



A

Church

BY ANY

OTHER NAME . . .

NT descriptions of the church:

- church of Christ – Rom. 16:16
- church of God – 1 Cor. 1:2
- church of the saints – 1 Cor. 14:33
- church of (city) – Col. 4:16
- church of the firstborn – Heb. 12:23
- the church – 1 Cor. 12:28
- the disciples – Acts 6:2
- flock of God – 1 Pet. 5:2
- house of God – 1 Tim. 3:15
- temple of God – 1 Cor. 3:16



NT descriptions of the church:

- No specific title given to the church in the NT.
- No right to demand that others use the designation “church of Christ” on their sign.
- Does not mean we can call the church anything we want to.
- What we call the church should reflect what the NT says it is.



Principle of 1 Cor. 1:10-13

- A divided church.
- Basic to division was unscriptural categorizing (naming) of loyalties.
- Using different names was way of saying, “I am in some way different from you.”
- Paul’s demand: Drop the names!
- Same mindset produces denominationalism.



Principle of John 17:20-23

- Oneness of Father and Son – nature, character, purpose, action.
- Not forced union, but true unity resulting from being the same.
- Jesus wants for His church that same unity.
- Impossible? Jesus' plan for all who believe in Him through the apostles' word!



Principle of Rom. 6:17

- “That FORM of doctrine.”
- Tupos = a die in which something is imprinted or molded.
- The die is the doctrine of Christ; each Christian has been pressed into the shape of that mold.
- There is only ONE mold – Eph. 4:3-6
- If molded by same die, we should be the same, producing unity in Christ.



Lessons from John 17

- Jesus' designed His church to be one.
- That oneness should flow from our common unity with God and Christ.
- Our oneness will give the church a completeness that cannot be had by division.
- Our oneness will cause the world to accept that Jesus was sent by God and the church is loved by God.



Denominationalism

- Not good – violates the plea of Jesus.
- Not necessary – we all have the same die (doctrine of Christ) into which to mold ourselves.
- A product of unbiblical toleration of things that are not true.
- Specifically condemned by principles contained in 1 Cor. 1, other NT passages about unity.



What should we call ourselves?

- Who died for us?
- Into whose name were we baptized?
- Our only plea to the sinner: Become a Christian (one who belongs to Christ), be added to Christ's church (the church of God; the church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, etc).

