

divine church of the Bible, assuming a divinely authorized name alone is not the only characteristic of the Lord's church.

Biblical Names for Members of the Church

Throughout both testaments, various descriptive names are also applied to God's people. Many of these terms used in the Old Testament are also used in the New Testament. There is, though, a singularly different and new name given to the people of God in the New Testament

Terms used in the Old Testament and applied to God's people in the New Testament as well include: **"members"** (1 Corinthians 12:27), **"disciples"** (Acts 6:1; 20:7), **"believers"** (Acts 5:14), **"saints"** (Acts 9:13; 1 Corinthians 1:2), **"brethren"** (Romans 8:14) and **"children of God"** (1 John 3:1,2). Add also these terms: **"beloved of God"** (Romans 1:7), **"heirs of God"** (Romans 8:17) and **"royal priesthood"** (1 Peter 2:9).

There is yet another New Testament name for God's people that was the subject of prophecy long before its application. Isaiah taught that once the Gentiles gained admittance into the kingdom (church) and its blessings, all God's

people would "be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isaiah 62:1,2; 56:5). After the admission of Cornelius and his household, the new name CHRISTIAN was given God's people (Acts 11:26). Used twice more in the New Testament (Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16), the term Christian uniquely describes one's relationship to his Redeemer and serves as a perpetual reminder of Christ.

Conclusion

Every accountable soul should strive to be a Christian only with the full knowledge that only Christians comprise the Lord's divine church. Denominational names are human in origin and clutter the divine term Christian. There are no brand name Christians. One is either a Christian only, or he is not a faithful Christian!

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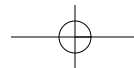
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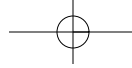
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The New Testament Church Is Divine in Name

Louis Rushmore





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The church for which Jesus died (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25), over which He is Head (Ephesians 5:23) and about which anyone can read in the Bible, is known by several biblical names. These names are divine in origin and always glorify God or Jesus Christ, with the possible exception of the simple term church (Matthew 16:16; Acts 2:47). Similarly, the New Testament records divinely given names for the members who comprise the church. Once the biblical names of the Lord's church and its members are learned, one can easily ascertain whether the names of contemporary churches and their members are divine or merely human in **origin**.

Biblical Names for the Church

In the strictest sense, the Lord's church has no name. Instead, the biblical names of the Lord's church to which reference is made herein are only descriptive terms.

These terms describe the nature of the church or its relationship to God or Jesus Christ.

Commonly, names are used to identify one brand of the same or similar product from another brand. If there were only one of something, distinguishing names would not be necessary; the item would be just called what it is or by its association with its maker. This probably explains why the names "Kleenex" and "Q-Tips" became synonymous terms for tissues and cotton swabs, respectively; at one time they were either the first or dominate in their fields. In some parts of the country, folks may ask for "an Orange Coke" for the same reason.

Similarly, before the rise of the Catholic Church and denominationalism, biblically descriptive terms identified the one church without confusion. All these terms simply described the church or its relationship with its Maker. However, now denominational brand names are used by the thousands to distinguish between the denominations and unintentionally also

from the church of the Bible.

Hence, biblical names for the Lord's church are not brand names, whereas the many denominational names are brand names. The Lord died for and established only one (His) church (Matthew 16:18). Denominational names identify one brand of church from another and one brand of religion from another, instead of identifying the one true church of the Bible and simple New Testament Christianity.

The descriptive terms by which the Lord's church is biblically known include these: "**my church**" (Matthew 16:18), "**the church**" (Acts 2:47; 8:1), "**church of God**" (1 Corinthians 1:2), "**churches of Christ**" (Romans 16:16), "**body of Christ**" (Ephesians 4:12), "**church of the living God**" (1 Timothy 3:15), "**temple of God**" (1 Corinthians 3:16), "**bride of Christ**" (Ephesians 5:21-32; Revelation 22:17), "**kingdom of his dear Son**" (Colossians 1:13) and "**house of God**" (1 Timothy 3:15). Though wearing a divine name is a crucial, identifying mark of that one true

