

# “What is Your Name!”

*Ecclesiastes 7:1; Proverbs 22:1*

**Intro.** – Some people collect stamps while others scramble for autographs or campaign buttons... but John Train’s hobby (an investment counselor) is simply to collect names. He is a name buff, who recently compiled a book entitled *Remarkable Names of Real People*. In this book he demonstrates how names often times really do fit the person. Let me share a few of these names with you:

1. A. Moron (educational official)
2. Cardinal Sin (archbishop of Manila)
3. Doctor Doctor (medical doctor)
4. Justine Tune (chorister)
5. Groaner Digger (undertaker)
6. Firmin A. Gryp (banker)
7. Ronald Supena (attorney at law)
8. Mr. Vroom (motorcycle dealer)
9. I.C. Shivers (iceman)
10. Major Minor (U.S. Army)

Reminds me of the names of real people and places with whom I am personally acquainted:

1. Dr. Dead (medical doctor in So. Bend, IN)
2. Butcher’s Mortuary (Knightstown, IN)
3. Boots/Ivan Odor (preachers)
4. Harry Pitts (just retired preacher)
5. Harry Butts (leader in one of our churches)

We laugh at these because we all know that names really do mean something. Names have been likened to a key. They often unlock hidden treasures and open the doors to a greater understanding. This certainly is the case with the names applied to God’s people as found in the New Testament.

*Purpose: to consider five New Testament names given to God’s people by God Himself*

By doing this we will prove what our text says: *A good name is to be desired than great riches or good ointment.* Thus, if you consider yourself one of God’s people, let me ask you “What is your name?”

## I “DISCIPLE”

- a perfectly good name found only in the Gospels and Acts... a name from which we have all but abandoned because of its use by a group that decided to become a denomination in the early 1900’s
- yet, it is perfectly Biblical to call God’s people *disciples*:

### A. Its Meaning

1. Literally means *pupil, student or learner*
2. It presupposes a teacher and always means the pupil is lesser in contrast to the teacher/master
3. To be a *disciple* means to be a *learner* as taught and instructed by master/teacher – i.e. X!

### B. Its Use

1. As stated already the use of this term is found only in the Gospels and Acts:
  - 73(Matthew); 44(Mark); 38(Luke); 77(John); 30(Acts)
2. Only name used for Christ’s followers in the Gospels – especially used for 12 apostles (disciples)
3. Used in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) = told to go and do what? *Make disciples!*

### C. Its Applications

1. In every case *disciples* were and are those who not only accept the teaching of Jesus, they put them into everyday practice! Acts 6:1; 11:26; 21:16 etc. makes this abundantly clear.
2. What is your name? *Disciple?* If so implications clear – X is Lord, you are His student/learner!

## II “BELIEVER”

### A. Its Meaning

1. This name is a little more intimate than the name Disciple.
2. I.e. it suggests a closer relationship and means more than mere intellectual acceptance of truth.

### B. Its Use

1. Acts 2:44; 4:32 – early church called “believers” who closely knit together because of Christ.
2. 1 Timothy 4:12 – “...*be an example to the believers...*”
3. Many other passages use this name to describe *faith THAT works* unto the glory of Christ...

#### C. Its Applications

1. Further study will reveal basic idea of *TRUST* – those believe in X put confidence in Him alone!
  - Illus. – demons called *believers* (James 2:19), difference is their *trust* is someone else...!
2. Like what Paul expressed in 2 Timothy 1:12 “*I know whom I have believed and am persuaded...*”
  - Illus. – songs: “Only Trust Him” and “Tis So Sweet...” – if such songs are the “theme songs” of your life then you can answer question *What is your name?* with “Believer!”

### III “BROTHER/SISTER”

#### A. Its Meaning

1. “He Ain’t Heavy, He’s My Brother” = older song...
2. Relationship indicated by this term is more intimate than name just considered = close family ties
3. This family oriented idea involves “brotherhood” where love is essential – love of a divine origin and not a worldly love – 1 John 3:13-16 “*Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*”

#### B. Its Use

1. Acts and epistles use this more than 100 times – e.g. Acts 11:29; 14:1-2; 15:1 etc.
2. 1 Corinthians 8:12 “*And thus, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.*”
3. Want a solid study? – Run the references on the use of the term brother/sister = brethren!

#### C. It Applications

1. 1 Corinthians 8:12 – sin against the brethren you sin against Christ – i.e. our dealings with each other must be above board for several reasons, not the least of which is the effect on our evangelism...
2. Our intent with each other ought to be the very best:
  - a. Galatians 6:1-2 “...*bear one another’s burdens...*”
  - b. Luke 22:31-32 “...*strengthen your brethren...*”
  - c. 1 Peter 1:22 “...*fervently love one another from the heart...*”

What’s your name? In love for one another do we individually/collectively ear the name “brethren”?

### IV “SAINT”

#### A. Its Meaning

1. How tragic many place meaning on this name that differs greatly from Bible’s simple definition.
2. Many think “saint” applies only to those who are *superior in goodness* or one *canonized* by Roman Church after they have died – Illus. – bones little girl displayed cathedral of Notre Dame...
3. Used in the NT – “those set apart for God” ... term literally means “holy one(s)”

#### B. Its use

1. Acts 9:13 – Ananias “...*Lord I’ve heard what he’s done to your saints in Jerusalem.*”
2. Romans 1:7 = “*To all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” = used to identify God’s people (not dead or superior).
3. 1 Corinthians 1:2-3 “*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*”
  - saints is used exclusively for God’s people!

#### C. Applications

1. Does not carry idea of sinless perfection = 100% forgiven but NOT 100% good!
2. Carries idea of “holy living” = standard of living that encourages more God-likeness.
3. Question to consider: What are we doing to encourage more holy lives?!

I pray our name is “saint” that we be more holy in our living encouraging one another be more like Him!

## V “CHRISTIANS”

### A. Its Meaning

1. Literally means “follower of Christ”
2. It immediately suggests the name of our Great Redeemer
3. It identifies Christ as “Our Chosen Leader”

### B. Its Use

1. Given only three references in Bible; yet, stands as the most significant name ever given by God!
2. Acts 11:26 “...*disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*”
3. Acts 26:27,28 – Agrippa “...*short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.*”
4. 1 Peter 4:16 “...*but if any one suffers as a Christian let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God.*”

### C. Its Applications

1. This suggests our most intimate relationship with Christ, making clear we accept Christ as:
  - our source of all good blessings... author of salvation... fountain of all joys...
2. It is not that we belong to this or that denomination/church – belong to Him ALONE!
3. This name should identify our character, doctrine, attitudes, hopes and joys = binds us together!
4. He who lives in accord to the true, Biblical meaning of this name is the most blessed of men!

Thus, what is your name!

**Conclusion:** Just what is your name? Is it “Disciple?” Is it “Believer?” Is it “Brother/Sister?” Is it “Saint?” Is it “Christian?” If you can wear the names which we have been considering, not because you have earned them or deserve them, but you wear them based solely on the fact you have been saved by His grace alone, then your life will be what they imply!