

**Of the trinitarian formula, into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, which later became universal in the church, we have no trace in the New Testament, except in the single passage, Matt. xxviii. 19.\* It is difficult to suppose that it was employed in the early days with which we are here concerned; for it involves a conception of the nature of the rite which was entirely foreign to the thought of these primitive Christians, and indeed no less foreign to the thought of Paul. When and how the formula arose, we do not know. We find it expressly enjoined in the *Teaching of the Apostles...*\*\***

\* It is difficult in the light of all we know of Jesus' principles and practice, and in the light also of the fact that the early disciples, and Paul as well, baptized into the name of Christ alone, to suppose that Jesus himself uttered the words: "Baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," which are quoted in Matt. xxviii. 19. But it may be that he directed his apostles not simply to make disciples of all the nations but also to baptize them, as they had, perhaps, been in the habit already of baptizing those that joined their company. If, then, he simply gave the general direction to baptize (cf. the appendix of Mark xvi. 16), it would be very natural for a scribe to add the formula, "Into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost," which was in common use in his day. On the other hand, the fact must be recognized that Paul's indifference about performing the rite of baptism (see 1 Cor. i. 14 sq.) is hardly what we should expect if the eleven apostles received from Christ a direct command to baptize; and it is not impossible that the entire passage (Matt. xxviii. 19 b) is a later addition, as maintained by some scholars...

\*\* Didache, vii. But baptism into the name of the Lord is also spoken of in a later chapter as if it were synonymous. Hermas (Vis. iii. 7, 3) speaks only of baptism into the name of the Lord...

(A History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age by Arthur Cushman McGiffert, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925 [1897], ebook, 61, Text Modified)