

## Do We Need A Name Change?

By Steve Higginbotham

In some circles, there is an effort, or at least a desire, to change the name that is on the sign out in front of our church buildings. We're being told that we would be more effective in our communities if we would remove the name "Church of Christ" and replace it with some other name.

Well now, that's an interesting suggestion. As you know, there is no "proper name" given to the collective assembly of the saints. Scripture uses several designations to identify the church. Among these designations are the "churches of Christ" (Romans 16:16), the "body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12), the "church of the firstborn ones" (Hebrews 12:23), the "church of the Living God" (1 Timothy 3:15), the "household of God" (Ephesians 2:19), the "kingdom of the Son of his love" (Colossians 1:13), "the church" (Acts 2:47), and the "church of God" (1 Corinthians 1:2).

So when it comes to Scriptural designations for the church, we shouldn't be so wedded to one name that we would be unwilling to use another designation if one could be proven to be better than another.

However, with that said, I must express some serious doubts as to the legitimacy that the designation "Church of Christ" in front of our buildings is hindering people from becoming a part of our fellowship. It's not the name people have problems with, it's the doctrine we teach (e.g. baptism for the remission of sins, acappella singing, the role of women, marriage, divorce, and remarriage, etc.). Because of this, changing the name on our church signs won't make any difference, for it's not the name to which people object, it's the doctrine that offends them.

As I see it, we don't need a name change. The problem is not with our name. The problem is that a worldly, secular society has little interest in the doctrine of Christ which demands changes in their habits, beliefs, and morals. And friends, that's non-negotiable!