

The Priesthood of Christians Part 3

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)

The first study was about the "Spiritual Sacrifices" we offer up to God. The next study we did was about being obedient in our "Work" to God and receiving our crowns through obedience. We therefore must learn about turning our services outward to the Body of Christ. It is always best said that "we serve God before the people." Never do "we serve the people before God." The difference is our main point of focus. Often ministers can become too 'people focused' and forget the reason and person we are actually serving, and that is our Father God. Becoming overly people focused can lead to compromise and burn out. Yet, the God-centered minister will always be better equipped to love and serve the people in the proper manner. SO, with that in mind, let's look into the "Application" of our office in the Christian Priesthood. God has given us many varied tools and spiritual equipment to be successful in our operations.

The Application

You can do nothing without the power of God. Here is how you receive it after you have faith in Jesus!

"Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
(Acts 2:38)

***It all begins with obedience to God. If you want the Holy Spirit to fulfill your office, it begins with obeying God.**

"And we are witnesses of these events, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him." (Acts 5:32)

HOLY SPIRIT

Now, many in the Church have been taught that the Church began at Pentecost when they received the Holy Spirit. This is factually incorrect. We will cover what happened at Pentecost in a moment, but let's read when they really received the Holy Spirit for the first time and why it happened.

"And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit." (John 20:22)

***We clearly see that the disciples received the Holy Spirit for the first time after the resurrection of Jesus, not 50 days after His resurrection at Pentecost. I believe the first time was the release of the Fruits of the Spirit. In giving them the Holy Spirit then, not at Pentecost, He fulfilled the promise He gave them.**

"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 14:16-18)

***The Church started after Jesus was resurrected, as to not leave them orphans. So what exactly happened at Pentecost? They received the gifts of the spirit. Just as Jesus told them in Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Let's read the moment they received the gifts of the spirit:**

"Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place. Suddenly there came from the sky a sound like the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. Tongues like fire appeared and were distributed to them, and one sat on each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak." (Acts 2:1-4)

We will briefly cover the fruits and the gifts of the Holy Spirit of God in this study.

BE LIKE JESUS (WHAT WOULD JESUS DO?)

We must mimic the ministry of Jesus.

"When Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are healthy have no need for a physician, but those who are sick do. But you go and learn what this means: **'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**" (Matthew 9:12-13)

What Is The Game Plan?

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim release to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, to deliver those who are crushed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began to tell them, “Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:18-21)

The Clarion Call Of The Christian Priesthood

“From that time, Jesus began to preach, and to say, “**Repent!** For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)

THE COMMISSION GIVES US AUTHORITY & PERMISSION

The Declaration Of Your Office

“Most certainly I tell you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also; and he will do greater works than these, because I am going to my Father. Whatever you will ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you will ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:12-14)

Great Commission Of Your Office

“Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

“And as you go, proclaim, saying, The kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. You have received freely, freely give.” (Matthew 10:7-8)

Execution Of The Commission

“but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to everyone who asks you a reason of the hope in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that while they speak against you as evildoers they may be shamed, those falsely accusing your good behavior in Christ.” (1 Peter 3:15-16)

“For we don’t preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake; seeing it is God who said, “Light will shine out of darkness,” who has shone in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:5-6)

Be Like Jesus- Be The Light Of The World

“While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (John 9:5)

“You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its flavor, with what will it be salted? It is then good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under the feet of men. You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can’t be hidden. Neither do you light a lamp, and put it under a measuring basket, but on a stand; and it shines to all who are in the house. Even so, let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16)

“The night is far gone, and the day is near. Let’s therefore throw off the deeds of darkness, and let’s put on the armor of light.” (Romans 13:12)

JUDGMENT: LOOSE & BIND

“And I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven to you. And whatever you may bind on earth shall occur, having been bound in Heaven, and whatever you may loose on earth shall occur, having been loosed in Heaven.” (Matthew 16:19)

“Of whomever sins you remit (Loose), they are remitted (Loosed) to them. Of whomever sins you retain, they are retained.” (John 20:23)

“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over, they shall give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you measure, it shall be measured to you again.” (Luke 6:37-38)

FRUITS, GIFTS, & OFFICES

***We don’t want to get carried away with thinking that what’s on the list is all that is available. These lists are to help understand what God is doing, opening up our hearts and minds to God’s plan. With that in mind, let’s take a peek into these wonderful empowering blessings of our Father God.**

Fruits Of The Spirit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness,** and **self-control.** Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ **have crucified the flesh** with its passions and lusts. If we live by the Spirit, **let’s also walk by the Spirit.** Let’s not become conceited, provoking one another, and envying one another.” (Galatians 5:22-26)

Walk In The Gifts

“Now there are various kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are various kinds of service, and the same Lord. There are various kinds of workings, but the same God, who works all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the profit of all. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; and to another gifts of healings, by the same Spirit; and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits; to another different kinds of languages; and to another the interpretation of languages. But the one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing to each one separately as he desires.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

Execute Your Office

“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. God has set some in the assembly: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracle workers, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, and various kinds of languages.”
(1 Corinthians 12:27-28)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

***We live behind enemy lines. Every moment of every day you are on the Battlefield!
You must always conduct yourself as such. The moment you forget this, you become
easy targets for Spiritual assassination.**

“For though we walk in the flesh, we don’t wage war according to the flesh; for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the throwing down of strongholds, throwing down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ;” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

“...don’t give place to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:27)

Put On The Armor Of God

“Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world’s rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having the utility belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having fitted your feet with the preparation of the Good News of

peace; above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; with all prayer and requests, praying at all times in the Spirit, and being watchful to this end in all perseverance and requests for all the saints:" (Ephesians 6:10-18)

***The picture that Paul is painting here is the one we see in the Old Testament- Representing YHWH and the Messiah Jesus Christ, dressing in battle armor, readying themselves for war. This should be a clue for why we put on the armor.**

"Yes, truth is lacking; and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Yahweh saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore his own arm brought salvation to him; and his righteousness sustained him. He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head. He put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a mantle. According to their deeds, he will repay as appropriate, wrath to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies; he will repay the islands their due. So shall they fear Yahweh's name from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun; for he will come as a rushing stream, which Yahweh's breath drives. "A Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from disobedience in Jacob," says Yahweh. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says Yahweh. "My Spirit who is on you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your offspring, nor out of the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says Yahweh, "from henceforth and forever." (Isaiah 59:15-21)

MAINSTAYS

1. "Until I come, attend to **reading**, to **exhortation**, to **teaching**. **Do not neglect the gift in you**, which was given you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the body of elders. **Meditate on these things**; be in these things in order that your improvement may appear to all. **Hold on to yourself and to the doctrine**; continue in them, for doing this you shall both save yourself and those who hear you." (1 Timothy 4:13-16)
2. "Therefore we ought to **give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard**, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and if every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those who heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with different kinds of miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (Hebrews 2:1-4)

3. **“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks,** for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus toward you. **Don’t quench the Spirit. Don’t despise prophecies. Test all things,** and **hold firmly that which is good. Abstain from every form of evil.** May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-23)
4. “But he who looks into the perfect law of freedom, and continues, not being a hearer who forgets, **but a doer of the work,** this man will be blessed in what he does. **If anyone among you thinks himself to be religious while he doesn’t bridle his tongue,** but deceives his heart, this man’s religion is worthless. **Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.**” (James 1:25-27)

FULFILL THE GREAT COMMISSION AS DISCIPLES

A disciple learns what is being taught to them. Most see the Great Commission as “go make disciples”- which it is. It’s also rooted in BECOMING a disciple.

- ✓ “But Jesus called them and said to them, You know that they who are accounted rulers over the nations exercise lordship over them. And their great ones exercise authority on them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever desires to be great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever of you desires to become first, he shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45)
- ✓ “Yield to those leading you, and be submissive, for they watch for your souls, as those who must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17)
- ✓ “But we passionately want each of you to demonstrate the same eagerness for the fulfillment of your hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and perseverance inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:11-12)
- ✓ “Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who labor among you and preside over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them most highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
- ✓ “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 11:1)

CLOSING

"For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each one of us will give account concerning himself to God." (Romans 14:11-12)

RECAP:

OBEY- It all begins with faith in Jesus, then repenting and being baptized. We can then receive the Holy Spirit: releasing upon us Fruits, Gifts, & Offices. Followed with the "Great Commission", that gives us the permission in the authority of Christ to perform our Priesthood. We put on the Armor of God and engage in spiritual warfare every day, for we live behind enemy lines. We lose the captives in the power of God, proclaiming freedom to the slaves of sin. We bring light into this dark world in Jesus' Name. Setting the captives free: all for the glory and pleasure of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and our Father God YHWH!

There are many more things that could be added to this brief list. This is just a quick overview of many big topics. But be not dismayed, I have covered in depth many more aspects of our walk before God in my book "We Shall Be Like Him", which is available for free at www.weshallbelikehim.com. For example, the importance of the Lord's Supper and the position we will hold in Heaven. Needless to say, there is so much more spiritual treasure to uncover. May God bless you on your journey.