

# Bedford Bulletin

Columbus Street church of Christ

512 Columbus Street Bedford, Ohio 44146

----- Building Phone: 440-232-2231 -----

Website: [www.bedfordcoc.com](http://www.bedfordcoc.com)

BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE  
**F A I T H**  
1 Corinthians 3:9-11

## Appointed for the Defense of the Gospel (Part 12)

### Identifying the Church through the Inspired Scriptures – Part 2 of 3

I'm Dave, my wife is Sharon and when people refer to the place where we live, they say, let's go over to Dave and Sharon's house and when you get there you know just by looking, you're at the right house and not just because the address outside the door. When you come in you know it's our home because you recognize us, and the many pictures of our family hanging on the walls. It would be a "Twilight Zone" moment if when you walked in you saw two people you didn't know, and the pictures on the wall were also of unknown individuals. When anyone searches the scriptures, looking for the identifying marks of the Lord's house, you'll always read the same thing because the scripture is never changing. The church we read about in the Bible will therefore, never change. It is the only church of prophecy to come in "latter days" (Isa. 2:2-3), planned by God, "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4), established in Jerusalem around 33 A.D. on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and the Head of the church was and is Jesus (Acts 2:36; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).



*"Greet one another with a holy kiss.  
The churches of Christ greet you."*

I've personally never been more confused than when I hear of people who insist on calling the

Lord's church after some other person's name. Remember, we're talking about the Lord Jesus Christ's church, of which He is the Head, the church He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28), and which He promised to build (Matt. 16:18). Why not church of "Christ"? What is the motive behind the name, Luther, Wesleyan, Saint Paul's or Saint Mary's? Can it be that some give more weight, credence or honor to these individuals than to Christ? I owned a computer business which I called AJT Solutions. "A" for Angela, "J" for Jim and "T" for Tony. I started this business, I paid for it, I was the owner, I had every right to call it after my children. But what if I were to walk into McDonald's and place "AJT Solutions" stickers over everything that said McDonald's, over the cups, signs everything? You think the owner would say, who cares, what's in a name anyway? Seriously not! They would throw me out and remove all my stickers. If you agree with this, then why wouldn't you agree that the Lord's blood bought church should wear a name that signifies Him as Head, owner, Lord, Master? Notice that all the names by which the church is called in the scriptures relate to the owner in one way or another.

The church in the Bible is described by a number of terms, any and all of which are scriptural names by which to call the church. Here are a few, not all, by which the Lord's church is called in the New Testament; Churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16), Church of God (1 Cor. 1:2), Kingdom of God (Acts 8:12), House of God (1 Tim. 3:15), Church of the Living God (1 Tim. 3:15), Kingdom of God's Dear Son (Col. 1:13). However, the scriptures do condemn calling the church by names that are unauthorized. The church at Corinth suffered division because groups rallied around men, calling themselves after other men's names. Paul wrote, "Now I say this, that each of

# Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

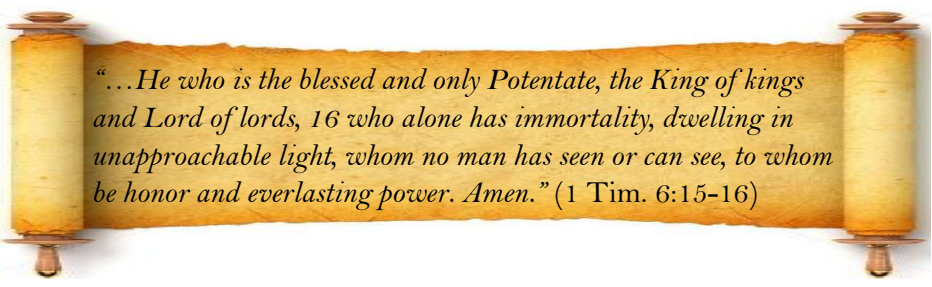
you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:12-13). What is the point in this? One should not be called after a name of another who did not die for him and into whose name one was not baptized! No difference exists today with people who call themselves after Wesley saying, "I am a Wesleyan" and the people at Corinth who were condemned for calling themselves after men saying, "I am of Cephas," "I am of Apollos," or more modern names such as Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Catholic, or Episcopalian. All are equally wrong. If the name of the church of which you are a member is not found in the Bible, it is not the Lord's church. I did a search on Biblegateway.com for "Wesleyan church" and this is the result; "0 Bible results for "Wesleyan church". Check to see if the name of your church is in the Bible!

We need to be clear: The name only carries power if the content within is also scriptural. The practice of worship must also be authorized. In the scripture God has legislated how the church is to worship. Understand that if God didn't there would be no condemnation of idolatry and other forms of illicit worship (John 15:22). The Lord requires His saints assemble on the Lord's day, the first day of the week, to offer its worship (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Rev. 1:10) and at any other day and time those who rule (Heb. 13:7, 17) appoint. The worship that is according to inspiration is as follows: (1) Teaching apostolic doctrine (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Matt. 28:20); (2) Prayer in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:42; John 16:23-24); (3) Breaking of bread, or the weekly observance of the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34); (4) Congregational singing (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16); and (5) Taking a contribution (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

If the worship of the church has been changed from this pattern (Phil 3:17; 2 Tim. 1:13), then it is unauthorized. Many unauthorized acts of worship have been introduced over the years by liberal thinkers including such things as burning incense, lighting candles, baptizing babies, and using the rosary. The music of the church has been changed from congregational singing to choirs, bands or praise teams. Some offer prayer in the name of Mary rather than Jesus. Some offer the Lord's supper only once or twice a year instead of weekly. Observation of apostolic doctrine has been replaced with anecdotes and stories. Free-will offerings taken on the first day of the week are replaced by tithing, including several contributions being taken at every assembly of the church. If the church you attend does not practice the five items of worship each Sunday, it is not the church of the New Testament.

Another area where many fall-short, is in the organization of the church. The church is organized according to the pattern revealed in the scriptures as autonomous or self-sufficient. In the scripture no authority is found for inter-congregational organization that ties local churches together under some group acting as a head organization, such as is done in the Southern Baptist Convention, and the organizational structures of most Catholic and Protestant denominations. Each local church is autonomous and independent with one Head, Christ.

The church of the Bible is organized under elders and deacons (Phil. 1:1). God reveals the qualifications of the officers in the local church in great detail (1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-11). There must be a required plurality of elders; Also referred to as bishops, overseers, and pastors. These must meet the qualifications as revealed in scripture, and they are to oversee or govern only the local church (Acts 14:23; 1 Pet. 5:1-3). Deacons are special servants of the church, whose qualifications also are revealed in scripture, and who are under the oversight of the elders. The absence of any reference to officers or qualifications for them in the universal church is strong clear evidence



*"...He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen." (1 Tim. 6:15-16)*

that these things did not exist in the first century church. That is to say there is no earthly, universal head of the church, such as a pope, for Christ is the only head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23). There are no cardinals, archbishops, or bishops in the denominational sense in which one

man oversees a diocese or group of churches. The local preacher, erringly called the “pastor” in some fellowships, does not have bible authority to oversee the local church. Women do not serve in leadership roles in such official capacities as pastor, deacon, Sunday school superintendent, and other such offices (1 Tim. 2:14-15). If the church you attend is not organized like the one you read about in the Bible, it’s safe to say it is not the church of the New Testament.

As always, in Love  
Dave Scarpino

### **Times of Our Services**

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

### **What Must I Do to Be Saved?**

Hear the gospel-----	John 6:45; Romans 10:17
Believe the gospel-----	John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
Repent of sins-----	Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
Confess Christ-----	Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
Be baptized-----	Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
Remain faithful unto and until death-----	Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22