

*From Where I Sit . . .*

## **Is There Really Nothing In A Name?**

I've been thinking (and sometimes that gets me into trouble) BUT hopefully with the right spirit I can write about what I've been thinking this week. Years ago, I remember hearing preachers on the radio declare there's nothing in a name. Of course they were referring to the fact that there were so many churches and all had different names, but they believed they were all headed to the same place heaven. Right out front I'll remind the reader that God will have to make all those decisions. He authored the plan, and He alone will decide how strictly he wants to enforce it. I just want to try to please Him in thoughts, words, and deeds. His Book is my only guide for this so I believe in sticking very close to the Book. That's not intended to be judgmental of anyone.

About this idea of nothing in a name though, there seems to be some new thoughts floating around of late. Have you noticed how many Community churches have sprung up in America. Many churches are getting away from the mainline denominational names and going to something neutral hoping to draw a crowd, or at least not repel those who are tired of a particular denomination's politics. I guess they're realizing there is indeed something in a name. Names identify people and what they believe.

The *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, 10-5-05, carried a story in the People section concerning this trend with numerous references to specific churches around the country that had done so. In the article entitled, *Losing The Labels*, one minister declared, *Labels over the years are man-made.* He continues, *Nowhere in the Bible does it talk about people as Baptist or Pentecostal.* This man was a Baptist evangelist whose church had changed its name to appear neutral for the community to feel more comfortable. He reasoned that the denominational tie has the potential to keep some people out. The article reports him saying, *So many over the years have been hung up on the Baptist name. They won't come if Baptist is on the building.*

This is an interesting discovery many are making. Unfortunately it isn't changing anything. The minister went on to say his congregation is still loyal to the tenets of faith of that religion, and is a member of the governing convention. Changing the name is supposed to get people in the door, but what they find when they get there may well be many of the same teachings as before. However, in some cases they're finding a total relaxing of doctrinal restraints and open compromise with any and all.

For years the church has been preaching that the name of the Lord should be worn, and worn proudly. Wearing that name should not represent sectarian views and divisive spirits. We should all be one in Christ. Religion in America is seemingly in some kind of transition toward neutrality. They still believe there's nothing in a name, yet they are playing the name game to draw a crowd. Unfortunately what is emerging is a melting pot of open tolerance and compromise in so-called Community churches. It is my fervent prayer that more and more people will see that the Lord authored the blueprint and Jesus died for His one body, the church. We must strive to unite the religious world, not by compromise and name games, but by getting down to God's fundamentals. We must, in the words of the Apostle Paul, *all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment* (1 Corinthians 1:10).

**. . . . Terry Broome**

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