

February 28, 2021

Viewpoint from the **Valley Grove Church Of Christ**

Why We Call Ourselves A “Church of Christ”?

By Heath Rogers

“**C**hurch of Christ” is not the official name for the Lord’s church. It is one of a number of scriptural designations found in the New Testament (Rom. 16:16). However, I believe it is a fitting designation for us to use. Here are some reasons I am not ashamed to refer to the Lord’s church as the “church of Christ.”

1. Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). When we purchase something it belongs to us. We have the right to place our name upon it.

2. Christ gave Himself for the church (Eph. 5:25-27). Out of His love for the church, Jesus gave His life for her, making the ultimate sacrifice to sanctify and cleanse her for Himself. Paul states that the church is the bride of Christ. Most brides wear the name of their husband.

3. Christ built the church (Matt. 16:18). The church was built on the first Pentecost after the Lord’s resurrection (Acts 2). Christ built the church when He sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles and they, for the first time, set forth the terms of entry into the church. If we build something it is ours, and we have the right to put our name on it.

4. The church exists by Christ’s authority. Jesus has all authority (Matt. 28:18-20). The church that Jesus built is the only church that exists by His authority. The churches of men have the right to call themselves by any kind of name, but they will be uprooted on the Last Day (Matt. 15:13).

5. Christ is head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23). Jesus is the only head. There is not another head upon this earth in the form of a single man or a council of men. Also there is only one body to go along with the one head. Denominationalism (many different kinds of churches, separate and apart from one another, yet all claiming to be a part of Christ) distorts and divides the body of Christ.

(Continued on page 2)

6. Christ is the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:11). The church was built upon His sacrifice and His teaching. The church continues to exist because Christ functions as our King and our High Priest. Thus, the church has the right to bear His name.

While “Church of Christ” is not an official title for the Lord’s church, it is a fitting designation. Unfortunately, some brethren are following the “Community Church” approach and are removing the name of Christ from the meeting house of their local congregations. One preacher’s reasoning for doing this was as follows: Some people are prejudiced against the “Church of Christ.” Once they hear that name a wall goes up and they will not listen. If we remove the name, they will attend services and hear the truth.

Paul said, “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22), but he also prayed “that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified” in Christians (2 Thess. 1:12). How is Christ glorified by us removing His name from our building in an effort to appear to be something we are not in the name of evangelism? While local congregations certainly have the right to do such a thing, I wonder if it is the right thing to do. How would Christ feel about us removing His name from our buildings and signs and hiding it from public view? And regarding those prejudiced prospects — aren’t we going to have to get around to teaching them the doctrine of Christ? How are they going to feel when they eventually learn that we are a church of Christ?

The church belongs to Christ. He built it and bought it with His blood. He rules it as its head and will save it in the end. I am not ashamed to be a member of the Lord’s church, the church of Christ.

Why Christians Must Accept The Exclusiveness Of Their Faith

By Heath Rogers

Ours has fast become a world of tolerance and acceptability. We “narrow-minded” westerners are encouraged to overcome our prejudices and embrace the commendable aspects of other cultures. Such a message of toleration has also come to involve religion. Christians have been challenged to accept those of other faiths “as they are.” The process of proselytizing (trying to convert people from one religion to another) has been soundly criticized in our society. As opposed to targeting individuals from other religions as subjects for conversion, Christians are encouraged (pressured) to embrace them as “fellow-believers.”

(Continued from page 2)

How should a devout Christian respond to this world-wide ecumenical spirit? Should Christians accept other religions as being valid, equal to, or possibly even superior to Christianity? Should a Christian accept adherents of other religions as “saved” individuals, children of God who are simply serving God in another way? Should Christians seek to borrow doctrines and traditions from other religions in an effort to “improve” Christianity?

If we believe Jesus is the Son of God we must accept the exclusiveness of His religion. Jesus Himself leaves no room for any other God, Savior, doctrine, or hope of salvation. Consider the following Scriptures.

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me’ ” (John 14:6). Jesus is the (singular) way to God, the (singular) truth (which means truth cannot be found in other religions), and the (singular) means of attaining eternal life. Jesus did not offer Himself as one of many choices with regard to religion. He came to bear witness to the truth and to offer Himself as the only acceptable sacrifice for man’s sins.

When the apostles were questioned about their authority to preach the resurrection of Christ, Peter responded, *“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12). The name that has been given is “Jesus Christ” (v. 10). Salvation cannot be obtained through any other religion.

“That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). Paul says those who are without Christ have no hope and are without God. There may be many good, sincere and upstanding people in other religions. They may be making positive contributions to their communities. They may be devout adherents to their faith — but as long as they are without Christ, they are without God and have no hope in eternity.

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:4-6). While the spirit of tolerance insists we embrace other religions, the Holy Spirit will not allow such a concession. The unity of the Spirit is achieved by accepting and acting upon the realization that there is one (exclusive) body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism and God. World religions offer many different gods, faiths, lords, hopes, etc. Thus, the Holy Spirit offers no grounds for spiritual unity with those who hold to other religious beliefs.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9). The only people who have fellowship with both God and Christ are those who abide in the doctrine (teachings) of Christ. When we embrace the teachings of other religions we are no longer abiding in the teachings of Christ, and thus no longer have God.

One cannot believe Jesus is the Son of God and claim that Christianity is just one of many possible ways to serve God and save one's soul. Belief in Jesus requires that we believe what Jesus said, and Jesus taught His religion was exclusive. Do not yield your faith to the spirit of tolerance that currently prevails in our world.

Visitors — We pray that you benefit spiritually from our worship together and hope to see you again.

Study Your Bible

February Birthdays:

The 1st Roseanna Carter; The 6th Jay Stewart; The 11th Mary Lynn McCartney; The 16th Tommy Reynolds; The 17th Austin Hisaw; The 20th Shirley Pike; The 22nd Peggy Thomas; The 25th Don Haynes

Postage
Stamp

Valley Grove Church Of Christ
2110 East Stateline Road
P. O. Box 461
Southaven, MS 38671

This Bulletin is a weekly publication of the Valley Grove Church Of Christ, Southaven, MS

Sunday
Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:30 A.M.
Worship 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday
Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

Phone: 662-342-1132
www.valleygrovechurchofchrist.com