claims "the Father" is not a name yet he believes "the heirs" is a name. More than once in his rejoinder, Asaolu removed the definite article before the word "heir" in Hebrews 11:9 in other to confuse the readers and insists that *"a Bible verse exist that branded Abraham, Isaac and Jacob* ***with a common name****, which referred to them as heirs"* (p.1) and that *"Heb 11:9 reveals that...the single name applicable to both Jacob and his fathers is "heir"* (p.2). What happened to the definite article? He removed it!!! Honestly, I am embarrassed to have to debate a man who keeps making rules that would not be consistent even for a second.

What Does Name Mean?

Asaolu falsely accused me when he said; *"It is in your rejoinder you aver that "name" refers to three distinct names yet posit it refers to authority."* I never said that the meaning of "name" as used in Matthew 28:19 refers to *"three distinct names"* (and I challenge him to produce my very statement where I said that). In page 6 of my erstwhile response to him, I showed clearly that "name" refers to authority, citing Greek scholars and passages of the scriptures to prove it. I mentioned A.T. Robertson (1934, p. 740) and said that he cites the use of *onoma* in Matthew 28:19 as an example where "name" "has the idea of 'the authority of.'" I do not know where Asaolu got the impression that I said that the word "name" as used in Matthew 28:19 refers to 3 distinct names.

The truth is: Asaolu does not appreciate real meaning of "name" in this verse. Even when he is not schooled in Greek, he disagrees with Greek authorities and lexicographers on what they said the word "name" means here and substitutes with his own meaning. He has been the one insisting that its usage in that verse refers to ONE SINGLE LITERAL NAME and then requests that I produce the three names if I disagree it is in reference to one name. I mentioned that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are names (using his own definition of what a name is) and that the three names in Matthew 28:19 are Father, Son and Holy Spirit. That is not to say that I have interpreted "name" as "three different names." We can have the sentence construction in a different way and I will still argue that three names are mentioned there. For example, if we have *"Baptizing them in the authority of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."* We still have three names in the verse even when we replaced the word "name" with "authority." It does not matter whether the word "name" is there or not, we still have three names regardless. It is not the word "name" in Matthew 28:19 that makes it three names; rather, it is the mentioning of Father, Son and Holy Spirit that makes us arrive at three names.

In I Samuel 25:9, some people brought greetings to Nabal "*in the name of David.*" There is only one person mentioned here which is David. I did not come to the realization of that because the word "name" is mentioned but because "David" is mentioned there. So also, there are THREE people mentioned in Matthew 28:19 and I did not come to the realization of that because "name" is mentioned but because the three people are mentioned separately.

Is Genesis 48:16 And Matthew 28:19 Not Really Parallel?

Asaolu said that Lesley "*assumes that the constructs of Mt 28:19 and Gen 48:16 are same but that is not true.*" Is it not interesting that Asaolu claims that the construction of Matthew 28:19 and Genesis 48:16 are not the same, yet he applied the same rule and produced a single name IN BOTH PASSAGES? What exactly is his position? If he actually believes that the two constructions are not the same, how is he able to produce a single name in Matthew 28:19 and in Genesis 48:16. I am even more amazed that after telling us that there is a single name for the three in Genesis 48:16, Asaolu still admitted that *"it amounts to two names."* (p.2). Why such inconsistency? The truth is: whatever he is going to say, Genesis 48:16 sinks his whole argument about "the name" and he cannot help but contradict himself.

He still has nothing to refute Genesis 48:16. The sentence reads; *"the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac."* The word "name" is singular and we have plural persons mentioned alongside with it; the same thing in Matthew 28:19, *"the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* we have the singular "name" used with three distinct people. Asaolu says because of the singular "name," it means the three people in Matthew 28:19 have one name. If that is true, then Genesis 48:16 should have one name too. That is the simple parallel he has refused to admit. He insists it must read like Matthew 10:2 and Revelation 21:14 (*the names of the apostles*) before one can argue for more than one name. Genesis did not read "*the **names** of my fathers*" but the "***name** of my fathers.*" Brother Asaolu cannot eat his cake and have it at the same time. Up until now, he has not made up his mind on whether Genesis 48:16 has a single name or not. In one place, he will admit there is a single name and in another place, he would admit there is more than one. He should please make up his mind quickly and let us know.

In page 1-2, he brought up some grammatical statements as a condition for a parallel to exist between Genesis 48:16 and Matthew 28:19. He said *"If Jacob had stated: Let my name **and of** my father Abraham **and of** my father Isaac be named upon them... this would be exact with the construction of Mt 28:19 and **indicate a single name was invoked.**"* He also cited Mark 15:40 in an effort to support that statement. Well, Jacob did not say so and he did not have to say so to be parallel to what Christ said. Observe carefully: in Mark 2:18, we have the following words; "*...the disciples of John **and of** the Pharisees used to fast...*" Would Asaolu argue that the "*disciples of John **and** of the Pharisees*" are one and the same (single) **<u>set</u>** of disciples? In his 3rd example on page 2, he said a government could say; "*I bring greetings in the name of the President and of the Petroleum Minister*" and concludes that "*this is a reference to two entities which share a single name; Buhari.*" I would like to know what would be wrong with the sentence if he replaces "Petroleum Minister" with "Governor!" Would the sentence be grammatically incorrect? If yes, how? And if no, would it still refer to two entities which share a single name, using the same Nigerian context and characters that he used?

Is This Really The Truth One Should Concede?

He asks me if I still deny or I now concede "***this truth***" that "heir" is the one name for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I am amazed at what he calls "truth." This so called truth is a perverted one as he did not even quote it correctly by omitting a word. Every sound Bible scholar in the world knows that "the heirs" is not being used as a name in Hebrews 11:9. Brother Asaolu must be saying this out of desperation. Even his modern "Oneness colleagues" will most likely disagree with him on that (I know of a Oneness Pentecostal advocate that believed the single name of the trio in Genesis 48:16 is Israel)! It would be a poor reflection on my part to admit this gross error that *"the heirs"* is the name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Has he ever taught on the book of Hebrews since he became a member of the Lord's church? If yes, I wish to know if he had ever taught a class while reading Hebrews 11:9 that the single name for Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is "the heirs" or he just realized it during this discussion. Asaolu is only perverting this passage to have his way on this issue but it will not work.

Smart Attempt To Dismiss And Get Away From Jude 1:4

On Jude 1:4, Asaolu said that *"Rather than admit it teaches that Jesus Christ alone is the Lord God Almighty, LE sought for translations that render it as "only Sovereign." Nevertheless, the import remains that Christ as the only potentiate is our Lord and God."* It is amazing that despite the Greek analysis I did on that verse, the only thing Asaolu saw was that I sought for translations that render it as "only sovereign." That is sad! I stated that the phrase; "***the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ***" as rendered by the KJV appears in Greek thus: *ho monos despotes kai kurios ego Iesous Christos.* And when translated in English, what we have is: *ho (the – **g3588**) monos (only – **g3441**) despotes (Master, Lord, etc. – **g1203**) kai (and – **g2532**) kurios (Lord – **g2962**) ego (of us – **g1473**) Iesous (Jesus – **g2424**) Christos (Christ – **g5547**)*. It simply reads; ***the only Master and Lord of us Jesus Christ***. The Greek word for God (*theos*) is absent in that verse and what we have is "***the only Master and Lord of us Jesus Christ***" The definite article appears once before the first noun (Master) and is not repeated before the second noun (Lord) and that clearly shows it refers to one person. He did not disprove it but ignored it. To further strengthen my point, I quoted two different translations of that verse and encouraged readers to check other translations and see that they are in agreement with what I said but Asaolu ignored all of these efforts and made false claims.

It is a standard in polemics that a person may refer his audience to check other rendering of a particular text by translators in order to justify a point, and my doing so is not in any way out of place. Brother Asaolu has referred people to Bible Hub and used different translations of the Bible to prove his point at different times during Bible discussions. He did not consider such as inappropriate but because he has found himself in a predicament, using other translations to support a point is now a crime. His KJV Bible has the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4 but he would not teach that it is a correct rendering; however, he wants to marry and stick to the KJV Bible in Jude 1:4 because he thinks it support him. Well, I am willing to take away other translations but I request that he disprove the Greek analysis above. He should not pretend that he agrees with me on that verse. If he did, he would not complain that Lesley *"sought for translations that render it as 'only Sovereign' rather than admit it teaches that Jesus Christ alone is the Lord God Almighty."* He actually brought it to dismiss the relevance of the Grandville Sharp's Rule and to prove the error that God the Father and the Son is one single individual and that was why he dared me to apply the rule to the text. He had a completely different and wrong interpretation of that verse and thought I would not accept the ramifications as it relates to the GSR. Because of the rendering in KJV, he was seeing TWO ENTITIES in this verse which was fused together as ONE SINGLE PERSON like he has been erroneously doing with other verses. He did not know that the verse is talking about Jesus Christ alone. He assumes that the verse refers to God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ as ONE SINGLE PERSON. That has been his position from the beginning and his baptismal formula doctrine of mentioning the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at baptism is an offshoot of that false idea. He tries to paraphrase the Grandville Sharp's Rule by all means just to prove his point. But I do not understand why he must twist the simple rule before he can apply it.

Inconsistent Grammatical Principle

Asaolu said; "*Like uninspired Granville Sharp, I could equally highlight a grammatical principle but for English language*." Well, even if brother Asaolu highlights a grammatical rule or principle in English language, such rule will have to go through scrutiny and be adjudged as correct, before it becomes a generally accepted principle. Unlike uninspired Asaolu, uninspired Grandville Sharp was a Greek language scholar and that was why he was qualified to set forth the Grandville Sharp's rule and till date, the principle still holds water; it has been tested and proven to be true. Asaolu is neither a Greek nor an English language authority and he is absolutely UNQUALIFIED to propose or highlight a grammatical principle without citing an English authority that agrees with him. The problem with the principle he proposes is that **it does not work when applied to other parallel statements in the Bible and even with his own very examples that he gave**. His principle in his own words is that *"If a sentence is in the form "U of A and of B and of C..." where A, B & C are singular nouns then the principal attribute in U applies simultaneously to A, B and C."*

This self-made principle of Asaolu means that if you have a statement such as in Revelation 22:1: "*proceeding out of **the throne of** God **and of** the Lamb*", since "throne" is in the singular and not "thrones," it means that God and Lamb must have one throne. Or if as we have in Colossians 2:2: "*acknowledgement of **the mystery of** God, **and of** the Father, **and of** Christ,*" what it means, according to Asaolu is that both the Father and Christ has a single mystery. That is the essence of all the passages he quoted such as John 3:5, Mark 15:40, Acts 3:13, Ephesians 5:5, etc. We would come to those passages later but let us first of all apply this principle to Matthew 28:19 and see how reliable it is. In that verse, we have; "*baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*" According to Asaolu's grammatical rule, since name is singular, it means Father, Son and Holy Spirit share ONE SINGLE NAME. But what is this single name? Asaolu gave about THREE to FOUR variations of name yet, he says it is a single name. In fact, in page 4 of his rejoinder, he confessed; "*I gave at least four VARYING examples of such in each of my articles*" and yet, he says it is a single name. His grammatical rule states that Father, Son and Holy Spirit should have one single name, but he claims he gave four variations of names. If Matthew 28:19 would allow for **three or four variations of the same name**, then other passages he brought up should allow for different variations of the subject involved. Let us now apply this rule to other passages he brought up as seen in the table in the next page:

S/N	Bible Passages Cited By Asaolu For His Rule	Questions Showing Asaolu's Rule Is Faulty
1.	John 3:3: *"...Except a man be <u>born</u> **of** water **and of** the Spirit..."*	Does water and spirit amount to three or four variations of birth?
2.	Mark 15:40: *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary <u>the mother</u> **of** James the less **and of** Joses, and Salome*	Did James and Joses have three variations of one mother?
3.	Revelation 22:1: *"proceeding out of <u>the throne</u> **of** God **and of** the Lamb"*	Do God and the Lamb have three variations of one throne?
4.	Ephesians 5:5: *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom **of** Christ **and of** God.*	Do Christ and God have three variations of one kingdom?
5.	Genesis 48:16: *"the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac."*	Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have three variations of the same name?
6.	James 1:1: *James, a servant **of** God **and of** the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*	Do God and the Lord Jesus Christ have three variations of the same servant, James?
7.	Col 2:2 *"...acknowledgement of the mystery **of** God, **and of** the Father, **and of** Christ."*	Do the Father and Christ have three or four variations of the same mystery?
8.	Acts 3:13: *The God **of** Abraham, **and of** Isaac, **and of** Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.*	Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have three variations of God (the Father)? Notice that this passage mentions God and His Son Jesus. So there ought to be 3 or 4 variations of God (the Father) according to Asaolu.

It would only be consistent if Asaolu will correctly apply his rule and produce three variations of each of the subject discussed in the above passages he has brought up. The "name" in Matthew 28:19 cannot have more than one variation using his rule and he would not produce the variations in other passages brought up.

On James 1:1, Asaolu said; *"One James introduced as a servant of God, was concurrently a servant of Christ. He served the Lord Jesus and God. Since his name is stated, Lesley cannot argue that "servant" refers to two distinct persons."* I did not argue that "name" in Matthew 28:19 means "three distinct persons" and I would not argue that "servant" would refer to one or two persons. James is mentioned here and that tells me it is one person. The three distinct persons in Matthew 28:19 were mentioned separately from the word "name" and that tells me that they are three distinct persons.

Why Deny And Accept Your Baptismal Formula At The Same Time?

Asaolu denied ever saying that what to be mentioned by the baptizer at baptism is "the Lord Jesus Christ" and challenges me to bring his statement where he said those exact words must be said. I knew that was the only way for him to get out of such predicament – he has to simply deny that he said so! Well, I will be glad to provide his statement again. In page 2 of his first rejoinder, he said; *"the Lord revealed **a single name** to his apostles to use in baptizing converts. That name is "**the** **Lord Jesus Christ.**"* **I looked up the word "single" on Google and it means "only one." If the Lord reveals only one name and that name is "*the Lord Jesus Christ,*" then there cannot be another name. If there are variations as he supposedly agrees, then the Lord did not reveal A SINGLE NAME**.

In page 17 of his 33paged write-up, he said "***Neither of them*** **(i.e. the baptizer and the candidate to be baptized)** ***SHOULD FAIL to say THE NAME*"** (emphasis L.E.). In page 5 of his second rejoinder, he said; *"To minister unto and baptize a person, **without mentioning the name of Jesus Christ** would be unacceptable."* What name did Asaolu said the Lord revealed to be used in baptism? The name is "the Lord Jesus Christ." And he said that "neither of them SHOULD FAIL TO SAY THE NAME." And if the baptizer FAILS TO SAY THE NAME, Asaolu says it is UNACCEPTABLE! He wants **these very words** to be said by both the baptizer and the one being baptized. That was why he was displeased with those saying something different from "the Lord Jesus Christ" while baptizing a penitent. This is a set of exact words that he wants people to say during baptism and I showed it is a formula.

Interestingly, on page 5, Asaolu was talking about what to be said at baptism by the baptizer and he wrote; *"Whether we say "in the name of Jesus Christ" or "in the name of the Lord Jesus" or "in the name of Christ," such is valid...Each of the statements **refer exclusively to the same Saviour...;**"* If THESE THREE STATEMENTS refer to one person, then the three statements cannot be A SINGLE NAME. He has three names here and he is still insisting on a single name. Besides, is he also aware some were baptized "*in the name of the Lord*" without "Jesus" or "Christ" mentioned (Acts 10:48)? Why did he not include it as part of his new variations? If "the Lord" is an acceptable name, why can we not have "the Father," "the Son" and "the Holy Spirit" as acceptable names?

The truth is: whether Asaolu insists that what to say while baptizing is *"in the name of Jesus Christ" or "in the name of the Lord Jesus" or "in the name of Christ,"* **It is still a formula and he admitted this fact** in his writing as we shall see in a moment. We are not talking about mathematical formula here. Asaolu should have done a little job by looking up the word "formula" in the dictionary or Google. I looked it up and it gives me FIVE different meanings. One of the meanings I got is "a mathematical relationship or rule expressed in symbols" but this is not the meaning intended in this discourse; hence, his reference to the quadratic equation formula is a straw man and it only landed him into more trouble as we shall see in the next paragraph. Another meaning of formula is *"a set form of words,* *especially one used in particular contexts or as a conventional usage*" and the various synonyms brought under this definition include; *form of words, set of words, set expression, phrase, saying, etc*. and this is the meaning intended. One of the ways Merriam Webster defines formula is *"a set form of words for use in a ceremony or ritual."* All of the variations he claims are available are *"set of words...that neither of them SHOULD FAIL TO SAY"* during baptism.

Initially, in page 4 of his erstwhile rejoinder, he said that *"Faithful members of the Lord's church, do not insist on "a particular formula" or set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone."* When it was proven to him that the name he gave to us to be used in baptism is a formula, he recanted and said *"formula may take different forms at certain times though the same system is under consideration"* and he used the quadratic equation formula to prove that a formula may take different forms. He now admits that what he is teaching is a baptismal formula but the only thing is that the formula should take different forms or variations. Faithful members of the Lord's church do not insist on a particular formula to be used when baptizing, yet, at the same time, they can insist on a particular formula provided the formula takes different forms or variations. His inconsistencies and shifting positions are so glaring for readers to see and these amaze me greatly.

He said *"The essence of using* ***one name*** *in baptism is to acknowledge that the Godhead is fully manifest in* ***Christ*** *(Col 1:19; 2:9). Furthermore, when one is immersed into that name, "the name of Christ is named upon the person" and, such becomes a* ***Christian****"* **No Bible passage teaches that the essence of using one name in baptism is to acknowledge that the Godhead is fully manifest in Christ (and I challenge him to give us a passage that says that). The Bible references he cited do not teach so. Please read Colossians 1:19 and 2:9 and you would see that it says NOTHING about the essence of using one name in baptism. This is another error embedded in Asaolu's view.** Besides, he did not show us **one name** but **three to four variations of names.** Furthermore, what is "the name of Christ" that is named upon the person? Is it Christ? Or is it Jesus? Or is it Lord? Or is it ALL OF THE ABOVE? All of these (Lord, Christ and Jesus) have different meanings and I do not understand how they translate to ONE NAME.

"Repent" Is Also "In The Name Of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38)

In my first rejoinder I asked that

> *"If baptizing in the name of Jesus means calling the name of Jesus over the one being baptized, remember that in Acts 2:38, Peter said they should "Repent...in the name of Jesus Christ." "Repent" is also "in the name of Jesus Christ." Let Asaolu tell us HOW the penitent SHOULD "repent... in the name of Jesus Christ."*

In response, Asaolu said; *"Lesley is trying to inject his opinion into scripture. The inspired text does NOT state "Repent in the name of Jesus Christ" rather it says "Repent and* ***be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."***

I am amazed that he does not understand the usage of conjunction in English sentence, yet he wants to propose a new grammatical principle in English! When the Bible says ***"Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ,"*** it means repent in the name of Jesus Christ and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, just like Asaolu would admit that the verse is also saying repent for the remission of sins and be baptized for the remission of sins. Asaolu has not answered this point – he should tell us why he does not say *"you repent in the name of Jesus Christ"* when he baptizes someone.

In Mark 16:16, Jesus said; *"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved"* Asaolu understands this to mean that belief + baptism will give you salvation. Some have argued that only belief is necessary to give you salvation but we have correctly understood this to mean belief and baptism will give you salvation because of the conjunction "and" that connects or joins belief plus baptism. In Acts 2:38, Peter said *"Repent AND be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."* What they are to do "in the name of Jesus Christ" is "Repent and be baptized." There is absolutely no way Asaolu would dismiss this!

"Even If" Means I Agree With You?

Asaolu said on page 5;

> *Rather than affirm outright as false "the one name argument," Lesley repeatedly avers: "even if it is true it does not prove that they are the same person." This suggests that the view is reasonable but the larger implication makes it difficult for him to accept the mounting scriptural evidence that the Godhead bears one special name.*

He does not have to tell people that his view is "reasonable" before they will see it. If it is reasonable, people will know without him telling them. He tries to pick up on my statement "even if" and assumes that suggest I appreciate his position to an extent but I would not just accept it. That is false. My whole endeavor from the beginning of this discourse is to show that the oneness doctrine is false. My use of *"even if"* only shows how flexible I am and the incongruity of his position. Sometimes, we grant certain things for the sake of argument but that does not mean we are in agreement with what we have granted. I do not actually believe that "name" as used in Matthew 28:19 refers to either one or more names. But Asaolu's WHOLE argument is dependent on "name" in that verse. I told him that even if he is able to prove (that does not mean he has proven it) that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have one name, that does not mean they are one single individual. He did not disprove it (and that does not mean that I believe that the three have one name). I could as well say *"even if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have one name, that would not prove that they are the same person."* This statement would not mean that I agree that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have one name which brother Asaolu called "heir". I am only granting it for the sake of argument; I do not believe it for a second!

Why Is "Heir" Not A Single Name For God's People?

He claims that the single name for God's people today is "Christians" but he would not claim the single name is "heir" even though we are heirs like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Romans 8:17; Galatians 3:29). On what basis did he give the three men the name "heir" and would not give us? Notice that the word "***heirs***" as used for God's children in both Galatians 3:29 and Romans 8:17 is without the definite article "*the;*" the text does not say we are Abraham's seed and "***the heirs***." Rather it says we are Abraham's seed and "*heirs*." Since the definite article is missing, that should very well be fitting for a name according to Asaolu's argument. Why does Asaolu have to insist that *"The single name that we bear worldwide is "Christians"* (p.6) when he claims "heir" is also a name and we are called by that? Is "heir" a variation of our single name?

My question to him was *"How in the world is it consistent to insist for a single name for any or all of the three and it makes no sense to insist for a single name for the church?"* And he prefers to explain something else from what I asked. There is no passage that states *"this is the one single name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit"* and no single passage states *"this is the one single name for the church."* Asaolu looked for a single name for the three; he should also look for a single name for the church. If he cannot produce a single name for the church because there is no passage that states there is one single name, then why does he have to argue over a single name for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit even when there is no single passage that clearly says so?

"In The Name Of" – Does It Mean "Say The Following Words"?

He asks; *"Do you baptize a penitent in the names of God such as "the Holy One of Israel, the everlasting Father and the Spirit of Truth?"* I do not believe that baptizing *"in the name of"* means you have to say the name. That is Asaolu's view! **If *"in the name of"* means "say the following words," Matthew 28:19 contradicts Acts 2:38 because what they are to say differs in BOTH TEXT!** By what rule did he interpret "in the name of" in Acts 2:38 as "say the following words" on those baptized, yet comes to Matthew 28:19 to say "in the name of" means "one single name." If it means "say the following words" in Acts 2:38, it will definitely mean "say the following words" in Matthew 28:19. And if that is correct, that will be a contradiction in the Bible on what to say during baptism! He also asks if I *"insist that the EXACT phrase: "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" MUST be pronounced?*" No. My magazine article states that God did not tell us what to say or be pronounced while baptizing and I cannot insist on saying a particular thing like Asaolu is insisting.

He said; *"Lesley threw in verses such as Col 3:17, Exo 5:23 & Acts 3:16 to propound that name refers to authority in Mt 28:19. That is inadequate."* Asaolu disagrees with the Greek scholars that said "name" means "authority." I cited A.T. Robertson, Vine, etc. to show this. These are Greek authorities and if he dismisses their lexicons because the men are uninspired, we could as well dismiss his own! The truth is: the word "name" in Matthew 28:19 and the four passages in Acts refer to authority. The passages are talking about names – Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and Jesus, but they are not teaching "say the name" but do it by the authority of that person. For example, if I say the *"USA secretary of state negotiated in the name of the President,"* I would not be talking about what the secretary said but what he did – he negotiated by the President's authority acting as his representative. And the name referred to could be "President" or "Biden" – either one of those are names. President is used as a role and a name (just like "Father").

Why Not Produce The Passage?

I asked him to produce a CLEAR PASSAGE that reveals the EXCLUSIVE SINGLE NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then he cites Titus 2:13 and II Timothy 1:2 **but none of these passages tells us what is that**

name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He did not have trouble citing Matthew 10:2 and showing us that *"the names of the twelve apostles are these:..."* He does not need to explain to anyone what the names of the apostles are; they are clearly stated in the text. Since he is insisting on a single name for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Asaolu should give us a clear passage that clearly states *"this is the name..."* just like Matthew 10:2. Up till now, he is still not sure if it is a single name or three to four different variations of names.

The Godhead Is Excluded When Jesus Said "All Authority Is Given To Me"

He said *"Peter never commanded people to be baptized in the name of a Trinity or in the authority of a Trinity. Christ need not instruct: "baptizing them in the authority of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" since he just declared that all authority is vested in himself!"* Brother Asaolu needs to understand that when Jesus said *"**all authority is given to me**"* in Matthew 28:18, the Godhead is excluded. In I Corinthians 15:27 we have these words; *"For he 'has put everything under his feet.' Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that **this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ**"* (NIV). The New Living Translation renders it thus: "For the Scriptures say, *"God has put all things under his authority." (Of course, when it says "all things are under his authority," that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.)"* And the NKJV puts it this way: *"For 'He has put all things under His feet.' But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted."* I truly wish that brother Asaolu understands this, that when Christ says all authority has been given to Him, the Godhead is EXCLUDED! The first import of Matthew 28:18 is that a distinct person gave Jesus all authority. This confirms that the Godhead consists of more than one person.

Other Questions

He asks if Lesley is positing that *"Penitents must be baptized in three literal names: Father, Son & Holy Spirit?* Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three literal names. We are baptized by their authority – which is one and the same.

He also asks if Lesley is saying that *"Jesus means baptizing them in three distinct authorities of the Father & the Son & the Holy Spirit? [If it is not a common name then it can't be a common authority! Presently, who has all authority?].* It is all one and the same authority. That is the very reason why Matthew 28:19 does not contradict Acts 2:38. The two verses are teaching the same thing – baptize (or be baptized) because God told you to. If the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all possess the same nature of Divinity, surely they will have common authority.

He asks if *"In Gen 48:16, Jacob meant: "let my authority be authorized upon them and the authority of my fathers Abraham and Isaac..."*? It is irrelevant what Genesis 48:16 means since it is not talking about baptism. The point from this verse is that it conclusively demonstrates Asaolu's false argument that the singularity of the word "name" in Matthew 28:19 proves the verse is only talking about one name. I have told brother Asaolu that I am not interested in his commentary on this verse and I will pay no single attention to it but he still wants to divert my attention from why this verse was brought up by asking for an explanation of the verse; that is exactly what he is trying to do here and I would not allow him do it.

Why The Complaints?

He said; *"If LE really believed that existing works sufficiently address my position, he would not devote any effort to write on the subject or do rejoinders! His two Magazine articles were supposedly to confront "false doctrine" which "not until very recently" had he ever known is propagated by "some "amongst us."* My statement was that I believed there are enough materials already available which masterfully did justice to his work; hence, I did not consider it necessary to do a rejoinder to his 33-paged work as he was desperately looking for. But what I do not understand is this: so because there are existing works on *infant baptism* for instance, I should not discuss or write about it in my magazine? I did not say that I had no time to write in my magazine. I said I had no time to devote to doing a rejoinder to his work! I can correct errors without necessarily doing a rejoinder to a work and that was exactly what I did. Brother Asaolu should know I am not afraid of debating. I already told him in November, 2021 that we can formally engage in the discussion by writing if he wants and that is what we are doing now, yet he would not stop complaining about me refusing to rebut his work.

Asaolu further said of Lesley; *"He declined to privately discuss his views on Mt 28:19 based on Gen 48:16 which he raised after the MOG discussion. Seems he preferred a public avenue to seek to address "the old arguments" which "Asaolu somewhat tried to make in a different way."* Brother Asaolu can continue to assume and make untrue suppositions. When I introduced Genesis 48:16 to him privately and ask that he tells me the one name of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob based on the argument he made on Matthew 28:19 in his 33paged write-up, Brother Asaolu **<u>could not tell me the single name</u>** (he could not even tell me it was "heir" as he now argues). Rather, he was explaining Genesis 48:16 and giving me his commentary on the verse. He even referred me to <u>Bible Hub</u> to see other people's commentaries and translations; the same thing that is now unacceptable for me to do. I became uninterested in the discussion since he could not answer my question and I reiterated to him that I will address the issue clearly in my magazine. Why is he still complaining? Well, like I mentioned in my erstwhile response, those who are bold and confident of what they teach should teach it publicly and not rehash their points privately and complaining and accusing people of not commenting.

He said; *"It is what the New Testament teaches that is important not necessarily what some modern Churches of Christ teach and practice now. The apostles' doctrine in the Lord's church is evident in Acts 2:38f."* I did not mention ***"<u>modern</u> churches of Christ."*** He deliberately inserted the word "modern" in my sentence to distort my statement just as he has been doing with the Bible passages.

Contradictions He Is Silent About

- Is there one single name in Genesis 48:16 or MORE THAN A SINGLE NAME?

- Did God reveal A SINGLE NAME for baptism or FOUR VARIATIONS of name?

- Why is "the Lord" (Acts 10:48) a name and "the heir" (Hebrews 11:9) a name but "the Father" (Matthew 28:19) is not a name?

- Why would faithful members of the church of Christ not insist on a set of words to be said while baptizing but you insist on a set of words to be said?

· Is "the Lord Jesus Christ" a set of words or not?

· Do you have a baptismal formula or not?

· Is the statement; "the Lord Jesus Christ" a formula or not?

· Does a formula have to contain mathematical symbols for it to be a formula?

· Is Genesis 48:16 And Matthew 28:19 Not Really Parallel? If yes, why did you apply same rule and arrive at same conclusion in both texts?

· As God's children today, is "heir" a variation of our single name? If not, why?

· Why would "in the name of Jesus Christ" in Acts 2:38 means "say the name of Jesus Christ" and "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" in Matthew 28:19 would not mean "say the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"?

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Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

A 3rd rejoinder to Mt 28:19 And The Triune God

Olumuyiwa Asaolu | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article is Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu's third and last response to the above article. It was received on the 14th of January, 2022. He still maintains his position on the issue.

This is my final response to Bro. Lesley Egharevba on this subject. It is a reply to his 2nd Rejoinder issued on Jan 12, 2022. First, I wish to further address the last statement in his initial Magazine article.

LE: Not a single New Testament passage tells us what was said at the point of baptizing an individual and it would be wrong to insist on a particular formula to be said when baptizing a person.

OA: Before each penitent was baptized, such is required to confessed or call upon the name Jesus Christ, to acknowledge His Lordship or as the Son of God (Christ) -Mt 10:32, Acts 8: 37; 22:16, Rm 10:9-13.

It is necessary for a baptizer to affirm that the subject is therefore being translated into the domain of the same Jesus. That one is immersed in the name of Jesus Christ is pretty clear in Acts 2:38 since the core of the message was for that audience to know assuredly that Jesus of Nazareth 'is both Lord and Christ' -Acts 2:36. Other pertinent scripture are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Review of some Scripture on Water Baptism

Passage	Import	Note
Acts 10:48 *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*	Peter's team would have effectively told Cornelius' household that "ye are hereby baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Recall that Jesus Christ was earlier named or introduced as 'Lord of all' to those at Cornelius' place -10:36	The passage isn't that 'he instructed them to be immersed in the authority of the Lord' but into His actual name. To the entire audience, **Peter was the one authorizing the baptism of the Gentiles.** Later, he had to explain why to his Jewish brethren (Acts 11:2-18). The Lord already authorized such in Mk 16:15-16
Romans 6:3-4 *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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.*	The Roman saints already knew they were baptized into Jesus Christ. Paul now states such ought to know that baptism alludes to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. We should live a new life as those who figuratively died and rose with Christ.	One is not to baptize himself. How would one know "unto what he was baptized" unless informed by the baptizer just before or while the immersion took place? The gospel (1 Cor 15:1-4) is re-enacted in baptism (Col 2:12-13). The believer was therefore informed that he would **be immersed into Christ** to partake of His death and resurrection.

Passage	Import	Note
1 Corinthians 1:12-15 *Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.*	Christ is not divided. Thus, His church should not be factionalized. Paul rarely conducted baptism, nobody should assume he cultivated personal followers. One could say that *I belong to X* if X was crucified for him OR such had literally been baptized **into the uttered name** of X.	Many were baptized in Corinth via the authority and preaching of Paul and his fellow-workers (Acts 18:1-8, 2 Cor 10:8). All the Corinthian saints were baptized using the name of the crucified Christ, not Paul's name or any other preacher's name.

The passages **imply** that a baptizer mentioned the name of the one into whom the prospect was baptized.

Lesley claims that the Godhead does not have a special single name that applies to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit which, must be pronounced or named on the prospect. (Indeed, many believe that Christ is in the Godhead whereas inspiration says that the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ in bodily form) He indirectly posits that nothing may be said "at the point of baptizing an individual."

The 'say nothing at baptism philosophy' is also advanced by those who claim that it is unnecessary for a baptizer to believe in or utter the name of Jesus Christ so Atheists and Satanists could baptize someone.

[I have addressed that argument from some professed preachers some time ago. Available at https://www.lainosint.com/download/faith/Could_An_Atheist_or_Satanist_Baptize_One_Into_Christ.pdf]

Contrary to both claims, it is evident in the NT that penitents were duly informed that they were being **baptized into Christ** by someone who is also a believer. After all, the Great Commission was given to unto disciples who were mandated to preach unto all mankind. It is unfortunate that these scriptural facts are no longer generally appreciated. For some, the refrain is: 'it would be wrong to insist on a particular formula to be said.' I say, let the mutual profession of Christ's name be verbalized in understandable sentences. Only then can we truly *pray in Christ's name* and sing *"O happy day that fixed my choice..."*

Now let me address specific statements in Lesley's second rejoinder. I will quote Lesley as LE and tag my remarks with OA.

LE: Does The Definite Article Really Nullify The Names?

OA: Lesley seems to forgets that I was responding to what he wrote on usage of "my father" and "father" in his illustration. He asks why "The Lord Jesus Christ" has the definite (the) within it. This is the full name of the Saviour as often used in NT scripture (Acts 16:31; 28:31), it combines the title with the personal name of the messiah. The Lord [Adonai] of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Understanding the full name of our God shows it is the same Lord across both dispensations.

I have stated that Father, Son, Holy Spirit, etc. are nouns or names in each of my articles. Lesley repeatedly ignores and even denies this fact. The real issue is whether aside these terms, **there is a common name** in Mt 28:19 that applies to [every manifestation of] the Godhead.

LE: Hebrews 11:9 reads; "*...**the heirs** with him of the same promise*" and not "*...heirs with him of the same promise.*" He claims "the Father" is not a name yet he believes "the heirs" is a name. More than once in his rejoinder, Asaolu removed the definite article before the word "heir" in Hebrews 11:9 in other to confuse the readers and insists that "*a Bible verse exist that branded Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with a common name, which referred to them as heirs*" (p.1) and that "*Heb 11:9 reveals that...the single name applicable to both Jacob and his fathers is "heir*" (p.2). What happened to the definite article? He removed it!!!

OA: Lesley contradicts himself here, he wrote 'he believes "the heirs" is a name' AND 'What happened to the definite article? He removed it!' Lesley is mistaken as he is not a mind reader. I wrote exactly what I believe that 'heir' NOT 'the heir' is their common name because each received God's oath to become a 'father of multitude.' Since Abraham had many other sons from his concubines, inspiration herein identifies those unto whom God's promise applied -Abraham himself and the duo of Isaac and Jacob. Hence, these three men were designated "the heirs" which makes each of them an "heir." While the three were co-sojourning, it would not be appropriate to term any single one out as "the heir" since each independently received God's oath on THE SAME promise. As original recipients of that promise, together they are "the heirs." Their progeny are inheritors not direct recipients of the promise. Thus, the word "heirs" is used for God's children in both Gal 3:29 and Rm 8:17 without the definite article "the."

LE: I never said that the meaning of "name" as used in Matthew 28:19 refers to "three distinct names" (and I challenge him to produce my very statement where I said that).

OA: I will admit that I misunderstood you on that because you wrote that "the three names in that verse are: (1) Father, (2) Son, and (3) Holy Spirit." After all, 'in the name [singular]' is the phrase of interest.

LE: Is Genesis 48:16 And Matthew 28:19 Not Really Parallel?

OA: If after my last explanation, Lesley still does not realize that the word 'name' appears once in Mt 28:19, that Jacob invoked 'name' twice in Gen 48:16 and that two names could become one when they are equal then I cannot elucidate more.

LE: in Mark 2:18, we have the following words; "...the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast..." Would Asaolu argue that the "disciples of John and of the Pharisees" are one and the same (single) set of disciples?

OA: Lesley is yet to grasp the Observation I made. It is distinct and should not be conflated with GSR.

1. The principle states that "***the principal attribute in U** applies simultaneously to A, B and C.*"

2. The principle proposes U "is the same set" only for cases *"where A, B & C are singular nouns."*

In Mk 2:18, the principal attribute of interest is known. It was the disciples that fast not the relations, neighbours, etc. (of John and the Pharisees). However, 'the Pharisees' is NOT a singular noun so it should not be expected that the disciples of John would necessarily be the "the same (single) set" of disciples of the Pharisees.

LE: He said a government [official] could say; "*I bring greetings in the name of the President and of the Petroleum Minister*." I would like to know what would be wrong with the sentence if he replaces "Petroleum Minister" with "Governor!"

OA: The President being the Minister and having same name (Buhari) is peculiar to Nigeria. The replacement would signify greetings from two distinct authority-wielding individuals.

LE: Is This Really The Truth One Should Concede?

OA: Lesley may refuse to concede that each patriarch was an heir of God's promise and a father of multitude. I stated ab initio that this does not in any way affect the validity of Mt 28:19.

LE: ...His KJV Bible has the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4 but he would not teach that it is a correct rendering; however, he wants to marry and stick to the KJV Bible in Jude 1:4 because he thinks it support him. Well, I am willing to take away other translations but I request that he disprove the Greek analysis above. He should not pretend that he agrees with me on that verse. If he did, he would not complain that Lesley "sought for translations that render it as 'only Sovereign' rather than admit it teaches that Jesus Christ alone is the Lord God Almighty." He actually brought it to dismiss the relevance of the Grandville Sharp's Rule and to prove the error that God the Father and the Son is one single individual and that was why he dared me to apply the rule to the text...

OA: Lesley is yet to understand that I know and accept the Grandville Sharp's Rule wholeheartedly. I thought he would notice when I wrote phrases such as "the kingdom and body of Christ; the Lord Jesus and God; the Lamb and God," etc. Most Bible students know that the word 'Passover' was mistranslated as 'Easter' in KJV Acts 12:4. Is 'only Lord God' in Jude 1:4 of the KJV a mistranslation of 'only Master'? I brought up Jude 1:4 because applying GSR to that verse will lead to the inescapable conclusion that Jesus Christ is the ONLY Lord God -something which Lesley does NOT believe.

LE: He tries to paraphrase the Grandville Sharp's Rule by all means just to prove his point. But I do not understand why he must twist the simple rule before he can apply it.

OA: Why not show **how** my paraphrase of GSR amounted to 'twisting'? I paraphrased not to apply it but to contrast it with my own Observation stated on Page 3 of my second Rejoinder. Lesley's second rebuttal is laden with unproven accusations/insults. How come that asking if he would do a rebuttal to an article he disagrees with, is restated as 'Asaolu desperately seeking a rebuttal for his 33-page work'?

LE: Asaolu is neither a Greek nor an English language authority and he is absolutely UNQUALIFIED to propose or highlight a grammatical principle without citing an English authority that agrees with him.

OA: To propose an original principle, one does not need to already have academic qualifications or renown in that field but to simply do research work therein. One then needs peer-review to get the work out so others can scrutinize its validity. What I observed is NOT novel, I cross-checked with a Professor of English who concurred and says it is available in Cambridge and Oxford Grammar resources. Based on the Greek/English grammar of Mt 28:19 text, the Godhead has a common name in the NT.

LE: According to Asaolu's grammatical rule, since name is singular, it means Father, Son and Holy Spirit share ONE SINGLE NAME. But what is this single name? Asaolu gave about THREE to FOUR variations of name yet, he says it is a single name. In fact, in page 4 of his rejoinder, he confessed; "I gave at least four VARYING examples of such in each of my articles" and yet, he says it is a single name. His grammatical rule states that Father, Son and Holy Spirit should have one single name, but he claims he gave four variations of names. If Matthew 28:19 would allow for three or four variations of the same name, then other passages he brought up should allow for different variations of the subject involved... If THESE THREE STATEMENTS refer to one person, then the three statements cannot be A SINGLE NAME. He has three names here and he is still insisting on a single name.

OA: My position is that the Godhead has a single name just as the Head of State, the President and the Commander-in-Chief. Everybody knows that the variants of the name of the person in whom these three roles of Nigerian presidency dwells are: General Muhammadu Buhari, Muhammadu Buhari, Buhari, etc.

If Lesley accepts variants, then it will be clear that the name intended for baptism is the Lord Jesus Christ irrespective of its variation seen in a NT passage. Consequently, Lesley introduced an excuse so as to reject the obvious; he asserts that using variants amount to different names. While he persistently raises this objection, careful readers will recognize that Lesley violates his own "no variant rule." How?

In this discourse, Lesley has variously addressed me as "O. S. Asaolu, Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu, Bro Asaolu, & Asaolu." Are these not FOUR variations of my name? Do I have a single name or four? Is he referring to four different persons or I alone? Yet he has the audacity to posit that Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ, the Lord, etc. are four names and not alluding to one name or personality!

LE: The "name" in Matthew 28:19 cannot have more than one variation using his rule and he would not produce the variations in other passages brought up.

OA: Lesley gave a Table asking whether each entity U has variations. If he contests the stated principle, what he ought to do is demonstrate that the principal attribute of any stated U DOES NOT apply simultaneously unto A, B & C in that passage. Table 2 states variants of U associated with a given A, B & C. Let's be reminded that variation refers to a different description of same U in various Bible passages. Lesley seems to think that the objects A, B & C are the variations of U. He is mistaken.

Table 2: The Variations of entity U in Cited Passages

Bible Passages Cited By Asaolu	Lesley's Questions	Descriptions of U in other verses	Asaolu's pending queries
John 3:3: *"...Except a man be born* ***of*** *water* ***and of*** *the Spirit..."*	Does water and spirit amount to three or four variations of birth?	born, not of ...of the will of man, but of God. (Jn 1:13), ...born again, not of corruptible seed, but by the word of God (1 Pet 1:23)	Does the verse allude to one birth (born again) or several births (born again and again)?
Mark 15:40: *There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother* ***of*** *James the less* ***and of*** *Joses, and Salome*	Did James and Joses have three variations of one mother?	Mary the mother of James and Joses (Mt 27:56), Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses (Mk 15:40)	James the less and Joses, are both siblings or not?
Revelation 22:1: *"proceeding out of the throne* ***of*** *God* ***and of*** *the Lamb"*	Do God and the Lamb have three variations of one throne?	the throne of his holiness (Pls 47:8), the throne of his glory (Mt 19:28), the throne of grace (Heb 4:16)	Do God and the Lamb occupy different thrones or the same throne?
Ephesians 5:5: *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom* ***of*** *Christ* ***and of*** *God.*	Do Christ and God have three variations of one kingdom?	The kingdom of heaven (Mt 3:2), the kingdom of God (Mt 19:24), my Father's kingdom (Mt 26:29), the kingdom of our father David (Mk 11:10), my kingdom (Lk 22:30), the kingdom of his dear Son (Col 1:13)	Is the kingdom of Christ principally that of God or is the verse referring to two distinct kingdoms?

Bible Passages Cited By Asaolu	Lesley's Questions	Descriptions of U in other verses	Asaolu's pending queries
Genesis 48:16: *"the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac."*	Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have three variations of the same name?	Heir (Heb 11:9), father of multitude (Gen 17:1-8; 26:1-4; 28:10-15. See Lk 1:73 /16:24, Rm 9:10, Jn 4:12, Jn 7:22, Acts 13:32; 22:14;7:8)	Is the verse referring to a common name or their different names?
James 1:1: *James, a servant **of** God **and of** the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*	Do God and the Lord Jesus Christ have three variations of the same servant, James?	James [brother of Jude] (Jude 1:1), James the Lord's brother (Gal 1:19)	Does 'servant' refer to two distinct persons or a single individual in this verse?
Col 2:2 *"...acknowledgement of the mystery **of** God, **and of** the Father, **and of** Christ."*	Do the Father and Christ have three or four variations of the same mystery?	the mystery (Eph 3:3), the mystery of Christ (Eph 3:4), the mystery of godliness (1 Tim 3:16)	Does a single mystery pertain to the Godhead or several different mysteries?
Acts 3:13: *The God **of** Abraham, **and of** Isaac, **and of** Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.*	Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have three variations of God (the Father)? Notice that this passage mentions God and His Son Jesus. So there ought to be 3 or 4 variations of God (the Father) according to Asaolu.	the God of Nahor (Gen 31:53), God Almighty (Exo 6:3)	Is the same God known by the patriarchs or 'a different God for each'?

In John 3:5, born [birth] is U, A is water, B is the Spirit. Clearly, water and the Spirit are two singular nouns. Alternative descriptions of the birth are 'born of divine will' and 'born by the word of God.'

LE: Why Deny And Accept Your Baptismal Formula At The Same Time?

OA: This is still about single name/variants issue already addressed. I used THREE illustrations; a mathematical solution expression of the Quadratic equation, what a penitent confesses before baptism and what the baptizer says at baptism. Lesley himself adopted variants by using 4 distinct phrases derived from my fullname to address me. Likewise, in his articles, he has used various expressions such as Jesus Christ, Christ, the Lord, etc. to refer to our Saviour and has NOT restricted himself to one single term. Suffice to say that if in the New Testament, believers were acceptably baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth and also in the name of Paul of Tarsus then that would be TWO names. However, all the acceptable baptisms since the day of Pentecost were into the name of Christ irrespective of variant.

LE: In my first rejoinder I asked that

"If baptizing in the name of Jesus means calling the name of Jesus over the one being baptized, remember that in Acts 2:38, Peter said they should "Repent...in the name of Jesus Christ." "Repent" is also "in the name of Jesus Christ." Let Asaolu tell us HOW the penitent SHOULD "repent... in the name of Jesus Christ."

In response, Asaolu said; *"Lesley is trying to inject his opinion into scripture. The inspired text does NOT state "Repent in the name of Jesus Christ" rather it says "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."*

I am amazed that he does not understand the usage of conjunction in English sentence, yet he wants to propose a new grammatical principle in English!

OA: Lord have mercy! The reader can verify that it was Lesley who disjointed the phrase in Acts 2:38 and wanted "Repent" to go with "in the name of Jesus" the way some split Mk 16:16 and try to link "Believe" with "shall be saved." I objected and stated that inspiration uses "Repent and be Baptized" before "in the name of Jesus." Yet, Lesley has the temerity to accuse me of not understanding conjunction and even cited the denominational mishandling of Mk 16:16 which HE TRIED to replicate.

LE: "Even If " Means I Agree With You? ...My whole endeavor from the beginning of this discourse is to show that the oneness doctrine is false.

OA: A common phrase for communicating the first thought is "assuming without conceding." Indeed, with the mindset Lesley just admitted to, it is clear why he hardly discerns some of my statements. He is engrossed with dispelling Oneness doctrine about divine personalities while we discuss the 'name' of a trio in Mt 28:19. However, I noted from the start that one name does NOT necessarily, solely prove the equivalence of the personalities. I stated that Isa 9:6, 2 Cor 3:17 and other passages establish that fact.

LE: He claims that the single name for God's people today is "Christians" but he would not claim the single name is "heir" even though we are heirs like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

OA: They lived in a different dispensation from us. I wrote on Page 5 of my second Rejoinder that:

The foremost, proper name for God's people under the New Covenant is **Christians** since the most exalted name of God in this dispensation, wherein His people are immersed is Jesus Christ. Terms like brethren, saints, disciples, etc. are not unique to them. Interestingly, a local congregation does not formally bear "church of Christ" rather the nickname of each assembly is prefixed or suffixed with a geographical location e.g. "Corinth church of Christ" or “the Church of Christ - Corinth." The single name that we bear worldwide is "Christians."

If that was not clear enough within the CONTEXT of our discussion, here is what I meant. We have many names in this dispensation including heirs, brethren, saints, etc. However, none is as important or as unique as "Christians." People in other religions today or even in the Old Testament used brethren, saints, etc. to also describe themselves. "***Christ****ians*" is what God Himself has called us under the New Testament; through it we bear the name of Christ **-Isa 62:1-2, Acts 11:26 & 15:14, 1 Pet 4:16.**

Likewise, our Saviour has several names like Emmanuel, Jehovah, etc. but when I refer to his "single name," I mean his name relevant for man's salvation today, the most exalted appellation which is 'The Lord Jesus Christ.' Lesley totally ignored **Zech 14:9 & Acts 4:12.**

LE: By what rule did he interpret "in the name of " in Acts 2:38 as "say the following words" on those baptized, yet comes to Matthew 28:19 to say "in the name of " means "one single name." If it means "say the following words" in Acts 2:38, it will definitely mean "say the following words" in Matthew 28:19. And if that is correct, that will be a contradiction in the Bible on what to say during baptism!

OA: In Mt 29:19, Jesus effectively says baptizing them 'in the name of the Godhead.' If there is a literal name for the Godhead then it must be used. I reckon such was revealed to the inspired apostles in Acts 2 as 'Jesus Christ.' Peter said repent and be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ." People "**were baptized into Christ Jesus**" to become the children of God by faith (Gal 3:26). There is no contradiction between Mt 28:19 and Acts 2:38 as alleged. To borrow his own lingo and approach, let Lesley provide if he ever may -a clear passage in the Book of Acts or afterwards which state that we are:

1. Baptized in the 'authority' of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

2. Baptized in 'the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy

3. Baptized into 'the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.'

The Saviour had instructed that "repentance and remission of sins **should be preached in his name.**" –Lk 24:47. When the disciples ministered, in Jerusalem, Samaria, etc. they preached Christ or spoke about the name of Jesus and His kingdom -Acts 8:5,12. They did not say: "we are preaching about the authority of the Son but will not mention His name." The religious rulers warned them to stop uttering that name (Acts 4:18; 5:40) but the apostles refused and continued to testify about the grace of God.

Acts 5:42 *And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach* ***Jesus Christ.***

LE: Asaolu disagrees with the Greek scholars that said "name" means "authority." I cited A.T. Robertson, Vine, etc. to show this. These are Greek authorities and if he dismisses their lexicons because the men are uninspired, we could as well dismiss his own!

OA: Your 'name' is Lesley, your 'authority' isn't Lesley! No commentary can dismiss the fact that Acts 2:38 is the scriptural way of understanding and obeying the command in Mt 28:19. I noted on Page 7 of my second Rejoinder that Christ's authority is displayed by his approved messengers using His name.

LE: For example, if I say the "*USA secretary of state negotiated in the name of the President*," I would not be talking about what the secretary said but what he did – he negotiated by the President's authority acting as his representative. And the name referred to could be "President" or "Biden" – either one of those are names.

OA: Lesley unknowingly agrees with me on how to act as the President's representative. The official would need to mention a **variant** of his boss' name at the meeting (e.g. the President, President Biden, Biden, Joe Biden, President Joe Biden, etc.) while explaining why he was there and in what capacity. It is necessary, decent and orderly. Yet, Lesley teaches that a minister of Christ could go into the world teaching and baptizing without uttering the name of his Lord, so far he acts in His 'authority'!

LE: I asked him to produce a CLEAR PASSAGE that reveals the EXCLUSIVE SINGLE NAME of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and then he cites Titus 2:13 and II Timothy 1:2 **but none of these passages tells us what is that name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

OA: Interesting Lesley does not accept that the name of God as stated in Tit 2:13 is Jesus Christ though he avers God is three distinct persons. I knew he would not apply Grandville Sharp's Rule to 2 Tim 1:2. GSR has become a quibble that backfired! Lesley also hasn't declared that Jesus is the LORD in the OT.

LE: Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three literal names. We are baptized by their authority – which is one and the same. It is all one and the same authority... That is the very reason why Matthew 28:19 does not contradict Acts 2:38. The two verses are teaching the same thing – baptize (or be baptized) because God told you to. If the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit all possess the same nature of Divinity, surely they will have common authority.

OA: Lesley's supposition is not rooted in scripture. Note his conditional clause '**if** the trio possess the same...' Did not the Son say (Jn 14:28) that "*my Father is greater than I*"? Lesley stated few paragraphs prior that someone gave the Son all authority and that the Godhead should be excluded. How could the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit thereafter have same authority? It is either all authority has been delegated to the Son or the trio are sharing authority now in unequal proportions. If the former then we baptize in Christ's authority and magnify His name. If the latter then we baptize in multiple authorities and magnify different names. This proves that name is literal and does not refer to authority in Mt 28:19.

LE: It is irrelevant what Genesis 48:16 means since it is not talking about baptism. The point from this verse is that it conclusively demonstrates Asaolu's false argument that the singularity of the word name" in Matthew 28:19 proves the verse is only talking about one name. I have told brother Asaolu that I am not interested in his commentary on this verse and I will pay no single attention to it but he still wants to divert my attention from why this verse was brought up by asking for an explanation of the verse; that is exactly what he is trying to do here and I would not allow him do it.

OA: **How do I divert Lesley's attention when he was the one who introduced Gen 48:16 and keeps asking questions on it but cannot explain an iota of it?** At least I have been consistent! Why has he been stressing it, even after I initially stated it does not invalidate Mt 28 since these are disparate issues? Lesley posits that *name* is 'authority' in Mt 28 but won't reproduce that notion in Gen 48. Can someone please remind Lesley of his statement on Page 2 of his first rebuttal, on how he discussed *remission of sin* with a denominational pastor, and insisted on consistent application of the phrase?

LE: I did not mention "modern churches of Christ." He deliberately inserted the word "modern" in my sentence to distort my statement just as he has been doing with the Bible passages.

OA: Really? I have the freedom to contrast modern COCs with the New Testament [churches] so it is unfair for Lesley to claim that I twisted his statement. I offered my own opinion, and did not state LE said so and so, misrepresenting him via a quote or attribution. Obviously, Lesley just wants to attack me. The substance of those things he just listed under "*Contradictions He Is Silent About*" has been addressed already.

Conclusion: Professing preachers should rejoice at every opportunity to proclaim and glorify the name of the Lord especially when a soul is being translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son. Let it be audibly affirmed that a penitent is being "**baptized *in the name of Christ* [into Christ]**" when such is dipped into water for the remission of sins. To decline to say the Lord's name – Jesus Christ, on this occasion is contrary to the IMPLIED teaching and practice of the inspired apostles.

That certain COC preachers have debated denominational pastors on this subject does not mean new insights may not come from within. Let's study diligently and humbly submit to superior scriptural reasoning whenever such is presented. Our aim should be to please God, restoration continues! I sign off to avoid repetition and wrangling and thank everyone including Lesley for the study. May God give us better understanding of His word so as to reflect the unity of the faith, in Christ's name, Amen.

To download O. Lesley Egharevba's second rejoinder, please click:
https://www.unmaskingsophistry.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Matthew_28_19_And_The_Triune_God_Second_Rebuttal_To_Asaolu.pdf

Matthew 28:19 And The Triune God

A Response To O.S. Asaolu (Part Three)

Osamagbe Lesley EGHAREVBA | Lagos, Nigeria

The following article is O. Lesley Egharevba's response to Brother O.S. Asaolu's third and final rejoinder

This is a response to Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu's third and final rejoinder on the issue of ***Matthew 28:19 and the triune God*** which was released on the 14th of January, 2022. In my opinion, Brother Asaolu's final response is the weakest of all his rejoinders as it seems more like an emotional appeal. He contradicted himself again at different times and left certain points unanswered. It appears he has exhausted all his arguments on the matter and would not want to continue so as to "avoid repetition and wrangling" (p.8). Well, my desire in this piece is to further show his inconsistencies. I hope that he would realize that his position and arguments on this issue are neither scriptural nor logical.

Do You Know What Was Said By The New Testament Baptizers?

Brother Asaolu went back to a statement which I made in my very first article where I said that *"Not a single New Testament passage tells us what was said at the point of baptizing an individual and it would be wrong to insist on a particular formula to be said when baptizing a person."* And in response, he said;

> "It is necessary for a baptizer to affirm that the subject is therefore being translated into the domain of the same Jesus. That one is immersed in the name of Jesus Christ is pretty clear in Acts 2:38 since the core of the message was for that audience to know assuredly that Jesus of Nazareth 'is both Lord and Christ' -Acts 2:36. Other pertinent scripture are given in Table 1."

The "other pertinent scriptures" that were given in the table by brother Asaolu are; Acts 10:48; Romans 6:3-4 and I Corinthians 1:12-15. Brother Asaolu thinks that to be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" means to "say the name of Jesus Christ" by the one doing the baptism. I have showed severally that if that is correct, then baptizing "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" would also mean to say the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It amazes me greatly that brother Asaolu interprets the statements; "in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38), "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48) and "in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:5) to mean that the baptizer mentioned these very words while baptizing the individuals involved; yet comes to Matthew 28:19 and insists that "in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit" would not mean "say the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." By what rule did he make such distinction? He was completely silent on this. None of the passages he cited actually tells us WHAT WAS SAID by the baptizer at the point of baptism and he cannot prove that such was the exact name or phrase that was mentioned. The truth is: DOING SOMETHING "in the name of" someone is not the same thing as SAYING SOMETHING or repeating a formula of words. In I Samuel 25:5-9, we find these words;

> David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "***Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. And thus <u>you shall say</u> to him*** who lives in prosperity: 'Peace be to you, peace

> to your house, and peace to all that you have! Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.' " So when David's young men came, ***they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David***, and waited.

This passage clearly shows that doing something in the name of someone is different to saying a particular thing except there is a different command telling you what to say. It also proves that what is to be done is different to what is to be said. Here, David told them **what to do** and **what to say**. They were to (1) Go up to Carmel, (2) Go to Nabal and (3) Greet Nabal. These three things were to be done "i***n the name of David.***" The men were not expected to go about and say "we are going to Carmel in the name of David" for the command to be obeyed. Neither were they mandated to get to the house of Nabal and start saying; "We have come to Carmel in the name of David" before they will obey the command. David clearly told them **what to say** when they get there. According to Asaolu, the men MUST say "*We have come to Carmel and to you Nabal and to greet you in the name of David*" before they would obey the command. But this is not so. It only means that their going to Carmel to meet Nabal was by the authority of David. In other words, they went to Carmel, to Nabal and greeted him **because David asked them to go!** Similarly, people are to be baptized today b**ecause God asked them to! What we are TO DO is BAPTIZE but what we are TO SAY while baptizing is not stated.**

Do You Have To Draw A Table To Tell Us What Was Said?

Brother Asaolu had to draw a table and explain his "pertinent scriptures" to prove that a particular name was mentioned by the baptizer at baptism, yet we cannot find anything in the text to indicate such. If after drawing a cat on the board and one still needs to write beside it "This Is A Cat" before the viewers (e.g. high school students) can recognize that it is a cat, then the person is a poor artist. We cannot find in the texts what was said by the baptizer but brother Asaolu had to draw and explain WHAT WAS SAID at the point of baptism for us to know. We knew what the young men said when they got to the house of Nabal in I Samuel 25:5-9 without drawing a table and explaining anything, but we cannot know what was said by the baptizer in Acts 2:41 and other "pertinent scriptures" of brother Asaolu without his table and explanations.

Why Classify Me With Others?

Brother Asaolu said that Lesley "*indirectly posits that nothing may be said "at the point of baptizing an individual.*" And went further to say that "*The 'say nothing at baptism philosophy' is also advanced by those who claim that it is unnecessary for a baptizer to believe in or utter the name of Jesus Christ so Atheists and Satanists could baptize someone.*" This is a straw man! What I have been teaching is that it is wrong to insist on a particular formula or set of words to say while baptizing. I have never advocated that atheists and Satanists should baptize one into Christ and brother Asaolu knows my view on this subject. Thus, to classify me in the same group with those who advocate such, is incongruous. By his own reasoning, I could as well group him with the Jewish exorcists who believe that calling the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits is what is necessary to cure them. In Acts 19:13, we read; "*Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying 'We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.'*" Brother Asaolu's teaching is that you have to call the name of the Lord Jesus over the one you are baptizing for the person's sins to be washed away. Meanwhile, this is exactly what the Jewish exorcists believed; that when you call the name of Jesus over one with an evil spirit, then that would drive the evil spirit away. However, this is not true as evident in verses 14-15 of Acts 19. Brother Asaolu could very well be classified with the **Oneness Pentecostals** since his rejoinders regurgitate the failed arguments of the oneness doctrine. His doctrine also suggests that there is only one single name for God which he called the Lord Jesus Christ. This brings to our minds the Jehovah's Witnesses who also insist on a particular name for God which they call Jehovah even though their view of the Godhead differs from his.

Your Statement Is What Is Contradictory

In page 2, he said I contradicted myself with his quotation that I cited. No, I did not contradict myself. What brother Asaolu did was to cut my comment and disjointed it to prove his supposed contradiction. He refused to quote my statement EXACTLY as it was written but brought two different phrases made in different sentences to prove his supposed contradiction. However, his statements are the ones that are contradictory. The truth is: Brother Asaolu says "Father" as used in Matthew 28:19 is NOT a name because the definite article precedes it; but comes to Hebrews 11:9 to argue that "heirs" is the single name for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I showed that what we have there is "the heirs" not "heirs." And if he believes that "Father" in Matthew 28:19 is not a name because of the definite article, then he cannot have "heirs" as a name in Hebrews 11:9 since the definite article precedes it. I mentioned that brother Asaolu knows that will be a killing blow on his position and intentionally removed the definite article while quoting Hebrews 11:9. That is the point. Perhaps, brother Asaolu intended to say that he (and not Lesley) contradicted himself.

Why Do You Apply Same Rule To Two "Unparallel" Passages?

Brother Asaolu still insists that Matthew 28:19 and Genesis 48:16 are not parallel but he failed to tell us how and why he was able to provide a single name for the individuals in both passages. He was silent about this yet claims that "The substance of those things he just listed under "*Contradictions He Is Silent About*" has been addressed already." The reason why I cited Genesis 48:16 was to show that his grammatical argument of "name" in Matthew 28:19 meaning the three persons have one single name, is faulty. If he claims both passages are not parallel, then he should not have been able to apply his rule therein. Another good parallel to Matthew 28:19 is Joshua 23:7. In that verse, Joshua said; "*You shall not make mention of **the name of their gods**, nor cause anyone to swear by them; you shall not serve them nor bow down to them*," Here, we have "name" used in connection with plural "gods." Will brother Asaolu argue that this is just one name for many gods? If yes, what is the one name? It is clear that his grammatical argument of one name for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is baseless, illogical and does not align with the principle of any Greek or English scholar. Little wonder why he has not cited any Greek or English authority to validate his claim.
He said "Lesley's supposition is not rooted in scripture. Note his conditional clause 'if the trio possess the same...'

He said "*Lesley's supposition is not rooted in scripture. Note his conditional clause '**if** the trio possess the same...'* He said my supposition is not rooted in the scriptures because I used the word "if." Well, Asaolu also used the word "if" when he said; "*In Mt 29:19 (sic), Jesus effectively says baptizing them 'in the name of the Godhead.' **If** there is a literal name for the Godhead then it must be used.*" (p.7). Note his conditional word "**IF** *there is a literal name for the Godhead...*" By his own argument, that would mean also, that there is not a single literal name for the Godhead and brother Asaolu's supposition is not rooted in scripture. What is good for the goose is good for the gander. Besides, if "the name of the Godhead" (Matthew 28:19) means one single name for the Godhead, then "the name of their gods" (Joshua 23:7) should mean one single name for the gods. Let brother Asaolu provide this single name.

You Cannot Get Away From Mark 2:18

Brother Asaolu's comment on Mark 2:18 is faulty and funny. Perhaps, he does not understand why I introduced that verse. In page 2 & 3 of his second rejoinder, he said if a government official should say, "*I bring greetings in the name **of** the President **and of** the Petroleum Minister,*" this would mean that the President and Petroleum Minister share a single name. He also made reference to Mark 15:40 ("*the mother **of** James the less **and of** Joses, and Salome*") to show that James and Joses have one mother. And then he referred to Acts 3:13 ("*The God **of** Abraham, **and of** Isaac, **and of** Jacob,*") to show that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have one God. I introduced Mark 2:18 ("*...the disciples **of** John **and of** the Pharisees used to fast...*") and asked him if he would admit that the "disciples of John and of the Pharisees" are one and the same (single) set of disciples? He tries to explain it away saying that because "the Pharisees" is not a singular noun, it should not be expected that the disciples of John would necessarily be "the same (single) set" of disciples of the Pharisees. But that is beside the point. He was not citing his rule when he made the example of the President and Petroleum Minister.

Besides, I looked up the words "the Pharisees" on Google and I got different definitions from different websites: Each defined "the Pharisees" as (1) **an** ancient Jewish group; (2) **a** religious and political movement of ancient Israel; (3) **a** working-class movement concerned with establishing a clear and consistent Jewish identity; (4) **an** influential religious sect within Judaism (5) **a** Jewish religious sect; (6) **a** Jewish group mentioned collectively or as individuals (7) **a** social movement and a school of thought, etc. If "the Pharisees" is **A GROUP**, then it is singular in that context of Mark 2:18 and so, Asaolu's excuse of not being able to apply his rule, is moot. This further shows that his rule is faulty and inconsistent as shall be later seen in this piece.

Do You Really Understand And Accept The Grandville Sharp's Rule?

Brother Asaolu said; "***Lesley is yet to understand that I know and accept the Grandville Sharp's Rule wholeheartedly.***" If brother Asaolu accepts the Grandville Sharp's rule WHOLEHEARTEDLY as he claims, then he would not argue that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are ONE SINGLE PERSON. Grandville Sharp's rule states that you can only argue that they are one single person if the definite article is used once. Brother Asaolu does not accept this rule and he has been arguing that there is only one person in the Godhead. But then again, how come he conveniently describes what he wholeheartedly accepts as "a quibble that backfired"? In page 8 of his third rejoinder, brother Asaolu unequivocally said that the Grandville Sharp's Rule "***has become a quibble that backfired!***" How in the world would you accept something wholeheartedly yet conveniently refers to it as a quibble that backfired? If brother Asaolu feels I have misapplied the Grandville Sharp's Rule in any way, he should simply have stated that my application of the rule is the quibble that backfired and not the rule itself. Saying that the GSR is a quibble that backfired shows he does not believe in the rule at all.

He said; "*Interesting Lesley does not accept that the name of God as stated in Tit 2:13 is Jesus Christ though he avers God is three distinct persons. I knew he would not apply Grandville Sharp's Rule to 2 Tim 1:2. GSR has become a quibble that backfired! Lesley also hasn't declared that Jesus is the LORD in the OT*." Applying the Grandville Sharp's rule to II Timothy 1:2 would not hurt my position one bit. When he asked me to apply it to Jude 1:4, I did, even though he thought I could not do so; and up till now, he has refused to accept my analysis on that verse, yet complains about me not applying it to another passage. I believe that anyone can look up the Greek construction of II Timothy 1:2 to realize that Asaolu is TERRIBLY mistaken about his supposition on that verse. I am glad that he has boldly declared GSR as a quibble that backfired; this is the same rule that he wholeheartedly accepts as correct. I would suggest he takes a look at the "Quibbles that Backfired" section of Unmasking Sophistry Magazine to understand how and when a quibble is said to have backfired. Besides, I am wondering why we have to apply Grandville Sharp's rule to a Bible passage before we can realize that there is a name mentioned there. Did brother Asaolu apply GSR to Matthew 10:2 before he realized what the names of the apostles are? Why do we have to apply it to II Timothy 1:2 before we can see the single name of God? He should please be reminded that the purpose of GSR is not to determine a name in a passage.

What Is The Problem With Jude 1:4?

Brother Asaolu said; "*I brought up Jude 1:4 because applying GSR to that verse will lead to the inescapable conclusion that Jesus Christ is the ONLY Lord God -something which Lesley does NOT believe*." How many times do I have to explain Jude 1:4 and show to him that I accept what it says? He is the one that has a wrong interpretation of the verse, thinking that the verse speaks of TWO PEOPLE as ONE SINGLE PERSON. It is obvious he loves his KJV so much and would not want to leave it to see other translations. But then, let us examine the verse as rendered by the KJV. Does the phrase; "***the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ***" prove that there is only one person in the Godhead? Does it exclude the other two members of the Godhead from being God? Not at all! The words; "only," "except," "all" "no one," etc. are sometimes used in a limited sense and not absolute. For example, in Romans 3:23, Paul says "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." Does the use of "all" here include infants? Does it include Jesus? Of course not! In verse 9, it is written, "there is none righteous, no, not one." Is Jesus included? No. In John 17:3, Jesus was praying to the Father and He said; "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" Brother Asaolu has been arguing that Jesus is the ONLY true God excluding every other; yet Jesus calls the Father the ONLY true God. To sustain his position, he will have Jude 1:4 contradict John 17:3 just as he has been using other Bible passages to contradict Matthew 28:19.

Why Not Produce Your English Professor's References?

He said; "*What I observed is NOT novel, I cross-checked with a Professor of English who concurred and says it is available in Cambridge and Oxford Grammar resources. Based on the Greek/English grammar of Mt 28:19 text, the Godhead has a common name in the NT.*" Since we do not know the Professor, why not cite the Cambridge and Oxford Grammar resources so we can all see? Asaolu should provide the English or Greek rule that states that the use of "name" in Matthew 28:19 means that the three have one single name and then tell us the single name for the gods in Joshua 23:7. If Asaolu cannot provide the sources, then the claim is false! If the statement had read this way; "*...in the name of John and of Peter and of James,*" would Asaolu and his unknown English Professor argue that Peter, James and John bear one single name?

Does It Matter What I Address You As?

Brother Asaolu said; ***In this discourse, Lesley has variously addressed me as "O. S. Asaolu, Brother Olumuyiwa Asaolu, Bro Asaolu, & Asaolu."*** *Are these not FOUR variations of my name? Do I have a single name or four? Is he referring to four different persons or I alone? Yet he has the audacity to posit that Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, Christ, the Lord, etc. are four names and not alluding to one name or personality!* That I have variously addressed him by different terms does not mean that those terms are his names. For example, in my first rejoinder, I called him "Brother" without adding anything else. Would he admit that "brother" is a variation of his one name? I believe that if he is writing his name in any official document, he would probably write "Olumuyiwa Asaolu" and not "Brother Asaolu." I wish that he would forget about the terms by which Lesley has called him and let him tell us if the Lord revealed a single name for baptism or four different variations of names. He has not answered this question.

In page 7, he said "*our Saviour has several names like Emmanuel, Jehovah, etc. but when I refer to his "single name," I mean his name relevant for man's salvation today, the most exalted appellation which is 'The Lord Jesus Christ.' Lesley totally ignored* ***Zech 14:9 & Acts 4:12.***" My question to him would be why did he not list "Emmanuel" and "Jehovah" as acceptable variations of the name? Would it be acceptable or not if someone mentions the name "Emmanuel" or "Jehovah" or "God with us" while baptizing? Zechariah 14:9 and Acts 4:12 that he said I ignored do not teach that the most exalted name of the saviour is "The Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 4:10 mentions "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" not "The Lord Jesus Christ" and some people were baptized "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). I am wondering if those ones were not properly baptized since "Jesus" or "Christ" is not mentioned. Brother Asaolu likes to make statements and attribute them to Bible passages that say NOTHING about them. He made a statement about the essence of using one name in baptism in his second rejoinder and attributed it to Colossians 1:19 and 2:9. I pointed that the texts say nothing about the essence of using one name in baptism. But what was his response to it? Nothing! He was so SILENT about it.

Your Rule Is Inconsistent Again

In my last rejoinder, I made a table and asked him to tell us the different variations of the subjects in each of the

Bible passages he brought up in order to show the consistency of his rule. Then he said; "*Let's be reminded that variation refers to a different description of same U in various Bible passages. Lesley seems to think that the objects A, B & C are the variations of U. He is mistaken.*" Based on this, he brought up passages that describe the subject by a different term. But this further puts him into more trouble. For example, in Revelation 22:1 ("*...proceeding out of the throne **of** God **and of** the Lamb*"), I asked him if God and the Lamb have three different variations of one throne. He then made reference to Psalm 47:8, Matthew 19:28 and Heb 4:16 wherein the throne is described by different terms. But this is not what he did with Matthew 28:19. In Matthew 28:19, brother Asaolu told us what he thinks the word "name" means and then brought up scriptures that describe what he thinks the name means. He said the name is "the Lord Jesus Christ" and introduced scriptures that describe Jesus by different terms. However, if "variation refers to a different description of same U in various Bible passages," then brother Asaolu should give us the various description of "**name**" as used in Matthew 28:19 in other passages and not for him to introduce passages that mentions what he thinks the name is. Someone else could come and say the single name in Matthew 28:19 is "Melchizedek" and points to scriptures where Melchizedek was described by different terms (e.g. King of Salem, etc. – Genesis 14:18; Hebrews 7:1) and he would be as "right" as brother Asaolu. Asaolu's rule is faulty and he needs to admit this fact.

In page 5, he said; "In John 3:5, born [birth] is U, A is water, B is the Spirit. Clearly, water and the Spirit are two singular nouns. Alternative descriptions of the birth are 'born of divine will' and 'born by the word of God.' Now, let us fix in Matthew 28:19. In that verse, name is U, A is Father, B is Son and C is Holy Spirit. Clearly, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are three singular nouns. Alternative descriptions of the name are what? Asaolu only gave us alternative descriptions of what he assumed the name to be but failed to tell us what the alternative descriptions of name are, yet his rule is in line with Cambridge and Oxford Grammar resources.

Why Not Fix The Problem?

I am wondering why he has not fixed the trouble he got himself into. He seems to have intelligently evaded it. Brother Asaolu said that *"Faithful members of the Lord's church, do not insist on "a particular formula" or set of exact words to be said when baptizing anyone."* It has been proven to him that the name he gave to us to be used in baptism is a formula. He admitted this and said, well, "*formula may take different forms at certain times though the same system is under consideration*" and he used the quadratic equation formula to prove that a formula may take different forms. He now admits that what he is teaching is a baptismal formula but the only thing is that the formula should take different forms or variations. He needs to tell us if he truly believes that statement. He cannot be insisting on a particular formula to be used when baptizing, yet, at the same time claiming that faithful members of the Lord's church would not do so.

"Repent" In The Name Of Jesus Christ

On Acts 2:38, he said "*The reader can verify that it was Lesley who disjointed the phrase in Acts 2:38 and wanted "Repent" to go with "in the name of Jesus" the way some split Mk 16:16 and try to link "Believe" with "shall be saved." I objected and stated that inspiration uses "Repent and be Baptized" before "in the name of Jesus." Yet, Lesley has the* *temerity to accuse me of not understanding conjunction and even cited the denominational mishandling of Mk 16:16 which HE TRIED to replicate.*" Acts 2:38 is clear and I have clearly explained it in my last response. I did not disjoint anything as he claimed and I CLEARLY showed he is the one adopting the denominational approach. I will encourage the reader to take this passage to any English teacher and ask the teacher this simple question; "what were the people expected to do in the name of Jesus Christ? My simple answer would be "they were to repent and be baptized." Brother Asaolu would not teach that repentance is not necessary "for the forgiveness of sins" as mentioned in the text but he is clearly denying that repentance is not "in the name of Jesus Christ" just because he wants to sustain his position on the baptismal formula. The conjunction ties "repent" and "baptism" but brother Asaolu is the one who has decided to cut repent away from it. I am willing to let the readers decide for themselves.

Do You Really Mean What You Said About "Even If"?

Brother Asaolu is still having issues with my use of "Even If." He thinks it means I agree with him but that I just do not want to accept. Hence he suggested a common phrase to be used instead ("assuming without conceding") if I really intended to express that I do not agree with him. I am still very much amazed and wondering if brother Asaolu believes this or he is just trying to argue. In John 8:13-14, we find these words;

> The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true." Jesus answered and said to them, "**Even if** I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

Here, we find the Pharisees saying to Jesus that His witness is not true because he bears witness of Himself. In response, Jesus said that **even if** he bears witness of Himself, His witness is true and He went further to prove that there are other witnesses. According to brother Asaolu, the use of "even if" by Jesus would mean that Jesus agrees with the Pharisees or that there is some sense in what the Pharisees said. That is ridiculous! Interestingly, brother Asaolu released an article on the 18th of January, 2022 titled "***Statement of purpose the scriptures require from a baptizee and from a baptizer***" and on page 4-5, he was addressing Colossians 3:17. Interestingly, he comes up with a new interpretation of the verse different to the simple and general interpretation of it. After giving his explanation, he said "***Even if** Col 3:17 is construed as doing things (by the Lord's authority) rather than giving thanks (by praising His name), it would still be expedient to mention His name on such occasions...*" Here is brother Asaolu, after condemning my use of "even if" and implied that it means I agree with him, went ahead to release an article and used the same words that he complains about. May I conclude like him, that his use of "even if" means that he agrees with everything I have been saying but he would just not want to accept it? I am amazed that brother Asaolu is never consistent for a second with his own very arguments. If there is one thing I have learned in this discussion, it is the fact that the more a person tries to uphold error, the more trouble he will get into.

How Come You Do Not Know The Baptismal Formula Is An Offshoot Of The Oneness Doctrine?

In my last response, I said that my whole endeavor from the beginning of this discourse is to show that the oneness doctrine is false; and Asaolu responded by saying that "*Indeed, with the mindset Lesley just admitted to, it is clear why he hardly discerns some of my statements. He is engrossed with dispelling Oneness doctrine about divine* *personalities while we discuss the "name" of a trio in Mt 28:19."* It is sad that brother Asaolu is oblivious of the fact that the baptismal formula doctrine that he now advocates is an offshoot of the oneness doctrine. And when I said my endeavor from the beginning is to prove that the oneness doctrine is false, it encompasses both the personalities in the Godhead and the baptismal formula of mentioning the name of Jesus while baptizing.

Why Did You Ignore I Corinthians 15:27?

He wants me to provide a passage in the book of Acts or afterwards that says we should be baptized in the name or authority of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Does that suggest he is taking Matthew 28:19 as a spurious verse as some take Mark 16:16? If Matthew 28 tells us that, why should anyone look for it elsewhere before he can believe it? Besides, I Corinthians 15:27 tells us clearly that the authority of Christ is the same with that of the Father. I noted that when Jesus said "all authority is given to Me," the One who gave Him this authority is EXCLUDED. I made this point very clear but what did brother Asaolu say about this verse in his third rejoinder? NOTHING! He was completely silent, yet claims he has addressed all my points.

How Did I Agree With You?

He said "*Lesley unknowingly agrees with me on how to act as the President's representative. The official would need to mention a **variant** of his boss' name at the meeting (e.g. the President, President Biden, Biden, Joe Biden, President Joe Biden, etc.) while explaining why he was there and in what capacity.*" I am not sure he read my statement well. I never said to act in the President's name means to mention his name. In fact, I used that example to prove that doing something in a person's name means to act by his authority and not to say the name. Where did Asaolu get the notion that I said the official would need to mention a variant of his boss' name and concluding that I agreed with him unknowingly? I made that illustration to show a parallel to Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38, 10:48, etc. The statement, "*the USA secretary of state negotiated in the name of the President,*" does not refer to what the secretary said but what he did – he negotiated by the President's authority acting as his representative. And the name referred to could be "President" or "Biden" – either one of those are names. Similarly, *"baptizing in the name of the Lord"* or "*baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*" does not mean say the name; it simply means to act by the authority; and the names referred to could be Lord or Father, Son, Holy Spirit. That is simply the point.

Do You Not Realize A Word Is Different From A Phrase?

He said; "*Lesley posits that name is 'authority' in Mt 28 but won't reproduce that notion in Gen 48. Can someone please remind Lesley of his statement on Page 2 of his first rebuttal, on how he discussed remission of sin with a denominational pastor, and insisted on consistent application of the phrase?*" Is "name" a phrase? I never said that anywhere the word "name" appears in the Bible, it must mean authority. What I have been affirming is that the phrase "in the name of" means "in the authority of." And so, when you see "name" used in the phrase "in the name of," it refers to "authority" and I have consistently applied this to ALL the passages that have been brought up in this discussion where the phrase "in the name of" is used. This is consistent with my statement regarding my discussion with the denominational pastor. I insisted that "for the forgiveness of sins" must mean the same thing, both in Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38 just as "in the name of" must mean the same thing in all the passages introduced in this discussion so far. Brother Asaolu is the one saying that the word "name" means a literal name which he called "the Lord Jesus Christ" and he tries to defend it by saying that the word "name" is singular and is used in connection with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; so it must mean the three have one name. That was the essence of citing Genesis 48:16 to prove that such grammatical rule is faulty. My argument on authority is not based on the word "name" but on the phrase "in the name of;" and so, he is actually diverting my attention by asking me to explain what "name" means in Genesis 48:16. I am amazed that up till now, brother Asaolu does not understand why I introduced Genesis 48:16.

Were The Accusations Really Unproven?

He further said; "Lesley's second rebuttal is laden with unproven accusations/insults. How come that asking if he would do a rebuttal to an article he disagrees with, is restated as 'Asaolu desperately seeking a rebuttal for his 33-page work'"? If brother Asaolu considers my statement of him desperately seeing for someone to rebut his work as "an insult", then I would apologize for that as I do not intend to insult him; I do not even consider such as an insult. However, for him to have consistently complained about me not refuting his work shows he is desperate in my opinion. In his first rejoinder, he complained of Lesley keeping quiet and not participating in the WhatsApp group discussion. In his second rejoinder, he complained about Lesley declining to privately discuss his views on Matthew 28:19. He also complained about Lesley quoting his 33-page article and not refuting the whole work. Why are all these necessary in his writing if he really does not need someone to refute his work or engage him in a discussion?

Why Not Agree You Were Wrong?

He said; "*I have the freedom to contrast modern COCs with the New Testament [churches] so it is unfair for Lesley to claim that I twisted his statement. I offered my own opinion, and did not state LE said so and so, misrepresenting him via a quote or attribution. Obviously, Lesley just wants to attack me.*" Brother Asaolu's accusation of me wanting to attack him is false. Everyone can go back to read his statement where he said "*It is what the New Testament teaches that is important not necessarily what some modern Churches of Christ teach and practice now.*" That statement was made in response to my statement when I said churches of Christ are not known to teach the doctrine that he now advocates. He should have proven to the audience that I am wrong by telling us just one congregation of the Lord's church that he knows that advocates or advocated the oneness doctrine. Rather, he said what is important is what the New Testament teaches and not what "modern churches of Christ" teach. He is obviously implying that I am referring to modern churches of Christ. Everyone can see this and he does not have to quote me word for word for anyone to understand that. After all, he even misquoted me at least once when he attributed a statement to me that I said "if the trio possess the same...' That was not my exact statement as seen in page 9 of my last response but he attributed it to me and I did not complain.

Is There Any New Insight?

He said; *"That certain COC preachers have debated denominational pastors on this subject does not mean new insights may not come from within."* Any new insight that is contrary to God's word must be rejected (Galatians 1:6-9). Besides, I have repeatedly told brother Asaolu that what he is advocating is not new at all. He has not made any new argument on this issue so far in my opinion. I have read a few debates on this issue and I can confidently say that brother Asaolu is only regurgitating the old Oneness Pentecostal doctrine. And so, there has been no new insight from brother Asaolu on this issue so far in this discussion or any I have seen lately from the Oneness doctrine advocates.

Will You Submit To The Superior Arguments That You Have Seen?

He said; "*Let's study diligently and humbly submit to superior scriptural reasoning whenever such is presented.*" I truly hope that brother Asaolu will diligently study and humbly submit to the superior scriptural reasoning that has been presented to him. I have no doubt in my heart that this debate has unmasked all his sophistries and revealed his inconsistencies. If he would not stop advocating the false doctrine of the Oneness Pentecostals, let him be rest assured that we would not be tired of exposing those false doctrines as God gives us the strength. I appreciate him for taking the bold step to begin the discussion by writing the first rejoinder. I hope and pray that we understand and do God's will in Jesus name. Amen.

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