

surrender. With a heavy French accent, my Catholic English teacher said, “I guess I need to be baptized in Jesus name!”

“Yes!” I said as I pulled my upraised clenched fist down from my chin area. The other 30 students in the class clapped. I did a modest jig in the class aisle myself.

Have you been baptized in Jesus name?

Acts 2:38 (KJV) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

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

name                      name  
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                            of  
                            Father  
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                            the

name                      name  
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/  
of                      of  
Father              Son  
/  
the                      the                      of  
                            the                      Holy Ghost  
                            /  
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# Why My English Teacher Wanted to be Baptized in Jesus Name!



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Ms. DeGroote, as she wished to be called, was from France and she taught my senior year English class at South Bend Central High. She was 63 and referred to herself as a spinster. We had more creative names for her. Most of the students dreaded her classes. We were taught diction and enunciation with a heavy French accent. It seemed to make learning to speak proper English an impossibility with her as the instructor. By much effort I received the only A in her class both semesters.

My class was filled with Catholic students. South Bend, Indiana still is a predominately Catholic town. Its claim to fame is the University of Notre Dame. I was the only non-Catholic in the class.

Ms. DeGroote was a stern woman who tolerated no-nonsense in any of her classes. I was highly confined in her restrictive and controlled environment.

During the course, we had many weeks of conjugation and diagramming sentences. Somehow the nerd in me found those subjects easy and interesting. No, that is not normal, but it happened nevertheless. (I knew I was a nerd and not a geek, because geeks make more money than nerds.)

One day Ms. DeGroote said, “Now students, tomorrow I want you to bring to class a sentence or sentences that you have diagrammed. You may go to the board and diagram your sentence, and I will correct your paper. Or, I will go to the board and diagram your sentence while you correct the paper.

For the life of me, I could not think of a sentence to diagram. Especially since the whole class would see. Then it dawned on me. What better sentence in

the world to diagram! I went home, picked up my Bible, and copied Mt. 28:19 down. I proceeded to diagram the verse. This just had to be right.

The next day couldn’t come soon enough. I was ready for class. When 3rd period English finally arrived I knew I would be the second one called on. Everything in the class was by alphabet. Even our seating was arranged that way. I set behind Adams. We were all called by our last names.

When Adams was called on, he went to the chalkboard and almost got his correct. Ms. DeGroote sat at his empty desk and corrected his paper while he was at the board. When he finished, I heard “Ballestero!”

“I would like you to go to the board and diagram my sentence, and I will correct my own paper,” I said to Ms. DeGroote.

She said, “Read me your sentence.”

“It’s a Bible verse, if that’s OK,” I ventured.

She nodded and I read my Scripture.

Matthew 28:19 (KJV) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

“Go ye therefore (comma)” I said.

Ms. DeGroote prefaced her work with a (you) in front of the word “Go”.

When I read the verse aloud, I paused on the word “name,” while I waited for her to catch up.

“Of the Father,” I said.

“Now, here we have a prepositional phrase modifying the word name. At this point we do not know yet what the name of the person is, but we do know by this prepositional phrase, that whoever this person is, they are a Father,” she said.

She then drew the appropriate lines on her diagram.

“Of the Son,” I continued.

“Now we know, that this person is both a Father and a Son, but we still don’t have a name.”

“Ms. DeGroote,” a girl named Williams called out with her hand in the air. “Aren’t Father and Son names?”

“They’re just descriptive titles. They tell us something about the name, but they don’t tell us His name, they are only titles.” was her answer.

She again drew the second prepositional phrase on the board.

“Of the Holy Ghost.” I continued.

After the 3rd prepositional phrase was in place, my teacher looked carefully at the diagram on the board from end to end. She shook her head. “All we know here is that whoever this person is, they are a Father, a Son, and they are the Holy Ghost! But we still don’t know what the name is.”

“Martyn,” she said looking at me carefully, “What is the name?”

I had been waiting for this moment. I stood, and gently said, “Jesus is the name!”

Ms DeGroote looked at her writing on the board. Then she turned back to me with her arms wide in