

A READER ASKS: DID JESUS NAME HIS CHURCH? (3 OF 3)

David Halbrook

This question was submitted to us through our website (WWW.QVCOC.COM):
“Where, and when, in the Bible (book, chapter, and verse) did Jesus specifically name His church?”

1. God identified individual members of His church as Christians (Acts 11:26), disciples (Acts 11:26), and saints (Romans 1:7). Did God ever call a Christian a Catholic?

2. As a worldwide group, He specifically identified them as the kingdom of His Son and the family of God, to name a few (Colossians 1:13; Ephesians 2:19). Jesus called them *My church* (Matthew 16:18). Did God ever identify this group as the Mormon Church?

3. As local groups, He specifically called them the churches of God, the churches of Christ, or the church at ____ (physical location) (2 Thessalonians 1:4; Romans 16:16; Galatians 1:2, 22). God specifically identified the saved in multiple ways, but did He ever identify them as Lutheran or Baptist churches?

To you, we ask—does God identify His church the way you identify your church? In the Bible, God chose how to identify Himself and His people. Don’t add to that—get back to God’s word!

-- *Editor’s Note:* There are two extremes to the above subject—“There’s nothing in a name” and “The name is all that matters.” If God gave a name, how can it *not be important*? But individually or as a local church, we may have a name that we are alive when God sees us as dead (Rev. 3:1). Let’s not be ashamed of the name of Christ or His people but teach and teach and teach those who do not understand.

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

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November 6, 2011

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AN INJUSTICE DONE TO MEN

Jarrod Jacobs (*The Word of Life* 7-3-11, <http://biblework.com/>)

Someone once said, “No greater injustice can be done to any person than to give them the impression that they are saved when, in fact, they are not.” How true this is! Brethren, let us not be guilty of allowing our friends and neighbors to go through life having never heard the gospel! May we never be guilty of the quote above and leave our friends with the impression that they are saved from sin when they are not!

How could such a thing happen? Perhaps the most common way this is done is when we know our friends are in religious error and we say nothing to them about it (Jas. 4:17)! How terrible it would be to see our friends and neighbors stand before Christ and be sent to a devil’s Hell because we did not tell them the truth and they died in their sin (Jn. 8:24; II Thess. 1:7-9)! Are you one who does not give others the opportunity to hear the gospel preached? How many people have you invited to the worship services this week? This month? This year? How many have you taken an interest in and showed them how the Bible can answer the most important questions of life? How many times have you shirked your duty and then soothed your conscience with excuses? These are good indicators of where your priorities truly are!

Do we allow fear of losing a friend, or the fear of being considered a “fanatic”, etc., keep us from doing what we should (Matt. 10:28)? If we have, then let us repent and determine to show folks the truth before it is too late!

Christ said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God ...” (Matt. 6:33). Friends, after we pass on, what will be left? Where will we, our friends and neighbors spend eternity? What effort are we making to help folks go to Heaven? Or, are our lost friends under the impression that they are saved already? **Think about it!!**

WHAT BAPTISM DOES NOT DO (EXCERPT)

Bobby Thompson

This is a scriptural approach to the subject. In 1 Peter 3:21, Peter mentioned to his readers what baptism did and also what it did not do. “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” Much is said in the word of God and by gospel preachers concerning the importance of water baptism, yet there are some definite things which baptism does not do.

It is well to study this lesson for more than one reason. One reason is that denominationalists claim that members of the church of Christ are fanatics on the subject of water baptism. To hear them, one would think that the members of the Lord’s church consider baptism to do it all and be everything. A lesson of this nature might help to silence such unwarranted statements. Why do they think that members of the church of Christ say so much about baptism? It could well be due to the fact that they say so little about the matter, that by comparison, it seems like so much. It is also good to study this lesson due to the fact that some members could possibly be found placing entirely too much importance on baptism to the disregard of other things! By the action of some members, one might be led to think that baptism does it all. That appears to be about all some have done as far as the kingdom of God and service to Christ is involved. Yes, there are those who abuse baptism by over emphasizing what it does, but we must always remember that the abuse of a thing does not destroy the proper use of it.

What Baptism Does Not Do

It does not put off the filth of the flesh. This is evident from Peter’s words in 1 Peter 3:21. “Filth” refers to that which is dirty, physically defiled. Baptism does not “wash sin from the skin” and is not to be confused with a bath for the body or a ceremonial cleansing of the flesh as ordinances practiced under the Old Covenant.

It does not destroy a man’s inclination to sin. If one’s love for sin is to be destroyed, it will be in “godly sorrow working repentance unto salvation (2 Cor. 7:10). If a man doesn’t have godly sorrow toward sins before baptism, he is not going to acquire such in being baptized. Some have questioned their conversion when, after baptism, they were again tempted to do wrong. Baptism does not exclude an individual from being tempted. Christ’s greatest temptation came after he was baptized (Matt. 4).

Baptism does not suffice for obedience to other commands, either before or after. Every command which God has given has its own definite purpose in those who are obedient. Denominational people are inclined to make prayers suffice for other commands that they fail to obey. We might find ourselves doing the same with the command of baptism. Baptism is not repentance and it will not suffice for repentance. Some people seem to be of the persuasion that they can be obedient to baptism and that takes care of every sinful relationship. What of the meaning of repentance? Baptism doesn’t wash away a sinful relationship. It is in repentance that we forsake such and in life bring forth fruits of repentance. To be right before God, we must learn to keep every commandment of God in its proper perspective.

It does not grant a deliverance from persecution, affliction, sickness, or death! Those who were obediently baptized suffered as much or even more than others did (2 Tim. 3:12). Think of faithful Stephen (Acts 7:54-60). Baptism as it is accompanied by faith, repentance, and confession of Christ affords one deliverance from past sins—not from persecution.

Let’s never be guilty of abusing any of the commandments of God. Let’s leave them where God placed them. Baptism is a condition of salvation (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21). We have no promise of heaven without it--*but it doesn’t do it all!*

{To read the entire article, see page 415 of the book [Speaking Truth In Love](#)}

“TILL KINGDOM COME”—WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

The expression “till kingdom come” is based on the mistaken idea that in the future Jesus will establish an earthly kingdom. The Bible shows that Jesus’ kingdom is present today. Read these passages and notice the problems with waiting for a future earthly kingdom:

Mark 9:1 Jesus said that the kingdom would come during the lifetime of some of the people He taught, not thousands of years later.

Ephesians 2:19 You are missing the current **citizenship** of the saints and membership in the household (family) of God.

Colossians 1:13 You are in the power of darkness, outside the kingdom of Christ. You are lost!

Revelation 1:9 You are missing the brotherhood and companionship which John had in the tribulation, patience, and kingdom of Jesus Christ. John was not waiting for tribulation, patience, or the kingdom-- he was in them as he wrote!