

The Priesthood Of Christians Part 2

Our Key Verse:

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for possession, so that you might speak of the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; you who then were not a people, but now the people of God, those not pitied then, but now pitied. Dearly beloved, I exhort you as temporary residents and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honest among the nations, in that which they speak against you as evildoers, they may glorify God in a day of His visitation, seeing your good works." (1 Peter 2:9-12)

Today, we will cover our "Works" in the priesthood of the Christian. Now that we hold an office, what are our assignments before God?

~ The Works ~

We are saved by grace- not of works. This is true. The question before us is: "how do we act after we have been saved?" Most Christians fail to separate the two concepts. They get stuck on "saved by grace," or "saved by works." Both are wrong and destitute of spiritual discernment. The answer is "Yes" and "Yes." We are saved by grace not by works, yet now that we are saved, there is a calling to obey. We didn't earn our salvation, yet now that it has been given, it comes with guidance. Failure to heed the guidance is to reject the offer of salvation. Grace and works are intimately connected. You can never be good enough. That is why there is grace and mercy. Yet, you cannot remain with a heart of rebellion and call Jesus "Lord". That is why there remains God's way of doing things, also called the law. To say that you can have a relationship with God on your own terms and conditions, is to deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Another way to put it is this: You have been given a free ticket into the city of Heaven, and it didn't cost you thing. Now that you have entered into this kingdom, there are expectations of your conduct.

The Most Conclusive Verse on "Works -VS- Faith & Grace."

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love with which He loved us (even when we were dead in sins) has made us alive together with Christ (**by grace you are saved**), and has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works**, lest anyone should boast. **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works**, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:4-10)

THE DECLARATION VERSES:

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” (James 2:26) See also: James 2:14-26

“But that which you have, hold fast until I come. And he who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, to him I will give power over the nations.” (Revelation 2:25-26)

****As we can clearly see, salvation is a free gift from God. Yet now that we are saved by His grace and mercy, we have been saved for a purpose. This purpose is to obey him and serve him, to do that which is pleasing in his sight.
This is the Priesthood of the Christians.***

Marching Orders Of The Christian Priesthood

Should Christians Keep The Commandments? Are we even called to keep the commandments? Here is a list of 12 things the Bible says you cannot do, cannot have, and cannot experience without keeping the “Commandments” of God and Jesus. It is impossible to faithfully fulfill your high office without obedience to God and His ways. Just as it was impossible for Jesus to be faithful to God without complete obedience.

KEY CONCEPTS:

“Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,” (1 Corinthians 9:21b)

“Do we then make the Law void through faith? Let it not be! But we establish the Law.”
(Romans 3:31)

#1) You Cannot Experience The Fullness Of God’s Love!

“If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s Commandments, and remain in his love.” (John 15:10)

“At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My Commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him.”
(John 14:20-21)

#2) You Can Not Love God!

“Jesus answered him, “If a man loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our home with him. He who doesn’t love me doesn’t keep my words. The word which you hear isn’t mine, but the Father’s who sent me.” (John 14:23-24)

“If you love me, keep my Commandments.” (John 14:15)

#3) You Can Not Love God Or Fellow Believers!

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. Whoever loves the Father also loves the child who is born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his Commandments. For this is loving God, that we keep his Commandments. His Commandments are not grievous. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world: your faith.” (1 John 5:1-4)

#4) You Can Not Say That You Even Know God!

“And he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world. This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his Commandments. One who says, “I know him,” and doesn’t keep his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth isn’t in him. But whoever keeps his word, God’s love has most certainly been perfected in him. This is how we know that we are in him:” (1 John 2:2-5)

#5) You Can Not Be God And Jesus’ Friend!

“You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.” (John 15:14)

#6) You Can Not Count On God’s Presence!

“He who sent me is with me. The Father hasn’t left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.” (John 8:29)

#7) You Can Not Count On Having Your Prayers Answered!

“Beloved, if our hearts don’t condemn us, we have boldness toward God; and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 John 3:21-22)

“I am the vine. You are the branches. He who remains in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a man doesn’t remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it will be done for you.” (John 15:5-7)

#8) You Cannot Tell The World You Love God!

Jesus said: “But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father commanded me, even so I do. Arise, let’s go from here.” (John 14:31)

~Just as we prove our love for God to the world- by keeping His commandments!~

#9) You Cannot Receive The Fullness Of The Holy Spirit!

“We are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” (Acts 5:32)

“He who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.” (1 John 3:24)

“If you love me, keep my commandments. I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, that he may be with you forever: the Spirit of truth, whom the world can’t receive; for it doesn’t see him, neither knows him. You know him, for he lives with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you.” (John 14:15-18)

#10) You Cannot Have The Expectation Of Salvation!

“Here is the patience of the saints. Here are the ones who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” (Revelation 14:12)

“Blessed are they who do His commandments, that their authority will be over the Tree of Life, and they may enter in by the gates into the city.” (Revelation 22:14)

#11) You Cannot Be Called Great In The Kingdom Of Heaven!

“Whoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and teach others to do so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever shall do and teach them shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Matthew 5:19)

#12) You Cannot Participate In The War Against The Forces Of Darkness!

“And the dragon [Satan] was wroth with the woman [The Church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Revelation 12:17)

Keep The Commandments!

“When all has been heard, the conclusion of the matter is this: Fear God and keep His commandments, because this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13

“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;” Hebrews 5:9

****Most do not realize that commandments are being followed even in lawlessness. Lawlessness is a command that tells you not to obey. The question is, who is it a command not to obey? It's a commandment to not obey God. Instead of having a heart attitude of: "I can love God in this manner", they take the perspective of "Oh, do I have to?" Once you have learned the truth just as you have: God is no longer your Father and Jesus is not your Lord and Savior- IF you do not keep the commandments of God! It is the duty of every soul saved by His mercy and grace. No, we are not talking perfection- we are talking about a heart of obedience!***

"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. But in vain they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:8-9)

Failure to head the guidelines with a repentant heart will have you removed from your office as a priest of God, and your name blotted out of the Book of Life.

"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars says these things. I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead... The one who overcomes, this one will be clothed in white clothing. And I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." (Revelation 3:1+5) *See also: Revelation 22:19

"Let them be blotted out of the Book of Life, and not be written with the righteous." (Psalms 69:28)

"There will in no way enter into it anything profane, or one who causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life." (Revelation 21:27)

ON OUR HEARTS

****Let us always remember: The New Covenant of God with Man is to write His laws within us. This is the covenant we preach and share with humanity.***

"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified. The Holy Spirit also is a witness to us; for after He had said before, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord; I will put My Laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," also He adds, "their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." (Hebrews 10:14-18)

CONFIRM YOUR COMMISSION

As we receive authorization from God to be a part of the new Priesthood, we must handle our new position and relationship with God with care. We must never take our salvation and office lightly. Don't fail or give up before its payday!

Be Diligent In Your Office:

"Therefore, brothers, rather be diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, you shall never fall." (2 Peter 1:10)

Walk The Path Set Before You:

"Enter in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter in by it. How narrow is the gate, and restricted is the way that leads to life! Few are those who find it." (Matthew 7:13-14)

Tremble At The Awesome Power Of THE ONE Who Called You:

"So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12-13)

DON'T FORGET YOUR CROWNS!

****Working for the God and creator of the entire universe comes with many perks and blessings, many of which we will be covering next week. Just like those in the military, our office comes with many and varied accolades provided by God. More specifically, we will talk of the crowns given to His children. These might be literal or figurative- or both, yet the impact is a certainty upon the standing of the person receiving them.***

"You therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit the same to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. You therefore must endure hardship, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on duty entangles himself in the affairs of life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier. Also, if anyone competes in athletics, he isn't crowned unless he has competed by the rules."

(2 Timothy 2:1-5)

Run To Win The Prize Set Before You

“I do it all for the sake of the Good News, so that I might be a fellow partaker of it. Don’t you know that in a stadium the runners all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win! Every competitor exercises self-control in all respects. They do it to receive a perishable crown, but we do it to receive an imperishable one. So I run in this way—not aimlessly. So I box in this way—not beating the air. Rather, I punish my body and bring it into submission, so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.” (1 Corinthians 9:23-27)

Crown Of Salvation & Life:

“Blessed is a person who endures temptation, for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord promised to those who love him.” (James 1:12)

“Don’t be afraid of the things which you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested; and you will have oppression for ten days. Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who overcomes won’t be harmed by the second death.” (Revelation 2:10-11)

“I am coming quickly! Hold firmly that which you have, so that no one takes your crown.” (Revelation 3:11)

Crown Of Glory:

“When the chief Shepherd is revealed, you will receive the crown of glory that doesn’t fade away.” (1 Peter 5:4)

Crown Of Righteousness:

“I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith. From now on, there is stored up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that day; and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

Those You Serve & Help Save Are A Crown To You!

“For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Isn’t it even you, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For you are our glory and our joy.” (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)

RECAP: So far, we have covered the “Sacrifices” we offered in Part I. We just covered that we are called to obey in our “Work” before a righteous and holy God. Next week, we will cover how to apply these sacrifices and obedience in our duties as the Royal Priesthood of YHWH. Now, perform your duties before God lawfully and receive the promised “Crown of Life” for those who obey Him!