

The Lord Jesus said ... “My Sheep

OT Picture

In Deuteronomy 12 God gave Israel instructions concerning what would make the place of gathering special. Israel was to destroy all other names from the land. All shrines and religious gathering places were to be overthrown. Anything that hinted of the name of another god was to be eradicated. But there was one name they weren't to eliminate, That was the Name of their God, *Jehovah*, for He had put His Name in one place. This one place, then would become His people's only religious gathering center in the land.

Then there shall be a **PLACE** which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his **NAME** to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD (Deu. 12:11).

It is the name of the Lord in that place that then makes that place holy and sacred; different from all other places. When one puts their name on a house it expresses certain facts. What's in a name on a place?

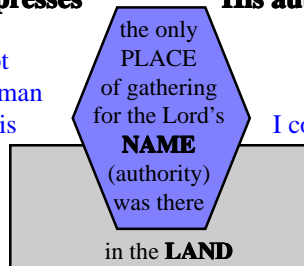
A name conveys:

1. The *identity* of the person who lives there
2. The *authority* over all that transpires there
3. The *personality* that must be pleased there

Initially in Israel, the place God chose for His tabernacle (living place) was Shiloh. Eventually, God chose Jerusalem with its temple to put His Name there (1Kings 11:36). Jerusalem became the one gathering center for Israel because the Lord's Name was there.

“The place ... the Lord put His Name” expresses His authority

“Ye shall not do ... every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes” (Deu. 12:8)



“What thing soever I command you, observe to do it.” (Deu. 12:32)

hear my voice, and

The fact that God's *Name* was at the place of His choice conveys that His absolute authority and wisdom were there because His presence and Person was there. For example, when one comes to your door in the *name* of the IRS, you understand “name” to mean all the authority of that office. God stressed two ways by which His people were *not* to operate in His house.

One, by what seemed right in their own eyes (Deut. 12:8). Their authority would not be what seemed to make the most sense to them nor what produced the best results, nor what was the most popular.

Two, by how the other nations functioned (Deut. 12:30, 31). His people were not to ask how the other nations served their gods and then imitate such methods for Jehovah. They were not to go by the systems of men, but by the authority of the Lord alone, for *His* Name was there.

Israel was not to subtract from God's Word: that would be liberalism. Neither was Israel to add to God's Word: that would be legalism. They were to walk the middle road between the two extremes of liberalism and legalism – God's Word alone.

Therefore, God said:

Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in *every place* that thou seest: But in **THE PLACE** which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee (Deut. 12:13,14).

Thus the faithful would perhaps travel many miles past other former places to the place where God had put His Name. God's house became a place of *separation*. For to gather unto HIS NAME ALONE was to recognize no other names or places.

The popular saying “Go to the church of your choice” is wrong. One should go to the place where God chose to place His Name.

And this matters to God for He has said, “I am the LORD: that is my *name*: and my glory will I not give to another ...” (Isa. 42:8), and “... For the LORD, whose *name* is Jealous, is a jealous God” (Ex. 34:14).

they follow me” John 10:27

NT Reality

From Jerusalem to Jesus - Where has Jehovah Lord God placed His Name today? Is it in one holy city on earth? Is there a central place on earth unto which Christians are to gather for their authority?

In Acts chapters 6 and 7 a great progressive transition was revealed by God. The Jews accused the Christian, Stephen, of speaking “blasphemous words against this holy *place* [temple].” Stephen reminded them that the Scriptures said, “the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” As they began to attack him, Stephen saw the glory of God. It wasn't in the temple as before, but now with Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

By resurrection to His own right hand, God has graphically demonstrated that this Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified as a criminal by religion and government is indeed Lord (Acts 2:36). Philippians 2:8-11 shows that God has now given Jesus a Name above every name – the name is *Lord!* Thus the *Name* of the Lord Jesus Christ alone has **authority** to give salvation, remit sins, grant access to the Father, discipline sinning believers, and authorize a church gathering place of believers that is recognized by God (Acts 4:12, 10:43, Eph. 5:20, 1 Cor. 5:4, 2 Thess. 3:6, Matt. 18:20).

Not only is the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ the only Name by which to be saved, but it is also the only Name to own in the church.

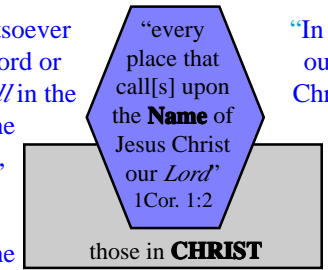
The Corinthian epistle deals with the truth of the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the local church. His Name is the only Name with which to identify, own as an authority, and from which to draw wisdom. As brought out in Chronicle #1, a local church is those in Christ Jesus who in a given locality (anywhere in the world) come together in one place to call upon the *Name* of Jesus Christ our Lord (1Cor. 1:2). An assembly of believers that calls upon *His* Name is recognized as God's temple. His Spirit is then in their midst (1Cor. 3:16).

In 1 Corinthians, the opening issue is renouncing all other names for His Name: the Lord Jesus Christ.

“And they shall see

The NT Gathering Center

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do *all* in the **name** of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col 3.17).



“In the **name** of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, ... with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Cor. 5.4).

The Corinthian Problem

The Corinthian believers had placed personal faith in the gospel and were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 18:8). The grace of God had been given to them. They were very gifted. They were confirmed blameless to the end in Christ and had been called by God Himself into the fellowship of His Son (1Cor 1-9).

Yet, as fundamental as they were, within the church they were identifying themselves by different names – even good names. And, of course, this created contentions and disunity. Rather than just telling them to stop doing it, the apostle gives the reason behind the truth. Thus they could have committed minds in doing it the Lord's way. He deals with 3 areas that will be affected by identifying with a name other than the Lord Jesus'.

1. The Name and unity
2. The Name and glory
3. The Name and authority

What's in a name? For example, consider a newly married couple. What if Mrs. Jones now said to Mr. Jones, “Wasn't the preacher eloquent who performed the wedding. Would you please call me *Mrs. Preacher*”? Or what if she said, “What a lovely bathroom you have provided, would you please call me *Mrs. Bath*”? Or what if she said, “I appreciate your orderly methods. Please call me *Mrs. Method*.” Or what if she said, “It's such a delight being your wife. Please call me by what I am, *Mrs. Wife*”.

Such an attitude that would want another Name would affect the unity of the marriage, the glory of her husband's name, and it would question His authority.

His face;

The Name and Unity

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the *name* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the **same** thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the **same** mind and in the same judgment (1Cor. 1:10).

When a believer or Christian group identifies themselves by a name other than the Lord Jesus, whether it be a good man, an organization, a church, or a doctrine, he has introduced a division to the one body of Christ. For a Christian to say “I am a ‘this’,” by definition means some other isn’t: we now have a difference.

The apostle takes their minds back to the truths connected with the gospel. Who was crucified for them? And in what *name* were they baptized? Of course, the only answer is Jesus Christ the Lord. Then that is the only Name to own. Our mind-set and all our decisions (evaluations and judgments) should only come from the risen Lord through His Spirit-inspired Word. This will take humility, time and trusting His Spirit to rightly divide the written word of truth to our seeking hearts.

This is not a unity of purpose, all agreeing to do the same thing, for that could simply be a unity of error. But it is a unity of truth, based on the Name (authority) of the risen Lord alone.

We should also never say when asked what we are, “We have no name,” for we do have a Name – Jesus Christ the Lord.

The Name and Glory

That no flesh should GLORY in his presence. ... That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him GLORY in the Lord. ... Therefore let no man GLORY in men (1Cor. 1:29,31, 3:21).

The Lord has said, “I am the LORD: that is my **name**: and my *glory* will I not give to another ...” (Isa. 42:8).

and His Name shall be

You would be highly insulted and hurt if your children announced to you that they’re changing their family name. So the Lord is defamed and hurt when we do such. Isaiah. 43:7 tells us that every one called by His *Name* is created for His glory.

Again the apostle takes us back to gospel truth to explain church truth. He reminds the Corinthians that *every* grace they have is of God in Christ Jesus. Thus, their redemption for sins, righteousness, sanctification, and even their wisdom came not from any human source. So the only One we dare glory in is the Lord for He only is worthy of such (1Cor. 1:29-31). All titles of sacred honor must only be given to Him (Matt. 23:7-12). *Glory* is a reason why it matters by what name we identify ourselves as we come together in the church.

The Name and Authority

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? (1Cor. 1:20).

Of course the term, “name,” also has to do with authority, such as one coming in the *name* of the law. When the apostle calls for unity of mind and judgment, he does it by “the *Name* of our **Lord** Jesus Christ.” Here he is not even satisfied with those who say “I am of Christ.” For while one might believe in Messiah Jesus, does he submit to His risen authority as *Lord* over the church? Not what Moses (law) or tradition say but *only* the risen Lord. (Christ is called *Lord* 7 times in 1 Cor. 1.)

It is the authority that supplies the wisdom and logic for the commands it gives. As the apostle goes on to teach, the Lord’s wisdom is the only wisdom we are to seek and apply in the church. For His wisdom alone is true and good: the best and right. That’s why we need to own His Name (authority) alone.

Again the apostle appeals to the gospel as he proves in whose wisdom a church should walk. He shows that the cross of Christ has exposed the wisdom of the wise as nothing. In light of the “Lord of glory” being *crucified* by men, religious and intellectual *men*, God asks, “Where is the wise?” To think, the church was now looking to *men* for their authority and wisdom.

in their foreheads. Rev. 22:4

✠ How has the cross destroyed man’s wisdom and proven God’s wisdom? The cross, you see, was capital punishment. It was where only criminals went: the vilest scum, who were unfit for society.

World’s Wisdom

Demonstrated by ✠

Princes (authority) of this world crucified Lord of glory **not knowing** it was He 1Cor. 2:8

Ignorance in crucifying

Lord has now exposed man’s wisdom as unable to know God: foolish 1Cor. 1:18-21

Cross has now destroyed any logical confidence in man’s wisdom to discern the things of God via human *rationalization* 1Cor. 1:19, 2:9

God’s Wisdom

Demonstrated In Christ

God knew Christ was Lord and raised Him from dead – using the preaching of cross to save 1Cor. 1:21b

God in His wisdom used man’s wisdom in crucifying the Lord, thus proving man’s poverty and God’s richness 1Cor. 1:21a

The Spirit has now given the believer the mind of Christ so that by *revelation* one can now know the wisdom of God 1Cor. 2:10-16

The Lord Jesus Christ is not just an issue of one’s personal heart but the Name we name. And His Name is not just a right title to mouth but promotes unity, glory and wisdom.

If you’re saved by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, may you also take no other Name in the church for His sake. Could the above truth be part of the reason why the assembly in Philadelphia received no rebuke from the risen Lord but only compliments? “The church in Philadelphia ... for thou ... hast kept my *word*, and hast not denied my *name*” (Rev. 3:7,8).

Chronicle #3 of ‘The Church of God’ series looks at the church being a place for remembrance

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Feed My Sheep



The Chronicles of the

Church of God

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The Place: of His Name Alone

In Chronicle number one of “*the church of God*” series we saw that believers are given two sets of instructions: one, concerning something they were in; and two, concerning the place where God lives. In the OT, they were *in* the land of promise which was their gift from God, and then *came* to the temple at Jerusalem where God was. In the NT the believer is *in Christ* through the gift of the Spirit of promise, and as God’s living temple of Christians *come together* in one place where Jesus is: the local church.

Continuing to focus in this series on the place where God lives, we saw that it was to be the gathering center for His people to *give* worship and service unto Him and not a place of getting one’s own needs satisfied. It is a place for God, not self. Is He worth such? In this chronicle we will see that the house of God is to be **the place where His Name is**. In a world of many religious names, His house is for His Name alone.