

DON'T CALL ANY MAN 'FATHER'

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DON'T
CALL
ANY MAN
'FATHER'

*Is it wrong to use titles like Father, Priest,
Vicar and Episcopa for the leaders
in the holy church?*

DR. K. P. YOHANNAN METROPOLITAN

Faith and Tradition Series

Don't Call Any Man 'Father'

(English)

Faith and Tradition Series

by

Dr. K.P. Yohannan Metropolitan

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Preface

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit ✠

Our faith and tradition are the two major factors that define our identity in Christian living. Faith stands for what we believe as a church and tradition denotes how we live according to our faith.

As a church, the faith of Believers Eastern Church is deeply rooted in the Holy Bible, which is the foundation of our life and spirituality. Our tradition is the practices of what the apostles, the composers of the New Testament showed and later was perfected by the vision of the early church Fathers.

My hope is that the 'Faith and Tradition' series will bring renewal and life to our

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Christian life and our church, to know
Jesus, who gave His life and loved us, more
intimately.

✠The blessings of the Triune God be with
you all forever.

Synod Secretariat
March 20, 2018

✠Dr. K. P. Yohannan
Metropolitan

Introduction

How would you feel about addressing Jesus Christ as “Slave Jesus”? Do you find it offensive? You might. But is it not what we read about Christ in Philippians 2?

Let’s attempt a more contemporary analogy for comparison. What if we called the President of our country Slave so-and-so? Or perhaps, what if we stayed true to the root from which the word ‘minister’ is derived. We might call the Prime Minister ‘Servant so-and-so’. After all, ‘minister’ is derived from a word that means ‘servant’.

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We are people with strange contradictions and irrationalities in our value system and judgment.

In everyday life, we refer to so many people without calling them by their names, by using their designation or our relationship to them, without a second thought. We say “my teacher”, “my professor” Professor XYZ. We have a way of referring to royalty, to those in authority – from the Queen of England to the Collector of a district, a pilot, a police officer, even our own parents.

There are people that vehemently oppose using titles such as Reverend, Priest, Pastor, Clergy, Metropolitan, Catholicos, Pope, Holy Father, Vicar General, Archbishop and so on. They insist that using these terms to refer to people is the same as taking God's name for them. They have an argument against each title. Even calling somebody a priest, they say, is to live under the Old Covenant.

But we must address them. They feel that we must call our preachers and

advisors, the ones we now call by all these titles that they object to so angrily, 'brother' or 'elder' or 'friend'. Perhaps this sounds like a good compromise, but remember that Jesus was addressed in the Bible as our brother and our friend. Would using these titles be elevating ourselves to His stature, assuming an honour we do not deserve?

I am sure you agree that it is God who started giving titles to His called delegates to represent Him and do His work. Think of how we refer to Father Abraham, Prophets, Kings, Priests etc.

We read in St. Matthew 23:9 - "Do not call any man Father" (NIV). Jesus goes on to say the same about calling anybody 'teacher'.

What does it mean? Is it wrong to call our biological parents, 'father' or our instructors in school and college 'teacher'?

Obviously, it is a subject that can create conflict and give rise to strong opinions. So in this book, we will look at the titles

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the holy church has used for 2000 years
to address the people God called to serve
His people.

My prayer and hope is that what you read
here will help in your understanding for
greater unity and love for God's church
at large.

It Began with God Himself

CHAPTER ONE

It Began with God Himself

Identifying a person by using a term to qualify who he is began with God. He very often adds an adjective or title to qualify/identify the person or individual He is talking about. Here are a few examples of them:

After creating Adam and Eve, God identified them as the “first man”, “made in God’s image”. Eve, He said, was “the first woman” and “a helpmate”.

When they had children, God pointed Cain out as the ‘older’ and ‘Abel’ the

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younger. They are identified by the qualification attached to their name.

Moses was called the 'deliverer'; Gideon the 'Judge'; Saul the 'King'; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel were 'prophets'; Samuel the 'Priest'; David the 'king of Israel'; Joseph the 'Prime Minister' of ancient Egypt.

Now one can go through the whole Bible and see the way people identified with a title or honorific before and after their name.

It is similar to how we would say Dr. David Johnson M. D., Mary John R. N (Nurse), Hon. Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi, President Donald Trump etc.

When I first went to Germany, I learned that you don't call people by their first name unless they give you permission to do so. It is a sign of closeness, so you call them Herr Muller or Frau Davis. In English, that would be Mr. Muller or Ms. Davis. But then, this same Herr Helmet Muller, when he is

at his work, is Dr. Helmet Muller M.D. This is not only respect for him as a medical doctor, but also respect and honor as an individual.

In the New Testament, Jesus addressed His followers as 'children,' 'disciples,' 'brothers' and so on. They were later addressed as "Apostolos". Stephen was a 'deacon' as we read in the Book of Acts. Then there were prophets and prophetesses. In both secular and spiritual fields of life, people have always been identified by their profession or their vocation, no matter what it might be. Some professions and vocations come with specific honorifics to be used while addressing them – for instance, in a court of justice, there is a definite protocol regarding the use of the words 'your honour' and 'my lord'. The judges, in turn, will address lawyers as 'counselor so-and-so'.

Even in daily life, we use professions and our relationships with people to decide how we address them – mother, mama, father, papa, daddy, doctor, teacher, miss,

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madam, and so on. We do this without a second thought.

Put that way, it seems natural and obvious, doesn't it, that we must have ways to address leaders in the church, as well? And yet, this is a matter of much conflict and debate.

More than we realise, the tens of thousands of divisions in Christianity came about due to the disagreement as to what certain Bible passages mean. After Reformation, within a short period of time hundreds of denominations were established, each one claiming to know the truth.

The same dilemma continues even today. Just look around and you will realise this. If the church acknowledges Jesus as Lord, the holy Trinity, the Bible as God's authentic infallible revelation, then why are there so many divisions and so much fighting among people that believe in one God and one Saviour?

Something is wrong.

To understand the intended meaning

of the author of the Scripture, we need to have some understanding of Hermeneutics (from Greek for ‘interpretation’). This is how over the years the church fathers who are godly scholars worked so hard to help us with methods and tools to understand the original meaning and applications of the Scripture.

To interpret is to reveal the true meaning of something spoken or written, especially hundreds of years ago.

For example, it took 15 centuries to have the Bible written. These 1500 years saw massive changes and evolution in cultures, meanings, customs etc.

So to understand the Word, it is important to consider quite a few things: the history and culture, linguistic structure, literary context, short figure of speech, external figure of speech, typology, symbols, symbolic actions, apocalyptic description of prophecy, language of creation and climax of poetry. It’s also important to distinguish between literal and figurative

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language while understanding the meaning of both.

If we want to truly understand the meaning of the Word and apply it in our lives, we need to shake off our pride and be willing to say, "I don't know everything. I want to learn." This humble attitude will help us to learn.

So to learn, I went back to the first 500 years of the church history. Reading about the Apostles, the Fathers of Faith and the early church teachers, helped me to better my understanding of the Word of God.

The more I learn, the more I realise that so much of the fighting and division is over minor matters that should not matter so much. The minor matters are built up into major issues, once personalities, opinions and pride are in the mix. What a terrible loss for those of us who are dedicated to being His witness in this dark and dying world.

Why Call A Man Who Serves
God by Any Kind of Title?

CHAPTER TWO

Why Call A Man Who Serves God by Any Kind of Title?

I grew up in a church where we always called our local church priest ‘father’. This is true of most all Eastern churches for 2000 years.

When I grew up, I heard stories of great men of God who changed history like ‘Father Damien’, who left his homeland of Belgium and went to Hawaii to serve among the leprosy patients who were exiled to the Island of Molakai. Not only did he touch the lives of thousands of these forgotten people, but he himself became a patient and died there.

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Mother Teresa (St. Teresa of Kolkata) on other hand, as a young girl, left her comfortable home in Europe and came to the slums of Kolkata to serve the poor, earning the name by which she is now known.

And there are thousands of men and women all over the world who have given their lives in the service of God. Think of the desert fathers and desert mothers who kept the faith of the early church! The fathers of the church continue to do the same even today all over the world.

Now the question is, is it right for them to assume the titles 'Father' and 'Mother'? What does the Bible say about it? We will discuss this question in the next chapter. Before we get into this, let us consider another title: 'shepherd'.

In the Old Testament, we read of the Almighty God calling Himself the 'shepherd' of His people.¹ In Psalm 23, David says, "The Lord is my Shepherd". So it is obvious that the title shepherd, is one that has been assigned to God. Now,

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would it be sensible to say that, because of this, no man should dare to call himself a shepherd?

We read in the New Testament of how this Almighty God became a man, and we call Him the Lord Jesus Christ. So it is natural for Him to say about Himself, "I am the good shepherd... gives His life for the sheep."² So God the Father has the title shepherd, God the Son has the title shepherd.

But wait! When we read Acts 20, we see that St. Paul says (inspired the Word of God) that the people called by God to lead His church are shepherds.³ So, God takes His title and gives to mortal men who are appointed by Him to be shepherds of His people. The great shepherd is God, but then men called to lead the people of God are also shepherds under Him.

When Jesus taught us to pray, He said, when you pray, pray like this:

‘Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

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Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.⁴

It is obvious that the creator of the universe, the Almighty God, is the Father of all.⁵ We are His children and can call Him "Our Father in Heaven". But then what about calling a mortal man who is called to lead the people of God 'Father'?

Let us go one step further. What about the many titles God uses to address His servants:

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Ministers
- Stewards
- Episcopas
- Deacons

Why Call a Man Who Serves God by Any Kind of Title?

- Soldiers
- Ambassadors
- Doctor (Luke)
- Fathers (1 John)

and many more.

So it is obvious that God did address those He chose with titles. It's also the obvious reality that we use titles all the time - Officer, Prime Minister, President, Member of Parliament, King, Queen, District Collector, SP, DGP, Mayor, Congressman, Senator, Lord, Judges, Chief Justice etc.

These titles only remind us of the human government God has established after the flood recorded in Genesis 7.

So when it comes to God's kingdom on earth, God has called people to lead His church and they are given titles so that we may know their roles in the call of God for His church to lead us.

St. Paul at one time called himself a slave.⁶ Then he talks about himself as an

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'Apostle'.⁷ This tells us that, the heart of the individual must be humble, broken, a servant following the master who is the Lord yet He was also a servant (slave) loving and serving others.⁸

Interestingly, the Pope is known as the Holy Father, while at the same time, he calls himself, "servant of the servants of God". That is how he addresses himself in the new catechism. I imagine, he did it obeying Christ's words, "But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant (slave)."⁹

Call No Man Father

CHAPTER THREE

Call No Man Father

In our 'Believers Eastern Church', we have various titles for the servants of God, based on their responsibility and position in the work of God.

The Supreme Head of our church is called the 'Metropolitan' and somebody who oversees a Diocese is called an Episcopa (Bishop). An ordained clergyman is called, 'Father' and then there are deacons, missionaries, evangelists, 'Sisters Of Compassion' (our religious order for women). And there are

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dozens of other titles we use to recognize the role each one serves.

Of all the titles, calling someone 'Father' has become a controversial topic among some Protestant churches. The Bible passage they use for their argument is found in the Gospel of St. Matthew chapter 23:1-12:

“Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best

places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'

But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.' ”

First of all, let us be aware of the context in which Jesus says this. One of the Rules of Hermeneutics is that one verse or isolated scripture should not be taken literally to establish a doctrine or truth when there are many other passages in the Bible dealing with the same subject. You take the whole Scripture into account when you interpret something so integral.

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That is allowing the Word to interpret the Word. In this case, using the title 'Father' is used several times throughout the Bible in a positive, affirming sense. So we must know that what Jesus says here is not to be taken literally; otherwise we will have to admit the Bible contradicts itself, and Jesus and His disciples are continually disobeying what Jesus said in the above passage, where He said, 'call no MAN father'.

The context of these instructions must be taken into account. Consider this: The Scribes and Pharisees He is talking about were not living for God. They did not know God as they should have. And yet, they pretended that they were spiritual. They were religious, but not godly. And they used the titles, 'father' and 'teacher' for their own gain, to garner the respect and acceptance of people.

They demeaned those titles with their actions and their intentions, and hence had no true right to use them the way God Himself did throughout the Bible.

It is like, say, a known religious cult group and their leaders using the same titles as the authentic community. After discussing the dark side/evil of these phrases, Jesus tells His disciples not to be like those who used those titles while being unworthy of them. Only those who represent and understand the value of those titles may use them. Be real, in other words. The issue here is not the title, but the reality behind it.

Now let us look at some of the many times the title 'Father' is used positively in the Scripture. St. Paul speaking to the Corinthian church, "For though... you might have ten thousand... in Christ, yet you do not have many Fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." that is, St. Paul becomes their spiritual Father through the gospel. "For this reason I have sent Timothy, to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord."¹⁰ Here St. Paul sees himself as Timothy's Father, while St. Paul was not his physical father.

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“As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children.”¹¹ Here again St. Paul is talking about the spiritual position of these church leaders who saw themselves as Fathers in faith to the church. Just as we do today.

“Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.”¹² Abraham did not literally father these people, it was a spiritual reality.

It is important to know, as I mentioned earlier in this booklet, that those who composed the Bible used various kinds of approaches to explain the truth. Here it is obvious, Jesus is engaging in hyperbole as He often did, to expose the abuse of the title 'Father' by the Pharisees.¹³

Jesus was not condemning the use of the titles 'Rabbi' (teacher) and 'Father', rather He was against the improper use of these titles by the hypocrites, those who talk about spiritual things that they themselves do not obey.¹⁴

There is nothing wrong with using the title 'Father' when addressing someone who is placed as a shepherd over God's people by the holy church.

The problem with some religious hypocrites then, as also today, is that they are not servants, but seek to be held in high esteem, honoured and praised by people. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. And Jesus warns His followers to stay away from such temptation and to be like Him, who is the Lord and God, yet He washed the dirty feet of the disciples, which was the lowest slave's job.¹⁵

Jesus was called, Rabbi, Teacher, Lord, and He called God His Father.¹⁶ And let us not forget, Jesus lived on earth as 100% man, and calling "no man Father and Rabbi" would apply to Him also, if it were to be taken literally!

There are a lot of references that help us to understand the meaning and intent of what Jesus talked about not calling any man father and teacher.¹⁷

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Through these references, if examined carefully, one can easily see the positive meaning, the beauty and holiness in using the title 'father' for those God called to lead His people.

In the fallen world in which we live, there will always be counterfeits in all matters of life, like counterfeit currency or duplicate products or even fake doctors. But we should not make such exceptions as rules, discrediting the good and the right.

For me, I am glad and grateful to call the man who became a saint to the leprosy patients as 'Father Damien' and the woman who inspired millions across the world to care for the poor and suffering as 'Mother Teresa'. She became the inspiration for Believers Eastern Church to launch our own 'Sisters Order' called the Sisters of Compassion, patterned after the 'Missionaries of Charity' that was started by St. Mother Teresa.

I am so glad for the early church Fathers who protected the true faith and traditions

of the church that we today can follow as part of the authentic church that began 2000 years ago. The very sound of the words, they are 'Fathers of our faith' gives us comfort.

The Implications of Being a Spiritual Father

CHAPTER FOUR

The Implications of Being a Spiritual Father

My father passed away in 1974. He was known in my village as someone who had never uttered a lie. He was deeply honest and upright, a very compassionate individual. No doubt, his influence on my life is significant. But then, all our relationships as human beings are limited by time and space. Being a biological father or mother is unique. Yet compare this relationship with our spiritual relationship, which is eternal, and being a 'spiritual father' or 'spiritual

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mother' transcends our time bound relationship.

Being a 'father' in the Lord to the people of God is an awesome call and a privilege that should be taken with uttermost seriousness.

St. Paul says to the parish at Corinth, "For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."¹⁸

Then again in his letter, St. Paul talks about Timothy being his beloved son.¹⁹ And anyone who is called to serve the Lord as a shepherd should see himself as God sees him. The highest form of commitment to the people of God can come from the awareness of this holy call of being a 'father' to the people of God.

For me, as the Metropolitan of our church, sometimes when I sit quietly with eyes closed and think about the millions of members of our church -both old and young - I feel grateful. I am also awestruck by the thought, for I am their father and

these people are my children. I think about them, feel for them, pray for them and write the monthly letters (which they hear read in their own native language) with the heart and compassion of a father. This is such a privilege that cannot be compared to any other title or job.

And as spiritual father, we are called to represent our heavenly Father to the people of God. In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus taught a parable about a human father to explain the heavenly Father's nature and attitude to His children.²⁰

Believe in them

Jesus said, to see Him is to see the Father. When we see how Jesus lived and dealt with His disciples, we get a sense of how the heavenly Father deals with us. The disciples were not perfect people. But Jesus believed in them, when no one else would.

Leading by example

Being a spiritual Father, the clergy of a

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local parish must be a father who shows the way by being the way. If he is teaching about prayer, the flock sees and senses the life of prayer and fasting in the life of the shepherd. In the areas of love, kindness, faithfulness, giving, witnessing, honesty, hard work, loyalty, caring for the poor, the only model the people see is 'their father' who is with them representing God. And they become like Him. What a terrible and fearful responsibility! We read in the book of Acts chapter 20, St. Paul gives the farewell address to the leaders of the church at Ephesus and expresses this truth in very graphic and profound way.²¹

Being a servant

It is a paradox. How can the Lord be the slave, as well? The way of the Kingdom of God is upside down, opposite to the world's way.

Jesus spoke about this:

A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be

greatest. Jesus said to them, “Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.”²²

There are many false fathers who take advantage of the sheep. These are false shepherds who abuse and use the flock of God for their personal gain. When a person uses his power and position to manipulate others for any form of personal gain, they are not godly shepherds. St. Paul warned about these kinds of false leaders.²³

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Feeding the sheep

The responsibility of a spiritual Father of the people of God is to feed them from God's Word. He is called not to beat and abuse the sheep, but to feed and lead them in the way of the Lord.

A true spiritual Father will care for his children's spiritual health. So he will faithfully teach, exhort, gently rebuke, and correct. The Word of God is faithfully taught week after week so that his children grow in the Lord.

Loyal and faithful

It is said, a good leader is one who is a good follower. Any priest or father who is not loyal to his superiors and his church is not a godly leader to the people of God. He will often review the Constitution, Canon Laws and the vows he made to his superiors, and he will remain faithful and loyal even when he feels he is overlooked or not understood. A priest who is not loyal to his church will find that the people

in the congregation are not loyal to him either. His authority as a spiritual father and shepherd comes from the authority over him and his heartfelt submission to his authority over him.

Blessing of a faithful father in faith

Our behaviour is based on how we see ourselves. What we believe on the inside is what we show outside. It is an inside-out reality. The way you think is what you become. The Bible says, “As a man thinks so he is.”²⁴ Again the Scripture says, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”²⁵

St. Paul saw himself as a father in faith to the parish in Corinth, to Timothy and the people he was assigned to minister to, by the great shepherd and the Heavenly Father. When a minister sees himself as the Father to the people of God, he responds, subconsciously as a father does. Even when he must correct, rebuke or admonish, he will come across with the love, mercy and gentleness of a caring

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father. St. Paul talking to the people of God said, "I have begotten you through the gospel."²⁶

Fathers are not hired servants. They care deeply for the family—the people of God. They don't run during times of problems and difficulty; they will risk their very lives to protect and save the people of God.

This is the heart of God the Father. This is without doubt a great blessing that we inherit from God. When the journey comes to an end, this faithful shepherd and father will hear from the heavenly Father, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'²⁷

A Final Word

When it comes to the Biblical worldview of leadership of the holy church, it is good to keep in mind that the Bible is understood better with an Eastern mindset than a Western thinking. Biblical leadership is theocratic; that is, God-centred. In other words, the sheep don't lead the sheep, it is the shepherd that leads the sheep.

The children of Israel were in bondage. God promised to deliver them. But He needed a leader to do the job. Moses was

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called by God to be the deliverer, but Moses was not ready for the job, so they waited another 40 years until Moses was ready to lead the people.

Here is the principle: God does His will through men and women who are chosen to lead. Throughout the Bible, we see it.

Biblical leadership is understood with the Eastern mind-set. In the Old Testament, we see God-Moses-Elders and then the congregation. In the New Testament, we see Jesus as the head of the church, then Episcopas and presbyters, and the congregation.

The problem with the Western mindset is, people and individuals are independent and submitting to authority is not natural to the culture. Of course, those churches that understand Biblical teachings will choose to embrace this truth.

The Orthodox and the Catholic church structure understand and practise this respect, and live in submission to their appointed authority.

The Bible has much to say about the non-negotiable teaching on submission to God-ordained authority. The local Father of the congregation is placed over the congregation to teach and lead the people of God. The people should give their due respect, acknowledging that God has placed him there to be their leader. When they rebel against him, they are rebelling against God.

Our teaching is that as long as the leader does not ask us to disobey the Word of God, we must humbly obey and follow.

Unity cannot be maintained without submission to authority. No army can function if soldiers don't obey the captain's orders.

There are some specific areas the people of God must give attention in our attitude and response to the clergy God placed over us.

Undoubtedly, the most important thing you can do to help your local priest be

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fruitful and effective in his role is to pray for him daily. Never criticise, find fault or gossip about him, God will not be pleased with this. Moses had to deal with this from the people of God he was called to lead.²⁸ Co-operate with him to do the work of the Lord with your talents and take care of his needs as the Bible tells us to do so. Every once in a while, write a personal note or tell him you are praying for him and appreciate his ministry.

Be a regular member of your church. This will place yourself in a position to be taught and shepherded by your clergy. Never miss the church worship services or taking part in the Holy Eucharist. To be fully participatory in the service and mission, make sure you bring your Bible, liturgy book, notebook and pen, and take notes from the teaching time for further study of the Word. And also make sure to give your tithes and offerings faithfully to the church, so that the ministry is not hindered due to lack of resources.

Remember that your shepherd's job is to lead his people according to God's Word. The people should be active in the work of God according to the talents and abilities God gave each one. One of the best ways to grow in the Lord, and at the same time help the church grow, is to find an opportunity where their gifts, talents and abilities can make a unique contribution. Therefore, come to church not just thinking of what you will get but also about what you can give through prayer and service to build others in their faith and good works. If you do this, you can find ways to serve your church and lighten the load of the minister/priest who is carrying the burden for the church.

Citations

Chapter Two

Why Call a Man Who Serves God by Any Kind of Title?

¹Eze. 34:1-25

²St. Jn. 10:11

³Acts 20:28

⁴St. Matt. 6:9-13

⁵Eph. 4:6

⁶Rom. 1

⁷1 Cor. 1:1

⁸St. Jn. 13

⁹St. Matt. 23:11

Chapter Three

Call No Man Father

¹⁰1 Cor. 4:15-17

¹¹1 Thess. 2:11

¹²Isa. 51:2

¹³St. Matt. 23:6-8

¹⁴St. Matt. 23:3

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¹⁵St. Jn. 13

¹⁶Eph. 3:14-15

¹⁷Acts. 7:1-2,11, 12, 32, 38, 39, 45, 51, 52;
22:1, 14, 26:6; 28:17; Rom. 4:1, 11, 12,
16, 17, 18; I Cor. 4:15; 10:1; Gal. 1:1;
1 Thess. 2:11; Phil. 2:22; 1 Tim.1:2, 18;
5:1, 2 Tim. 1:2; 2:1; Titus 11:4; 1 Peter
1:18; 2 Peter 3:4; 1 John 2:13, 14

Chapter Four

The Implications of Being a Spiritual Father

¹⁸1 Cor. 4:15

¹⁹1 Cor. 4:17, Phil. 2:22

²⁰St. Luke 15

²¹Acts 20:13-37

²²St. Luke 22:24-27

²³1 Tim. 6, Eph. 4

²⁴Pro. 23:7

²⁵Phil. 2:5

²⁶1 Cor. 4:15, 2 Cor. 12:14-15

²⁷St. Matt. 25:23

A Final Word

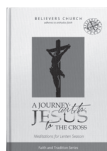
²⁸Num. 14

FAITH AND TRADITION SERIES

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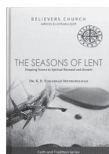
Season of Lent is a journey to spiritual growth, renewal and an opportunity to know the Lord Jesus more intimately and closely. We must hear the Lord speaking to us all along the way as the journey continues so that our heart-attitude will become more like His. The way to attain this is by deliberately choosing an attitude of confession, denying of self, fasting, meditation, prayer and supplication. And, the life is enriched with humility of Christ and service to others. This daily devotional will do just that: bringing the focus upon Jesus and enabling spiritual renewal in our walk with the Lord.



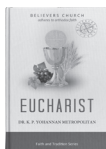
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Eucharist is one of the Sacraments of the holy church that the Lord Jesus told us to do.

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In this booklet, we will explain this unexplainable and awesome mystery to the extent that we can understand it.



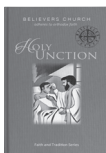
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Believers Eastern Church

We live in a synthetic world of make-believe and pretense. We long for reality, but lack of authentic information often leaves us confused.

With tens of thousands of Christian denominations, one wonders which one is authentic and represents the truth that we all seek. Is there a plumb line, a touchstone that will help us find what is real?

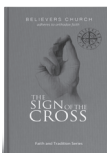
The author of this booklet believes that there is an answer to our dilemma. He explains where we may find guidance, and why that guidance is sure and true.



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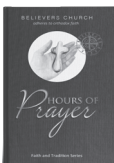
There are times in our life when we need God's help desperately. The Holy Unction is one of the sacraments meant to meet our needs during times of sickness, to bring hope and healing for body, soul and spirit through prayer and through anointing with holy oil.



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In the history of the world, there is one event that stands above all others. That event is the crucifixion of Christ. He gave His life for our salvation. From the beginning of the church, the Sign of the Cross has been the symbol of Christian faith and hope. Making the Sign of the Cross is a ritual that binds us together as people of God. In this booklet, you learn the depth of meaning behind this symbol, and how this ritual can bring you blessing and hope.



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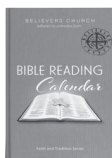
The faith and holy traditions of the Believers Eastern Church go back to the directions and rituals that the Apostles handed down to the church Fathers, and the church Fathers to us. The Hours of Prayer is one of the most significant aspects of the personal and co-operative spiritual lives of the people of God. This booklet explains the significance of the Hours of Prayer and how we can become part of this beautiful journey year after year.



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Thablitha

The symbols and godly traditions of our Holy Faith help us to retain our identity, which is based on the One Holy church. The Thablitha is an important symbol and component of the celebration of the Eucharist, which speaks of the Cross of Christ and His eternal sacrifice for our redemption.



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Bible Reading Calendar

Reading and meditating on God's Word is like oxygen for our spiritual life. Accordingly, this must become a daily habit for each individual and family.

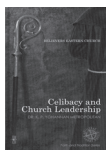
This Bible Reading Calendar will help you read through the entire Bible in a year, and be your guide on your journey through the seasons of the church year.



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The Plumb Line

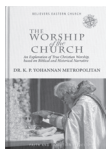
Our faith is based solely on the Word of God. While the Nicene Creed is not part of the Holy Bible. Its importance is second only to that of the Holy Bible itself. Every believer should endeavour to be able to recite it from memory. The Nicene Creed is a short and condensed one-page version of the Holy Scriptures. This creed contains the non-negotiable fundamental truths and doctrines of the bible, and it covers God's revelation from eternity past to eternity future. This book gives a brief explanation of the importance of the Nicene Creed and the meaning behind each its statements. It is important to understand the background and uniqueness of this creed for the sake of our faith, both individually and as a body of believers.



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Celibacy and Church Leadership

Why do some Eastern churches mandate celibacy for their bishops? It is a reasonable question to ask since 'Believers Eastern Church' adheres to the Eastern 'lineage of the Church', and in most of these churches, bishops are required to be celibate (that is, they don't marry). Another question is regarding the official ceremonial outfit that bishops wear, specifically the skull cap or masanapsa. Is it connected to this mandate of celibacy? What does the Bible say about bishops' celibacy? Is there a holy tradition of the church to support this view?



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The Worship of the Church

The break-up of the church is one of the darker aspects of the Protestant Reformation during 1500 AD under Martin Luther of Germany. Now there are 42,000 denominations, each of which claims to be the true and authentic church in their faith and practice!

In this brief booklet, the author tries to help the reader travel back in time to the first 500 years of the early orthodox faith of the church, to help us answer questions about a crisis of the modern-day church. The booklet explores how man has become the center of worship instead of God, who should be the audience in our worship, and the follies of this new way.



Price
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ബിലീവേഴ്സ് ഈസ്റ്റേൺ ചർച്ച്

വിശ്വസിക്കുകയും നടിക്കുകയും ചെയ്യുന്ന കൃത്രിമ ലോകത്താണ് നാം ജീവിക്കുന്നത്. നാം യാഥാർത്ഥ്യത്തിനു വേണ്ടി ആഗ്രഹിക്കുന്നു വെങ്കിലും ആധികാരികമായ വിവരങ്ങൾ സത്യസന്ധമായി ലഭിക്കാത്തതുകൊണ്ട് ആശയക്കുഴപ്പത്തിലാകുന്നു. ആയിരക്കണക്കിന് സഭാവിഭാഗങ്ങൾ ഉള്ളതുകൊണ്ട് ഏതാണ് നാം അന്വേഷിക്കുന്ന യാഥാർത്ഥ്യമെന്നോ ഏതാണ് സത്യത്തെ പ്രതിനിധാനം ചെയ്യുന്നതെന്നോ അറിയാൻ കഴിയാതെ അത്ഭുതപ്പെടുന്നു. ഏതാണ് യാഥാർത്ഥ്യം എന്നറിയാൻ ഒരു തൂക്കുകുട്ടയോ ഉരകല്ലോ ഉണ്ടോ?

ഈ ലഘുകൃതിയുടെ എഴുത്തുകാരൻ നമ്മുടെ ഈ പ്രതിസന്ധിക്ക് ഉത്തരമുണ്ടെന്ന് വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു. നമുക്ക് എവിടെ മാർഗനിർദ്ദേശം ലഭിക്കുമെന്നും എന്തുകൊണ്ട് ആ മാർഗനിർദ്ദേശം കൃത്യവും യാഥാർത്ഥ്യവും ആകുന്നുവെന്നും ഗ്രന്ഥകാരൻ വിശദീകരിക്കുന്നു.



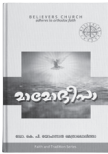
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കുരിശ്

കുരിശുവരയ്ക്കുന്നതിന്റെ അർത്ഥവും പ്രാധാന്യവും

ലോകചരിത്രത്തിൽ ഒരു സംഭവം മറ്റെന്തിനെക്കാളും പ്രാധാന്യത്തോടെ നിൽക്കുന്നു. ആ സംഭവം ക്രിസ്തുവിന്റെ ക്രൂശീകരണമാണ്. നമ്മുടെ രക്ഷയ്ക്കുവേണ്ടി ക്രിസ്തു ജീവൻ നൽകി.

സഭയുടെ ആരംഭം മുതൽ ക്രിസ്തീയ വിശ്വാസത്തിന്റെയും പ്രത്യാശയുടെയും പ്രതീകമായി കുരിശിന്റെ ചിഹ്നം നിലകൊള്ളുന്നു. കുരിശുവരയ്ക്കുക എന്ന കർമ്മം ദൈവജനം എന്ന നിലയിൽ നമ്മെ ഒരുമിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. ഈ പ്രതീകത്തിന്റെ ആഴമേറിയ അർത്ഥവും ഈ ആചരണം എങ്ങനെ നിങ്ങളുടെ ജീവിതത്തിൽ അനുഗ്രഹവും പ്രത്യാശയും നൽകുമെന്നും ഈ ലഘുഗ്രന്ഥത്തിൽ നിങ്ങൾ പഠിക്കുന്നു.



Price
Rs. 50.00

മാമോദീസാ

വിശുദ്ധമാമോദീസാ അഥവാ സ്നാനത്തെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള ഒരു ലഘു പഠനമാണ് ഈ പുസ്തകം. യേശു കർത്താവിന്റെ മഹൽ പദ്ധതിയായ വിശുദ്ധസഭ ഇന്ന് ആയിരക്കണക്കിന് ഗ്രൂപ്പുകളായി ചിഹ്നഭിന്നമായിരിക്കുന്നതിന്റെ ഒരു കാരണം, മാമോദീസാ എന്ന കർത്താവിന്റെ കല്പനയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള തെറ്റിദ്ധാരണകളും ഉപദേശപിശകുകളുമാണ്.

വിശുദ്ധബൈബിൾ ഇതിനെപ്പറ്റി എന്തുപറയുന്നു? സഭാചരിത്രവും സഭാപിതാക്കന്മാരുടെ ഉപദേശങ്ങളും ഇവയെപ്പറ്റി വ്യക്തമാക്കുന്നത് എന്ത്? മാമോദീസാ എന്നാൽ എന്താണർത്ഥം? മാമോദീസായുടെ ആവശ്യമെന്താണ്? ബിലീവേഴ്സ് ചർച്ച് എന്തു വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നു, ആചരിക്കുന്നു? ഇങ്ങനെ അനേക ചോദ്യങ്ങൾക്ക് ദൈവവചനാടിസ്ഥാനവും സഭാ ചരിത്രവും സഭാപിതാക്കന്മാർ ഉപദേശിച്ചതും പരമ്പരാഗതമായി അനുവർത്തിച്ചുവന്നതുമായ വസ്തുതകൾ കൂട്ടിയിണക്കി തയ്യാറാക്കിയിരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ഗ്രന്ഥം.



Price
Rs. 50.00

ആരാധന ക്രമവും ചിഹ്നങ്ങളും

നാം എന്തിനാണ് പള്ളിയിൽ പോകുന്നത്? ദൈവത്തെ ആരാധിക്കേണ്ടത് എങ്ങനെയാണ്? പള്ളിയിൽ കാണുന്ന ഉപകരണങ്ങളുടെയും ആരാധനയിലെ ചിഹ്നങ്ങളുടെയും അർത്ഥം എന്താണ്? ഈവിധ കാര്യങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റി നിങ്ങൾ ചിന്തിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടോ?

ആരാധനക്രമത്തെപ്പറ്റിയും ദൈവാലയത്തിലെ പ്രതീകങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിയും അടുത്തറിയാൻ സഹായിക്കുന്നതാണ് ഈ ലഘുകൃതി. ആരാധനയിൽ ഉപയോഗിക്കുന്ന ചിഹ്നങ്ങളുടെയും പ്രതീകങ്ങളുടെയും അർത്ഥവും വിശദീകരണവും ആരാധനയുടെ മാഹാത്മ്യവും പ്രായോഗികതയും തിരിച്ചറിയുവാനും സഭാപാരമ്പര്യത്തിന്റെ പൊരുൾ മനസ്സിലാക്കുവാനും ഈ ഗ്രന്ഥം സഹായിക്കും.

