

# There Is Nothing in a Name

Dub McClish

There is more to Christianity than wearing a certain name. I could put a “Ford” nameplate on my Chevy, but that wouldn’t make it a Ford. I could call a worldly person a Christian, but that wouldn’t make him one. A church building may have the name “Church of Íthe question, “Is there anything in a name?” Sometimes it is positively stated, “There’s nothing in a name.”

While other things in this world and in religion are important, one flies in the face of reason and Scripture to say a name has no importance. Why does my car have “Chevrolet” instead of “Ford” or no name at all on it? Because there **is** something in a name That name is important to the manufacturer who advertises, to the customer who buys, and to the state that registers that car. If there is nothing in a name, why not sign someone else’s name when you write a check or borrow money? When you buy insurance, why not put Benito Mussolini’s name in the beneficiary blank? No need to make a will if names are unimportant. Obviously, names of people, places, and things are the most basic forms of identity among men. There would be no order or civilization without them.

Is God concerned about names? He had an angel tell Joseph to “call His name Jesus” when Mary gave birth to our Lord (Mat. 1:21). Later, Jesus taught the apostles, “Whatsoever ye shall ask **in my name**, that will I do” (John 14:13). Peter preached repentance and baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ” (by His authority) (Acts 2:38). In Acts 4:12, He specifies that there is no other **name** wherein we can be saved. Isaiah had promised that God’s people would be called by a new Í (Isa. 62:2). This is fulfilled in Acts 11:26 when “the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” With such emphasis on the sacred name, can we imagine that God has no concern for the name of His church? If we are truly concerned with honoring the name of Christ and being only His church, we will wear only His name. Every designation applied to the church in the New Testament reflects honor on the name of its owner. This is why Paul speaks of “the churches of Christ” in Rom. 16:16. While a church can be wrong while wearing the right name, it cannot be right while wearing the wrong name **There is something in a name.**

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