

Rabbi, Father, Teacher



HUMBLE MAN

EXALTED GOD



Philippians 2:1-11

CONTEXT of *Matthew 23:8-10* (before
and following:

condemnation of pious church leaders
(Jewish world) who loved attention,
devotion, and exaltation.

Many Pharisees were haughty and condescending in their attitude toward others who did not keep the Mosaic law as scrupulously as they did.

Pharisee = separated ones (from Persian... prs)

Jesus went after their hypocrisy in contrast to their splendid titles such as “rabbi” [great one]

- lack of **integrity** 23:3
- lack of **sympathy** 23:4
- lack **spirituality** 23:5
- lack of **humility** 23:6-7

Titles and tags can be tricky. Intended to convey respect and recognition they can (like anything else) become a source of pride and pretension [artificiality, grandiosity]

Jesus: Godly leaders should shun pretentious titles simply to avoid the perception of importance, cleverness, or superiority. Issue: exalted worth or status before God.

The issue is not any particular word (title) but WHY someone wishes to have that title used.

- Many titles are benign, simply descriptive...
 deacon [table waiter], pastor [shepherd],
 bishop [overseer]

- Some titles are questionable in intention... Reverend [to revere], cardinal [esteemed, essential]... called “his eminence”, pope [father]... called “his Holiness” Etc.

Jesus... Do not use titles as a way of exalting yourself or others. Just exalt God.

The Bible tells us to **honor** leaders
(in all areas of leadership)

HONOR your father and your mother (*Ex. 20:12*)

HONOR one another above yourselves

(Rom. 12:10)

Give everyone what is due him. If you owe taxes,
pay taxes. If revenue, then revenue...

If respect, then respect. If HONOR, then

HONOR.

(Rom. 13:7)

The elders who direct the affairs of the church are worthy of double HONOR, especially those who whose work is preaching and teaching.

(1 Tim. 5:17)

We ask you to HONOR those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in highest regard in love because of their work.

(1 Thess. 5:12)

I am sending Epaphroditus... welcome him in the Lord and HONOR men like him, because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me. (*Phil. 2:29*)

In this teaching, Jesus balances that **HONOR**
by adding **HONESTY** and **HUMILITY**.

“you have only one Rabbi [teacher] and YOU
ARE ALL BROTHERS” 23:11

- **Honesty** > an important role does not make you a **more** important person.

“The greatest [play on Rabbi] among you will be your servant” *23:11*

- **Humility** > a leadership role **includes** the role of servant.

ON THE ONE HAND:

Realize that any leader (even in God's church) can manufacture and manipulate appearance or presentation thus **inviting praise** of men.

“I am the Lord, that is my name! I will not give my glory to another! *(Is. 42:8)*

ON THE OTHER HAND:

God has delegated authority to positions of leadership and many leaders work hard and humbly to discharge their responsibilities. God expects honor and support without constantly **criticizing** or **accusing** or making their authority **burdensome**.

“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy and not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.” *(Heb. 13:17)*