

The WORLD TOMORROW

A WORLD-WIDE BROADCAST

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Dear Friend:

Many readers continue to write Mr. Armstrong, addressing him as "Reverend." Should this be done? Let us understand how and when it became the custom to give ministers this title.

The word "reverend" is applied only to God in the Bible -- it is not once applied to man. In Psalm 111:9 we read: ". . . He (God) hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and REVEREND is HIS NAME." Another translation renders it: "Holy and awful (that is, full of awe, worthy of worship) is his name."

God alone has a name which may properly be addressed as "Reverend." No man will have such a name until born again in the resurrection. No minister has a name which is worthy of reverence or worship.

You cannot find one place in all the New Testament where Paul, Peter, James, John -- or any other minister -- were ever addressed as "Reverend." If we follow the Bible example -- which we are commanded to do -- then we ought not ever use the title "Reverend" for any minister. (See also Matt. 23:9.) Since many ministers of this world's religions would take offense were you not to give them some title, you may properly address them as "Pastor," or "Elder," or "Evangelist," or "Bishop," depending on what office they hold. These are proper titles of office given in the New Testament. They may be applied -- out of respect to ministers, whether or not those ministers are serving the true God.

The use of titles such as "Reverend" began when the great apostacy set in the Church at the close of the first century. Ministers put themselves "in the place of Christ." Hence they took upon themselves the attributes and titles of divinity. God's ministers have never done so.

LETTER ANSWERING DEPARTMENT