

The Church Jesus is Building- part 6: "A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD" March 20, 2016

1 Peter 2:5-9

CORE: God has always desired to have a company of ROYAL PRIESTS on the planet—HIS people. Who know how to DRAW NEAR TO HIM—and know how to DRAW OTHERS TO HIM, as well!

NOTE: This begins by **believing what He says!** We are transformed by the "renewing of our minds"—not simply by **trying harder.**

1. People of UNHINDERED PRAISE.

We are "offering up" spiritual sacrifices

- "Offer up"- to go up the steps of the Brazen Alter to offer a sacrifice
- Peter takes this OT image (reserved only for the priests) and applies it to ALL of us—**WE are a royal priesthood (no longer excluded)!**
- **Spiritual sacrifices?**
 - Hebrews 13:15- "Sacrifice of praise (or shout)"—it's when you lift up your hands; also called "the peace offering"
 - Rabbis taught that when Messiah comes—all sacrifices will be done away with EXCEPT the "peace (praise, shout) offering"
 - NOTE: Lifting hands is not a recent Pentecostal/Charismatic phenomena; it's as old as Leviticus—now applied to ALL believers
 - We come, lifting hands to the Lamb Sacrifice (who ended all sacrifices)

2. People of UNLIMITED ACCESS.

We are ALL priests!

- The church believed that for the 1st 200 years; ALL could speak directly with God, hear His voice, minister in His name
- After that, a hierarchy was developed (*NOTE: At Sinai—Israel chose a **mediated** relationship with God thru Moses. Contrast this with Joshua **had immediate encounters** in the Tent of Meeting after Moses would leave it.*)
- NOTE: When Jesus taught/ministered—He always chose the "**full access**" places.
 - The word "**lay people**" is not in the Bible (*NOTE: It is thought that the concept of a "common/less than" company of people was developed by the Nicolaitans whose "deeds (God) hated" (Rev. 2:6)! "Nikos" means "to conquer, subdue, and demean"; "laos" means "the people"→ resulting in a weak/powerless Church!*)

3. People of INFLUENCE.

(v. 9) Is a quote from Exodus 19- when Israel became a NATION—more than merely the “children of Jacob (i.e., Israel)”. A nation of RULERS & PRIESTS.

“The world” Peter refers to is the **system that was persecuting the Church.**

- His message is **NOT “coping” —BUT contending AS PRIESTS for the healing of the world! Not merely “putting up with” indifferently, BUT LIFTING UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES that make a difference!**
- i.e., Jesus walked through His sufferings as a priest—“Father, forgive them!” (Stephen did the same). As royal priesthood, we are called to **intercede** on behalf of a world system (often hostile to His Kingdom)—**in order to radically transform it!**

Our INFLUENCE flows from INTIMACY with Him.

- “Royal priesthood”- two distinct lines; priests couldn’t be kings (and vice versa). “Royal” (*king*) “priesthood” (*priests*).
- David- Psalm 110- Messiah will be of the order of Melchizadek (not Aaron or Levi). He will be king and priest all in one!
- **IN JESUS, WE ARE:**
 - **PEOPLE OF INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE!** (*W/ God & people*)
 - **UNLIKELY CANDIDATES!** (*Melchizadek came from Ham, who dishonored & humiliated his father, Noah...whose son, Cush, was builder of Tower of Babel...whose son, Nimrod, is the father of paganism...whose son was Canaan—the usurpers of the Promised Land...and Mechizadek was a Canaanite!*) i.e., lineage of Ruth
 - **Those who have FULL ACCESS—we make Him ACCESSIBLE!** He met Abraham where he was at...simply brought **bread & wine**—while other tribes possessed land—the **priests’ inheritance was the PRESENCE OF THE LORD!**
 - **Those who know we are DELIGHTFUL TO HIM!** “A people of God’s **OWN possession**”—that which is **peculiarly valuable to!** He delights over us, because that’s the way He is (*not because we earn it by our performance*)

“But you shall be called the priests of the Lord; People will speak of you as the ministers of our God...Instead of your [former] shame you will have a double portion; And instead of humiliation your people will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore in their land they will possess double [what they had forfeited]; Everlasting joy will be theirs.” (Isaiah 61:6,7 AMP)