

Priesthood of Believers

1 Peter 2:4-10

May 22-23, 2010

- Sermon's theme = Every disciple of Jesus Christ is a part of a priesthood with responsibilities to be met.

Introduction

- Open Bible to 1 Peter 2
- North Point's "Shepherd Infomercial"
- What would you think if I...
 - ✓ ...showed up late to our worship services?
 - ✓ ...skipped worship services whenever I felt like it (nice weather, too tired, rather go to Disney or the beach, etc.)?
 - ✓ ...never talked to new people or any people before or after services?
 - ✓ ...only ever talked to my family or the other pastors?
 - ✓ ...only gave a few dollars a week to the church?
 - ✓ ...hurt or offended people and then never attempted to make things right with them?
 - ✓ ...saw someone alone in the foyer before service or alone in the service and never approached them?
 - ✓ ...never asked about praying for someone or asked but never actually prayed for them?
 - ✓ ...didn't take the time to find out what was going on in people's lives or didn't make the effort to remember what was going on in people's lives?

Exegesis

- 1 Peter 2:4-10
 - 4 *As you come to him, the living Stone-- rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—*
 - 5 *you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

- 6 *For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame."*
- 7 *Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone,"*
- 8 *and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message-- which is also what they were destined for.*
- 9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*
- 10 *Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

➤ **Description of the Priesthood**

- **What it is not – it is not singular or exclusive.**
 - Roman Catholic model – A priest for a parish = Singular
 - U.S. Protestant Church model – A pastor for the church (average attendance of 87) = Singular
 - Old Testament model – A select group of people (tribe of Levi) to serve as priests = Exclusive
 - Division of Clergy and Laity = Exclusive

- **What it is – it is plural and inclusive.**
 - 1 Peter 2:5, 7, 9-10
 - 5 *you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*
 - ✓ “you...living stones...priesthood” = Plural pronoun, noun and collective noun
 - 7 *Now to you who believe...*
 - ✓ “...you...” = Plural pronoun
 - 9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*
 - ✓ “...you...people...priesthood...nation” = Plural pronoun and collective nouns
 - 10 *Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

✓ "...people..." = Collective nouns

- **Scriptures**

- Revelation 1:5-6

5 ...*To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,*

6 *and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father-- to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.*

✓ Similar to OT model in that it is organized to serve God BUT different from OT in that it is not exclusive but includes all believers

- Revelation 5:9-10

9 *And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*

10 *You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.*

✓ Similar to OT model in that it is organized to serve God BUT different from OT in that it is not exclusive but includes all believers and they reign as well as serve

- Revelation 20:6

6 *Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*

✓ Different from OT in that it is not exclusive but includes all believers and they will reign

❖ **All believers, all disciples are part of the priesthood because of their position in Christ**

➤ **Duties of the Priesthood**

- **We are to offer spiritual sacrifices.**

- 1 Peter 2:5

5 *you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

- Romans 12:1-2

- 1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-- this is your spiritual act of worship.*
 - 2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-- his good, pleasing and perfect will.*
- Duties among believers – “built”
 - What are these spiritual sacrifices?
 - Living a Consecrated Life
 - Leviticus 8, 21-22 = Cleansing, application of blood, set apart, restricted from contact with unclean, hair and beards, social relationships
 - 1 Peter 2:11
 - 11 *Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.*
 - ✓ “...aliens and strangers...” = Cp. OT priests were not given a portion of the land (cities)
 - ✓ “...abstain from sinful desires...” = Your life, as disciples and priests, should meet the standard to which you would hold me, a pastor
 - ✓ Cp. Acts 15; Romans 8; Galatians 5
 - ✓ Practical Application = Living a life worthy of your calling and position
 - ✓ Practical Application = Discipleship groups for accountability
 - ✓ Practical Application = Mindset for worship (clothing, hair, rest, etc.)
 - Making Sacrifices
 - Leviticus 9, 22; Numbers 18 = Offering sacrifices before God to cover sins and restore a right relationship with Him
 - 1 Peter 3:8-9
 - 8 *Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble.*
 - 9 *Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.*
 - ✓ Cp. Romans 12; Matthew 5; Ephesians 4

- ✓ Practical Application = Top Ten Reasons for leaving Church include hypocrites (#3), judgmental (#4), clique (#9), and divorced/separated (#10)
 - ✓ Practical Application = Growing number of “formerly” churched
 - ✓ Practical Application = Granting and seeking forgiveness (rather than merely being okay with the hurt, offense or absence)
- Serving Others
 - Leviticus 5, 9; Numbers 18 = All offerings were brought to the priests who in turn were responsible to serve and bless the people
 - 1 Peter 4:8-11
 - 8 *Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*
 - 9 *Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.*
 - 10 *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*
 - 11 *If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*
 - ✓ Cp. Romans 12; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; 1 Corinthians 12
 - ✓ Practical Application = Come every week (Barackman, “Although they do not contribute to our salvation, these sacrifices are an expression of worship and a means of glorifying God.”)
 - ✓ Practical Application = Come on time and don’t leave early – how can the priest serve others when they aren’t here
 - ✓ Practical application = Speak or serve someone every time you come to church – the duty of a priest! (You will determine whether a visitor returns or not AND whether an attendee will continue or not.)
- **We are to declare the praise of God.**
 - 1 Peter 2:9

- 9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*
- Duties among non-believers – “darkness”
 - How do we declare the praise of God?
- Doing Good
 - 1 Peter 2:12
 - 12 *Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*
 - ✓ Cp. Matthew 5:16
 - ✓ God gets no glory when His priests do no good – Cp. Leviticus 10 (Nadab and Abihu), 1 Samuel 2 (Hophni and Phineas), Malachi 2, and Ezekiel 44
 - ✓ Practical Application = Do good
 - Giving an Answer
 - 1 Peter 3:15-16
 - 15 *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*
 - 16 *keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.*
 - ✓ God is glorified when we speak of His glory – the hope that you have.
 - ✓ Do so with gentleness and respect – contrary to those who attack your hope.
 - ✓ Practical Application = Be prepared and share the hope you have
 - Suffering Persecution
 - 1 Peter 4:14-16
 - 14 *If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*
 - 15 *If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.*

16 *However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.*

- ✓ God is glorified in the suffering of His children when they suffer for His sake
- ✓ Practical Application = Be willing to suffer for Christ that God would be glorified

❖ All believers, all disciples as priests are to offer spiritual sacrifices and declare the praise of God

Response

- **As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are all a part of the priesthood and we must all carry out our responsibilities.**
 - ✓ Observers = Accept God's invitation to draw near to Him
 - ✓ Disciples = Carry out your responsibilities as one of His priests