

FEBRUARY 20, 2022

CHURCH OF CHRIST



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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY:

Bible Classes.....9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY:

Bible Classes.....6:00 p.m.

Minister, John Keith
(304) 266-9027

WELCOME!

We invite you to all of our services.

“...the churches of Christ salute you” (Romans 16:16)

HE SAID WHAT?

Recently, *Todayparents.com* reported that “a pastor at a Catholic church in Phoenix, Arizona [had] resigned after learning he had incorrectly performed thousands of infant baptisms”¹. The so-called, “Reverend” Andres Arango would say the words, “we baptize”, instead of the *correct*, “I baptize” when administering the rite of baptism. As a result of his *error*, and “after careful study, it has been determined that the form (words) Fr. Andres used for the sacrament of baptism has been incorrect, and all of the baptisms he has performed until June 17, 2021, are presumed invalid”.

For those who respect the authority of Scripture you have already noticed a few glaring errors in practice in just the few lines above: “infant baptism”, calling a mere man, “reverend”, or “Father”, the church assuming authority it has never been given, etc. The balance of the article reveals even more departures from the divine pattern within the Roman church. But let us examine the alleged procedural error that is in question here—is there a proper, verbal formula, when one is administering, or receiving baptism? If so, who authorized it, and where is it found in Scripture?

Just prior to Jesus ascending back to Heaven He gave His disciples what we call, “The Great Commission”:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:15-16).

Obviously, Matthew’s account gives slightly more details than Mark’s, but they both say the same thing essentially. Jesus commands His disciples to **go** to people of **all nations** and to **preach the gospel**, and to **baptize** the believing ones. Mark’s account does not include the statement of authority (“in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”), but this omission is not something to be seized upon when we remember who it is speaking the words—God the Son. When anyone obeys a command of Jesus, he is doing it *in the name of Jesus*, or by His authority.

Stated differently, when somebody assists another in their obedience

¹ <https://www.today.com/parents/parents/catholic-priest-baptism-incorrect-rcna16464>

to the Gospel, he is obeying the command of Jesus and therefore, he is baptizing them **by the authority of** (in the name of) Jesus—that is what he is to **do**—not necessarily what he is required to **say**. So why do we say it when we baptize someone? Because it is a reminder to the witnesses (if there are any) and it teaches and reinforces the idea of submitting to authority in the mind of the candidate and to non-Christians who may be there. If you read all of the accounts of baptism in the New Testament, you will not find the verbal formula, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”; it’s just not there. Is it wrong to do it? No, because it is exactly what we are doing.

The same thing applies to public prayer. The Bible teaches that we approach God in prayer through Jesus, our sole Mediator (Colossians 3:17; 1 Timothy 2:5). When we approach God in prayer, whether we say those words or not, we are doing so by the Lord’s authority, or in His name. We typically hear men close public prayer with the formula, “in Jesus’ name we pray”, and that is perfectly fine. It would be equally fine to say it at the beginning of the prayer”: “Our Father in Heaven, we come to You in the name of Jesus...”. There would also be absolutely nothing wrong with omitting the verbal formula (“in Jesus’ name”) altogether. You know by whose authority you are approaching God; God knows by whose authority you are approaching God, so why say it? Because to say it is a reminder (but not a requirement) for us of the solemnity of the occasion, and some folks might get their sensibilities exercised because they fear that prayer is not a prayer unless the one praying says, “In Jesus’ name”.

Consider this: Paul writes, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:17). Does this passage mean that each and every time we do something—anything—that before we do it, we must pause and say, “In Jesus name”? Of course not. We should, however, be constantly aware of Whom it is that makes it possible for us to do the things we do daily.

Back to baptism, when a baptismal candidate has received proper instruction and knows *why* he is doing *what* he is doing, the verbal formula of the person administering the rite is of no consequence. The person doing the baptizing is an expedient tool for accomplishing the obedience of the person being baptized. The one being properly baptized is of a such a mental capacity to understand concepts such as the significance of the virgin birth of Christ, His death, burial, and resurrection, the awfulness of sin and what it means to repent. The candidate knows he is making Christ the center of His life and will endeavor to grow and make necessary changes as he grows.

Your eternal salvation does not hinge on the verbal formula of another; but upon your “obedience to the faith” (Romans 16:26)—*R*.

Welcomē! To our visitors. We are thankful for your prēsēncē. Plēasē fill out onē of thē bluē cards and placē it in onē thē collēctiōn platēs or lēavē it on thē sēat. Allow us to answer any quēstions you may havē.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **John and Tina Keith** are recovering from COVID. John expects to be here Wednesday for Bible Study. John and Tina wish to express their gratitude for the prayers, calls, cards and food.
- **Mo Smith** also has COVID and will have an infusion tomorrow, God willing.
- **Jill Norris** (Nellie Bichard’s niece and Kevin Norris’s sister-in-law) has blood clots in her lungs.

REMINDERS:

- ❖ Remember to take advantage of our library in the basement.
- ❖ Please inform John of any changes needed to the prayer list, or directory.

TODAY’S LESSONS

AM: Alan Wells

PM: Raymond Wayble

IN OUR PRAYERS: Diann Bachmann, Erma Endly, Mike & Karen Grove, Angela Herald, Cathy Jackson, Bruce Johnson, Gary Jones, Rick Lambert.

SHUT-INS:
Debbie Jones, Nancy Love, and Randy Yost

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Debra Bates-Phillabaum, Weston Boulet (great-grandson of Shirley Patterson), Trudy Kerby, Colleen Kiester (Mo Smith’s sister), Linda Potts (Joyce Starrett’s sister-in-law), Addy Reed, Rodney Reeves (Erica Cunningham’s father), John Rockhold, Wilma Roe, Bob & Marge Watson, and remember to pray for **one another**.

AM Study	AM Worship	PM Worship	Wed.	Contribution (Budget)
36	66	32	24	\$4564 (\$2420)