

Read: Matthew 28:16-20

We Preach and Teach the Triune God to All People

Matthew 28:19-20

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Everyone has a name. Does your name have a story? Did Mom or Dad simply like your name or was your name specially chosen? Did they name you after a family member like your grandma or grandpa? Perhaps your name comes from the Bible or from someone famous. Maybe your name comes from someone special in the life of your parents. Maybe your name is an important reminder of where your family came from. A name can say so much about a person and even about that person's family or family history.

Did you know that God has also given you his name? Before Jesus ascended into heaven, he gave his followers a mission. They were to go out into the world and make other followers of Jesus. How? They would take the good news of Jesus out to the people of our world. They would also baptize people from "all nations"—no matter where they came from, what they looked like, or who their parents were.

By doing that, God was going to place his name on people from "all nations." They were to be "baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." At Baptism, the name of the *triune* God is placed on you, not the name of three gods, but one God who reveals himself as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is not easy to understand, but that is how God reveals himself in his Word.

So what is so special about having God's name? That name reminds you of how much God loves you and all that he has done for you. God the Father created you and cares for you as his precious son or daughter. In fact, God loves you so much that he sent his Son Jesus to rescue you when you disobeyed his holy commands and failed to do the good things he wants you to do. Jesus rescued you by perfectly obeying his Father's will, dying on a cross, and rising from the dead. Then the Holy Spirit came to plant faith in Jesus in your heart. How? He used someone to share with you the good news about the love and work of the triune God for you and for all people. Through that good news, God made you his own child. Through that good news and the waters of Baptism, he gave you his name as a member of his family—a family made up of people from all nations.

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for Younger Children

- What is special about your name?
- What was the mission that Jesus gave to his disciples?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- How would you have felt if you were one of those disciples who had received Jesus' mission to go out into the world? Why would you feel that way?
- Jesus sends us out to people of "all nations." Why is that important?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Explain what it means to be "baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
- Read Matthew 28:16 and 28:20. How do Jesus' promises in these verses help us to carry out his mission to all people?

Closing Prayer:

O triune God, no matter where I come from, no matter what I look like, no matter who I am, remind me that you have given me your name and made me part of your family. Help me to see others as people you love and people who need to hear about your love. Amen.

Hymn: CW 194:1,3 – Oh, that I Had a Thousand Voices

Oh, that I had a thousand voices to praise my God with thousand tongues!
My heart, which in the Lord rejoices, would then proclaim in grateful songs
To all, wherever I might be, what great things God has done for me.

I praise you, Savior, whose compassion has brought you down to ransom me.
Your pitying heart sought my salvation; You bore the cross triumphantly,
Brought me from bondage full release, made me your own, and gave me peace.