

## Why do you call the priest “Father” when the Bible says not to call any man “father”?

Orthodox understand the "call no man father" passage (Matthew 23:9) specifically in the context of our Lord contending with certain rabbis of His day who were using these honorific titles to accomplish their own selfish, prideful and hypocritical ends. Had these same apostate rabbis been using other titles, like "reverend" and "pastor," Jesus might as easily have said, "Call no man reverend or pastor." His condemnation was not of the use of "father" (or any specific title) but of the hypocrisy and pride of the Pharisees and rabbis in their use of it. St. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:15. "For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers&hellip;" St. Paul seems to claim to be the "Spiritual Father" of the Corinthians! St. Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus obviously did not interpret our Lord's words to mean that only our Heavenly Father can be called "father". In Luke 16:24 Jesus tells us that the rich man cries out "Father Abraham, have mercy on me..."; Abraham did not correct or criticize the rich man by saying, "call no man father"! Are we saying that the Apostle ignored Jesus? Are we saying our Lord Jesus Christ contradicted Himself and violated his own statements? We think not! Rather the passage must be understood in its specific context of condemning hypocrisy, self-aggrandizement and pride, rather than a universal condemnation of the use of "father".