

<i>In search of</i> Truth and Right		
<i>Tim Henderson, Editor</i>		
Vol. 02 No. 09 09/30/ 2007	<i>"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things."</i> Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)	A publication of the Wellsburg church of Christ

Please, Don't call me Pastor

By: Timothy R. Henderson

It seems petty, my request to not be called by what is considered an important title by many today. I believe it is an important title, used by the Scriptures in reference to the office of an elder (also referred to as bishop and overseer). So why not allow some to call me that? Simply ... I'm not one, I hope to one day achieve the office of an elder (bishop, overseer, pastor), but when I do, I won't be the pastor of a local church, but one of the pastors (elders, overseers, bishops). Why is it that so many today refuse to look to the Bible for the correct usage of Biblical terms? Have you ever had a "Mormon Elder" come knock on your door? "Elder", these kids still have to deal with pimples. I had some visit me one time and I asked them about the qualifications of an elder as mentioned in 1 Timothy 3. Their first reply was they had not read that passage. Now how can you use a title from the Scriptures and not know what it means? What church leaders would send them out with name-tags referring to them as elders? Do they not know what it means? Obviously not. And that is part of the problem, even those who claim to be leaders of various religious organizations don't understand the meanings of words that are thrown around so easily.

Take for example, "Reverend" Jesse Jackson, or "Reverend" Jerry Falwell, or "Reverend" Jimmy Swaggart, or "Reverend" Billy Graham, or "Reverend" Pat Robertson, or "Reverend" Benny Hinn, or "Reverend" Al Sharpton, or "Reverend" anyone who goes on TV or the radio. All of these actively use or allow the title "Reverend" to be used in reference to them. They also claim to have intently studied the Word of God and claim an extensive knowledge of it.

But wait a minute, the Scriptures use "Reverend" in reference to only one thing – God. In Psalm 111:9 the ASV reads *"He hath sent redemption unto his people; He hath commanded his covenant for ever: Holy and reverend is his name."* [emphasis mine – TRH] This is the only time the word "reverend" is used throughout the entire Bible. God's name is to be revered, not Jimmy Swaggart, Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Jesse Jackson, Jerry Falwell, Benny Hinn, Al Sharpton, nor anyone else. There is no reverence that we should

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	

This Bulletin is published by the:

Wellsburg
church of Christ

which meets at:

112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070

give to them, it belongs only to God. And you know, by looking at Psalm 111:9 we see that God is holy. He is our “Holy Father”. But doesn’t the Pope accept worship and praise in such a way? According to Wikipedia and other sources – one of the forms of addressing the pope is “Holy Father”. The only time we read of using the term Father in reference to a spiritual leader is God. In Matthew 23:9 we read Jesus’ words “*Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.*” (NASB-U) Did you catch that – “*One is your Father, He who is in heaven.*” But the Catholic Church uses it in reference not only to the pope – “holy father”, but in reference to its priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, etc.

Whoa, wait a second ... where did all of those terms come from. I remember the New Testament talking about priests: “*and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*” Revelation 1:6; also “*you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ... 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal PRIESTHOOD, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*” 1 Peter 2: 5,9. All members of His body become priests, there is no special order of priests in His kingdom, He (Jesus Christ) is the High Priest (read Hebrews) and we are His priesthood.

I also remember the New Testament speaking of “bishops”. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 gives the qualifications of the office of “bishop” (overseer, also referred to as elders in Titus 1:5-9). The term pastor is used together with bishop, elder, and overseer to signify the office of those who were leaders of a local congregation. Note the following study:

1 Peter 5:1-2 - NASB Greek & Hebrew Dict. (Upd.)

Elders - **presbuteros** - presbyter

presbuteros; a cptv. of πρεσβυς **presbus** (*an old man*); *elder*:— elder(3), elders(57), men of old(1), old men(1), older(1), older man(1), older ones(1), older women(1), women(1).

Strong's: comparative of **presbus** (*elderly*); *older*, as noun, a *senior*, specially an Israelite *Sanhedrist* (also figurative member of the celestial council) or Christian “*presbyter*” :- elder (-est), old.

Bishops - **episkopos** - overseer—**episkopeoô**; from Greek 1909 (ἐπί, epí) and Greek 4648 (σκοπέω, skopeoô); *to look upon*, fig. *to care for*:— oversight(1), see(1).

Pastors - **poimen** - shepherd—**poimainoô**; from Greek 4166 (ποιμήν, poimeôn); *to act as a shepherd*:— caring(1), rule(3), shepherd(5), tending sheep(1), tends(1).

So we see what these three terms mean – Now let’s look at how they are used interchangeably to refer to the same group of individuals.

Acts 20:17 - “*From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders [presbuteros] of the church.*”

Acts 20:28 - “*Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [episkopos], to shepherd [poimen] the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*”

1 Peter 5:1-2 - “*Therefore, I exhort the elders [presbuteros] among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd [poimen] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight [episkopeo] not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;*”

Eph. 5:14 “*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists [euaggelisteôs], and some as pastors [poimen] and teachers [didaskalos].*”

Bishops or elders were to be appointed in every church. Note that it was to be a plurality, more

than one in every church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). Never just to the bishop/elder of a church.

So we read of priests and bishops, but where do archbishops and cardinals come from? Not from the Scriptures, and that really is all that needs to be said. It does not come from God, Jesus Christ, His Son, or from His Word. Therefore, let us use the spiritual terms He has given us in a proper, Biblical way. I'm not a pastor. One day I hope to be one of the pastors of a local congregation. May I live my life in such a way that I will be qualified to serve in the office of bishop / pastor / elder / overseer. Even then, I will not be Pastor Tim, I will be simply Tim, one of the pastors (bishops/overseers/elders) of a local congregation.

It's also interesting to note how many (the pope one of them) allow themselves to be worshiped. They allow others to bow down before them, even expecting it. When we look at the Scriptures however, none of the apostles accepted worship, neither do angels. Note the following Scriptures:

Acts 10:25-26 *"When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshiped him. [26] But Peter raised him up, saying, 'Stand up; I too am just a man.'"*

Revelation 22:8,9 *"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. [9] But he said to me, 'Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.'"*

Now pay attention to what you have just read. Peter, the apostle that is claimed by the Catholic Church to be the first pope, refused worship stating *"I too am just a man."* A far cry from the attitudes of his supposed descendants (with more space and time we would look at the fact that Peter was not the first pope). Even angels refuse worship telling John to *"Worship God."*

So, please don't ever call me "Pastor" Tim, I'm not a pastor and even when I become one, it is a title of an office in the Lord's church, not a title to be used in a name like Doctor or Professor. And don't ever call me "Reverend" for our God in Heaven alone is "Reverend", He alone is our spiritual "Father".

News N Notes

Our Gospel Meeting—October 14-19 with Jarrod Jacobs.

Remember these in your prayers:

- **Blake Headen**, Alberta's husband recovering from surgery and facing future cancer treatments.
- **Blake Swanson**, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson
- **Terry Smith, Jr.**, dealing with cancer treatments.
- **Virginia Malick**, Peggy Miller's mother
- **Amanda Dowdy & Mabel Fleming**, also **Joyce Coen** taking care of Amanda & Mabel.
- Terry Smith's brother **George**
- **Ed & Marie Roberts**, & Ed's father, **Jim Roberts**.
- **Ila Marshall**, Harold Marshall's mother
- **Cary & Grace Lancaster**

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers

Shut-ins:

- Rhea Henthorn
- Ethel Mahan
- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap