

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Publication No. 211780

Second Class Postage Paid at Mammoth Spring, AR

Volume 21

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

November 1987

No. 11

Salvation In A Name

By Jared Williams

Is there anything in a name? Does a name mean anything as far as the Bible is concerned? Is it reasonable to assume that salvation has nothing to do with a name? Should God's people be known, and identified by a name? What of the church, is there a God given title(s) for the church?

Many religious leaders contend quite arrogantly that a name does not mean anything. Is this true?

What source must we look to in determining what is right? Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). In John 17:17 he said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: **THY WORD IS TRUTH.**"

Names have always been used to identify objects and persons. God Himself gave names to things and people. In the beginning after God created and "divided the light from darkness He called (named) the light Day, and the darkness he called (named) night" (Genesis 1:1-5). God gave Adam his name. This is very significant, in that, Adam means red earth, the elements from which he came. Other accounts could be given in regard to the names given at creation. These are sufficient to prove that there is something in a name.

GOD GAVE A NATION A NAME

God has always identified his people by giving them a name. It began with Abraham, that is, the giving and changing of his name. Surely there was some reason why God changed his name.

Abram was his name, which is seen in Genesis 11. Abram means "exalted father." However, God made a covenant with him and changed his name, and states the reason. God said, "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee" (Genesis 17:5).

Abraham means "father of a multitude." God promised Abraham that his seed would be blessed. So it was, Abraham became the "father of many nations." That through Abraham's seed came a mighty nation. Also, through whose seed the Messiah would come. The nation was Israel, God's own people, (Genesis 32:28). In the following chapter Jacob worshipped God as *El-e-lo-he-Is-ra-el*, which means, "God, the God of Israel." *El* was a Hebrew name by which God was called in Old Testament times (Genesis 33:20). The name Israel included the name of God. God gave His people this name. It showed ownership, it was a name by which God would be exalted and honored. By this name, Israel would be known as God's people until Christ came.

A NEW NAME

Again, God chose to change the name of His people and not without reason.

Isaiah the prophet said, "and the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a NEW NAME, WHICH THE MOUTH OF THE LORD SHALL NAME." (*Emphasis mine - Editor.*) (Isaiah 62:2). The

prophet spoke of a time when God's people would wear a new name. He said it would be when the "Gentiles shall see thy righteousness."

God said to Israel, "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off" (Genesis 56:5).

From these inspired statements we learn: a new name was to be given within God's house and a name better than the names of sons and daughters of men. Do you believe God's promise of a new name was fulfilled? No doubt, it is a matter of believing God's word!

When Jesus died on the cross "the house of the Jews - with the name, Israel" was destroyed. Paul wrote saying, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14). Again, Paul said, "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, **EVEN THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCES**; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Ephesians 2:14-16).

Paul clearly says, that the old law with the religious practices of the Jews, including their identity by name, Israel, was removed in the death of Christ, that he might create in himself, one new man, one new body, one church.

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

... is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name be SURE to include the ZIP CODE. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know the financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request. Mail all address corrections to:

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
P.O. Box 251
Mammoth Spring, AR 72554
EDITOR Jared Williams
Publication No. 211780

God Will Surely Visit You

By Ken Butterworth

Our text is taken from Genesis 50:24. Joseph is at the point of death and he is reassuring the Jews that God will remember them, visit them and allow them to enter the promised land. It is the statement, "God will surely visit you" that has stuck with me. Not only does it "stick" with me but it also draws fear within me when I realize that God will visit my offspring! I am forty-one years old, have four wonderful children and two PRECIOUS grandchildren. I think often about the church we are and/or not leaving them. When God visits them what will he find? Exactly what am I, and what are we, leaving or building for their spiritual welfare? There are certain things my children and grandchildren deserve and have a right to demand from me. They are as follows:

When God visits my children and grandchildren, will He find them wearing the right name? Will they be calling themselves Christians? (Acts 11:26, 1 Peter 4:16). For the life of me, I do not understand why so many members of the church are ashamed to admit that they are Christians and are members of the church of Christ! That is exactly why Jesus died!

When God visits my children and grandchildren, will he find them worshipping scripturally? Why can we not just humbly, reverently and scripturally worship? What is wrong with coming together as one, partake of the Lord's Supper, pray, give, teach and sing without the aid of an instrument? (I Corinthians 11:23-30, 16:1-2; Ephesians 5:18-19 and Acts 2:42). I hear more and more about "dynamic" worship services! For shame! What is wrong with worship as God commands.

When God visits my children and grandchildren, will He find them with the scriptural organization for the church? I still do not see what is wrong with Philippians 1:1! Why can we not have elders, deacons and saints? Oh, now, we must have clowns and gismoes and

elephant trainers! If we are not as "organized" as the denominations then something is wrong with us! We are then labled as "antis". We do not need an arrangement liken to that of the city of Birmingham, but that seems to be the order of the day! How sad, for we are leaving our offspring something from man not God!

When God visits my children and grandchildren, will He find them using His Word as the standard? (John 12:48 and Philippians 3:16). Will He find them using something that is nothing but the language of Ashdod? What is wrong with the King James and American Standard versions? It is a crying pity that many in the church, including elders and preachers, endorse, condone and use such tomfoolery as the various modern garbage called "Bibles". The name, worship, organization and the emphasis of the one church will be destroyed for our offspring if we do not STAND on truth now!

When God visits my children and grandchildren, will He find them living better (quality) than the world? Talking better? Dressing better? (I Peter 4:3-4). I wonder how they can if we (parents) love the same things as the world! Worry and fret over the same things as the world! Live like the devil six days a week and then stake a claim on plain, rotten, high hypocrisy by "acting" like a Christian on Sunday. It will not work!

Yes, God will surely visit my children and grandchildren, When He does, how will He find them? So much depends on me. I need help, courage, conviction, dedication and a good old dose of BIBLE to ensure them that the church will be pure for them!

744 Heflin Ave. East
Birmingham, AL 35214

"A man is also known by the company he avoids."

"When men speak ill of you, live so that nobody will believe them."

SALVATION IN A NAME

continued from page 1

According to what the prophet said, this new name was to be given within God's house, in other words, the kingdom would be established before the new name was given. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus promised to build His church. In Acts 2, for the first time people were being added to the kingdom of God, the church and at this time, the new name was not given. However, when reading of the first Gentile converts, the new name is given, "and the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch," (Acts 11:26). The Gentiles had seen the righteousness of God (Isaiah 62:1, 2).

THE NAME CHRISTIAN IS A GOD GIVEN NAME

Today many are wearing names given by men, that are uninspired names. Who have you chosen to honor, God or man? Do you realize that only as a CHRISTIAN you honor God? By wearing the name Christian one shows he belongs to Christ. When people wear names that men have given, they honor NOT GOD but man. Don't you know such is displeasing to God?

King Agrippa knew that if he obeyed the gospel of Christ he would become a Christian (Acts 26:28). Inspiration, God's word, says there is something in a NAME. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other NAME under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

WHAT RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH MEANS

By Clifford Dixon

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). It is easy to read a verse and accept the fact that it should be done but not so easy to apply the facts to our actions. Let us realize the meaning of rightly dividing the word of truth.

1. When we rightly divide the word it means that we no longer can observe the sabbath day to keep it holy. Paul pointed out that Christ: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbath days**: Which were a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Col. 2:14-17). Some think the sabbath day observance is an eternal commandment since God in the beginning rested the seventh day from his creation, and sanctified that day (Genesis 2:3). But God did not set this day apart to all the world, but only to the nation of Israel, and this setting apart came when the law was given on Sinai. The first time we have a record of people observing the sabbath day is in Exodus 16:23, and the occasion was Israel in the wilderness just a few weeks before it was given as a command of the law. Later at Sinai they were commanded to observe it because God rested from creation (Exodus 20:11), and also to remember their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt (Deut. 5:15). Nehemiah made it clear that it was on Sinai that the commandment to remember the Sabbath day was given (Nehemiah 9:14). We are told NOT to observe it in Colossians 2:

16. Christ arose the first day of the week (Mark 16:9). Christ met with the disciples after his resurrection on at least two occasions on the first day of the week (John 20:19, 26). The church was established on the first day of the week, because that is the day Pentecost fell on (Lev. 23:15; Acts 2:1). The three thousand who obeyed the gospel continued in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42). Later we find congregations meeting on the first day of the week for the bread breaking, which was observing the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 10:16). Also the church at Corinth and the other congregations in the area were told to give on the first day of the week (I Corinthians 16:1, 2). John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day (Revelation 1:10), and the only day that could have been the Lord's day was the first day of the week - his resurrection day. The sabbath commemorates the creation of the world, the first day of the week commemorates the redemption of the human race due to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. When we rightly divide the word of truth we cannot observe the feast days or clean and unclean meat laws according to Colossians 2:16. The only day of importance to the Christian is the first day of the week or Sunday when he along with other Christians gather to partake of the Lord's supper, and to give of their means to carry on the work of the Lord.

3. When we rightly divide the word of truth we cannot use clerical robes as church officials to distinguish ourselves from the rest of the Christians. The special clothing the priests wore under the law of Moses was typical of the robes of righteousness that all Christians today are to wear (Revelation 19:8). When we are baptized into Christ we put on Christ (Galatian 3:27). As such we are all one in Christ and heirs of the promise made to Abraham (Galatians 3:28, 29). This does away with the right of some Christians wearing a different uniform from other Christians. All are to wear ordinary clothing that is decorous and an honor to God.

4. When we rightly divide the word of truth we will realize that there is to be no clergy-laity distinction made in Christianity, because we are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28, 29). Christ warned us to call no man "father" or to call no man "master", because we have one Father in heaven, and one Master, who is Jesus Christ (Matthew 23:8, 9). Only God is called "reverend" in the scriptures (Psalms 111:9). Peter told Cornelius not to worship him because he was also a man (Acts 10:26). Only God is to be worshipped as the angel told John (Revelation 22:8, 9). It is true that different talents equip us to do different works but all these works are important, and no man should feel exalted above another man because of his talents. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3). If this was so in the age of miraculous spiritual gifts it is certainly so in the time of natural abilities. We should realize, "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary" (I Cor. 12:22).

5. When we rightly divide the word of truth we will not use instrumental music in our worship. It was used in temple worship (Psalms 150) but also animal sacrifices were offered in temple worship (Psalms 51:19, 66:15). Christ took away this law, becoming the one sacrifice for the sins of the world, and giving us the New Testament (Hebrews 10:9-14). This New Testament commands us to sing (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). We cannot add to this command without the wrath of God being upon us (II John 9; Galatians 1:8). Instrumental music is certainly an addition to the command to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord. All kinds of arguments to justify them fall short in the face of this fact.

6. When we rightly divide the word of truth we could not sprinkle for baptism. They had the sprinkling of water for purifying (Numbers 8:7), and for separation (Numbers 19:21), but this along with other parts

(continued on page 4)

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD

continued from page 3)

of the law were nailed to the cross. The meaning of the word **baptism** is immersion, submersion (Thayer). The action of baptism was a burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).

7. Rightly dividing the word of truth affects actions in every realm, even in marriage and the home. Jesus pointed out that Moses commanded to give a divorce because of the hardness of the people's hearts, but from the beginning it was not so. Jesus returns us to the original marriage law of one man and one woman joined together for life (Matthew 19:3-9).

It is no little matter to rightly divide the word of truth. However, we are commanded to do so. Let us be careful in our handling of the word of God because it will judge us in the last day (John 12:48).

P.O. Box 507, Jay, FL

TAKE A STAND

READ ACTS 19:13-20

Bible Thought: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not vain in the Lord"

(1 Corinthians 15:58)

WEALTHY, heavily populated, strategically located, Ephesus was probably the most important city in the Roman province of Asia. One of the Seven Wonders of the World graced the city — a temple four times larger than the famous Parthenon. Heathenism in the form of black magic thrived.

Among the Christians in Ephesus in the Apostolic age there were those who had once practiced black magic. Now that they were living for Jesus, what were they to do? Should they continue to practice these arts in secret? Should they sell their black magic scrolls and parchments for a profit?

These Ephesian saints decided to publicly destroy the articles of sorcery. They vividly fulfilled the saying of Jesus: "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out." They were not ashamed of Jesus, and they made their loyalty to him obvious as they burned valuable articles of black magic so revered in their city.

*"Ashamed of Jesus! That dear friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend!
No; when I blush, be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name."*

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

Mail all address changes to:
CHURCH OF CHRIST
 P.O. BOX 251
 MAMMOTH SPRING, AR 72554