

Why does the "Church of Christ" insist that their name is scriptural when it cannot be found anywhere in the Bible?

Some time ago David Martin, minister at the Solid Rock Baptist Church in Bartlett, TN, authored an article entitled "Common Sense Questions A 'Church Of Christ' Preacher Cannot Clearly Answer." This article contains 13 questions that address subjects such as the necessity of baptism and instrumental music. Through much study and reading on these subjects I have formulated answers that cite "book, chapter, and verse" references showing what the Bible teaches regarding these questions. This article addresses Mr. Martin's ninth question.

It is my prayer that anyone who reads this article will study the verses cited with an open mind to truly learn what God's Word teaches. Obedience to God's Word, nothing more and nothing less, is what will get us to Heaven. We all want to go, but we have to remember that those who reach Heaven will do so on God's terms, not man's.

QUESTION

Why does the "Church of Christ" insist that their name is scriptural when it cannot be found anywhere in the Bible? The church is referred to as the "church of God" eight (8) times in the Bible, but never is it called the "church of Christ." The verse they use is Romans 16:16, but it doesn't say "church of Christ." Where does the Bible call the church the "church of Christ"?

BOOK CHAPTER AND VERSE ANSWER

This question bothers me very much. No honest student of the Bible could make this statement. It is very true that "church of Christ" is not the only scriptural name for the church that Jesus gave himself for. It is, though, most definitely one of the scriptural names.

The church belongs to Christ.

Mat 16:13-18

(13) When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

(14) And they said, Some say *that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

(15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

(16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

(18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

It is His bride and he gave himself for it. The church is subject to Christ just as the wife is to the husband.

Eph 5:22-27

(22) Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

(23) 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.

(24) Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

(25) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

(26) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

(27) That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Isn't it true that when a man marries a woman she takes his name? The wife proudly wears the name of her husband. It follows that the church should wear the name of Christ.

While it is true that Romans 16:16 says "churches of Christ" rather than "church of Christ". The argument that this verse does not call the Lord's church "church of Christ" is somewhat dishonest. Let's look at this verse.

Rom 16:16

(16) Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Paul is saying here that the churches with whom he is working salute, or send greetings to the church at Rome. There was more than one congregation of the Lord's church with whom Paul worked, hence the plural, "churches". Each one of these churches of Christ would be a church of Christ. Any other use of this verse is using the Word dishonestly.

There are other names for the church that are scriptural as well. Some of these are:

The church of God

1Co 1:2

(2) Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

The church of the Firstborn

Heb 12:23

(23) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

The church

Eph 3:10

(10) To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

The Kingdom

Mat 16:19

(19) And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

There are scriptural names for the church and there are unscriptural names for the church. The church belongs to Christ and the name used should glorify Him or God, not man. The name is important and the church is not a New Testament church if it wears the wrong name. It is equally important that the church follow the teachings of the New Testament. If either of these elements is missing, then the church is not the church spoken of in the New Testament and it is not the church that Christ died for.

Donnie Autry