

The WORLD TOMORROW

A WORLD-WIDE BROADCAST

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Proclaims to the World the
GOOD NEWS of THE WORLD TOMORROW

Publishing:

Box 111, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

The PLAIN TRUTH
a Magazine of UNDERSTANDING

Dear Friend:

What is the Biblical NAME for the Church? The Bible gives the true NAME of the Church in twelve different places. Twelve, remember, is God's complete number.

In five passages where the true NAME of the Church appears, the entire Body of Christ -- the Church as a whole -- is indicated. Thus when speaking of the entire Church, including all its individual members on earth, the name is "The Church of God." Here are these five passages:

1) Acts 20:28. The admonition to the elders is to "feed The CHURCH OF GOD."

2) I Corinthians 10:32. "Give no offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to The CHURCH OF GOD."

3) I Corinthians 11:22. ". . . or despise ye The CHURCH OF GOD, and shame them that have not?"

4) I Corinthians 15:9. Paul wrote: "For I persecuted The CHURCH OF GOD."

5) Galatians 1:13. This verse repeats the one last given -- "I persecuted The CHURCH OF GOD."

Notice that Paul did not call the true Church "Catholic" or "Protestant." Nowhere is the true Church called after the name of a MAN or after the name of a doctrine.

Where one specific local congregation is mentioned, the true Church is called "The CHURCH OF GOD," often in connection with the place of location. Here are four more passages:

6) I Corinthians 1:2. "The CHURCH OF GOD which is at Corinth."

7) II Corinthians 1:1. "The CHURCH OF GOD which is at Corinth."

8) I Timothy 3:5. In speaking of a local elder in a local congregation, Paul wrote Timothy: "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of The CHURCH OF GOD?"

9) I Timothy 3:15. ". . . behave thyself in the house of God, which is The CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD." Here it is The Church of the Living God.

In speaking of the local congregations collectively, not as one general Body, but as the total of all local congregations, the Bible name is "The CHURCH OF GOD." Here are the final three verses of the twelve which name the Church:

10) I Corinthians 11:16. ". . . we have no such custom, neither The CHURCHES OF GOD."

11) I Thessalonians 2:14. "For ye, brethren, became followers of The CHURCHES OF GOD which IN JUDAEA are in Christ Jesus."

12) II Thessalonians 1:4. "So that we ourselves glory in you in The CHURCHES OF GOD."

These verses prove the NAME of the true Church. Denominations not bearing this name could not be God's true Church. And of all the churches that do bear the name, only one could be the true Church of God -- that one which OBEYS ALL the commandments of God and maintains the FAITH delivered once for all time -- the one which grows in truth. All others are counterfeit, even though they may have the knowledge about the true NAME of God's Church.

Since Christ is the Head of the Church, Paul also called the various congregations "the churches of Christ" (Rom. 16:16) -- but the actual NAME is the CHURCH OF GOD. It is kept in the NAME OF THE FATHER (John 17:11).

LETTER ANSWERING DEPARTMENT