

Why Do We . . . ?

by Bill Crews

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20:17, 28; Phil. 1:1), and there is no such thing as “a pastor” of a congregation. And preachers are not, for that reason (because they are preachers), pastors.

Nowhere in the New Testament is any man referred to as “the Reverend.” To honor and elevate a man with such a title is contrary to the principles found in Matthew 20:25-28; 23:5-12 (There Jesus condemns and forbids the use of religious titles such as “Master,” “Rabbi,” and “Father”; yet, men defy our Lord, and use them anyway.) and 1 Peter 5:5-6. The use of “reverend” as a religious title has opened the door to other titles that exalt even more, such as, “the very reverend,” “the right reverend,” “the most reverend,” and “the most holy reverend.” There could be no end to such. Children are to reverence their parents (Heb. 12:9; Eph. 6:1-2), and wives are to reverence their husbands (Eph. 5:33), but they are not to address them as “reverend.” And nobody is to take upon himself to parade around in special religious vestments and wear high-sounding titles.

“Except Ye Be Converted”

by Wayne Goff

“...Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:3, KJV).

Privilege

It is a **privilege** to be offered membership into the kingdom of heaven at any price! Do we ever stop to think about what Jesus is saying? The kingdom of God is *righteousness* (Rom. 14:17). This is a place where everything is ordered rightly and cannot be changed by evil men. It is a kingdom of *peace* — peace with God and men. It is a kingdom of *joy* in the Holy Spirit, something that can never be taken away from us.

“Be Converted”

However, one must **“be converted”** — requiring a radical change in one’s life, way of thinking, and goal setting. To **be converted** means to **be changed**. I know that people do not like change, especially in their own lives, but to be in this eternal kingdom one must be willing to become a new creature in Jesus Christ. The change may be tremendous, but it is worth it!

Evidence Of Conversion

The **evidence** of this change is that the new citizens of the kingdom of heaven will *“become as little children”*! It is a great step up to once again be as honest and simple as a trusting child. Some of the ingredients suggested here include:

- **Unconscious humility.** No hypocrisy, no deceit or guile, but being humble while being unaware of it.
- **Total dependence.** A child knows nothing else but to totally trust in his parents for his well-being. The Carpenters once sang a song entitled “Bless the Beast & the Children” which carries the sad lyric “For the world can never be the world they see.” While this is true, it is also true that our utopian world can be realized in the kingdom of heaven! Trust and obey your heavenly Father completely!
- **Unquestioning Receptiveness.** A young child is so teachable and obedient! The evidence of conversion is seen in **character** not in profession. It is not putting an old head on young shoulders, but **becoming as little children!**

How Can This Be?

“Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God’ (Jn. 3:4-5).

“Trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

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