

## WHAT IS THE CORRECT BIBLICAL NAME FOR GOD'S CHURCH?

There are twelve New Testament scriptures indicating the name by which God's true Church is known. Five of these scriptures refer to the Church as a whole:

1. Paul, speaking to elders in the Church, stated, *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the CHURCH OF GOD, which He has purchased with His own blood"* (Acts 20:28).
2. *"Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the CHURCH OF GOD"* (I Corinthians 10:32).
3. *"What? Have you not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise you the CHURCH OF GOD, and shame them that have not?"* (I Corinthians 11:22).
4. *"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the CHURCH OF GOD"* (I Corinthians 15:9).
5. *"For you have heard of my [conduct] in times past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the CHURCH OF GOD, and wasted it"* (Galatians 1:12).

In none of these scriptures did Paul refer to the Church of God in terms of a denominational category. Neither is the Church identified by the name of a man or by a teaching.

When a reference is made to a particular congregation in a given area, it is identified as "the Church of God," followed by the location. This is found in four scriptures:

1. *"Unto the CHURCH OF GOD which is at Corinth..."* (I Corinthians 1:2).
2. *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ...unto the CHURCH OF GOD which is at Corinth..."* (II Corinthians 1:1).
3. *"...how shall he take care of the CHURCH OF GOD?"* (I Timothy 3:5).
4. *"...the house of God, which is the CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, the pillar and ground of the truth"* (Timothy 3:15).

When referring to local congregations in a collective sense, but not in general, Scripture uses the term "the Churches of God," as in the following three verses:

- a. *"...we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God"* (I Corinthians 11:16).
- b. *"For you, brethren, became followers of the Churches of God..."* (I Thessalonians 2:14).
- c. *"So that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God..."* (II Thessalonians 1:4).

Christ is the Head of the Church (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Colossians 1:18). This is why Paul, in Romans 16:16, also referred to various congregations as "the Churches of Christ." But the Church is kept in the name of the Father: *"...keep through Your own name those whom you have given Me that they may be one, as we are"* (John 17:11). Christ said, *"I will build My CHURCH..."* (Matthew 16:18). There is only *one* true Church of God, and the above scriptures prove the name by which it is known. Therefore, any congregations or denominations not having this name cannot be God's true Church. And of those having the correct name, the true Church of God is the one that obeys all of God's laws, including the Ten Commandments.