

YATI Old Question Call no man rabbi

Original date 08/16/01

Dear Rabbi,

In the New Testament, Yahshua says, "call no man Rabbi." Are you Gentile or Jewish? If you are Gentile and are called Rabbi to help Jewish people learn about their Messiah, I guess I can understand that. Please answer honestly.

Thank you.

A. Benz

Parts Unknown

Dear Mr. Benz,

I always answer honestly and it often gets me in trouble, so you can expect a similar answer.

Excellent question. Let me answer it briefly. I am Jewish and I am a Rabbi. When Yahshua "supposedly" prohibits men from using the title Rabbi, He is not picking on one or two titles out of a truckload of manmade titles and forbidding their usage. He is attacking an ungodly principle involving the mental gymnastics that religious people tend to play. Their giving, exchanging, purchasing, renting, or requesting of titles, from one another, is sinful behavior. Amongst those who represent Yahshua this practice is condemned, since that behavior is man's ordination practice and not the Father's. He states that we shouldn't call anyone Rabbi. Why? Because only He can anoint and issue a call for someone to be a Rabbi. If Yahshua were alive on the earth today, He would say to religious folks something like this: "Do not be called District Supervisor, do not be called District Superintendent of the Sunday school and do not be called Rev." Why? Because manmade titles and recognition puff up the flesh and are not necessarily a sign of Yahweh's calling. Remember, He was talking to Jews and therefore dealt with the title that they were most abusing. Were He to be talking to Baptists, He would say "Do not be called Pastor." Why? Only He does the calling of Pastors. Not you or I! To think that Yahshua is picking on two or three titles, in a world full of manmade titles, is a highly anti-Semitic mind-set. It is unfortunately exactly what many churches would like you to believe and have in fact trained their people to believe.

To further prove my point, remember that Rabbi means teacher. Rav Shaul (Paul) lists the five fold office giftings in Ephesians 4 at the end of verse 11 and calls Rabbis a gift to Yahshua's body. Rabbi and teacher are synonymous terms. The risen Messiah gave Rabbis to the body. The church has a problem with the Hebrew word "Rabbi", not the concept of teacher. This is Judeophobia at its ugliest.

Finally in First John 2:13-14, Yochanan calls mature believers in the faith, "fathers". Wasn't John paying attention to Yahshua? Didn't Yahshua warn us not to call any man father in Matt 23:9? Isn't John contradicting Yahshua? Or maybe John was in rebellion? No sir! We know that not to be the case. He correctly refers to mature believers as fathers of the faith, despite Yahshua's pronouncement. Therefore it is safe to say when you are a mature believer and are able to lead others as John said, you are a father of and in the faith. When you walk in the five fold ministry of teaching, given by Yahshua to teach others, you are a Rabbi. Period! He isn't picking on two titles as evil over and above all the others! He merely is rebuking the principle of arrogance and pride in man's tendency to issue titles, without divine sanction and anointing!

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