

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Not to be called Rabbi, Teacher and Father...

Not to be called Rabbi, Teacher and Father... - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/16 3:25

Mat 23:6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,
 Mat 23:7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'
 Mat 23:8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.
 Mat 23:9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.
 Mat 23:10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.

Some claim that because Paul opens his letters calling himself an apostle which legitimizes men to take titles such as a teacher, pastor, apostle and so on and require others to also call them as such but a close look at Paul's introductions and we find a different style of identification...

Rom 1:1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

1Co 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2Co 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in all Achaia:

Gal 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Col 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

1Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope,

2Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

Tit 1:1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,

In these NKJV scriptures Paul gives a term relating to his job description and not a title at all hence following the commandment from the Lord, in fact he shows clearly he's as much a bond/love doulous/slave of Christ as an apostle. Are the titles we find attached to post modern ministers stemming from cultural/professional pride? I as a minister have been faced with this issue over the years and have had to make some uncultural decisions...

I very much do not want to cause any division with this post especially with any who may be using a title, I am only desirous of digging deep into this little reviewed scripture and finding the heart of it's meaning (pride has been an important issue of review recently and I found this verse to be relational).

All for souls,

wta

Re: Not to be called Rabbi, Teacher and Father... - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/16 7:04

It is interesting that the Lord says not to "allow" men to call you these things. Meaning, the onus is not on those who call others these things to cease from doing so, but rather, the onus is on those who are called such by others to not permit them to do so. Indeed, if men who are called such by those who sit under their instruction are instructed not to do so, then surely if they were willing to sit under their teaching, they will cease from calling them such.

It is interesting, I personally know a man at my church who was ordained by a certain denomination as a bishop. Yet, this man doesn't even attend a church within that denomination, let alone pastor any church. He just sits on one of our back pews and sometimes is asked to preach. Yet, some people (especially our pastor) will address this man as "bishop." The man even wears a reverse collar, colorful suits, and plastic/gold crosses! It is exactly this sort of thing the Lord spoke against. I believe the man is probably well meaning, but, just because one is well meaning doesn't mean one is right.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/16 7:08

Also just a note, this sort of thing creates a mutual self-congratulatory culture. I pay you a compliment so that you will acknowledge me. If I call you "father" or "rabbi" or "leader" and you receive such a compliment, then you receive me. Such creates a culture of man-pleasers.

Re: Not to be called Rabbi, Teacher and Father...ONE, on: 2008/6/16 7:16

In your post you quoted Matt:23 vs. 8. We are "Brethren" first, and the spirit of titles is also the spirit of rulership, or positional superiority. This doctrine, or idea, is odious and utterly rejected by our Lord in many ways.

I think the Lord Jesus's own words, in Rev: chpt: 2, vs. 6.. "But this you have; that you hate the *deeds* of the **Nicolaitans**, which I also hate. It is not a complicated Greek word to translate. It, *NICO*, means ruler or King, and *Laitan* means, *under, or that which lays beneath*, thereby, the Kings, or the Rulers over my people. It also, in religious terms, denotes the position of these rulers; the wearing of robes or collars as " **THE CLERGY**, and hereby the introduction of titles into the Body of Christ.

But, remember, it is not the title in itself that Jesus hates, but the motives and Spirit behind it; the spirit of prideful and arrogant superiority over the weak and the meek. The strong and smart are more qualified and apt to rule. It is the doctrine of the Devil himself, in his cosmic order of princes and lords, that were transferred to all mankind, and brought to maturity at Babel, under the first of the great Lords, Nimrod. **Benefactors**, but it shall not be named among you! "...For you are all brothers, and you have one ruler and Head, even Christ!"...

This is the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which Jesus HATES!.....Rev:2.vs. 15.. Jesus hates the deeds, and doctrines of these who would usurp His rulership alone. They are wicked in His sight, for in the doing of their "ministry", they quench His ministry. He is no respecter of Persons, and gives equal love and honor, to all, and His favorites are those who love Him, and carry His heart, not those who demand Position as being on top.

Words carry spirit. "My words, carry spirit and Life.".....The translators of the 1611 KJV were in a bind. One word is used throughout the New testament for the Shepherd, and should be translated as such,,,but:, to do so would dismantle the hierarchy the Church of England!.. A reformed British Catholic Church..Not if you valued your life!

Thereby the many words for one...Bishop is the biggy here....oooooh!, B I S H O P!

The word means the ruler, and after a while, everyone.. received this idea, of a multi tiered system of Rulers. Thereby the Pastor of today. The Pastor has Elders. The Elders have Deacons. The Deacons have specialized ministries, divided into corps, all the way down to the kids....Wow!

Pride, and the benefits of following it.

Re: Nicolaitan! and the Bishop of London...TWO...see below., on: 2008/6/16 8:38

The translators of KJV 1611 were a brilliant crew, and overall did a stellar and anointed work, but they were human, and liked having their heads attached to their necks to get around and all. This multi - translated word, Shepherds, to bolster the pyramidal and Babylonian structural system set in place by the quasi-Catholic Church of England wasn't the only debacle they compromised to. The other splinter, was "**Nicolaitan**". It is simple, as I implied in my last post.....Lord or Kings over My people.

The King himself, James at the time, had to yield to the , and further more, *wanted* to yield, to the hierarchy of the church, as a means to solidify his Authority among his people, and abroad. **IF** he allowed this one simple word, to be translated as it was meant to be, as King or Lord, the common believer would figure it out, just like Jesus simply said. *"I hate what it is, and what it does. I HATE IT."*, then, most people would can it' defy it's obvious implications, IE, The Bishop is Naked!.. The King has no clothes!

The entire system would be thrown upon it's derriere', and chaos would ensue. This could not, nor would it happen. The church, as it was, and the King of England needed each other, and another darker prince was pulling the strings on his puppets, outside, in the nether world.

So, the entire English speaking World, the cradle of Christian freedom in the entire WORLD, was penetrated with a false hood, in the form of a mystical and almost undefinable term: **NICOLAITAN**.. We know it's bad, but what does it mean? It must be a first century heresy. That's it....bad doctrine, that's it! Roman Catholic,, yeah, that's the ticket..those bad Catholic guys!

Today..the Pastor...always one man..A leader among equals!...and here we go again. The preeminence, and the love of it. There is no New Testament description of the Pastor, but always a plurality of Pastors, or, more honestly, a plurality of Shepherds. This Godly and holy system of unity and many, is the check and balance of Heaven itself. It prohibits the commandeering of one over the many, for whatever the reason. Men may become deceived, and Devil possessed, and take the church with them. It has happened many, many, times. Remember Jim Jones, and the holy Kool Aid communion . Cyanide and hundreds dead,, Oh dear Pastor! He sexed who he wanted, male or female, and enjoyed preeminence!

You could go on and on, but New Testament Doctrine prohibits the "one man show", and everyone knows it. I have confronted many with these scriptures, and the "pat" answer I get usually is, "Well it just doesn't work."

They're right, and it won't work where ambition and pride rule and reign, and man's awful lust to build a "name" for himself. It goes back to ascending to the sides of the North. This is the desire for preeminence. Pride,,Pride,, Pride!

Let us also consider that many, many holy and Godly men, operated under this system, with great favor, and respect of the Lord Jesus Himself. God has used this system, but more often than not, in the time of seduction, the once humble servant rises up with fury in his eyes and screams, "Look what I have built! Do you not know who I am?"

I think of Alexander Dowie, one of the most awesome men of God in the 20th century. Satan came, not as the tempter of the passions of lust, but as the flatterer, and Brother Dowie, the one and only absolute dictator of men and cities, bowed the knee to himself....A name for himself..

In one of the more unusual public encounters ever, the Holy Spirit Himself met Alexander at the dedication of the Dowie temple in Zion. When Dowie touched the communion cup to drink, he was stricken instantly with a paralyzing stroke, and suffered two years or more, until he died from it. In the process, he lost everything, and even his own son was so disgraced, he changed his name. Worship and Dominion belong to Jesus alone. He is jealous.

Great fear came upon this fledgling Pentecostal child, and many gave up their ambition to be numero uno. I believe Dowie is in Heaven, as the Lord has looked upon his entire life covered by the blood. he may have had his works burnt in fire, but I think he was saved. I have used him only as a type, for there have been too many to name. We could spend hours doing that.

If this interests you, please read Ezekiel 34. This system unchecked can produce some real animals. even excluding the Satanic excesses and murders of multitudes by the Roman Catholic system. It is alive and real, next door, and it revolves around names, that identify the spirit of control, for the personal power and gain of the one who rules.

The pharisees speak about the great ministry of the Lord Jesus, just prior to their murder of Him ; "This man does many miracles, and the people flock after Him. If we let Him continue, the Romans will come, and remove our Nation, and our place from us!" They only cared about their place, in the context that their nation provided their place,,,a position of the benefactor. Power, Position, and Privilege.

Read **Acts, chapter 20**. The grievous Wolves that would draw away others, to follow. To be a king, oh to be a king; a real success!,, a leader of men.

"But, it shall not be so among you, but the greatest shall be, *as the least*, and the servant of them all!" Just a simple servant, who loves his family, the people of God. One of several shepherds in the local assembly, where the unity of the Brothers rule and reign, not the cruel and arrogant ambition of one. **If we let Him continue, the Romans will come, and remove our place, and our Nation** Alive and well in the honoring of one over the other, and this, alas, is designated by Names, which is the WHY of Jesus's command not to do so.....He hates the spirit of it.

"Do you not know. that God is NO respecter of Persons!"

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/6/16 11:43

Quote:
-----very much do not want to cause any division with this post especially with any who may be using a title, I am only desirous of digging deep into this little reviewed scripture and finding the heart of it's meaning

No doubt the labels we give to certain select people can cause enormous walls of division - for example — between the laity and the clergy. I find it interesting that terms that formerly referred to servant roles, have drifted into status labels. The problem is not merely in the use of the labels, but in the people who use them. They put their trust in the labels and they create status from them: and THAT, we can be sure is wrong.

Still, there are times when it is appropriate to address people with formal labels, ex: Rev./ Father Smith instead of Tom or Joe. You may think Professor Reverend Doctor Jones is a complete jerk, but still, a dose of respect doesn't hurt. You need discernment.

I am not for creating a buddy/buddy relationship with everyone, or for the erosion of authority in our culture. Let's admit, there are those whom God had gifted to serve in leadership capacities, and who are empowered and trained to teach the word of God. We need to regain respect for those roles — and at times labels serve well. Who of us hasn't gone to Bible studies where no one is supposed to be any more an authority than anyone else? You end up with pooled ignorance

nce and a lot of opinions – none of which is supposed to be any better than any other.

I know a Reverend who gave up his ordination status in order to support two troubled youth in a tough court battle. Sure, he may have lost an important status, but he gained the respect of two young fellows who even today regard him as a spiritual father to them. For him it was worth the price – for Jesus' sake.

Would the apostle Paul not have done likewise?

Diane

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/16 16:09

I've found personally the longer I search to have the heart/mind of Christ I find how simple a mind I really have and how far I am from the mind that created the universe and all that's in it. With that said I've also learned that the Lord's commands are intended for simple minds like mine and by this rule I address His commands (his commands are that all should repent and know and be taught by God). I say all of that to say this...

Should I not just do what He says and pass all the questions that may arise? How difficult is it really to just simply agree and obey? If He says not to call men father, teacher, rabbi and the like (this seems consistent throughout scripture) and especially not permit others to call me as such who am I to second guess the Lord? Call me a simpleton but this is the safe place my mind wants to come to...

All for souls,

wta

Re: Pastors. Without such the Church will perish, on: 2008/6/16 16:55

Diane: In no way did I, or will I suggest that because the clergy/laity system is broken, we do not need Pastors. I, in my post, was simply responding to the positional abuses and divisions that inevitably come when it is instituted.

Without Godly Pastors, the church will perish. The Bible says that we are to submit to those who have the rule over us, and that without grieving them for they watch over our souls. Even Jesus, when referring their hypocrisy to the crowds, exhorted them to do as they say, not as they do! We must have order, and oversight in the body.

I am never going to call a man Father Smith, or Rev. Father Joe out of respect. That is the root purpose of the quote that began this thread. To do so, for me, would add respect on one who could not deserve it, and disrespect the One Father who does.

Concerning Paul's ordination status; it was impossible for him to relinquish it to a man. He never got it from a man. It would be hard for me to see him cow-towing to a group of Catholic priests, calling them father this or that, for any reason.

At the end of the day there is one body, and one Spirit, and one Lord above all, who is no respecter of persons. Tom.

Re: We are all different but equal... - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/16 19:25

Mat 23:8b and you are all brethren.

We truly would fall apart without godly pastors but this can not happen as the Lord gives the gifts to men to do that job as it is a gift of the Spirit.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers

, Eph 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

Eph 4:13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Eph 4:14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

Eph 4:15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

Eph 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

The ordination from heaven is what gives a person the supernatural ability to govern God's people and of course the Lord knew this when He spoke Mat 23 on this subject. It seems VERY clear in verse Mat 23:8b that He gives the leveling title to all, "brothers".

I personally, as I mentioned in previous posts have had to renounce the titles of pastor, reverend and the like to submit to this command from the Lord. My convictions do create a challenge when I'm a guest in other churches addressing others ministers/workers/servants of the Lord but I've also found very little resentment.

All for souls,

wta

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/17 1:09

The follow is what John Wesley had to say on this subject...

Mat 23:8-10 - The Jewish rabbis were also called father and master, by their several disciples, whom they required, To believe implicitly what they affirmed, without asking any farther reason; To obey implicitly what they enjoined, without seeking farther authority. Our Lord, therefore, by forbidding us either to give or receive the title of rabbi, master, or father, forbids us either to receive any such reverence, or to pay any such to any but God.

*** John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible

Re: spotlight on the "label" issue - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/6/17 8:35

Quote:

-----I am never going to call a man Father Smith , or Rev. Father Joe out of respect.

Brotherhood, Actually, my views lean more in your direction than may appear. Let me illustrate with a true story. One year I was invited to a national pastor's convention as guest musician. For much of that event I was in the prayer room as called to by God. His most striking prayer burden to me related to this very issue of using labels to define status and rank. God gave me the illustration of the Wizard of Oz. Do you know the story? At the end, the much revered and "distinguished" wizard in the land of Oz, hiding behind the screen and all the pompous green regalia turns out to be nothing but a pitiful fearful man who is totally unable to do anything for anyone. The parallel is this: Behind all the hierarchy, divinity degrees, position and rank, etc are human beings who are just as needy as the rest of us. They cannot offer us the things we so desperately hope for.

Anyway, at that convention, I was given the list of all the ministers in all the churches. I noticed that most were titled as "Reverend", and some as "Pastor", and the odd, "Dr.". Obviously the labels referred to nothing more than educational achievement. The Lord stirred me to pray against that whole thing, and have those labels removed. I told no one about that prayer. A few months later I happened to see the new list of pastors, and sure enough, all the labels were removed.

Here's another true story: One day I introduced a pastor to a 5 yo foster child whom I had taken to church. I said, "Jeremy, this is Mr. Smith (not real names). He likes to talk about God." Now, I doubt that the minister had often heard himself addressed that way. However, in that situation I was thinking about the child. The term "Pastor" would have meant absolutely nothing to him.

My main concern with this matter is this: Diligently applying the scripture on this teaching does not guarantee that we are following the true spirit of the exhortation. There are plenty out there who are trying hard to follow it. I know one Christian organization who calls their preachers "workers", another calls their minister "Principal"... and on and on it goes. However, in time—alas, people run into the same typical problem they tried to solve. Humble terms morph into status labels.

Far better to simply apply the general message of scripture—live according to the Spirit, and then labels will lose their power to divide the body. Learn to recognize and value the work God is doing through his servants, not by labels, but by actual fruit.

Meantime, while we may be diligently obeying this one verse by refusing to use a label, we may inadvertently be communicating to some, especially older people, a prideful disrespect. May our zeal for God's word never become stumbling blocks. May Love always be our strongest driving force.

That's the way I see it, anyway...
Diane

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/17 20:02

Wow road sign that was a powerful post. Humility is just too vital to successfully maintaining a relationship with the Lord and without a close relationship with the Lord there is no success in ministering to His body and the unsaved world.

Pro 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.

Oh Lord help us understand your true humility. Lord the kind that would see the creator of the universe born in a barn and destroyed on a cross... How ever can we, your body walk as you walk without this revelation?

All for souls,

wta

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/17 22:29

I wonder if the Lord had called some of our ministries by different names, if we'd be so quick to use them. Imagine if the apostles had been called "ditch diggers." I wonder if we would be so quick to embrace such labels. Indeed, it is a scary thing today that many embrace the label apostle, yet, know nothing of the apostolic poverty Paul and his coworkers knew. How about this description for such a "glorious" ministry:

1 Cor:49 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor. 11 To this present hour we are both hungry and thirsty, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless; 12 and we toil, working with our own hands; when we are reviled, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure; 13 when we are slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become as the scum of the world, the dregs of all things, even until now.

How do you like 'them apples?

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/17 23:33

Well said KingJimmy.

I've noticed a trend in the last fifteen years or so. There are waves of titled "pastors" being elevated to the distinguished title of "prophet" but somehow only for a season as these very same chaps go through more elevation and end up with the illustrious title of "apostle". Curious how the Lord seems to "juggle" these gifts; its hard to keep up with it, all the changes in my address book...

Pro 15:33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

I feel only to have touched the tip of the iceberg and I'm in awe of how great a task it will be to find the end of the revelation of humility...

All for souls,

wta

Re: Roadsign:...Doctor Tozer....., on: 2008/6/18 5:01

In his day and times, A.W.Tozer was a true Apostolic teacher and voice in many arenas. I believe that is how the "gift" works. "In whatever is spoken, *THAT* will He speak of!"

A few years ago, I got ahold of some old Tozer tapes. On this one, he was addressing a group of ministers at a conference, and evidently was very well known and honored by all there.

The master of ceremonies, his introductee, poured on the accolades in heaps, ending with his call to the pulpit. "Now, I give to you this illustrious preacher of preachers; Doctor A. W. Tozer!!!!

Tozer came up to the podium, and you heard a little shuffling of paper....."That's *Brother* Tozer to you!" thank you...,,and the audience laughed, maybe nervously.

He preached on the position and lineage of Positional office, using the text about the Pharisee's touting their pedigree in racial blood line to assume the "Chair of Moses." He equated the exact same spirit resting on this group of Pastors, as was on them, in that they may have believed that the virtue of their office would exempt them broken love for all. I remember him crying; "You are the flesh!" right in their faces. You are the flesh!", as he considered their plight and deception of wicked Adam within, that would allow a positional separation, a "Clergy/ Laity, in the body of Christ.

Not a lot of ministers would go there...

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/19 1:39

I've been told that there is a new "movement" by the Lord to "reinstate" the offices of apostles and prophets and that it due to this "move" of God that we're seeing so many "released into their destinies". I grimace just to type such things. May I venture to say that God has never stoped giving the spiritual gift of governance to His people. He has always raised up all the offices as true apostles and prophets, evangelists and pastor teachers who refuse to announce that they are such and hence are seen as humble brothers in the Lord that give their lives totally to the Lord, His word, prayer and the protection and forwarding of the apostles doctrine.

Is it only prideful men wanting to be seen well before people that promote such self serving issues? I humbly wonder w

ith great concern...

All for souls,

wta

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2008/6/19 7:11

Quote:

I've been told that there is a new "movement" by the Lord to "reinstate" the offices of apostles and prophets and that it due to this "move" of God that we're seeing so many "released into their destinies".

While I believe in modern day apostles, I find the so-called "apostolic" and "prophetic" movements of the last 20-30 years rather scary. They are anything but. Indeed, those in these movements seem to be seeking for power, position, and prestige much in the same way those in traditional hierarchical church governments have. And when so-called apostolic and prophetic men act in such a way, they show they are not living up to that calling.

Indeed, I believe apostolic men have always been around. Ephesians 4:11-15 makes such clear. But like you say, they have been individuals who did not go around flaunting their "office."

Indeed, they have more often than not simply been the humble yet bold missionaries that have taken the gospel to those who have not heard it yet. They are those men who made great sacrifices and often gave their lives, simply so that the name of Christ might be established in a place where it had yet to be established. They did this in word and deed. And thus, they were truly apostolic.

Re: For those who would make a name for themselves., on: 2008/6/21 16:45

Jimmy: You spoke of the Apostolic always having been around. You are right. John Wesley, and Whitefield, John Lake, and many more. They were not men, who sat in the towers and dispensed their Authority as so many Charismatic Cardinals seem to do, to pass off as real Apostolic.

The true Prophets, and especially Apostles of all times, are directly associated with the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven, by the taking of it, away from Satan. Revived Churches spring up behind the Apostolic team...the 5 fold....

Someone out there knows the thousands of miles that John Wesley spent on Horseback...and his troubles....Do these modern day usurpers of that Word, have this experience behind them, and fruit of holy and sound Churches rolling forward, because of their ministry?...or do they want you to accept them because they say they are qualified....

Many, many do accept them. Let us look at the prophets in ministry now, as you have referred to. It seems they desire power, more than their desire to see souls saved and grounded for Jesus's sake.

Most of the Apostles who have lived, are most likely lost in Obscurity, with no record or Honor rolls on Earth...yet, I bet we will one day see who has made the wiser choice. I would rather have my name, where my reward is also...I am hoping, in that Great Book, the book of Life. Good enough for them, I bet, also.

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/23 1:47

Doctrinal issues such as this are deeply concerning. It's one thing if we had a fringe group who were rouge separatists but what we are looking at, if we have the heart of the matter is a deadly plague of pride sweeping through what has been commonly described as the body/church of Christ.

I am split on this matter as I have great faith in my commander in Chief and His ability to train and govern His military forces. Now with that said I get a yet deeper concern. Are these men and woman who are failing to address Mat 23:8-10 really severing Jesus Christ? Can they really be filled with the Spirit of Truth? Why do they look more corporate than broken? Why do they spend more time per week on their Sunday morning sermons than winning souls and training those he has been authorized to oversee to win souls? How do I know this and make such speculations? I have been one of them... but yet not at the same time. I've been in the system but not of the system and now I feel I've been given the release to stand aside and review, review, review.

Does a little leaven leaven the whole lump?

1Co 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

1Co 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened.

Lord have mercy.

wta

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/6/23 13:58

From time to time I receive a private email in response to an SI discussion. I have received permission to post the following comments shared to me privately. They are important in my opinion, because they remind us of the danger of running away with any one scriptural idea while failing to see the bigger picture, or failing to understand the spiritual implications of that verse.

I just want to thank you for your post on SI in reference to title distinctions. It was right on the mark. (Â...)

We had some dear friends who got really caught up on not using title distinctions because they said Jesus forbid it. And they would go as far as to say it was sin to call someone "Mr" because it was a derivative of "master" and Jesus said "call no man master". So they would look down on humble godly men who people referred to as "pastor" etc. But greatly respected a man named Mike whose teachings they were deeply entrenched in. They held this man's teachings higher than the scriptures themselves. They were not able to see that they had made this man "Mike" master even though they just called him by first name and were completely missing the point.

I was not quite able to articulate my uneasiness about the whole situation and it was some time later that I was able to see what was going on. But I knew something was amiss. I agreed with the principle and could see that it was biblical, but the spirit behind it was off.

So, I just want to thank you for your humble, yet truthful post.

via a messenger, Diane

Re: Not to be called Rabbi, Teacher and Father... - posted by BenBrockway, on: 2008/6/23 15:38

I, too, feel strongly about the "labeling" issue. It breaks my heart to see so many people caught up in status and popularity. Not only is it becoming more evident in the world, with "Reality shows," but even amongst Christians. It's the "I've gotta be somebody" syndrome.

I constantly find myself in this same struggle. I grew up a pastor's kid. My childhood life was all about looking good, showing people that we are a family who has everything together, and putting on a facade. When I got old enough to work, I was bound and determined to be the center of attention, somehow. I wanted to start a band, be a promoter, own a well-established promoting company, and so on.

Several years ago, the Lord got ahold of me and I have since ceased to try and establish a "label" for myself.

Today, I still struggle, though, not just with my own past, but the fact that in order for me to shepherd people within a church (trying not to put a label on the desire God has placed within me), I have to make a label for myself. I have to have a degree or in some cases a doctorate.

Why can't shepherding be based upon one's relationship with the Lord and the calling that has been placed upon that person's life?

It baffles me that "the church" is strongly against its congregation to seek worldly things, and yet the church itself does not pay attention to its own God-given wisdom.

I still have much to learn, but it is these such things that boggle my mind.

Ben

Re: - posted by wta (), on: 2008/6/23 17:02

Ben,

For me I have learned that I must walk as the Lord would have me, humble and submissive to all His commands. By doing, He will build His kingdom on/around what He has made me to be. That has meant that I can't work within the post modern church any longer as they refuse to submit to all His commands. So My wife and I are staying true to our convictions as people gifted to govern His people and it's been AMAZING how He has brought people into our lives that we now minister to. We are tentmakers like Paul and Barnabas but at the same time helping to raise up or equip His saints for the work of the ministry and at the same time being true to our convictions. I hope this testimony will at some level bring hope to your situation. One thing I know for sure, He is worthy to finish all that He's started, amen?

All for souls,

wta

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/6/24 8:46

There are two precious testimonies here that I feel should be bumped up.

wta said:

Quote:
----- So My wife and I are staying true to our convictions as people gifted to govern His people and it's been AMAZING how He has brought people into our lives that we now minister to.

wta, may you find God's blessing as you allow Him to place you in His Body—both to minister and to be ministered to. In this way you can enjoy precious give-and-take relationships: when you are all on level ground.

And Ben:

Quote:
----- I constantly find myself in this same struggle. I grew up a pastor's kid. My childhood life was all about looking good, showing people that we are a family who has everything together, and putting on a facade. When I got old enough to work, I was bound and determined to be the center of attention, somehow. I wanted to start a band, be a promoter, own a well-established promoting company, and so on.

You were merely practising what you were taught: that is, by example. This kind of story is all too common!

Quote:
----- Several years ago, the Lord got ahold of me and I have since ceased to try and establish a "label" for myself.

Today, I still struggle, though, not just with my own past, but the fact that in order for me to shepherd people within a church (trying not to put a label on the desire God has placed within me), I have to make a label for myself. I have to have a degree or in some cases a doctorate.

Deeply engrained false notions about roles do not seem to uproot instantly. If only! They remind me of root fragments that are left behind when the weed is pulled. It has become my belief that our ability to recognize such weaknesses can propel us towards the Lord. We see our constant need for his mercy.

Quote:
----- Why can't shepherding be based upon one's relationship with the Lord and the calling that has been placed upon that person's life?

It baffles me that "the church" is strongly against its congregation to seek worldly things, and yet the church itself does not pay attention to its own God-given wisdom.

Once institutionalized wheels are in motion and these faulty views about roles are inbred, it's hard to stop the monster. I am reminded of a train headed down the track. You can't just stop one wheel and expect the machine to come to a halt. You have to stop all the wheels. Regarding the institutionalized church, I'd rather leave that to God. It's too big to handle.

Quote:
----- I still have much to learn, but it is these such things that boggle my mind.

Me too!

Diane

Re: - posted by BenBrockway, on: 2008/6/24 23:05

Thank you WTA and Diane for your input and precious words of wisdom. :-D