

# THE CHURCH: NAME IDENTIFICATION

## LESSON 3

### INTRODUCTION:

1. A “name” is “a word or phrase by which a person, a thing, or a class of things is known...”
  - a. If we did not have a personal name, how long would it be before others would have to name you?
    - (1). Your mail: “the 100 Main Street Resident”
    - (2). Your friends: “Red,” “Blondie”
    - (3). Your spouse: “Hey, You”
  - b. Names help us distinguish between people, places or things which is essential for personal or collective identification.
    - (1). Father – from whom the whole family of the redeemed is named (Eph. 3:14)
      - (a). “in heaven”
      - (b). “on earth”
      - (c). Hebrews 12:22-23 -church distinguished from host of angels (also created by God,) comprised of those enrolled in heaven, and just men made perfect.
    - (2). Identified with Jesus Christ.
2. In this lesson we seek to know how God identifies the collectivity of His redeemed people.
  - a. A synonym of “name “ is “denomination.”
    - (1). We live in the long-established belief that the church is comprised of distinctive churches and identified by distinctive names (Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Church of Christ???)
    - (2). We want to be clear in how the church is “named” or identified and be precise in accurately communicating the Scriptural concepts.

### I. CHURCH IDENTIFIED METAPHORICALLY

- A. “the body” – “one body” – “His body” “body of Christ” (Col. 1:18, Eph. 4:4, Eph. 1:22-23, I Cor. 12:27)
- B. “the household of the faith” (Gal. 6:10)
- C. “the church of the firstborn – “firstborn ones” (Heb. 12:23)
- D. “the kingdom of the Son of His love ” (Col. 1:13-14)

### II. CHURCH IDENTIFIED RELATIONALLY

- A. Jesus: “My church” (Matt. 16:18) – “churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16)
- B. “church of God” (I Cor. 1:2)
- C. “the bride” – “the wife of the Lamb” – the Lamb’s wife” (Rev. 21:9; cf. 19:7-9).
- D. “the flock of God” (I Peter 5:2)

### III. CHURCH IDENTIFIED LOCALLY AND REGIONALLY

- A. “church of God at Corinth” (Col. 1:2, 2 Cor. 1:1)
- B. “the churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2)
- C. “the saints that are at Ephesus” (Eph. 1:1)
- D. “the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi” (Phil. 1:1)

- E. “the saints and faithful brethren at Colossae” (Col. 1:1)
- F. “the church of the Thessalonians in God the (our) Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”  
(I Thess. 1:1, 2 Thess. 1:1)

DISCUSSION:

1. Which is more important: Reading, Writing or Naming?
  
2. “The Father” and “the Lord Jesus Christ” are connected with the “naming” the redeemed people of God (T) (F)
  
3. Knowing that Denominationalism is widely accepted, how do you use the name “church of Christ” (cf. Rom. 16:16) to communicate the truth and avoid misunderstanding?
  
4. Does Peter’s statement: “...for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men wherein we must be saved” teach there is only one approved name for the church (cf. Acts 4:10-12)?
  
5. Knowing that people today equate unacceptable doctrines with “the church of Christ,” it is wise to identify ourselves by “less identifiable” names?
  
6. Explain what the following scriptural identification of the church “...the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria” identifies (Acts 9:31):
  
7. “While many of the congregations divided, the church did not divide.” Is this Scripturally true?
  - a. Which church did not divide?
  - b. Did “the church divide” over missionary societies and instrumental music to form the Church of Christ and the Christian Church?