

The Name of the Church

John Isaac Edwards

A name is a word or a combination of words by which a person, place, or thing, a body or class, or any object of thought is designated, called, or known. This study takes a look at the word or words by which the church built by Christ is designated, called, or known.

What's in a Name? Many seem to think that it really doesn't make any difference what name one wears religiously; there's nothing in a name. The Scriptures teach that a name is of great significance. God changed the name of Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17:5), Sarai to Sarah (Genesis 17:15), and Jacob to Israel (Genesis 32:28; 35:10). Why would He do that, if there's nothing in a name? Also, the Bible talks about “a good name” (Proverbs 22:1; Ecclesiastes 7:1). If there's nothing in a name, would you name your son Ahab or your daughter Jezebel? Why are men sent to prison for signing the wrong name to a check? Why don't you have your employer make out your paychecks with my name on them instead of yours? Acts 4:12 records, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

A New Name. Isaiah prophesied concerning a new name. Three passages predict this name:

Isaiah 56:5, “Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will

give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off.”

Isaiah 62:2, “And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.”

Isaiah 65:15, “And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name.”

This prophesied name would be given in the Lord's house, be a better name, an everlasting name, would be given when the Gentiles see God's righteousness, would be a new name, and would be given by the Lord.

There are three passages in the New Testament which reveal the name:

Acts 11:26, “...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”

Acts 26:28, “Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”

1 Peter 4:16, “If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”

How the Church Is Designated. The church built by Christ really does not have an exclusive name, but is spoken of several different ways. It is simply known as “the church” (Acts 2:47), “the church of God” (Acts 20:28), “the church of the living God” (1 Timothy 3:15), “church of the firstborn” (Hebrews 12:23), “the churches

of Christ” (Romans 16:16), and “churches of the saints” (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Words by Which Members of the Church Are Known. They are called “believers” (Acts 5:14), “disciples” (Acts 6:1), “saints” (Acts 9:32), “Christians” (Acts 11:26), “children of God” (Galatians 3:26), “brethren” (Colossians 1:2), and “friends” (3 John 14).

Principles Concerning the Name of the Church. Wearing the names of men is condemned (1 Corinthians 1:10-15). Combine spiritual things with spiritual words. Paul penned,

“Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual words” (1 Corinthians 2:10-13, ASV). Call Bible things by Bible names. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

The church planned by God and built by Christ is called by a name designated by God and found upon the pages of His word. Is the name you wear religiously known to the word of God? Can the name of the church to which you belong be found in the Bible?

Does It Really Make a Difference How We Worship?

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If it makes no difference how we worship:

Why Did God Reject Cain’s Offering. Have you read Genesis 4? “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain...” (Hebrews 11:4). This could not be said, if it makes no difference how one worships.

Why Were Aaron’s Sons Killed? When Nadab and Abihu “offered strange fire before the Lord,” “there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them” (Leviticus 10:1-2). I won-

der why that happened, if it makes no difference how we worship.

Why Was God So Specific About Worship? A reading of Deuteronomy 16 shows God chose the place, told them when to worship, what to do and what not to do. Why all this instruction?

Why Did the Lord Say, “But in Vain They Do Worship Me”? Read Matthew 15:9.

Any answers to these questions?

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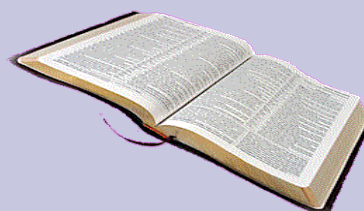
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Assembling Times:

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
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Is Our
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