

# DO YOU AGREE WITH JESUS?

**QUESTION: Should we call preachers “reverend,” “father,” etc.?**

Numerous titles are bestowed upon preachers throughout the religious world. There are “reverends,” “right reverends,” “pastors,” “fathers,” etc. Should we refer to preachers using such titles? Is there Biblical authority to bestow religious titles such as these upon a preacher? What would Jesus say about such?

Jesus stated, “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ” (Matthew 23:8-10). Jesus here denounces the use of religious titles. We have earthly, biological fathers, and as such, there is no harm in calling them “father.” We have those who have been spiritual fathers unto us (see 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Timothy 1:12). However, to bestow a title upon someone for religious purposes in order to elevate them above another is strictly forbidden. Many have the idea that the church is divided into two distinct groups—the clergy (preachers) and the laity (common members). The Bible knows nothing of such distinctions. Look again at the words of Jesus: ***“and ALL ye are BRETHREN”*** (emphasis mine, Patrick Morrison). Each member of the body is vital to the functioning of the body of Christ. No one member is more important than another (1 Corinthians 12:20-25). Religious titles seek to elevate men to positions that God never intended.

Search the Scriptures. You will never find “the Right Reverend Paul,” or “Pope Peter,” or “Bishop Pastor Timothy,” or “Father Titus,” or “Worshipful Master John.” These were merely identified as servants of the Lord and preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the height of spiritual arrogance to demand that someone call us by such titles. Don’t be guilty of seeking after the praises of men, but rather learn contentment with the praise of Almighty God. Let us emulate the example of these great early preachers, and refuse to accept or adopt any nomenclature that would serve only to further man-made distinctions and divisions in the church of our Lord!

Do you have a question that you would like for us to consider together, or a comment regarding what has been written? If so, please email us at [sixthavenue@bellsouth.net](mailto:sixthavenue@bellsouth.net), or write to us at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama, 35501.