

The Oologah Informer

August 3rd, 2014

What is the proper name for the Church?

By Robin Haley

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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Closing the door on Satan:
Seeing through the fog of false
teaching.
(Galatians 1:6-7)

PM Sermon:

You don't always get what you
want.

Sunday AM Bible Class:

The book of Joshua – D. Jackson

Wednesday Bible Class:

Summer Series – Steve Lay

In SEARCH of the Lord's Way

Tulsa KWHB TV 47
Sunday mornings at 7:30am

Radio Program

"The Minister's View" on
KTTRadio.org on Monday's at
9pm.

(Mid-August it will be moved to
Tuesday's at 9am)

Respect for things spiritual is an admirable trait. So few these days seem to have any regard for religion in general or for God in particular. Especially does this seem to be the case with so much emphasis was paid to the tragic events of what has come to be called 9/11 and the war with Iraq. As a result, many are suspect. Of most religions. Happily, some still think there is something worth our reverence in this world. Such is the case with the church and what concerned people think they ought to call it. Just how shall we refer to the church about which we read in the Bible, that which Jesus built, and that which God blesses?

Surprising to many, the church of the Bible has NO proper name. Denominations are "named things" but not so the New Testament church. The Bible reveals the church was known AS and BY a variety of terms, most of which (if not all) are more descriptive in nature than simply a "designation." The New Testament church is not a denomination, for denominations by definition are an original. Obviously, the church of the Bible is the original.

So, how was the church described or called in the New Testament? This writer was able to find at least a dozen ways the church was referred to in the New Testament. It was called the church (Acts 9:31), "my church" (Jesus being the owner/builder, Matthew 16:18), the brethren (Acts 11:29), negatively speaking: the Nazarene sect (Acts 24:5), God's people, or the people of God (1 Peter 2:10), sons of God (Romans 9:26), the temple of God (2 Corinthians 6:16), the Israel of God (Galatians 6.16), the Way (Acts 9:2), the church of the firstborn (Hebrews 12.23), the bride (Revelation 21:9), the church of God (1 Corinthians 1:2), and the churches of Christ (Romans 16:16). Likely there are more to be found, but let these suffice to show that the church was not a named thing, but described in a variety of texts that fit the context.

Those who are a part of the New Testament church today have chosen to be identified to one another by referring to the church of Christ (the church that belongs to Christ). The church of Christ (or Collectively, the churches of Christ) is comprised of congregations of individuals who have been added by the Lord to his church (Acts 2:47) that He promised to build (Matthew 16:18,19) upon their obedience to The Gospel (there is death in failing to obey the Gospel, 2 Thessalonians 1:8 ; 1 Peter 4:17). The Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). One obeys that death when they are "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20). That "crucifixion" takes place when one joins Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, and this is accomplished in their being baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-7).

Good reader, are you a part of the church for which Jesus died? Did you join Him in crucifixion? Do so before it is too late...obey His Gospel!