

Article Title— "Titles of Reverence"

Article Category— The Visible Church

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Why do churchgoers continue to gush flattery on their preachers and denominational leaders? Do you think it may be that most of us perceive that they're "called" and "chosen" and we're not? Is that even marginally supported by scripture? Here's a little-known quote from the Old Testament: "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; [in so doing] my maker would soon take me away." The apostle, Peter, responded wisely to that carnal mindset, too: "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped [him]. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." —Acts 10:25,26 Got it? Not "Reverend" Peter or "Bishop" Peter or "Cardinal" Peter or "Pope" Peter; just "Peter." What's so hard about that?

God, alone, is worthy of any lofty name that would tend to assign glory—or "special" status (See Psalm 111:9). The widely-coveted "reverend" title is from the word, "revere." To revere a person is to regard him as worthy of great honor or worship. To covet or to even *tolerate* such a title for oneself or to clothe oneself in a manner or to speak in a manner that might even suggest such an elevated status is to think more highly of oneself than one ought to think. In short, to present oneself as "special" within God's family is sin! The interim consequence of that sin results from others perceiving one as "special." In the visible church, there are "special" people; but the playing field is level in THE Church: Correction, exhortation, reproof, and occasional rebuke are reciprocal (See 2 Timothy 4:2).

Jesus had this to say about those who behave and clothe themselves in a manner that might suggest an elevated status: "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. 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. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." —Matthew 23:5-12

It is truly unfortunate that some of Martin Luther's 16th-Century Reformation contemporaries coveted the enormous potential for controlling their followers and their followers' dollars. They copied the organization and the business model of the Roman *church* and the pomposity[^] of its clerics. They elevated the Protestant clergy to "special" status. To reinforce that scripturally unjustified perception among their followers many clerics, even today, adorn themselves with pompous attire. With or without such pompous attire, most rank-and-file churchians perceive their clergymen as "special." In doing that, they perpetuate a dangerously false narrative.

[^] "Pomposity," per the World English Dictionary:

1. vain or ostentatious display of dignity or importance
2. the quality of being pompous
3. ostentatiously lofty style, language, etc.

Here's something else you may not know: The Roman church replaced the false-god name, "Dagon," with the name "Ichthus," meaning "fish" in Greek (See Strong's H-2486). They *claim* it's an acrostic for **I**esous **C**hristos **T**heos **U**ios **S**oter. That translates to "Jesus Christ God Son Savior," in English. Many Bible and church history scholars have concluded that it's simply the Romans' clever continuation of clandestine Dagon worship. The Ichthus monogram in Greek is **ΙΧΘΥΣ**. To yield the symbol for 666 in Greek, it is said that one must simply superimpose the first, second and last letter of that monogram on top of each other. (I'm not personally convinced that that's true, mind you...but lots of folk repeat it as truth.)

So, who was/is DAGON...??? Per Judges 16:23, Dagon was worshiped by the Old Testament Philistines. "Dagon" means fish-god, per Strong's H-1712. The primary worship of the Babylonians was to Dagon. In Chaldean times the head of the church was the representative of Dagon. He was *infallible* and people had to kiss his ring and his slipper. He was also addressed as "Your Holiness." Like the Roman super-clerics, Dagon's priests also wore the fish mitre and pompous robes. What about that *fish mitre*? For starters, it's a tall hat that resembles Dagon's fish mouth...



—T. C. Newsome

I was a successful Bible teacher for a LOT of years—big sanctuary classes.
I knew what my denomination believed and that's what I taught.
Yes, I should've checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn't I do that? Well, maybe I didn't do that for the same reason that you haven't really checked out what your denomination teaches.

"In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Samuel Clemens



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