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# Bible Talk

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Welcome to "Bible Talk." This week we are discussing this question: **Does it matter what name a church wears?**

The popular opinion is that the name of the church is unimportant! "What difference does it make what name the church wears?" people ask.

Well ... this is a valid question. What difference does it make? Is the name of the church really important?

## **Names Are Important**

Let us begin with this simple observation: The Bible considers names very significant and important!

This fact can be demonstrated over and over again, but let me give just a few examples to illustrate the point.

### **(1) God changed Abram's name to Abraham.**

#### **Genesis 17:5**

<sup>5</sup> Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

Why did God go to all this trouble to change Abram's name? Because names are important. Names mean something. Abram meant "high father," but Abraham meant "father of a multitude." God changed Abram's name to Abraham to testify that Abraham would become the father of a great nation in time to come.

## **(2) God changed Sarai's name to Sarah.**

Sarai was the wife of Abraham. The name Sarai meant "dominative." But God was not pleased that Abraham had a wife with a name like that, so He changed her name to suit His divine plans:

### **Genesis 17:15**

<sup>15</sup> And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

The name Sarah means "princess" and this was the divine name that God wanted this godly woman to have! Names were so important to God that He personally chose the names of the father and mother of the Jewish nation!

## **(3) God chose the name of John the Baptist.**

God was not satisfied that the forerunner of Jesus would be named just any old name. He personally chose the name that this harbinger would wear:

### **Luke 1:13**

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

Are you beginning to get the idea that names are important to God?

## **(4) God chose the name of His own Son.**

Names are so important that He chose a certain name for His own son:

### **Matthew 1:21**

<sup>21</sup> And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

The name Jesus means "Saviour" and the wisdom of God is seen in His choosing that name for His only begotten Son.

## **Application**

The idea that names are unimportant did not come from the Bible! No ... it came from people who are members of churches that cannot be found in the Bible!

When you point out to people that there is no such thing in the Bible as:

- The Baptist Church
- The Catholic Church
- The Methodist Church
- The Pentecostal Church
- The Jehovah's Witnesses Church

people act as though it's no big deal. They say, "Oh ... it doesn't matter what name the church wears. Names are unimportant."

But we have demonstrated from the Scriptures that names do matter! Names have a meaning and these manmade names point to manmade churches. A manmade church is a church of human origin and human wisdom. But the divine church will have a divine name. The Lord's church will wear the Lord's name.

## **The "Bride Of Christ"**

In the Bible the Lord's church is compared to a bride. The Lord loved His church so much that He would give Himself for His church and would rule over His church like a loving husband would rule over His beloved wife:

### **Ephesians 5:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

The apostle Paul was not the only inspired writer to speak of the church as being the bride of Christ. The apostle John, when banished to the isle of Patmos was allowed to see a divine vision of the Lord's church:

**Revelation 21:2**

<sup>2</sup> And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Here the bride is the Lord's church!

Now the point is this: When a man takes a wife, that wife begins from that day forward to wear the husband's name!

What an insult it would be for the husband if his bride refused to wear his name and chose a name to suit herself. Even so, it is insulting to the Lord Jesus when men claim to be disciples of Christ, but refuse to wear His name!

**Summary**

In summary, what name should the Lord's church wear? It should wear the Lord's name of course. Notice carefully:

**Acts 20:28**

<sup>28</sup> ... the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Here the Scriptures speak of "The church of God purchased with his blood." Who was this "God" that purchased the church with His own blood? Jesus of course! In other words, this passage is speaking of "the church of Jesus," or if you please, "the church of Christ."

Again:

## **Romans 16:16**

<sup>16</sup> Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Yes, the "church of Christ" is a divine name. It is scriptural and refers not to a manmade denomination, but to the Lord's church which He purchased with His own blood.

### **A Closing Story**

It was said that once some young people were going door to door collecting money to build a new church in the neighborhood. When they knocked on the door of an old, wealthy man he pondered their request for a moment and said this:

"I'll tell you what. I'll donate \$1000 to help build your new building if you will do one thing. After you finish building the building I want you to put up a sign over the door that says, "This is the church of Christ.""

The disappointed young men said, "Oh ... we couldn't put up a sign like that." The old man then said:

"Well, I'll tell you what then. I'll give you that same \$1000 if when you finish that building you put up a sign over the door that says, "This is NOT the church of Christ.""

Those young men thought about it for a minute and said, "We can't do that either." Those young people left the old man that day discouraged and the old man was left wondering what kind of church it was that they were going to build!

My friend, a church is either the church of Christ, or it is not! And if you are not a member of the church of Christ, then you need to be! Jesus is the Saviour of the body ... the church (Eph. 5:23).

## **Conclusion**

In summary, what does God require of you in order that you might be saved? He requires that you:

- (1) Believe in Jesus as the Son of God (John 3:16)
- (2) Repent of your sins (Luke 13:3)
- (3) Confess your faith in Jesus (Romans 10:10)
- (4) Be immersed in water to have your sins washed away (Acts 2:38).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website [www.WillOfTheLord.com](http://www.WillOfTheLord.com). There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.