

San Juan church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About . . . Names for the Church

The prophet Isaiah wrote much about the redemptive work of the Messiah. More about the person and work of Christ is found in Isaiah than in any other book in the Old Testament. The church was also prophesied by Isaiah in 700 B.C. when he wrote about the beginning of the church in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3). Isaiah also prophesied of those who would be in this church [kingdom] and would "be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord will designate" (Isa. 62:2). Isaiah also wrote that this new name would endure forever. "For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I make will endure before Me", declares the Lord, so your offspring and your name will endure" (Isa. 66:22).

The Biblical names for the church [kingdom] are "the church of God" (1 Cor. 1:2), "church of the first born" (Heb. 12:23), "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16), "body of Christ" (Col. 1:24), "bride of Christ" (Rev. 21:2), and "house of God" (1 Tim. 3:15). Notice that these references are not denominational names. They do not refer to different churches, only to God's one true church. In each name we can see God and His Son's name being glorified. God has chosen these names for His church. Christ is the builder of this church [kingdom] (Matthew 16:18-19). He is the head over all things to the church, which is His body (Eph. 5:23-24; Col. 1:18). God refers to His people as Christians (Acts 11:26, 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16), saints (Phil. 1:1) children (Romans 8:16-17), disciples (Acts 11:26), priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9), and brethren (Eph. 6:23; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 4:9; Gal. 6:1). We who have been obedient to the will of Christ, are in the family of God. Should not the family wear His name (1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 3:14-15)?

To the church in Pergamum the apostle John wrote, "To him who overcomes ...I will give him a white stone and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it" (Rev. 2:17). The white stone referred to the custom of voting for a man's innocence when accused by the court. In this verse Jesus teaches us that the obedient believer can be assured of his acquittal before God from sin. Jesus told the apostle John to write, "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God [church], and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem (Heb. 12:22-23) which comes down out of heaven (John 1:1-2, 14) from My God, and My new name" (Rev. 3:12). The prophecy in Isaiah 66:22 was fulfilled in this verse.

It is an honor to wear His name and we must please Him if we expect Him to receive us when He comes back for His church [kingdom] (Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 15:24).

Send comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:
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