

REVISITING THE PRIEST

DISPENSATIONALLY RECONSIDERING THE PRIESTHOOD

"For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer."

~ Hebrews 8:3

1. The Christian Priest

- a. It is iconic of most churches to have priests, clergy, or a sacred hierarchy
- b. Getting married, dying, sick, need confession, cleansed, anointed, blessed? Get a priest!
- c. If not a 'priest', then a higher class, licensed, specially called, anointed man of God.
 - i. Said to be distinct from the *layman* in calling, gifts, service, and grace from God.
 - ii. Serves to administer sacraments, keep holy orders, mediate sacrifices, sins, pray
 - iii. Seen as closer to God, a means to God or His truth, a channel of blessing
- d. *What is the church without a priest?* It's time to revisit the priesthood dispensationally

2. Priests in Israel's Old Testament

- a. Priests represent people to God: offerings to God, taught laws to men - Exo 18:19-20
- b. Priests were sanctified ministers of the LORD - Exo 18:21-22, 28:1-3, 29:41, 30:16, 29
- c. They had holy garments, holy sounds, holy smells, holy headpiece, holy washings
- d. If you did not do what the priest said, you die - Deu 17:8-12, 21:5, Mal 2:7
- e. Priests declared God's people and received God's words - Deu 27:9, 31:9
- f. Priests prepared sacrifices, made atonement, judge, diagnosed/anoint the sick, were guards of temple/holy things, collected tithes, scribes, musicians, led worship/prayer
- g. Priests had restrictions on activities, who they could marry, children, health, wealth
- h. There were 3 priestly ranks - high priest, Aaron's sons, all Levites - Exo 40:14-15
- i. All of Israel was to be a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation - Exo 19:6
- j. All of Israel would be priests of the LORD in their kingdom - Isa 61:6, 66:21

3. Priests in Israel's New Testament

- a. Priest mentioned most in Leviticus, "high priest" mentioned most in Hebrews
- b. Jesus is the faithful high priest - Heb 2:17, 3:1, 4:14-15, 5:1
- c. No man takes the honor of priest unto himself, but he that is called of God - Heb 5:2-4
- d. The priesthood changed, the law changed = new covenant - Heb 7:12, 7:22-26
- e. Jesus is the high priest, the sacrifice is his body, blood is his own - Heb 8:1, 10:19-21
- f. Every priest offers gifts and sacrifices - Jesus offered himself - Heb 8:3
- g. He would not be a priest on earth under the OT law - Heb 8:4-5
- h. He did this sacrificial service once for all - Heb 9:26-27
- i. Rulers who "watch for your souls" "giving account" are priestly - Heb 13:17
- j. Jesus left power to forgive sins to his 12 apostles of Israel (priestly) - Jn 20:23, Mt 16:19
- k. Peter calls believing scattered Israel a priesthood 2x - 1 Pet 2:5, 9
- l. Israel's kingdom on earth is filled with priests reigning with Christ - Rev 20:6
- m. Every defense of a priesthood by the church rests on descriptions of NT Israel.
- n. Priests are needed for Israel's kingdom come, to judge/restore all things, but now...

4. Dispensing Grace to All Replaces Priestly Service

- a. Our fellowship with Christ (mystery) is w/o Israel, law, covenants, or priests.
 - i. Priest is not one of the spiritual gifts, offices, or gifts in 1Cor 12, Rom 12, Eph 4
 - ii. Number of times Paul references priests in his epistles to the churches = 0
 - iii. (Rom 15:16 in ESV/NIV say Paul performs a priestly duty)
- b. Your position in Christ closer than any has ever been – Eph 1:7, 2:13,5:30, 1Co 12:13
 - i. Paul is “less than the least of all saints” not a higher priest – Eph 3:8, 3:18, 3:1
 - ii. Grace abounding means you don’t need a priest to deliver grace to you-Rom 5:2
 - iii. Everyone saved is called with a holy calling in Christ –Eph 4:1, 2Tim 1:9
 - iv. There is no difference between Jew/Gentile, priest/laymen – Col 3:11, Gal 6:15
 - v. ‘man of God’ or ‘saint’ refers to all believers – 1 Tim 6:11, 2 Tim 3:17
- c. There are no priests under grace b/c there is nothing left for us to do/ offer/ sacrifice
 - i. No sacraments to administer (Christ performed all that was needed) Rom 5:21
 - ii. All that you needed was administered by Christ (not a priest) - Col 2:8-17
 - iii. *(The Lord’s Supper is remembering Christ’s work, not eating Christ’s work)*
 - iv. No ordinances to enforce (Christ is our sanctification, our Head) 1 Cor 1:30
 - v. No sacrifices to mediate (Christ is the one mediator) 1 Tim 2:5
 - vi. No sins to be forgiven (Christ forgave all our trespasses) Col 2:13
 - vii. No one accountable to us, every one accounts for himself to God – Rom 14:12
 - viii. No sacred places, no sacred objects, no need for sacred priests.
- d. Separating priest from layman is wrong division under grace robbing you of Christ’s gift
 - i. We are all ministers of God and stewards of the mystery of Christ – 1 Cor 4:1-2